

So Far Away From Home

*Engaging the Silenced Colonial; the Netherlands-Indies Diaspora
in North America*

Proefschrift

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An American Tune

Words & music by Paul Simon

*Many's the time I've been mistaken
And many times confused
Yes, and I've often felt forsaken
And certainly misused
Oh, but I'm all right, I'm all right
I'm just weary to my bones
Still, you don't expect to be
Bright and bon vivant
So far away from home, so far away from home*

*And I don't know a soul who's not been battered
I don't have a friend who feels at ease
I don't know a dream that's not been shattered
or driven to its knees
but it's all right, it's all right
for we lived so well so long
Still, when I think of the
road we're traveling on
I wonder what's gone wrong
I can't help it, I wonder what's gone wrong*

*And I dreamed I was dying
I dreamed that my soul rose unexpectedly
And looking back down at me
Smiled reassuringly
And I dreamed I was flying
And high up above my eyes could clearly see
The Statue of Liberty
Sailing away to sea
And I dreamed I was flying*

*We come on the ship they call the Mayflower
We come on the ship that sailed the moon
We come in the age's most uncertain hours
and sing an American tune
Oh, and it's alright, it's all right, it's all right
You can't be forever blessed
Still, tomorrow's going to be another working day
And I'm trying to get some rest
That's all I'm trying to get some rest*

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1 Introduction

In order to enhance our understanding of the making of colonial identities, the bond to natal land fundamental to the formation of 'self,' its impact on immigration/repatriation, and the hegemonic application of the paradigm of Colonialism¹ to highly diverse colonial encounters, this research engages the voice of North American peoples from Indonesia that were resident in the Netherlands Indies at the end of the colonial era. Participants in a "*political order that inscribes in the social world a new conception of space, new forms of personhood, and a new means of manufacturing the experience of the real*,"² they encountered the Japanese invasion and Occupation from unique perspectives. More than 2/3 of the interviewees span the Bersiap period³ and the 1945-1949 clashes with the Republic, while others struggled to maintain their Indonesian identity until the 1956-57 crises. A significant number repatriated or fled to the Netherlands during one of those critical confrontations, or bypassed Holland and left directly for North America. The life stories that include exile in the Netherlands before their departure to the 'New World' therefore engage immigration through an evacuation experience. In all cases however, narrators are peripheral to the

¹ I capitalize the term "colonialism" whenever I refer to it in its paradigmatic sense.

² Mitchell, Timothy. (1988) *Colonizing Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Page xi.

³ Bersiap = a name given to the period at the end of the Japanese occupation when terror and violence reigned in the streets and countryside of Java and youth attacked and killed those of Dutch and Eurasian blood as well as members of the Indonesian elites who had played a role in the colonial administration. Later, Chinese and other Indonesians were also targeted. Cribb, R. (2007). Misdaad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom. Page 39. The period derives its name "*from the cry of bersiap (get ready!) shouted by Indonesian youth groups when attacking.*" Steijlen, Fridus. *Memories of the East: Abstracts of Dutch Interviews about the Netherlands East Indies, Indonesia and New Guinea (1930 - 1962) in the Oral History Project Collection*. Leiden: Under the Auspices of SMGI: KITLV Press, 2002. Page 2. Almost all scholars address the period when discussing the first few post Occupation years.

ongoing dialogues in the Netherlands⁴ and Indonesia⁵ that constrain or mobilize what ex-colonial subjects in those countries share. Hence, they utilize divergent schemata⁶ to frame “how,” “what,” and “why” they remember.

Mingling with the voices of Indonesian expatriates elsewhere,⁷ the “baroque complexities”⁸ of these narratives articulate a multiplicity of transformational world-views. Comparative analysis of this North American collection with other compilations of Indonesian expat oral history projects,⁹ or academic research undertaken using life story methodologies,¹⁰ reveals a divergence in experiential recall that is readily apparent, as well as more subtle differences. Steijlen notes for example, that Leiden Oral History project interviewees address the “ungenerous” reception of repatriated Indonesians in the

⁴ Houben, Vincent J.H. (1997) A Torn Soul: The Dutch Public Discussion on the Colonial Past in 1995. *Indonesia*. Vol. 63 (April). Pages 47 – 66. See also collections such as the one compiled by: Steijlen, Fridus. (2002) *Memories of the East: Abstracts of Dutch Interviews about the Netherlands East Indies, Indonesia and New Guinea (1930 - 1962)* in the *Oral History Project Collection*. Leiden: Under the Auspices of SMGI: KITLV Press.

⁵ Stoler and Strassler touch on the impact of the political on life story narratives, but do not discuss it at length. Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*: Vol. 42; No. 1 (January), 4 - 48.

⁶ Bartlett, C.R. *Remembering*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁷ Steijlen, Fridus. (2002) *Memories of the East: Abstracts of Dutch Interviews about the Netherlands East Indies, Indonesia and New Guinea (1930 - 1962)* in the **Oral History Project Collection**. Leiden: Under the Auspices of SMGI: KITLV Press.

⁸ Cribb, Robert. (2003) “*Indische Identity and Decolonization*.” IIAS Newsletter, # 31, July 2003. For an important discussion of this complexity, see: Bosma, Ulbe and Raben, Remco. (2003) *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker.

⁹ Steijlen notes the dearth of interviews from ex-pats who took up residence in the U.S., Australia enz. Steijlen, Fridus. (2002) *Memories of the East: Abstracts of Dutch Interviews about the Netherlands East Indies, Indonesia and New Guinea (1930 - 1962)* in the *Oral History Project Collection*. Leiden: Under the Auspices of SMGI: KITLV Press. Page 3.

¹⁰ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*: Vol. 42; No. 1 (January), 4 - 48.

Netherlands.¹¹ Many database informants on the other hand,¹² maintain that the people of the Netherlands did their utmost for them under very difficult national and personal circumstances; the Netherlands was just emerging from Nazi occupation. Another contrast: Steijlen observes that the “Dutch” in Indonesia were largely unaware of the nationalist aspirations of the colonized¹³ while North American interviews explicitly claim the contrary. Narrators also confront multiple academic perspectives, such as Cribb’s assertion that ‘independence appealed deeply to all peoples in all areas of the archipelago’¹⁴ and Stoler and Strassler’s findings during their oral history investigations in Indonesia.¹⁵

These North American life story narratives therefore represent a critical addition to expatriate and academic accounts of colonial and occupied Indonesia, challenging, confronting, affirming, and elaborating other life histories and scholarly investigations. Moreover, analysis of their content elicits insight into the importance of the social milieu in the making of memory, affirming Colombijn’s point that humans labour to maintain a coherent image of the past through an incomplete suppression of existential facts at odds with current ideologies.¹⁶ Indeed, the textual differences expose variations

¹¹ Steijlen, Fridus. (2002) *Memories of the East: Abstracts of Dutch Interviews about the Netherlands East Indies, Indonesia and New Guinea (1930 - 1962)* in the *Oral History Project Collection*. Leiden: Under the Auspices of SMGI: KITLV Press. Page 5. He further discusses the fact that this issue was part of a greater public debate in the Netherlands regarding the end of the colonial era and the Japanese occupation in the Indies.

¹² This database contains the memories of veterans who fought in Indonesia against the Republican Army. Their discourse differs substantially from the narratives in the other subsections of the databases. Claims regarding database discourse excludes veteran life stories, except when they are specifically noted as inclusions.

¹³ Steijlen, Fridus. (2002) *Memories of the East: Abstracts of Dutch Interviews about the Netherlands East Indies, Indonesia and New Guinea (1930 - 1962)* in the *Oral History Project Collection*. Leiden: Under the Auspices of SMGI: KITLV Press. Page 2.

¹⁴ Cribb, R. (2007). *Misdaad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië*. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom. Page 42.

¹⁵ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). *Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. Comparative Studies in Society and History: Vol. 42; No. 1 (January)*, 4 - 48.

¹⁶ Colombijn, Freek. (2009 in press) *Van bilik en steen. Ras en klasse in de Indonesische stad*. (in) Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp.

in operative memory; North American life histories, contrasted with those collected from expatriates living in Holland and Belgium, or Indonesians residing in Indonesia, demonstrate the powerful impact a narrator's current environment exerts on an individual's perceptions of his/her personal past. That certain themes receive elaboration, and others marginalization, sheds light on *how societies and bodies remember, but equally important, how they forget and go on to forge viable practical models to help them endure.*"¹⁷

Attending to ex-colonial voices is essential to an understanding of colonial identity making, its later relationship to immigration and/or repatriation, and colonial encounters. Interstitial discourses re-inscribe the spatial, identity, and reality configurations of both colonized¹⁸ and colonizer.¹⁹ Assertion of Indies identity by database narrators embraces a natal bond to place-worlds;²⁰ *the Indonesian topography determined their world-view.*²¹ In turn, Indies *belonging*, profoundly reconfigured their reality frames. Participating in a rich cultural mosaic, nestled in *family and patron networks deeply rooted in particular locales,*²² 'colonizers' identified with native land and peoples, not the 'mother country' or 'back home.' Indonesia was

31-48). Amsterdam: Boom. Page 49. I note the suppression as incomplete, since the subsequent information that re-surfaces in his narrative confronts the initial statement made by the life story teller. In the case of Dr. Colombijn's example, his narrator's initial assertion claims racial segregation in the colonial city. His subsequent utterances however, illustrate the contrary.

¹⁷ Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). The Work of Memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 25, 610-633. Page 628. Here Cole draws as well on the work of: Wikan, Unni (1996) *The Nun's Story: Reflections on an Age-Old Postmodern Dilemma.* *American Anthropologist*. Vol. 98(2). Pages 279-289. Page 285.

¹⁸ Mitchell, Timothy. (1988) *Colonizing Egypt.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Page xi.

¹⁹ Bhabha, Homi. (1994) *The Location of Culture.* London; New York: Routledge. pages 2-4

²⁰ Basso, Keith (1996) *Wisdom Sits in Places.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

²¹ Translated paraphrase from: Bosma, U. and Raben, Remco. (2003). *De Oude Indische Wereld.* Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker. Page 11.

²² Op. cit., translated paraphrase. Page 11.

Home. The denial of their identity through ²³the “repatriate” label inscribed on refugee, evacuated, and exiled bodies by governments and scholars alike, and the subsequent academic silence regarding their experience, requires careful analysis.

The externally imposed, categorical label “Dutch,” is uniformly applied to residents of the Indies with ‘Dutch’ blood, in keeping with the official tripartite colonial classification of peoples; the Dutch designate a sub-category of the category “Europeans.” In truth, as I note below, the attempt to impose order on the creative pluralism that characterized the Indies social fabric(s) obfuscated the reality of enormous disparities between the members of classificatory sub-groupings. Those marked “Dutch” included men and women newly arrived in the Indies from the Netherlands; children born in the Indies of Dutch parents; children born from marriages between Dutch men and Asian partners; men and women descended from “Dutch” ancestors who had arrived in Indonesia centuries before; and offspring of liaisons between Dutch men and Eurasian/Asian women recognized by their fathers. Indeed, eighty percent of the ‘Dutch’ community in Indonesia had “Asian” blood, each generation growing up in households that were culturally Indonesian, not Dutch.²⁴ Yet as a single constitutive category – ‘the Dutch’ – they stand as symbols of Colonialism, and their claims to Indonesian identities were not only negated at the Dutch, Japanese and Indonesian government levels, their natal and cultural affiliations are largely negated in the academic literature.²⁵

As Bosma and Raben’s sophisticated analysis probes, scholarly use of official colonial categories continue to re-produce, rather than relativize, myopic discourse.²⁶ As a result, I argue that one of the

²³ I will elaborate on this denial on the part of by the Dutch, the Indonesian revolutionary government, the international community and by scholars, below.

²⁴ Bosma, U. and Raben, Remco. (2003). *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker.

²⁵ The highly refined studies of the Dutch colonial regime in Indonesia produced by scholars in the Netherlands do not have a parallel in the English-speaking world.

²⁶ Bosma, U. and Raben, Remco. (2003). *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker.

distinguishing features of colonial history is a rhetoric imposed on the colony, including its elite. Since the voices of colonials themselves are largely silenced, indeed the current discourse on Colonialism overrides their assertions, declarations, and explanations through a reinterpretation of their narratives, academic analyses of lived experience binds colonial identities into a one dimensional, and always predictable, framework. Informed by the motherlands' popular culture discourse on the tropics, the rhetoric of colonial officials, the colony's official administrative documentation, and academic angst, theoretical application of the paradigmatic edifice "Colonialism" to colonial texts prescribes, not describes, colonial life.

This research begins to dismantle that hegemonic structure by listening to the voices of colonials. The life stories shared with me confront both official and academic discourse, hence compel relative analyses. In particular, database interviews not only challenge particular views of Dutch Indies colonialism, they urgently query the lack of theoretical application to hard data.²⁷ Throughout the manuscript therefore, I undertake an entwined examination of three themes: the making of colonial identities/interactions, narrators' retrospective understanding of that identity mediated through the immigration/repatriation process and their current socio-political milieu, and an examination of analytic structures that frame (English speaking) colonial analyses.

1.1 THE DATABASE

The data in this thesis derives from life story interviewing with North American subjects whose formative past incorporates Indonesian place worlds. Potential interviewees were located through advertisements inserted in a number of North American publications²⁸ catering to readers of Dutch/Indonesian background.

²⁷ If, for example, Bhabha is correct in his assertion that colonial discourse is interstitial, where are the analyses that dwell in the gaps of colonizer/colonized interaction?

²⁸ Here is the ad that I originally ran:

Dutch-Canadian PhD Candidate seeks to establish contact with Dutch and Indonesian peoples in Canada/USA previously affiliated with the Dutch East Indies in order to record their life stories. The research undertaken will be explained to all serious parties so that anyone considering participation will be able to make an

In these ads, I requested that readers who had been born or lived in Indonesia during the crucial period 1938–1965 contact me so that we could explore the possibilities of an interviewee/interviewer relationship. Additionally, I placed announcements in the bulletins of a number of churches. I deeply regret that time and financial constraints inhibited an ability to pursue each contact, although I did correspond with a number of informants in Mexico who were not available on a face-to-face basis.²⁹

1.1.1 Database: Comments on Interviews

Interviewing took place in the households of the interviewees since telephone interviewing was not an option for a variety of excellent reasons.³⁰ Because I teach regular academic semesters, I utilized Easter, Christmas, Reading Week, and summer breaks³¹ to carry out the research. Aware of my journeys from afar, interviewees took the initiative to contact former Dutch East Indies friends and relatives in their immediate vicinities to see if they wanted to participate. Their

informed decision. I am especially interested in families/peoples whose life in the Indies continued after the declaration of Independence by Indonesia up to, and including, the year 1962. I can conduct the Interviews in Dutch if that is preferred, since I was born in Holland. Thank you for any consideration. I very much look forward to meeting you. Please respond to: (details of contact given).

²⁹ For example, I was contacted by a couple who left Indonesia, moved to Mexico where he was highly placed in Mexico's Department of Agriculture, and now live, happily retired, in Puerto Vallarta. They were simply too far away for personal Interviews.

³⁰ I reject it as a viable Interview alternative since paralinguistic cueing and "body language" disappears in telephone Interviews. Elderly Interviewees are not only uncomfortable with the telephone beyond business usage, many of them needed to be interviewed in short time sequences, due to age or failing health. Telephone Interviewing also precludes the building of the type of trust that will facilitate a discussion of very difficult topics, such as the Japanese occupation, or expulsion from Indonesia and telephone Interviewing does not facilitate the type of gift exchange essential to relationship building (*gebak voor de Koffie enz*). As noted however, I did correspond with three families who lived in Mexico; as this correspondence grew more familiar with time, the letters grew increasingly reflective. Some of the Interviewees I met in person, also became correspondents after their Interviews.

³¹ I direct a large research grant on the Blackfoot peoples and this resulted in very busy summers indeed.

thoughtfulness ensured that I was able to complete a variety of interviews on a single extended visit.³²

The interview process itself commenced on a ‘free-flow-open ended’ basis, since that format facilitated the building of trust. Insisting on an a priori script left power over the discourse in my hands and my goal was to relinquish that power to narrators in order to enable a less hierarchical relationship. Interviewees wanted to ‘know,’ in effect, to interview, me. In order to share their lives they needed to ‘pin down’ my moral, religious, and ethnic background. Facilitating their ability to lead the discursive interaction allowed them to probe my character and credentials in order to assess whether they wanted to share their stories with me. An aspect of that evaluation was a determination if I was simply interviewing them to ‘use’ their narratives for further indictments of the colonial period in order (for Dutch informants especially) to obtain a Ph.D.

Relationship building forms an integral aspect of oral history interviewing, and both smoothes and inhibits the gathering of data and subsequent analyses. While the interviewer does visit to socialize, the purpose of interaction is the gathering of information. Recognizing this end goal, interviewees invariably monitor what they are willing and not willing to disseminate, while the interviewer fine-tunes input and response to elicit further data. Particularly in the early phases of “getting to know one another,” narrator preoccupation with self-presentation accompanies their scrutiny of interviewer response. What will be included in telling a life depends in large part on interviewer ability to convey the reactions the narrator seeks. The informants in this database looked for cues that indicated interviewer empathy, historical awareness, and a genuine interest in their lives.

Interviewing therefore, did not usually proceed until the second visit, as a lengthy introduction was required. Once research commenced, I simply asked, “*Tell me about Indonesia. What do you remember most,*” thereby facilitating interviewee ability to choose a

³² I cannot express enough gratitude for the ‘gastvrijheid’ offered by my consultants – a stance they cheerfully extended to my husband and daughter who accompanied me when I had to drive very long distances.

narrative point of entry. The rest of the interview depended entirely on the interactive dynamic operative between self and informant. As a result, interviews were often extensive, intimate and conducted in the shared language of my childhood.³³ When conversation became highly personal, I turned the recorder off. Wrapped in memories, many consultants forgot they were on tape.³⁴

Shared religious precepts,³⁵ as well as cultural values and knowledge, contributed to mutual recognition of social and moral, as well as narrative, forms. Yet in spite of these commonalities, I soon recognized that I could never fully understand the circumstances of their lives, and that indicating I 'shared' in them, or 'commiserated' with them, was to patronize both interviewee and her/his memories.³⁶ Our interaction did evoke emotion, and I did respond personally and intellectually to community landmark events³⁷ articulated in their life stories; internment camp experiences, expulsion from Indonesia, and childhood memories.

³³ Ong, Walter J. (1982, 1988) *Orality and Literacy*. London, New York: Routledge. Page 7.

³⁴ Age was a further critical factor in the Interview process. Those elderly people who represent the 'parents' of colonial families – whether Dutch-Indonesian or Dutch, are in their 90's, and had to be Interviewed in short time periods. Even many of the children born in the Indies are in their 80's and health as well as potential psyche considerations, structured the length of time I spent on each Interview period with them.

³⁵ Albeit in my case precepts that I have long discarded.

³⁶ I am concerned, as I will later discuss, that this appears to be part of other Interview processes, as expressed by Stoler and Strassler's observation regarding their relationship with Ibu Darmo: "*We left after a short visit, disquieted by her willingness to share memories even as she rejected our eagerness to commiserate and share in them.*" Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History: Vol. 42; No. 1 (January)* 4 - 48.

³⁷ Linde, Charlotte. (1993) *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence*. New York, London: Oxford University Press.

Interviewees exhibited a variation in willingness to relate intensely personal experiences. Crapanzano³⁸ notes that narratives do not exist independently of the collection process, and decisions to share or not to share depended upon narrator perception of our interactive relationship. As interviews progressed for example, a number of interviewees that initially stated they would not speak about their war experiences spontaneously did so based on their perception of increased mutuality. Indeed, many elderly interviewees appropriated the interview process to review and assess their lives.³⁹ Bornat⁴⁰ has noted that the elderly will reminisce whether they are interviewed or not and my experience not only underlines that observation, it validates Lummis'⁴¹ discussion of the enhancement of long-term memory in the elderly.

Multiple narrators also moved their experiences from the private context to public domain, thereby situating the personal within the historical to render an experience comprehensible to 'self.'⁴² This significant database statistic counters Grele⁴³ and Frisch's claims that informants do not situate themselves within historical processes and many have no language to do so; ⁴⁴to wit: informants divorce themselves from history by turning history into biography.⁴⁵ Lummis argues that this is a mirror image of the process as it actually occurs,

³⁸ Crapanzano, V. quoted in Shostak, Marjorie (1989) [in] Personal Narratives Group (eds.) (1989) *Interpreting Women's Lives: Feminist Theory and Personal Narratives*. Bloomington: Indiana University press. Pp 228-240.

³⁹ Bornat, Joanna. (1989) Oral History as Social Movement: Reminiscence and Older People. *Oral History*, Vol. 17 no 2. pages 16-22.

⁴⁰ Op. cit., page 20.

⁴¹ Lummis, Trevor. (1983) Structure and Validity in Oral Evidence. *International Journal of Oral History*, 1983, Vol. 2 no. 2 pages 109-120 (Meckler Publishing).

⁴² Op. cit., page 112.

⁴³ Grele, Ron, (1985) Movement Without Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems in Oral History [in] Grele, Ron (1985) *Envelopes of Sound: The Art Of Oral History*. Chicago: Precedent Publishing, pages 127 -154.

⁴⁴ Frisch, Michael (1972) Oral History and Hard Times. [in] *Red Buffalo* (1972) vol. 1 nos. 2/3.

⁴⁵ Grele, Ron, (1985) Movement Without Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems in Oral History [in] Grele, Ron (1985) *Envelopes of Sound: The Art Of Oral History*. Chicago: Precedent Publishing, pages 127 -154.

and his observations characterize the tendencies identified in the database.⁴⁶ Individuals initially experience history as biography and only subsequently objectify and analyze the life as history, moving from the personal to the collective. Attendant upon increasing reflection, narrators interlaced micro-macro, referring to historical antecedents in their personal, as well as their national lives in order to refine, compare, and contrast people/incidents under current discussion. Indeed, some of them tried to do my analysis for me! A lively curiosity and a bank of opinions regarding their own experiences and the lifeways, languages and cultural customs of others had not dimmed with time. Houben's observation that the "*Dutch possess a strong historical awareness*"⁴⁷ and that they have been "*taught to think that certain collective values....are expressed in their own national history*"⁴⁸ may have played a key role in informant ability to transform the personal to the political.

1.1.2 Informant Geographical Backgrounds:

The 52 elderly informants that compose the database currently reside in Canada, the U.S.A, and Mexico. In addition to interviewing Canadian, American, and Mexican citizens, I was able to tape the narratives of a small number of people who were visiting friends and relatives from the Netherlands and Indonesia. While completing preliminary documentary fieldwork in Holland in 1999, I had the opportunity to speak with repatriates who did not immigrate, but chose to remain in the Netherlands. Those interviews do not form part of the research base, but contributed to my understanding on a comparative basis.

The countries of birth, ethnic affiliation etc. of interviewees, breaks down as follows:

⁴⁶ Lummis, Trevor. (1983) Structure and Validity in Oral Evidence. [in] *International Journal of Oral History*, 1983, Vol. 2 no. 2 pages 109-120 (Meckler Publishing).

⁴⁷ Houben, V. J. (1997). A Torn Soul: The Dutch Public Discussion on the Colonial Past in 1995. *Indonesia*. Vol. 63 (April) , 47-66. Page 64.

⁴⁸ Op. cit., page 64.

	Live In	Born In	"Dutch-Indonesian"	Dutch	Indonesian	Left IND 1946	Left IND 1949	Left IND 1956/58	Assumed Indonesian Citizenship
NDLD	3	12	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
CANADA	31		11	14	2	13	10	7	2
INDONESIA	2	40	1		1		1	1	2
USA	13		10	6	2	4	6	2	
MEXICO	3		2			1	1	1	1
TOTALS	52	52	25	21	6	19	19	12	6

Table 1: Informant Demographics

A brief summary of the chart appears below:

- 80.7% of informants were born in Indonesia;
- 52% were Dutch-Indonesian, 40.3% were "Dutch," with the remainder Indonesian.
- Of those born in Indonesia, 19 of them were 'repatriated' to the Netherlands subsequent to the defeat of the Japanese, many after their release from the internment camps.
- Another 19 interviewees left in 1949/1950 when Indonesia obtained her Independence, 9 departed with the expulsion of the Dutch in 1956/1957.
- One Indonesian interviewee left in 1950, one in 1965 and two came to North America after 1970.
- Of the database of 52 individuals, 50 of them do not live in Indonesia while two remain in the archipelago. I interviewed both Indonesian citizens in Canada.

While six Dutch/Dutch-Indonesian informants did obtain Indonesian citizenship, four of them revoked that citizenship since,

*"it became clear that we were not seen as Indonesian citizens. The problem was not with our Indonesian friends and neighbours, but with elements in the government who used hate against groups to cover up the fact that they were doing nothing for the people. It was frightening because you did not know if you might be a victim next."*⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Oral History Interview; Dutch-Indonesian Male. Tape # 3, July 2001.

Of 80.7% of informants born in Indonesia, less than 76 % of them had seen the Netherlands prior to repatriation; those who had encountered the country experienced it on vacation.

The category “Dutch” informants, incorporates people that left the Netherlands during the period 1938 – 1965 for employment in Indonesia or to fight against the republican army. Their story is told in Chapter 3: The Dutch. Of those narrators, all but three had made the decision to remain in Indonesia after retirement. Professionally speaking, they included:

1. government personnel
2. missionary families
3. medical (doctors, Nurses etc)
4. army personnel, including members of the KNIL and the “Vrijwilligers.”
5. Businessmen and family members (includes plantation owners and workers, oil men etc)
6. A well-known Dutch TV personality
7. Home Makers
8. Education (teachers etc)

I have included children born in Indonesia to Dutch parents in my discussion in Chapter Three – the Dutch. Orientation and world-view of Dutch offspring varied considerably with parent discourse, and their self and national identification lay overwhelmingly with Indonesian place-worlds, not with the Netherlands. Some of these children were in their late teens or early twenties when the Japanese invaded, and their pre-war imagined life trajectories did not include tenure in Holland. They were, by birth and by inclination, Indonesian and they rightly belong to the group I refer to as Dutch-Indonesians throughout the thesis. Nevertheless, a discussion of the differences between children and parents is crucial to the analysis I undertake in that chapter and their narratives are therefore situated in that section of the thesis.

Classificatory members of the second ‘Dutch’ sub-category represent Indonesian settler society. As a descendent of one of these families explicitly noted, the ‘manner of life’ that characterized his family was Indonesian-Dutch, rather than Dutch. He further stated that his

family preferred to socialize with peoples who were Dutch-Indonesian or Indonesian, and that the Dutch who had recently arrived in Indonesia were 'very stiff' in their attitudes and morals.⁵⁰ 'Settler' family and Eurasian narratives exhibit marked similarities, and both sets share significant overlaps with Indonesian life story texts. 'Settlers' and "Eurasians" therefore, as Dutch-Indonesians, are discussed in Chapter Four, but it is important to note that settler society and Eurasians are entwined; almost all settler families claim Asian "blood" and hence have a "Eurasian" component, hence to separate the two creates a false distinction.

The use of the label "Eurasian" in the literature denotes descendents of Dutch-Asian unions. In this database, settler-Eurasian narratives are structured though matrilineal kinship calculations. Among these consultants, I have a single example of a union between a Dutch woman and in this case, a Javanese man. Their children, torn apart in 1945/46, chose oppositional roles: in some cases fighting with the Dutch during the war for Independence, while other sons fought for the Republic. All currently reside in Indonesia and I had the honour of interviewing a grand-daughter who remembers her Dutch grandmother with deep affection.

The narrative boundary line is thus marked between Dutch newly arrived in the archipelago and those born in the Indies. Although in the Netherlands, the term "Indische" refers to all past colonials *emotionally* connected to the Indies,⁵¹ and I acknowledge that emotional bond for almost all of my interviewees, it is nevertheless the case that in this database, there are differences both in narrative style and in content based on tenure in the archipelago. Those 'who came' to Indonesia during their lifetimes, including the veterans, utilize a narrative structure that departs significantly from those born in the Indies; even the emotive quality of their texts differ. The term "Dutch-Indonesians" therefore includes any interviewee born

⁵⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 2, February 23, 2003.

⁵¹ Goss, Andrew. (2000) From Tong-Tong to Temp Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History, 1957 - 1961. *Indonesia*. Vol. 70. (October) pages 9-36. Page 22, Footnote 45.

in the Indies who has a Dutch ancestor/ancestress.⁵² Although the use of that single label may mask the differences between long term residents/Eurasians and children born in the Indies from Dutch parents, I highlight those differences when necessary through the following scheme: children born in Indonesia to Dutch parents = 1st generation Dutch-Indonesians;⁵³ long time residents (including Eurasians) of the archipelago = ‘settlers.’ If it is necessary to specifically address the Dutch Asian population, for example when examining scholarly discussions of those communities, I use the term “Eurasian.”

‘Dutch-Indonesians’ share in the employment categories characterizing the backgrounds of Dutch interviewees that came to Indonesia during this critical period, except for (6) above, which is unique in the database. I have listed the backgrounds of informants based on their own characterizations in Figure 2. In truth, there are categorical overlaps. A Dutch-Canadian female interviewee, who describes her role in Indonesia as a ‘child,’ was born on Papua. Subsequent to her internment camp experience, the repatriated remains of her family settled in Holland where she completed the balance of her schooling, trained as a surgical nurse in Scotland, and returned to lend her talents to the archipelago, as well as many ‘Third World’ nations. She is now retired and lives in Canada. In another case, a Dutch-Indonesian woman who describes herself as a homemaker, did in fact, become a businessperson in the archipelago. It would be a mistake to rigidify the categories below, since narrators experienced Indonesia from multiple perspectives. To remain true to their perception however, I have categorized each interviewee according to the ‘*habitus*’⁵⁴ through which they experienced Indonesia.

⁵² The people I interviewed of Dutch-Indonesian descent overwhelmingly referred to themselves as Indische.

⁵³ I have chosen 1st generation, rather than second generation, as the parents, in an immigration scenario, would have been 1st generation. Since not all parents could be likened to immigrants due to the fact they were in Indonesia ‘temporarily’ to work, and returning to the Netherlands, the children receive the 1st gen label.

⁵⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre [1980] *The Logic of Practice*. Translated from the French by Richard Nice. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

In addition to the relevance of birthplace and current residence, relationships to place-worlds in Indonesia characterized the lives of my narrators and were of critical importance. Those who lived on Java for example, held divergent opinions, and had different experiences, than those who lived in Eastern Indonesia or on Papua. Gender of course, also framed worldview. Figure 2 summarizes place of domicile, employment background, and gender:

	Government/ Education	Mission	Medical	Army	Business	Entertainment	Housewives	TOTALS
Java	2 (males) 1 (female)		2 (1 female, 1 male)	9 (males)	6 (5 males and 1 female)	1 (female - same person as Sumatra below)	4	25
Sumatra	2 (males)			5 (males)	4 (males)	1	2	14
Papua		2 (1 female; 1 male)	1 (female)	2 (males)	1 (male)		1	7
Eastern Indonesia		2 (2 female)	1 (female)		1 (male)		2	6
TOTALS	5 (4 males and 1 female)	4 (3 females; 1 males)	4 (3 female, 1 male)	16 (16 males)	12 (11 males 1 female)	1 (1 female)	9 (9 females)	52

Table 2: Indonesian locale + Employment background (35 males; 17 female)⁵⁵

1.2 Methods

Transcription of tapes collected over a four-year interview process that included multiple return visits, follow-up contact by telephone, dialogue with interviewee family members by email and letters, and remembering my informants at Christmas and on birthdays, resulted in hundreds of pages of narrative flow. Imposing order on a bewildering array of information was my first priority. Swiftly recognizing the re-occurrence of narrative themes across the life stories, I made the decision to verify and ground this impression through an initial reliance on quantitative methodology. As Glaser

⁵⁵ I have not noted the exact location of interviewee domiciles in order to mask anonymity.

and Strauss argue,⁵⁶ preliminary theoretical hypotheses should arise from a close examination of accumulated data. Thereafter, expansion or rejection of those hypotheses occurs through the application of further collected materials and qualitative analyses.

Since self-other utterances stem from an explicit or implicit comparative process, speakers utilize analogy/extrapolations from the 'known' to the 'new'.⁵⁷ Consequently, a Being cannot speak or write of/about an Other without conveying other-as-other, even if only in degree and not in kind. This fundamental principle, seemingly embedded in cognitive processes, is a universal that applies to western selves as well as other. A self is the fundamental source of analogy from which all definition springs. Embedded in linguistic categories, the meanings through which a self defines the self and self's social context are recoverable from self's discourse.

I began by analyzing that discourse in order to assess speaker categorizations of self, self's social world, the constitution of Other and the potential links between self-other. Through the development of a computer Database program, I initially identified dominant narrative Domains. "Domain" designates a discursive category that includes multiple subcategories and addresses the question, how does the narrator order, classify, and elaborate his/her social world. As Spradley⁵⁸ noted, the Domain "People" appears to represent a universal cultural (classification) category. However, the subcategories that form part of this Domain are by no means uniform.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A.L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory; Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine Publishing Company.

⁵⁷ Horton among others, has powerfully and in my view finally, illustrated that all systems must utilize analogy/extrapolations from the 'known' in order to conceptualize the new. Horton, Robin. [1993] *Patterns of Thought in Africa and the West: Essays on Magic, Religion, and Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁵⁸ Spradley, James (1979) *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston. page 111.

⁵⁹ When refining Spradley's methodology for previous research, I uncovered that in English, nouns typically hold the key to the identification of categories,⁵⁹ specifically, nouns that act as the subject of a sentence. Noun-as-object designates the secondary relational Category with which the speaker is concerned. Other syntactic bits link and/or describe these primary and relational categories. Of the possible word forms

Once the identification of narrative and academic Domains was saturated, I listed all thematic references made by authors/speakers to those Domains (elaborations).

- Relationships with servants as told by Dutch and Dutch Indonesians.
- Family
- Relationships with ‘Dutch’ or Dutch Indonesians as told by Indonesians
- Relationships between Indonesians
- Relationships between ‘Dutch’ and Dutch Indonesians as stated by Dutch and Dutch Indonesians
- Relationships with mother and father (as told by children)
- School
- Friends
- Work
- “the way of life” – all groups
- Holidays
- Relationships with the land (all groups)
- Political perspectives

Figure 1: Example of Domains/Themes: (Database 1: Domains/Themes) For Domain “Indonesia,”- Sub Domain “Pre-War,” dominant themes

While refining Spradley’s methodology for previous research, I uncovered that in English, nouns typically hold the key to the identification of categories, specifically, nouns that act as the subject of a sentence. Noun-as-object designates the secondary relational Category with which the speaker is concerned. Other syntactic bits link and/or describe these primary and relational categories. Of the possible word forms in English, verbs and adjectives, which stand primarily in an Attributive semantic relationship to Nouns, represent the most significant analytic category. In Appendix E, I offer an example of the methodology, illustrating particularly the significance of the Domain/Attribution relationship. Subsequently, I analyzed the expansions that characterized each Domain-theme. Similar statements relating to a Domain or sub-Domain constituted clusters, or “like utterances.” (Figure 2).

in English, verbs and adjectives, which stand primarily in an Attributive semantic relationship to Nouns, represent the most significant analytic category.

Example: Domain: Indonesia. Sub-Domain Households. (Attribute European) Sub-Domain: Servants. Theme: Relationships⁶⁰ (like utterances/cluster):

- I spent more time with the houseboy than I did with my parents or siblings”⁶¹
- My earliest memories are of my babu, I was closer to her than I was to my mother.⁶²
- Yes, we had a houseboy, cook, laundry girl, gardener.... my father had a company car with a chauffeur. (Daughter and I exclaim! She laughs) I mentioned yesterday that when my parents went out, (aside: well our servants all went home, they did not live in), one of them would stay with us and sleep and my sister says, what a scandal! They were on the floor and we in our soft beds!⁶³
- Our servants were treated like members of the family.⁶⁴
- We didn't USE them. I remember so well....when once my brother commanded the gardener to do something and my father was so angry! So angry! That he dared to do this. And he said to him (to my brother) what do you think you are doing? Who are you to command anyone here?⁶⁵
- We all were supposed to sleep in the afternoon, but we young ones, we would sneak out and be with the servants.⁶⁶
- Customs such as sleeping on mats are cultural; it was nothing to do with being colonial. It was not because we felt that servants should sleep on the floor because they were not worth more. It is a judgment on our part that we deplore this, just because we prize sleeping in beds. If a person is not comfortable on a bed, should she be forced to lie in one so that we feel better? This is something

⁶⁰ I merely offer an example here. This list by no means saturates the statements on this topic in my database.

⁶¹ Dutch-American Male. (business group) Oral History Interview, July, 2004. Tape 2.

⁶² Dutch-Canadian Female. (Plantation family) Oral History Interview May, 2003. Tape 1.

⁶³ Dutch-Indonesian Female. (father; businessman; mother teacher) Oral History Interview, May 2003. I will return to this issue of sleeping on the floor, as well as the oft-cited opinion of "sisters" or "brothers."

⁶⁴ Dutch-Canadian Male. (Business group) Oral History Interview, June, 2005. Tape 3.

⁶⁵ Dutch-Canadian Female. (Government group) Oral History Interview, June, 2003. Tape 1.

⁶⁶ Dutch-American Male. (Plantation group) Oral History Interview, July, 2004. Tape 2.

that my sister and I disagree on all the time. She can barely talk about that time in Indonesia because she believes we were wrong.⁶⁷

- “I had to leave my babu.⁶⁸ Well you know she had always been with us...I was the youngest and it was even harder for my sister who had had her for so long....but because I was only 8, well she still was so close to me.... And when we were taken, we had no time to say goodbye...really..., she cried, and you know, I had never seen her cry.... They took us and we left our house and everything behind. I never knew what happened to her... and I have always wondered if she would even want to see me – well you know because of the things they said about us afterwards. But some of the people I know, well they went back and found their babus and djonas years later...⁶⁹
- “Our household was assisted by Indonesian servants. We always spoke their language... they did not have to learn Dutch. By the age of 5 or 6, we were fluent in the native tongue. We played with the servants kids. Also going to school, church or Boy Scouts we had full blooded Indonesians amongst us all the time, and also visiting at our home...⁷⁰

Figure 2: Example: theme saturation: Like Utterances

In the case of each thematic set identified for a specific Domain, narratives contained utterances that opposed the common opinion or altered the perception of certain customs. (Resistant utterances) I initially set these aside for later analysis. Once saturation of ‘like utterances’ was complete, I added another column: “Historical Period” in order to plot the historical date/time corresponding to that (normative) utterance. The purpose of this utterance-time line association was the establishment of a baseline for hegemonic paradigms/opinions/attitudes during a specific historical period. (What was the dominant opinion at this time?)

Utterances (for 1945-1949) on the topic of Indonesian independence revealed a hegemonic cluster of normative statements. (*Indonesia was not yet ready for Independence. The time was certainly coming,*

⁶⁷ Dutch-Canadian Female. (Missionary family) Oral History Interview, June, 2005. Tape 1.

⁶⁸ None of my Interviewees on the outer islands had babus. This could be the result of my sample size.

⁶⁹ Dutch Informant (Government) Oral History Interview. May, 2004. Tape 1.

⁷⁰ Dutch-Indonesian-American. (now Doctor; son in plantation family) Correspondence 2005 to Beaulieu, 2005. Cited with permission. Emphasis his.

*but there was a lot of clean-up necessary after the war. The country was ruined. It needed rebuilding; the economy put on track, Indonesian politicians of good character with firm views. Then she would have a good start.)*⁷¹ These opinions shared a common theme; Indonesia was not ready for Independence for various reasons. Yet a number of statements offered an (resistant) alternative view. (*Indonesia was ready for Independence before the war already. Yes, we probably needed to have some transition time to make sure that it all went right, but the Dutch, the Indonesians and the Indos in the country were ready to work together to build an independent country that we all loved and were dedicated to*).⁷² These “Resistant Utterances”– the statements that deviated from the statistically significant “like utterances” at a given historical time – constitute Column C: – “normative/resistant.

Next, I investigated whether or not certain opinions aligned with speaker background. Did members of a group such as ‘veterans,’ tend to have the same opinions on a particular topic? If this was the case, did veterans utter a statistically significant opinion (as a group) on a certain topic when contrasted with another group? Utilizing a fourth column (Column D) I reconciled the backgrounds of interviewees with themes and then scrutinized the resulting collection for commonalities. Utilizing the independence and veteran theme as an illustration, I entered all statements relating to Independence made by the veterans I had interviewed, both normative and resistant opinions. Then I statistically analyzed those opinions for each group. Veteran opinion (92.8%) stated they opposed Independence IF Independence meant Indonesia under Soekarno. However, 60.9% of those veterans expressed they were in favour of Independence under other circumstances, one that involved a slower transfer of power and incorporated the rights and unique concerns of islands and peoples other than Java and Sumatra.

Finally, I noted the divergent narrative focus and opinions of the men and women, the correlation with Ethnic background, and the

⁷¹ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. April, 2004. Tape 2.

⁷² Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 2. July 2005.

relevance of their place of domicile in the archipelago. I therefore added Columns E, F & G: Gender, Ethnicity, and Place of Domicile. All of the veterans were men. However, what about the female nurses I interviewed that saw action at the front, or the female entertainer that had gone to Indonesia for the Dutch troops? How did their statements regarding independence compare with the veterans? How did these differing stances correlate with their ethnicity and/or their place of residence?

Reconciling all of the columns, I was able to:

1. Outline the variety of utterances during a particular time period (correlation of normative/resistant opinion and 'history')
2. Identify the dominant utterance in relation to a topic such as Independence (normative/hegemonic opinion on particular topics)
3. Identify deviations from, or resistance to, hegemonic opinions during a particular time-period.
4. Identify social sub-groups that held to certain opinions based on statistically significant findings regarding normative opinions correlating with group membership.
5. Identify statistically significant findings regarding resistant opinions and subsequently correlate with group membership.
6. Reconcile hegemonic and/or resistant utterances with gender, ethnicity, and place of domicile.

"Resistant utterances" formed the focus of the "Transformations" database that correlated the narrative statements deviating from normative opinion. Through the development of interrogative headings, I established degrees of deviation in relation to relevant topics and pinned these to a historical timeline. I give an excerpt of this process using initial data entered for the scholarly works regarding Papua, below:

Scholar/Interviewee	Opinion	Reason	Alternatives	Expressed when?
Penders	No	Not in best interest of Papuan people	Extended Dutch rule leading to Independence Extended governance by U.N. leading to Independence Possible joining with Australian New Guinea	2002
Bone	yes	Belongs to Indonesia (note contempt for Dutch position, glorification of 'revolution')	None, Unequivocal	1958

Table 3: Example: Scholarly Opinion – Papua: Conformity and Deviation Historical. Query: Should West Irian be ceded/have been ceded to Indonesia?

By entering the attitudes of informants and successive scholars to a particular issue, and pinning those attitudes to a time line, transformations of thought were highly visible. This process therefore incorporated diachronicity into analyses. In summary, I present the major databases:

B	Name	Subcategories	Purpose and Tasks
	Themes		List of all themes found in oral and documentary texts
		A: Like Utterances	Clustering of similar external referents
		B: Historical Period	Historical period of each utterance identified
		C: Normative/resistant	Identification of hegemonic concepts and resistant utterances.
		D: Context/Background	Reconciliation of A to C with social backgrounds of speaker.
		E: Gender	Reconciliation of A to D with gender of speaker.
		F: Ethnicity	Reconcile A to E with Ethnicity
		G: Place of Domicile	Reconcile A to F with Place of Domicile in Indonesia.
	Transformation		Utterances that deviated from hegemonic ascriptions during particular periods.
		Attitudes	Attitude deviation separated from Attitude saturation.
	Alternatives		Database listing alternatives to questions

Table 4: Database Table

Quantitative analyses verified my initial impression that certain topics regularly surfaced in the narratives. In Appendices A and B, I table the significant themes that emerged from discourse analysis performed on the life stories. In Appendix C, I offer a chart comparing the divergence in life story and academic topical emphasis. I underline once again that the themes are derived from the data; they were not tabulated and then a priori imposed on the data.

Reintroduction of voice will clarify that while themes re-surface, the attributions that modify the themes diverge. For example, in life stories the attribution “Home” is interchangeable with the Domain Indonesia (hence ‘home’ is a Domain folkterm). Scholarly attributions assigned to Indonesia dismiss “Home’ as an attribute of Indonesia + Dutch or Dutch-Indonesians, and modify the domain Indonesia with the attributes; colonized, exploited (space/place for the mother country), feminized, infantilized (Indonesia as child in family metaphor), etc. in place of Home.

1.3 Those who immigrated to North America.

Bosma, Raben, and Colombijn, among others, have convincingly demonstrated that the structuring of the complex social fabric(s) of colonial Indonesia proceeded not only from administratively imposed ethnic categories, but more importantly, from status indicators such as education, income, and class.⁷³ Pluralism and porous ethnic relations have long marked South East Asia⁷⁴ and the Dutch and Dutch-Indonesians were not exempt from these paradigmatic influences. Lived experience is here at odds with official policy. State colonial administration ordered the composite human population of the archipelago into three distinct categories; Indigenous peoples, Foreign Orientals and Europeans. Each of these categories was multifaceted; urbane Javanese bupati occupied the same classificatory niche as a Sumbanese tribesman. On the ground however, operational principles other than ethnic taxonomies were evident. Interviewees distinguish characteristics of self-self social relations, as well as 'categorical interactions,' on the basis of multiple factors, speaking directly for example, to Colombijn's discussion of the importance of class,⁷⁵ while for Indonesians and Dutch-Indonesians in this database, there is a critical emphasis on kin and patron relationships.

Under the colonial sorting system, Dutch men and women born in Holland, as well as children born in Indonesia to Dutch parents, ranked as "Europeans." So did the offspring of men who married indigenous or Eurasian women, as well as children produced out of wedlock but officially recognized by their fathers. Off-spring not paternally acknowledged received the status Indigenous. Although it is certainly the case that a multiplicity of ethnic backgrounds regularly co-mingled in the South-east Asian world, Hybridity did

⁷³ See: Bosma, U. and Raben, Remco. (2003). *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker. Colombijn, F. a. (2009). *Urban Space and Housing during the decolonization of Indonesia, 1930 - 1960*. Leiden: KITLV Press.

⁷⁴ See Bosma, U. and Raben, Remco. (2003). *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker. Page 19 ff.

⁷⁵ Bosma, U. and Raben, Remco. (2003). *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker.

not represent an alternative category for the pre-colonial, or the colonial, systems.⁷⁶

Given unilineal taxonomies based on descent, one cannot be Hybrid – one's 'blood' is Dutch or Javanese for example. The Dutch colonial classificatory system evidences a rigorous adherence to patrilineality. Ethnicity depended on the father's house. Barring the fact that many scholars anticipate racism within the colonial paradigm – and hence are always able to identify it – there is no good reason to propose that race was the only contributing principle to the colonial system of categorization, although 19th century notions of the hierarchical ordering of humanity certainly played a role. Where Dutch women married Indonesian men, their children – especially if that Indonesian society was patrilineal – belonged to the ethnic 'house' of their fathers,⁷⁷ again suggesting the importance of ordering through the patriline to the colonial regime. Indeed the entire colonial classificatory system appears, at least partially, to rest on the ordering principles that inform descent groups, including the establishment of group membership, responsibilities and rights aligned with that status, and the careful delineation of belonging in the social sphere; in short the imposition of order on (potential) social chaos.

The problems of imposing a unilineal descent ordering on a multi-ethnic society are particularly poignant in the "European" category. In Netherlands-Indië the majority of the European population was composed of Dutch-Indonesians, people born and raised in Indonesia, *whose first impressions were Indonesian, who formed their worldview in their natal milieu.*⁷⁸ Consequently:

[...] quickly after the first generation colonialists, communities arose that although they had close contact with the colonial

⁷⁶ Hybrid is a categorical vessel that awaits the specification of the (blood/cultural) mingling that will fill it with meaning

⁷⁷ I understand from an interviewee in this database that Dutch women in these circumstances could maintain their citizenship, but am not aware if this was blanket policy or specific to this particular family.

⁷⁸ Bosma, U. and Raben, Remco. (2003). *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker. Page 11.

*administration and colonial regulations, they had equally close ties with local circumstances and people; a strong local perspective. (the Indische world) [...] This world was a [...]local community under colonial administration, an administration that left its marks on those communities, yes, but communities that had their own logic and evolved independently. The colonial administration was a sometimes dominant, but not an all pervasive, element.*⁷⁹

Expatriate life stories affirm the uniqueness of the Indonesian social sphere, its multiple ethnic layers and the Indies cultural and land-body formations that lie at the core of Dutch-Indonesian identity. Yet the daily realities of Dutch-Indonesian life confronted their official delineation. Governing bodies, first the Dutch, then the Japanese, and finally the Government of Indonesia, negated the intricate webs that bound Dutch-Indonesians to their land. However, during the colonial period, the slotting of Dutch-Indonesians as “Europeans” did not have the same connotations as the identification would have during and after the Japanese Occupation. Pre World War II Europeans were an integral part of the Indies social fabric; they were ‘inside,’ members of a society that numbered literally thousands of diverse ethnic groups across the archipelago. Subsequent to the Japanese occupation however, “European” connoted “outside.” Compounding the colonial classification of peoples, the Japanese “*made mathematical ancestry decisive*’.⁸⁰ Although they abolished the tripartite system, they stipulated amount of European or indigenous blood as the wellspring of ethnic, hence social/personal, identity: Dutch-indigenous persons with at least 50% European blood went to the camps with Europeans; those with less than 50% stayed outside the camps.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Op. cit., page 11.

⁸⁰ Colombijn, F. (2009 in press). *Urban Space and Housing during the decolonization of Indonesia, 1930 - 1960*. Leiden: KITLV Press. Page 12.

⁸¹ Van Schaik (1996:56) in Colombijn, F. (2009 in press). *Urban Space and Housing during the decolonization of Indonesia, 1930 - 1960*. Leiden: KITLV Press. Page 12. However, given some of my narratives, one wonders how rigidly this was adhered to, or how the Japanese wielded the formula. I interviewed a woman of Dutch-Asian descent, whose Eurasian matrilineage (going back 5 generations to a “full” Asian ancestress)) had married “full-blooded” Dutch men in each generation. Located in

Under the Japanese, the amount of “European blood” coursing through one’s veins had important consequences: blood spared you from incarceration, or it did not; blood rendered you an “inside” member of the Indonesian social fabric, or it set you apart (outside) as a “non-Asian” foreigner. Subsequent to Japanese surrender, blood was no less important in this inside/outside distinction. Cribb notes the implications of an Indische identity during this period in his discussion of the Indonesian revolution and reservoirs of violence in Indonesian society. Seeking an explanation for the statistically significant amount of violence directed at Dutch-indigenous peoples, he analyzes their importance as figureheads of the Indische independence with association⁸² option and correlates the attacks on their persons with an Indonesian ‘inferiority’ complex as the nation embarked on independence.

While racial categories were not determinate of social relations in late colonial Indonesia, they most certainly were the key factor for the subsequent life trajectories of those who lived in the colony and claimed a percentage of European blood. Interviewees, with the exception of veterans, Indonesians and those who were in Indonesia temporarily, may have adamantly adhered to the notion that they were Dutch-Indonesians - citizens of the Indies - but the official classification “European” overrode their self-perception. From European - to camp internee- to victim of the bersiap rage-, the progressive labelling equally determined eligibility for ‘repatriation.’ The categorical affiliation (European), on the one hand the source of potential persecution in Occupation and post WW II Indonesia, simultaneously offered escape from maltreatment for classificatory members through the possibility of a new life in Holland.

The foregoing discussion clarifies the difficulties of ordering interviewees of multiple backgrounds into a cohesive pattern in order to give the manuscript form.⁸³ Although I originally toyed with

Batavia, they were not sent to the camps, and by my calculations, their ‘blood’ was well over 50% “Dutch.”

⁸² Cribb, R. (2007). Misdaad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom.

⁸³ The problem lay in how to accomplish this when the database consists of men and women born in Holland, children of Dutch parents born in Indonesia, interviewees

the idea of utilizing ethnic self-description to arrange database respondents into broad groupings, I decided to blend them with the colonial categories for three critically important reasons. In the first instance, my interviewees refer to the colonial categories. Partially retaining those categories ensured that I did not have to alter their language, and hence obfuscate their narrative intent. Secondly, the label 'European' represents the single most important element in the subsequent repatriation/immigration scenario. Without that classification, the trajectory of interviewee lives would have proceeded along a highly divergent course. Although a number of them remained in Indonesia until the Dutch expulsion under Soekarno in 1957/58, they were able to leave for Holland *because of* that classification. Finally, although imperfect, the categories represented the best compromise in terms of the divergences in database discourse.

Many interviewees in this database claimed an Indonesian identity and called sundry Indonesian locations, home. Many did not experience their removal to the Netherlands as 'repatriation' but as exile, their legal identities at odds with personal realities. The majority of them had never seen, and did not comprehend, the Netherlands, and enforced detachment from the land-body bond that framed the self, often arriving on the heels of torturous camp experiences, led to severe psychological dislocations nursed in solitude.

1.4 Battered Souls: The Indische (Dutch-Indonesians) in the Netherlands

The Indische form a distinct group in the Netherlands⁸⁴ where Indonesia "*sits in the heart*"⁸⁵ of national culture. Memories of the East

with long bloodlines in Indonesia, Dutch men born in Holland who married women who were Dutch-Indigenous, Dutch men who married Dutch women in Indonesia, Indonesians of multiple indigenous backgrounds, a woman whose grandmother was Dutch and grandfather Javanese, and three people who were in Indonesia 'temporarily.'

⁸⁴ European-Asians are also a distinct group in Indonesia.

⁸⁵ <http://academic.sun.ac.za/afrndl/tna/pattynama03.html>. Tydskrif vir Nederlands & Afrikaans 10de Jaargang, Nommer 2. Desember 2003. Page 3.

Indies are not central, nay not even peripheral, to Canadian or American society, nor does either country have a deep historical bond with Indonesia outed in public discourse and national literature. Moreover, the Indische people in the Netherlands have formed an identifiable community with attendant political and social standing.⁸⁶ The fluid symbol of that community is the remembered Indië.

Pattynama's analysis of Indische literature distinguishes between first and second-generation Indische writers. In isolating the narrative building blocks common to both groups; the *silence* imposed on their collective past, the *disappointing trip* back to Indonesia, the *wartime father*, the *family stories*, and the ongoing *problem of the "I,"* she clearly reveals how first generation parents have transmitted narrative schemata assimilated, resisted, or transformed by second-generation children. Alterations of the Indies origin myth in second generation narratives imparts a deep ambivalence, at times through disrespect, regarding their parents, their experiences, and the Indies identity within the Netherlands, while their intertextuality exposes interlaced personae uniquely expressed, yet largely resisted, by those authors.

First generation repatriates are a *fated community* bound by the destiny that brought them to the Netherlands. This community-through-circumstance resists identification through 'race' since in Holland; 'Indische' includes 'full blooded' whites.⁸⁷ In short, the label "Indische" parallels the term "Dutch-Indonesians." Unlike interviewees in North America who are immersed in their current societies, many Indische people in the Netherlands resist full textual/bodily immersion into Dutch society through the repatriate mythology that defines their Indonesia-to-Netherlands transition. Concurrently, the refugee schema that binds personal identity to Indonesian place permeates a processual "I" formulation that situates Dutch society as 'not-me.'

⁸⁶ Op. cit., page 4.

⁸⁷ Op cit., page 3

The difference between North American narrative absorption into the social fabric, and Indische resistance to a parallel trajectory in Holland, stems from the haunting questions of identity that are ever-present in the Netherlands: there is no reprieve from Indië for the Indische community. Adults and children live in a milieu where their past is ever-present in the form of national discussion and ‘*technologies of memory*’⁸⁸ that concretize, while re-constructing, that past. As visible signifiers of colonialism, including Dutch-indigenous sexuality, the Indische are not only re-inscribed with the how and why of history, but ongoing political and social significations. Whether the East Indies are paradise lost, evil regime, or a ‘*verzonken*’ Indonesia,⁸⁹ Indische identity transforms as Indies mythology alters. Dutch-Indonesians in the Netherlands have not learned how to *forget, nor gone on [..] to forge viable practical models to help them endure.*”⁹⁰

While public discourses made and remade reverberate on the bodies of Indische individuals and community, evidence from Indische literature illustrates that group members are fully participant in the search for those *viable models* through the remaking/re-shaping of the Indische self. For second-generation writers, the problem of “I” making is compounded by the problem of *received identity*, the burden of first generation “I/we”⁹¹ mythological transmission. Their eternal return to the re-working of Indische identity building blocks suggests incomplete mourning for an inconvertible and unspeakable loss initially suffered by parents and transmitted to children as identity legacies. Thus, first generation writers articulate memories silenced upon their introduction into a Dutch society focused on its

⁸⁸ Sturken, Marita (1997) *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS epidemic and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁸⁹ <http://academic.sun.ac.za/afnrnd/tna/pattynama03.html>. Tydskrif vir Nederlands & Afrikaans 10de Jaargang, Nommer 2. Desember 2003.

⁹⁰ Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). The Work of Memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 25, 610-633. Page 628. Here Cole draws as well on the work of: Wikan, Unni (1996) The Nun’s Story: Reflections on an Age-Old Postmodern Dilemma. *American Anthropologist*. Vol. 98(2). Pages 279-289. Page 285.

⁹¹ Personal identity derived from group identity and transmission of “us” as a source for emerging “I.”

plight under the Nazis,⁹² while second-generation writers wrestle with the ‘slap and embrace’⁹³ relationship they maintain with parental transmissions. Symptomatic readings of both narrative sets suggest writers continue to bang on the doors of Dutch awareness in order to achieve experiential validation, reclaim voice, and construct an Indische-Dutch identity.

A North American interviewee expressed regarding a sister in Holland:

*(we are speaking of being Indische in the Netherlands as opposed to North America) Interviewee: There is no recognition, none, of what they have experienced. Self: (!)The discussion of Indische people is everywhere! Interviewee: Oh exactly. They talk about them, not to them. And now there is a lot of “not that old song again” – you know? Even some of the kids have it.*⁹⁴

Second-gen writers confront Goss’s claim that, ‘many of the Eurasians who came over as adults were indeed never able to feel “at home” in the Netherlands, but their children did.’⁹⁵ His confident assertion is clearly not reflective of second-generation children that carry memories inspired by ‘living room conversation, servants, and Indische literature.’⁹⁶ Instead, children write a schizophrenic sense of ‘non-belonging while belonging’ in terms of their biological nation,

⁹² Withuis, Jolande. (1994) *Het Verhaal van de een en het Zwiigen van de Ander*. O. Stichting Centrum '45 (red). *Vier Wijzen van Omzien: Hulpverlening voor Oorlogsgetroffenen in perspectief*. Assen: Van Gorcum. Pages 46-74.

⁹³ Toni Morrison has coined the duplicated phrase ‘slap and embrace, slap and embrace’ as characteristic of minority writing.

⁹⁴ Oral History Interviewee. Dutch-Indonesian-American informant. Tape 1. June 2005.

⁹⁵ Goss, Andrew. (2000) From Tong-Tong to Tempo Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History, 1957 – 1961. *Indonesia*. Vol. 70. (October) pages 9-36. Page 18.

⁹⁶ <http://academic.sun.ac.za/afrndl/tna/pattynama03.html>. Tydskrif vir Nederlands & Afrikaans 10de Jaargang, Nommer 2. Desember 2003. Page 4.

exhibiting that the Indies to Netherlands origin myth profoundly affects both self-and national-identification.⁹⁷

Since Goss over-generalizes second-generation adaptation, we can ask if his attribution to first generation Indische-Dutch citizens – that they were never able to feel ‘at home’ in the Netherlands – is an accurate one. Interviews with Dutch-Indonesians suggest the situation is far more complex than a simple belonging-non-belonging polarity. There are first generation immigrants that assimilated to Holland, recall the past but do not construct their identities on or in it, and think of Indië with love, but not with reclamatory longing. In short, they do not participate in Dermoût’s assertion:

I have experienced a rather traumatic past. Therefore I can only write about one subject – that time, those consequences, in that place at that time, and never about a subject now and here.’⁹⁸

Haunted by a personal history that has not received closure, Dermoût probes her obsession with the past. Interviews however, indicate clearly that some Indische people in the Netherlands do not affiliate self with the community or its politics, nor do they wrestle with torn or battered identities.

Self: How do you define yourself today? What is your nationality?

Interviewee: Oh, Dutch of course. I am Dutch. There is no question.

Self: So you are not involved politically with the Indische community?

Interviewee: No. I have other Indische friends of course, but I have just as many friends who have never been to Indonesia. You know, there is no going back.... There is no going back there. I think that to keep memories in front of you like that..you forget to live now. I

⁹⁷ Lyotard, Jean-Francois. (1993) *The Other’s Rights*. Shute, Stephen and Hurley, Susan (eds.) *On Human Rights: The Oxford Amnesty Lectures 1983*. New York: Harper Collins. P. 193. Biological nation = nation through natality. In the case of second gen writers, this is the Netherlands.

⁹⁸ Van der Woude (1974) *Maria Dermoût. De Vrouw en de Schrijfster*. Den Haag: Nijgh en van Ditmar. Page 74. Translation mine.

*am not taking anything away from what happened. But you cannot change it, acceptance is hard, but it is important.*⁹⁹

The building blocks outlined by Pattynama as fundamental elements in Indische narratives exhibit overlap with the database, and deviate in others. Imposed *silence* on the Indische past is marginal to some Dutch narratives and lacking in North American Dutch-Indonesian life stories, except as an important theme in the repatriation-immigration process. The ‘*wartime father*’ arises in all Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian narratives as a sub-theme of Family and Kin, while noted by Indonesian informants from a divergent perspective. *Family* stories are central to Indonesian and Dutch-Indonesian narratives, but not to Dutch couples who departed for Indonesia from the Netherlands, rather than being born in the Indies. Finally, the issue of Indische *identity* is non-existent for these North American informants. While it formed an interesting topic of discussion, it is not a “problem.”

1.5 Retrospective: Dutch-Indonesians and their Historic-political context

The making of Dutch-Indonesian communities in South East Asia spans four centuries of cultural transformation and self-identification as Dutch-Indonesian.¹⁰⁰ Initiated in the late 16th century with the commencement of trade voyages to the Indies, the early 17th century witnessed the permanent establishment of Dutch presence at Batavia by the Dutch East India Company (VOC). VOC policies that governed the lives of varied Europeans and Asians of multiple backgrounds solidified into laws and directives by 1640; legislation reflected the VOC view of the Indies, as well as their ambitions in the archipelago. By 1652, despite the pleadings and arguments presented by Governor-General Coen, the Heeren 17 resolved to

⁹⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Dutch-Indonesian Female. Tape 3. May 2004. (sub-category Eurasian)

¹⁰⁰ For a detailed discussion and sophisticated analysis of these issues: Bosma, U. and Raben, Remco. (2003). *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker.

discontinue the sending of “Company daughters”¹⁰¹ to Batavia, adopted a policy of preferred bachelorhood in European recruits, and fostered relations between Asian born women and VOC employees. Apparently, they silently agreed with Governor-General Brouwer’s assessment that East Indies households were happier with Asian women at the helm, rather than Dutch wives whose pretensions worked against the success of the colony,¹⁰² and most importantly, the interests of the Company. The “peculiar policies”¹⁰³ of the Heeren 17, particularly with respect to immigration and inter-marriage, provoked a unique multi-racial society with its own cultural trends and social ideology.

Inter-ethnic marriages and encounters were subject to strict regulations. The Company proscribed ‘liaisons,’ encouraging the regularity of marriage through a diverse set of incentives. Slave women were VOC purchased and brought to harbour towns to serve as brides for soldiers.¹⁰⁴ In what Taylor describes as an “uncharacteristic generosity,”¹⁰⁵ the company facilitated employee payment plans for slave-brides, concurrently insisting that brides become Christian free women, and granting them and their offspring the national status of their husbands. The Company also took steps to ensure that this Made in Asia society, stayed in Asia. Strict laws regarding repatriation - a man who married an Asian woman could not repatriate for example - led to an increase in concubinage as the relationship of choice for some rank and file VOC personnel, although numbers of men did marry under company guidelines or cut ties with the company after their contracts expired¹⁰⁶ and

¹⁰¹ See Taylor for a discussion. Company daughters were largely women taken from orphanages and sent to the Indies as potential brides.

¹⁰² Taylor, J. G. (1984). *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Page 14.

¹⁰³ Op. cit., page 14.

¹⁰⁴ Op. cit., page 16.

¹⁰⁵ Op. cit., page 16.

¹⁰⁶ A discussion of these relationships is complex. Men also ‘deserted’ and settled in various parts of Asia. Furthermore, when we speak of ‘marriage,’ do we discount all indigenous forms of marriage? Do we only allow ‘marriage’ to exist in its Christian ritual guise?

remained in Asia.¹⁰⁷ Regulations that bound men and women to Asia for lengthy periods were the norm.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, a widow in Asia could not repatriate until five years had passed, and by then she was usually re-married.

Due to these varied policies, the marriage/prestige/clan affiliation pattern that emerged throughout European-Asian society in the East Indies was a remarkable one. Men of European background – VOC employees were by no means uniformly Dutch – settled in Asia to raise families with Asian, later Eurasian, spouses, or concubines. Many recognized their offspring and ensured that their children received a place in Euro-society. Daughters of these unions became preferred brides as succeeding generations of men arrived from Europe, some rising as high as first lady within the colonial sphere. Boys faced a rather uncertain future. Depending on the status of the father, some sons received their education in the Netherlands and became upwardly mobile, while others joined militia companies, served as auxiliary troops for the VOC, or entered the lower echelons of civic life. Despite laws to the contrary, as Taylor observes, boys could and did find employment with the VOC, some obtaining considerable status within the Company's hierarchy.¹⁰⁹

Asian born women held the key to male position and status within the Indies colonial setting. By 1636, Asian and Dutch-Indonesian matrilineal links forged the men who composed the Raad van Indie into a cohesive, kin connected, whole. These men participated in an unfolding worldview and in cultural customs far removed from the social outlook of the Netherlands. European-Asian households, headed by Asian or Eurasian women, socialized their children quite differently than did mothers in Holland. Boys and girls accepted as normal the Asian custom of semi-seclusion for girls and women, the marriage of girls to considerably older men, hierarchical social ranking, pomp and circumstance, and symbolic indicators of position and wealth across all levels of society. Divorce was common to a

¹⁰⁷ Bosma, Ulbe and Raben, Remco. (2003) *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker.

¹⁰⁸ Op cit., page 17 ff.

¹⁰⁹ Op. cit., pages 20-21.

degree unheard of in the Netherlands, and remarriage the norm. In short, this emerging Indies society, a potent blend of cultural and ethnic hybridity, produced new social subjects with a unique worldview. Commenting on this society in the 20th century, Cribb notes that, “*distinctive uses of language, dress, cuisine, entertainment, recreation, and housing*” characterized European-Asian life.¹¹⁰

The significant divergence in worldview soon led these Company men to take the position that administration in the Netherlands knew little of what was required in the Indies, while establishing manoeuvrability to facilitate their access to power and prestige in the archipelago. At the outset of the Indies venture, it was customary for the Heeren 17 in the Netherlands to appoint the Governor-General of the Indies, but the Raad in Batavia usurped that privilege. Rather than defer to VOC headquarters to select men for this important position, the previous Governor-General named his successor or, if he failed to do so, the Raad itself made the decision, in both cases submitting the name for ratification by the Heeren in Amsterdam. Administrators in Batavia clearly preferred men who had spent years in Asia; in some instances, their choice for Governor-General had never been to the Netherlands.

In addition to Company policies on marriage and family life, the VOC maintained a hard line concerning its primary objectives in the Indies. Seeking an absolute monopoly on trade and implementing laws that curtailed private ventures on the part of eager burghers, the Company simultaneously retained control of all land under their jurisdiction. The restraints on private enterprise, and a priori foreclosure on the formulation of a landowner farmer class, ensured that men leaving VOC employ, but remaining in the Indies, struggled to secure an acceptable livelihood.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Cribb, Robert. (2003) “Indische Identity and Decolonization.” *IIAS Newsletter*, # 31, July 2003.

¹¹¹ ‘most land around Batavia was already owned by Senior Company officials and leased to Chinese sugar cultivators, while in Commerce, few legitimate areas were open to private trade and “heathens and Moors” were favoured over free settlers. (17th c) Taylor, J. G. (1984). *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Page 10. and Cribb, R. (2007). *Misdaad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië*. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van*

During two centuries of VOC administration in the Indies, crucial continuities structured the Dutch-Indonesian community. Men largely married women of Asian or Dutch-Indonesian descent; hence, the enculturation of children remained overwhelmingly Asian. Cultural comprehension flowed through the mothers and daughters acting as conduits between European and Indonesian life-ways. Matrilineal ties remained the medium through which European, and Indonesian, came to comprehend each other's likenesses and differences, while integrating Dutch men into Indonesian clans. Civic power remained largely in the hands of matrilineally well-connected, full blood Dutch men, who served the company and ensured their own advancement, although some Dutch-Indonesian men did achieve high positions in the Raad. Finally, policies that ensured lack of land ownership and limited access to private enterprise, regulations governing repatriation, VOC determination to keep Asian families in Asia, and the patrilineal policy of granting women and children the national status of the husband/father, set the stage for the final fate of the settler-Eurasian community in the Indies.

With the demise of the VOC at the turn of the 19th century, and the assumption of responsibility for the Indies by the Netherlands state, the structural limitations that framed settler-Eurasian society remained profound. The Dutch government extended the ban on land ownership, albeit for reasons that diverged from the VOC's. In an effort to protect native welfare, the state prohibited the alienation of land to foreigners. Simultaneously, it confirmed the practice of granting the national status of husband/father to Asian women and children, effectively writing them, under law, as 'foreigners' in their own land. Any aspirations held by European-Asian families to land-ownership thus fell by the wayside. Legally assimilated to the "Dutch," settlers could not transform into a gentry class rooted in land.¹¹²

Indië tot Indonesië (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom. In this article he also notes that "Indo-Europeans just as newcomers out of Europe, were forbidden to own land." (under Dutch state). Page 41.

¹¹² Cribb, R. (2007). Misdaad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom. Page 41.

Secondly, the influx of Dutch colonists, especially Dutch women, altered the cultural contours of the colony, as 19th century Netherlands ideology and customs began to play a greater role. “Blijvers”(settlers) increasingly became a marginalized curiosity, their cultural practices and daily habits often mocked and frowned upon by the newcomers.¹¹³ New communities of families founded on the Dutch model ensured that mutual cultural comprehension became increasingly difficult, leading to misunderstandings and the isolation of Indonesian and some settler-Eurasian families/groups. By the third and fourth decades of the 20th century Taylor observes, long entrenched Dutch-Indonesian families were no longer a dominant political or cultural factor in the Colony.¹¹⁴

In sum, VOC policies and regulations framed a Dutch-Indonesian society that confronted and adapted to specific structural limitations and possibilities, including marriage or concubinage to indigenous women, Asian enculturation patterns, lack of access to land,¹¹⁵ private enterprise opportunities for a relative few, and the patrilineal imposition of ethnic identity on a family structure largely matrilineal in nature. The Dutch state, acquiring VOC holdings in the archipelago, extended, and in some cases intensified, the constraints on Dutch-Indonesian society, reinforcing the “Dutch” identity in the face of overwhelming cultural evidence exhibiting lack of ‘Dutchness’ among community members. Often opting, up to the termination of the colonial enterprise, to re-inscribe Dutch-Indonesians as ‘fallen,’ ‘almost,’ or ‘trying to be’ Dutch men and women, this persistent misrecognition of identity also facilitated their repatriation to the Netherlands. Subsequent Revolutionary and succeeding Indonesian governments adopted the binary

¹¹³ See for example, the mockery in Olivier’s travel literature in the 19th century: Olivier, Johannes. (1827-1830) *Land en Zeetogen in Nederlands Indië (3 delen)* [in] Brommer, Bea (1979) (ed.) *Reizand door Oost-Indië: Prenten and Verhalen Uit de 19^e Eeuw*. Utrecht, Antwerp: Het Spectrum.

¹¹⁴ Taylor, J. G. (1984). *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

¹¹⁵ Cribb, R. (2007). *Misdaad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië*. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom. In this article he also notes that that “*Indo-Europeans just as newcomers out of Europe, were forbidden to own land.*” (under Dutch state). Page 41.

Dutch/Indonesian groupings, ignoring the blurred boundaries Dutch-Indonesians embodied. Liminal racial identities evoke fear; in a revolution rooted in clear self/other dualities, where did Dutch-Indonesian loyalty lie? Viewed with suspicion as a potential 5th Column,¹¹⁶ while simultaneously signifying the intimacy of the colonial encounter, Dutch-Indonesians found themselves officially inscribed by Dutch, Japanese, and Indonesian institutions, in each case without reference to Dutch-Indonesians themselves.

1.5.1 SETTLER SOCIETY IN THE INDIES

North American Dutch-Indonesian interviewees who define themselves as Canadian and American simultaneously identify Indië as home.

*The Indies was our home.*¹¹⁷

*Where you are born, that is your country in your heart. I would never want to live there now, but it was my home.*¹¹⁸

*No place, however much you may be at home there, replaces the land of your birth.*¹¹⁹

*No one, not Indonesia, not Holland, understood that Indonesia was OUR country too. We were Indonesians. We were part of the land.*¹²⁰

In spite of these overt and explicit references to Indonesia as home and biological nation, it remains true that the Dutch-Indonesians did maintain a lasting political movement that clearly enunciated their

¹¹⁶ See Cribb for an extended discussion. Cribb, R. (2007). Misdad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom.

¹¹⁷ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Female. Tape 1. July 2005. (Asian-Dutch)

¹¹⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. May 2005. (Asian Dutch)

¹¹⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Tape 1. August 2004. (Asian Dutch)

¹²⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 1. December 2005. (Asian Dutch)

identity and concurrent political goals before the war. Those Indische parties that survived, although supportive of independence, did not break with the colonial regime, and maintained their cooperative stance, articulating a belief that working alongside the Dutch would lead to independence for the colony.

Analyzing why Indische identity failed to coalesce as a strong political identity advocating independence without association, Cribb offers a number of potential alternatives. As he notes, the Indische were, in effect, a settler society, but the trajectory of their history within the colony differs substantially from settler societies elsewhere.¹²¹ These societies initiate identity formation *as* settler societies through differentiation from the former 'homeland' – this pattern emerges in South Africa, Canada, Australia, and the United States. As Gouda and Taylor have illustrated, it also emerged in the Dutch East Indies. However, this emerging identity customarily enters a second phase – the cultural and political separation from the 'mother' country. *Creole nationalism*¹²² did not emerge in Indonesia as a definitive movement for Independence, although a strong attempt to formulate its principles commenced in the 20th century under both the Indo-Europees Verbond and the Indische Partij under E.F. E. Douwes Dekker.¹²³

Cribb addresses a number of conventional scholarly arguments often wielded to discuss the Indische lack of political organization. One argument runs that Dutch-Indonesians aligned themselves with (some)¹²⁴ Dutch colonials and conservatism because they feared a loss of privilege attendant upon Independence. Some academics argue for this perspective:

¹²¹ Cribb, Robert. (2003) "Indisch Identity and Decolonization." *IIAS Newsletter*, # 31, July 2003. For a review of his position see: Cribb, R. (2007). *Misdaad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië*. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom

¹²² Anderson, Benedict. (1983) *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso/New Left Books.

¹²³ See Appendix F for a more extended discussion.

¹²⁴ Life story narratives assert that there were Dutch colonials who favoured Independence.

*(Indo Europeans, were) culturally and politically tied to a society thousands of miles away along the shores of the North Sea,"*¹²⁵

(or.)... determined to identify themselves with the ruling caste of white Dutch men and to preserve their superior status vis a vis the Indonesians and...

*(to mitigate)... the danger of social submersion in the native masses,¹²⁶ as well as to overcome...their social status (which was) ambiguous: they were often slighted by the Dutch, but felt superior to the inlanders, as the Indonesians were called...'*¹²⁷

An articulated sense of inherent superiority informs the notion that Dutch-Indonesians 'naturally' wanted to be Dutch in reality as well as in law. Denied by multiple Dutch-Indonesian narratives in the database, it is equally noteworthy that in other colonies, the mixed settler society spearheaded nationalist movements, as they had the most to gain from Independence.

Another argument proposes that Dutch colonial society was fundamentally racist in its categorization of Indië peoples and that the colonial system instilled racism in the 'Indonesian.' Cribb observes that this claim:

*... 'runs counter to what we know about the baroque complexity of Netherlands Indies society. Colonial Indonesia was not an archipelagic South Africa with a system of racial classification that permeated every aspect of society. Class, religion, law, region and culture all blurred boundaries in hundreds of ways. Nor does this argument help us to understand the relatively easy acceptance of Indians, Siamese and Arabs.'*¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Van der Veur, Paul W. (1960) Eurasian Dilemma In Indonesia. [in] *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 20, No. 1 (Nov) pages 45-60; page 45.

¹²⁶ Lijphart, Arend. (1966) *The Trauma of Decolonization. The Dutch and West New Guinea*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. Page 71.

¹²⁷ Dahm, B. (1971) *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*. Translated by P.S. Falla. London; New York: Praeger Publishers. Page 11.

¹²⁸ Cribb, Robert. (2003) "Indisch Identity and Decolonization." *IAS Newsletter*, # 31, July 2003.

While Dutch-Indonesian informants identify with the Indies as home and embody “settler” qualifications; long-term residence, attachment to land and people, transformative and unique cultural customs and linguistic forms, absolute commitment to their lives in the land, they did not in fact, produce a political movement to concretize those attributes. Dutch-Indonesian identities remained liminal, constructing neither the Dutch nor the indigenous citizen as Other in the definition of self. Instead, their cross-fertilized ethnicity, rather than rigidifying, fluidly bridged and embodied multiple cultural streams.

Feelings of attachment to land and/or people thus remained *personal*, not political. Narrative structures create tapestries woven from personal orientations: the warp and woof of love for place, bonds between child, adult, and land, relationships established between persons, families created through marriages, and clans that had their roots deep in time and across ethnicities - these relationships remain non-political in articulation. The Dutch-Indonesian narrative schema gives rise to intense personal emotion precisely because the Indies-Dutch-Indonesian link was lived and experienced at a communal, not political level. Although *many of us knew each other in Indonesia*,¹²⁹ and *it is possible to trace many of our familial links to each other*,¹³⁰ Indische communities did not go on to formulate those links within a revolutionary political framework.

Cribb’s own view is that the key element in the non-emergence of a strong Indische political identity in Indonesia lies in the fact that they could not own land. The Dutch policy of non-alienation of native land to foreigners was, in many respects, laudable. Since the States General resisted all attempts to apply western notions of property ownership to native land, the people continued to hold both *de jure* and *de facto* rights. Although the government did allow planters to obtain long-term leases on non-utilized land either from the government itself, or on an annual lease from villages, the ban on the purchase of village land ensured that the village retained full control

¹²⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 1. July 2005.

¹³⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Female. Tape 2. December 2004.

over the disposal of its land in accordance with village custom. The reader will recognize that this “full retention of disposal” was constrained by the rule that no foreigner could *buy* land; this principle effectively placed a limitation on village control. Seen in light of colonial experiences elsewhere however, the ban on the alienation of land to foreigners protected villagers from unscrupulous land speculators and ensured that even when times were hard, villagers could not resort to the sale of land they could never again reclaim.¹³¹

Use of the term ‘foreigners’ in this case, is doubly interesting, as it suggests that the Dutch administration, at least from the legal standpoint on land, self-identified as ‘foreigners.’ Since Dutch-Indonesians were legally assimilated to the Dutch, while pursuing a vastly different ideological and cultural lifestyle, they too, were foreigners; note that once again, settler identity is externally inscribed. Cribb points out the significance of the fact that the land purchase ban effectively precluded the formation of agricultural attachments to land, a relationship formation that sparked identity construction through passionate interaction with the ‘*land on which I labour*’ in places such as North America, Australia, and South Africa. Lack of access to land he proposes, also insulated Dutch-Indonesians from issues of land ownership and control that have continued to haunt Indonesia and to provoke the kind of tension that led to the 1965-1966 massacres.¹³² In other words, as noted, attachments were urban and personal, not rural and political. It is difficult, given the trajectories of that history, to judge the claims made by some interviewees that this identity “*would have*”¹³³ coalesced after the war, under different circumstances. There is no doubt that the war politicized many consultants and that their assertions regarding

¹³¹ For the Blackfoot, this has recently become an important issue since the Piikani (Peigan) Nation alienated its head water rights to the provincial government for a considerable sum. Many observers see this decision as short-term gain (for the Piikani) for (very) long-term pain (Piikani descendants).

¹³² Cribb, Robert. (2003) “Indisch Identity and Decolonization.” *IIAS Newsletter*, # 31, July 2003

¹³³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Tape 2. August 2005.

what would and might have been, filter through the lens of the Occupation.

It is additionally relevant to Dutch-Indonesian identities that outsiders subjected their cultural choices and way of life to consistent denigration. This point factors into any consideration of the disinclination to form a specific group identity. At the turn of the 19th century, we discern Indische strength in an emerging syncretized identity and confidence in a burgeoning awareness of, and mutability between, peoples and cultures. The incoming Dutch community in the Indies attacked and shook this identity to its very core. Ultimately arising from 'outsider subjectivity,' the revulsion articulated by these new arrivals for Indies settler society was nurtured by Indies mythology in the Motherland that itself arose from flawed perceptions of Indies lifestyles, customs, and Orientalism. Members of the Dutch-Indonesian community were divided by their diverse responses to the condemnatory perception of outsiders, while the VOC structure that often left mixed blood elite divorced from poorer families of like composition complicated the possibility of a well-integrated settler structure facing a large number of Dutch citizen-imports determined to stamp out social degradation and implement Civilization. Dutch-Indonesians in fact, confronted a policy of divide and conquer based their ethnic and class status.

Locating a historical period when 'others' illustrate an awareness and recognition of the Indies identity as fundamentally different, unique, and celebratory, is nigh impossible. That statement largely includes contemporary analyses. When not proclaimed as (a bit lesser than) Dutch, the difference that was acknowledged was labelled misguided, a 'falling away' from true civilization and heritage, or evil and polluted where the focus was on Asian blood. Although these two perspectives over-lapped, the schools of thought remained remarkably entrenched right up to the Occupation, and certainly impacted the self-esteem and confidence of Dutch-Indonesian families in the Netherlands – be they former successful members of colonial society or those struggling to make a place for themselves. The necessary catalyst, a rejection of the identity conferred on self by Other, did not gain legitimacy (although it did exist), while the dismissal of the ideology of Asian degradation, necessary in a biracial individual (although this too had emerged), did not concretize as self, and subsequently political, awareness.

Note also the extremely problematic outline of possible identity formation a la Neuberger.¹³⁴ Dutch-Indonesian families structured marriage tentacles into multiple facets of Indonesian polyglot society. In this database alone, I recorded marriages into the Dutch, American, and Chinese communities, along with Indonesians of multiple ethnic backgrounds, and other Dutch-Indonesian men and women. Who, in this scenario, would form the necessary 'Other' for Indische self-identification? Clearly, the Dutch or Europeans, were not other. On the other hand, neither were Indonesians or Chinese. The Dutch-Indonesian community was diffuse - bridging oppositions, blurring group boundaries. The inherent possibility signified by that community is the 'new' Indies man or woman; in fact that process was well underway.

Taylor notes that in the 19th century, the bupati (as seen in the database) began to take Dutch or Indische brides. The pattern of Asian women-Dutch men was therefore expanding to include Asian men - Dutch or Dutch-Indonesian women. With the advantage of hindsight, we recognize yet another creative possibility to augment Dutch-Indonesian personae. But the enforced necessity to choose where one's allegiance and ethnic identity lay, offered only an either/or formulation in law - Dutch, Indigenous or Foreign Oriental; no legal/civic recognition of the status "Dutch-Indonesian" existed, all were slotted somewhere in the tripartite system. Pigeon-holing of a compound identity however, can force homogenization of that identity. This process also remained incomplete in the Indies. Dutch-Indonesians classified as Europeans did not become 'fully' European, multiple social clubs/groups and political movements/parties existed that focused on the Dutch-Indonesian worldview and cultural grounding. Knowing themselves as Dutch-Indonesians, but unable to apply a legal label to that unique position, they remain defined by what they were not "quite" - not Dutch, Chinese, American, or a specific Indonesian ethnicity.

A truly politicized Indische community arises in the Netherlands in the 1950's on the back of the expulsions from Indonesia of the Dutch

¹³⁴ Neuberger, B. (1986) *National Self-determination in Post Colonial Africa*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publications. page 20.

and Dutch-Indonesians-who-stayed. Expat Indonesians, finding themselves in similar situations in Holland, all of them facing loss of space-place, lifeways, ideology, identity, and even nationality as some of them assumed Indonesian citizenship, relegated their many differences to the margins and identified through their common tragedies and their ultimate expulsion. That this took place in the fifties is no accident. Many of the Dutch and Dutch-Indonesians who remained in the Indies until Soekarno expelled them, had worked through the repercussions of the Occupation, bersiap periods and Revolution, as well as the multiple offenses committed against them by youth and succeeding Indonesian governments, in order to remain in the land they describe as their own. They are/were unafraid to identify the racial and politically expedient policies adopted by Indonesian leaders, nor to acknowledge or speak out against the repression of Indonesian peoples. Finally, unlike those who repatriated to Holland after the war or in 1949, they were not exhausted, disoriented, fragile from torture or camp experiences, and without energy to fight for their identity. Many of them were simply angry. Finding themselves in the Netherlands, almost all against their will, they felt themselves to be, and politicized as, *Exiles*. They did however, have attitudes in common with those who came before them, including contempt for the Dutch government's interaction with Indonesia, still ongoing as the "Papua crisis," and were almost rabidly opposed to the cession of New Guinea to Jakarta.

1.6 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS.

It is beyond the scope of the current work to engage each theme articulated by the Dutch, Dutch-Indonesians, and Indonesians in this database. Instead, I concentrate on motifs/narratives that dominate the life histories of each group within the Dutch-Colonial, Japanese Occupation, and revolutionary post-war contexts and contrast narrator explication with academic analyses. (Table 5)

Theme	Academic	Dutch	Dutch-Indonesian	Indonesian
Betrayal	No; although partial insinuation that Dutch betrayed Indonesians by not facilitating freedom sooner	Central to Dutch discourse, acts as motivating narrative principle.	Partial motif; some feelings of betrayal that in the end, Holland did not stand firm, and assumed that Dutch-Indonesians were Dutch	A dominant theme Indonesians betrayed by Revolutionaries and International Community
Repatriate Immigrate	Repatriation is noted, not analyzed in terms of self/identity, thinly discussed.	Central to narrative lives; motivation for immigration and repatriation lie in the motif Betrayal.	Repatriation: The landmark event that altered life trajectories	Immigration discussed by all North American interviewees.
Sexuality	Dominant motif of Colonial analysis; rape/sex with indigenous women stands metaphor for rape of colony	Extracted from the narrators, not spontaneously discussed.	Where noted, spoken of in a relaxed, open and often humorous fashion. Depending on marriage partner, some children of Dutch parents (1 st gen Indies) more reticent	Overlaps with style of Dutch-Indonesians with same exception (Children of Dutch parents)
Family	Minimal; except as Dutch (colonizer)parent and Indonesian (colonized) child metaphor	Family life , not lineage, is stressed.	Family lineage frames the life story.	Family partially frames the narratives
Servants	Central metaphor for colonial oppression; links also to sexuality.	Central theme in family life	Central theme in relationships	From Servant perspective/ retrospective
Memory (widely divergent attributions)	Multiple analyses of memory	A concern for interviewees – how memory soothes, betrays, or fails.	Dominant concerns, often addressed	Dominant topic specifically addressed in terms of state and personal memory.
Cultural Complexity	Noted; but often marginalized/ reduced to Dutch vs. Indonesians	Noted; gender divergence, more males discuss.	Woven through narrative fabric	Woven throughout narrative fabric.
Indonesian Place Worlds/ Identity	Java as 'center' (political etc) noted, identity formation neglected	May frame narratives, especially on outer islands	Identity formative	Identity formative

Table 5: Thematics

The structures of Dutch, children of Dutch parents and Dutch-Indonesian narratives diverge, while Indonesian and Dutch-Indonesian life stories exhibit marked similarities. Dutch-Indonesians and Indonesians began their narratives by *tracing their ancestry* – this phenomenon is gender consistent – and framed their life stories through their lineages.

Dutch narratives focus on *betrayal* – of the mission in Indonesia and Papua, of the Indonesian people, of the veterans, and of themselves. The main themes in Dutch betrayal discourse included life before the war, while stressing the occupation by the Japanese, the release from the camps, the *bersiap* period, repatriation, and immigration. Dutch-Indonesians addressed all of these themes but additionally emphasized the structure of their Indonesian identity. Of life stories drawn from the Dutch, place of abode affected the manner in which they viewed, assessed and framed their lives in Indonesia, as well as their politics and their experiences during the war; outer island lives were differently configured than those on Java.

In spite of these notable divergences in both style and content, this thesis would have suffered deeply from a rigid adherence to the categories outlined. Throughout the current text, I compare and contrast the attitudes of Dutch-Indonesians, Indonesians and Dutch narrators through a juxtaposition of their positions on particular issues. The reader should therefore not anticipate that only Dutch voices (along with born in Indonesia children) will be heard in Chapter Three, that Dutch-Indonesians will speak only in Chapter Four, or that Indonesians will remain silent until their speech is facilitated in Chapter Five. Since all of their voices formed part of the choir that constituted the Indonesian pluralistic social fabric, they will equally speak to and of each other throughout this research.

Chapter Two incorporates the theoretical paradigms that frame the research through a critique of current analyses and methodologies. In particular, I address the positioning of the intellectual self in relation to Other, western history, and the historical actors engaged in the colonial endeavour. Within that context, I also engage the local/global distinction, and how that binary serves to underpin a particular self-presentation on the part of western scholars.

Research rooted in life stories cannot avoid the problem of memory, since the very act of telling the life raises the question of narrative

quality and veracity. The utilization of oral memories – which do not translate well into script – requires that the interviewer/analyst take a position regarding the data and its possible uses in the reconstruction of historical eras and human relationships. Questions of content – are the incidents recounted by this narrator verifiable, real, true; are they supported by independent textual evidence or other oral accounts independently collected – is a theoretical concern that has occupied many scholars. Others repudiate the notion of truthfulness, focusing instead on form – how memories are constructed. Quite quickly after initiating interviews, I noted a significant link between social environment and the construction/evocation of memory. Throughout the current work therefore, I follow Elizabeth Cole's lead, focusing on *how societies and bodies remember, but equally important, how they forget and go on to forge viable practical models to help them endure.*"¹³⁵

Interviewees narratively frame their pre-war, Occupation and post-war tenures in Indonesia through consistent schemata. In particular, their departure from Indonesia to the Netherlands often conforms to the Refugee structure first illuminated by Westerman.¹³⁶ Referred to in Colonial analyses as the 'repatriation' of the Dutch to the Netherlands, speaker reinscription of that event as 'evacuation' and their perception of self in the Netherlands as 'refugee' significantly altered historical and representational analyses of the Netherlands Indies relationship.

In Chapter Three, I initiate a discussion of the oral history database through the Dutch narrative collection. I note immediately that placing the "Dutch" first does not convey a hierarchical ranking, but a strategy. Since they are the 'colonizers' and Indonesian narratives require contextualization, I have placed Dutch and Indonesian

¹³⁵ Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). The Work of Memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 25, 610-633. Page 628. Here Cole draws as well on the work of: Wikan, Unni (1996) The Nun's Story: Reflections on an Age-Old Postmodern Dilemma. *American Anthropologist*. Vol. 98(2). Pages 279-289. Page 285.

¹³⁶ Westerman, (1994) Central American Refugee Testimonies and Performed Life Histories in the Sanctuary Movement. [in] Perks R. and Thomson, A. (eds.) (1998) *The Oral History Reader*. London: Routledge. Pages 224-234.

discourse on either side of Dutch-Indonesians, the liminal group that bridges the two other narrative sets.

I take the position that Dutch-Indonesian interviewees are a distinct set of people in Chapter Four. Divergently framed and articulated, they exhibit a corresponding difference in their North American lifestyles. Living in the New World, Dutch-Indonesians felt that they had permission to *be*, to express their Dutch-Indonesian ethnicity, rather than adjusting to, and stressing, the “Dutch” side of their heritage. Consequently, some of them sustain an ‘Indonesian’ identity – in their homes, their food preferences, their linguistic affiliations, and their emotional ties. Moreover, they appear to feel little necessity to demarcate exactly ‘what’ makes them Dutch-Indonesian; surrounded by a plethora of ethnicities in Canada and the USA, not facing the *technologies of memory*¹³⁷ daily encountered by the Indische in the Netherlands, no urge to create us/them boundaries arises in the narratives. In this, they are assisted I believe, by the fact that neither the USA nor Canada has a fixed cultural heritage.

The ‘other’ that creates the tension for ‘Dutch-Indonesian’ self-identification is difficult to locate. For many Dutch interviewees, “Holland” is simultaneously dearly loved and the pre-scripted Other that provoked immigration survival. Paralleling many immigrants who do not include an Indonesian sojourn and repatriation chapter in their lives, the Holland ‘we left/rejected’ is frozen in time and conceptually fixed as a non-fluid entity against which the immigrant constructs the self. The tension inherent in Dutch self-presentation that includes Holland rejected is not evident in Dutch-Indonesian prose; the Other, if it must be located, is an Indonesia under Soekarno.

Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian database discourses therefore underline that it is highly problematic to conflate Dutch-Indonesian and Dutch life story recollections. Judging from surnames attributed in footnotes to life story quotes, Dutch-Indonesian discourse is

¹³⁷ Sturken, Marita (1997) *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS epidemic and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

“Dutch” discourse in colonial life story analysis. I do not believe that this can continue; it is an opportunistic effort to have it both ways. The academic proclivity to lump anyone previously connected to the Indies as “Dutch colonials” without reference to their very real differences, and widely divergent constructions of self/other, leads to a systematic cooptation that serves academic requirements. Take servant discourse as an example. In the database, servant narratives substantially diverge between the groups, both in the ‘what and how’ of remembering. Dutch-Indonesian memories of servants are highly emotional, intercourse with servants more familiar, and family life more informal. The ‘sentimentality’ and ‘nostalgia’ attributed in the scholarly literature to ‘Dutch’ accounts,¹³⁸ backed in the majority of cases it seems, by quotes from informants with Dutch-Indonesian (Eurasian and settler) surnames, or taken from children born in the Indies (also Dutch-Indonesians), is lacking in the accounts I gathered from the Dutch ‘who came’ to Indonesia, but significant, and moving, in Dutch-Indonesian (settler and Eurasian) accounts. In “between” the two discourses, children born in the Indies detail cherished memories of servants and the land that formed the identity frameworks of their childhoods.

In Chapter Five, I introduce the ‘thinnest’ set of life story accounts, the collection from Indonesians, barely recalled victims of violence, propaganda, terror, and indoctrination that did not end with the fall of the Japanese, but continued in one form or another, for five long decades. The ‘silence’ regarding the people of Indonesia and the concomitant neglect of their ongoing condition is admittedly “semantically heavy” in the Netherlands, with its connotations of 1945-1959 rhetoric. It is however, an analysis I take on with optimism – little is at stake in a Canada far removed from personal relationships with the Indies, or guilt and angst regarding the Indonesian scene.

The informants in this section, bar two who remain in Indonesia, left for politically related reasons. Hence the narratives are tinged, as all

¹³⁸ See for example, Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History: Vol. 42; No. 1* (January) 4 - 48. Conclusion.

narratives in this database of course are, by a particular 'way of seeing' their homeland. The Indonesians I interviewed in North America immigrated to the 'land of opportunity' and came from varying economic and educational backgrounds. I was initially amazed that two of them could speak Dutch; many of the others recalled Dutch words. In their interviews, they often focused on relating anecdotes about Dutch/Indonesian relationships. The fact that they would not tell (they insisted they could not tell) negative stories left me with the quandary that this could be because I am of Dutch descent and that Indonesian politeness prevented their causing possible discomfort. Certainly, Dutch informants were far more critical of Netherlands-Indonesia relations, colonial policies, and the Dutch government.

Moreover, two Indonesian informants are 'second-generation' informants in the sense that they were pre-teens when the war began and largely rely on parental stories regarding Dutch-Indonesian encounters. Although initially concerned about this fact, I came to relish the possibilities once I began interviewing. Since Stoler and Strassler's oral history investigation in New Order Java recounts the sparse nature of servant memories regarding their former servant roles, and the marked disinterest of children in those memories, it is significant that some parents of the people I interviewed transmitted information on their roles (where applicable) to their children. Indeed, this fact facilitates the discussion of imposed narrative silence at a particular historical time in a society and enriches observations of "*how societies and bodies remember, but equally important, how they forget and go on to forge viable practical models to help them endure.*"¹³⁹

In Chapter Six, I examine voice in the context of questions raised in Chapter Two. What do the narratives have to say to current analysts? What do they say about Colonialism(s)? I identify contradictions in current assessments of inter-ethnic relations and discuss the dialogic nature of self/interviewee as a methodological model for scholarly

¹³⁹ Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). The Work of Memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 25, 610-633. Page 628. Here Cole draws as well on the work of: Wikan, Unni (1996) The Nun's Story: Reflections on an Age-Old Postmodern Dilemma. *American Anthropologist*. Vol. 98(2). Pages 279-289. Page 285.

interaction as well as future research. Next, I briefly consider the Other-Same identity construction that we disseminate to illustrate both our non-participation in the Orientalist paradigm, and our empathy and identification with Other. Lastly, I note that an adherence to mythic purity leads to divergent expectations and assessments of 'western' behaviour/attitudes and those held by other peoples in other countries.

1.7 Angle of Vision

No matter how deep the immersion in research, an academic rarely finds him/herself in a position where the data s/he is gathering challenges self to evaluate and re-appraise one's being-in-the-world. This was one of those rare instances. The people I met and the data I gathered throughout this study, provoked fundamental transformations in my academic life. Embarking on this project, I held straightforward, conventional opinions regarding colonialism; it was simply wrong. Colonialism as a system meant the prosperity of one country and people at the expense of another land and people. It included a scenario wherein white people administered people of color, hence a racist element that included notions of superiority/inferiority permeated the institution. Colonialists, I thought, should never have been where they were, but since they were there, they should leave as quickly and quietly as possible. Long Live the Revolution! I thought and I certainly meant it.

It required an academic predicament of existential proportions to arrive at a stance of scepticism regarding the motivations and successes of bloody revolutions against Colonialism. That crisis occurred during the course of my fieldwork. Uncle-related stories triggered my interest in Indonesia as a small child, but I was oblivious to the role of KNIL and vrijwilliger soldiers in Indonesia, let alone the circumstances surrounding the repatriation and expulsion of Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian peoples from their homeland. What I did know was that Indonesia was a Dutch colony for a lengthy period, that initially the Dutch encountered the archipelago through trade quest, and that it was a beautiful country, the latter fact related by Ooms who loved its diverse landscapes.

Of course, I consumed multiple ethnographies of various Indonesian peoples during the course of my Anthropology undergraduate and graduate work. Yet these studies rarely offered insight into Dutch-

other relations. Bar the notation in the opening chapter commenting on their presence in the archipelago, scholarly works often marginalized references to Dutch administration unless it involved peoples of Sumatra, Java, and island coastal regions, or a colonial policy directly affected the ethnographic subjects. Indeed, a lack of overt or onerous colonial interference in island tribal lives rendered this gap possible.

My immigration as a child contributed to my ignorance regarding the details of a Netherlands Indies relationship familiar to all Dutch schoolchildren. I received my education in Canada, where British history holds center stage. Historical instruction pays little attention to other colonial powers with the exception of the early French role in Canada's foundation, although in the Province of Québec, French colonialism is an important subject. Thus when I embarked on my background reading for this research, I was a virtual blank slate, although I held, as noted, strong opinions on Colonialism per se. One encounter did tip me that I was wading into unexpected waters. During the course of my undergraduate degree, I worked as research assistant for a gentle Japanese man of infinite talent. Well into my PhD. coursework, I had coffee with him and outlined the details of the research. He was quiet for a moment and then responded; *'you will never see me in the same way again.'* Surprised, I asked him why and he queried, *'Don't you know what the Japanese did in Indonesia? Don't you know what happened with the Dutch?'* Naturally, I was aware of the fact of Japanese camps during World War II. I was not however, aware of the details.¹⁴⁰ Those particulars soon invaded my consciousness.

Absorbing scholarly research at a tremendous rate, I simultaneously embarked on a search for interviewees, and quickly slated meetings with potential informants. The resultant parallel unfolding of the final colonial time line in the Indies amplified the dissonance between life stories told, and academic analyses written, about that history. Critical to the journey I would undertake, these divergent understandings became intertextual; pursuing academic texts on a

¹⁴⁰ I note that increased knowledge of the Japanese in Indonesia did not alter my view of him in any way.

topic such as Papua, I was conscious of informant voices speaking back to the text as I read. As this dialogue emerged, I became third contributor to an ongoing conversation. Where texts and voices could not find common ground, I felt compelled to mediate, negotiate, and straddle disparate perspectives and understandings.

Texts: The refusal to cede Papua to Indonesia signified Dutch reluctance to come to terms with the passing of Colonialism ...

*Interviewee: The Dutch made every effort to accelerate the process to prepare Papuans for Independence. They were genuinely concerned with Papua's future.*¹⁴¹

Arguing now to the texts from the side of voice, then to voice from the perspective of text, I finally acknowledged that there were claims I could not defend, questions I could not answer. Provoked increasingly by politically correct stances and convoluted lines of reasoning, I reached a critical point in the research where voice and text – and the worldview projected by each – appeared irreconcilable.

Beyond the existential input demanded by this interpenetration of voice and text, the other crucial element contributing to perspective on gathered data and the interface with interviewees, is the personal history that forms my subjectivity. The critical strand in that self-formation is the relationship between person and place. During the summer, my mother and her sister gathered up children and belongings and established themselves in a cottage by the North Sea. Fathers left Amsterdam on weekends to join us, while other relatives were in and out all summer long. Those idyllic days spent in dunes and water, body acquiring the limits of space, soul indelibly marked by place, established the “inner landscape of my heart.”¹⁴² As the fundamental, yet largely unconscious structure of my ‘self,’ I traveled through life with that inner place, rendering my identity liminal as an immigrant child living in an environment that held few

¹⁴¹ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. July, 2006

¹⁴² Stewart, Pamela J. and Strathern, Andrew. (2003) *Landscape, Memory and History*. London. Pluto Press. Page 8.

“correspondences of association.”¹⁴³ Although I draped many memories “on the pegs”¹⁴⁴ of the Edmontonian places where I came of age, I never felt quite at ease.

The awareness that an indefinable ‘something’ was missing during the years after our immigration, obtruded in a rather spectacular manner when I returned to the Netherlands in the late sixties to begin a backpack trip of Europe with my closest friend, a “real Canadian girl” as my Opa referred to her. An uncle, who served in Indonesia, took it upon himself to reinstruct me in my homeland’s history and symbols. We began our journey on the coast where I spent my early summers. As I emerged from the dunes, my first glimpse of the sea literally brought me to my knees.¹⁴⁵ Waves of emotion, accompanied by a profound physical ache, revealed to me in a moment that ‘here’ was home – this is where I belonged.¹⁴⁶

Subsequent to a two year backpacking trip in Europe and Africa, I returned to my native land and accepted a position with a Rotterdam shipping company. Speaking to my parents in Canada to advise them of my decision, my mother commented upon the ‘naturalness’ of this employment trajectory, since I was ‘pre-programmed’ for the sea. I was at sea regarding this comment and requested clarification. Puzzled, she reminded me of an old sailor whose acquaintance I had cultivated during those early summers and with whom I had spent hours sitting in the dunes as he narrated the stories of his journeys. Click! Another key to the puzzle of my liminal identity and my fascination with the life stories of others.

The old sailor was not the only embodiment of Dutch history to affect my life. I am always consciously aware that kin embody Dutch

¹⁴³ Op. cit., page 4.

¹⁴⁴ Op. cit., page 3.

¹⁴⁵ I am never able to speak adequately of this relationship.

¹⁴⁶ Our next stop was Europoort, accompanied by an Uncle delivered dissertation on the Dutch relationship with the sea and the transformative technology incorporated into dikes, dams and sluices to prevent, perhaps finally, the terrible floods of the early fifties that typified the historical sea people relationship in the Netherlands. Our trip ended at Veere, here we sat seaside gazing in the direction of an invisible England, and reminiscing about the relationships between the two countries.

annals – relatives often took the opportunity to point out the events and themes they had participated in or signified. As well, the role of religion in national and family life permeated my childhood. If there is one thing the Reformed church does exceedingly well, it is the instillation of European history and the role of the Dutch and various branches of the Dutch church, in that history.¹⁴⁷ Even today, those catechism lessons act as lens that filter my view of the Dutch in Europe.

I have noted my relationship to the Dutch landscape and formative familial themes to illuminate my ‘angle of vision.’¹⁴⁸ On the one hand, I reflected gravely on whether my feelings for the Dutch and their history could jeopardize my analyses, given the possible extension of Dutch to self and the potential personalization of critiques levelled against the Netherlands. Indeed, throughout the collection of database narratives, I was always already aware of an affinity, a level of understanding that had not formed an integral aspect of former oral history research. While I did connect with facets of experience related by those past informants, the familiarity did not resonant to the degree I contended with on the current project. On the other hand, I agree with Rosaldo’s exhortation that we should celebrate emotion and subjectivity as an integral part of our interface with others.¹⁴⁹ Although my “unofficial Anthropologist”¹⁵⁰ dominated analytic choices, that same intimate acquaintance with Dutch peoples and landscape provoked insights of which I would have been

¹⁴⁷ Our branch of the Reformed church was not the ‘black stocking’ branch, but liberal, after all we are Amsterdammers who believe in the good life. I enjoyed every minute of Catechism classes and the philosophical arguments (we received report cards from our Ministers!) that took place in class. This fostering of critical thinking does not promote blind acceptance of the tenets of the Church.

¹⁴⁸ Rosaldo, Renato. (1993) *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*. Beacon Press.

¹⁴⁹ Op. cit., page 3.

¹⁵⁰ Shostak, Marjorie (1989) [in] *Personal Narratives Group* (eds.) (1989) *Interpreting Women’s Lives: Feminist Theory and Personal Narratives*. Bloomington: Indiana University press. Pp 228-240. While Shostak notes the triangulation of herself as Official Anthropologist and Unofficial Anthropologist in interaction with Nisa’s voice, I note my own Official and Unofficial Voices in interaction with my nation and my oral history informants.

blissfully unaware without my background. Throughout this research then, I engaged in a careful balancing act, a constant re-assessment of my responses, thoughts, ideas, and emotions, subjecting them to severe self-critique.

1.8 ETHICS

I obtained Ethics Approval for this research under the Human Subjects Protocol Review Committee of the University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, thereby meeting all standards and protocols required by the Canadian Tri-Council Policy on Human Subject Research in Canada.

Through the interviewee release forms, participants had the choice of releasing their names and 'words' for use in the dissertation. Over 80% of them choose to do so; the individuals most reluctant to expose themselves to potential identification were the veterans. Accordingly, early drafts of this thesis referred to peoples, locations, and opinions, by name, where facilitated through Intellectual Property consent. The preliminary outline for this thesis sent to the Netherlands fully revealed the identity of all interviewees who had given me permission to do so.

Once interviewees were aware that this material would be available in Holland, the number of people requiring anonymity increased; *"it's such a small country. Someone is sure to read it who knows someone else and before you know it, I have trouble on the doorstep. So and so will tell so and so, and they will have said it better....no better take it out."*¹⁵¹ In addition, consultation with learned individuals in the Netherlands counselled complete anonymity. I have therefore taken out names, place names, references that might facilitate identification such as people in connection with certain camps, etc, particularly since interviewees spoke so freely in the certain knowledge that they were 'safe,' and any threat to that safety is, in my eyes, completely unacceptable.

¹⁵¹ Oral History Interview (follow up phone call re ethics) Dutch-Canadian Female. May 2007.

2. Living, Writing and Speaking Colonialism

Colonialism is a sub-plot of the Grand Narrative of Europe, laboriously regulated through “nature, politics, or discourse.”¹ Disciplining of the potentially unruly colonial paradigm is accomplished through the application of current motivations, definitions, and ideologies to historical peoples. As a result, the hegemonic edifice that constitutes “Colonialism” in academic writing, serves to frame a new and improved West. Systematic reduction² of social circumstances to nature³ generates an inevitable Colonialism-Nationalism-Revolution cycle constructed on the maxim that man *naturally* desires to rule himself; it is unnatural for any ethnic group to view with equanimity their governance by ethnic others. The structure of Colonialism on-the-ground therefore carries the seeds of its own destruction; nationalism and revolution will inevitably follow an inherent desire for self-rule. Yet history is littered with examples of peoples conquered by Others who subsequently became ‘same.’⁴ This fact raises questions regarding both inherent need and inevitability. Is a universal, inherent desire to rule the self a species trait, or are both desire for self-rule and its ‘natural’ attribute socially constructed?⁵ That we apply notions of innateness selectively is clear; evidently we recognize that an indefinite extension of ‘natural rights’ leads to chaotic international conditions. Hence, only some indigenous peoples may express the need to rule self, while others, international law maintains, must forego that happy situation and suppress their “innate” needs.

¹ Latour, Bruno. (1993) *We Have Never Been Modern*. translated by Catherine Porter. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Page 3.

² A disciplinary technique that serves to marginalize contrary text.

³ Op. cit., page 5.

⁴ One has only to look for example, at Ancient Mesopotamia and China to note that the “Hordes” from the North or from the ‘mountains’ acquired the very traits (often magnified) they had originally despised in those they deposed.

⁵ Handler, Richard. (1988) *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

While popular and academic rhetoric overlap remarkably in the articulation of the evolutionary progression whereby each social situation properly emerges from its linked paradigm, the discursive order implodes upon deconstruction. Rather than materializing out of an inherent need, the development emerges from 'western' epistemology. The prescribed sequence runs roughly as follows. Minority-colonized individuals acquire a western education that incorporates social science and philosophical narratives of rights and nationalisms, instilling self-awareness of oppression among this previously unaware group. 'Thinking European,' those newly familiar with their oppression status recognize that they too, naturally struggle to be free. Wielding a key ingredient embedded in the western social science rhetoric of cultural identity, "our" cultural symbols,⁶ revolutionaries-in-the-making self-consciously define the otherness of colonizer, and oft-times of attendant marginal groups. Awakening to the realization that foreign colonizers are unfit to govern, or to live as co-citizens, of a particular area, results in the struggle for self - Nationalism. That exertion creates a legitimate basis for Revolution, the right of a group of individuals to take up arms to ensure that they enforce their natural rights, a cluster of rights that includes self-determination. So self evident a course does this progression constitute, that some scholars interpret the militarization of Indonesia under the Japanese as laudable⁷ since it prepared the young for their inevitable task against the Dutch.

2.1 Components of Colonialism

Colonialism can be minimally rendered as, "*a system or policy by which a country maintains foreign colonies, especially in order to exploit them economically.*" Note the dominant constitutive elements of the paradigm: (1) a *system* or a *policy* by which (2) one country

⁶ Op. Cit. Chapter One for an excellent discussion of social science complicity in the constitution of Nationalist paradigms.

⁷ Dahm, B. (1971) *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*. Translated by P.S. Falla. London; New York: Praeger Publishers. Page 100; Anderson, Benedict. (2005) *Java In a Time of Revolution*. New York: Cornell University Press. Cribb, R.B. and Brown, C. (1995) *Modern Indonesia: A History Since 1945*. Longman Publishing Group.

maintains (3) *foreign* colonies to (4) *exploit* them economically. A symptomatic reading reveals the following important principles:

- The active/passive principle between ‘*maintainer*’ and ‘*maintained*’ is stipulated.
- Since the colonizing country ‘*maintains*’ the colony, a direct *relationship of involvement* is indicated, unlike Imperialism where one country may seek to influence another (weaker) country without a maintenance relationship.
- Since colonial maintenance is defined as *exploitive*, the binary coercive nature of the relationship is evident; the “*strong*” exploit the *weak*. If the colonized were equally strong, the colonizer would find it difficult to exploit said foreign colonies.
- The use of the word ‘*foreign*’ explicitly demarcates the colonized as ‘different’ and constitutes an ‘us/them’ or ‘*same/other*’ relationship as fundamental to the colonial paradigm.

Binary extraction specific to Indonesian analyses yields the following scheme:

COLONIZER (West)	COLONIZED (East)
ACTIVE - <i>Maintainer</i>	PASSIVE - <i>Maintained</i>
STRONG	WEAK
US (SAME)	THEM (Other) - FOREIGN
EXPLOITER	EXPLOITED.
ECONOMIC (RATIONAL)/ MATERIAL	NON-ECONOMIC (NON-CAPITALIST) SPIRITUAL
MALE	FEMALE
PARENT	CHILD
CULTURE	NATURE
(Marxism) Bourgeoisie	(Marxism) Proletariat

Table 6: Dualism: the Colonial Paradigm

Discussions of the Indonesian Revolution evoke the ‘natural’ passivity to activity progression for the colonized consciousness. In the process, Revolutionaries take on the Colonizer’s binary position; in effect – although this is rarely underlined – become the

'colonizers.'⁸ They engage in 'liberating' (active and strong) behaviour, wielding objectified cultural symbols to create boundaries around 'us,' while simultaneously dismissing colonizer as 'them.' A critical problem however, arises with this binary maintenance. Although Colonizers are initially dismissed as "Them," once out of the picture, the formerly exploited revolutionary minority often emerges, post-colonially, as exploiter of the people they 'liberated;' the new "Them" in relation to the people they rule.

Since this Colonialism-to-Revolution paradigm requires an adversarial structure, some scholars circumvent the problem of the oppression of the people by their own revolutionaries/rulers through the re-casting of the opposition along Marxist lines: bourgeoisie versus proletariat. This opposition of course, typifies Marxist paradigms of Colonialism; in this schema, revolution prompts the alteration of former members of the proletariat (revolutionaries) to bourgeoisie.

Revolutionaries	The 'people'
ACTIVE (<i>Liberators</i>)	PASSIVE
STRONG	WEAK
US (SAME)	THEM (Other)
EXPLOITER	EXPLOITED.
PARENT	CHILD
MALE	FEMALE
ECONOMIC (RATIONAL)	NON-ECONOMIC (NON-CAPITALIST) SPIRITUAL; unaware (need leaders)
Bourgeois (Marxist paradigm)	Proletariat

Table 7: Revolutionaries and the People

Contra Latour, anthropological accounts of Colonialism have attempted unification of discourse and politics/socialization through recognition of their interpenetration. Yet efforts to write paradigmatic intertextuality have consistently resulted in reified re-

⁸ Although I cannot probe this here, the acquisition of the colonizer status may be a given since the entire processual formula is often set into motion by western education.

separation. West (Colonizer) and East (Colonized) head two columns of mutually exclusive characteristics that rhetorically reinforce unbridgeable difference. Informant stories arise in the space 'between' east and west, interstitial utterances that address Jack Goody's assertion that the binarism and stage approaches to Oriental/Occidental distinctions are counter-productive and re-constructed to serve particular academic endeavours. Whether intended or not, academic writing recreates the distinctiveness of the "West," and obfuscates recognition of parallel trajectories followed by West and East.⁹ In short, the ever-recurring reliance on binarism re-positions west in terms of the Rest, maintaining the mythic efficacy of useful paradigms such as "Europe," the "East," Us/Them, rational/irrational.

Deconstruction reveals that angst suffuses this reiterative establishment of binaries, not a conscious adherence to western supremacy. Quite the contrary, identification with 'other' permeates the discourse. Thoughtful discussion of the detractions and merits of Colonialism has been highly suspect for at least the past 60 years. Scholars resist critically engaging pre-colonial or postcolonial regimes they would roundly condemn if administered by Europeans, and consider it the height of hypocrisy if colonizers intimate they are accountable for the colonized. As the Dutch experienced in relation to the rope pull for West Irian, responsibility is a dead, a laughable, paradigm. Viewed through the family metaphor dear to colonials and scholars alike, it smacks suspiciously of paternalistic values.¹⁰ Instead, analysts present responsibility as a gloss on the Colonizer's part, one that hides their true intent; economic motivation or

⁹ Goody, Jack. (1996) *The East in the West*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁰ Both colonials and scholars use the family metaphor for colonizer/colonized relation in the literature. However, there is a vast difference in *value* accorded to the metaphoric terms. At least until the modern period (when most motherlands began to let their colonies 'go') colonials understood the role of 'father/mother' (the colonial power) as entailing particular responsibilities as well as roles vis a vis the 'children' (colonized). The re-envisioning of the family, particularly in feminist theories, has shifted the signification of father and children (and mother) significantly. Hence, how we "read" paternalism (formerly good – now deplorable) differs.

misguided attempts to retain a resemblance of “former greatness” (false pride).

The refusal to ascribe positive attributions to the Domain ‘western culture (sub-domain-colonialism)’ ultimately stems from a commitment to advocacy that leads to the sponsorship of “Other.” Anxiety regarding the writing of Other prompts a recasting of peoples in colonial and/or post-colonial states within paradigmatic confines that facilitate that particular end goal. Since self-determination requires an adherence to the fundamental premise that Colonialism is wrong - it is simply politically incorrect to state otherwise - any analysis begins with that unspoken assumption. Next, the recipe requires we stir the inalienable, natural, *rights of man* into the mix.¹¹ Those rights justify the a priori position on Colonialism since the institution, in its very essence, violates the natural rights of men as defined by the self-rule premise. Simultaneously, rights set up the argument for the inevitable natural progression that becomes part of the circular discursive soup, to wit: colonized peoples, based on a species inherent trait, will resent administrative foreigners, will become politically aware, and will naturally revolt against the “foreign” peoples governing them, and that - closing the circle - is why Colonialism is wrong.

Recognizing the problematic actions of some post-revolutionary governments, those too, emerge from Colonization. Incoherently, the notion that postcolonial governments are trapped in the after effects of a colonial past perilously re-articulates the “they are still children and must find their way” stance we disparage and dismiss in Colonizers who argued for transition/prefatory periods between colonialism and independence. This explanation for postcolonial behaviour further exposes a continued scholarly adherence to a Rousseauian ideal - prior to the coming of the ‘white man,’ pre-contact cultures existed in a pristine state of nature that modeled mankind as it ‘ought’ to be when contrasted with the degraded form of civilization that followed in the wake of ‘European’ contact. Those exposed to European mortification we intimate, need considerable time to recover.

¹¹ Douzinas, Costas. (1998) *The End of Human Rights*. Northwestern University Press.

If the stipulation that acts of post revolutionary governments are rooted in the colonial period is dismissed, cultural relativism is harnessed to the disciplinary cart to elicit motivations and practice derived from cultural paradigms in order to illustrate why those governments make particular choices. Yet the link between individualized, rather than generic ‘European’ cultural ideologies and practice is negated when we discuss European nations that acted in a colonial capacity. Only in discussions of de-colonized Nations, do we invoke cultural relativism and cling to the mandate that comprehending Other demands an understanding of their epistemology. However, if the olive branch of cultural relativism is extended to terrorist/revolutionary Other, it cannot be withdrawn from similar discussions of social or historical contingencies that inform the stance of various European nations. While every European Nation’s history has experienced in-depth deconstruction to expose the socio-historical impulses that led to a particular Age of Exploration, particular, local European knowledge does not inform analysis of colonial practice. Instead, extrapolation from generic “European” epistemological models represents the norm.

Where we do acknowledge socio-historical forces at work in a single country’s trajectory, they are prescribed and often morally condemned.¹² Mythologically speaking, the conjunction between

¹² The deployment of attribution in conjunction with the Domains “trade” and “merchants” in academic literature is intriguing. Both are attributively degraded; the heroic model of chivalry, said to characterize dynastic European states, celebrated. In essence, scholarship perpetuates the historical British stance that the upper classes carried within their ‘blue’ blood a level of inherent civilization to which no commoner could aspire. Reinforced through British ascriptions such as ‘new money,’ the emerging middle (trade) class throughout the 18th and 19th century typifies this inherent difference in human *nature*. Vulgar and non-aristocratic ‘new money,’ was socially opposed to land based ‘old money,’ to the extent that an aristocrat living in ‘genteel poverty’ socially outranked, by a considerable margin, a wealthy tradesman. The denigration of wealth-by-trade often emerges, albeit subtly, in academic works devoted to a discussion and comparison of British and Dutch colonial powers. British upper class characteristics metaphorically appear in her colonial Empire. Imbued with these self-ascribed characteristics, the rhetoric of chivalry obfuscates the economic motivations underlying Empire and disguises the realities of British colonialism on the ground. In short, the colonial portrait of Britain is one in which Gentlemen run the Empire

trade and vulgarity – certainly in British ideology - underlies propaganda assessments of the Netherlands and her people as base burghers (bourgeois) driven by a lust for gain and an incapacity for spirituality, moral judgment, and behaviour as defined by British and continental neighbours.¹³

*“Hence Amsterdam, Turk-Christian-Pagan-Jew,
Staple of sects and mint of schism grew;
That bank of conscience, where not one so strange*

and merchants serve the Empire’s needs. Britain self-signifies as a moral trade nation.

I do not negate that many studies decry British colonialism or question her policies. I merely attempt to illustrate that the historical British denigration of the merchant resurfaces in the academic discourse on trade. If Nations that lived by trade do not utilize the rhetoric of the hero to mask their intentions, their spirituality is suspect, as is their service to mammon. The history of trade in the Netherlands stands in stark contrast to the British perception of trade and those who engage in it. Indeed, this is a product of their diverse national trajectories rooted in their environments. The Dutch openly embraced trade, acknowledged it as the life-blood of their national survival, and accorded her most successful traders the status of most important citizens; land based wealth and status played a minimal historical role in her development and did not automatically confer prestige. Analyses of discourse on the Dutch illustrates that other Nations claimed offense to this plain speaking. They preferred to cloak their interest in riches with virtuous rhetoric, setting themselves above the burghers who, they claimed, could not be moral as their birthright to honour and prestige was suspect.

¹³ “What was striking about the Hollandophobic variety was how far it went beyond the old Catholic style of anathematizing heretics, and even beyond the stock conventions of late Baroque name-calling, to something more sinister. At its most bilious, it implied that the Dutch title to freedom and sovereignty were spurious; that their pretensions to statehood were doubtful and had been overindulged through the misguided magnanimity of their allies and protectors. Overgrown and ungrateful, their ‘reduction’ – to what, remained ominously indeterminate – was now an urgent requirement for the dignity and prosperity of all true (read dynastic) states.” Schama, Simon. (1991) *The Embarrassment of Riches: Dutch Culture In the Golden Age*. London: Fontana Press. Page 261. “So long as they (the Dutch) were mere Lombards in worsted, bankers to the powers rather than a power in their own right, the scale of their riches could be accepted as a regrettable necessity. But when it was converted into the means by which the Dutch could throw their weight about in the company of monarchs, their wealth ceased to be a joke and became an intolerable threat.” Schama, Simon. (1991) *The Embarrassment of Riches: Dutch Culture In the Golden Age*. London: Fontana Press. Page 258-259.

*Opinion but finds credit, and exchange.*¹⁴

The lack of perception regarding the complicated reality of the Netherlands (was) “*obscured by the fixed stereotype of the Republic as a pseudo-State devised and managed purely in the interests of Dutch money;*”¹⁵ a viewpoint clearly embraced by Wallerstein in the late twentieth century when, dressing old propaganda in new Marxist clothing, he stated that the Dutch state,

*“was an essential instrument used by the Dutch bourgeoisie to consolidate an economic hegemony they had won originally in the sphere of production and had then extended to commerce.”*¹⁶

Absorbing the Dutch = trade equation, while embodying the myth that baseness characterizes the merchant, most scholars reject moral claims made by the Dutch re their responsibility to their colonies, and recast Dutch discourse within a politico-economic framework that evaluates her attitude to the severance of colonial ties as a concern for loss of revenue or a reluctance to acknowledge her loss of stature.

Yet anomalies that refuse neat packaging into handy theoretical concepts reveal the cracks in the hegemonic wall of assertions that elaborate on the motivations of colonial powers. This fact vividly arises in analyses of the Dutch-Indonesian-West Irian “debacle.”¹⁷ Since all of the scholars who have occupied themselves with the

¹⁴ Marvell, Character [in] Schama, Simon. *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*. London: Fontana Press. Page 267.

¹⁵ Op. cit, page 261.

¹⁶ Wallerstein, Immanuel. (1980) *The Modern World System Vol. 2: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World Economy 1600 – 1750*. New York: Academic Press. page 65. On the basis of this flawed observation, Wallerstein goes on to discuss his equally flawed concept of the ‘cultural expression of (economic) hegemony’ in the Dutch Republic, a hegemony that has been exploded by Simon Schama. Although it is true that Wallerstein structures a ‘world history’, in my opinion, the resultant structure is flawed if the premises are which he builds his argument are erroneous.

¹⁷ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press.

question of West Papua¹⁸ acknowledge the Dutch heavily invested, financially and psychologically, in the region, analysts confronted the question, *why would the Dutch act contrary to their mercenary/merchant nature and desire jurisdiction over such an unprofitable region?* Dutch claims that they had a responsibility to West Irian, that the country would be marginalized by Java, and that Irian, given a transition time that was clearly defined, would be able to govern herself, are dismissed out of hand. Academics casting the “Colonialism is evil/Colonialism is profit” model, concurrently reject any claims to colonial responsibility, and therefore face unhappy (and foregone) conclusions. Setting Lijphart’s pathology argument aside, others uniformly propose the Dutch fought to retain their vision for West Irian because of delusions of imperial grandeur that refused to die. Concisely, the Dutch refused to accept the ‘writing on the wall’ with respect to colonialism. Since Dutch administrative plans for the colony were at one with the vision that Irian’s leaders submitted to the United Nations, restructuring those leaders as Papuan Uncle Toms in thrall to the Dutch¹⁹ is necessary to render the academic argument coherent, and this too, occurs as a methodological side product of Dutch-Papua analyses.

Interviewee narratives raise important issues. Is de-colonization at any cost more important than responsible de-colonization? Do scholars recognize and reflect on the fact that rapid decolonization often trampled on the rights of peoples ‘de-colonized?’ Will we confront the tautology inherent in the problem of decolonization versus indigenous rights for the people, rather than the rights of

¹⁸ Bone, R.C. Jr. (1958) *The Dynamics of the Western New Guinea (Irian Barat) Problem*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Modern Indonesia project, Cornell University. Lijphart, Arend. (1966) *The Trauma of Decolonization. The Dutch and West New Guinea*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. Drooglever, P.J. (2006) Barsten in het blanke front: De Vaderlandsche Club en het Indo-Europeesch Verbond [in] Drooglever, P.J. (2006) *De Kolonie en dekolonisatie; Nederland, Nederlands-Indië en Indonesië; Een bundel artikelen aangeboden bij het afscheid van het Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis*. Den Haag: Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis. Pages 119-29.

¹⁹ The stance taken by these leaders is often dismissed as an Uncle Tom stance and rather than reflecting the wishes of the people, these leaders were said to be in thrall to the Dutch. See the works noted in footnote 18.

revolutionary rulers?²⁰ Does our emphasis lie on de-colonization or on “rights”? When we engage the paradigm of freedom in analyses, is the focus on ‘freedom from European government,’ or freedom for the ‘people’ to participate in public life with a full ‘bundle of rights?’

Deconstruction and Domain analyses reveal that the fundamental concern occupying colonial theorists was/is the presence of Europeans in positions of power outside of their natal lands and the urgent necessity for them to leave. Where those powers have left ‘occupied’ territory, trepidation regarding past colonial behaviour leads to uniform condemnation of the colonial enterprise and the subtle construction of rhetorical alliances with former ‘Other.’ Emphasis is on ‘decolonization’ cloaked under rights-rhetoric that stresses a people’s right to self-determine rulers, although it is highly debatable in many colonial revolutions that the ‘people’ had any input whatsoever into ruler choice. Thus, academics focus on freedom from European rule, nothing more and in many cases, much less, under revolutionary regimes that wield violence and terror to benefit the ruling few. Retrospectively projecting the current western existential crisis onto history, academics engage in effacing an uncomfortable - for some shameful - past, while not coincidentally remaining preoccupied by it. In sum, answering narrator challenges to colonial research exposes a uniform, yet contradictory stance to ‘the’ colonial past: adherence to rapid de-colonization, a celebration of revolution while marginalizing the resulting lack of freedom for the people whose rights supposedly form our focus, and a sigh of relief that Europeans are back in their own countries; appropriate apologies necessarily and rather endlessly forthcoming for western imperialism.

Unless we can locate the disciplinary biases we embody, Colonialism will falsely remain the defining period of recent East-West relations, and the concurrent assumption that peoples colonized *are* their colonial periods will continue to haunt their histories. In reality, Colonialism was neither new, nor was (northern) “European colonialism” - as if all European countries were uniform in approach

²⁰ Resistance to the notion that the ‘will to power’ exists outside of the European framework has gravely affected analytic models.

- particularly brutal, although I hasten to add that brutality is never relative, nor acceptable. The conquests of the Romans, often undertaken simply 'because they could,' represent an obvious, interesting antecedent to European expansionism, as in that instance, "European" tribal peoples were colonized. Represented quite differently in the scholarly literature, imperialist Romans evoke no guilt from scholars. After all, the conquests took place millennia ago and those conquered have long forgotten what they lost when Roman armies came to call. Gain receives emphasis: roads, judicial systems, irrigation works, syncretization of religions, and the later spread of Christianity. Roman military practices, expansionism, tribute systems, the disappearance of languages and cultures; all are sacrificed to an analysis of the Civilization brought to the tribes of Europe. One ponders the viewpoint of contemporaneous Celtic or Germanic tribes.

2.2 Writing Colonialism

While scholars utilize increasingly refined analyses to engage colonial and post-colonial historical periods, symptomatic readings of articles, book theses, and monographs yield an unsettling observation. Rather than offering new glimpses into colonial relations, or extending the boundaries of the colonial paradigm, they have shifted the us/them binary and simultaneously reinforced the centrality of "*that mythified, yet world historically efficacious entity called Europe*"²¹ through the imposition of normative prescriptions that arise from an eschewal of "orientalist" attitudes.²²

Said's sharply drawn caricature of the "European" imagination and his critical assessment of stereotypical re-presentations of the Orient permeating 'western' literary and academic works, elicited more than a little academic angst. Since he had "*flung open the gates of*

²¹ McLean Stuart, (2003) *Céide Fields: Natural Histories of a Buried Landscape*. [in] Stewart, Pamela J. and Strathern, Andrew. (2003) *Landscape, Memory, and History*. London. Pluto Press. Page 50.

²² Said, Edward. (1978/87) *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books.

*colonial discourse as a legitimate field of research,*²³ western scholars engaged in a rapid sanitation of their own texts, while keenly evaluating the work of others for signs of complicit orientalist traces. Certainly, the main problems with Said's work have been isolated; he relies on a simplistic us/them binary, he presents colonial culture as static rather than as process, while the "passive" colonized is indeed, creatively resistant. Responses to Said have added important insights into the dynamics of colonialism.²⁴ What critiques of Said have not confronted is the guilt that underlies the headlong rush by the academy – often it seems, unconsciously – to prove its non-Orientalism. Nor have we queried the manner in which we accomplish this task. The binaries "East/West" or "us/them" have not disappeared; they have simply been re-contextualized, consequently nourishing Occidentalism²⁵ through our stringent – and at times merciless – critique of "former selves." For the ancestors of the West now stand as orientalist Colonizer-Other," "they" feared the 'inscrutable' Orient, "they maintained a characteristic ambiguity in us/them relations. Through the techniques of Distanciation and inversion, we do not share these misconceptions.

Creating Other, – and the effects of that creation – has exercised numerous scholars. Commenting on the work of Mungo Park and its '*prosaic narrative order*,' Jean and John Comaroff note that even while Park 'demystifies' the fanciful rhetoric of the scattered sixteenth and seventeenth century accounts²⁶ of Africa, the Africans in his text remain *fundamentally other*:²⁷

²³ Locher-Scholten, Elsbeth. (2000) *Women and the Colonial State. Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indiës. 1900 – 1942*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. Page 25.

²⁴ See for example, McClintock, Anne. (1995) *Imperial Leather, Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Context*. New York: Routledge.

²⁵ Buruma, Ian and Margalit, Avishai (2004) *Occidentalism*. London: Atlantic Books.

²⁶ Comaroff, Jean and Comaroff, John. [1991] *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa. Vol. One*. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press. page 91.

²⁷ In other words, Mungo Park constructs a 'rational' text. The Comaroffs, who decry the fanciful rhetoric of sixteenth and seventeenth century accounts of South Africa, find that not even 'prosaic' accounts of Africa such as those rendered by Park are

²⁸ Domain: People; (Sub-Domain of people by Inclusion)	Europeans
(Sub-Domain of Europeans by Inclusion)	Men
(Sub Domain of men by Inclusion)	Mungo Park
Attribute of Park:	writer
(Spatial - writes)	narratives
(attribute of narratives)	demystifies
(By Inclusion)	Other
(attribute by Cause/Effect of other)	fundamentally

Figure 3: Mungo Park

Although the Comaroffs prefer Park's 'normative' text to the 'exotic narratives' centered on Africa, they deplore the result; the Africans remain Other. If both exotic and normative accounts result in a fundamental 'other,' an unavoidable conundrum arises, what *'kind' of description of (Park's) encounters* would have satisfied the Comaroffs and the academy since analogy of the newly experienced arises from already known? Marcus and Fisher²⁹ have traced the anthropological debates regarding this issue. No question, the earnest dialogues that focus on writing Other exposed a genuine concern for the results of our prose and the paradox that to write is to objectify; *"writing ... is a particularly pre-emptive and imperialist activity that tends to assimilate other things to itself, even without the*

'good enough' – Park is still guilty of rendering the African as other. Comaroff, Jean and Comaroff, John. [1991] *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa*. Vol. One. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press. page 92.

²⁸ Spradley, James. (1979) *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. I accept that meaning is re/constructed by, for, and through the manner in which we deploy language. His methodology facilitated the discernment and explication of the relationships between signs that encode particular scholarly meaning systems. Based on Blumer's requirements, it facilitated an understanding of (1) the meaning certain things/people/ideas held for the scholar of the text being analyzed, (2) how those meanings arose in linguistic interaction between scholars, particularly in the way in which scholars continually draw on each other's texts and (3) how meanings were internalized, modified and mobilized by the writer under scrutiny. Blumer, Herbert. (1986) *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press.

²⁹ Marcus, George E. and Fisher, Michael M.J. (1999) *Anthropology As Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

aid of etymologies."³⁰ Analyses of the cultures of other in fact, did often assimilate those cultures to self, and did incarcerate the very people we hoped to liberate in prose. Scholars confronted a paradox; although writing other is what anthropologists do, we reject writing other as Other since doing so opposes dearly held personal and political convictions regarding race and ethnicity. Yet as anthropologists, we must write. Writing Other thus required, as Marcus and Fisher outline, a transformation of Voice.

Subsequent to that realization, a scholarly sub-text saturated the illumination of colonial interactions; an eagerness to illustrate that while our ancestors may have been rabid imperialists, we reject the error-filled ways of our elders. Radical alteration of attributions assigned to Other, as well as a reorientation to the writing of Self, conveyed "new models" of Other, while simultaneously facilitating the exhibition of our cultural sensitivities. Scholars converged ... *'on the topic of resistance... and subordinate groups'*³¹ through an emphasis on local, rather than global paradigms and concerns. The 'global' connotes cultural systems considered as a whole, while signifying a theory or text that subsumes other theories, texts, or phenomena into a universal explanation. "Local" studies celebrate a small sub-section of a geographical area as well as particular cultural/textual sites (*resisters*) that appear to subvert *assimilation* into the generalization of a universal (global) theory (Colonial powers).³² This synthesis of the geopolitical with critical theory

³⁰ Op. cit., page 12.

³¹ Abu-Lughod, L. (Feb. 1990). The Romance of Resistance: Tracing Transformations of Power Through Bedouin Women. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 17, 41-55. Page 41. In her introduction to "*The Romance of Resistance*," Lila Abu-Lughod queries, "*What is the relationship between scholarship or theorizing and the world-historical moment in which it takes place – why, at this particular time, are scholars from diverse disciplines and with extremely different approaches converging on the topic of resistance?*" She adds, "*What is the ideological significance in academic discourse of projects that claim to bring to light the hitherto ignored or suppressed ways in which subordinate groups actively respond to and resist their situations?*"

³² The reader will recognize the establishment of yet another (global/local) binary.

represented a critical step in the deconstruction and subsequent dismissal of “totalizing theories” as oppressive and hegemonic.³³

Thus, focus on local sites facilitated the rejection of other as Other inscription, since the analyst writes characteristic empathy vis a vis resister-Other, while constructing distance from former western selves through a thorough delineation of the difference that distinguishes those current and past selves. This reoriented emphasis fulfills significant functions. It facilitates the conflation of current Self-analyst with (former) Other, places new Other (former western selves) firmly within the (past) western context, enables the continuation of writing while simultaneously rejecting its imperialistic results, and finally, re-revisions the new Self. Highlighting locality assisted in the transformation of colonial scholarship in that it smoothly facilitated the conveyance of political correctness. Disconnection from western history and past selves is the result.

³³ Geertz underlined the obfuscation of global theories; global theories are inadequate for an understanding of complex systems such as cultures that in their very essence are site-specific semiotic texts. Terms such as “culture” ensure the marginalization of the site specificity of a particular culture, since one cannot separate meaning from the particular organization of signs that characterize a given site. Geertz, Clifford. (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books. Pages 3-32.

Self's Analytic categories	PAST OTHER; now US	FORMER SELVES (now Other)
Power	Positive Resistant Identify (courage)	Negative, must distance. Served economic paradigm Violent, debased; Technological
Spirituality	Celebrated co-opted deeply spiritual. At one with universe/nature	Negative, false and/or nonexistent, Subverted the worldview and ideologies of other; served western power. Materialistic; not spiritual Often violent
Morality/Character	Good/Innocent/Open/Free	Evil/Calculating/used Others
Racist attitudes	Acquired from colonialism derived from cultural relativity not credited to 'other' as west holds monopoly	Racist Exploitative Pervasive Negative; White supremacy
Sexuality	Originally suspect and feared (now, in resistance to Orientalism) Pure Innocent Exploited Spiritual Free, open, in tune	Uptight Exploitive Used as tool for power over Misogynist Wrote Other as suspect/feared/seductive
Economics	Communal Shared Cooperative Non-profit In tune with nature Local	Profit (ugly label) Exploitive Rapes nature Marginalize people, privileges commodities Sterile Totalizing
Politics	Communal Equality Local	(Former selves = power based, exploitive, violent, serving economics, etc.) Totalizing

Table 8: Self, Past Other-now-Self, Former Selves-now-Other

'*Mechanisms of mastery*'³⁴ facilitate the narrative disciplining of Colonizers and their History.³⁵ Normative categories of the contemporary 'Self' conflated with past Other-now-us inform the attributes we ascribe to (Them) colonizer's policies, attitudes, and interaction, *from a simulated past Other's perspective*. Yet the entire attempt is a dead letter. Repositioning the self behind the eyes of Other still assimilates other to self. *Figure 11* illustrates the function of Former Selves as foil for the "new" and "improved" West (current self + past others), while facilitating the self-flagellation required as compensation for centuries of colonizing Other in text, word, and deed. The focus remains western Self-presentation.³⁶

In addition to the re-placement of attribution, a refusal to engage voice and/or dismissing/re-writing historical context and narrative content also renders judgment of/on colonial actors possible. I offer a benign contemporary example of hegemonic ascriptions that construct self, while simultaneously positioning a liminal 'Other.' The assumed inscriptions in the following quote, appear largely unconscious, but are perhaps the more powerful for that fact: "*They (Asian-Dutch/Eurasians) were loyal to Holland and the empire, but they were poor in the Indies and nearly destitute on arrival in Holland.*"

³⁷

³⁴ Comaroff, John and Jean. [1991] *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Page 87.

³⁵ Sahlins, Marshall. (1985) *Islands of History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Sahlins, 1985) Introduction. This transformation of praxis/experience to ideologies based on self/other is predicated, as Sahlins has noted, on actors' proclivity to attribute significance to objects/praxis within both self's and other's culture based on their existing understanding of their own cultural order and their pragmatic understandings of their own empirical interactions with objects/others. I have extended Sahlins' concept in light of my 'reading' of his definitions and explorations of the transformative nature of praxis/ideology and history/culture. While Sahlins does not render to the subject the emphasis I will give the individual here in, none of the transformations of Hawaiian society outlined in *Islands of History* could have occurred without the subject; they turn on redefinitions of self/other.

³⁶ Table 8.

³⁷ Goss, Andrew. (2000) From Tong-Tong to Tempo Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History, 1957 - 1961. *Indonesia*. Vol. 70. (October) pages 9-36. page 15.

Domain:	People
(Sub) Domain	Dutch Indonesians
Attributions:	loyal
Inclusion:	to Holland and empire
Spatial	Indies
Attributes	poor
Spatial	arrival (Netherlands)
Attribute	destitute

Figure 4: Goss: Attributions - Dutch-Indonesians - Eurasians

This essentializing quote carries a subtext often paralleled in the earlier literature on Eurasians. Yet based on database narratives, the attributes here inscribed on the Asian-Dutch community; “loyal to Holland, *poor* in the Indies and *destitute* on arrival,” are contentious. The hegemonic and reiterative use of the pronoun “they” creates distance, manufactures an inclusive category, and obscures the very real fact that “they” were not all loyal to Holland; indeed had no concept at all of “Holland.”

There were Eurasians that stayed in Indonesia and of those that arrived in the Netherlands, a significant number identified as Dutch-Indonesian, but ‘repatriated’ because their self-identification was denied by Indonesia as well as the Dutch.³⁸ “They” were not necessarily poor in the Indies, most of those in my database held excellent positions in Indonesia; Eurasians, like other Dutch-Indonesians and the Dutch themselves, represent a full spectrum of power/prestige possibilities. My narratives suggest that more successful Eurasians repatriated to the Netherlands and that many who remained in Indonesia were, as per Goss’s description, poor.

Finally, the implied affiliation between ethnicity (Eurasian) and poverty confronts non-Eurasian repatriated individuals who describe themselves as “*almost destitute*” on arrival since they left all of their assets in Indonesia. The hegemonic myth of the “poor, destitute, marginalized, yet desperate to appear loyal and Dutch’ Eurasian continually arises in the literature, silencing their lived experience. Engaging the Eurasian identity as separate and unique,

³⁸ Houben, V. J. (1997). A Torn Soul: The Dutch Public Discussion on the Colonial Past in 1995. *Indonesia*. Vol. 63 (April), 47-66. Page 64. Houben makes the point that Dutch-Indonesian ethnicity did gain acceptance in Holland.

and evaluating the ideologies of the Dutch and Indonesians, racism subtly penetrates writings that relate to Eurasian peoples.³⁹ Fundamentally, inscribing the Dutch-Indonesian as “Dutch,” for Dutch, Indonesians and academics alike, facilitates a clean binary that maintains the necessary us/them binary in Revolution (Europeans versus Indonesians).

The attributions *loyalty*, *poor* and *destitute*, expose deeply embedded assumptions regarding the Eurasian and the primacy of ‘Dutchness:’

1. What is the meaning of *loyalty* to Empire and Holland for Goss and his readers? Is this attribute laudable or misguided? Is it a term that conveys perhaps, that their very loyalty entitles these poor cousins to demands on the Dutch public purse as well as living space?
2. Secondly, *why* were they loyal?
3. What is the meaning of the word ‘poor’? Is poor economically measured and does this constitute an ethnocentric bias? What if the Eurasian self-perceived as rich in Family for example, and eschewed material riches as a gauge of life success? Additionally, what power and signification does the term ‘poor’ carry for the reader?
4. Why were Eurasians ‘poor’ in Indonesia? (Connect to 3 - What does “poor” imply about the Eurasian?) Indeed, this question links not only to ideologies of poverty, but also to ideologies of ethnicity. How did they come to be poor? Were they uneducated? Did they eschew work? Was their poverty the result of their being Eurasian? (the connection of poverty to ethnicity) If the latter was the case, is this a result of Colonialism and their position within it? Alternatively, are we to understand that poor is “inherent” in (the genes of) the Eurasian; is there something ‘about’ the Eurasian that leads to a state of impoverishment?
5. Based on (4) we return to (1). If Colonialism is responsible for the condition of the Eurasian, *why* would they display *loyalty* to Holland and Empire. If their poverty and destitution is a direct result of the Colonial establishment, what institutions and

³⁹ Indeed, Racism by Others against Others requires exploration outside of the “it is the fault of colonialism that they are racist” context.

ideologies were responsible for their marginalization and why would the Eurasian remain loyal to an organization/people responsible for their poverty? Inherent in the question is the answer – they were legally ‘named’ Dutch and that is superior to any other Naming within the Colonial sphere. This assumption underlies Goss’ entire assessment; Eurasians took whatever steps were necessary, including the outing of a paradoxical loyalty to a regime that ensured their “poor” status in the Indies, because to be Dutch over-rode all other considerations.

In recentring the voices of colonizers/colonized peoples, I endeavour to deconstruct the monolithic edifice that prescribes their past, to understand the world on their terms, to examine current ideologies through a deconstruction of inscriptions imposed on their experiences. I strive not to prescribe, but to describe, not to state, but to assess, narrator understanding. Simultaneously, I remain aware of the entwined process of remembering and psychic health, and that the elderly, when reviewing their lives, utilize schemata that assist in framing and explaining personal histories to achieve peace. However, I have not allowed that consideration to over-ride their narratives. The muted scholarship on Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian incarceration, repatriation, the war with the republic, experiences of the veterans, the trauma experienced by Indonesian citizens under the Japanese, as well as all subjunctive narrative bits, is the result of the fact that these events took place during the “last *colonial* (oppressive) regime” in the Dutch East Indies and the subsequent Indonesian *revolution* (liberation).

Admittedly, there are risks involved in my task. First, lending a sympathetic ear to the “colonizers” in order to understand what they thought and felt, may elicit critiques that the work is reactionary. Having weighed this possibility carefully, I chose to proceed in the hope that the work will provoke further exploratory studies that re-center voice instead of speaking “for” past selves, prescribing what ‘they should’ have thought and felt, or assessing their memories as flawed, nostalgic or sentimental when those memories conflict with our “shoulds.”

Secondly, colonial analyses express views of colonialism at odds with the voices of individual colonial/colonized speakers. This phenomenon presents the scholar with a formidable task of reconciliation that s/he may eschew altogether. Indeed, it is very

difficult to 'listen' with sympathy and then to analyze those narratives through current academic understandings; the possibility of dismissal as a mere apologist for colonialism looms large indeed. Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian informants were overtly aware that, having been in Indonesia during the last colonial regime, the attribution "colonizers" applies to them, with its attendant connotation "oppressor." Although this interpretation is not one they themselves make when analyzing past actions and/or motives, they are highly sensitive to the fact that this "misidentification" on their part is re-presented as an inability to admit their role as colonial appropriators.⁴⁰ Succinctly put, "we" know the devices and desires of their hearts more clearly than they do. When not actively ascribing imperialistic motivations to their stance in the past, scholars sorrowfully allow that perhaps they were just 'misguided,' but that in any case, it was wrong for them to be in Indonesia at all.

Current approaches to the lives and words of past selves inflict violence through narrative discipline; by re-framing the narrative, semantic relations shift within the colonial text(s). The friendships between colonizer and colonized alluded to by informants for example, are scrutinized through the lens of 'power over' paradigms that negate any possibility of 'equal' friendship. Hence, 'real' friendships described by a 'colonizer' with the 'colonized' (or vice versa) can be marginalized as narrative self-delusion at best, and at worst, as something more sinister. Our analytic models are *prescriptive*, not *descriptive*.

2.2.1 POSTCOLONIALITY

The local-global linkages that cross-pollinate postcolonial works derive from geopolitical and world historical investigations that connect East and West. Scholars study clashes of culture, hegemony, governmentality, sliding signifiers, body politics, modernity, civilization, humanism, humanity, gender, class, capitalism, strategic locations, and contested sites of meaning. Indeed, the application of postcolonial theories to formations of native policy, life under colonial rule, expressions of power, and cross cultural sites of contention between oppressors and oppressed, continues unabated,

⁴⁰ A rather liberal application of Freudian repression.

as analysts seek to identify the discursive loci of material-human to expose the essential experience of colonial rule.

Post-colonial studies enunciate a teleological understanding of Colonialism, and re-center the colonial as the watershed in the lives of nations. The prefix 'post' designates a time that is over and gone, rather than an ongoing interactive model that predates, and post-dates, the European colonial period. Furthermore, postcolonial studies provide ample evidence that 'Others writing selves' participate fully in the western ideological paradigms post-colonial writing seeks to dismantle. While some scholars consider it nigh impossible for western scholars to write the colonized perspective, it is highly questionable that scholars in formerly colonized countries themselves can write the subaltern, since they themselves are not subaltern, and their minds and bodies are inundated with the 'European philosophies' they deplore.

Spivak's concern is for the processes whereby postcolonial studies ironically reinscribe, co-opt, and rehearse neo-colonial imperatives of political domination, economic exploitation, and cultural erasure. In short, she probes complicity through an examination of whether or not the post-colonial critic participates in the task of imperialism through a specifically first world, male, privileged, academic, institutionalized discourse that classifies and surveys the East in the same way as the modes of dominance it seeks to dismantle.

In "Can the Subaltern Speak?", Spivak encourages, while criticising, the efforts of the subaltern studies group, a project led by Ranajit Guha that has re-appropriated Gramsci's term "subaltern" (the economically dispossessed) in order to locate and re-establish a "voice" or collective locus of agency in postcolonial India. Acknowledging the "epistemic violence" experienced by the subaltern, she suggests that any external attempt to ameliorate their condition by 'granting' them collective speech will encounter the following problems: 1) a logocentric assumption of cultural solidarity amongst a heterogeneous people, and 2) a dependence upon western intellectuals to "speak for" the subaltern condition rather than allowing them to speak for themselves.

As Spivak argues, by speaking out and reclaiming a collective cultural identity, subalterns will in fact re-inscribe their subordinate position in society. The academic assumption of a subaltern

collectivity becomes akin to an ethnocentric extension of Western logos - a totalizing, essentialist "mythology" as Derrida might describe it - that does not account for the heterogeneity of the colonized body politic. Deploying Marx's notion of *vertreten* (represent), Spivak asserts that a society's underclass cannot self-refer, while representation of the subaltern is doomed to failure.⁴¹ She highlights two dominant reasons why academics of any stripe cannot imagine the power and desire that was available, and inhabited, the Unnamed colonial Other. First, anything the postcolonial scholar reads or writes participates in the debate about, while reproducing, subaltern Other within the European phenomenological context, "...supporting or critiquing the constitution of the Subject of Europe."⁴² Secondly, in creating Other, Europeans participated in the ultimate epistemic violence; they obliterated the textual ingredients of Other, creating an Other as Other that never existed. Inscribing subaltern in East or West, someone else speaks for, while simultaneously re-constructing, the other of Self's imagination.

Working with the concept of the subaltern, Homi K Bhabha is a tad more optimistic. Focussing on articulations spoken in the space between East and West, he sheds light upon the liminal negotiation of cultural identity across differences of race, class, gender, and cultural traditions. His concern is with 'intervening ideologies,' Bhabha holds that cultural identities are not aligned with pre-given, irreducible, or scripted monologues. "Colonizer" and "colonized" cannot be (self) articulated as independent separate entities; the negotiation of cultural identity involves the continual interface and exchange of cultural *performances* that in turn produce a mutual and mutable recognition, or representation, of cultural difference.⁴³ Interstices, hybrid sites, discursively produce, rather than re-produce, cultural meaning.

⁴¹ Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. (1988) "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Grossberg, L and Nelson, C. (1988) (eds.) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press. Pages 276-277.

⁴² Op. cit., page 280.

⁴³ Bhabha, Homi. (1994) *The Location of Culture*. London; New York: Routledge. pages 2-4

Since ongoing and continual discursive productivity points to transformational identities, Bhabha's concept of 'linguistic multivocality' is highly relevant to the Indonesian social context, since 'colonizer' and 'colonized' categories in Indonesia were by no means uniform. Chinese, Indian and Arab communities, among others, were important factions within the "colonized" social fabric, while the "Colonizers" included Europeans of multiple backgrounds, as well as Americans. Indeed, the Amboinese, certainly an 'indigenous' Indonesian population, were often linked to the Colonizer, rather than colonized in 'Other's' perception. Liminal negotiations of identity and the cultural performances that provoke recognition are polyglot in nature on islands like Java. Thus the conversation between 'colonized and colonizer' is not dialogic, but heteroglossic.⁴⁴

Eurasians/Settlers were true *bricoleurs*,⁴⁵ diluting binary ethnicities and attributions, rendering possible unique identity significations, existing in the space 'between,' signifying the ultimate instability of a monolithic perception of 'colonial and/or colonized' identities. Both academic analyses and public policies however, proceed on as 'as if' dualistic basis – fixed identities are assumed and inscribed. "Liminality" or 'liminal ethnicity' is not a checkbox choice on forms, for the purposes of sorting and demarcating, ethnic affiliation/choice is mandated.

Hybridity also speaks to memory, the necessary and hazardous bridge between colonialism and identity.⁴⁶ Since colonial/imperial discourse is inherently unstable, hybridity underlines the interpenetration of the languages spoken by master and slave; another binary rendered unstable by the Indonesian social fabric. To extract hybrid discourse, Bhabha identifies linguistic instability by instancing the deployment of imperial authority through

⁴⁴ Bakhtin, Mikhail. (1983) *The Dialogic Imagination*. Translated by M. Holmquist. Houston: University of Texas Press.

⁴⁵ Levi-Strauss, Claude (1962) *The Savage Mind*. Translated from the French by John and Doreen Weightman. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

⁴⁶ Steinmetz, George (2007) *The Devils Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 55

stereotyping.⁴⁷ Demonstrating that iconic images such as the 'noble savage' and 'wily oriental' are conveyed as 'fixed' and 'natural,' in actuality each requires continual re-deployment if the binary is to hold; left without reinforcement, they quickly descend into profound contradiction. "*The colonial subject*", Bhabha notes, "*is a savage and yet the most obedient and dignified of servants. He is the embodiment of rampant sexuality and yet innocent as a child; he is mystical, primitive, simple-minded and yet the most worldly and accomplished liar.*"⁴⁸ Moreover, contradictory stereotypes are as true for the colonizer as for the colonized, a discursive order characterized by diffusion and reorientation. Diffusion, reinscribed by Bhabha as double inscription or mimicry, betrays the slipperiness and ambivalence of colonial discourse and authority.⁴⁹

What Bhabha fails to fully develop is how mimicry evolves within the colonized, or how it leads to Colonizer identification with the colonial subject.⁵⁰ Moreover, he neglects to concretize his ideas of sliding discourses and representations in the material world; he never demonstrates how this (re)construction of memory might feed into colonial administration or impact the lives of those colonized. Nor does Bhabha's double inscription highlight material changes in the colonial ideas of the metropole beyond discourse: "*The ambivalence at the source of traditional discourses on authority enables a form of subversion, founded on the undecidability that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention in the discourse of the colony.*"⁵¹ For Bhabha, there is only perpetual liminality, shifting discourses within imaginary fixed points of resistance combined with, but not wholly attendant to, a program of oppression, lending some credibility to the charge levelled by Marxist scholars that postcolonial critics with 'discourse

⁴⁷ Bhabha, Homi (1995) *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge. pp 32-33

⁴⁸ Op. cit., page 82.

⁴⁹ Op. cit., page 108.

⁵⁰ Steinmetz, George. (2007) *The Devils Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. page 41.

⁵¹ Bhabha, Homi (1995) *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge. page 112

fetish' have rendered the world outside the subject somewhat meaningless.⁵²

Hybridity and mimicry in turn, permeate Bhabha's discussion of subject-formation, a discursive instability that he envisions as central to individual delineations of agency.⁵³ Agency and subjection are intimately related, the type and degree of agency is tied to the type and degree of power, since the subject, and world outside subject, cannot be easily separated.

*Life under the Dutch was pretty relaxed. We did our jobs, we went about our own business, we spoke to each other openly about our thoughts, our ideas. We didn't go to sleep at night worrying that the thought police would be knocking on the door. That came later.*⁵⁴

Interviews with Indonesians who left their country for North America suggest that the relationship between power and 'subjection' sat relatively lightly on the shoulders of the average citizen during the colonial period, leading to the wielding of agency and conscious formulation of self that did not include the notion of subalternity in terms of a 'lesser' humanity. Furthermore, self-identification was always already in conversation with the Indonesian social fabric and hierarchical (or not) understandings at specific Indonesian locales; the ancestral customs of specific Indonesian societies wielded definitive perceptual power vis a vis Dutch-self definitions.⁵⁵

⁵² Op. cit., page 195.

⁵³ Loomba, Ania. (1998) *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. New York: Routledge. Page 194.

⁵⁴ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Interviewee. May, 2004. Tape 2.

⁵⁵ I am indebted to S. Yuri Beaulieu for the insight that psychological theories address collective memory and play a prominent role in postcolonial theory. They represent a potential, alternate analysis of portions of the current database texts. Fanon, Césaire, Spivak, Said, Bhabha, and materialist critics probe the manner in which memory is constructed and reconstituted through interaction. For Spivak and Bhabha, qua Derrida, the commitment to "Other" provokes a hunt for ghosts. In terms of a culture of defeat, postcolonial studies assume that the colonial period has left the west haunted with spectres, a defeat that must be rectified, or forgotten, asserts Spivak. The "will to forget" and, as Ghandi argues, the will to rectify a

2.2.2 FEMINISM AND RACE

Feminist theories have contributed significantly to colonial and postcolonial analyses, in part because colonies are feminized in the binary sets that structure the colonial paradigm, but also because of the innovative theoretical perspectives offered by feminist theorists. The sometimes voyeuristic, but always evocative analyses of potential relations between Colonizer-male and oppressed indigenous female share the linguistic structures that probe the relations between Colonizer (male) and the Colony (female).

The link is extended to the point that it has become 'naturalized' in academic analysis. Susan Brownmiller's assertion that "*rape is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear,*"⁵⁶ represents the departure point for feminists linking race and sexuality. The binaries are well established. Bodies of indigenous women are equated with the body politic, and the rape/abuse/violence perpetuated by colonizing men on colonized women, parallels the rape/abuse and violence committed on the colony. Indeed, Neferti Tadiar argues that colonial relationships are themselves gendered and sexualized;

*The economies and political relations of nations are libinally configured, that is, they are grasped and effected in terms of sexuality. This global and regional fantasy is not, however, only metaphorical, but real insofar as it grasps a system of political and economic practices already at work among those nations.*⁵⁷

Similarly, Andrea Smith notes that while indigenous women and men are 'equally screwed' by the colonial power, indigenous women suffer in ways that indigenous men do not,⁵⁸ expressing her conviction that abused indigenous women see the attacks on their bodies as a double negation: their identity as women, and their

seemingly, '*self-willed historical amnesia concerning colonization*' has led to the development of trauma theories that essentialize or re-member the colonial experience.

⁵⁶ Brownmiller, Susan (1986) *Against Our Will*. Toronto: Bantam Books

⁵⁷ Tadiar, N. (1993) *Sexual Economies of the Asia-Pacific*. [in] Dirlik, A. (1993) *What's in a Rim? Critical Perspectives on the Pacific Region Idea*. Boulder: Westview Press.

⁵⁸ Page 8.

identity as members of a particular indigenous group. Integrating Kate Shanley's notion that native people are a 'present absence' in the colonial imagination into her analysis, Smith make a compelling case for her proposition that absence feeds the metaphorical transformation of indigenous people into '*a pollution of which the colonial body must purify itself.*' Thus polluted, those same bodies are understood as immanently "dirty" with sexual sin and/or sexual perversity, hence less than human.⁵⁹ If, she maintains, 'colonization=thingification,'⁶⁰ then indigenous bodies are inherently violable as things.⁶¹

An analytical model that incorporates the equation colonizer + colonized = rape, and places indigenous women at the bottom of the hierarchy, facing as they did, the dual illegitimacy of ethnicity and gender, is consistent. So too, is the proposition that the model can be utilized to examine gender relations in the dominant structure. Stoler's observation that imperial discourses on sexuality "*cast white women as the bearers of a more racist imperial order*"⁶² speaks implicitly to the role of indigenous women as the ultimate keepers of the non-imperial order, thereby structuring oppositional female discourses/roles that colonial men mediate. The effect of the wedge driven between women linked to the colonized and colonizing group is easily discerned: as elite women increasingly begin to fear indigenous women, men retain control of both sets of females.

The model is pervasive to the extent that some analysts of colonial interaction set out specifically to look for 'what must be there,' as rape and abuse of indigenous women is both prescribed and 'always already' anticipated by the model. Stoler and Strassler's oral history research in New Order Java is a case in point. Not only did they seek to uncover 'evidence' of prurient Dutch male behaviour with

⁵⁹ Op. cit., page 9; 11.

⁶⁰ Césaire, Aime (1972) *Discourse on Colonialism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

⁶¹ Smith, Andrea (2005) *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. Cambridge: Southend Press. Page 11.

⁶² Stoler, Ann. (1997) *Race and the Education of Desire*. Chapel Hill: Duke University Press.

servants, they “pressed” their interviewees to remember when they maintained they had nothing to tell.⁶³

Given the fact that the briefly sketched analytic paradigm noted above frames multiple analyses and speculations regarding Dutch men on servant/Dutch men on indigenous women sexuality, I take up the framework, as well as the main themes that inform the theoretical position, in the context of the database narratives. Suffice it here to say that I will argue that the model constitutes a global paradigm that evades context. Drawing on mythologies of the “Orient,” Dutch-other sexuality was differently perceived in the motherland than it was in the colony itself, indeed Dutch men/indigenous relations are the base on which the emerging settler society was founded.

2.3 Of Memory and Remembering; Living and Speaking Colonialism

A study that utilizes oral histories must deal with the problems of the what, where, and how of memory and remembering. Early analyses centered on the *what* of memory, a technique Koriat and Goldsmith refer to as the ‘*storehouse metaphor*’ that places emphasis on a “*multitude of stimuli assumed to impinge upon the senses,....discrete impressions of these stimuli are retained as memory units for later retrieval. As a result of decay or interference some of the units may become lost, weakened, or otherwise inaccessible.*”⁶⁴

Scholars quickly noted that this model did not effectively address the manner in which memory appeared to work outside of the laboratory. Although it is no longer in (admitted) use in the Social Sciences, Jussim has rightly noted that “*regardless of whether anyone actually believes in the storehouse metaphor, clearly many chose*

⁶³ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History: Vol. 42; No. 1* (January) 4 - 48.

⁶⁴ Koriat, A., & Goldsmith, M. (1996). Memory Metaphors and the Real life/laboratory Controversy: Correspondence versus Storehouse Conceptions of Memory. *Behavioural and Brain Sciences Vol. 19*, 167-228.

research topics, write and interpret research as if they believed it.”⁶⁵ How could it be otherwise? Although I reject the idea that discrete units of unchanging and accessible stored memory defines the manner in which memory is structured, clearly any oral historian or anthropologist, myself included, accepts that memories can not only be elicited, they can tell us something about the past. In other words, I reject the notion that in hearing the words of interviewees the best I can hope for is to “*decode these representations...that...tell us more about the colonial mentality*”⁶⁶... than the policies, events, or relationships under discussion. Instead, I maintain that memory, although imperfect, is an improvement on the imposition of etic perspectives on Others, and that multiple conversations, from diverse perspectives, can, if taken together, illuminate the past.

Subsequent cognitive studies addressed ‘what exactly’ about the past it is that memories can relay. Explorations of operative memory in the ‘real world,’ for example in the way in which different people recall the same event, illustrated that they focus on diverse details characterizing that event. To incorporate these new findings, the *correspondence metaphor* became the frame of choice for memory research. A number of assumptions that critically affect analyses characterize this metaphor. First, the “Representation” element stipulates that memory is about a past event in the ‘real world.’ Thus, memory bits have truth-value; they are ‘about something.’ Secondly, the “Accuracy” component evaluates memory in terms of its descriptive overlap with real events. Thirdly, “the “Content” factor is concerned with the *quality* of the memory; a crucial difference may arise if a narrator remembers one thing and not another. Koriat and Goldsmith offer the following example: *In the courtroom for instance, it might make a crucial difference whether the witness remembered that the burglar “had a gun” and forgot that he wore a hat, or vice*

⁶⁵ Jussim, L. (1991) Social Perception and Social Reality: A Reflection Construction Model. *Psychological Review*, 98. Pages 54-78. Page 55.

⁶⁶ Locher-Scholten, Elsbeth. (2000) *Women and the Colonial State. Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indiës. 1900 - 1942*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. Page 85.

versa.” Thus functional considerations ⁶⁷.... are intrinsic to the correspondence metaphor. Finally, rather than a focus on storage (input), the correspondence metaphor is concerned to address ‘output’ – *subjects are.... held accountable for what they report.* ⁶⁸

Yet this remaining emphasis on “accuracy” in the correspondence metaphor heightens the problem of divergent memories. As Conway has noted:

One difference between mental and physical states is that mental states have content, whereas physical states do not. Thus my memory of dough rising is about something, some representation of an event I once experienced. But actual dough rising is not about anything; it is simply what it is – dough rising.” ⁶⁹

Research focusing on veridicality – how memories of the dough rising parallels how the dough actually rose – amplified the sometimes wide gap between memory and ‘reality’.⁷⁰ In 1932, C.R. Bartlett addressed this problem when he discussed the manner in which people use ‘schemata’ to make sense of their everyday experiences. Schemata are not merely passive frames potentially available in a specific society, but “*an active organization of past reactions, of past experiences.*” ⁷¹ This “reconstructive approach,” including Niesser’s subsequent enhancements, informed Elizabeth Cole’s provocative analysis of “*how societies and bodies remember, but equally important, how they forget and go on to forge viable practical models to help them endure.*” ⁷² For informants, active use of

⁶⁷ Koriat, A., & Goldsmith, M. (1996). Memory Metaphors and the real life/laboratory Controversy: Correspondence versus Storehouse Conceptions of Memory. *Behavioural and Brain Sciences Vol. 19*, 167-228. The synopsis contained herein is drawn from this excellent article.

⁶⁸ Op. cit., page 174.

⁶⁹ Conway, M.A. (1994) In Defence of Everyday Memory. *American Psychologist. Vol. 46*. Pages 19-27. Page 2.

⁷⁰ Note that reality is conceived of as a ‘steady state.’

⁷¹ Bartlett, C.R. (1932) *Remembering*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Page 201.

⁷² Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). The Work of Memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist Vol. 25* , 610-633. Page 628. Here Cole draws as well on the work of: Wikan, Unni

the “refugee” schemata identified by Westerman⁷³ played a key role in trauma work and self-presentation.

The Bartlett/Niesser reconstructive model offers an excellent interpretive frame for understanding structure and content of database oral histories. A number of interviewees offered me the opportunity to interview Dutch, Dutch-Indonesian and Indonesian people who were vacationing with them in Canada and the USA. Those interviews, in particular, underlined ‘*how societies and bodies remember*’⁷⁴ through the social inhibitions imposed on narratives that are potentially accessible, but not recounted. Visiting narrators articulated the license they felt to discuss issues in North America that they did not feel they could address in the Netherlands or Indonesia. On the one hand, I ascribed this phenomenon to the liminality that forms part of travel. Telling stories to a relative stranger in a country not engaged on a national and personal level with the developing narratives engenders a freedom in the narrator to engage forbidden narrative sets.

However, their conviction that they could not address certain issues in their home countries underlines the importance of social milieus that frame “remembering” and “memory work” within a particular society and political climate at a specific historical time. The colonial and post-colonial scripts in the Netherlands and Indonesia are of long standing and although altered by the changing discourses of/on history, a number of themes remain sacrosanct in the literature and hence, memory as well. Niesser discusses this aspect of remembering through the “ecological approach.”⁷⁵

(1996) The Nun’s Story: Reflections on an Age-Old Postmodern Dilemma. *American Anthropologist*. Vol. 98(2). Pages 279-289. Page 285.

⁷³ Westerman, (1994) Central American Refugee Testimonies and Performed Life Histories in the Sanctuary Movement. [in] Perks R. and Thomson, A. (eds.) (1998) *The Oral History Reader*. London: Routledge. Pages 224-234.

⁷⁴ Op. cit., page 285.

⁷⁵ Koriat, A., & Goldsmith, M. (1996). Memory Metaphors and the real life/laboratory Controversy: Correspondence versus Storehouse Conceptions of Memory. *Behavioural and Brain Sciences* Vol. 19, 167-228.

“Rather than beginning with the hypothetical models of mental functioning, ecological psychologists start with the real environment and the individual’s adaptation to that environment.”⁷⁶

Indeed, Stoler and Strassler noted the potential confluence of politics/history with the servant narratives they collected in “New Order” Java, while simultaneously sidelining, perhaps deliberately, a discussion of the diverse “official” accounts of the Indonesian past that have structured and reconstituted ‘what’ and ‘how’ their informants should remember the past; indeed even if that past is worth remembering. While their arguments for an emphasis on the *nature* of colonial memories are plausible,⁷⁷ a consideration of Narrative possibilities and refusals as discerned by the narrator within a particular socio-historical fabric would broaden their mandate. The effect of environment on remembering is poignant in stories of war theatre or internment camps, but the pending discussion of the political and terror indoctrination of Indonesian subjects firstly under the Japanese, and then under Soekarno and Suharto, elicits a deeper understanding of the impact of social environment on the re-structuring of memory and remembering.⁷⁸ Life storytellers, as Cole has emphasized, remain silent on topics they feel will be misunderstood, unappreciated, misinterpreted or threaten their very existence; memories may be bracketed to an extent that they may eventually disappear from collective/public memory altogether.⁷⁹ This potential phenomenon confronted Stoler

⁷⁶ Niesser, (1988a) *The Ecological Approach to Perception and Memory. New Trends in Experimental and Clinical Psychiatry*. Vol. 4. Pages 153 – 166. Page 151.

⁷⁷ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History: Vol. 42; No. 1* (January) 4 - 48. Page 4. Stoler and Strassler are concerned with subaltern accounts.

⁷⁸ Taussig, M. (July, 1984). Culture of terror - Space of Death. Roger Casement's Putumayo report and the Explanation of Torture. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. Vol. 26 , 467-497.

⁷⁹ Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). The Work of Memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 25, 610-633.

and Strassler in their interviews with Indonesian servants of the Dutch colonial period.⁸⁰

Equally pertinent to analyses is Bartlett's observation that people/groups adhere to the notion that by articulating one set of relationships they can forget or erase another,⁸¹ leading Cole to observe that "*it is the forgetting that allows the creation of an acceptable social community*"⁸² Her postulate will lead to an examination of the *functions* of forgetting and/or remembering within North America, as well as in the Netherlands and Indonesia. The "*development of specific images*" manifests through a "*persistent framework of institutions that act as the schematic basis for reconstructive memory.*"⁸³

2.4 On Producing Truth in Interaction

I am confident this research will provoke critiques that assert an over-involvement with life story interviewees as well as their narratives and that I personalized and hence rejected, negativity levelled at colonial systems. It is undeniable that I merged with many of these texts and I hope that I achieved an understanding of the histories so willingly shared. In my view however, this process models a transformation in colonial methodology long overdue; *listening* to the voices of those we speak about rather than to, *facilitating* the questions they pose to our texts, rather than imposing reinterpretation and silence on theirs. If we are to transform colonial studies, the lived experience of both colonizer and colonized is integral to the process of building a bridge to the colonial past.

⁸⁰ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History: Vol. 42; No. 1* (January) 4 - 48. See especially their discussion of the fact that the children of these servants were rarely interested in their parent's histories.

⁸¹ Bartlett, C.R. *Remembering*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁸² Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). The Work of Memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist Vol. 25*, 610-633. Page 622.

⁸³ Op. cit., page 255.

Telling a life story is a series of speech acts. It is not merely the relation of recalled memories of events that 'happened' to the narrator, but an interactive script. Personal narratives raise questions of identity, location, action, forms of conduct, and acts of judgment. A consideration of the formulation of characteristic discourses structuring the 'I' in diverse narratives, is particularly relevant to current assessments of the fluid re-working of 'self' through life story discourse. Self-presentation played a key role in informant-self relationships and this construction was dialectic. I was not a passive recipient of confidences but fully engaged in the construction and presentation process.

Goffman defined focused interaction as the "*kind of interaction that occurs when persons gather together and openly cooperate to sustain a single focus of attention, typically by taking turns at talking.*" Tannen's subsequent analysis⁸⁴ reveals this conversational pattern, and hence this definition, as typically male; however taking into the account 'overlapping speech' patterns preferred by women, including myself, the definition does point to the flow of interaction during interviews.

The "*special mutuality of social interaction,*"⁸⁵ that arises when two people are together results in an adaptive line of communicative action whereby one will be either insightfully facilitated or insightfully countered, or both and such a line must continue if focus is to be maintained.⁸⁶ Adaptive trajectories arise from the listener's attentive injection of self into the text of speaker. However, injection is not possible where listener does not recognize, or refuses, the speakers' code and either situation may result in a decoding of the original message through the preferred code wielded by listener. Throughout the course of these interviews, coding did become a problem on several occasions.

⁸⁴ Tannen, Deborah (1998) *Why Don't You say What You Mean?* [in] Angeloni, E. (2000/2001) *Anthropology 00/01 Annual Editions*. Guilford: Dushkin/McGraw Hill.

⁸⁵ Goffman, Erving. (1963) *Behavior In Public Places*. New York: The Free Press. page 16.

⁸⁶ op. cit., page 16.

Close examinations of my reactions to initial discursive productions typified the behaviour of a number of veterans as well as Dutch men not married to Dutch Indonesian women. Lingering suspicion of the motives informing the research, combined with an ongoing sense of betrayal - and often anger - regarding the Indies-Dutch association, prompted tricky interactive encounters. At issue was control of the narrative exchange. Veterans quite often approached the process from an, “*I will tell you how it was and then you can go*” perspective; strategic interaction⁸⁷ rarely took the form of ‘turn-taking.’ As a result, I devoted considerable time to defusing a priori hostility, not so much to me personally, but to what I might potentially represent. “Settling down” the narrative atmosphere required that I employ a number of ‘tactics,’ including moving the subject away from the Indies, speaking to wives, if present, about families and immigration, asking about their backgrounds – where they were born in Holland, about family still in the Netherlands – and like topics. Even so, many refused to participate in attempts to become familiar; instead, they waited impatiently until I gave up attempting to distract their focus. Indeed, a few veterans repudiated these attempts on my part, breaking into my side conversations with wives or familial others;

Interviewee: I thought you came here to talk about my experience in the Indies?

Self: Yes, indeed. I... (Interviewee breaks in)

Interviewee: Well then, let's get on with it. You don't need to know about my wife's family in Holland. (wife tries to speak – Interviewee shuts her down) I have a lot to tell you. We were betrayed. That's right. Betrayed. By the government. That's right, our own government. (Wife interjects – (says to me apologetically) He gets real upset when he talks about this, (turns to husband), Now, XX remember your blood pressure. (Husband/Interviewee glares at wife.)

I intervene.... Self: Okay, I can see that this is really important to you. Why don't you tell me about what happened. I really do want to know... Is it okay with you that I have the tape on now? Remember we discussed that the

⁸⁷ Goffman, Erving. (1969) *Strategic Interaction*. New York: Ballantine Books.

day before yesterday, so I have it on, but I want to make sure that you realize that before we begin.

Interviewee: What are you going to with it again?

Self: I will use it to try and tell a little bit about the veterans that fought in Indonesia.

*Interviewee: You are really going to do that? (self: nods) He: Well, that will be the **first** time.*

Self: The first time? (and the interview begins)⁸⁸

Releasing control of the narrative flow was the only way that I could initiate a relationship with some men in this particular group. Rather than an interactive process, the exchange was dictatorial; speech acts both emotive and rhetorical.⁸⁹ It was required that I listen and not speak, although I often used interjections to convey continued interest, disgust, shock, or sympathy. Once the 'steam' that provoked these long one-sided narratives ran out, then, and only then, was I able to ask questions or comment on what I had just heard.

The Emotive function that characterized this preliminary discourse exposed significant aspects of the speaker's self. Messages conveyed to the interviewer focused on self-concept and views of others only in relation to how they affected the self. This inclination to 'lump' narrative peoples into generic categories complete with generalized emotions and motives, offered significant insight into speaker personality and how they regard themselves in terms of self-other dialogue, but offered little information in terms of self/other interaction. Nevertheless, the qualities that characterize these communications did factor into analysis of interviewee experience and attitudes. While the narratives explicitly dealt with betrayal of the self, speech 'tone' cued anger, although a number of interviewees could name that emotion. Furthermore, the characteristic 'burst dam' discourse pattern indicated stories long harboured in silence.

⁸⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. July, 2005. Tape 1.

⁸⁹ Jakobson, Roman. (1960) "*Linguistics and Poetry*." [in] *Style and Language*. edited by Thomas A Sebeok. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press. pages 350-377.

Once interviewees gave themselves permission to speak, they found it difficult to stop.

This same group would often check if I had “really heard” them by asking, *Do you hear me?* Or, *do you understand?* Yet they did not expect a response, the question was rhetorical, as they would often answer for me, *“Well no, you can’t understand. How can you? You weren’t there. No one can understand who wasn’t there. You had to be there.”* Assuring the narrator that I was trying to grasp his point and asking a question that touched on his opinions resulted in close examination of my face. If they were satisfied that what they saw there was ‘real’ interest, they would nod and continue the life story.

Problems also arose when I could not decode particular discourses. Even though interviewees and I share North American culture and the mutuality that arises between people of shared linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds, other narrative placeworlds were often “foreign.” Not until the speaker arrived in ‘Holland’ was I able to connect spatially with the life story. I could certainly apprehend what I was ‘hearing’ – I understood the words spoken and knew their meaning. I fully appreciated the stories related and quickly discerned their point, the morality and worldviews resonated with my own background. However, in some cases plot context and content evoked resistance on my part.

The first ‘camp’ narrative took me unawares. Moving from a delightful set of life-vignettes before the war into the Occupation, the light/dark contrast was surreal and the dissimilarity in quality of life marked by the Japanese, unfathomable. I did not know how to respond. Everything that I thought of saying seemed either patronizing or minimizing; how does a listener who has never had an experience that even remotely connects with what s/he is hearing, convey understanding when you really ‘did have to be there’ to fully empathize with that alternate reality? I experienced that narrative as distancing – in truth because I refused to participate in it.

This initial rejection, indeed denial, did facilitate increased understanding of what prompted Dutch reaction to Indies narratives after repatriation; - ‘it can’t have been that bad,’ “better get on with your life”– but I developed shame around that first repudiation. Reflecting that I too, was silencing or rejecting their texts, I resolved that I would “do better” in subsequent interviews, and ‘open’ self to

what I was hearing in order to *really* appreciate both narrator lives and the contrast 'before' the war,' 'during the war,' and 'after the war.' That resolution required sincere and active labour on my part, but as an interviewee said to me, *if I can live it, you can hear it.*⁹⁰

She was right in her estimation. As narratives exposed the rite-like pre-war, Occupation-Bersiap and Revolution-Independence worlds, increased sensitivity to content illuminated a number of truisms. First, interviewees actively existed with tragedy in their lives to an extent that I could only approximate in imagination. Secondly, that tragedy arose from a micro-macro set of circumstances over which they had little control. The helplessness that permeates the narratives articulating camp experience, post-camp repatriation and life trajectories during the immediate post-repatriation period, emphasize a lack of personal power. Thirdly, my assumption that I was talking to "Dutch" interviewees was largely incorrect, bar the veterans and Dutch to Indonesia interviews in the database. Fourthly, I resonated to loss of natal land, and injecting self into narratives that spoke to self-formation through Indonesian landscapes, and the psychological disjunction that accompanied loss of homeland.

The receiving/conveying relationship in co-presence and its potential for the (sometimes wilful denial) misunderstandings noted speaks to Goffman's assertion that; "*not only are the receiving and conveying of the naked and embodied kind, but each giver is himself [sic] a receiver and each receiver is a giver.*"⁹¹ Indeed, his stipulation that dialogic self and other are not only interactive, but also interchangeable, cannot be overstressed. Adaptation to focused interaction initiates a monitoring process on the part of both parties to ensure that adaptation to the social environment is a consistently acceptable one.

Mikhail Bakhtin:⁹²

⁹⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. June, 2006. Tape 2.

⁹¹ op. cit., page 15.

⁹² Although Bakhtin's work expands Mead, it is not derivative. Bakhtin's manuscripts date early to mid century; he was translated much later.

*The expression of an utterance can never be fully understood if its thematic content is all that is taken into account, the expression of an utterance always **responds** to a greater or lesser degree, that is, it expresses the speaker's attitude towards the other's utterances and not just his attitude towards the object of his utterance.*⁹³

And

*.....utterance has both an author and an addressee.....both composition and particularly the **style** of the utterance depends on those to whom the utterance is addressed, how the speaker or writer imagines and senses his addressees and the force of the effect of the utterance.....when I construct my utterance I try actively to determine his [reader/hearer] response. Moreover, I try to act in accordance with the response I anticipate, so this anticipated response, in turn exerts an active influence on my utterance.*⁹⁴

Any social relation always determines its own terms and each individual within the social relation is a locus within which an incoherent and often contradictory plurality of relational determinations flow and ebb.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, as de Certeau points out, actors in a situation 'know', that is they have learned, are conscious of, and are an intrinsic part of, an operational logic within any social situation.⁹⁶ A participant member to a communicative exchange actively works to put his/her language system to use in order to produce a self that appears coherent in spite of the multifarious situational factors⁹⁷ present in any dialogic exchange; discourse as labour.⁹⁸ Interviewees did orally labour to convey aspects of their experiences. In addition, Ricoeur's point that

⁹³ Bakhtin, M.M. (1986) *Speech Genres and Other Later Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press. page 92.

⁹⁴ op. cit., page 95.

⁹⁵ de Certeau, M. (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life*. translated from the French by Steven Randall. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁹⁶ de Certeau, M. (1986) *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*. translated from the French by B. Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. page 148.

⁹⁷ Much could be said here in terms of de Certeau's "tactics and strategies" or "knowledgeable acts" as outlined by Giddens or Habermas.

⁹⁸ Ricoeur, Paul. (1981) *Hermeneutics and the Social Sciences*. translated from the French by J. Thompson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. page 136.

discursive practice/labour takes place within a certain context of production, in this case my interviews, resulted in speakers' work to convey to me what they needed me to hear and their efforts to give me keys to the code they were using so that I would hear 'correctly.' Analysis of interview labour facilitated recognition that to tell a life story, or life story bits, is to 'rebirth' the past, to resurrect that which may have died, indeed what may have been violently excised, into the living present. The speaking of a past reawakens a weakened body/memory; it gives birth to an "I that is Me."

In addition to the dialectic relationship between emergent selves, it is critical to acknowledge that recounted life stories are instances of Orality and it is the qualities of Orality that frame the 'what and how' of saying. In contrasting the paradigmatic and narrative modes of cognitive functioning, Bruner observes:

"There are two modes of cognitive functioning, two modes of thought, each providing distinctive ways of ordering experience, of constructing reality. The two [though complementary] are irreducible to one another.....Each of these ways of knowing, moreover, has operating principles of its own and its own criteria for well-formedness. They differ radically in their procedures for verification."⁹⁹

Bruner appropriates the term narrative to describe discursive sequences that tell a story; female informants of all backgrounds rarely step out narrative mode. Not only do these stories re-inscribe social themes [mythemes] that are part of the cultural heritage of a particular culture/sub-culture, they incorporate a number of stylistic specificities that mark them as 'narrative.' Through references to their own actions or the actions of others, and their integration of chance happenings as significant contributions into narrative production, storytellers underline the meaningfulness of individual experience within the framework of the 'whole.' The narrative

⁹⁹ Bruner, Jerome (1986) *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. page 11.

weaver manipulates an ability to discern, interlace, and create relationships.¹⁰⁰

My interface with many women informants – who prefer a narrative style - provoked a transformation of interviewer into “something more than just an interviewer.” No woman of any background initiated communication from a dictatorial perspective, working instead to establish mutuality. Gender based differences in speech patterns certainly played a role in this divergence. Gilbert and Gubar's claim¹⁰¹ that women's writing is conversational not confrontational, suggestive not argumentative, is paralleled by Deborah Tannen's discussions of “report talk” and “rapport talk”.¹⁰² Tannen notes men's preference for the “reporting” of information, the making of statements, and turn taking in conversation. Conversely, women in groups tend to speak all at once, are active/cooperative “overlappers,” and singly or in groups are supportive of conversational streams. The tendency to favour

¹⁰⁰ Bruner identified the second primary cognitive style as the paradigmatic mode. His analysis of the paradigm focuses on its central tenet – the search for universal truth conditions. He adds that we know “precious little” about how narrative processes work, while we have an extensive knowledge of the paradigmatic processes used in formal science and logical reasoning. As the ‘preferred code’ in western society, it represents the ‘objective, logical’ mode of thinking philosophically represented as the rational ‘ideal.’ To be objective and rational means to have the ability to remove one’s “self” from the thing or problem under one’s consideration. It means that rules and ethics apply without regard for contextualization. It means to discuss things “out there,” depersonalizing and stripping the topic of discussion of emotional input. The paradigmatic mode can be sterile, vacuous and narrow, subsuming Domains rather than linking them. Bruner’s discussion of the paradigmatic and narrative modes is, to my mind, nothing less than an aspect of the differences between Ong’s Orality and Literacy. Indeed, Ong’s discussion of the characteristics of both paradigms, and the transitional phases between them, are central to a discussion of memory and remembering. Orality represents humankind’s base form of communication; literacy is a secondary skill that facilitates the development of, and emphasis on, particular cognitive skills, while marginalizing others. The paradigmatic mode is, in effect, an artificial, left-brain focused product; that is the reason we have such an extensive knowledge of its processes.

¹⁰¹ Gilbert, S. and Gubar, S. (1988) *No-Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the 20th Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

¹⁰² Tannen, Deborah (1990) *You Just Don't Understand: Men and Women In Conversation*. New York: William Morrow and Co. Ltd.

cooperative or report speech patterns formed an integral aspect of both the interview and the mode through which stories were articulated. The term 'tendency' is key; there were men, including a number of veterans, who were equally reflective, illustrating Kristeva's proposal that the "feminine" and the "masculine" are not gender specific styles, they are simply labels we give to divergent narrative constructions to signify socialized character and sensual traits. Kristeva conceptualizes these terms as being ones in which males and females share, men writing like women, women as men.¹⁰³

Overall, however, women were the ones who established 'connecting points,' *you know ___ right, ...well it was just like that, (or) It's kind of like ___... Well you can compare it to... You know how you feel when...?* Their hermeneutic¹⁰⁴ conveyance of information, provoking emotive, as well as intellectual response, vitally altered my perception of their circumstances. Simultaneously, their understanding of the interview process as dialogic resulted in their asking as many questions as they answered. Focusing their attention on how I thought, and what I felt about particular issues and circumstances, resulted in increased knowledge of me that they used to gauge what they could reveal, and importantly, how they would reveal it – orienting their narratives to interviewer-as-story-consumer.

In addition to these phatic¹⁰⁵ communication patterns, women uniformly told 'stories,' casting the dissemination of information in narrative mode through the evocation of personal relationships, land-body bonds, familial interpretations of macro events, and the provocative solicitation of shared emotional moments based on commonalities in our respective backgrounds that led them to believe I would respond in the 'right way.' Where some men simply dispensed, at times 'barked out,' information, women would weave morals, habits, behaviour, personalities, political circumstances, terror, and personal lives/reactions into comprehensive narrative patterns.

¹⁰³ Kristeva, Julia. (1980) *Desire In Language*. New York: Colombia University Press.

¹⁰⁴ Jakobson, Roman. (1960) "Linguistics and Poetry." [in] *Style and Language*. edited by Thomas A Sebeok. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press. pages 350-377.

¹⁰⁵ Op. cit.

In addition to Kristeva's cautionary admonishment that we cannot categorize "feminine and masculine" speech patterns as consistently typifying 'gender talk,' Tannen prudently notes that speech characteristics are also culturally/ethnically learned. Men of Dutch-Indonesian and Indonesian background slipped into narrative mode when telling stories, but their communicative interviewer/interviewee patterns exhibit a marked affinity to conversational patterns often labelled as 'male.' They preferred turn taking in conversation, tended to 'instruct' me – a paternal stance based on age difference and the assumption of teacher-to-initiate status regarding Indonesian and colonial history - and often assumed an 'objective' posture that allowed them to analyze the past while distancing the self from it. Again, women uniformly eschewed all of those patterns.

Finally, Orality is central to narrative re-telling. Keeping in mind Ong's admonishment that we slip naturally into age-old oral speech and thought patterns when storytelling, the qualities of Orality are significant to the act of re-remembering. Orality discards memories irrelevant to social and personal identification; a key fact when analyzing the content of oral life story interviews. Secondly, Orality depends on direct semantic ratification;¹⁰⁶ words acquire meaning within their context, in combination with facial gestures and vocal inflections convey key information, and are directly received and reacted to by listener. Finally, the speaker uses situational and operational frames of reference, offering keys to the decoding of their life story transmissions. The oral world and its aggregative, redundant, conservative, empathetic, and participatory qualities represent a life story framework consistently brutalized when we employ 'literary criticism' on spoken-become-written texts.

The tension between a literary inheritance and the demands of Orality was significant in the "Dutch" group of informants and the use of narrative and paradigmatic tones decidedly split in terms of gender. The tonal quality of Dutch-Indonesian, as well as Indonesian gendered life story discourse, was less marked; both groups

¹⁰⁶ Direct Semantic ratification = (co-presence) = the meaning of a word is controlled by real life situations in the here and now.

preferred a narrative structure. Use of the terms ‘tone and tonal’¹⁰⁷ draws on their musical connotations and is intended to evoke Bateson’s discussion of ‘ethos’¹⁰⁸ since narrative styles are specialized designs or productions that mark the distinctive, characteristic manner of a particular narrator. Provisioning mood and atmosphere, styles function as locators, positioning both speaker and listener through ethos and articulated positions. In dialogic interaction, the listener-who-is-always already-speaker adds, subtracts, refines, accepts, or negates the meaning and/or the tonal intent of an oral transmission and conveys this internalization orally or through paralinguistic cues. To achieve a successful dialogic transaction, the listener must adjust his/her style of **comprehension** to parallel the speaker’s style of **presentation**. When the listener refuses interaction or cannot adjust comprehension, or a speaker fails at conveyance, miscommunication occurs.

2.5 Refugee Schema

Internment camp accounts form part of the life history of some interviewees, but represent gaps in the texts of others. If informants did engage in a discussion of that period of their lives, it, along with the other landmark¹⁰⁹ events, expulsion from Indonesia, participation in the bersiap period, and/or the war for independence, was recounted with a great deal of emotion and pain. These are “*humiliated memories, memories that represent pure misery...even decades after the events (s/he) narrates.*”¹¹⁰ I labelled these landmark events “bracketed accounts,” since the segments were compartmentalized in terms of the life story flow. They were not polished oral segments re-told many times, but were tentatively addressed through ‘recall.’¹¹¹ Even when camp or expulsion stories

¹⁰⁷ Each discursive bit has a certain quality that I can only compare to the overall ‘mood’ or ‘ethos’, as Bateson uses this term, of a musical piece.

¹⁰⁸ Bateson, Gregory. (1936, 1958) *Naven*. London: Wildwood House.

¹⁰⁹ Linde, C. (1993) *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence*. New York, London: Oxford University Press.

¹¹⁰ Langer, Lawrence. (1977) *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Page 77.

¹¹¹ Lummis, Trevor. (1983) Structure and Validity in Oral Evidence. [in] *International Journal of Oral History*, 1983, Vol. 2 no. 2 pages 109-120 (Meckler Publishing).

haltingly emerged however, a testimonial framework structured the narrative.

Westerman illuminated the outline of this structure through his analysis of Central American Refugee life stories.¹¹² Interviewees conform markedly to his outline. Based on the narrative fragments that emerged after a long repression, the “refugee” outline is an example of Bartlett’s schemata. This is evident from the framework that narrators imposed on even the most disconnected of accounts. The internalization of the sequential criteria understood as constituting a refugee account in North America, expressed through the narrative flow, simultaneously legitimated their experience, and constituted the self as refugee.

Narrative sequences that touched on the “refuge” thematic, began with an opening sequence clearly demarcated as a unique “garden of Eden” memory: “Before the War.” The purity of these memories stems from their youth and/or innocence at this stage in their lives and the personal security experienced prior to the war, consistently contrasted with the ‘Persecution’ period that succeeds it. The coming of the Japanese introduces the persecution sequence that incorporates life during the occupation, but this sequence does not terminate with the release from the camps or the surrender of the Japanese since it extends through the bersiap period and in some cases, to 1956-1957. Additionally, interviewees do not identify “Indonesians” as their persecutors, but identified the Japanese, and subsequently, the Republicans and/or the pemuda, usually referred to as a handful of misguided youth, as the culprit in the persecution sequence. The Japanese period represents a bracketed interval in the main story line – Indonesians and the Dutch before and after. Finally, Escape and Exile characterizes accounts of the escape/exile from

Lummis uses “memory” to refer to a category of life story segments drawn from a fund of information that the Interviewee will readily relate as polished stories or anecdotes. By “recall,” he refers to ‘dormant’ or suppressed memories that are less likely to be integrated into the individual’s narrative.

¹¹² Westerman, (1994) Central American Refugee Testimonies and Performed Life Histories in the Sanctuary Movement. [in] Perks R. and Thomson, A. (eds.) (1998) *The Oral History Reader*. London: Routledge. Pages 224-234.

Indonesia (and in some cases, from Holland). The final phase, Analysis, is not complete for some interviewees.

One of the more interesting aspects of the Indonesian material is the refugee schemata that emerge from Indonesian accounts. Indonesians living in North America have adapted the N.A. framework to their own experiences, and those stories inter-mingle with Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian refugee accounts; Indonesians also bracket the Japanese when they discuss their 'Before the war' initiatory phase and evaluate colonial relationships. Then some of them 'get stuck.' Looking forward 'from the Japanese' they cannot, and do not, demarcate clear boundaries.

All members of the community acknowledge and participate in Westerman's 'functions' of the refugee life story: to educate the public, as a religious act, as therapy (bearing witness and empowerment for survivors) and finally, as a mark of solidarity within the refugee community. The interviewees who embarked on a telling of the refugee interval in their lives expressed overlapping goals: they did hope to initiate a dialogue concerning their experiences, and it is a sign of solidarity within their extended Dutch-Indonesian-Indonesian community. For some, but not all, the discussions became therapeutic as they addressed topics on which they had maintained silence for a very long time indeed.

2.6 Oral Histories as Education

The academic literature has not been silent on the internment camps under the Japanese, but the bulk of the analysis has dealt with the British experience in S.E. Asian camps and even this body of work is negligible compared to the literature on war crimes committed in concentration camps by Germany. In part, this focus on the role of Germany received some impetus from German attempts to come to grips with their history and to enter into a discussion with other historians regarding their past. No similar conversation evolved between Dutch, Indonesian, and other historians regarding the War, post war, and 1949 – 1957 experiences of these narrators.

It is easy to discern the reasons for the relative silence regarding the WW II and post war situations in South East Asia. In the self-determination climate that rapidly emerged after World War II, it is highly relevant that the bulk of the inmate population in Japanese internment camps were "colonialists." The fact that the Japanese

were initially the conquerors and then the vanquished, while taking the initiative to grant Independence to Indonesia during their tenure in the archipelago, is equally important. The political climate in relation to Japan changed rapidly after WW II and Japan became the only “western friendly” first world power in a section of the globe that threatened to move to Communism during the Cold War. Japan itself has not been open about its role during World War II, but has re-written that section of her history or expunged it from textbooks altogether. The role played by Britain and the USA, who used defeated Japanese troops to maintain order on islands such as Java, who ensured that no Dutch men/troops would land for many months, and who prioritized Britain’s colonies and personnel, receives little comment in subsequent analyses, beyond a bare mention of the facts.

The Japanese perspective of her legal position vis a vis conquered territory maintained a *de jure* status by virtue of conquest.¹¹³ Chakrabarty quotes Dow:

*The British nation have become the conquerors of Bengal and they ought to extend some of their fundamental jurisprudence to secure their conquest.....The sword is our tenure. It is an absolute conquest, and it is so considered by the world.*¹¹⁴

Like the 18th century British, Japan understood conquest as a legitimate basis for ownership and acted on that assumption throughout the war. In 1943, she granted Burma independence from Britain and Tokyo’s language and actions consistently illustrated that she assumed parallel rights to the Dutch East Indies. Towards the close of WW II, in conversation with Soekarno and Hatta¹¹⁵ (as

¹¹³ A *de jure* government is one legally in place; a *de facto* government is one effectively in power and operating, but without legal authority. It is important to note that the Japanese position has traditionally been the international position – throughout history if you won the war, the land and people were yours.

¹¹⁴ Dow, Alexander (1770 – 1772 3 Vols.) [History of Hindostan] (in) Chakrabarty, Dipesh. (Winter, 1992) Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for Indian “Pasts”? *Representations*. No. 37. Special Issue: Imperial Fantasies and Post Colonial Histories. Pages 1-26. Page 6.

¹¹⁵ It is interesting, and excellent politicking by Soekarno and Hatta that the subsequent revolutionary government did not share in the Japanese interpretation

well as the actions she took in relation to both) Japan maintained her ability to grant sovereignty to 'Indonesia' until she had formally surrendered to Allied Forces. Clearly she was working with the formula that defeat (conquest nullified) = *de jure* status voided.

The transfer of sovereignty from the Japanese to Indonesian nationalists created a *de facto* nationalist government over parts of Java and Sumatra. Given declarations regarding indigenous rights, the denigration of Colonialism post World War II, and the immediacy of the "Indonesian" revolution, international opinion rapidly swung in favour of the Republic. Academic literature in the English-speaking world has effectively buried the fate of internment camp inmates, POWs, the fate of the romushas, and indeed, the effect of the Japanese on the lives of 'Indonesians,' under a narrative of romanticized resistance against Colonialism. Noted, but muted, the political events surrounding the release of prisoners, the fact that the Japanese had to act as guards over their former enemies, and the

of Dai Nippon's legal status. That they recognized the Japanese spin on its position is implicit in the fact that they entered into negotiations with Japan to accept sovereignty of the Republic. That they themselves questioned Japan's right is evident since they did not advance an argument based on a *de jure* transfer from Japan to legitimate their sovereignty claims over the Republic. Instead, they followed the international position that Japan may have held a *de facto* status, but was not in a legal position to transfer sovereignty to nationalist leaders. Therefore, they required a transfer of sovereignty from the Netherlands; these negotiations would occupy the years 1945 - 1949. The Dutch position in the Indies was rooted in the "short" and "long" legal contracts they had closed with various rulers throughout the archipelago over the centuries. International law supported the Dutch *de jure* status in relation to the Indiës, although my discourse analysis indicates that the fact that she had not been able to play an important military role during the war was detrimental to her cause as subsequent events unfolded. Since she had not been able to defend what she held, she had lost the right to hold it.

The situation regarding the transfer from Japan to the nationalists was complicated by the fact that Japan had parceled the archipelago into various administrative units, the Japanese 16th Army was in charge of Java, the 25th Army in Sumatra, and the Navy controlled eastern Indonesia from its headquarters at Ujung Pandang. Moreover, the Japanese made the decision on May 9th, 1944, to abandon West Irian. Therefore, the passing of Japanese sovereignty to the nationalists *in the Indies* was nominal and symbolic only. Barring the authority he held "in the name of the Emperor," General Yamamoto, in charge on Java, had no jurisdiction over some of the areas he purported to transfer and Japan had abandoned even her *de facto* claim to West Irian.

reality of the bersiap period melt away in the face of the Grand Narrative of Indonesian liberation.

The Indonesian silence on Republican and pemuda activity in the war for Independence remains relatively unchallenged, as does her use of terror and torture during that same period. Her subsequent political stances; her actions in the 1950s vis a vis the Dutch, the “stand-off” with Malaysia, the crisis over Papua New Guinea, the situation in east Timor, and the persecution of dissidents, receives some academic attention, but little sustained challenge or ideological deconstruction of Holland as “Other” can be located. Veterans, in particular, do confront the activities of Indonesian republicans during the pre-war and 1946-49 periods, as well as consequent Indonesian politicking, as indicative of a will to power displayed by Indonesian revolutionaries. In turn, this quest for personal power led to a betrayal of the Indonesian people, facilitated firstly by the Dutch government, and carried out by subsequent Indonesian leaders.

Interviewees are acutely aware of the silence surrounding their camp experiences, the period after their release, the “actuality” of the war for Independence and the events leading up to the 1956 crisis. Many of them expressed the hope that their interviews might lead to a re-opening of those historical questions, initiate a re-evaluation of the events characterizing the politics, and initiate a dialogue on the complicated realities of relationships in Indonesia.

2.7 Testimony: Shared Reality

Dutch-Indonesians, Dutch-Indonesian people and Indonesians, form communities within the cities of North America. Moreover, they have created a wide range of virtual communities in cyber space. The glue that binds them together is the silence imposed on their common experiences. A number of groups engaged the problem of Japan’s admission to the Security Council of the U.N.¹¹⁶ They support the

¹¹⁶ Van der Veen, Marjolein. In *Tempo Dulu Journal*. (February, 2005) Journal of the August 15, 1945 Foundation. “As a survivor of the Japanese WW II internment camps, I would like Japan to fully acknowledge and make amends for its WW II history of war crimes before it be considered for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

admission but insist that Japan must address her war effort and make the appropriate public admissions, before her installation at the Council level. The communities exchange political information, trace genealogies, find 'lost' community members for each other, and more generally validate what was, for many of them, a fragmenting experience.

Taussig has noted the difficulties facing a scholar who attempts to grapple with the "culture of terror through narration."¹¹⁷ Indeed the difficulty is inherent in the craft of writing. When faced with the transcription results of a living breathing oral performance-become text, the reduction of emotion is profound.¹¹⁸ I had previously encountered the 'flatness' of written concentration camp accounts through recollections given to me by informants.¹¹⁹ What is striking about these written memories, and sadly, my transcriptions, is that no matter how 'writerly' the authors/reader's intent,¹²⁰ they do not facilitate jouissance. During oral interviews, I was fully participant, had wept and laughed and felt the experiences that I was privileged to hear. Consequently, since the words still 'rang in my ears,' I did not anticipate that my transcriptions would suffer the same reductive quality. The transcribed accounts are almost surreal on paper – a distant non-relevant fiction – and I was unable to find a narrative solution that would adequately enable the transmission of

Without such a full reckoning, it gives a green light to other nations today and in the future to engage in war crimes with impunity."

¹¹⁷ Taussig, M. (July, 1984). Culture of Terror - Space of Death. Roger Casement's Putumayo report and the Explanation of Torture. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. Vol. 26, 467-497. Page 467.

¹¹⁸ As noted by Wigginton in Wigginton, Eliot. (1988) *Reaching Across the Generations: The Foxfire Experience*. [in] Perks R. and Thomson, A. (eds.) (1998) *The Oral History Reader*. London: Routledge. Pages 207-213.

¹¹⁹ See for example, Tromp, S. (1999) (Ed) *Four Years Till Tomorrow*. Surrey, B.C.: Vanderheide Publishing. One of my informants gave me a non-published photocopy collection, *Zo Verging Het Ons*, gathered by Tineke Stolk.

¹²⁰ Barthes, Roland [1975] *The Pleasure of the Text*. translated from the French by Richard Miller. New York: Hill and Wang.

violence and terror, and their effects, to a reader. Camp accounts provoked an awareness of the limits of representation.¹²¹

Ongoing attempts to convey terror in words, parallels the manner in which POW and veteran interviewees groped to explain their experiences aloud. Significantly, internment camp inmates, POWs, and at times, veterans, were more apt to speak of their experiences when other survivors were present. Naomi Rosh White marks 'absences' – gaps in Holocaust texts - through her discussion of the '*place where language fails.*'¹²² Accounts of terror move beyond the limits of representation to a place where the words for experiences and feelings resist articulation. Other survivors can *feel* those spaces written on their bodies. Groping for words is only necessary when conveying to an interviewer such as myself 'what was felt' through what was 'done.'

Have any of you looked into the eyes of another person, on the floor of a cell, who knows that he's about to die though no-one has told him so? He knows that he's about to die but he clings to his biological desire to live, as a single hope, since no-one has told him he's to be executed.

I have many such gazes imprinted upon me.....

Those gazes which I encountered in the clandestine prisons of Argentina and which I've retained one by one, were the culminating point, the purest moment of my tragedy.

*They are here with me today. And although I might wish to do so, I **could not and would not know how to share them with you.***

¹²³ *(emphasis mine)*

¹²¹ LaCapra, Dominic (1992) "Representing the Holocaust: Reflections on the Historians Debate," (in) Freidlander, Saul (1992) (ed.) *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution."* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. Page 126.

¹²² White, Naomi Rosh (1994) *Making Absences, Holocaust Testimony and History.* [in] Perks R. and Thomson, A. (eds.) (1998) *The Oral History Reader.* London: Routledge. Pages 172 - 188.

¹²³ Timerman, Jacobo. (1982) *Prisoner Without A Name, Cell Without a Number.* New York: Vintage Books.

Terror is carefully deployed to destroy a self's sense of intentionality and agency, creating a deliberately induced disorientation. Disjunction, that state of being where there is no longer a shared set of "sense making practices," results in a deep corrosion, in effect "splits" between "self" and memory."¹²⁴ Langer argues that true healing is not ever possible where the rift between 'Self' (the "I" as I 'know' myself to be) and Memory (the "I" that I was on these occasions, but who is not really me) is inculcated. White disagrees. She argues that moving from silence to speech is a gesture that heals, while Langer argues that survivors continue to live as fractured selves.

Interviewees carefully weighed the dynamics of their own understanding of "permissible disclosure,"¹²⁵ a paradigm that incorporates social/personal notions regarding what 'should' and 'should not' be communicated, in order to gauge whether or not they would move from silence to speech. In my interviews, 'permissible disclosure' is inseparable from "disturbance considerations."¹²⁶ While narrators judged the impact of their stories on me as listener, concerns regarding self-exposure were equally important. This reluctance to expose the "me on this occasion who is not *really me*," for example under torture conditions, or experiencing severe hunger, also arose in some of the veteran interviews.

Concern about the impact of particular stories on me as listener was specific to my male interviewees, a fact that directly addresses Sherbakova's analysis of the gendered differences in the Gulag accounts she collected. Paralleling her interviews, women emphasized their personal relationships in the camps, while men

¹²⁴ Langer, L. (1991) *Holocaust Testimonies: the Ruins of Memory*. New Haven: Yale University press. Pages 63-64.

¹²⁵ Whether or not an event is too private to relate. White traces what can and cannot be spoken through her discussion of "Difficulties in telling" and notes that the "*inside is inconceivable, even to those who were there.*" White, Naomi Rosh (1994) *Making Absences, Holocaust Testimony and History*. [in] Perks R. and Thomson, A. (eds.) (1998) **The Oral History Reader**. London: Routledge. Pages 172 – 188. page 173.

¹²⁶ Whether or not a communication poses a threat to the listener. Op. cit., page 176. "*silence also protects the listener.*"

exhibited how badly their humiliation in those camps affected them.¹²⁷ Many female interviewees transferred moral, personal, and social lessons through a retelling of their camp experiences – narratives I could “grow from.” Indeed, women conveyed that if they could live it, I could hear it, and woman to woman were certain I had the strength to do so. While they suffered from torture and other humiliating experiences in the Japanese camps, women sought validation and solace in their closeness with other inmates as well as their own children and the children of others. *“They were strong for us (children).”*¹²⁸

Moreover, men were disproportionately subjected to excess physical and mental hardships and do not seem to have been able to find relief in close personal relationships such as those described by women. In essence, they felt they had little in the way of lessons or morality to transmit, only despair, anguish or anger.

*Sometimes I wake up in the morning and I can smell the air..... and I am back in Papua.*¹²⁹

*What a strange land. (Netherlands) I kept thinking, when are we going home?*¹³⁰

There was to be no return to the life informants had experienced before the war, Dutch, Dutch-Indonesian, or Indonesian. The Japanese occupation represented a watershed – a chasm with no bridge back. The narratives clearly illustrate the socially imposed inability to talk about loss of innocence, land, and past, for all three groups. As a result, a feeling of sadness permeates the narratives of repatriates, while the changes wrought in the archipelago led to different kinds of pain for Indonesian interviewees.

¹²⁷ Sherbakova, Irina. (1992) The Gulag in Memory. [in] Passerini, L. (ed.) (1992) *International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories: Vol. 1. Memory and Totalitarianism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pages 103-115.

¹²⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian (Female.) Tape 3. June, 2005.

¹²⁹ Op. cit., Tape 2.

¹³⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian (Female.) Tape 2. July, 2004.

Subsequent to their arrival in Holland, a number of informants attempted to discuss aspects of their camp experiences with people in the Netherlands. Their accounts had been met with disbelief (surely, it cannot have been that bad!) or advice (“best to forget about it and get on with your life – you survived.”) When searing (and reoccurring post camp) images of self-despair and suffering inflict the individual, when self engages in persistent and corrosive self inquisition (did I do everything I could have done, could I have helped in this or that instance?), they experience the silence imposed on their memories and identities, as a state of re-incarceration. *“To forget the victims of violence ...is to inflict that violence a second time.”*¹³¹

The Indische encounter with silence addresses Captain’s discussion regarding the number of memoirs that reached the Dutch public in the 1940’s (17) and in the 1950’s, 1960’s and 1970’s, when only 17 were published in almost three decades.¹³² In the 1980’s, as the “listening” climate transformed, - and I propose, an increased need for the aging to speak before they passed on - people tenuously began to share their memories. Many interviewees referred to perceived constraints imposed on these conversations in Holland. Veterans, who keep in touch with their brethren in the Netherlands, insist that the only “acceptable” framework for KNIL or Vrijwilliger conversation is an admission of “war crimes,” and that *“Holland is not interested in a full conversation of what we did and what we saw, as this may embarrass her relations with Indonesia.”*¹³³

Some narrators continued to eschew potential healing through speech and maintained silence. As they put it, *“you explain it the best you can....”*¹³⁴ Or *“what is the use of airing it all out again. Will that*

¹³¹ Valensi (1992) [in] Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). The Work of Memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 25, 610-633. Page 626.

¹³² Captain, Esther. (1997) The Gendered Process of Remembering War Experiences: Memories about the Second World War in the Dutch East Indiës. *European Journal of Women’s Studies: Vol. 4*. Pages 389 – 395. Page 390.

¹³³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 1, June, 2004.

¹³⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 2, July 2005.

*change anything...?*¹³⁵ or “it is the way that humans are.....it is not the first time anything like this has happened, and it will not be the last....look at.....”¹³⁶ In an endeavour to explain, a number of informants utilized the ‘redemptive power of history’ to situate their experiences in the ‘nature’ of humankind.¹³⁷

Silence bestows dignity and I chose silence and paralinguistic cues to respond to their stories, since Language failed me. The western psychological notion that bearing pain in solitude is unhealthy, informs the proposition that in order to heal, we must speak that which is silent, retrieve what we have buried. On the national stage, the Confession principle incorporates individual and nation. Valensi adheres to this model of self-understanding when she maintains that a vanquished nation must come to terms with its defeat; it must air out its historical deeds, examine them, and discuss them, in order to deal with national memory and move on.¹³⁸ Rooted in a specific view of human psychology, the paradigm maintains that sharing enables true validation and self-knowledge.¹³⁹ Hence, privacy is both unhealthy and undesirable. Interviewees admire, validate, and practice privacy. The current rage for public disclosure in North America that incorporates the ‘airing out’ of man’s cardinal sins with all appropriate emotional displays intact is, for these informants, voyeuristic and demeaning.

¹³⁵ Oral History Interview, Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1, August, 2005.

¹³⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Tape 1, August, 2005.

¹³⁷ For a discussion of the redemptive power of history see: Leys, Ruth (1996) *Traumatic Cures: Shell Shock, Janet and the Question of Memory*. [in] Antze, Paul and Lambek, Michael (eds.) (1996) *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory*. New York: Routledge. Pages 173-198. Also: Herman, Judith. (1991) *Trauma and Recovery*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

¹³⁸ Valensi (1992) [in] Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). *The Work of Memory in Madagascar*. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 25, 610-633. Page 626. See also Goss, Andrew. (2000) *From Tong-Tong to Temp Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History, 1957 - 1961*. *Indonesia*. Vol. 70. (October) pages 9-36

¹³⁹ See the discussion of the conflicting approaches to a discussion of the “past” in connection with Indonesia in; Houben, Vincent J.H. (1997) *A Torn Soul: The Dutch Public Discussion on the Colonial Past in 1995*. *Indonesia*. Vol. 63 (April). Pages 47 - 66.

2.8 ON RESISTANCE

The dominant western paradigm appropriated by other in terms of self rule/revolution is rooted in the Kantian mandate that individuals have autonomous wills and the will must be free in order for the will to fulfill itself. This principle frames the paradigm of self-determination. When analyzing resistance, we accept as a given that any policy or state of being that threatens this freedom of self-will elicits from the 'self' the necessity for struggle against 'other.' Neuberger characterizes this Naturalistic-Universalist stance when he notes:

The emergence of a national self occurs – at least in its formative stages – through a process of differentiation from an opposing group. The formation of the American nation was linked with opposition to the British. The concept of the Pakistani nation does not make sense without its differentiating stand against the Hindu dominated Indian nation.”¹⁴⁰

Neuberger does not present this model as acquired social interaction with political purpose, but as inherent. Extending the 'individual' imperative to group behaviour, after all, in this scheme, groups are simply multiple individuals driven by a (singular) self-will, he mandates that the group 'self' must struggle against another group in order to know the self. Contra Sartre,¹⁴¹ one cannot come to know the self through the eyes of other in terms of degrees of difference; Neuberger formulates the additional criteria that self must formulate self in *opposition* to other eyes. Presumably, if there is no opposing group to hand, or one that is not oppositional enough, the group must create/imagine one. Neuberger extends the self/other dyad to group – as an inherent, confrontational, oppositional and inevitably conflict ridden binary.

¹⁴⁰ Neuberger, B. (1986) *National Self-determination in Post Colonial Africa*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publications. page 20

¹⁴¹ Sartre, J.P. (1993) *Being and Nothingness*. Translated from the French by Hazel E. Barnes. New York: Washington Square Press. Sartre postulated that in order to know self as self, we must see ourselves reflected in the eyes of at least one other. Knowing self as self depends on co-presence.

The 'natural' framework of this paradigm has been utilized in many a resistance movement as well as by those who analyze resistance. Yet as Moynihan noted, "*minorities not infrequently see self determination for themselves in order to deny it to others.*"¹⁴² Self-determination may be a right but it does not necessarily facilitate justice; ethnic government does not automatically create ethical government. While one group may claim the right to self-determination or freedom, other peoples, at the hands of those same 'freedom fighters,' may lose that right.

Indonesian revolutionary leaders claimed the right to self-determination and freedom from the colonial regime. The U.S./international community and self-determination discourse supported that right. Through the evocation of cultural symbols defining Javanese difference from the colonizer, while simultaneously evoking a spurious historical archipelago unity, the republic claimed rights to all areas in South East Asia previously held by the Dutch colonial administration. That many leaders of the revolution had territorial aspirations that indicate a will to power rather than a will to be free (the will to power often wears freedom's mask) emerges from the observations below; clearly, these revolutionaries were capable of imagining Nation:¹⁴³

As regards territory, opinions were more divided. Hatta thought it should be limited to the former Dutch East Indies, excluding New Guinea, which was racially not a part of Indonesia, but of Melanesia. The Papuans, he argued, had a right to freedom too, and in the next few decades it would be beyond Indonesia's capability to educate them for Independence. On the other hand, Hatta saw no objection in principle to including Malaysia.....if it was clear they wanted to join Indonesia. Yamin.....demanded the whole of New Guinea, Portuguese Timor, the British possessions in Borneo and Malaya as far as the frontier of Thailand. Soekarno supported these demands, and added that he had formerly thought of including the Philippines also, but as these had now gained their independence,

¹⁴² Moynihan, Daniel Patrick. (1993) *Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc. page 70.

¹⁴³ "Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self consciousness; it invents nations where they do not exist. Gellner, Ernest (1964) *Thought and Change*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson. Page 169.

*he would be content with the area suggested by Yamin. ...A third group wanted the territory of the Dutch East Indies as it stood. When the question was put, this group (the latter) scored 19 votes, Hatta's proposal (see above) 6, while Yamin's party were victorious with 39.*¹⁴⁴

Secondly, who are these others we must confront in order to emerge as 'selves?' Critically, Culture marks difference. While Handler has convincingly demonstrated the intimate links between social science discourse and the rhetoric of nationalism,¹⁴⁵ his provocative hypotheses remain relatively neglected in our subsequent analyses. He asserts that Social Science scholars have *structured* the models (including the fear of "cultural loss") utilized by peoples in their political quests for self-rule and that *our* objectification of cultural criteria has led to the revolutionary appropriation of a social science model that stipulates that culture is *the* natural basis of a political state. This is learned behaviour – the 'making' and 'imagining' of nation and community based on the identification of shared cultural symbols has its roots in the 'identifying markers' social scientists have stipulated as signifiers of particular identities. Even *if* the self/other definitional dyad is inherent, or arises from a Levi-Strausseau concept of language, the construction of other as oppositional based on cultural criteria, is not.

As Soekarno clearly understood, the creation of self and nation in terms of oppositional Other, is a political game:

"XX"¹⁴⁶ was an 'inland' flyer, Catalinas that could land on water and on the islands and he flew Soekarno to lots of places. Well you know he (Soekarno) was terribly nice, really jovial and friendly and spoke fluent Dutch. He would kid around with the whole (Dutch) crew, you know, all boys together, laugh and talk. Well then they would get to where they were going and Soekarno would get off the plane

¹⁴⁴ Dahm, B. (1971) *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*. Translated by P.S. Falla. London; New York: Praeger Publishers. Page 104. Emphasis mine.

¹⁴⁵ Handler, Richard. (1988) *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Chapter 1.

¹⁴⁶ XX was this informant's husband. They were married in 1946. The flights occurred during the confrontation between the Republic on Java and the Netherlands.

*and make a speech to the people. And then (in his speech) there had to be terrible things that would happen to the Dutch, horrible things had to happen to them... and then ja, he would get back on the plane and grin..."Just politics" he'd say and then back they would go, laughing and joking...*¹⁴⁷

On the next tape, she adds:

*I was 19 in 1942..... (long pause.) The Japanese continued to conquer and rob the country..... after XX and I were married after the war, well my man was flyer. Well speaking of Soekarno, (we weren't) he had to keep in touch with all these areas. So only with a water-boat-flyer could he get to where he had to go. So well – Soekarno was a nice jovial guy, well so great to get along with, well they would have their fun, he and the crew, and then they would get to an island, so he would talk about the 'blue eyes.' Yes, that's what he called them - "blue eyes"! Well like I said before, the things that had to happen to those blue eyes! Ja, and then they went back. Just politics. And then laughed. It was all over.*¹⁴⁸

After independence in 1949:

*I remember after it was all over, when everything was settled, he (Soekarno) invited all the flyers and wives to the palace..... and it was such a naïve, such an innocent feast..... so jolly.... – we gathered around the piano and sang songs at the top of our lungs... (Daughter): But mama, didn't anyone stay away on principle? (Mother): No. No-one. (Daughter): Could the Dutch understand? (Kon de Nederlanders het verstaan?) (Mother) Ja. Absolutely. But it all went completely wrong, completely wrong.... (Het was helemaal verkeerd gegaan, helemaal verkeerd).*¹⁴⁹

The relevance of this thesis extends beyond analysis and transformation of the academic discourse on colonialism, the re-centering of post/colonial voices, and the role of Orality and memory in the reconstitution of post/colonial periods through recognition of socio-historical milieus on 'remembering.' Given the mosaic of

¹⁴⁷ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Dutch-Indonesian/Female. Tape 1, May, 2004. (Eurasian)

¹⁴⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Dutch-Indonesian/Female. Tape 2, May, 2004

¹⁴⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Dutch-Indonesian/Female. Tape 3. May, 2004.

ethnicities that currently characterize the majority of western nations, the understandings extrapolated from narratives regarding feelings for 'native' land, structures of power and authority, possibilities of co-existence, and syncretized cultures, will contribute significantly to ongoing discussions of immigration, multiculturalism and ethnic adaptation.

3 The Dutch

Dutch discursive structures compiled from the narratives of veterans and Dutch men and women who left the Netherlands for Indonesia during their lifetimes, are tightly fused through the attribute betrayal. The discursive map of the narrative weave appears in *Figure 5*:

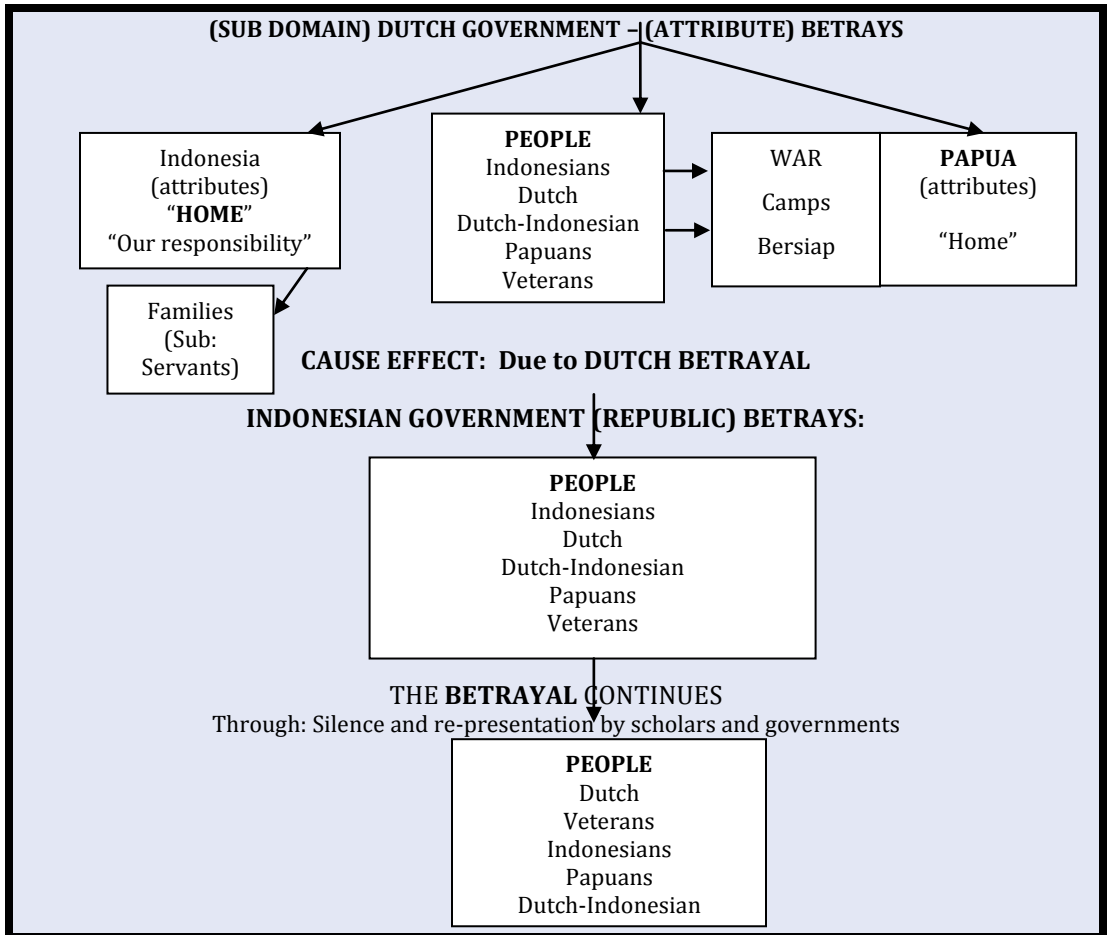


Figure 5: Betrayal Motif in Dutch Discourse

This sense of betrayal is rooted in a strong conviction that the Netherlands Indies relationship was right, true, and closer than other colonial relationships. Debating this position with the relevant informants is difficult, since their sense of treachery

has hardened and is ongoing. The Dutch Government, they maintain, initiated the duplicity process by leaving Indonesia and Papua to the mercy of Indonesian republicans/revolutionaries and abandoning their 'responsibilities' in both locales. In turn, Indonesia betrayed Dutch, Dutch-Indonesians, Indonesians, and Papuan peoples through dishonesty, misrepresentation, violence, and terror. Finally, the betrayal continues unabated for all, through silencing and denial of their circumstances.

The Netherlands government however, receives the lion's share of the blame. In the view of many consultants, including over 90% of the veterans, the only barrier standing between long-term grief for the peoples of the archipelago and the Revolutionaries, was a Dutch government that proved unequal to the task. Narratives echo Spreeuwers:

*"An unforced and heartfelt friendship between two people under the same Crown. A togetherness that brings salvation to both of us. Why can it not be the same in all areas of the archipelago? Why do we not move swiftly against the power hungry few who ruin their own peoples' lives? Why not cut out the rotten spots in the body of the Netherlands bosom? Why not flout American and England? Do we offer up these people for a little Marshall help? It all goes over our helmets."*¹

In acceding to the demands of the Republic, the government disillusioned many of its own citizens:

We would feel forgotten and betrayed by our own government.....

*Know also, that our trust in right was to receive an (un-reinstatable) unrecoverable blow.*²

The betrayal motif informs the immigration decisions made by these interviewees, while ideologies that frame the idea of Nation in their new homelands resituate their understandings of the past. When

¹ Spreeuwers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. Page 155. All translations from this text are mine.

² Op. cit., page 126.

interviewees immigrated to Canada for example, it was a country administered under the British crown. The schemata they utilize when assessing their relationship with Indonesia draws on an immigration experience that highlighted multiple peoples united under one crown, facilitating a parallel “could have been” vision for Netherlands Indies relations under the House of Orange. Conversely, others assert that they immigrated to North America precisely because they had formerly conceptualized their (hoped for) relationship with Indonesia and its people as a society of multiple ethnicities living side-by-side, subject only to the secular laws that bind them as one. Therefore, they chose to leave the Netherlands for countries of like mind.

While Europe, like North America, is multi-ethnic, schizophrenic analysis of what is or should be possible in North America or Europe, and what is/should be possible elsewhere, is the norm. In the literature on European Colonialism, a long-term government that included former colonizers is neither proposed nor theoretically possible, given the “naturalness” paradigm of self-definition and determination. Yet both Canada and the United States ‘came to be’ through processional Colonization that parallels those scenarios condemned elsewhere: without the participation of indigenous peoples, rhetoric expended on their self-determination, or opportunities for their self-definition.

3.1 Indigenous, Self-Determination and Colonialism

According to international law, the (original) possession of a locality confers indigenous status on a particular group of people. Those holding that status have legal rights; Self-determination is one of those rights, albeit poorly defined within the context of International Law.³ As a self-proclaimed right of man, the idea that a group has the

³ The legislation did not assist the Papuans. We can attribute this fact to the recognition that the “peoples” who have rights are further defined by the salt/blue water thesis that stipulates a colonial situation, as I note below. The Papuans are subservient in (international) status to the nation in which they reside. Both the legislation noted above, and the 1953 and 1960 declarations on colonialism and indigenous rights, should include the codicil “among peoples as determined by that

right to determine who will lead or rule them is an age old concept that arises in the Old Testament and is certainly not new to the contemporary political scene. It elevates a principle (to determine how best to govern oneself as community) to the status of a right (all men have the right to determine who will govern them).

Woodrow Wilson played a key role in the formulation of international self-determination, including its enforcement through the right to take up arms:

*"Self determination is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of action, which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their own peril."*⁴

Subsequent to the post World War II establishment of the United Nations, "self determination" was enshrined as a fundamental political right for peoples living under *certain* colonial administrations. Simultaneously, F.D. Roosevelt determined upon a course of action that would render Europe strategically irrelevant; emasculation depended upon the relinquishment of overseas colonies. American policy henceforth rhetorically stressed that colonial peoples had the right to self determine their leaders,⁵ effectively equating ethnic government with ethical government. At the heart of the definition of self-determination lays an uncomfortable truism as the paradigm is presently conceived; colonial administrations cannot be ethical governments; their very presence is unethical since they are not ethnic.

In 1960, the United Nations issued the "*Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*," a declaration in which the Americans again played a key role:

The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination, and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is

State" in order to accurately reflect decisions supported since the clarification of the Charter principle.

⁴ Moynihan, Daniel Patrick. (1993) *Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc. page 79.

⁵ Kagan, R. (2003, 2004) *Of Paradise and Power*. New York: Vintage Books. Page 70.

contrary to the charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and cooperation. (emphasis mine)

*..all peoples have the right to self determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.*⁶

The “salt or blue water” thesis appended to the 1960 Declaration glosses the critical term ‘alien.’ It specifies that a colonial situation is only self evident when the colonized population is both culturally distinct from, and geographically separate from, the mother country.⁷ Under these stipulations, indigenous populations in Canada, Australia and the United States did not meet the criteria for a self-evident colonial situation and the governments of those countries did not find themselves under international pressure to honour rights to self-determination for their indigenous subjects. Furthermore, in the case of the U.S.A and Australia, those countries were among the most vocal against, and exerted undue pressure on, European Nations to “de-colonize.”

The implicit message in the blue/salt water thesis, that only European countries are colonizers, echoes throughout the apparently unselfconscious tendency of mid 20th century American scholars to celebrate Revolution against evil colonial regimes. Oblivious to the fact that a bland acceptance of the status quo vis a vis their own indigenous peoples permeates their scholarship, and that an unprecedented and unwarranted smugness regarding the rights of subjugated others dominates their narratives, the received message is clear: “Europeans” are ‘colonialists’ who oppress others. North Americans, it is implied, are a different breed of people/scholars who understand and empathize with the ‘colonized.’ This distancing stance promoted uncritical and unthinking academic

⁶ *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.* Resolution 1514 [XV] United Nations (1960) Resolution Adopted By the General Assembly during Its Fourth Emergency Special Session 17 -19 September 1960. New York: Official Records of the Fourth Emergency Special Session Supplement No. 1 (A/4510) page 67.

⁷ Asch, M (1984) *Home and Native Land: Aboriginal Rights and the Canadian Constitution.* Toronto: Methuen.

work in relation to ‘revolutions’ such as the Indonesian-Dutch encounter, and it has only been recently that critical American works, incorporating the role of their own country in that endeavour, have entered the academic stream. Yet North American intellectuals continue to deploy terms such as “Eurocentric” and “Eurocentrism” when discussing attitudes and interaction between North American aboriginals and American/Canadian citizens, compounding the continual displacement of responsibility from settlers of North America to a mythified ‘Europe.’⁸ Simultaneously, many European scholars appear to accept and internalize these critiques.

This deployment of intellectual rhetoric unreflectively arises from, while reconstituting, ideology and praxis vis a vis North American aboriginal populations, for within the framework of this understanding, ‘who’ is a colonialist bypasses Canadians and Americans.⁹ Fundamentally, the dominant attitude among them, including many academics and those who deplore the current conditions of North American aboriginal populations, is that ‘we won’ the war on North American soil and indigenous peoples must adjust and adapt to changing circumstances.¹⁰ Guilt and angst regarding the ongoing colonial situation is thin on the ground, and little in the way of soul searching forms part of the Canadian or

⁸ Indeed, these terms are regularly deployed by First Nations people I work with. It is difficult to reconcile the term “Eurocentric” with an attitude struck by a Canadian farmer (as an example) whose family has been in Canada for more than three generations. His perspective has nothing to do with a “European” world-view, but is firmly rooted in the way in which he (historically) regards relations on Canadian soil.

⁹ Perhaps no clearer example of this mindset can be found than in President Obama’s interview with Al Arabiya on January 27, 2009. In that interview, he utters the surprising claim that the United States was never a colonial power; was not born in and of Colonialism. In response, one can only point silently (and initially) at the experience of Native North Americans. Since the U.S. was a “colony” of England’s, a Nation that colonized North America, when did colonization stop? The war of Independence merely shifted colonization from the shoulders of the British to the newly formed nation

¹⁰ In the U.S.A., indigenous peoples are an absent presence. If you watch CNN for an hour, you will hear blacks, Hispanics etc referred to constantly in terms of race relations, but there will be no mention of Native Americans. In Canada, First Nations do play a prominent political role.

American national psyche. While there is no shortage of documentation on 'how the west was won,' in this ideal scenario atrocities against aboriginal peoples form part of the national pasts,¹¹ they are "behind us."

The trajectory of Colonialism in the USA and Canada and the manner in which the encounter is defined and understood in both countries, diverges critically from analytic models imposed on the roles played by countries such as Britain and the Netherlands in the lands of Other. Nestled within the North American social fabric, informants enjoy a freedom from guilt that frames "how" and "what" they remember, as well as their attitudes towards Indonesia and the Netherlands.

3.2 Place, Body, Identity

Canadian and American ideologies offer interviewees not only a language, but also validation for their conceptualization of relations with the Indies. Some of the Dutch interviewees who left for Indonesia prior to World War II, and all sub-categories of Dutch-Indonesians, state they were citizens of the Indies, paralleling their current North American status. In asserting this identity, they directly challenge contemporary analysts, who dismiss any claim to an Indies identity on the part of Netherlands Indies men and women, or Dutch-Indonesians, as 'colonialist' or 'orientalist.' Elsbeth Locher-Scholten for example, reading "*Ams Houdt van Indië*,"¹² observes: "*the political ideal of association between colonizer and colonized – or the harmonious coexistence on a more or less equal level – is the final imagery of this novel. Together the children – Ams, Wim, and the now*

¹¹In the national consciousness, the plight of aboriginal peoples resulting from colonization receives only sporadic attention. Institutions in Canada, such as the Catholic Church, have discussed, at least in the courts, their role in the colonization process. Acting on legal verdicts, the Canadian government is compensating residential school survivors.

¹² Translation: *Ams loves (the) Indies* Van Marle-Hubregste, M.J. (1941) *Ams houdt van Indië*. Deventer: van Hoeve.

recovered Soedarso – go for their last holiday walk. The following conversation develops”:¹³

“We have a very nice country indeed,” Ams said with satisfaction.

“But this is not your country,” Soedarso said calmly.

“This is not my country,?” Ams said with indignation.

“Holland is your country,” and Soedarso looked at Ams, a little shy about the effect of his words.

“Holland,” said Ams, “Holland is the country of Mother and Father, they belong there. But not me, I belong here. In her excitement, Ams got up and stretched out her arms. ‘I belong here,’ she repeated, ‘I was born here.’ ‘I love these mountains and the people here.’ Soedarso looked at Ams as she stood on the mountain top and he felt a deep sympathy for this blond girl from a different race who had accepted him simply as a comrade and now also made his country her own.”

(Soedarso goes on to say) ... “I did not know....you considered it that way.”¹⁴

Using the pronoun ‘we,’ the child Ams encircles land and people. In response Soedarso, the signifier of the indigenous inhabitant in Van Marle-Hubregste’s text, articulates the view that Indies born Dutch children continue to feel an identity link to the Netherlands. Paralleling many interviewees, Ams reacts with indignation. Merging her body with the land, she conveys her sense of oneness between land and people and dismisses any link between herself and Holland. While it may be the country of her Dutch born mother and father, it is emphatically not hers. Soedarso’s reply, *“I did not know... you considered it that way,”* opens up the possibility that communication

¹³ Locher-Scholten, Elsbeth. (2000) *Women and the Colonial State. Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indiës. 1900 – 1942.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. Page 108.

¹⁴ Van Marle-Hubregste, M.J. (1941) *Ams houdt van Indië (Ams loves the Indiës).* Deventer: van Hoeve. Page 196. In my opinion, the last line of this text should be translated as; *“I did not know you felt that way.” Considering and feeling are different kinds of approaches.*

between peoples can lead to mutual understanding. In short, Van Marle-Hubregste, using the children as signs and their discourse as symbolic, explores the possibility that difference in background does not rule out relational co-occupation and that *children*, to whom the country is native, represent the key to alternative possibilities.

Locher-Scholten dismisses this alternative.¹⁵ Instead she powerfully states that Ams' position reflects "the strong connection Indies-born children may have felt toward the country of their birth from which they, - like Dutch adults - could not distance themselves."¹⁶ She continues:

*The quote itself is thoroughly colonial. The idea of cultural or political association is expressed by appropriating the Javanese mountains and therefore the Indonesian archipelago, without asking the original inhabitants for their opinion.the rhetoric of the family implies an ownership of land and people and a disregard for the opinions of Indonesians.*¹⁷

Participating in this "appropriation," interviewees observed:

*I was never home, or felt at home anywhere, after we were forced to leave Indonesia... the Dutch were so good to us and we had a happy life there with our children. But always, always something was missing*¹⁸

*Papua was my home, ... I did not choose to leave it.*¹⁹

¹⁵ The use of Locher-Scholten's admirable work is in no way intended as an attack on her formidable analytic abilities, but represents an instance of the way in which scholars a priori apply current thinking to the past and its people. It is my contention that is doing so, we silence the very voices we need to listen to in order to understand colonial relationships and their diversity.

¹⁶ Locher-Scholten, Elsbeth. (2000) *Women and the Colonial State. Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indiës. 1900 - 1942*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. Page 108. Underline emphasis mine.

¹⁷ Op cit., page 108.

¹⁸ Oral History Interview, Dutch-Dutch-Indonesian Female. (Eurasian)Tape 2. May, 2004. This interviewee has built a home in Indonesia and spends 6 months a year there.

¹⁹ Oral History Interview, Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 1, June 2005.

“What does it mean, that one country belongs to so and so, and one to another? Does it mean that no one else can be home there? Can live there? But I live in Canada and I can be at home here. No one questions that right. Is it not about your heart and where you feel you belong? Where you commit yourself?”²⁰

“From an early age it was understood that Java was our home and Holland a far away item.My father was busy on the plantation and did not have much time. So: how to fix a bicycle, how to fly a kite, or play marbles, I learned from the Javanese....”²¹

Since Locher-Scholten imposes an a priori analysis on the text rather extracting the elements of the narrative and placing them into their social and historical contexts, her critique reads as a judgement of the text and its narrative trajectories. Yet, the textual characters embody attitudes, feelings, and ideals that signify emerging transformations regarding colonial relationships during a specific socio-historical period,²² and in no way reflect current ‘politically correct speech. Dismissing as reprehensible the cues that would have led to an interesting probe of colonial identities, Locher-Scholten reveals a great deal about current attitudes, but throws little light on colonial relations:

- She adheres firmly to the current adversarial model of colonial relations.
- She accepts a specific geo-spatial mapping within the colonial-other sphere; a planet divided into irrevocable geographic parcels owned by the “original” inhabitants of those lands along with everything on it, including the personified Javanese mountains.
- Anyone who feels a love and belonging for an environment that “belongs to ‘other’ is a ‘colonialist

²⁰ Oral History Interview, Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 6, August, 2005.

²¹ Oral History Correspondence. Dutch-Indonesian-American Male.(plantation) (Both correspondent and Interviewee) (2005) Correspondence to Beaulieu. Cited with permission.

²² I recognize that the text of *Ams Houdt van Indië* is syrupy-sweet; children’s books of the era contained that note of a perfect world where problems between people and nations are amendable to the personal touch.

appropriator' of someone else's property. (If a bond is forged between colonizers and other's landscape, it has no credibility.)

- Current interest is not in how people thought or felt, but focuses on how they *should have* thought and felt. We judge, we do not analyze, texts. By extension, interviewees, who *may have* felt a strong connection with the Indies, when they *should have* distanced themselves, are colonialists who hide their appropriation rhetoric under a veil of emotionality.
- Her stance is an example of the guilt, ambivalence, and derision with which some academics writing from within former "mother countries" regard their colonial past. Moreover, it signifies an internalization of the critiques of European colonialism and clear identification with the 'oppressed' - the romance of resistance.
- The status 'indigenous,' confers western attributes of possession and ownership.
- As per Neuberger, people of divergent backgrounds cannot relationally exist side by side in a colonial environment; conflict is inevitable.

Connections between human body and body of land however, are particularly relevant to understanding "belonging." Mercia Eliade has noted that there are special places in one's life that differ qualitatively from other places: the area where one has passed his/her youth, the place where one meets their first love; these are special places within one's personal cosmos. Although Eliade²³ dismisses the emotion evoked by personal space as a degradation of religious values, the relationship with the land where one is born is sacred and naturalized; body of land is the body of the individual. No scholar has plumbed this relationship more deeply than Handler has. The naturalized link between land and people is an essential component of what "makes" a person a Québécois:

(How do you explain your attachment to Quebec?) You're asking me how I explain the fact that I first saw the light of day here?!" "I

²³ Eliade, M. (1962) *The Sacred and the Profane*. Hilversum: Paul Barnd. Page 11.

first saw the light of day here." These things aren't rational. Well, they're rational, but it's much more a question of feeling. You don't just say, "Oh, I'm going to feel an attachment to this country." An attachment is always non-rational.²⁴

Marginalizing any consideration of a natural bond between a member of a colonizing group and landscape, Locher-Scholten inscribes Ams as European, while prescribing her behavior: she (Europeans) *should have* reacted unnaturally to their Indies locales through a rational, distancing, and objective response to landscape, consciously declining an attachment to country belonging to 'other.' Indeed, this position leaves Ams/the European in the land of other in a Catch 22 "damned if you do and damned if you don't" conundrum. Had they lived 'on top of' landscape, without deep emotion in relation to that land or those peoples, their discursive dismissal as calculating and cold-blooded occupiers is certain.

Handler identified additional criteria beyond the land-body link that characterizes "ethnic" self-understanding:

(What is it that makes a person Québécois?) – that more likely would be people who have been here for a stretch of time.... And generally they speak French and have a certain way of looking at life. When you talk about the Québécois, you're talking about Francophones who are nationalist and who hold to their heritage, culture, customs and traditions.²⁵

Length of residence, language, heritage, shared culture, customs, and traditions compound the land-people claim to place. One Dutch-Indonesian noted:

You know, we weren't Dutch, we were Indische. We knew that of course, but when we arrived in Holland, it became part of the adjustment process. There were some familiar things, yes. We could speak the language for one thing. But even the language sounded different in Holland from when we spoke it in the Indies. And there were some things you could not translate from Javanese to Dutch

²⁴ Handler, Richard. (1988) *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Page 33.

²⁵ Op. cit., page 33.

*anyway, so we always used the Javanese words. I still do. <grins> (then slowly).. but.... it was more than that. It was a way of living, of seeing the world around you, how you understood people. ..and the climate! My dear! That took some getting used to.*²⁶

Dutch-Indonesians participate in the requirements outlined for “ethnic identity” by Handler’s informant. Calculating in the matriline, the family of the above interviewee had always lived in Indonesia. Yet long-term settler families in the archipelago parallel the Québécois example even more accurately, given that the Québécois are usually ‘fully European’ in heritage. An informant states:

My ancestors came to Indonesia with the VOC. As far as we have been able to trace our family tree, we arrived in the early 18th century. The pattern of marriages in the family seems to have been Dutch men with Dutch women, but I sincerely doubt this held true, nor do I care. What does it matter?

*What was so difficult for my parents was that Indonesia was home. Who knew anything about Holland? My parents were very political and arguing for independence before the Second World War. After our time in the prison camps, they stayed. They stayed right up to the time when Soekarno sent us all to the Netherlands – to a country we had never seen and had no relationship with. After we arrived, well the Dutch did not get it. They could not understand us. Life there was so stiff... very quickly my parents made the decision to immigrate. They could not adjust.*²⁷

The Québécois are not indigenous to Canada, no more than the long time Dutch residents of the archipelago were. They are the descendents of colonial French families who define themselves in relation to the oppression of British colonialism,²⁸ while marginalizing indigenous claims to the territory known as Quebec. Their situation overlaps in every way with the backgrounds and

²⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Dutch-Indonesian Female. Tape 3, May 2005.

²⁷ Oral History Interview, Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1, April, 2004.

²⁸ On the basis of the War of 1812, the area passed to the British. Moreover, having “lost” the war, they did not “choose” (although many thought, and still think, they “should”) to adjust to a “British” way of life, but define themselves as a separate body of people within the Canadian social fabric.

opinions of Dutch-Indonesians; the Québécois however, have not been expelled from their home; indeed Québec is accorded ‘special status’ under the Canadian Constitution. This fact does not pass Dutch-Indonesians in Canada by; they note it could have been applied to their own situation in the Indies, although they also stress that their claim was stronger. Unlike Dutch Indonesians, the Québécois cannot claim strong indigenous ties to the land.

Summing up, Handler observes that claims to Québécois status hinge on two key attributes:

1. The relation of an individual to a particular territory or locality
2. A style of living or “Code for Conduct.”²⁹

The naturalized relationship between individual and locality existed for all informants and a ‘code for conduct,’ expressing the bricolage³⁰ that had long characterized Dutch-Indonesian families was in place. Indeed, the heteroglossic transformations inherent in colonial interstitial space are exemplified by my informant’s statement that he learned how to “fly a kite, play marbles, ride a bike” from the Javanese. Surely these were not ‘indigenous’ pastimes. Assimilated into the Javanese social context, a servant transferred them back to a young Dutch-Indonesian boy.

Interviewees embraced their ethnicity:

“ (what nationality did you consider yourself to be?) Indische. I guess now you would say Indonesian. (Why?) Why? Well because I was born there.”³¹

“ (What nationality do you consider yourself to be?) That’s a tough one. (laughs) Well in the beginning we thought of ourselves as Papuan – well Papuan Dutch I guess you would say. Then came the camps and our exile to Holland, but I never felt truly Dutch. I

²⁹ Schneider (1968) [in] Handler, Richard. (1988) *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Page 33.

³⁰ Levi-Strauss, Claude. (1962) *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

³¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Dutch-Indonesian Female. Tape 3. May, 2004.

*studied in Scotland, then.. well I have told you, I have nursed all over the world. Now I am here – Canada. I have been here a while and think of myself as well... somewhat Canadian.*³²

Narrators who define themselves as ‘somewhat’ Canadian or American, practice cultural traditions understood as ‘Dutch’ and/or ‘Indonesian.’ Particularly in Canada, those diverse cultural practices are not significant in the identification of nationality. It is possible, indeed celebrated, to be Canadian and to practice traditions sourced to diverse cultural streams. The recognition of these potentialities informs interviewee musings on ‘what might have been’ in Indonesia.

The main tenets of interviewee observations regarding their backgrounds, the land they identify with, and their inability to feel completely at home elsewhere, emerge in Groulx’s and Handler’s summary:

- There is a reciprocal relationship between people and land, a “*marriage sealed in sweat and blood.*” That bond leads to an intimacy so deep; *land and people come to resemble* each other.
- People can be bound only to land where they are born and labour.³³
- A decision to change countries is unnatural; forcing people to leave their “home” simultaneously requires that “*one alter naturally given personal attributes.*”
- “In sum,” as Handler notes, “choice is subordinate to essence: birth in a particular place determines the kind of person one will naturally become, yet one cannot choose one’s place of birth.”³⁴

Rather than an acknowledgement of the difficulty experienced by exiled Dutch and Dutch Indonesians who had to alter “naturally given personal attributes” deriving from bonds to Indonesian place in order to “distance” from their natal homes, their behavior and

³² Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 2. July, 2004.

³³ Groulx (1918, 1924) in Handler, Richard. (1988) *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Page 34.

³⁴ Handler, Richard. (1988) *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Page 35.

responses are prescribed as “should haves.” It is this re-inscription and marginalization, more than any other, that has led to the imperfect reconciliation of their personal trauma and continues to signal to expatriates of the Indies that their realities are not only invalid, they are actively and prescriptively re-written.

Dutch Indies expatriates maintain that a joined community of multiple peoples under a single government was the ultimate goal in the Indies and that the process was underway when the war intervened. It is not my intention to review the political events in Indonesia, but to describe the way in which interviewees retrospectively re-member and how their tenure in North America has facilitated participation in particular schemata that solidify perceptions and possibilities inherent in self/Indies, Dutch/Indies relationships. Many narrators are zealous in their eagerness to highlight the possibilities in the Indies if outsiders – the international community and in some cases, the outsider-revolutionaries themselves who are narrated as a blot on the body-politic- had not meddled for selfish gain.

3.2.1 PLACE, IMMIGRATION, IDENTITY.

Interviewee Indies identity claims, viewed through the lens of immigration, assume heightened signification when articulated by interviewees born in the Indies. Van Marle-Hubregste’s text explores the possibility that the achievement of mutual understanding lies in co-communication and a mutual passion for, and connection to, a particular landscape. This proposition represents the goal, and the manner in which a nation hopes to achieve it, for the *children* of immigrants born in the “new country.”

Consider a mirror narrative of the one offered by van Marle Hubregste through the example of Javanese parents whose baby is born subsequent to their immigration to the Netherlands. Imagine that this baby Anya, now a young girl, goes for a walk in the Dutch dunes at the end of the summer with a Dutch male classmate, Hans.³⁵ Let Anya utter virtually the same words as Ams proclaims on the

³⁵ Ams and Soedarso were classmates.

memorable occasion noted above, substituting dunes for mountains and Indonesia for Holland:

"We have a very nice country indeed," Anya said with satisfaction.

"But this is not your country," Hans said calmly.

"This is not my country?" Anya said with indignation.

"Indonesia is your country," and Hans looked at Anna, a little shy about the effect of his words.

"Indonesia, said Anya, "Indonesia is the country of Mother and Father, they belong there. But not me, I belong here. In her excitement, Anya got up and stretched out her arms. 'I belong here,' she repeated, "I was born here." "I love these dunes and the people here." Hans looked at Anya as she stood in the dunes and he felt a deep sympathy for this dark haired girl from a different race who had accepted him simply as a comrade and now also made his country her own."

(Hans goes on to say)....."I did not know....you considered it that way."³⁶

Is Anya appropriating the Netherlands and the "Dutch" dunes without the consent of the Dutch people? Would we instruct her to "back off" emotionally from the landscape of 'other'? I submit that most readers will applaud this integration into the society to which her parents immigrated. This is what we hope for, work for, indeed anticipate from the children of immigrants; here the land-body bond between child and natal country, not ethnic background, is celebrated. Indeed, this is precisely the course of events that typifies the lifeways of children born to interviewees in Canada and the U.S. Those children developed their feelings and attachment for a country that they were "allowed to love" and their experience was not lost on parents who noted the sad divergences between their own situation and the social possibilities offered to their children.

Power – a paramount attribute of colonizers as derived from domain analyses of scholarly texts - is the crucial element that renders the

³⁶ With due apologies to the original author for the liberties taken.

Ams text colonial and the immigration scenario laudable from the standpoint of conventional analysis. Power in the hands of people defined as *foreigners* (another attribute that modifies “Colonizers” in the literature, but interviewees reject out of hand) compounds the problem. Immigrants, theoretically at least, make uncoerced decisions to leave their natal country, while the land to which they immigrate reviews their papers or, in refugee situations, may offer them sanctuary. In Ams’ case, a “foreign” people administered, and foisted themselves on, the Indies and she is irrevocably, in western academic eyes, a case of “once a European, always a European.” The colonial (us/them adversarial) paradigm denies a real connection between colonizers and land or people based on the power over paradigm. Locher-Scholten’s focus on the European ancestry of the child Ams compounds ongoing denial of Indies identity as different from Dutch. Inherent in her refusal to recognize potential alteration in Ams’ self-awareness based on the intimate bond between child and place,³⁷ is an adherence to the proposition that those assimilated under the label “Dutch” in law, were Dutch. Rationally, I am sure; she would recognize this as utter nonsense, naming a person ‘Dutch,’ does not make it so. A child raised in the landscape of Indonesia is not the same child that would emerge from a childhood in a Dutch city, even if raised by the same parents in both cases. Nevertheless, she proceeds on an ‘as if’ basis – the Dutch and Dutch-Indonesians, are one.

³⁷ Locher-Scholten’s extension from the ‘appropriation’ of one region to the appropriation of the ‘entire archipelago’ is highly suspect, both on ‘Dutch’ and ‘Indonesian’ grounds. No Indonesian or Dutch person I interviewed spoke with passion about the ‘archipelago,’ but focused their love on the place where they had been born. Having said this however, it is noteworthy that the Dutch extension between local birthplaces - to entire East Indies- appeared stronger than the awareness articulated by Indonesian informants. Dutch interviewees contextualized love of place within the greater whole on a more fundamental level than the Indonesian or Dutch-Indonesian people I interviewed. In my opinion, this is due to a formative European context that included the paradigms of nation and state, while the outlines of Nation and State were only taking shape for Dutch-Indonesian and Indonesians during that historical era. On the other hand, Freek Colombijn suggests that the Dutch perception of Indonesia may reflect the fact that (usually) higher income Europeans moved more often than Indonesians. (Colombijn; personal correspondence)

From the perspective of immigrant parents, but not for the children born in the 'new' country, the land to which they immigrate is foreign; there is always, in some sense, a comparison of "how we did (it) back home," a regret, a lack, an open wound. Reasons for immigration may be voluntary or coerced; the degree to which "new" land and people are experienced as alien will depend on the circumstances that compelled the immigration. Likewise, the worldviews and lifeways that characterize natal land will influence immigrant ability to merge with the "new" homeland. A surprising narrative element surfaced in interviews with people who had left Holland, gone to Indonesia, went back to the Netherlands, and subsequently immigrated. The ease that characterized their adjustment to Indonesia is astounding, while the difficulty they experienced in their re-adjustment to Holland led them to immigrate elsewhere. The land-body bond that evoked the greatest emotion from Dutch born in Indonesia, and even some of the Dutch 'who came,' was the Indonesian connection.³⁸

3.3 Indonesia was Home

*Indonesia was home. Who knew anything about Holland? [...] the Netherlands – to a country we had never seen and had no relationship with.*³⁹

*Indonesia is a very fruitful land. You put something in the ground and it grows. It can easily support its people if it is taken care of.*⁴⁰

So very lonely. So lonely. I was the only Dutch wife in a little outpost in ___ and I could not speak the language when I came. My husband worked hard and was gone a great deal of the time. I went from a busy career, so busy..... friends with ideas.... to silence... all the time. (question: what was the country like?) Beautiful. But it was lonely.

³⁸ Indonesia is a "gezellig" land, with a "gezellig" lifestyle. This was not how they felt about Holland after repatriation, nor can they describe Canada or the US in that manner. While you can be 'gezellig' with family etc, the land is not.

³⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Dutch-Indonesian Female. Tape 3, May 2005

⁴⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 1. July 2005.

*Our son (her first) was born there. His first words were not Dutch.....
well he learned those from his babu.*⁴¹

My parents are the same age – in their eighties – as many interviewees. Subsequent to our immigration, they maintained a circle of Netherlands-to-Canada immigrant friends and I became accustomed to particular characteristics that marked those domiciles as ‘Dutch,’ compared to homes of their – and my – non-Dutch friends. Cleanliness was certainly a factor; but also window dressings – those were the days of ‘vitrage’ – pictures, plants and a general sense of ‘coziness’ that Dutch housewives strove for no matter how difficult the circumstances of the immigration (which were rarely conveyed to the people ‘back home’). Entering the houses of my first Dutch Canadian and American interviewees, my initial thought was; “these are not typical Dutch homes”! “Dutchness’ had been integrated with “Indonesianness” – incorporating Dutch signifiers such as framed pictures and wall hangings to be sure - but additionally, in the case of born in Indies children - creating an altered atmosphere none the less. Photos of domiciles in Indonesia, cultural artefacts that were clearly South East Asian, old tint types showing families (with or without servants) in the fashions of the ‘30s and ‘40s... lawns, picnics, smiles... Even the choice of furniture, its arrangement, and architectural features, conveyed a casual open air...

Consistent interviewee use of Indonesian and indigenous terminology during our conversations underlined this assimilation of Indonesian past into living present. Three critical observations prevented a dismissal of this liberal use of indigenous terms as the establishment of presence.⁴² Narrators slipped ‘out’ of English or Dutch only when they attempted to express particular feelings, life domains, and/or terms for ‘Indonesian’ objects. The language operated as a memory generator - the “speaking” rendered that world existent; while the terms were keys that unlocked

⁴¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 2. May 2003.

⁴² Marcus, George E. and Fisher, Michael M.J. (1999) *Anthropology As Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

conversational domains that were particularly important to share - information they needed to transmit/re-create regarding Indonesian lifeways and their difference from subsequent places of residence. Secondly, narrators explicitly retained the Indonesian term when there was no adequate Dutch or English word or concept that 'fit.' Children born in Indonesia regularly utilized indigenous terms to speak the past into living present and to underline for me (on this point I needed no convincing) that some concepts simply *cannot* be translated.

However 'speaking' one's childhood tongue does more than this. As Ong has noted, "*thought itself relates in an altogether special way to sound,*"⁴³ and the quality, the music of the remembered language, re-wakened the child within. I am not being fanciful when I state that they loved the very sound of the words, that their faces grew younger as they used the language, that their bodies moved with a greater freedom, that for a little while they were 'back' in a happy past. Just as their birth in the Indies and their relationships with people and land impacted children's ability to 'see' the Netherlands, socialization processes that included inter-ethnic affiliation and either partial or full language acquisition, contributed to post repatriation immigration decisions.

3.3.1. THOSE WHO CAME

Setting aside the veterans, interviewees who came from Holland to Indonesia, subsequently repatriated to the land of their birth, and made a decision to immigrate, represent the smallest group in the database. Narrators expose conflicting emotions regarding their Indonesian tenure, and repatriation-immigration, while the genders diverge in terms of topical foci 'before the war.' Men spoke of their work, the land, the economy, politics, and the 'reserve' ranks they held (if they did) in the KNIL. The latter theme was important for men who participated in the defence of the East Indies when the Japanese invaded in 1942; they used their 'pre-war' status to prepare for the sequences that would deal with the occupation, their subsequent incarceration, and the length of time it took before they

⁴³Ong, Walter. (1982, 1988) *Orality and Literacy*. New York: Routledge. Page 7.

were able to 'return home' to Indonesia or the Netherlands. On the other hand, men who had married Dutch-Indonesian or Indonesian women diverged from 'Dutch' men married to Dutch women, adapting the Dutch-Indonesian narration model initiated through an emphasis on Family. These men, absorbed into affinal kin, separated, in some instances completely, from the families they left behind in Holland. In their case, without exception, Indonesia was home and they did not intend to leave after retirement.

It is appropriate to pause here and note a number of commonalities regarding these Dutch men. In the first instance, they were 'seekers;' restless youth. Unhappy in the Netherlands and today still slightly contemptuous of norms and mores imposed by their (natal) families and Dutch society, they left the land of their birth in search of 'something more.' As a Dutch aunt expressed to the Dutch-Indonesian wife of one of these men when they met in Holland:

*He was different...always different. Never happy...always looking for something....*⁴⁴

Having accepted the 'self' as marginal to a Dutch society they marked as 'Other,' these men, without exception, found "something" in Indonesia.

Their problems with Dutch society; its norms, mores, perceptions of morality, and the scrutiny of public and private behaviour, extended (politely) to critical evaluations of the role of Dutch women, an underlying reason perhaps, for their decisions to marry indigenous or Dutch-Indonesian women after their arrival in Indonesia. "I found them (Dutch women) to be... abrasive, yes, that's right, abrasive."⁴⁵ Yet the narratives are contradictory. On the one hand, they express concern with the (then) changing role and attitude of women in the Netherlands while, on the other, they married well-educated indigenous or Eurasian women in the Indies. In comparison with the lives of many Dutch database women on Java, mothers in "mixed" marriages integrated a wide variety of outside activities with family, intellectual interests, and household responsibilities. It appears

⁴⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Female. Tape 1, May 2004.

⁴⁵ Oral History Interview, Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 2, April, 2004.

therefore, that Dutch men who married in Indonesia did not eschew powerful women per se, since they married them.

My suspicion is that articulations common to Euro-Dutch feminist ideology, in fact certain types of mandated behaviour and/or statements, evoked their reaction. These men certainly conveyed an aversion to overt direction or advice on how to think or behave in many examples from their life scripts; they present as (quiet) rebels. The women they married *lived* the ideology espoused by European feminists, while thoroughly integrating 'traditional' feminine roles into their repertoire, creating "*very happy household(s) - without complaint,*"⁴⁶ in that process. The household sphere, completely under the wife's jurisdiction, concurrently demanded little of husbands in the way of domestic responsibilities, leaving them free to pursue their life's work. This is not to say that these marriages were not 'love' matches. Indeed they were, and quite obviously so where I interviewed Dutch male/Dutch-Indonesian (or indigenous) female couples. They were the interviewees that openly or subtly, but always with humour, referred to sexuality without pressure,

*....my eldest son.... the result of a mattress that sloped to the middle,*⁴⁷

In the second instance, having sought and found happiness and peace in Indonesia, they fully embraced the country. They built homes there with an eye to retirement. They had children, and became an essential part of large, matrilineally-linked clans. Their children were Eurasian - that group of 'poor, destitute, yet loyal' people referred to so often in the literature. Clearly, the attitude to ethnicity held by these men did not include the notion that "blood should not mix." Their sons and daughters - embodiments of 'pollution' - offered visible evidence of their negation of ethnic separatism or racist ideologies. Integrating values drawn from both cultural backgrounds, the families were close and education focused. A number of interviewed fathers and mothers expressed the belief that in stressing education for their children, they were preparing

⁴⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 1, July, 2004.

⁴⁷ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Dutch Female. Tape 2. May, 2004.

the future generation of leaders and workers in Indonesia – the land that for all of them, was home. Embedded in the landscape of Indonesia, their identities, the dreams held dear, the plans made, were disrupted firstly by the invasion of the Japanese, and more importantly, through the subsequent denial and betrayal of the ethnic heritage of their wives and children by the Indonesian government, as well as, initially, the Dutch.⁴⁸

3.3.2 SERVANTS

The literature on servants is rich and deeply analytic. Discussed by multiple scholars,⁴⁹ the remembering of servants constitutes a dominant theme in the Dutch colonial life story database. This is true of these narrative files, with two important reservations. Servant data is derived from interviewees who lived on Java, while the outer islands are represented only by Sumatra. More importantly, eliciting extended servant narratives from ‘those who came’ to Indonesia required sustained effort. While Dutch children born in the archipelago and all Dutch-Indonesians spontaneously offered information on their servant relationships, this group commented remarkably little on their servants without prompting.

Attributes assigned by scholars to servants are telling: *‘subaltern,’ subservient work, (derive from) subordinated social class, neither expected nor allowed to speak for themselves. “Representations of servants are part of the Orientalist tradition, i.e. of Western ideas about the ‘East’.*⁵⁰ Stoler and Strassler quote from “Dutch” colonial

⁴⁸ See Goss, Andrew. (2000) From Tong-Tong to Temp Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History, 1957 – 1961. *Indonesia*. Vol. 70. (October) pages 9-36.

⁴⁹ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*: Vol. 42; No. 1 (January) 4 - 48. Page 4; Locher-Scholten, Elsbeth. (2000) *Women and the Colonial State. Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indië s. 1900 – 1942*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.; Gouda, Frances (1993) *The Gendered Rhetoric of Colonialism and Anti-Colonialism in Twentieth Century Indonesia*. *Indonesia* Vol. 55. Pages 1-22. Etc. (see Bibliography)

⁵⁰ Locher-Scholten, Elsbeth. (2000) *Women and the Colonial State. Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indiës. 1900 – 1942*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. Page 85.

narratives recorded in the Netherlands to portray an almost mystical union of child-babu mingled bodies in order to underline the dominant role of servants as relationship signifiers and to query the gap between their Indonesian-servant oral history results and the memories of expatriates in Holland. Given the disparity between the remembering of servants among “the Dutch who came to Indonesia” in my database, the memories of Dutch children born in Indonesia who recounted detailed memories of servants and land, and Dutch-Indonesians whose servant accounts are highly emotional, I query the ethnic and ‘homeland’ background of the informant texts Stoler and Strassler utilize. If those interviewees are indeed Dutch men and women who left for Indonesia around the same time as my narrators, then the schemata for ‘safe talk’ in the Netherlands must include a formula whereby servant discourse stands-in for angst surrounding colonial relations.

The domestic manuals and children’s literature discussed by Locher-Scholten facilitate her reconstruction of ideologies informing Euro-servant relations, although importantly, she notes that ‘what was said’ and ‘what was done’ potentially diverged. The prescriptive framework – what homemakers ‘ought’ to do in regards to their servants – stressed a strict hierarchy utilizing the often rehearsed family model of colonial relations, - servants were as children that required guidance, firm control and gentle understanding. This paradigm existed alongside a conservative ideology that rendered the Indonesian “fundamentally” unknowable. Both streams of thought surface in the manuals, although the latter is muted. It is discernable however, in the pollution ideology that cautioned the mistress of the household to ensure that the body fluids of Indonesians should not co-mingle with those of the European.⁵¹ The manuals appear to target women ‘who came to’ Indonesia and may have attempted a reformation of the Dutch-Indonesian family.⁵²

⁵¹ Op. cit., page 85 ff.

⁵² Discussed in Chapter Four.

Javanese society⁵³ developed a formal and hierarchical pattern early in its history⁵⁴ and remained stringently tiered, as Multatuli, the oft quoted 19th century novelist portrays:⁵⁵

*the subject, with all he possesses, belongs to the Prince. ...Accordingly, nothing is more normal than that hundreds of families should be summoned from a great distance to work, **without payment**, on fields that belong to the Regent. Nothing is more normal than the supply, unpaid for, of food for the Regent's court. And should the horse, the buffalo, the daughter, the wife of the common man find favour in the Regent's sight, it would unheard-of for the possessor to refuse to give up the desired object unconditionally.⁵⁶ (Emphasis: Multatuli)*

The guiding principles of social life on Java combined with dearly held Dutch-evolved principles of local autonomy in the Motherland to structure a peculiar set of colonial institutions and relationships that flourished on the main island, and in particular, in its important urban centers. Behavioural expectations there differed markedly in comparison with other regions in the archipelago and attracted/structured a different kind of colonialist. Indeed, the hub of colonial as well as revolutionary activity centered on Java and Sumatra, with the consequence that not only the bulk of the European population, but also the servants that attended them, were located there. Women acquainted with the “should” and “should

⁵³ van Leur has proposed that Javanese ranked society was based on irrigated/terraced agriculture even prior to Hindu influence. Van Leur, J.C. (1955) *Indonesian Trade and Society*. The Hague and Bandung. While he is no longer the cutting edge scholar on this period today, although his focus on Indocentric history is honoured, the claim that Javanese society was tightly ranked early in its history has not, to my knowledge, been seriously contested. (except see below)

⁵⁴ Geertz disagrees with van Leur, arguing instead that Hindu cosmology... *made Kings out of chiefs, towns out of villages, and temples out of spirit houses.*” Geertz, Clifford (1956) *The Development of the Javanese Economy*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Center for International Studies. Geertz’s proclivity to attribute agentive powers to institutional forms is problematic, as here when he attributes intent to Hinduism’s “making kings out of Chiefs.”

⁵⁵ Multatuli. (1982) *Max Havelaar, Or the Coffee Auctions of the Dutch Trading Company*. Translated from the Dutch by Roy Edwards. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press. (see Chapter VII)

⁵⁶ Op. cit., page 74-75.

nots” of household manuals, and who employed the widest range of servants, were women that lived on Java and their servants embodied a formidable understanding of status hierarchy and appropriate status demeanours.

On Java, women’s pre-war narratives located themselves largely in the home, focused on family life, relationships with friends and children, a rich social round, interaction with servants and being a ‘good wife and mother.’ The norms governing their lives were not only important to their discourse; they laboured to convey how mores in the Indies structured what they could and could not do. Overall, though I do have two exceptions, women describe themselves as happy and content with their lives in Indonesia. Many of them gave birth in the Indies, two of them with native birth attendants. This interesting fact, uncovered early in the interview process, led me to integrate discussions on child birthing, as well as child rearing, into further encounters. I uncovered significant disparities in “manual” knowledge and conformity based on place of domicile in the archipelago.

For example, none of the children born on the outer islands, except Sumatra, had babus. This could be the result of my sample size, since Locher-Scholten notes their presence in the archipelago, albeit few in number. It could be due to the employment backgrounds of outer-island interviewees. Although Papua is a special case, the excerpt below links significantly to texts collected from women and men who lived on islands in Eastern Indonesia. In particular, the significant economic disparities that are evident in terms of Indonesian domicile, employment positions and education, arise as a main theme. Missionary families were particularly ‘poor’ and endlessly creative in terms of how they stretched their meagre funds:

Let me put this in perspective. My parents lived on less than what a government employee paid for his booze bill per year. (Sic) That’s what my parents lived on. We grew a lot of the food ourselves. We had to get special seeds from Java because we were so high up in New Guinea, we had to get special seeds that would grow at that level. So my father also had to make everything we had... furniture and so. People that lived near the coast were better fed... Of course, they had the pig. (where we lived) But the pig is what they bargained with for brides and everything... and once and a while they would have a feast and they would roast the pig ...but they did

not have a pig every month! And so my father, he said 'keep your pigs for your bargaining, but you try these goats..... because my father he kept goats..... the German missionary Schneider... he had cows there, ja, how he got them there I'll never know.....'⁵⁷

Not surprisingly therefore, the women who were attended by indigenous mid-wives at the birth of their children, lived on the outer islands. One of these women shared:

During the ten years we had been there, we were the only Dutch family in the vicinity. So the entire family interacted with the islanders on an intimate basis; of course, we spoke the language. I had learned First Aid in Holland, and often helped people who were hurt. So I had also attended a lot of births – well naturally – that was a woman's world. When my time came, I did not even think of going to Java. I knew the skills of the local mid-wife. So there was no choice to make.⁵⁸

It should be self evident that I did not pose the question of pollution to this interviewee. By the time we had embarked on birthing stories, I knew her well enough to recognize that I would put our entire relationship at risk if I suggested that “indigenous perspiration” or ‘body odour’ might be offensive or have the potential to contaminate the European. Yet even my other consultants, with the exception of one highly educated Dutch woman who lived on Sumatra, denied any affiliation for, or belief in, the ideologies expressed in the household manuals. Some of them chuckled as they recalled the “*ridiculous nonsense*” contained in these guides.⁵⁹ We could posit the wisdom of hindsight; we could propose

⁵⁷ My informant tells me that the German missionary referred to had been in New Guinea since before the 1st World war and after the territory was ceded to Holland he remained in New Guinea under the auspices of the Dutch Zending. During the Second World War, he was sent home (he was from Bavaria); his wife had left prior to the outbreak of the war. My narrator goes on to relate the story of her mother, who woke up one night and said to the family, “Schneider is dead.” They found out later that his boat was torpedoed on the way home. Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 2. June 2004.

⁵⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. Tape 1, July 2005. I sadly add that this baby died in an internment camp.

⁵⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 1. June, 2004.

retrospective denial. Alternatively, female interviewees, who did share in the “uplifting” ideology discussed by Locher-Scholten, may have rejected pollution ideology while accepting the metaphor of the family for their relationship with servants.

Both exceptions to happiness in Indonesia were women who suffered greatly from loneliness in the outposts where they found themselves after their marriage. One of them left a high profile career in the Netherlands, and missed the stimulation of both her career and the people she had worked with on a daily basis. She did not develop close relationships with the servants or the non-Dutch wives in her environment and she was unhappy about the fact that her first-born son learned to speak indigenous words before he learned Dutch. She spoke approvingly, but without emotion, of the care the babu gave her son, noting that she ‘trained’ the babu and that the ‘girl’ was very good at her duties. Reviewing the three tapes we made together, noting her phraseology, ‘hearing’ the flatness of her tone as she described her loneliness, I realized she had suffered from severe depression on that Sumatran outpost.

While she offered no narrative support for pollution ideology, neither did she engage the rhetoric of the family. Indeed, her attitude to my questions came very close to the rejoinder of a male informant:

‘why are you so interested in the servants? Do you interview people in Holland who had Dutch servants there and ask all these questions? Or has this something to do with us being so-called (zognaamd) colonial?’⁶⁰

In response, I frankly admitted that I was interested because relationships with servants stood out both in the life story collections as well as academic analysis, and I wanted to understand household interaction, in which servants played an integral part. He responded:

“I am a little bit suspicious of those questions. Of course we had servants. If you had a good income that was expected on Java. We

⁶⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 1. May, 2005.

*Dutch have never been about rank and file and servants have often played a family role in Dutch households – when people could afford them. So they are important, and the children especially, had relationships with them. But a servant has a job to do. You pay them for that job. And to be a good employer you need to treat people fairly. If they are with you for a long time, then just like an employee that has worked for you for a long time in an office, or on a plantation, they are invaluable. So if you want to judge me based on servants, then that should be the criteria – were we fair.*⁶¹

While men spoke of ‘correct interaction’ fairness, and the disciplining of children who did not behave respectfully to a servant, women bemoaned the fact that they ‘knew’ their children were deliberately disobeying instructions given by their mothers and how difficult it was to maintain the “Dutch way” in the Indies. A child-interviewee remarks; *well, we were supposed to sleep in the afternoons. But we never did, we would sneak into the kitchen and spent the afternoon with the servants.*⁶² Citing the “Indonesian environment,” the “*pace of life,*” the “*hours we kept,*” the “*friends we had, some of them ‘blijver’ families, and they were so casual!*” ...⁶³ mothers found it difficult to impose the regimented structure they had acquired as the “correct” socialization process for Dutch children in the Netherlands prior to the Second World War. Some of them noted their husband’s lack of support in this area. As one Dutch husband observed:

(me: some of the moms I have spoken with mentioned that it was very difficult to raise their children according to “Dutch standards” in the Indies, especially imposing bedtime hours, etc. How did that go in your household)? (Interviewee – quirks eyebrow) “Did they now”..... Well in my view that was the good thing about raising a family in Indonesia. It was a laid-back way of life and that was excellent for the children and for us. If my wife had a problem with

⁶¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 1. May 2005.

⁶² Oral History Interview: Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 2, July 2004.

⁶³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. Tape 2, July 2005.

*it, she never mentioned it to me. And if she had, I would have told her to "relax." Who needs all that pretence?*⁶⁴

Although some of the women who came to Java had contact with indigenous peoples primarily through the servants, no woman in my database was "housebound" or knew 'no Indonesians beyond their servants.'⁶⁵ What emerges from the narratives of this group is a schematic framework that emphasizes the iconic status of servants – they stand in for the Indonesian people in every detail, including the notion of "correct interaction fairness" between employers and employed. These relationships; the inter-mingling of Indonesian and European within the intimate household sphere, the loyalty when the Japanese invaded, the servant/employer mutual pain at parting; parallel and resonate with even greater power in the sequences that speak to the separation of Holland and Indonesia. In both scenarios, identical betrayals are sketched; friendships cruelly severed *without the (unforced) consent of both parties*. In the one instance, the Japanese forcibly separated Dutch and servants against their will, in the second, the Republican government, the "*duped*"⁶⁶ Dutch government, and the international community (especially the U.S.) separated Holland and Indonesia, against the will of both *peoples*. The lesson resounds throughout the story line: whatever corrupt government bodies may have done, the people held true to one another. This deeply held belief lies at the source of the betrayal motif.

Although friendships with servants = friendship between Holland and Indonesia writ small, this does not reduce relationships to mere signification. Hosts, save for the exception from Sumatra, regaled me with pictures. Despite the doubts expressed by Stoler and Strassler's informants, the pictures *do exist*. They are provokers of extended bits of narrative recall - the day (and how) the picture was taken was

⁶⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1. May, 2004. (the word used for pretence was "kapsonis")

⁶⁵ Locher-Scholten, Elsbeth. (2000) *Women and the Colonial State. Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indiës. 1900 - 1942*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

⁶⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 1, June 2004.

fully explained, - the weather was noted- each person in the picture was named and enlarged upon, including the servants. The pictures were invaluable, adding detail and provoking unparalleled nuanced evocations of mood and atmosphere.

A retrospective and painful self-analysis engaged in by some of these aged mothers underlined the very high expectations placed on Dutch women of this period. Never get angry. If you are angry, do not show it. Be gentle, lead by example, and never order. Ensure that your husband, your children, your servants, and your social life can bear intense scrutiny. Think first of others, never the self. The underprivileged, the poor, those not been as blessed as you are – these people deserve not only your deepest compassion, but also your kindest attention.

Unni Wikan's *Managing Turbulent Hearts* elicits awe of the discipline her informants exercise through their command of polished etiquette, refinement and an *artificiality of politeness*.⁶⁷ That same self-composure and public face was a daily requirement for the women who told me their lives. Yet while we acknowledge the culturally acquired social skills of Wikan's informants, (we do not criticize Other, but apply cultural relativism to achieve understanding) those characteristics are subtly mocked in the western context. Indeed, feminist analyses often equate the expectation that former western women would hide their true feelings with both hypocrisy and subjugation. Indeed, that may be so, but it does not lessen the strength of character that typifies this generation of women.

The consequence of this deprecation of (former) "woman's face" leads us to view, with some cynicism, the effects of an ideology that counsels the uplifting of other by example. The women I interviewed still carry these mandates, genuinely internalized, in their very skin. Their self-analyses focused on 'falling short' of the ideal, had they done all they could to do right by children/husband/servants/family/society? I submit that their grace under pressure and their concern for others, arising from the

⁶⁷ See Wikan, Unni. (1990) *Managing Turbulent Hearts: A Balinese Formula for Living*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

'uplifting' mandate, were the same ingredients that facilitated their dignity and survival in the internment camps of World War II, their subsequent successful immigrations, and fed their psychic recovery.

3.3.3 SEXUALITY

No topic was more difficult to broach with Dutch informants than sexuality within the colonial sphere. One female interviewee was blunt in her response. During the course of the weekend I spent with her, I shared my difficulties in interviewing Dutch men and women regarding sexual relationships forced on Indonesian women by Dutch men:

Well Jet – what do you expect? First of all those were days when we all went to Church and that kind of thing was against religion. It would be a shameful thing. Secondly, the wives can't or won't talk about it – they would not have wanted to know, and if they did, they would not speak of it. What would that say about a woman's marriage? You can't just write it off that it does not matter because it was not a Dutch girl. No one believed that anymore. Thirdly, I don't think it happened all that often. Maybe on Java⁶⁸ - but it certainly could not have happened in the circumstances we lived in. On Java, yes, maybe, all kinds of things happened there. But no..I don't think it was common. I have to say, and I hope you will not be offended, that all this talk about sex is because the person talking about it is interested in it. Everything is sex now. But that was not our life then.

Yet Buruma wistfully states,

*"People forget what a sexual, even sexy enterprise colonialism was..... No, colonial life was literally drenched in sex. White men would enter the kampongs and take their pleasure with native girls for a few coins or even for nothing if the men were cheap and caddish enough. Europeans enjoyed the droit de seignior in the kampong,....."*⁶⁹

⁶⁸ She lived on Papua.

⁶⁹ Buruma, Ian (1996) *The Missionary and the Libertine*. New York: Random House. Page 73.

Stoler and Strassler found the topic so pivotal to their interviews with Indonesian servants, that, as I noted, they “returned” to it a number of times with the same informants and ‘pressed’ some of them to remember.⁷⁰ This fascination with the sexual economy of the East is a central tenet in the critique of Orientalism. Current scholars may wield sophisticated analytic weaponry, but this is one Orientalist trend they have yet to eschew; the erotic pull of aboriginal/Dutch intersexuality has not palled, given the plethora of analyses that deal with the subject.

The mythology of the Dutch man who casts his Netherlands morality to the winds in South East Asia rears its head in the early days of the VOC and it forms part of the Netherlands’ interpretative schemata about the colony. In other words, the myth is ‘made in Holland,’ not in Indonesia, and it conveys strong puritanical condemnation. Given the fascination with the sexual economies of the East, (an element of Orientalism, as Said has noted)⁷¹ the mythology exercised not a few travel writers in the early 19th century; sex sells. Ritter for example, focusing his attention on the Njei, aimed his cause-effect analysis at a Dutch audience, pleading for understanding of Indies relationships based on an argument-from-history. Citing the historical absence of Dutch women in the archipelago, the long voyages to the Indies, the ‘natural’ sex drive of men (who had given up everything for the glory of the motherland), their subsequent loneliness, their longing for ‘hearth,’ and the empathy offered by indigenous women, Ritter proposes Dutch-indigenous couples as entirely natural. Simultaneously, he takes the home country to task for its narrow attitude towards these relations and its pressure, through families, on Dutch men to view aboriginal women as an ‘interim’ solution until they can marry Dutch women. Observing that Dutch women were now coming to the archipelago in greater numbers, but that Dutch men were often opting not to marry them, he notes that the fault lies with Dutch women, who not only had aspirations to a life

⁷⁰ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History: Vol. 42; No. 1* (January) 4 - 48.

⁷¹ Said, E. (1978/87) *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books.

style that few men could meet, their socialization did not prepare them for the relaxed lifestyle of the Indies.⁷²

Olivier, on the other hand, subtly denigrates settler society through an utter lack of narrative empathy for the ‘settler’ lifestyle in Batavia. Mocking the manner in which both Dutch men and women live, noting that husbands and wives feel it is necessary to have separate bedrooms, and commenting at length on the “Oudgaast’s” beautiful home, redundant rooms, working hours, sleeping habits and the role of female slaves in his life,⁷³ Olivier fashions a world of relative depravity built on marriages of convenience. The reader cannot help but absorb the fact that Olivier and the Oudgaast do not see or understand the same Indonesia, and that Olivier has little desire to become acquainted with the “Oudgaast’s” world.

There can be no doubt that some Dutch men and indigenous women were sexually interactive, and “Dutch style” marriages not consummated during those first centuries, although VOC records certainly speak to marriages between Asian women and European men. That indigenous women entered into non-marital relationships confirms the Motherland’s worst fears about ‘heathen/wanton’ women and the risk to male Dutch souls. We could query however, what a ‘Dutch-style’ marriage would have meant to the indigenous women in question, since during those centuries it was a church requirement symbolically expressing Christian ideology.

Indeed, fascinating patterns can be discerned in the literature on these male/female arrangements. I have discussed Taylor’s investigations into early VOC family structures on Batavia initiated

⁷² Ritter, W.L. en Hardouin, E. [1853-1854] *Java, Tooneelen uit het Leven, etc.* ‘s-Gravenhage. [Later uitgaven bij Sijthoff: Leiden]. Ritter stayed in Indonesia for 45 years. He worked as an Officer of Health during his first years and later for some time in the Civil Service. Subsequent to his service, he was employed as a writer and journalist, from 1852 as ‘redacteur/editor’ of the “Java-bode.”

⁷³ Olivier, Johannes. (1827-1830) *Land en Zeetogen in Nederlands Indie* (3 delen) [in] Brommer, Bea (1979) (ed.) *Reizand door Oost-Indie: Prenten and Verhalen Uit de 19^e Eeuw*. Utrecht, Antwerp: Het Spectrum.

through the Dutch man marries an indigenous woman pattern.⁷⁴ The progeny of these unions – Eurasians – gave rise to a subsequent marriage model whereby these daughters became the preferred marriage partners for incoming Dutch males, thereby connecting multiple Dutch men through the matriline. In discussing the impact of Asian customs on the family system, Taylor notes the relative ease of divorce and documents women's life paths through specific examples. As a result, we become aware of the extent to which women 'recycled' through the same group of men after those divorces or upon the death of a husband. In the next chapter, a Eurasian interviewee demonstrates the perpetuation of this pattern to the end of the colonial period, noting, almost as an afterthought, an incident that illustrates the same model. In this case, a widow with four children marries a man kin-linked through the extended matriline, and my consultant's data clearly illustrates that when a man or woman who was a member of a kin network died or divorced, they quickly entered into a new relationship with another member of that circle. Indeed, the narrator met her soon-to-be husband through the same extended bonds.

The fascinating analysis initiated by Bosma and Raben with respect to concubine/marriage relations in Siam between VOC employees and indigenous women, extends these patterns.⁷⁵ Ten years after the VOC first arrived on Siam's shores; they established a trading office just south of the capital city, Ayutthaya. Close to the VOC, other traders, such as the Portuguese and Japanese were also settled in their own quarters. The Dutch post was small, consisting of a few dozen men, but all of them, regardless of rank, had concubines for whom they provided homes and who they maintained economically. Although there were a number of Siamese women that were part of the arrangements, most of the women were ethnically Mon, and these arrangements held in spite of laws that forbade interaction

⁷⁴ Taylor, J. G. (1984). *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press

⁷⁵ I am heavily in debt to Bosma and Raben for this entire section. Without their exceedingly careful attention to detail, I would not have been able to trace these sustained patterns. Bosma, Ulbe and Raben, Remco. (2003) *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker. Page 22 ff.

between women of Siamese, Mon and Lao descent with European men; on-the-ground realities are often at odds with practical congress. Bosma and Raben propose that the history of the Mon, who had initially been brought to Siam as slaves, probably played a role in the Siamese royal acceptance of these relationships.

While company servants lived in their official quarters, the houses they provided for their female partners were located in the neighbourhood. From the children produced through these early relations, a satellite community arose that was closely bound to the company. Daughters became brides for succeeding VOC employees, while sons worked for the VOC, duplicating the process in Batavia. Similarly, if a man left Siam, the women he left behind quickly found a new relationship with a VOC employee, paralleling the process in Batavia and narratives in Chapter Four. Long lines of Dutch-Mon families that evolved close ties with the royal court of Siam were established. Bosma and Raben document that parallel communities with the same characteristics sprang up in dozens of locations across South East Asia. Furnivall's⁷⁶ observation that the Dutch attitude towards their colony was by no means one of 'staying out the tenure and getting home as rapidly as possible,' Tjalie Robinson's point that a mixed race culture began to emerge in the Indies as soon as Europeans became involved in South East Asia,⁷⁷ and Taylor's discussion of the families that composed the Raad van Indië,⁷⁸ are empirically demonstrated through Bosma and Raben's data.⁷⁹

Throughout the centuries, a goodly number of men who went to the Indies did not return and made Indonesia home; I have a number of descendents in the database. Establishing domiciles in the archipelago, they co-founded clans that span centuries. Analyzing

⁷⁶ Furnivall, J.S. (1956) *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India*. New York: New York University Press.

⁷⁷ Goss, Andrew. (2000) From Tong-Tong to Temp Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History, 1957 - 1961. *Indonesia*. Vol. 70. (October) pages 9-36. Page 27.

⁷⁸ Taylor, J. G. (1984). *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press

⁷⁹ Bosma, Ulbe and Raben, Remco. (2003) *De Oude Indische Wereld*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker.

these arrangements from the perspective of feminist theory, we are a bit “boxed in” in terms of an ability to probe these relationships. We could take the conventional approach and note that indigenous women were “being screwed” by the colonial power. An argument can be made that equates the rape of Siam for example, (although we would be hard pressed given Siam’s history) with the rape of Mon women. It is possible to maintain that Dutch men were worried about getting ‘home’ again and hence did not marry their concubines, as otherwise they were required to stay in South East Asia as per VOC laws. Therefore Dutch men “used” women as things. Finally, we could claim that building houses and providing economically for a woman is a form of sex for money, hence treating women as a prostitute (thingification) by relegating her position to that of a “kept woman.”

There are some problems with these applications of current interpretations of male/female relations, the role of economics in those arrangements, and ‘our’ expectations of ‘proper’ behaviour. In the first instance, the theory renders women like the Mon completely non-agentive, passive recipients of whatever the dominant male colonial decided to dish out. Surely Mon women’s concerns, aspirations, cultural mores, and even affections came into play? The consistent marginalization, - the writing of indigenous women as faceless, over-powered, subalterns - of two-party participation in relations between European men and indigenous women is troubling. Women are the life-blood of the Asian family; in matrilineal systems they are the determining element in terms of descent identity. Surely women’s marriage customs (in matrilineal systems, often relaxed in terms of divorce etc) would play a significant role? It is difficult to imagine a Mon woman insisting on a ‘white wedding’ with Christian accoutrements during those early encounters. The fact that it did not take place matters to Christians or Christian influenced ideologues, who indict colonial behaviour on the basis of ‘lack’ – non-Christian (heathen) arrangements from men who *should have* known better. Yet in spite of the fact that “Christianity” no longer (supposedly) plays a central role in either western societies or analyses, a ‘lack’ of marriage between a European man and an Asian woman is utilized as a specific symbol of abuse of indigenous women.

Writing the “subaltern” may be difficult or impossible – the point is moot, since I intend neither. But it is surely doable to *situate* a

subaltern within the context of her/her socio-cultural norms, mores and customs, and to derive (her) voice from arrangements that she may enter into. We may find for example, that being a “kept woman,” while derogatory in western culture, was a prized position in other societies because it created patron links and access to subsistence/economic or political opportunities that a particular clan may not have had before. Therefore a woman who entered into such a position potentially elevated both her status and the status of her kin. In exchange, European men benefited greatly from access to indigenous structures, including family. That fact is evident in database narratives from settlers – principles of reciprocity clearly emerge as the benefits of having a foot in two camps are outlined. Maintaining the application of ‘our’⁸⁰ paradigms to historical periods and cultures far removed from ‘our mindset’ continues to obfuscate colonial relations. What type of man/woman relations were found among the Mon? How do they contribute to Mon women/European men relations?

In order to uphold the proposition that Dutch men consistently used/abused indigenous women across the centuries, we need to show the “thingification” of women built on their pollutive potential. While this can be done from ‘outside’ the south east Asian sphere – in other words from the mythologies rampant in the motherland - we need to show that emically, men entering into relationships (rather than marriages) with these women clung to a pollution mythology that incorporated the notion that indigenous female bodies were immanently dirty and hence violable. I believe, although I cannot discuss this extensively here, that this argument will be difficult to build and maintain on the basis of the data available that speaks the contrary. In this database for example, Dutch husbands married to Eurasian or indigenous women had no concept of pollution, and were filled with pride regarding their offspring. While there must have been bad apples in the Dutch males that sailed around South East Asia throughout the centuries, it is equally certain that there were men who parallel my database informants.

⁸⁰ Our = “western dominant paradigms”

Perceptions of Dutch male sexuality in the tropics, as well as feminist theories applied to analyze colonial sexual/race relations, are “outside” constructs that take no notice, indeed have little interest in, context and the agentive possibilities of the (western constructed) so-called subaltern, who is often subaltern purely on the basis of contemporary western evaluations of her position, and not due to any inherent quality in her or her value in her own society. Rather than illuminating relations between European men and indigenous women of diverse backgrounds, analyses obfuscate and negate; neither agency or humanity are attributed to sexual male or the female, except where mythological concepts of agency are applied to predatory male intent. Neither feminist nor colonial motherland mythologies can afford to grapple with on the ground issues; they have points to make in relation to perceptions and institutions of (current) “self.”

Deconstruction of ‘outside’ discourse on Dutch male-Asian woman sexuality exposes the naturalized myth and the mythemes imposed on these relationships. The fundamental motif required is #1; it renders all other alternatives possible.

1. *The imagined sexually promiscuous landscape of Indonesia*: when Dutch men leave the civilized and moral landscape of the Netherlands, they lose the constraints on their sexual behaviour and in a land “like” Indonesia, indulge their appetites.
2. *Dutch men engaged in sexual relations with indigenous women*. The reading of this statement within the mythic framework requires that a concomitant decision re mytheme choice be made by the narrator:
 - a. The aboriginal woman is uncivilized, sexual, close to nature, and earthy. Alternate subthemes:
 - i. Dutch men fall, or will inevitably fall, for the wiles of a mysterious, sexual (and in Indonesian accounts, calculating) woman. Since aboriginal women are sirens, ‘what man could say no’?
 - ii. Dutch men violated earthy and natural, but pure and innocent of European evil, (a.k.a. evils of civilization) indigenous women. (rape motif)
3. *Man’s sexual ‘nature’*. Mytheme choice is again alternate:
 - a. (Dutch) Men have rapacious sexual appetites and little self-control; especially in the “tropics,” where society does not restrain them, they fall victim to those appetites.

- (relates most closely to feminist theory in which rapacious sexual appetites becomes an appetite for power conflated with sex as power)
- b. Men have strong sexual appetites that they must govern through reason. However, every man is by nature a barbarian who requires the civilizing influence that only (any) Woman can provide.
4. Dutch men lived for long periods with aboriginal women, and years later, abandoned them to “go home” to Holland. (Socially important theme in novels; society of abandoned ‘half-bloods’)
 - a. This mytheme is derivative and dependent upon either the violation of aboriginal women or the longing for the civilized side of life that women provide. Within the tenets of this mytheme, Dutch men are calculators seeking to assuage their sexual needs and they used colonized females to fulfill them. Denial of emotional involvement between these men and women permeates the text through the mechanism of silence; the storyline is one of use and abuse. Authors do not probe the male/female relationship – one wonders about their conversations, laughter, and time together; - the focus is on offspring who have no name, no ‘ethnicity,’ no ‘real’ identity, while the face-less mother is a one-dimensional victim of Dutch lust. (thingification)
 5. Dutch men regularly violated their servants. This mytheme requires:
 - a. If not an acceptance of rape as an aspect of the Dutch male and his rapacious sexuality in Indonesia, at least a willingness to consider that they forced sex on defenceless women.
 - b. A willingness to accept that Dutch or Dutch-Indonesian women present in the household turned a blind eye to male behaviour.
 - c. That the close relationships with servants described in particular by Dutch-Indonesian women, did not extend to servant sharing of rape/forced sex with the mistress.
 - d. If children were present in the household they were blind, deaf, and dumb, or have re-written the past to ‘forget’ any incidents they may have witnessed in order to help the ‘self’ endure.

- e. Alternatively, but more rarely, Indonesian servants (1) welcomed the advances of the 'master' or (2) accepted it as part of life, or (3) a calculating indigenous female solicited the advances. It is noteworthy that the latter motif dominates Indonesian textual explorations of Dutch male-Asian female sexuality, suggesting an Indonesian agentive paradigm of 'sleeping your way to the top.' The 'vamp defence' is not used by Dutch men to explain their relations with Asian women, suggesting that while Indonesian authors were willing to explore the possibility, constraints on colonial (or politically-correct) speaking, may have prohibited a like investigation or postulate for European authors, who write Indonesian women as (subaltern) non-agentive victims.
6. The sexiness of Colonialism was rampant, and European men, to use Buruma's wishful phrase, regularly exercised the droit de seignior in the kampong.⁸¹

The fundamental insight gained from an isolation of the mythemes utilized to produce mythic variation, is that the narratives are constructed from "outside, "and externally imposed - be it from the imagination of the Dutch population/authors, or current scholars who attribute rampant sexuality to the colonial sphere and perpetuate the myth. What did the myth look like from 'inside' Indonesia? Is it possible to empirically explore how sexy Colonialism was, even if we limit that analysis to Buruma's claim?

In 1940, the population of the Indonesian archipelago numbered roughly 65 million people. At the turn of the 20th century, 94,000 people fell under the classification 'Dutch' and only 1/5th of that number were reckoned as 'full blooded' Europeans. Sixty Two Thousand members of the total Euro population resided on Java. By 1940, sources estimate a total "European" population of around 200,000, including women and children, and again with 1/5th of

⁸¹ Buruma, Ian (1996) *The Missionary and the Libertine*. New York: Random House. Page 73.

them carrying 'full blooded' Dutch ancestry.⁸² We require the participation of 'full-blooded' Dutch men in the violations taking place in the kampongs, as Eurasian are not called to account for their encounters with Indonesian women. How many culprits can we posit?

1/5th of the total 'full blood' European population offers us an approximate number of 40,000 Dutch citizens including women and children. Allowing for single men, not as common in 1940 as formerly, we could propose a very high end number of 12,000 Dutch men with 80% located on Java = 10,000 men. Given that all of them regularly visited the kampong to exercise the droit de seignior in the twilight years of Empire, or made advances to their servants, a proposition I sincerely doubt, we can hardly claim the permeation of Colonialism by sexuality.

(we had been talking of childbirth) Self: This is difficult for me to ask, but did Dutch men treat Indonesian women differently than they treated Dutch women? Interviewee: What do you mean by Indonesian women? We had Indonesian friends, couples, so,...when I think about it, no... except there was more politeness I think, more formality. (self – treading very lightly) Well I was thinking about the servants maybe – how they treated them, or spoke with them. Interviewee: Well that was the servants – they worked for us. Really, my husband did not have a lot to do with them except his chauffeur and the outside help – the lawn and garden and so, and those servants were men. (Pause) You said this was difficult for you...why is that? (Self – throwing caution to the winds) Well some discussions about Dutch men in Indonesia talk about sexuality – relations between Dutch men and Indonesian women – sometimes against the will of the woman. (Long pause; Interviewee:) Ahhh. Yes. Well that is a case of "I heard that so and so." (Self) I'm sorry? [Body language: eyebrows up; don't understand] (Interviewee) You heard about it happening but never to anyone you knew,..they heard from a friend, who heard from a friend, who heard from so and so and it was always somewhere else – not in your circle, not in your city. So you could not verify anything. (self) Do you think it truly happened? (Interviewee) Gossip (geklets) People with

⁸² Source: Dahm, B. (1971) *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*. Translated by P.S. Falla. London; New York: Praeger Publishers. Page 11.

*nothing better to do. (Self - pressing) So you think there is no truth to those stories? (Interviewee) Well...I think there is no smoke without fire. So I think it did happen..but I can tell you this. In my household, in my circle, if any of our husbands, or our sons, had even thought about it, they would have heard about it from us. You can "take that to the bank."*⁸³

The above quote typifies the information from this database, people had 'heard' about it, they could not 'verify' it, and they would never have condoned it. From the perspective of those who had 'lived' in Indonesia, the subject of sexuality was hardly relevant, and some of them were surprised I raised it. Others understood:

*(interview with a woman I got to know very well, a very outspoken 92 year old) self: So XX, I have been asking people about whether or not Dutch men were sexual with Indonesian women and it is a hard subject to talk about. Interviewee grins and teases: Why Jet? Quite a few of them married Indo or Indonesian women. I suppose they had sex. (Self - partially laughing) Yes..... but you know that is not what I meant. I am talking about - you know - relations between Dutch men and say servants - that Indonesian women did not want. (Interviewee still laughing, partly jesting) In the old days we - that is us Dutch - used to think Indonesian women were dying to be with a Dutch man (aside !! how presumptuous) - in the 20th century we knew better. I took classes in Holland before I went out, and we (again she laughs) did not have a class on sex. (Mutters: we still didn't talk about it in Holland at all before the war, you would have thought babies came from the air). So when we learned how to interact with Indonesian people, they never said watch out for the women - they might be after your man.... Laughs again. But I am teasing. I know the stories you are thinking of. Did it happen? I bet it did. But not often, not in my household, and not among men of honour. I like to think that overall, Dutch men were honourable. And Jet.... It happened in Holland too. Don't make that kind of misbehaviour special to Indonesia. That you must promise me.*⁸⁴

In conclusion, the scholarly focus on Dutch sexuality in the tropics extends the fantasies, fears, and puritanical views of sexuality that were rampant among those who had never seen Indonesia. In light of

⁸³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 1, June, 2004.

⁸⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. Tape 2, May, 2004.

responses from interviewees, the attention paid to sexuality facilitates the postulate that we attempt to speak into existence that which largely lives in an absent imagination. That imagination, inspired by old fears of ‘mingled’ blood and barely comprehended “Others,” exotically expresses forbidden desires and sexual voyeurism, but not it seems, the life of Indonesian participants.

Interestingly, current scholarly literature also perpetuates and reinforces the focus on the sexual nature of Dutch men (why no women practicing the *droit de seigneur* in the *kampong*?) and the tired ideology of the “natural” sexlessness of northern European women that results in no danger to women’s (nonexistent) sexuality in the tropics. Since the notion that women were “attracted” to the opposite sex was (or is not) not one that was mythically applied to northern European women, being reserved for the fair sex representatives of more ‘animalistic/nature’ peoples, no concern regarding the behaviour of Dutch women in the presence of Indonesian men haunts either our mythic or scholarly works. The entire framework of the myth, and subsequent analysis, including feminist theorizing, is a male focussed paradigm, and the hyper-real interest in sexual liaisons takes little account of the active role of women as lovers, mothers, wives, or daughters, in the lives of men.

3.4 Born in Indonesia – Dutch-Indonesian children of Dutch parents

Those born in Indonesia were ‘of’ Indonesia. As such their narratives depart, sometimes radically, from their parents ‘who came’ to Indonesia. The atmospheric “South East Asian” homes noted in the early part of this Chapter are typical of born in Indonesian children; they articulated the union of self, land and people through the household environment. The Dutch “who came” to Indonesia expressed their identities through Dutch spatial configurations. While they keep and display mementoes, ‘Indonesianness’ does not frame their being in the world.

3.4.1 FAMILIES

Dutch children born on Indonesia offer family narratives that exhibit marked similarities with child narratives drawn from immigrant families in North America who came from Holland with no tenure in Indonesia, with an important exception. While children of

immigrants thematically agree that ‘Mom and Dad’ don’t “get” the ‘new country’ – its people, its customs, its food, its norms and its mores – Dutch children born on Indonesia tended to focus on maternal shortcomings and largely absolved their fathers of a failure to understand. Coupled with the laments of mothers that they found it difficult to enforce the “Dutch way” in Indonesia, and male database marginalization that this was wise or necessary, one reflects on Ortner’s “Implications of Intermediacy”⁸⁵ and its social manifestations in terms of “embedment” in the private sphere, conservatism, and motherly adherence to norms no longer relevant.

In spite of these generational clashes with Mom, who was after all ‘old fashioned’ or “too Dutch,” not a single child – no matter where they resided in the archipelago – claimed less than an idyllic childhood. True, children in families on the outer islands worked hard, while those with fathers in government or corporate positions on Java did not. Personal circumstances differed. Yet looking back through the eye of memory, anticipating the dark narrative storm to come, those sunshine days dominate:

*My childhood was unbelievably happy. No child could have asked for more.*⁸⁶

*How can I explain to you how it was? Sunshine... and of course rain... why don't I remember rain? It did rain, it always did at certain times of the year..... but my youth always seems sunny. It was freedom. That's what it was. It was free... and happy. Lots of friends. My parents, they had lots of friends. We had lots of friends. Visiting, intimate – you know – the country is intimate (gezellig). Then we came to Holland. It was grey...and dark. I still see the countries in colors.....*⁸⁷

Listening to the narratives it is hard to imagine a state of unhappiness living in a lush landscape, swimming, biking, visiting,

⁸⁵ Ortner, Sherry. (Autumn, 1972) Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture? *Feminist Studies*. Vol. 1 No. 2. Pages 5-31.

⁸⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. Tape 1. July 2005.

⁸⁷ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 2. June 2004

riding, picnicking, friends, and “*everyday something new to learn.*”⁸⁸ Unhappy little moments that typify childhood were present too and central to narrative recall; arguments with mama or one’s best friend, liking a boy or girl and finding out they liked someone else, wanting to go somewhere, have something, meet someone; being denied..... Yet new concepts also entered their lives, painting the social sphere with cosmopolitan brush strokes. Children went to school with others who were part Indonesian, Indonesian, Chinese... many of them did not notice difference until they ‘went home with them’⁸⁹ or someone ‘pointed it out’⁹⁰ to them.’ Those in the outer islands grew up amongst indigenous peoples and rarely met anyone who was ‘Dutch.’ The world of enriched cultural diversity children lived in starkly contrasted with the Netherlands they encountered upon repatriation.

*(discussion of race is underway) I was born on the island and lived there until we were taken to the camp. So from birth, the only white faces I saw belonged to my parents and later, my sister after she was born. The first time I saw a large number of white faces in one place, was in Camp. But even there, the shock was not as great as later in Holland. White is so pale, almost sickly... – have you ever noticed that?*⁹¹

3.4.2 LANGUAGE

Mothers commented upon the fact that their children, when they learned to speak, at the very least included native words in their vocabulary, although many Dutch babies uttered their first words in an indigenous language. Relationships established between children and babus sustained the credit or blame for this fact. On the outer islands however,

*Ja, Jet,*⁹² *I was born there and so of course, I learned right away to speak Malay*⁹³ *- because of course there was school and it was in*

⁸⁸ Op. Cit, Tape 1. June 2004 (Outer island Interviewee)

⁸⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 2, May 2005.

⁹⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1, June, 2004.

⁹¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. Tape 2. August, 2006.

⁹² My Dutch diminutive is Jetty.

*Malay – my father believed in that with all his heart. I never had the chance to learn XXX fluently, like my (older) sister – she was very good – because of the war (I couldn't) you know. So she spoke first Malay and then XXX and then of course, we had to learn Dutch.Our life was the same life they had –my friends, well they were XXX, but I did not think of them like that – as XXX - they were my friends, that's all.*⁹⁴

*"When they put us on the ship to leave for the Celebes, (ja, we didn't know then where we were going), I could hardly speak a word of Dutch.*⁹⁵

Neither of these families had servants; hence both young girls learned the language of their areas through interactive assimilation into their respective indigenous societies. As they acquired that language, they assimilated categorical/domain structures in relation to people and environment spoken through those indigenous languages. Consequently, their constructed behavioural, temporal, normative, and spatial environments diverged significantly from a "Dutch" environment/worldview. Adults who acquired a 'native tongue,' such as the parents of the two women noted above, also experienced the modification – the stretching if you will – of their being in the world.

The issue of language is interesting in the Dutch colonial context. Since the Dutch did not impose their language on their archipelago, indeed did not teach it in the schools until the 20th century, we can theorize their view of language in one of two ways. Either the Dutch used their native tongue to clearly delineate boundaries between self and Other as other-who-does-not-speak the language, or their respect, immersion, and/or interest in the languages of Other led to policies of language preservation and, following Sapir, through the

⁹³ Which she still does, and fluently. Like many of my other informants who used the first languages they had been born into, she consistently utilized Malay or indigenous terms, rather than translations, for her life in Indonesia.

⁹⁴ I found it necessary to disguise place of residence for this informant, as it would have led, without doubt, to her identification. Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 1. May, 2005.

⁹⁵ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. (Papua) Tape 2. June 2005.

acquisition of an indigenous language for communication purposes, an enhanced worldview.

Dutch colonial and missionary policy formally endorsed the prescription to leave indigenous languages intact. One of Dr. L. Onvlee's reports to the Zending expressed his concern regarding the increasing advocacy of the use of Malay for evangelical work throughout the archipelago, an advocacy that did not assert the superiority of the 'colonizer's language' but counselled the wholesale adoption of a Southeast Asian tongue. Dr. Onvlee argued against this universal appropriation, opting for indigenous languages/dialects. Conceding that islands such as Sumba offered up many practical problems with their linguistic variety, he notes that speech and the living relationship between speaker, word, and hearer must override all other considerations.

*There is no person that is not part of, and lives immersed in, a particular social/cultural structure. And in/with this structure, that person stands in a constantly transforming relationship with his/her material and spiritual being. With her/it, he participates in the past and in tradition; with her he shares a 'same' environment with all the possibilities and restraints that environment entails, with her/it he lives in ONE world of images, thoughts, values. In that circle, that structure, people understand each other. We bring something new, but we do not create a new beginning. We toss the seeds into a field that is no longer virginal. Through the community in which they live, the 'form' of their lives and their attitudes towards those lives [life] is already determined. If we wish to speak to the people, we must begin by learning the people. Therefore, the use of Sumbanese is critical...*⁹⁶

Dr. Onvlee's assertions re indigenous language, religion, and culture are doubly significant in that his emphasis on peoples' conceptual language illustrates a deep appreciation of an alternative, but not less civilized, worldview. The British, who hierarchically ranked

⁹⁶ Onvlee, L. [1973] *Cultuur Als Antwoord*. Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land - en Volkenkunde. 66. 's-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff. Chapter One. The translation is mine.

languages/cultures as entwined dual indicators of Civilization, effectively trapped 'other' in a Catch 22 since this ranking was circular; having decided that a specific culture was inferior, its language naturally was. Bringing "Civilization" went hand in hand with the imposition of English - the civilized tongue of tongues.⁹⁷ Consequently, residential school policies in countries such as Canada explicitly mandated that English replace all Native American indigenous languages- children could not speak their native languages within the schools and received severe punishment for doing so.

3.4.3 THE ABSENT SIBLING

Dutch children born in Indonesia, as well as a Eurasian interviewee from the Netherlands, introduced a narrative anomaly, the "absent sibling' syndrome.

*I mentioned yesterday that when my parents went out, (aside: well our servants all went home, they did not live in), one of them would stay with us and sleep and my sister says, what a scandal! They were on the floor and we in our soft beds!*⁹⁸

*This is something that my sister and I disagree on all the time. She can barely talk about that time in Indonesia because she believes we were wrong.*⁹⁹

I don't agree with my sister about this. She thinks Colonialism was wrong. We fight about it all the time.

Interviewee speaking of her sister: But you know, she won't go back now, she is ashamed, she has read too much about what we did to them. Self: Who? Interviewee: Well you know, she read about the revolution, and why the Indonesians rebelled and how the Dutch treated that..... and now she does not believe that Colonialism was right and she gets upset about the past. Self: Do you feel the same way? Interviewee: NNNNo, I can't agree with her. Well what did we do? But it hurts me so much to see how it has affected her. She

⁹⁷ A negation of the Tower of Babel story; I was taught in my Calvinist upbringing that this story signified that "languages" were simultaneously and equally created.

⁹⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. July, 2005.

⁹⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. June, 2005.

*cannot come out of it you know... we were in the camps and thought we would go home (outer islands), one sister died there.... But instead we went to Holland and we had never been there. You long for your home and then find out you should not have been there – everything has been taken from her. My parents went back, they went without us. What kind of parent does that to their kids? They left us there in Holland.*¹⁰⁰

Not only is the introduction of ‘the sibling’ specific to ‘born in Indonesia’ children, it arises only in the narratives of female interviewees. While some of them disagreed regularly with their brothers, overwhelmingly, sisters represent alternative viewpoints, and they were all siblings I was not in a position to interview! But...that was not the point in any case. The ‘absent sibling’ thematic is a narrative strategy that facilitates an exploration of the multiple messages informants have internalized regarding the Dutch Colonial mission. Through its introduction, they introduce the things that ‘prickle’ them in the night, the events they are not so sure of, the interpretations they took for granted and now question.

Each sibling stands in for two reified perspectives: (1) cultural customs differ and Colonialism was not the cause of, but honoured, those differences and (2) Colonialism is a corrupt system and everything associated with it, evil. In the first position, status hierarchies such as those on Java prescribed a set of indigenous protocols (and speech) that denoted and honoured status difference, including the hiring of servants. The demeanour displayed by servants embodied indigenous status requirements and cultural customs. ‘Sleeping on mats’ was culturally derived and not the result of demands by colonial masters that servants sleep on the floor because ‘they were not worth more.’ That, as pointed out to me by an informant quoted earlier, is a judgment on our part, rooted in our regard for sleeping in beds.

¹⁰⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. June, 2005. I suspect they were left in Holland due to the unsettled political situation in Indonesia. Even though they lived in the Outer Islands, they went over Java.

*If a person is not comfortable on a bed, should she be forced to lie in one so that we feel better?*¹⁰¹

Or

*Daughter: "My 21st birthday present was a trip to Indonesia." There we were the second day (with friends)..... and the servants.. they were older women with grey hair and they crept, they crept along the wall (literally the plinten – the baseboards) because their heads could not be above ours.... It was very difficult, it was terrible,...awful. Mother: Ja. And you know that was not a colonial thing. We did not teach them that. You know where they learned that - from their Regents, Their Regents. That was NOT us.....*¹⁰²

Siblings also enter the narrative fray in another interesting manner – the sibling punished for inappropriate behaviour towards indigenous peoples. This theme is ‘semantically heavy’ and severely tempts the analyst to theorize displacement. No interviewee ever received a *direct* scolding from a parent for treating a servant incorrectly:

*I remember so well.....when once my brother commanded the gardener to do something and my father was so angry! So angry! That he dared to do this. And he said to him (to my brother) what do you think you are doing? Who are you to command anyone here?*¹⁰³

The absent sibling who models inappropriate interaction serves a number of important functions. From the perspective of self-construction of course, it facilitates the narrator’s denial that she ever acted in an untoward manner in indigenous/Dutch interaction. Secondly, the trope symptomatically reveals the framework for ‘good’ and ‘bad’ interactions with servants/indigenous peoples. Thirdly, fathers and it is indeed always ‘fathers’ - stand in for the colonial structure, and are diligent in their attention to incorrect and correct behaviours vis a vis indigenous peoples. Writ large, the

¹⁰¹ Op. cit. Tape 2.

¹⁰² Compilation of various speech sequences from Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 3. May 2004. Trip was in the 1970s.

¹⁰³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 1, July 2005.

narrative bits recount proper relations and respect between indigenous and Dutch peoples.

Two 'siblings' in the sub-database stand for the Colonialism as inherently evil aspect of sibling discourse and speak about their absent siblings in reverse. These interviewees are not predisposed to answer the questions such as, *if a person is not comfortable on a bed, should she be forced to lie in one so that we feel better?*¹⁰⁴ The aversion, indeed the self loathing – a clearly un-resolved psychic state - to having been involved in the “colonial endeavour” is so strong that it produces a shudder in the person when they contemplate colonial, including spatial, arrangements. Any attempt to query ‘how’ the colonial regime may have instilled, or insisted on particular customs such as sleeping on mats, produced a bodily expressed ‘halt’ to the topic at hand. Indeed, body language utilized by interviewees who took this position on colonialism was clearly defensive. I could not pursue the topic without great difficulty, although I was able to broach a discussion of colonial ideologies in other ways. Interestingly, analysis *suggests* a correlation between aversion to Colonialism and the servant relationship: the *stronger* and more personal the individual relationship with the servants, the *greater* the later recoil to Colonialism.¹⁰⁵

3.4.4 THE SERVANTS

The narrative status of servants for ‘born in Indonesia’ children is not iconic, but highly personal. Here again, Dutch children born in Indonesia narratives overlap with Dutch-Indonesian models and not with the Dutch ‘who came.’

All interviewees with servants spoke of them with affection and regard; many recounted remarkably detailed memories, including their names, where they were born, details of their families, etc. They had all ‘learnt’ something from a servant; they all recalled those incident(s) with clarity. Compared to parental discourse, they spoke with far greater anguish regarding the separation from family servants as they departed for the camps. While their parents noted

¹⁰⁴ Op. cit. Tape 2.

¹⁰⁵ I will pick up this relationship in the next chapter.

the “difficulty in separation” and sometimes addressed the emotion of parting, accounts from children were purely personal and largely untangled. Servant-child dialogic associations operated in an interstitial space where hybrid interaction flourished. When narrators speak of servants as friends and part of family, they are articulating childhood interactions and perceptions formed *outside* of the formal employee/employer structure, but within the possibilities of a liminal creativity that led to co-understanding and unfettered love.

Dutch children born in Indonesia who had servants – hence we are back on Java and Sumatra – were aware that the relationship protocols between family and servants in place in their home differed in other households:

*I had good friends that were Indische (Dutch-Indonesian) and I liked being at their house. They were so informal and the mother - always laughing. There were servants there too you know, but I found it was more relaxed - especially again the mother who went into the kitchen and joked with them a lot. But at the house of papa's Indonesian friends it was more formal with the servants than it was at our house!*¹⁰⁶

Vivid memories recounted by these children involved “pulling the wool over mama’s eyes” with a servant. Indeed, narratives suggest that servant acts of resistance included collusion with the ‘master’s’ children, a clear instance of liminal intersection. The circumvention of ‘norms’ associated with servant/child relations on the child’s side, were gleefully carried out as minor rebellions. Most commonly associated with the bypassing of the ‘*sleeping in the afternoon*’ rule, children loved to ‘hang out’ with the servants in the kitchen and listen to them gossip, watch the cook and eat that which was forbidden at the front of the house, or collect ‘hugs’ when Dutch parents were not so physically expressive. Boys favoured following around the houseboy, the gardener, the chauffeur, and learning skills not customarily taught to Dutch children. Highly favoured by both genders was the “trip out” with a babu or other servant, which

¹⁰⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 2, May 2005.

involved going to the park, or the shops and indulging in “forbidden” indigenous foods or pastimes.

See – this not ‘eating this’ or not ‘eating that’ – what was my mother thinking. Did we live in Holland? No we did not. None of us even imagined that – it was where mama came from – well and papa too of course, but my sister and I both knew that he ate, all the time, what was forbidden to us. We were Indies kids. Born there, all our friends there, a way of life Hollanders could not even imagine. And the life of the servants, and their conversation, and our friends, and what they were doing, well that was far more interesting than Tante Riek in Holland. Our people lived in Indonesia. That was our reality. And we all used to say that when we grew up, and we had children, this silly nonsense would disappear. Today – rice. No potatoes for me. [Looks into the distance] ...but that was never to be....¹⁰⁷

Best of all however, were the visits to the kampong and the consequent immersion in servant families and kampong life. Indeed accounts from database children and those offered in Stoler and Strassler’s analysis are almost irreconcilable unless manual literature became part of Indonesian propaganda against the Dutch during the Soekarno years, or children born in Indonesia have invented a purely fictive collective past. Let us consider the latter possibility first. Children claim that they spent a lot of time with the servants. They address personal relationships with them. They demonstrate the language they learned from them, discuss the gossip they overheard in the kitchens and kampongs, sketch out the games they played with Indonesian, often servant, children, sing the lullabies learnt from babus that they, in turn, sang to their children, and take out the pictures they have reclaimed from their parents. In short, they offer tangible evidence that they had direct contact with servants.

Is there a social/psychic gain for North American informants when they claim servants as family and friends? Although these interviewees exhibit relatively little angst regarding ‘Colonialism,’ it does manifest in the absent sibling narrative theme. Therefore the

¹⁰⁷ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1, 2005. This young boy’s family planned to stay in Indonesia.

“servant’ thematic may quietly state, “Colonialism was not (all) bad.” We could further posit that they are illustrating the careful attention paid to indigenous/Dutch relations during the colonial era and that the narratives pre-address what ‘came later’ – interviewees not only deplore, they are emotional about the state of the Indonesian people under Soekarno and Suharto. There is no doubt that they maintain that Indonesia was happier and far more prosperous under the Dutch, while simultaneously conceding - many of them advocated independence in a scenario that included the ‘self-as-citizen’- that change was inevitable. Servant narratives may, and I believe do, carry all these connotations. Do these narrative indicators render their accounts discursively guilty of masking the reality of servant-colonial relations? Are they merely ‘nostalgic’ or ‘sentimental’?

In light of the highly personal and interactive narratives recounted by children born in Indonesia, we cannot reduce the discourse to a ‘nostalgic or sentimental’ tone. Any person telling childhood – old friends, good times, feelings for people that formed our “I,” tends to convey parallel tonal quality; we articulate the longing for what was, through the lens of what came, and what is. In order to assess quality and authenticity of relationship, empirical data and narrative content, not tone, should form the focus of our analyses. There is empirical data a-plenty regarding relationships with servants in the form of pictures, what is contentious is what the pictures signify. Content directed to signification speaks to close personal bonds and is potentially problematic in light of Stoler and Strassler’s findings. Were Dutch children blind, naïve, duped or stupid in *their* interpretation of the relationships with servants? Or does the flaw lie with our analyses? It is possible that the data used to support various claims about colonial/servant relationships is not always well sorted. Beyond the inclusion of age and gender criteria, categorical formations for the purpose of discourse analyses on servants must include natal place, ethnic background, and place of domicile. The “Dutch” in Indonesia were not a hegemonic group, and no light is shed on how *societies and bodies remember, but equally*

important, how they forget and go on to forge viable practical models to help them endure”¹⁰⁸ if we continue to treat them as such.

3.5 The Japanese

“They (Japanese) picked us up during nap time. (Slams down her dish cloth) They did that on purpose. They always did it. They knew that we would all be there and they knew everyone was napping. They got you out of your sleep you know – surprise. You were totally disoriented. And if anyone had wanted to help us, well – they were sleeping too.”¹⁰⁹

*Well what can you learn in the camps except survival. No books. No paper. Mama told stories, she sang us songs, she did arithmetic with us. She taught us what she could. But when you are hungry **all the time**, are you thinking about multiplication tables? (slams down dish cloth again)¹¹⁰*

I was talking to C about it just the other day and I said to him, “we were old when we got out.”¹¹¹

*“Well even before they (Japanese) reached us we heard them on the radio telling us that they were going to free us from the Dutch. They played the Indonesian anthem too and my sister in Surabaya said they were dropping little flags ... the one that is the Indonesian flag now.... Well you know a lot of people had never even seen it before, they didn’t know what flag it was.on Java I guess they had these... prophecies you know, my sister told me about one, she lived on Java....¹¹² anyway the Japanese said **they** were the ones the old prophecies were talking about.....”¹¹³*

¹⁰⁸ Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). The Work of Memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 25, 610-633. Page 628. Here Cole draws as well on the work of: Wikan, Unni (1996) The Nun’s Story: Reflections on an Age-Old Postmodern Dilemma. *American Anthropologist*. Vol. 98(2). Pages 279-289. Page 285.

¹⁰⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. (outer islands)Tape 1. May 2004.

¹¹⁰ Op. cit., Tape 1.

¹¹¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. (outer islands)Tape 2. July 2005.

¹¹² Subsequent research revealed that the prophecies to which T refers are prophecies attributed to King Djajabaja of Kediri. The ratul adil would appear after a time of distress and oppression and live for a time unrecognized among the people. Once he proclaimed himself, Allah would sweep all enemies from his path (Muslim

[a discussion of the declarations by the Dutch government and the Queen, who, just before the Japanese occupation in the Indies, promised to 'review' Independence for Indonesia after the war was over in Europe, is underway here. This informant was highly indignant that the 'words' coming from the government were so vague] "Who suffered? The Indonesian people. Look what has happened in that country. Did we do right for them? We should never have left the way we did.... We should not have listened to America, we knew what was going on .. we were there, seeing it. We were wrong to listen. For once, ja, just once, the government could have said something like..oh I don't know.... Something like, ja, you will be free. We will help. But let's do it right, and let's do it right away after the war. We promise. Because you know.....that is one thing about the Dutch, they don't break a promise. They knew that.

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[Another interviewee speaking of the Queen and Government's promise to review Indies status after the war] "Ja, we were going to war with Japan and what kind of hope did that give us? Was that support for what they were asking us to do?[this is a Dutchman speaking and he is alluding to the fact that they were being asked to fight for a Dutch Indies– he was in favour of Independence and a blijver]. ... and you know it is often said that we lost the Indies because of a few ambitious men and ja, that might be true, but there was a lot more than that going on.... Those men had help. But if you know a man is ambitious, do you throw him into the arms of someone who can give him what he wants?"

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'when the Japanese occupied XX, the people had no idea what to expect. They asked my father and mother and their leaders what was coming and what to do. I can best explain it by saying that they shrugged their shoulders a little bit, you know.... Well here we go, let's wait and see what the future brings now. But they were very upset when we were taken away....'

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elements were syncretized to the original prophecies). Note that this messianic prophecy **pre-dates** the Dutch.

¹¹³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. Tape 3. June 2005.

¹¹⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1. June 2004.

¹¹⁵ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 2. July 2005.

¹¹⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 1. May 2005.

“Eight thousand Japanese troops arrived on Sumba in 1942, whereupon they forcibly inducted local people to work on airstrips for a planned invasion of Australia. They required that local rulers supply them with large amounts of food and decimated local herds to feed the occupying forces. A number of people went hungry, most had no clothing, and few seemed to accept the Japanese message that they had been sent to liberate them from the oppressive institutions of Dutch colonialism.”¹¹⁷

... when I looked out I saw an 18 year old Amboinese boy about to be shot by an official of the guardhouse. The Amboinese loved the Queen of Holland very much and in every one of their homes one could expect to find a portrait of Queen Wilhemina hanging on their walls. The boy had been told to take down the picture of the Queen which he did. The Japanese officer of the guardhouse threw the picture down on the ground and started dancing on it, breaking the glass. He then tore the picture to shreds, whereupon the Amboinese boy hit the Japanese officer in the face.they tied him to a pole... the boy released one arm and started to yell at the top of his lungs, “Long Live the Queen”! ...the officer began shooting and the boy kept yelling.... And then they put a gun to his temple.¹¹⁸

We went, oh, so carefully, carefully, carefully.... out of the bay,..... it had been mined you see.....¹¹⁹

In the end, it made no difference if the Dutch were born on Indonesia, if they came to Indonesia, or if they had Indonesian blood. It mattered not that some were involved in Nationalist movements, or if the East Indies Dutch planned to solidify behind an Indonesian movement for independence, as some informants declared they would have. Regardless of the differences between them, what mattered was degree of blood’ not one’s perception of identity. Interviewees spent the war as POWs, in internment camps, or engaged in hard labour in places such as Burma or Tokyo. When they

¹¹⁷ Hoskins, Janet. (1997) *The Play of Time*. Berkeley; London: University of California Press. Page 131.

¹¹⁸ Franken, John. (1999) Slave labourer in Nagasaki. [in] Tromp, Sheri (1999) (ed.) *Four Years Til Tomorrow: Despair and Hope in Wartime Dutch East Indies*. Surrey: Vanderheide Publishing. This book features a collection oral history accounts.

¹¹⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female., Tape 1, July, 2005. In this sequence, she is describing her trip to her 1st internment camp.

“saw the beauty of Java”¹²⁰ again, they emerged into a changed world. Starving, emaciated, exposed to unspeakable atrocities, they were psychologically and physically incapable of absorbing the alterations in the world around them. The decorum typifying Dutch-Indonesian society had degenerated into Chaos.

In 1942, as the Japanese swept through South East Asia, Allied Command under General Wavell decided that defence of the Dutch East Indies was impossible and that no troops or equipment would be committed to its cause.¹²¹ The meagre Dutch and Australian forces were left to their own devices and the outcome, despite the heroics exhibited by small groups of soldiers, certain and swift. The Japanese subsequently incorporated the islands into their war effort under a more thoroughgoing imperialism than they had ever experienced under Dutch rule.

In keeping with the precept that all colonized peoples celebrate any chance to end colonial rule, multiple scholars discuss the welcome of the Japanese liberators. No life story interviewee discussed this but one. Informants living on the outer islands said the people were ‘silent’ or adopted a ‘wait and see’ approach. Those who resided on Papua said the Papuans were actively engaged in resistance,¹²² while Java dwelling interviewees recount stories about Javanese people who helped them to escape from cruelties, hid their prized possessions, or showed them little acts of kindness.

Given the assertions in the literature regarding the welcome originally accorded to Japanese ‘liberators,’ particularly on Java, oral history accounts of the partings between Europeans and their indigenous friends and servants reflect the divergence between micro-macro Indonesian-European relationships rather than

¹²⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 2. August, 2004.

¹²¹ Lieutenant Governor (the position previously known as Governor general) van Mook pleaded for the commitment of defenses, but to no avail.

¹²² Indeed, I discovered later that the Japanese had been attempting to infiltrate Papua for some time prior to the war. My informants pointed me in the direction of a number of sources. See for example: *Ten years of Japanese Burrowing in the Netherlands East Indiës: Official report of the Netherlands East Indies Government on Japanese subversive activities in the Archipelago during the last decade*. New York: Netherlands Information Bureau. 1942?

negating official reporting. An Indonesian informant from East Java, who agreed that some of the people welcomed the Javanese, asserted that the accounts he has read of the 'welcome' greatly exaggerate the phenomenon and he further introduced the idea that the 'welcome' was in some cases built on political expediency, since the people did not know what to expect from the Japanese:

Yes, in some cases the Japanese were welcomed. It was wise to do this. We did not know what to expect from them and it is always a good policy to be careful in these matters. There were people of course, who were happy to see them since they believed that Japan would treat them well. These were educated people who knew about the policies Japan had followed up to that time, so it is hard to understand why they were not more cautious about how they would treat us. These were the same people who led our youth to believe that the Japanese had our interests at heart. I am not a Fascist. I did not trust Fascism and Japan was a fascist state.¹²³

3.5.1 THE CAMPS

I spoke of the impossibility of transmitting terror, hunger, violence, rape, longings for death, loss.... through Literacy. Orality envelopes the body with sound, as ear internalizes word. Literate accounts depend on the 'eye,' thus ensuring Distanciation; the loss of the moment of saying, the intent of the speaker who spoke, the significance of that statement in its context, and the severing of the historical moment.¹²⁴ I found myself in a dilemma. In the first instance, repelled by the reduction of experience that accompanies oral to written transmission of internment camp experiences, I determined not to repeat the mistake of reducing bodies to text: 'X many found dead,' 'where he tortured and killed X women and children, 'when I was taken and then they began....' On paper, little anguish remains, no paralinguistic cues, no elaboration; simple facts, nothing more.

¹²³ Oral History Interview in the Netherlands. (1999) Dutch-Indonesian Informant. Tape 1. This gentleman (in every sense of that term) was highly educated. He insisted on the term East Java when I asked him about his place of origin.

¹²⁴ Ricoeur, Paul. (1981) *Hermeneutics and the Social Sciences*. translated from the French by J. Thompson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. page 136.

Since this single experience determined the trajectory of subsequent interviewee psychic lives, how would I deal with these narratives? On the one hand, not to use them would be to silence them. On the other hand, using them would trivialize them or lead to that deplorable, yet sadly present response, “oh, not another internment camp story.” The alternative of extracting narrative themes was an option but not an attractive one since this technique too, proved reductive. Subsequent to repeatedly revising this section, I made the difficult decision not to reproduce the words of internment camp or POW inmates that spoke to non-transmittable material. Instead, and I underline my reluctance, I attempt to ‘trace’ internment camp affect and its role in interviewee lives¹²⁵ through the extrapolation of narrative themes in spite of their silencing qualities.

3.5.1.1 Humiliation

Japanese required procedure for interaction with European populations (hence not just in the East Indies) formed an integral aspect of the propaganda techniques that served their master race and liberation ideology. Nippon presented itself as a liberating force and nation; frankly many of the ‘liberated’ had no idea of Japan’s activities in places such as Korea, China or Taiwan earlier in that century. Given this lack of knowledge, Japan was able to inscribe her version of world relations on ‘blank slates,’ reconstructing all former relations between conquered peoples and colonial ‘others.’ The skilful machine that would turn familiar Dutch into undesirable and foreign/strange Other was fired up under the Japanese occupation and instilled into the youth through multiple military organizations.

¹²⁶ A keynote piece in perceptual alteration was humiliation.

The Japanese deeply understood the ideology of hierarchy and correctly evaluated European male persona/pride. An acceptance of hierarchy by underlings depends upon an adherence to the ‘this is the way of things’ principle. Those who hold higher positions are

¹²⁵ Those who wish to access the ‘kinds’ of camps run by the Japanese, and who was sent where, as well as the locations of camps in South East Asia, the diseases that threatened the inmates, and the daily facts of coping, should consult the Bibliography.

¹²⁶ See Chapter 4.

held to have a claim upon them by virtue of a difference in a number of alternate possibilities; spiritual power, secular/economic power, right of inheritance, or simply brute force. The Japanese set out to systematically demonstrate that European powers had no claims to high status in relation to Asian populations based on any of those qualities. By forcing Europeans to bow to (any) Japanese, exposing their naked bodies to symbolically articulate their frail humanness, stripping them of the symbols of power, (the Governor General¹²⁷ directing traffic), withholding food, imposing systematic regimentation and/or insulting their humanity with torture in the camps, the Japanese reconfigured the 'Dutch' as undesirable, unworthy and less than human. In short, they relegated them to the bottom of the status hierarchy.

This policy of systematic humiliation had a two-tiered effect. The belittling of Europeans, along with brutish indoctrination, certainly affected the worldview and perceptions of Javanese youth. However, it also intensely affected the psyche of male Europeans who were the recipients of Japanese policy. Strangely, many women saw through Japanese methods:

*All that 'line up here', do this, do that..the kicking, the hitting, the screaming, learning Japanese, the hunger.. that was supposed to teach us that we were nothing. But they could not reach us inside. We had each other, and we had children to think of, and we knew who we were and what they (Japanese) stood for. It would end..sometime. I hung on to that. That evil could not triumph.*¹²⁸

Men, who in that generation defined themselves not only through character, but also through what they *did* in life and how they publically presented, were humiliated in their own eyes and, they believed, in the eyes of others. The public face they had worn in Indonesia, no matter what their position, was their persona; hence, to remove face was to obliterate the self. It denied the "I Am." While women did engage in many acts of resistance against the intent to humiliate, they dismissed the message. A significant number of male

¹²⁷ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press.

¹²⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. Tape 3. June, 2005.

interviewees interpreted every act of excruciating humiliation as personal; indeed have not come to terms with it today. The consequent internal rage they nursed increased with each new slur cast on their characters, and every additional abuse written on bodies unable to respond in kind. This fact – the inability to respond – that sense of helplessness when, as men state, *a real man* would have done something, anything... increased their humiliation fourfold as they added self-loathing to the already heavy psychic burden they carried compliments of the Japanese.

The long-term effects of this humiliation – and the Japanese did subject men to even greater physical travail – out themselves in the world of dreams. Children in internment camps who witnessed the humiliation of their mothers for example, live this fact in dreams more often than the abused mothers, who dream of the dead and of loss. Men however, are the great dreamers. Wives, often when their husbands had left the room, spoke of the increasingly horrible “spells” their husbands have at night as they both age. While they kept memory at bay through life’s demands - raising families, coping with immigration – the increase in the power of long-term memory in the aged is, for them, a deep burden. One of my interviewees – only half jokingly – expressed the hope that he might fall victim to Alzheimers.

3.5.1.2 Hunger

For women, hunger, not humiliation, is the dominant memory. Certainly, men were hungry, but they wave off this fact as if it gives them little concern.

*To watch your children go hungry Jetty.... I wish for this world that no mother would again ever have to watch a child she bore wither away in front of her eyes...when she should have been dancing, laughing, playing.*¹²⁹

Children recall being hungry, mothers recall watching their children’s hunger. The ‘unselfishness’ principle learned by Dutch mothers at the knees of *their* mothers, stood them in good stead in the prison camps. The inclination not to think of self, but to worry

¹²⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 2. July, 2005.

about one's neighbour, and especially one's own or another's children, led many of them to devise coping mechanisms for other that benefitted self. Narratives recall the famous story of the women who set up a choir to harness the healing power of music in one camp, a choir that sang as comrades died from disease and starvation around them. The missionary wife who buried her own child in a camp on the Celebes offered so much comfort and solace to others, that 60 years later her words and deeds are recounted in detail. Narrative recollections – and almost all camp women recount this one – speak of the woman who refused the little she had to eat and bestowed it on the child of the narrator. Vivid memories of the 'strong' woman spring to the lips of interviewees as they remember her holding a camp member "like a baby," and crooning a lullaby as the one she held slipped from this world. With an admiring tone, the powerful woman was re-created, she who 'had enough' and confronted the Japanese camp commandant, refusing to allow young girls to be taken to work in the "tea-rooms." These narrative themes recreate a world of women, while simultaneously revealing how they retained hope. Every act of selflessness, every unexpected kindness, every offering, represented a reaffirmation of good in the world.

The memory of hunger stayed with internment camp survivors throughout their lives; preparation of a meal for me often initiated hunger stories as women expressed thankfulness for the 'plenty' they have now, and the food they were able to prepare for their children once life resumed normalcy. Indeed, listening to female informants as they prepared my food, first fruits ceremonies and sacrifices to the gods flitted through my consciousness. Food is communal; meals together create friends from strangers¹³⁰ and food preparation and ingestion is simultaneously an act of giving, binding, offering, and an affirmation of life. Camp conditions systematically destroyed and perverted food symbolism and its social significations. The minute amount of food that was available encouraged hoarding, not sharing; hurried and private consumption, not communality; and preparation, if it was prepared, brought not an

¹³⁰ Van Gennep, Arnold. (1961) *The Rites of Passage*. Translated by Monika Vizedon. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

affirmation of life, but the knowledge of certain death – there was never enough to feed those who were sick and dying.

The impact of hunger on female prisoners aligned with its invidious impact on disease, and camp diseases were dreadful. The bodies of inmates, weakened by abuse, hard labour, and hunger, had little resistance to tropical diseases that thrived in the close quarters of camp conditions and lack of sanitary facilities. I spoke to no individual during the course of this research that did not lose a family member - child, sibling, spouse, or parent – in the camps of South East Asia.

3.5.1.3 Death

*Death is not an enemy, it is a friend. There were many times I was glad it had come to take someone who had suffered so much. They were going to a better place, no pain, no more suffering. Sometimes I was jealous, but I could not stop fighting. You can see death coming you know. The person prepares for it, even when they are alive, they have left this world. They are blank. There is no more fight.*¹³¹

*There are many things worse than death. Many of us you will speak to will tell you that there were times we prayed to die. Death is fine. It is when you are only partly alive, when you will do anything for the pain to stop, or for a crust of bread, that is not fine. Because then, you do not know who you are anymore. You are someone else. I look back at that time, and I say 'who was that'? That was not me.*¹³²

Death does not concern these men and women, whether they maintain their religious precepts, or have let them go. A number of narrators did discard their religion after their camp experiences, refusing to accept a God that would abandon the world to circumstances that they faced in South East Asia and others face elsewhere. Yet all have watched death come as a friend too often and they prepare, in their old age, to greet death in the same way and to rejoin those they lost long ago. Death will be forgetting.

¹³¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 2, July 2004.

¹³² Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 3, August 2004.

Narrators insist that it is humanity, not death, we must fear. While life is to be lived, there are many others, including the Japanese regime they knew, who twist life, who oppose it, who “*desecrate it. It is everything to be free, to express your opinions, to be who you are, to love your family, to enjoy nature and to let others do the same. It is not death that tortures, humans torture. To die under torture would be a blessed relief. To live with the memory of what men do to others, what they did to you and yours- that is the torture that goes beyond the body- that is lifelong torture.*”¹³³

Narrators remain politically involved and transferred the ideology to their children that *never again* should their experiences be repeated. They are concerned about the state of the planet, intensely worried that while Europe appears to have learned from its collective past it is content to allow other areas of the world to repeat the same mistakes, thereby threatening, as they see it, the lives of those who live in the ‘free world.’ They are almost all quite conservative; they do not believe in policy that privileges cultural customs over freedom, local justice over Universalist principles, or religious precepts over international law.

3.6 REPATRIATION and IMMIGRATION

*“I cannot tell you how difficult it was to make that transition. It seemed like the day before yesterday in camp...the next day on Java, the terror on Java...the next day on the ship... and then in Holland. On the ship I would say to myself over and over...“it’s over,” “it’s over.” My mother was good. She would talk about it with us. She knew, she knew it had to be out there, in the open. There were children who were not so lucky.”*¹³⁴

*So when we got to Holland, well they put us in a grade based on our age! There was no way.. I could not keep up. What they **should have done** was said: ‘yes well you are a bit behind. Let’s start you here and then force you to accelerate (because we would have done that) and then in two years or so you will be caught up with children your own age.” But they didn’t do that. So I always felt a*

¹³³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1, May 2005.

¹³⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 1. May, 2004.

*little bit stupid, I never came into my own until I started training as a nurse. Then I was alright. Then I was good.*¹³⁵

*You can't learn to read in the camps. You learn to survive. To deal with hunger, sickness and death. When we went to the Netherlands, there was school. Some of the little ones had never been. We were stupid. Stupid compared to the Dutch children. We felt it every day. And we were different too. We didn't laugh. We didn't know any games. Well when you are a child, you learn fast because you don't want to be left out. So you bury it inside and try to be the same.*¹³⁶

*The country, when we got there, well they had suffered. The war had really made them suffer. And that's why I said, they did right by us, never complained, they gave us more than they had too. And no-one complained about those war years, no it was looking at the future, re-building. The war is over, so let's get the country back on its feet. Well people had suffered there too, but they had not all been in internment camps. And except for those of us who had, well – you couldn't speak of it. People wanted to put pain, and suffering, and hunger behind them. Well that's right, you should. If it's just pain and suffering and hunger. But internment camps are more than that. Well... that's the Dutch way. Carry on. People didn't want to hear it.*¹³⁷

Whether they left in 1945/46, in 1949 or in 1957, interviewees who repatriated to the Netherlands had an adjustment to make. This adjustment process came most easily to those who left for Indonesia before the Second World War. They had parents and siblings in Holland, extended families to assist them in getting back on their feet, the potential to work for companies they had worked for in Indonesia, and ultimately, an intimate familiarity with land, language, and people.

However, not all of 'those who came to Indonesia' before the war, made the adjustment back. Although they had comfortably slipped into Indonesian society, they were unable to reintegrate into the ideologies, pace and moralities of Netherlands society. Paralleling

¹³⁵ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. Tape 1. July 2005.

¹³⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. Tape 2. May 2004.

¹³⁷ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 2, July, 2005.

the experiences of children born in Indonesia, blijver families and Dutch-Indonesian, the land, people, and culture was alien. The “Nazis” had little relevance for Indonesian repatriates, although they could understand and link to oppression, death, and terror. And if they had lost parents, siblings, spouses or children in the camps, many of them found themselves without someone to ‘name’ the dreams that resurfaced night after night, or the terror and feelings of loss – loss of country, friends, family and society – that haunted them. The chasm created firstly by their lives in Indonesia, and then their experiences of the war, bersiap periods, and the great loss, not of material goods, which no one mentions, but of land, innocence, friends, family and belief, separated them from the Dutch in the Netherlands.

As the informant quoted above notes, repatriates are enormously and uniformly grateful for the manner in which the Dutch public accepted the responsibility of caring for them. Not all members of this group immigrated because they felt socially marginalized by the Dutch, although some did. They immigrated because the chasm that lay at their feet was unbridgeable and compounded by feelings of bitterness towards the Dutch government and its policies regarding Indonesia and (later) Papua. The repatriates define themselves as refugees through the refugee schemata enunciated by Westerman, and as refugees in exile in the Netherlands – indeed it merits remarking that their papers were stamped as “DP = Displaced Person” in Holland – the Exile phase sets the immigration story in motion.

The smallest groups of database immigrants are couples that immigrated as families with children born in South East Asia. In two of these cases, the parents had originally been married to people they lost in internment camps. Friends before the war, and recognizing the bond that would link them for life, they married and blended the remnants of their families, since they had also lost children. Along with the two other couples, they describe their children as ‘completely confused’ when they got to Holland, themselves as at “loose ends and in pain,” and the Dutch public as self-focused in terms of its recovery. Bitterly noting that the Dutch at least had a country to rebuild, that the Dutch were Home and could heal, they suffered alienation from their natal country; they had “*changed*” in Indonesia and were ‘*altered*’ by their experiences under the Japanese and during the bersiap/Revolution periods. Deeply and

morally committed to the 'salvation' of Indonesia, they psychologically re-defined 'self' as no longer Dutch and took steps to leave. Two of these families live in Canada, two live in the United States. In addition to interviewing the parents, I was able to interview at least one of the children from each family and to follow up on their transition as children from Indonesia - Holland - to Canada and the US.

Repatriate-immigrants define "Self," as non-repatriate Dutch immigrants do, through the creation of Holland as Other. Dutch immigrants who do not include repatriation in their narratives cite various reasons for leaving the Netherlands. None of them, I am convinced, ever reflects the underlying forces at work. My own parents for example, since I am intimately familiar with their discourse, hold firmly to the acceptable justification (having compared notes with the children of other Dutch immigrants) that 'we immigrated for the children.' Those of us who remember our immigration, and the confusion we felt when we could no longer visit Omas and Opas or dearly loved Oms, Tantes and cousins, certainly queried our parents with 'why? - why did we have to leave?' Well, they replied, we did it for YOUR future. That was quite a burden to carry. Miserable because we were 'homesick' for Holland, and quite certain therefore, that our parents must be too, we lived with the fact that they had given everything up - land, language, families, for us. Therefore, you did not want to talk about it too much because you would cause your parents pain - you yourself were surely feeling it - when they had sacrificed so much.

Ten years after my immigration I returned to Holland and on the first Friday night feestje with paternal and maternal sides attending, sisters, brothers, and parents fell to reminiscing about my parents. With glee, (although my father's mother was not so amused, as she had never forgiven the immigration of her oldest son) they recounted how my parents had taken two guilders,

Ja... and so on one side, there was Suriname and South Africa, and on the other one New Zealand and Canada. So then they tossed them both. The one came up South Africa. Well your mother Jetty, she was not so keen on that. So they tossed the other one and

*Canada was the future! But Joop (my father) applied in New Zealand anyway, just in case. Crazy (Gek)...he had such a good job with such a bright future....*¹³⁸

Stunned, since I was programmed to believe that Canada was the *only* land of the future, I said, *'but I thought they had especially chosen Canada because it was where they had always wanted to go and since Papa could get good work there, and there was no future for us here, they immigrated?'* If I had set out to appal my family deliberately, I could not have been more effective. With Opa's backing, my paternal Oma assured me that my mother had been trying 'to get out of the country' long before she met my father and that my father had little choice but to assent to her demands to leave. This all, I was assured, in spite of the fact that my Father held an excellent position in Amsterdam with bright prospects. Since my maternal Opa had prevented (and one admits to siding with one's mother a bit over this) my mother from leaving, first for England, then to nurse in Indonesia, simply because she was female, my mother was determined to 'escape the family's clutches' when she could.¹³⁹

I never did confront my parents with this alternative history. Immigration mythology is an important aspect of survival. Having experienced its power personally, as I watched the myth operate in my parents, and the manner in which it validated the many sacrifices they made in order to be successful, I can do no more than honour parallel mythologies operative for repatriation-immigration refugees from Indonesia. Indeed, those families who repatriated and then immigrated may represent examples of a very small group of immigrants who are able to elucidate clearly their reasons for leaving the Netherlands. Even where interviewees had offered hours of background relating to their life story trajectory, when asked the

¹³⁸ I taped many occasions with my family for my parents, as well as (later) Interviews with two uncles who had been in Indonesia. I did not give this Tape to my parents.

¹³⁹ Given that my parents were bemused that I remained in the Netherlands for almost a decade, and that I was very happy there, (after they had given up so much!) I let the discourse stand. Indeed, I am convinced that they now believe that it is exactly how it was – they selflessly immigrated for the children. In their 80's, without family except their children dispersed throughout North America, they are alone with their memories.

question “why did you immigrate,” the answer came through the refugee schemata. Narrative links that wove the refuge tapestry were not necessarily lengthy; multiple details of their childhood and the period that succeeded it, were on tape. In order to explain the immigration however, it was *necessary* to re-frame it within the prescribed refugee sequence. After a little bit of hemming, and then hawing, and notes about dates and the trip, the interviewee returned to Indonesia and began to speak of the period before the war. Immediately afterwards, the persecution sequence, a sequence that included the Occupation, the camps and where applicable, the *bersiap* and later periods, commenced. As aspects of the ‘Persecution’ phase, narrators who stayed into the 50’s included racial discrimination based on the construction of the Dutch as wholly ‘Other’ under Soekarno. Veterans on the other hand, place ‘Persecution’ firmly in the bosom of the Netherlands, and they Voluntarily choose *Exile to a new land as immigrants to Escape* from a country that either had no interest in what they had experienced at “*that country’s request and for its future,*”¹⁴⁰ or actively denigrated their role as “*fighters for colonialism – lepers.*”¹⁴¹

For non-veterans, *Escape from Persecution* in Indonesia, whether 1945/46, 1949 or later, leads to the repatriation phase in the Netherlands, where they experienced themselves as largely non-voluntary *Exiles in the Netherlands*. This is the critical phase of the refugee schemata that finally leads to immigration, for they remained Exiles. They did not ‘fit’ into the Dutch mentality, country, climate, narrow morality, and they eschewed the country’s politics. Why had they spent the war in camps? *Did the Dutch government ever worry about the defence of Indonesia?*¹⁴² On the *bersiap* period and the War of Independence: *Did the Dutch government ever take a strong stand, send in the army, and stick with it? Have you ever seen a more waffling crew than that bunch of politicians between 1946 and 1949?*¹⁴³ On persecution under Soekarno: *They betrayed the army, the*

¹⁴⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 1. July 2005.

¹⁴¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 3. May 2004.

¹⁴² Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 2, July 2005.

¹⁴³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 3, May 2004.

*outer islands, the Indonesian people, and us.*¹⁴⁴ Betrayal is in fact, the key to the definition of self during Exile in the Netherlands, and it initiates the creation of Holland as Other for these repatriates and veterans.

The reader needs to understand that this creation is quite a feat. Immigration discourse in our household was rooted in a discursively created, "*Holland of no opportunity, high unemployment and no future for the children.*" Simultaneously I know how much pleasure it gives my aged parents that they can speak to me in my natal tongue (since my younger sisters do not speak it) and that they are happy and interested when I visit them to recount my stories from my last trip overseas. Constructing an "Other" both denigrated and loved is a painful process. My parents thus participate in a very common immigrant discourse – '*Holland had nothing left to offer,*' one that leaves a gap for feelings (if they allow themselves to feel this) of regret. The maintenance of this paradigm absolutely depends on a 'frozen' Netherlands – in our case Holland in 1957.¹⁴⁵ The discourse continues: 'discerning the writing on the wall, we were 'smart' enough to get out and to choose a country with unlimited opportunity.' Those that stayed behind had a little less courage, a little less foresight, and certainly did not possess the adventure or hard work it took to be an immigrant. Immigrants are special – pioneers.

By way of contrast, repatriate immigrants frame their discourse through, '*I didn't want anything Holland had to offer. They betrayed us, they can keep it.*' This paradigm depends on keeping the betrayal motif alive, and personal anger management thus plays an integral role in self-definition. To define the Netherlands as Other in this discourse is to recollect betrayal – of the Dutch in the Indies, of Indonesians, of veterans and of Papuans. It includes moral aspects – the "Dutch" are morally weak and dishonourable. It includes political assessment – the Dutch are sans international clout. Certainly, they

¹⁴⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 2, June 2005.

¹⁴⁵ It may be quite true that in the 1950s the Netherlands had embarked on explosive growth. That is irrelevant. In fact, it potentially damages the myth. When I told my parents how well the country and everyone in the family was doing, they were not that excited.

may have Dutch friends, and even family in Holland. However, those people are the Dutch writ small, and even they – it must be said – are subtly denigrated for living in Holland. The DUTCH are Other, although this does not preclude cheering them (although in some cases it does) on in the World Soccer Cup.

Both groups are appreciative of the opportunities and possibilities to *be* themselves provided in an ‘open and free’ Canada or the United States. Holland is just ‘too small’ and the connotations of this phrase reverberate well beyond an assessment of the country’s square miles. Terms such as ‘*tightness*,’ ‘*narrow*,’ or the phrase ‘*everybody on top of each other*,’ are not about space, but ‘*everybody looking to see what you are doing*.’ Not only is the country ‘narrow’ it is ‘closed’; it has no room for innovation, for difference, it is too self focused, and in gauging everyone and everything in terms of how it affects the national ‘self,’ it harnesses and controls individuals and events. Thus the rejection of the social milieu of the Netherlands, *as elaborated by immigrants*, plays a key role in self-definition and immigration motivation.

3.7 VETERANS

Turning to the scholarly literature on veterans in order to establish a context for the interviews I would undertake, I discovered an almost absolute silence, beyond the comment that they were there. Scholarly muteness joins a dearth of private memoirs in English, although articles by men who served both before and after the Second World War appear in collections gathered by the Community. In 2004, a Vrijwilliger interviewee gave me a revealing Dutch memoir.¹⁴⁶ Written by Roelf Spreeuwens, the work echoes the voices, the emotions, the circumstances, and the thoughts of the men I interviewed from the “last colonial army.”¹⁴⁷ As a result, I have utilized Spreeuwens’ voice as summary signifier for multiple

¹⁴⁶ Lent to me by a Vrijwilliger from the Province of Groningen. All translations from this text are mine.

¹⁴⁷ Spreeuwens, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. Translation: *The Long Road: As War Volunteer to the Dutch East Indië* s.

informants who did not release their interviews due to fear of identification.

Wesseling notes:

*“..... conscripts who served in the Indies. Little is known about their adaptation at home. No doubt their experiences had affected these men, generally very young....”*¹⁴⁸

When the early Volunteers made the decision to serve they were indeed, very young, as were the boys called up to the regular army later.¹⁴⁹ Many Vrijwilligers in fact, circumvented the age qualifications (18), a fact they were able to accomplish due to the post-Nazi conditions in the Netherlands at the end of WW II. As young as 12 in when the Nazis invaded the Netherlands, they spent the war fretting at their inability to produce a change in their circumstances. To deal with these expressed feelings of ineffectiveness they engaged in work for the resistance; indeed proof that they had done so was required to ‘join up.’ A commitment to freedom, fostered by their years under Nazi administration, burnt within them. As Baudet notes:

*“After the purgatory of the Second World war, there was a widespread tendency, generated by some inner need, to believe in a modern apocalypse which would inaugurate a “final epoch,” that is the universal collectivity of enlightened people.”*¹⁵⁰

Their lives under the Nazis, the only childhood that many could recollect, ensured that they not only sincerely believed in, they were wholeheartedly committed to, ensuring the freedom of the Indonesian people. In the scenario they acquired through word of mouth, a small number of revolutionaries were attempting to assert authority over the archipelago, while murdering and torturing

¹⁴⁸ Wesseling, H. (Jan, 1980) Post-Imperial Holland. [in] *Journal of Contemporary History*. Vol. 15, No.1. *Imperial Hangovers*. Pages 125-142. page 134.

¹⁴⁹ The Vrijwilligers, or Volunteers, made a decision to engage. Once the regular army became involved, the boys who were called up had no choice but to go.

¹⁵⁰ Baudet, Henry. (Jan 1969) The Netherlands After the Loss of Empire. [in] *Journal of Contemporary History*. Vol. 4, No. 1: *Colonialism and Decolonization*. Pages 127 – 139. page 130.

members of the Indonesian population. They are fervent in their continued moral commitment to that cause. Equally, they 'knew' - and they assert thorough vindication in this matter - that based on their experiences with the republican army the revolutionary government would not facilitate self-rule for the people, nor would it ensure happiness and prosperity for the population-at-large. In short, consultants share in the conviction that the "*Indonesian Republic constituted an evil force and did not represent the wishes of the Indonesian masses... the only morally right course of action would be to annihilate the evil element in the Indies. Any alternative policy was considered a betrayal of the majority of loyal Indonesians, the Eurasians, and other loyalty minority groups, and a sign of Holland's moral bankruptcy.*"¹⁵¹ While academic words akin to this statement tonally indicate the misguided task undertaken by the Dutch army on Java, veterans read their surface meaning and deeply feel their rightness today.

There is bitter resentment among veterans regarding the few incidents made public about the "largest army ever mounted" by the Netherlands.¹⁵² Both Goss and Wesseling have discussed that,

*"occasionally stories of incidents and excesses came to light, but there was never any question of a public discussion of – let alone inquiry into – the conduct of soldiers in the Indies"*¹⁵³

Circumstances have altered since Wesseling wrote his article in 1980. Some discussions and inquiries initiated in the Netherlands equate to the type of national soul-searching Valensi would approve. The soldiers I spoke with had no interest in a like discussion regarding their Indies tenure. They interpret the need to 'air the laundry' not in light of a Dutch proclivity to re-visit past behaviour in moral terms, but as further attempts to discredit their motives and morality.

¹⁵¹ Lijphart, Arend. (1966) *The Trauma of Decolonization. The Dutch and West New Guinea*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. Page 109.

¹⁵² Wesseling, H. (Jan, 1980) Post-Imperial Holland. [in] *Journal of Contemporary History*. Vol. 15, No.1. *Imperial Hangovers*. Pages 125-142. page 125-126.

¹⁵³ Op. cit., page 134.

Jetty, I don't know if you have noticed, but when something like that goes on in Holland, then all of a sudden everything else is forgotten. Self: What do you mean? Interviewee: Let me put it this way. They make it public that some Dutch people collaborated with the Germans during the War. Big surprise, we knew it was going on and it happened all over Europe. But the Dutch have to be different – no slip-ups in morals there. The French, and even the English – they are the kind of people to have traitors, but not the Dutch! Now all of a sudden the whole country is collaborators. What about those of us who were underground? Those people who died for the Jews or other causes? Nope, all forgotten. That's Holland. If a single Dutch person does not measure up, then the whole country is judged by that single person. Ridiculous. Say a soldier was out of control in Indonesia, then all of the rest of us will be out of control. You could show Holland 100 heroes, they will only care about the one who failed. That's Holland. Better let it lie.¹⁵⁴

Combatants present their tour on the island as marked by grace under unbelievable provocation. Those men who were prepared to discuss the 'loose cannons' in their midst,¹⁵⁵ were the same consultants who were able to evaluate the dark side of their experiences in the Indies. For in the course of their explanation as to why some of the soldiers lost a sense of perspective and went home, they had to articulate what they had witnessed, resulting in a traumatic exchange that left both of us shaken.

Veterans who evaluated the dark side of their Indies tenure powerfully revealed the psychological adjustments to their 'reality' during the war for Independence. Even though the initial passage offered below appears represent the demonization of the enemy as far as the involvement of women and children goes, many veterans deeply believe it and it fed their moral conviction vis a vis their task in Indonesia.

..... all whites became foreign invaders that had to be murdered. The Japanese poison worked quickly.....Soekarno and his 'satellites' spurred them on to murder all whites. In the Simpang society,

¹⁵⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1. June, 2006.

¹⁵⁵ Others became quite upset when I broached the possibility with them.

babies were dashed against the walls before the eyes of the mothers. The blood coloured the streets red. ...

Outside the city, murder and mayhem persisted unchecked. Dutch girls floated down the kali Brantas, horribly mutilated. They were pinned with bayonets to rafts. The beastly sentiments of the lawless gangs could proceed with impunity.¹⁵⁶

That veterans – young boys – found themselves in the middle of a social nightmare, is attested to by Cribb:

“People going to and from the market were snatched up and their bodies were later found, terribly mutilated, floating in the canals. {...} on the way home from internment camps, some [...] ripped from trains, where their bodies were quickly buried in shallow graves {...} or thrown in pits. Families were attacked in their own homes and murdered one by one, left behind as they fell.¹⁵⁷

The impact of these scenes and the Indonesian war fields on veterans in the database is crucial to understanding veteran refusal to engage in public discussion about their Indonesian encounters. For the narratives, make no mistake, speak the unspeakable; torture, lawlessness, violence and, in the field, psychological warfare was the order of the day. The daily heroics of their comrades is not well served, they feel, by the determination of others to extract from them that “one or two” of their company disintegrated completely – they understand what it took to stay sane. Ordered not to return fire during the multiple cease-fires in place during the War, one of the men in Spreeuwers’ platoon broke:

“who are those idiots, who everyday send us to this shooting fest? We are not allowed to shoot unless shot at. Those fellows behind the demarcation line sit there, fire, and laugh at us. We are not

¹⁵⁶ Spreeuwers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned.* Indië. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. page 45.

¹⁵⁷ Cribb, R. (2007). Misdad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom. Page 39.

*allowed to take a step over that line. Is our military leadership completely crazy?*¹⁵⁸

A veteran passionately stated:

*'they want US to admit that WE engaged in war crimes? Well, my platoon didn't. And if anyone did, then I don't know about it. But I can tell you this, and this is what gets to me and all the veterans I know, Indonesia certainly engaged in war crimes. Are we going to hear from THEM? Are they going to talk about the gangs? The torture? The murders? They want us to ask forgiveness from Indonesia? The only thing I ask forgiveness for is leaving the people to those murdering criminals. Holland is not interested in a real account of what happened to us in Indonesia. How will they deal with what they sent us to? That we did what was asked of us and they betrayed us and the people of Indonesia?'*¹⁵⁹

While these men had witnessed cruelty, pain, and trauma under the Nazi regime, they could not anticipate the circumstances they would face in Indonesia.

*..." a transport column from the Red Cross brought Dutch women and children, with 12 Ghurkas, from the interior of Java to Soerabaja. At the Wonokromo bridge, they were attacked by a large group of extremists that included a number of Japanese. A terrible tableau was played out. The Ghurkas fought as if possessed, and mowed down the attackers 10 at a time. In the end, numbers told the tale. When the last Ghurka had been killed, the extremists attacked helpless women and children like a group of hungry wolves. And yet... English army administration was not too bothered.*¹⁶⁰

Veteran narratives run remarkably parallel to the stories recorded from Vietnam soldiers. In Indonesia too, soldiers experienced "jungle" warfare, where rules of engagement were moot. Indoctrination under the Japanese stood the revolutionary army in

¹⁵⁸ Op. cit., page 96.

¹⁵⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1, June, 2005

¹⁶⁰ Op. cit., page 47.

good stead and tactics taught to Indonesian youth through multiple military organizations during the Occupation surfaced in the field:

*Those who think that the enemy only utilizes conventional methods of war are seriously mistaken. Men should not underestimate the students of Nippon. Indeed, in some cases the student has exceeded the teacher.*¹⁶¹

No popular culture exploration has taken place of Dutch experiences in the Indies; there is no *Deer Hunter*, or *Platoon*, or even, on the lighter side, no *Good Morning Vietnam*, that would facilitate discussion on any level of the war in Indonesia, or the silence that greeted (as it did Vietnam vets) veterans on their return home. While American movies do not skate over the actions taken by some American soldiers, they extract empathy from the audience and horror, not of the humans engaged against one another, but of the institution of war itself. Neither do the films downplay the role of the enemy – witness the terrifying roulette scene in the *Deer Hunter*. These films offered a sensitive probing of the psychological effects of terror and torture on the human mind, and opened up gaps whereby the American public could, and did, begin to discuss the behaviour and conditions of American soldiers in Vietnam. Any like discussion, veterans reiterate, would have to present both sides of the war, and it is not clear to them that the Netherlands is in any way prepared to deal with the pemuda/TRI and gang roles in Indonesia or to engage the idea of Indonesia as a former enemy.

Scholarly literature and the reminiscences of veterans exhibit little overlap. On the one hand, we have the discourse of “ceasefires” and meetings, on the other, the reality of constant sniper fire, hunger, and psychological warfare. While some scholars briefly observe that the revolutionary government was unable to restrain the gangs in their midst, and others note that there were sections of the Revolutionary army that were characterized by a leader with a band of men bound to that leader and that leader only,¹⁶² the soldiers in the

¹⁶¹ Spreeuwers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. Page 148.

¹⁶² Dahm, B. (1971) *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*. Translated by P.S. Falla. London; New York: Praeger Publishers. Page

field faced these groups 'on the ground.' For these men, the political scenario played out at the 'macro' level was surreal:

*"How is it possible that our government buys into this (promises by revolutionary government), we ask ourselves?"*¹⁶³

The stories of combat I was privileged to hear from Vrijwilligers and the soldiers that joined them later stress their relationships with comrades, the dishonour of the republic, the beauty of Indonesia, the peoples they interacted with, the difficulty of the environmental conditions, their constant exhaustion, and the betrayal of their cause. By way of contrast, the literature on their experience encompasses two themes: "the First Police Action" and the "Second Police Action." Underlying these brief descriptions is the reality of the lives and thoughts of over 170,000 men, including soldiers from many of the 'outer islands' in the archipelago, the cause they thought they were fighting for, and the betrayal they feel regarding the outcome of their mission.

3.7.1 ON THE GROUND

Subsequent to the liberation of the Netherlands, an appeal went out for young Dutch men to serve as soldiers in the army intended for the invasion of Germany. Those who were fit enlisted; they were few in number after five years of Nazi occupation. Shortly afterwards, the men who were combat healthy were given three choices; they could go home, they could sign up for a year and take part in the invasion of Germany, or they could go as Volunteers to the Dutch East Indies.¹⁶⁴ Vrijwilligers who went to the Indies became combatants under Montgomery's Allied forces and were destined for Australia to receive military training.

After Japan surrendered, Australia withdrew her offer to train troops on her soil. Puzzled as to what they should do with the Volunteers, the Dutch government made the decision to send home all young men who had signed up for the Indies, and to send the boys who had

¹⁶³ Spreeuwers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. Page 126. Translations are mine.

¹⁶⁴ Op. cit., page 10.

been destined for Germany as infantrymen in their place. The “OVW-ers,”¹⁶⁵ unhappy with this decision, contacted Prins Bernhard. As Spreuwers notes:

“Japan may have surrendered, yet it appears that a quick reinstatement of our administration in the Indies is highly desirable. The English, who have orders to land their troops on Java, to capture the Japanese, and to re-install Dutch rule, remain shamefully neglectful of their task. Months after the surrender and they have barely taken the largest harbour towns, apparently because they don’t have enough troops; where then are all those troops that were said to be ready to land on Malakka?”

In the meantime, the terror has broken out on Java and the bersiap period has started, murdering the white population. And still, Louis Mountbatten is in no hurry. Then a highly placed English officer is murdered. That is the sign for a little stronger reaction! Now, it is clear that something must be done and if it is possible, we want to be part of it.

Prins Bernhard agreed, and the Dutch government made the decision to utilize the OVW-ers in Indonesia. After interminable delays, they went to England for training. Memories of Britain are uniformly positive; in spite of the suffering she had endured in WW II as she stood against the Nazis, interviewees agree that conditions were paradise compared to the barracks and food in the Netherlands. A collection of their memories of England, and their subsequent ship journey to the Indies, would make for highly entertaining reading. Often dwelt on at length, the England/journey phase is liminal – not in the Netherlands, not yet at war – and contrasts sharply with the desperate time to come, foreshadowed only by their physical training and instruction in the Malay language.

Once they arrived in South East Asian waters, they found themselves diverted to Singapore and from there to camps previously used by the Japanese to hold Allied prisoners.

.... So we came through the Suez canal.... And then finally we thought, now we are close! We are almost at Java. Well then, do you

¹⁶⁵ The “Vrijwilligers”.

*know what happened? We were NOT ALLOWED TO GO. (very emphatically) No, the British and Americans had us diverted to Malaysia. WHAT did we want with Malaysia? Well Jet, there we sat. On Malaysia. Waiting for them to give US PERMISSION to go to the Indies. Like lackeys.*¹⁶⁶

Some ended up in Malaysia, some in Malakka, Spreeuwers himself, as well as a number of men I interviewed from the same Dutch province as Spreeuwers, found themselves 300 km above Singapore. *"It is not clear to us why we have been buried in the rimboe 300 miles above Singapore. We are curious to see how long they will keep us captive here."*¹⁶⁷ On average, veterans who left England in 1946 spent more than three months 'in the rimboe' awaiting word on their release to the Indies. This lengthy enforced inactivity parallels the situation of Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian POWs, who sat and awaited dispensation to Indonesia or the Netherlands, while British POWs quickly boarded their ships and Americans flew swiftly home.

Nevertheless, those sojourns in camps around South East Asia facilitated acclimatization to tropical conditions. Living in tents, they found humour in their condition; no beds, but a "kokosmatje" on which to sleep, hard ground that descended into a mass of "slimy porridge" with each heavy rainfall; rainfall so heavy the canals they dug around their tents could not divert it. Required to go shirtless for a little longer each day, they soon acquired resistance to the tropical sun. They learned how to survive in the jungle, how to ford kalis, how to get vehicles across rivers. In many of the camps, volunteers lived side by side with Japanese prisoners of war, who taught them how to make a "baléh-baléh," a type of hammock made of rope and bamboo that *"remarkably reduced the threat of premature rheumatism."*¹⁶⁸ The Japanese were required to do the upkeep work required in the camps; *"it must be said that these men did their work excellently."*¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1, May 2005.

¹⁶⁷ Spreeuwers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. page 31.

¹⁶⁸ Op. cit., page 33.

¹⁶⁹ Op. cit., page 32.

While they sat and waited...events raged on Java. The allies, under Montgomery, did not land on the island until six weeks after the Japanese surrender, and they were subsequently active in keeping the Dutch from interaction with the colony. There is no doubt that this long delay lent important assistance to the revolutionary cause; it effectively facilitated the consolidation of revolutionary leadership subsequent to the *Proklamasi*. When the Dutch were able to begin to deal with the situation in the archipelago, interference from external powers did not subside.

As Volunteers arrived on Java, the British were still the occupying force:

... then an English general was murdered. Only then was the entire city taken under English jurisdiction. Street by street, they swept the place clean.

..” A number of Europeans were rounded up together in the Jail on the Werfstraat. The extremists decided to burn the jail and all the people in it. A Javanese man, sickened by the violence, brought the news to the Allied forces. Thirty Ghurkas, passionate fighters, carved a path through the City. Only a handful arrived at the jail alive, just in time to prevent the wholesale murder. Hours long, these brave men defended the jail, until further help was able to arrive.

Reactions to their first sight of Java are revealing; they were shocked by, and completely unprepared for, the devastation of the country and the hunger, violence, and trauma they saw all around them. *[...] everything is in disrepair: roads, sewage, irrigation. Even the lampposts have disappeared. There is a great shortage of drinking water and there are leaks everywhere....in the interior and also in central Java many people walk around almost naked....*¹⁷⁰ Paralleling Spreeuwiers, four informants arrived in Soerabaja. In 1946, only 30,000 inhabitants remained in the ‘ghost town,’ as it was nicknamed by the English. Within a year of Dutch jurisdiction, that number would reach 400,000, and double three years later. Veterans speak movingly of people killed by pemuda, the vandalism rampant

¹⁷⁰ NIB Volume 1: 1971-1996, page 123.

in the town, and the enthusiastic welcome they received as ‘bringers of law and order.’¹⁷¹

I lived just outside Surabaya, and I cannot tell you how good it was to see the Dutch come back. Before they came, we did not know who would be killed next. The youth, they lived in gangs. There was no control of family – many of them were far away from their families. Soekarno told them to be angry at the Dutch. It wasn't the Dutch who had ever done anything like that to us. But those boys were not thinking. They just wanted to strike out. When the Dutch came back, they took care of stopping that right way. And we thought, well good, things can get back to normal. We have the police again, and there will be laws.

Veterans, and indeed other database narrators, often evoke Soekarno as the wellspring of all they intensely dislike about post war and independent Indonesia. In spite of the fact that Soekarno was a moderate, and did try to control pemuda violence, in these texts, he stands as the symbol for all that is evil (as well as the doer of evil):

*(me: Did the revolutionary government not have police, did they not try to stop them?) Ans: Why would they? Soekarno could keep pointing at them and saying – see how angry the people are at the Dutch? It had nothing to do with the people at all.*¹⁷²

Vrijwilligers naturally encountered the Ghurkha and Punjabi troops assigned to Java. If one stops to consider that India was fighting for independence, the British decision to deploy them in Indonesia is breathtaking in its cynicism. While veterans noted their bravery, many interviewees recalled their kindnesses:

..they took us to Java from the camp. There the Ghurkas, they had to protect us. I can't say enough about those wonderful men. One day... they organized a picnic for us, a bunch of them on their own time....their days off. ...loaded us onto the trucks, all of us kids...we had forgotten how to laugh. They took us to a beautiful spot.. but then we did not know what to do when we got there.. they said, Play! You play!we had forgotten how to play... well then we

¹⁷¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 2, May 2005.

¹⁷² Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 1, May 2005.

*thought of a game, ja it was planes and bombers, we didn't know anything else. Our innocence was gone.wonderful food...oh! the food!... I remember that day like yesterday... what wonderful men to do that for us kids.*¹⁷³

Soldiers maintain that events they experienced rigidified their resolve to help the Indonesian people:

*" How is it possible, the people can be so cruel to one another? Those responsible for these deeds are not human anymore, they should be removed from communal society. We will track and find them and treat them as mosquitoes."*¹⁷⁴

In mid June of that year, OVW-ers received the long-awaited orders to go into the field. They had rankled under the wait:

*How long will it take before the tyranny is ended? Don't we have enough supplies, are there not enough men, or haven't you talked long enough?*¹⁷⁵

Permeated with pathos, Veteran humour recalls relationships with comrades, the conditions 'in the field' and the trajectory of the war:

Self – after yet another burst of laughter: You know X, of all my interviews I have to say that I never laugh so much as when I am interviewing a veteran. Interviewee: (very pleased by the way, that he has made me laugh again) It was the only way to survive. You had to laugh. Those men who couldn't laugh anymore, who started to think only about the serious side of what was happening, they broke down. Then when I tell stories – like I am doing with you – do you want to sit and listen to me whine? It was a terrible war, terrible things happened. Terrible betrayal of our men and the people was the result. I am angry. Don't think I am not. But I can't let that anger out. Laughing was survival. It still is.

Jokes about army gear permeate the oral histories. *Cheaper soldiers, no one will ever get again.*"¹⁷⁶ Promised better clothing, action

¹⁷³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 3, June 2004.

¹⁷⁴ Spreeuwers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. Page 46.

¹⁷⁵ op. Cit, Page 58.

stopped there; their humorous cynicism re their headgear and uniforms in particular, knew no bounds. Even hunger, which permeated their tour of duty, is half anger, half comedy as Spreeuwiers' narrative exemplifies. Soldiers, often reduced to eating mouthfuls of dry bread, watched as their comrades, reduced to skeletons, desperately attempted to gorge on inedible mangoes – mangoes that caused a debilitating sickness “*Ah well, what did you expect?*” *No one asked you to serve in Jan’s army. You chose to do so. Long live the forgotten army!*”

The motif of betrayal feeds an ongoing veteran anger exacerbated when they speak of revolutionary equipment. Indeed, they maintain that the republicans were better equipped than their own forces. The army of Indonesia utilized armaments seized from the Japanese at the end of WW II,¹⁷⁷ and Japanese men who had not reported in by July 1946, choosing not to face the consequences of loss back in Japan, swelled the revolutionary ranks. One fact sorely tries their sense of humour; the USA, England, and Australia provisioned the Republicans with the latest in weaponry. Initial suspicions regarding the source of revolutionary armaments became reality when veterans seized arms in conflict or checked the brand of grenades thrown at them. Their unanimous conclusion is that the Revolutionary army was indeed receiving equipment from countries ostensibly allied with the Dutch:

*On the way back, we blow up their bunkers and throw the weapons and munitions in the kali. There is a great deal of modern weaponry that bears the marks “Made in England” and “Made in Australia.” Where those weapons were better than ours, we take them with us.*¹⁷⁸

We find (with the abandoned weapons) a beautiful Australian jungle rifle with night scope. It makes us livid that these fellows (revolutionaries) are apparently receiving all possible help from

¹⁷⁶ Op. cit., page 44.

¹⁷⁷ Most scholars simply reference this fact. See for example, Dahm, B. (1971) *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*. Translated by P.S. Falla. London; New York: Praeger Publishers.

¹⁷⁸ Spreeuwiers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. Page 147-148. Translation mine.

*the allies to help them render the term "cease fire" a complete farce.*¹⁷⁹

Veterans express great contempt for the Australian government, who refused to release the supplies in their harbours destined from the Netherlands for Indonesia, including medicine and food sent to relieve the conditions in the archipelago.¹⁸⁰

3.7.2 ON CEASE FIRES

*"Every time I hear or read the word "cease fire," I have to chuckle. Seldom has the word represented a hollower phrase than at the front lines outside Soerabaja."*¹⁸¹

The *non-adherence to cease-fires*, a.k.a. "**republican dishonour**" represents the dominant war motif in veteran accounts. To a man declaring that at no time was a ceasefire order honoured by Republican forces, they themselves were under orders from their officers not to respond to provocation. Spreeuwers observes that in some cases, the Dutch did respond, as one informant noted, *fight back or be killed*.¹⁸² Taken from the narratives, the following cease-fires are discernable in that first year alone:

July, 1946,	supposed ceasefire
August, 1946:	supposed cease-fire - 96 heads of kampongs west of Soerabaja requested Dutch protection
September 17, 1946,	new ceasefire arranged, backed by two-kilometre neutral zone: (<i>Long live the cease-fire!</i> ¹⁸³)

¹⁷⁹ Op. cit., page 177.

¹⁸⁰ This too, is briefly noted by scholars such as Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. page

¹⁸¹ Op. cit., page 86.

¹⁸² Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. June, 2005.

¹⁸³ Spreeuwers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. page 86.

October 15th, 1946, another cease-fire is ordered. *“This time,”* observes Spreeuwers, *“it is going to be really official.”*¹⁸⁴

Clearly, something was askew in the field.

During late 1946, Amboinese volunteers swelled OVW-er ranks, bringing their guitars and their *‘sad songs of Ambon’* and by December, the cease-fire ordered in October was meaningless. After every attack, extremists withdrew behind the ‘safe line;’ Dutch forces were not to retaliate. The republicans added heavy mortar to their weaponry and Dutch troops were sleeping, when they slept, an average of two hours a night. General Spoor, greatly beloved by his men, dubbed the line in the Soerabaja area the “Shooting tent,” where Dutch soldiers served as moving targets for TRI shooting practice.

In December 1946, the TRI took the sluice works at Mlirip and closed them down. Six hours later, they destroyed the rice fields and kampongs stood in 2 meters of water. The people fled to Soerabaja. As they described events that included the destruction of irrigation works, factories, or rice fields by the republicans, some soldiers speculated that this was not policy on the part of the republican government, but the work of pemuda youth; many of the platoons were involved in combat with groups that were not part of official revolutionary forces. They were incorrect in this assumption; the republican army was committed to a “scorched earth policy.”

Shortly after December 1946, when the republicans attempted to level the sugar factory, the Dutch launched a counter attack. The Republic complained to the international community:

“The innocent lambs on the other side of the demarcation line went to gripe to Dr. van Mook. Now we hear mumbles that they are going to make us retract. According to us men, there is far too much talk, and way too much giving in to the untrustworthy republic. Those gossips in Batavia should walk patrol around here for a few nights. Then they would sing another tune. Let’s finally get this going with resolve before it’s too late. What do we have to do

¹⁸⁴ Op. cit., page 87.

*with England, America, or Australia? Let them look after their own affairs. After all, we are not here for the fun of it either.”*¹⁸⁵

In March 1947, the Dutch devised a plan for the relief of Modjokerto and the recapture of the sluices of Mlirip since the entire Sidoardjodelta had been under water for months. Every day, thousands of people trekked into Soerabaja and other Dutch controlled areas. The sheer numbers of people needing assistance for starvation and sickness crippled the help organizations, who watched helplessly as people fell over from hunger.

*‘there was nothing, nothing we could do. Our supplies were stuck in Australia so we were working without proper medicine and had almost no food. Even today I remember the eyes of the mothers and the children begging us to do something. We gave them everything, everything we had until there was nothing left.*¹⁸⁶

Although the Republic had offered multiple assurances that they would reopen the sluices, no concrete action resulted. *‘It was more than time we acted.*¹⁸⁷

The Republic’s greatest strength in the war for Independence – if one may use the term ‘strength’ for this characteristic – was a willingness to sacrifice the people. Intimate knowledge of the Dutch character ensured their certainty that the Dutch would not only feel compelled to help, but that they would respond with horror to the circumstances confronting the Indonesian people – and this shortly after a brutal Japanese occupation. The scorched earth policy that appalled so many veterans was an aspect of revolutionary psychological warfare waged on three levels, against the soldiers and help organizations, against the Netherlands, and for the benefit of the international community. Soekarno, Hatta, and others, calculated that the plight of the people would sway veterans and help organizations against the war. Similarly, psychological transformations regarding the ‘rightness’ of the war in the Netherlands and the international community, were set in motion

¹⁸⁵ Op. cit., page 102.

¹⁸⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 2, July 2005.

¹⁸⁷ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 1, June, 2005.

through republic circulated reports concerning the desperation of the Indonesian people, reports honed to evoke dismay and pity. As the parallel U.S.A/Vietnam scenario would do in the U.S., transformations in view would/should lead to advocacy, in the Netherlands and on the international stage, for Dutch withdrawal... - put an end to the suffering of Indonesian people - stop the war. Although the ploy was largely successful overseas, in the case of the veterans, this *brutal disregard for the citizens* on the part of Revolutionaries rebounded. If anything it solidified soldier resolve to 'help' the people, a people, they assured me, who welcomed them wherever they went.

Spreeuwiers recounts an incident that eerily echoes a number of life story excerpts. Subsequent to the First Police Action, soldiers entered a kampong that had not interacted with the Dutch since 1942. As they embarked on patrol of the countryside, the kampong head advised them that they would hold a huge *slamatan* in honour of the return of the Dutch and asked if they would be able to attend. In answer to the anxious enquiries from the desa people if the pemuda were gone for good, if the Dutch had enough soldiers to ensure they would be safe, and if they would now proceed quickly to Djokja;

In our innocence, we promise that the pemuda time has passed, and that we will never, ever, forsake them. They can rest in our trust."¹⁸⁸

Soldiers dwell fondly on interaction with the people. They speak movingly of their time in the kampongs where they were exceptionally well treated and are particularly voluble regarding their memories of children. In areas under Dutch control, conditions rapidly improved for the populace. Veterans interpret this result – they note that people had clothes and rebuilt their kampongs – as evidence that the task undertaken was worth all the pain. The blot on their memories of their populace however, is that they assured Indonesians, repeatedly, that they would '*never forsake them*,' when they were forced, against their will, to do just that. This single memory – the humiliation of not keeping one's word in the face of

¹⁸⁸ Op. cit., page 155.

trust and confidence - in spite of all the hardships, the hunger, death, and terror, is a memory that many still cannot face. They promised. *I gave my word.*¹⁸⁹ Still ashamed, a soldier wonders; *what do they think of me now? What did they think of me when we left them to their fate? What happened to _ afterwards?*¹⁹⁰

As soldiers, help organizations, and the general population struggled with famine and increasing disease, Dutch authorities reached the end of their patience and initiated an offensive. Action began on March 5th, 1946 and ceased on March 23rd. Soldiers saw heavy combat and recounted, with heavy hearts, the loss of comrades. Shortly afterwards, the Linggadjati Agreement was initialled. Regarding the cease-fire ordered under the Linggadjati agreement, Spreeuwiers notes:

Without exception, all military personnel are strongly against this agreement. We have slowly come to realize what the word of the republican government is worth. For is it is sunshine clear that the signing of the agreement is merely a camouflage to allow them to prepare new attacks without interference and to continue to depict the trustworthiness of the republic to the international community.

*Especially in America, Soekarno embarks on the delivery of hypocritical propaganda. We (the Dutch) do nothing to counter it and we allow the poison of these dearly believed lies to work their way into their administration. England appears to find it delightful that the Dutch are in difficulty. Apparently, the British crown cannot bear to contemplate that a Dutch colony might endure.*¹⁹¹

Under constant sniper fire, and well aware of the overall combat picture, soldiers became utterly disillusioned with the policies being pursued by their own government. The Linggadjati cease-fire meant nothing. In May of 1946, a single Dutch platoon came under attack 45 times and carried out 36 long patrols of their terrain.

¹⁸⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 2, May 2005.

¹⁹⁰ Op cit. Tape 2.

¹⁹¹ Spreeuwiers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. page 126.

*"We noticed the promised betterment in behavior the very next day.... We begin patrol at 7.30... receive word less than an hour later that the boys from R-210 RI have a dead comrade....Halfway to kampong Blimbing, we find ourselves under an enormous round of fire.....drove them behind the demarcation line...."*¹⁹²

Frustrated, Dutch administration lodged a complaint with the allies, and discussions regarding a demarcation line between Modjokerto and Modjoagoeng ensued. General Baay and Lt Col. Keuning for the Dutch, army generals for the Republic, and Belgian and American representatives from the Commission of Good Offices, inspected the area. *The CGO? oh, don't make me laugh. What a joke.*¹⁹³ Simultaneously, the administration finally took note of war zone realities. New equipment began to arrive, soldiers were re-assigned, and the wounded and sick were moved to safer areas. All signs, veterans agree, pointed to a long awaited offensive. Instead, international interference in the guise of a U.S. nota sent to the Dutch government and the Republic, ended all planned activity. The Republic assured the U.S. that it would conduct itself according to its agreements in the future, and *"said Amen"* to the United States. *"Uncle Sam pats himself on the back."* *"Once more, he has been able to promptly handle the affair. Poor idiot!"*

By July of 1947, motivated by starvation, disease and the games of the Republic in the political arena, the Dutch launched the first "Police Action." The forces in Sumatra and Java coordinated their efforts and were extremely successful – they contained the Republicans in the area of Yogyakarta. Without exception, soldiers maintain that sans outside interference, they would have completed their task. Instead, they received an order to cease and desist:

"We soldiers can stand a lot. Men can expect us to go on without food, without socks, without heavy weaponry, without sleep and sick with malaria; we will still go on patrol. We do not ask why, because we know why. We just do it. Our comrades may die, friends we can barely do without. We know why and we continue on, even as our hearts contract with pain. But what happened on August 4th,

¹⁹² Op. cit, page 154.

¹⁹³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 1, June, 2005.

1947, dealt us an unrecoverable blow. In a radio message, de Heer Dr. van Mook orders that at 12 midnight, all action must be stopped, and that in spite of the fact that we have almost quelled all resistance. A few more days and all the major cities will be in our hands. The people are unbelievably enthusiastic and heavily on our side. Behind us, all vandalism has stopped, law has been imposed.

*Australia appears to feel itself called upon to act as spokesperson for the extremists. The same Australia, for whom the men of our armies, our navy and our air force, died. The same Australia that will allow no coloured person into their land, yet who appears to see economic possibilities in the republic. And the Security Council, shamefully unenlightened, orders the Netherlands to discontinue her mission. We cannot understand how our government can follow this order. What will the (Indonesian) people think? How shocking this will be to the trust of the outer islands! We are only soldiers, and we must obey, however heavy this lies upon us. Mr. van Kleffens spoke to the Security Council: "The blood of thousands of innocents will cling to your hands." If our government knows this so well in advance, where is her **responsibility**? For us, this is not a question.*

^{.194}

.....

Promptly dishonoured, yet another ceasefire accompanied Security Council resolutions regarding the First Police Action:

Not one man among us ever believed that the TRI would abide by the cease-fire. We know that the extremists have no honour. From our first day at the salt factory, they were back in action. From the break of dawn to the late evening, we are under fire from the extremists. ...Along the entire south-west front, Dutch posts are under ambush....¹⁹⁵

January 17th, 1948, saw the implementation of yet another cease-fire. This time the order stipulated that both sides would carry out only light infantry patrols, and that absolutely no shooting would take place. In February 1948, a demilitarized zone, 4 km on either side of a "status quo" line, came into effect that prohibited all military personnel from entering that area. One veteran served as "field

¹⁹⁴ Spreeuwiers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. Page 163.

¹⁹⁵ Op. cit., page 171.

policeman” assigned to patrol the area; he echoes Spreeuwiers in describing it as the *most dangerous stretch of ground in Java*.¹⁹⁶

Citing lack of compliance with the ceasefire, as well as total disillusionment with conciliatory proceedings under the Americans and the CGO, the Dutch engaged in the Second Police action. Capturing the revolutionary leaders, including Hatta and Soekarno, they subsequently dispersed them to Sumatra and Bangka. That their government succumbed to resulting American pressure, nullifying all they had fought for, signifies, for veterans, the ultimate betrayal. They describe the process as completely ‘two-faced’:

*‘We were the backup plan, the expendable men in the field. While we fought the republicans for the people every day, because we thought this was what they (Dutch government) wanted from us – that they too wanted to ensure the happiness and freedom of the people, the government was actually planning to sell us all out behind our backs. Self: There were many people against the war in the Netherlands. I think they had to deal with public opinion too. Interviewee: (sarcastically) Oh exactly. Just imagine (stel je voor) that they might not be elected next time. That is something to take into account when you are selling out your own army, and putting your own people (Netherlands) before Indonesians (Marshall Aid). But isn’t THAT an old story. I thought Indonesians were our people. And what I ask you, did the people of the Netherlands know about what was really going on in Indonesia? Soekarno had them all bambozzeld.’*¹⁹⁷

Veterans convey anger that their task is termed a “loss” in Indonesia against the Revolutionary Army simply because Holland signed for Indonesian independence. They completely separate the political scenario from the battles between the republican and Dutch armies, and concur unanimously that Soekarno, Hatta, and Sjahrir “beat” the Dutch government “hands down” in the political arena. *“The Dutch government could have taken a few lessons from those guys. We blame the Americans all the time for what happened, but Soekarno played the*

¹⁹⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. June, 2005. Tape 1.

¹⁹⁷ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1, August 2005.

*Americans. They were not running him, they thought they were, but HE was running THEM.*¹⁹⁸

On the other hand, veterans claim Victory on the battleground and given the results of the 'police actions,' results that included the capture and exile of revolutionary leaders, it does appear inaccurate to talk about a military 'loss' in Indonesia. (Indeed, I have always been somewhat amused by the 'exile' of Soekarno and Hatta and cannot think of any world power that would have been content to send them into 'exile.') Since the results of the police actions were unravelled at the political level, primarily through the intervention of the U.S., veterans concede the political loss, but not the military. Cribb notes:

*In the end, the transfer of sovereignty to the republic at the end of 1949 was more of a compromise that proceeded from international pressure and a Dutch conviction that the stalemate had to be broken, than a clear Republican victory.*¹⁹⁹

The response to any suggestion that the Dutch were in a weak financial and political position after the Nazi occupation, and had little choice but to succumb to American pressure, is a loud *Bah!* There is no sympathy for the Dutch position. Veterans view the Americans as simply mercenary; the majority of them hold to the opinion that the USA was interested in Indonesia's natural wealth. However, their own government they do not excuse; they did not expect betrayal from their government, they did not anticipate its moral failure, they do not expect mercenary, or any other kind of flawed behaviour, from the Dutch. It will not escape that reader that while they may deplore the standards the Dutch set for themselves in cases such as 'betrayers' or 'loose cannons in the army,' soldiers themselves set very high standards for the Dutch government.

(me) Other soldiers have said that if the President and leaders of other countries could have seen the things that you saw every day,

¹⁹⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 2. July 2005. Interview conducted in English, hence the terms 'played' etc are the Interviewees.

¹⁹⁹ Cribb, R. (2007). Misdaad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom. Page

*they would not have been in such a hurry to help the revolutionary government. (He): I don't believe that. If you believe that then you believe it was about the Indonesian people and it wasn't. You know before the war, the economic circle in Indonesia was between the Dutch, Indonesia, and the Americans. Well I think the Americans just wanted to cut out the Dutch, and have a relationship themselves with Indonesia – they thought they could run the revolutionary government from Washington. That is what I believe. Those of us who knew anything about Soekarno knew that was never going to happen. But what did the Americans know? No, No, it is naive to think that the torture and brutality...what we saw would not have made a difference. If they had wanted to find out what was really going on, they could have. But they didn't – and so they didn't. Some of us have to believe that it could have been different or it was all for nothing. But... I don't believe it and yes it makes me angry, but that is the way it is.*²⁰⁰

I close this chapter with words taken from Rolf Spreeuwiers as he gazes, overwhelmed with emotion, at the coastline of Java on his way home to the Netherlands. Let his words speak for the veterans of the last colonial war:

*What will be the fate of this beautiful country? Will right prevail or will this land with 70 million souls be delivered into the power of a few extremists? No, government of the Netherlands, we beg you, not the latter. Poverty, murder, injustice, vandalism, lawlessness will then be her legacy. Her people, and we, pray to you before it is too late. God in Heaven, have mercy for the people.*²⁰¹

²⁰⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian (Male.) June 17, 2005.

²⁰¹ Spreeuwiers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned. Indië*. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda. Page 207.

4 The Dutch-Indonesians

Excerpts from an extensive Dutch-Indonesian interview conducted while the narrator was visiting Canada signal the departure point of this Chapter. Born in Batavia, the narrator remained in Indonesia until 1949, when she and her husband repatriated to the Netherlands. In grounding this discussion in her narratives, I make no claim to “representative status” for the excerpts of her life story – it does not, for example, reflect the lives of Dutch-Indonesian women in Batavia during the Japanese occupation. It does however, validate the notion that *‘each human being occupies a legitimate position from which to experience, interpret, and constitute the world.’*¹ As the life story emerges in its unique, particular presence, *‘social structures are as recoverable from single social beings as they are from groups of them.’*² Although Stanley’s claim is perhaps a tad optimistic, the outlines of those structures are surely visible.

The interviewee, who I will call Alie, lives in the Netherlands where she remained subsequent to her repatriation, although she has now built a home in Indonesia where she spends six months out of every year. Her data offers an excellent foil for the narratives of Euro-Asian people who remember the Indies from their vantage points in North America. Unlike Ali, they reside in countries where ‘Indie’ evokes no angst, no communal or historical memories, and no clashes between widely divergent memories on what or how it was.

4.1 On Transcription and Structure

The format of Dutch-Indonesian narratives required an adjustment to transcription since naming – both proper names and place names – is an oral composition technique utilized by these narrators to establish identity, articulate history, and contextualize bodies in space. Replacing a name with a placeholder such as ‘X’ or ‘XX,’

¹ Stiver, Camilla. (1993) Reflections on the Role of Personal Narrative in Social Science. [in] *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. Vol. 18, No. 2. page 409.

² Stanley, Liz, (quoted in) Stiver, Camilla. (1993) Reflections on the Role of Personal Narrative in Social Science. [in] *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. Vol. 18, No. 2. page 413.

destroyed and misrepresented narrative sequence. Therefore, I have taken the liberty of replacing all names in the narratives with wholly fictive ones, not only to ensure that the texts do not lose their exemplary flavour, but also to protect identities that, in these narratives, are easily traceable. Indeed that is the thematic consequence of the narrative schemata: the binding of people and events to place.

Subsequent to the release of Renato Rosaldo's³ groundbreaking analysis, cultural anthropologists have been sensitive to the importance of space and place when mapping human values, societies, and histories. Landscapes encode socio-historical values and perceptions of personal identity within the framework of (diachronic) national or group community. Indeed, landscape can become "*a form of codification of history itself.*"⁴ For all narrators, particularized Indonesian landscapes encoded an evolving "I and us" over time.

The concept 'Landscape,' has been integrated into anthropological discussions of history, memory and identity within the framework of two dominant genres, the "inscriptive" and the "processual" models.⁵ The inscriptive model forms part of the paradigm of 'representation' and reduces people-landscape relationships to text. Santos-Granero's "topographic writing"⁶ exemplifies the perspective that people write history 'onto' their landscapes; Küchler similarly claims that the "West" treats "*landscape as an inscribed surface, as an 'aide-mémoire of cultural knowledge and understanding of its past and future.*"⁷

³ Rosaldo, Renato (1980) *Ilongot Headhunting 1883-1974: A Study in Society and History*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

⁴ Stewart, Pamela and Strathern, Andrew. (2003) *Landscape, Memory and History*. London: Pluto Press. Page 1.

⁵ Strang, Veronica. (2003) Landscape and Historicity among the Langalanga, Solomon Islands. (in) Stewart, Pamela J. and Strathern, Andrew. (2003) *Landscape, Memory and History*. London. Pluto Press. Page 199.

⁶ Santos-Granero, F. (1998) Writing History into the Landscape: Space, Myth and Ritual in Contemporary Amazonia. [in] *American Ethnologist*. (25) pages 128-148.

⁷ Küchler (in) Strang, Veronica. (2003) Landscape and Historicity among the Langalanga, Solomon Islands. (in) Stewart, Pamela J. and Strathern, Andrew. (2003) *Landscape, Memory and History*. London. Pluto Press. Page 200.

Hence, the story goes, the western association between landscape, memory, and history is a landscape *of* memory and not the process of remembering.

The construction of this inscriptive/processual binary reinforces the West/Rest formula, ⁸re-inscribing the West as special and/or different. ⁹In the case of landscape theorists who adhere to the inscription model for the 'West' while analyzing the 'Rest' as processual, western difference is signified through a celebration of Other's ability to commune with landscape, while the West abuses/negates the landscape/people interface. This denial of the ancient relationship between western peoples and their landscape marginalizes any consideration of the bond between western peoples and place. Schama's plea that we recognize the profound impact of nature on western thought and mythology is highly significant in this context.¹⁰

Interviewee situating of events and people in place suggests instead that the processual and inscription processes are entwined. They represent an existential universal that, even in the case of urban dwellers, emerges as a cityscape/people bond. Rooted in nativity and intimate knowing, the land-people interface produces a "second landscape," one not seen merely 'with the eyes,' but produced through praxis.¹¹ Subsequently encapsulated in iconic signifiers demarcating the landscape-people bond, these representations re-provoke both the symbolic and real. ¹²Assessing the Dutch land-body union elsewhere, I noted that Water suffuses the Dutch 'imaginary.'¹³

⁸ Gow, P. (1995) Land, People and Paper in Western Amazonia (in) Hirsch, E. and O'Hanlon, M. (eds.) *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Space and Place*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Pages 31-42. Gow opposes the inscriptive metaphor in his analysis, claiming that it is a cultural process of the 'west.'

⁹ Goody, Jack. (1996) *The East in the West*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

¹⁰ Schama, Simon. (1996) *Landscape and Memory*. Toronto: Vintage Canada.

¹¹ Stewart, Pamela J. and Strathern, Andrew. (2003) *Landscape, Memory and History*. London. Pluto Press. Page 2.

¹² Godelier, Maurice. (1996) *The Enigma of the Gift*. Translated by Nora Scott. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

¹³ Beaulieu (n.d.) The Real and the Imaginary: The Dutch waterscape. Unpublished manuscript.

In turn, this dominant icon structured the ideology (symbolic) that informed the pragmatic level of intentional action (the real).¹⁴ Dutch ancestors engaged with their waterscape by devising rudimentary adaptations to an environment that offered enormous challenges to basic survival.¹⁵ *Reclamation*,¹⁶ not conquest, underlies the Dutch moral claim to their land. Through water, tribal past, sense of place, and sense of self, entwine.¹⁷

Inscription of landscape *depends on distance* from environment; true inscription is a particular *kind* of relationship to landscape rooted in the objectification of terrain. As soon humans interact with surroundings, 'natural' landscape becomes culture, encoded by human perception based on the people/land interface. Known directly through labour, life and laughter, indelibly marked on the human psyche as 'our' place, 'our' home, landscape is not the backdrop of our lives, but the medium through which we express the

¹⁴ Op. Cit.

¹⁵ Their land first emerged as a barren of sand and clay left in the wake of the retreating ice. On the edge of the delta created by the melting glaciers that deposited thousands year old debris from half of Europe, wind and tide began to sculpt a fringe of dunes, dunes that would stretch from Belgium in the South to the mouth of the River Weser in the North. Archaeological evidence confirms the Frisii as the people who vigilantly piled up mounds of clay to create high, dry ground on which to maintain their communities. Masselman, G. (1963) *The Cradle of Colonialism*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press. page 3.

¹⁶ The Dutch completed construction of the "Afsluitdijk," the dike that facilitates the reclamation of land buried by the Lake Flevo disaster of the 13th century. As land re-emerged from the inundated regions, the present confronted the past in the form of Dutch villages and towns buried for over eight centuries. Ancestors reappeared; a continuity marked by process. Linking to their forefathers who struggled to win land from the sea, descendants continue the struggle, merging current and past lives, subordinating time to place. As Strang observes of the Langalanga, Dutch reclamation acts are simultaneously ancestral acts and current acts; they mimic ancestral acts of creation. Strang, Veronica. (2003) *Landscape and Historicity among the Langalanga, Solomon Islands*. (in) Stewart, Pamela J. and Strathern, Andrew. (2003) *Landscape, Memory and History*. London. Pluto Press.

¹⁷ Basso, J.H. (1984) *Stalking with Stories: Names, Places and Moral Narratives among the Western Apache*. [in] Bruner, E.M. (ed.) *Text, Play and Story: The Construction and Reconstruction of Self and Society*. Washington, D.C.: American Ethnological Society. Pages 19 – 55. The symbolic provokes the real in the form of social institutions that arise from the demands of a particular people-landscape interface

self. Others, deploying the gaze while refraining from interface, inscribe topography as a particular kind of environment, with certain kinds of characteristics, or as places where things ‘happened.’ Peoples born into and merging with particular surroundings do not experience environmental lack. Instead, the resulting intertextualization of body/environment structures situational identity. Under these circumstances, land/water/cityscapes are inscriptive *and* processual; the paradigms are not distinct, let alone binary.

Interpenetration of inscription and process culminates in ‘naming.’ Storytellers for example, utilize landscape place names to cue oral memory. Ong¹⁸ indicates that place naming facilitates the construction of a diachronic library of knowledge embedded in environment; names catalogue history. While particular groups of people experience their relationship with environment as ‘processual,’ they *inscribe* its surface to evoke and cue memory. Contra scholars raising the binary spectre, inscription is not a ‘western’ practice, but triggers process.

For the Dutch born in Indonesia, Dutch-Indonesian, and Indonesians, the place-people experience was not “*separately perceived but embedded within ways of living and being.*”¹⁹ Their Indische landscape was both inscribed and processual. This fact is often lost in transcription and analyses, as the narrative mode does not translate well into written prose, while inscription techniques inflict further violence on oral tradition. Sommer,²⁰ through her discussion of ‘translatio,’ highlights that the manner in which local concepts lose particularities in a global vocabulary, is decidedly relevant to critiques of textual analyses applied to oral traditions. The imperialistic nature of writing²¹ assimilates and sanitizes oral

¹⁸ Ong, Walter J. (1982) *Orality and Literacy*. London; New York: Routledge.

¹⁹ Johnston, R. (1998) Approaches to the Perception of Landscape: Philosophy, Theory and Methodology. (in) *Archaeological Dialogues* 5: pages 54-68.

²⁰ Sommer, Doris. (1999) Be-Longing and Bi-Lingual States. *Diacritics*. Vol. 29. No. 4, *Grounds of Comparison: Around the Work of Benedict Anderson*. Pages 84-115. Page 85.

²¹ Ong, Walter J. (1982) *Orality and Literacy*. London; New York: Routledge

traditions through the imposition of the paradigmatic mode and refuses oral non-conformity and its particularities.

Naming evoked the process of remembering, a processual re-connection of narrator, family, land, and peoples in place. It is not the case that Dutch-Indonesian interviewees are not political, or cannot articulate western historical concepts in a recognizable paradigmatic form; rather that politics, economics, and history are embodied and not abstract concepts 'objectively' assessed. It is significant that Pattynama notes the prevalence of family stories in Netherlands-Indische literature.²² Clearly, parents passed on oral transmission techniques utilized by indigenous and Dutch-Indonesian peoples in Indonesia to children, and these resurface in the Indische literary and oral tradition as the 'right way to tell a story.'²³

Linde notes the life story is a temporally discontinuous unit told over many occasions, altered to fit specific occasions of speaking, specific addressees, and to reflect changes in the speaker's long term situation, values, understanding and discursive practices. Major themes in life stories include *landmark events* used to date personal epochs.²⁴ Schemata utilized by Dutch-Indonesian narrators draw heavily on landmark events, self-evaluation and extended reportability to weave discontinuous units into a seamless whole. The landmarks that dominate discourse in this sub-database are Loss of Place, the Occupation, Repatriation and Immigration.

²² <http://academic.sun.ac.za/afrndl/tna/pattynama03.html>. Tydskrif vir Nederlands & Afrikaans 10de Jaargang, Nommer 2. Desember 2003. Page 4.

²³ Angela Sidney (in) Linde, Charlotte. [1993] *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

²⁴ Linde, Charlotte. [1993] *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press. Page 21.

A life story consists of all the stories and associated discourse units, such as explanations and chronicles, and the connections between them, told by an individual during the course of his/her lifetime that satisfy the following two criteria:

1. The stories and associated discourse units contained in the life story have as their primary evaluation a point about the speaker, not a general point about the way the world is.
2. The stories and associated discourse units have extended reportability; that is, they are tellable and are told and retold over the course of a long period of time

4.2 The Interview

Alie spends six months a year in Indonesia, where she has built a house on a small island approximately 26 sea miles from Singapore. Her eldest son was born in the Netherlands after she and her husband repatriated. He lives in Singapore. Her other son lives in Denmark, while her daughter lives in Canada where she is married to an Dutch-Indonesian man born on Java. Via a mutual friend, I initially contacted Alie's daughter and son-in-law, let us call them Piet and Jennie, in the hopes of interviewing *them*. That email resulted in a response that Alie was on her way to Canada and an invitation to come and stay with them so that I could meet and interview her. I accepted with alacrity.

The interviews took place in Piet and Jennie's home over a four-day period. In all I recorded four full tapes of data (90 minutes a side), although a goodly amount of conversation took place that I did not tape. On the second day of our meetings, a Saturday, Jennie, Alie, and myself spent eleven hours together talking through coffee, tea and in the evening, wine and Indonesian rijstafel. On a number of occasions, when the conversation became intensely personal, I turned off the recorder. Throughout the interview process, Jennie remained indispensable. Fascinated, and having previously engaged some of Ali's stories, she acted as prompter; *'was that the time,'* or, *'oh but mama, where was your brother'?*

Throughout the chapter, I introduce excerpts from this interview, and combine and contrast them with narrative bits drawn from other Dutch-Indonesian informants. In all cases, I have imposed a semi-structure on the free flow of our conversation, as I did not follow a question-answer format, nor did I direct our conversations into certain channels, favouring an 'unravelling process' that would allow the interviewee to follow the skeins of her thought as one story or memory evoked another. To impose textual order, I correlated diverse excerpts into focal themes. I also 'cleaned' up hesitations, some repetitions, and used English translations for Indonesian or Dutch words. A number of paradigms however, such as 'gezellig' or 'feestje,' presented nuance problems in translation; I could not get it "just right." I settled for approximation. Many paradigms do not translate into English, and Dutch emphasis on diminutives does not translate into English prose. How indeed, does one translate 'beeldig'?.....

4.2.1 KIN: THE RIGHT WAY TO INITIATE A STORY

I am “Alie Antonia van Meer,²⁵ born in Batavia, Netherlands India, 1923. My mother was Charlotta Inge Rijker and my father, Hans Bohn. They met in Indonesia. My father was born in Putten,²⁶ and worked with XYZ Maatschaap in the Netherlands. He was sent to the Indies, yes, a young man of about 23. Well... his company had an office in the Batavia harbour and so he arrived. Naturally then, he needed to find a place to live so he landed up with my Oma, he rented a room from her. Ja, she had just started to rent rooms so he was her first ‘guest,’ I would say. Well there he met my mother.²⁷

Compare the beginning of her narrative with this sequence lifted from a male Dutch-Indonesian American interview,

“My name is Johannes van der Haven, Date of Birth 10-24-26 in Bandoeng,²⁸ Java, Netherlands East Indies, presently called Indonesia. Youngest of 5 children. Father Hendrik Pieter van der Haven and Mother Petranella Josephina Carolina Gustavina Schwager. Father was a trader in coffee, tea and rubber. He left Holland in 1906 and was a “full blooded” Dutchman. Mother had at least 25 to 50% Indonesian heritage. From an early age it was understood that Java was our home and Holland a far away item.... I consider that I had a very happy youth until World War II struck....²⁹

Or

I was born during the great rains, the third child in the family of my mother and father. My father’s people were sailors..... Mother was

²⁵ I underline again that ALL names are PURELY fictive.

²⁶ I note again that all place names leading to identity are altered in quotes from all Interviewees. He was not born in Putten.

²⁷ From this point forward, all quotations rendered in this font style are from: Oral History Interview. Dutch-Dutch-Indonesian Female. Tapes 1-4. May, 2004.

²⁸ I render Bandung in my informant’s spelling here.

²⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Initial Correspondence prior to Interview. Cited with permission. June 2005.

*actually a cousin to my father...she brought wealth with her when they married...*³⁰

Dutch-Indonesian interviewees formally initiated their narratives by positioning themselves within their clans, a narrative technique derivative from Indonesian storytelling adapted to dispense informative particularities required in western cultures. Names of the parents were given in full; although I have replaced the proper names for the mother in the quote found above, the writer did in fact, provide me with all five of his mother's (rather impressive set of first) names. I recognized her maiden name immediately and was able to locate this interviewee in the old families of Indonesia and their attendant historical context. The narrative schemata further requires the narrator's position in the birth order, and then explication of the father's employment position and the mother's bloodline. The latter is the focus; the father's line will disappear in his parents' generation as narrators dismiss both the patriline and the Netherlands, while they embark on an expansion of the matrilineal roots within their Indies home.

My Oma was also Indische³¹ she was divorced, oh! a very courageous woman. That did not happen very often in that time (divorce) ... she was self-made, self-taught – she studied, she delivered babies – her own and other peoples.... and then she rented rooms, and became a teacher at a Dutch-Chinese school. *chuckles* I don't know if I should say this but! Opposed to what happens now that children are never to be touched! .. well the Chinese parents they said, if they don't behave, well you let them know!³²

My mother also went to school, well my Oma insisted, education is so important....and she became a teacher at a Dutch-Indonesian school.

³⁰ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. July, 2006. Tape 1. This informant did try to pinpoint the western dates of his birth for me.

³¹ I use Indische rather than Dutch-Indonesian where my informants use the term.

³² Throughout this interview, it is possible to trace the very close matrilineal links of these families.

van der Veur has noted that, “*the value of Western education had been impressed on Eurasians by their long struggle for socio-political emancipation during the colonial period.*”³³ van Veur’s claim regarding the ‘long struggle’ of Eurasians is highly contentious, given that mixed blood families were common within the European community, and dominated the elite that held power in all S.E. Asia VOC strongholds prior to the State’s assumption of the VOC’s holdings,³⁴ when the ‘new’ Dutch systematically dislodged them from their previous positions of prestige. During the 19th century however, Eurasian families certainly assimilated the emphasis on Education; indeed this focus ensured the successful lives of repatriate-immigrants. As Alie notes, her Oma insisted that her girls and her granddaughters educate themselves. Consider if you will, the years in which this occurred! Alie herself was born in 1923, her mother in the late 1890’s, and her grandmother in the 1860’s. Her Oma was a *divorced woman*, when divorce was virtually unheard of in “Dutch” society, and “*self taught*,” becoming by turns a midwife, a teacher, and a small hotelkeeper. She ensured that Alie’s mother also became a teacher. Alie herself completed her HBS before the war intervened in her further plans; she has certainly stressed education for her own very successful children. These women utilized education, not as an emphasis on Dutchness, but as a tool for self-sufficiency.

I knew my great grandparents well too you know.... My great grandfather was a de Roo. That was Oma’s name after she divorced - her maiden name. My Oma had four children. My mother was the youngest daughter, and there were in all three daughters and one son; he was the youngest of all the children. (*Self: did they all go to Holland after the war?*) My Oma died in Indonesia. My Opa was in the army (KNIL).³⁵ He died on Java.

³³ Van der Veur, Paul W. (1960) Eurasian Dilemma In Indonesia. [in] *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 20, No. 1 (Nov) pages 45-60. page 54.

³⁴ Taylor, Jean Gilman (1984) *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

³⁵ This was Opa Bohn, who was divorced from her grandmother. This divorce was completely amicable. Opa Bohn was a central part of their lives and eventually married another Indische woman in their circle of friends.

Well mammie and pappie went to the Netherlands, but Ben³⁶ and I, we stayed. Thus:

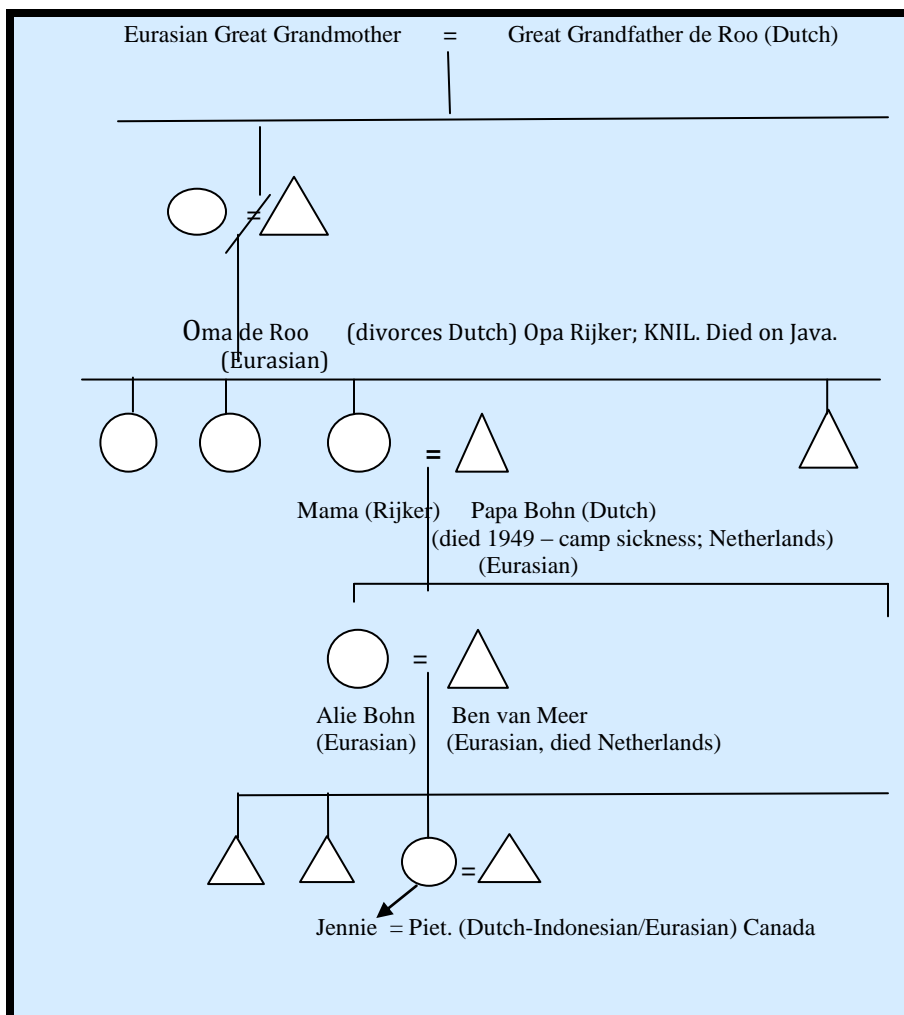


Figure 6: Simplified van Meer Matriline³⁷ (Eurasian/Dutch-Indonesian)

³⁶ Her Husband.

³⁷ Connections to families in the Indies are linked through the women in each generation (to their sisters who are also often married to Dutch men) and brothers, who married a variety of ethnicities, including other Eurasian women – again creating wider settler family links.

In terms of the four generations of kinship data collected from Ali, in each generation of her matriline, women married Dutch men. Her great-great grandmother, who does not appear on the chart above, was an indigenous Javanese woman who married a “full-blooded” Dutch man.

The families were very close:

Naturally...well you know... I was a child before the war. (*She was 19 in 1942 – not today considered a ‘child’*) I had always a lovely youth, a darling father, my mother was, well extremely, well (laughs) well really, a dear. My Oma lived two streets behind us, we went every day to her house. My sister was papa’s darling, my brother was my mother’s, but I, I was Oma’s darling. When....I was 13, I remember, it was time for my first HBS ball, and I wanted a long dress and my mother she thought that *utterly* unnecessary... but my Oma, she had a charming, simply charming long dress made up for me, green tucks and frills, organdy ..it was...oh so lovely! And I believe, no I know for sure, I remember that I went with a pimped youth, on the back of his bike..... off to the ball.... (*Jennie interjecting: On the back of a bike with that dress!*), complete with auto lantern. I can’t remember anything of the party, but I remember that!

Alie’s narrative, filled with anecdotes about experiences shared with family members, stresses the support network amongst her kin, networks that would ensure their survival during the occupation. They took their holidays together:

Every year we went on vacation to Bandung – ahh.. so nice and cool. Batavia got very warm and close in the summer, but Bandung was ‘high up.’ You know what I remember – well I said we went to Bandung – Well, that’s where my mom’s oldest sister lived, my darling cousins. I went there every year; we would go with the train, ja, even when we did not go as a

family I went to stay with them. Later my parents took us to my grandfather³⁸ at ? Sukibumi, (aside: so nice and cool) and then later we rented a house there.... and then we built a house there because my father never wanted to go back to the Netherlands.yes, that was to be mammie and pappie's house.....and we never lived in it, and then there were Indonesians that wanted to break down everything, tear it apart, and they burned it down. Yes, they burned it. After the war. Burnt. We never lived there. (Self: question: who burnt things?) Youth gangs. Yes, ..so terrible. (shakes head and looks off into distance).

Surely not a typical Indonesian paradigm, the yearly 'vacation' stems from a Dutch-European model with its regulated "two weeks' every year where we go to ___ to rest from labour. I have no doubt that this annual event entered the family through the Dutch father, who required rest and 'quality' time with family. In the Netherlands, many city families took annual trips to the seashore; it was not unheard of for mothers and children to leave for the summer, and for father to join them on weekends and during his vacation time. Just as the Dutch left summer stuffy cities for the cool sea breezes, the custom made perfect sense on Java.

In her discussion of family, Ali introduces crucial information. As the kinship chart makes abundantly clear, multiple children were born to each of the couples. Whom did the siblings marry? Dutch-Indonesian interviews quickly revealed the answer; siblings married other Dutch-Indonesian, indigenous people, or Dutch men/women. Tentacle like marriage intersections crept across Indonesian society, linking geo-spatial terrains, deepening in time, mingling blood, languages, and cultural customs. Networks of kin interacted together, picnicked together, talked together about their lives, including, as one informant noted, their politics:

My brother was married to a Sundanese woman and her brothers, who visited us all the time, were very political. So of course we

³⁸This was the grandfather who was divorced from her Oma. Divorce did not usually cause a lapse in familial relations and in fact, this grandfather re-married later to a Eurasian woman that was kin linked.

*discussed politics, of course we did. My mother, who was Indische as you already know, had strong opinions herself on those matters, and she was not afraid to speak out. Self: What kind of opinions did she have, or your sister-in-laws brothers? Interviewee: Well I can tell you we did not have Soekarno in mind, but we did think it was time for the Indies to stand on their own and govern themselves. The Netherlands really did not know anything about our lives and we thought it would be better for the country if we could steer it ourselves. For my mother this did not mean getting rid of the Dutch. She was married to my father for heaven's sake! But men like my sister in law's brothers who were educated, they were getting tired of being treated as children. They wanted some say, they wanted to do something, something meaningful. It was really time Jetty. You could see it coming. Self: How did your father feel about all of this? Interviewee: Papa? Papa was Indonesian. He was never going back to the Netherlands. So he agreed. But he always told the men (his son in laws thus) that it would have to go slow.*³⁹

Van der Veur typifies a common set of attributions used to characterize the sub domain 'Eurasian:'

*"The Eurasians of Indonesia are a group of mixed descent closely tied to the land of their birth, but culturally and politically tied to a society thousands of miles away along the shores of the North Sea."*⁴⁰

While the "Eurasians" of Indonesia may be a group of mixed descent, the 'cultural and political' ties to the North Sea are somewhat dubious. Indeed Cribb directly refutes this:

*'Indische culture was marked by distinctive uses of language, dress, cuisine, entertainment, recreation, housing, family structure and so on, all of them loosely speaking hybrid between Western and Asian cultures.'*⁴¹

³⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Female. Tape 2. August 2005.

⁴⁰ Van der Veur, Paul W. (1960) Eurasian Dilemma in Indonesia. [in] *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 20, No. 1 (Nov) pages 45-60; page 45.

⁴¹ Cribb, Robert. (2003) "Indische Identity and Decolonization." *IIAS Newsletter*, # 31, July 2003.

Since women overwhelmingly contribute the indigenous element to Euro-other marriages, their background was vital to the socialization process and the hybridization of cultures. Mothers, as well as Asian nursemaids, transmitted diverse Indonesian or Euro-Asian customs, norms, and mores to children. I discussed the role of women in the Dutch-Indonesian household with an Indonesian woman visiting Canada. Her Dutch grandmother and Javanese grandfather saw their family torn apart during the Revolution, with a number of sons supporting the Dutch, and an equal number the Republic. My interviewee is the daughter of the eldest son. Commenting on the importance of women in the socialization process, she imparted that her grandmother ensured that all of her sons spoke fluent Dutch as well as their natal Javanese. Since her grandmother transmitted the Dutch language to her father, he considered it extremely important that his daughter become familiar with both sides of her heritage. He therefore hired an Instructor to teach his children, as well as his wife, the language since she was home with the children – here the importance of the socialization process is explicitly articulated. Aside, I asked her about those Indische/Indische descendents that had stayed in Indonesia:

*“overall there remained a different cultural emphasis, but beyond that they could usually pass as Indonesians. The Eurasians that opted to leave Indonesia, or were forced out, were not treated well and it took great strength to stay. Under Soekarno, especially in the 1950’s if you could ‘see’ their ethnic background, employment possibilities were poor; they were discriminated against if they were easily identifiable. My own parents had problems because father was half-Dutch, but they had a prestigious background, so...Those families whose roots were deep in the country, it was home....many of them were poor as well, not the socially affluent Indos, most of the wealthier ones left. So they struggled and stayed and survived. But how they did that was interesting, because as I said, the different cultural emphasis, especially on Education, that helped. They ‘look’ Indonesian, (well of course they are), but they still have some of those old “Dutch” values passed down through the parents in each generation. (laughs) and you know, every once in a while a child is born that looks pure Dutch. *grins* There is a*

*'Belanda-Indo" community - and they do experience some discrimination.*⁴²

Family narrative forms the backdrop for all utterances that arise in a particular interview, whether these be political, economic, historical or personal. In turn, families are located in place/space; the landscape, its beauty, its smells, its richness...permeate the discursive skein and the two merge as an inseparable concept in the narrator's understanding of his/her Indies life.

4.3 The Dutch Father and the Indische Mother

Alie resumes [...]I always asked myself, about my father you know, how a young man who came to a totally strange country, did not know the language, and how he loved the country!!! How did that happen? Well..... my mother! That's how! He got to know it well. My parents married in (mammie was....).... let's see I was born in 1923, they must have married in 1921, then three more children, well four, the second baby died at birth so then there was five years between the next two.

Taylor has compellingly analyzed the matrilineal clan character of access to Regent power in Batavia among the Dutch men who circulated through the Raad van Indië, and discussed European male and Asian female alliances.⁴³ The pattern evinces great historical stability, as evidenced by this database where the narrative is consistent. Dutch men come to Netherlands India, take a bride of Indonesian or Indische descent, then, turning his face away from the 'home' country, he attaches himself to kin, people, and the land in which his children will be born. Indeed, the pattern reiterates in each generation. Moreover, as from the 17th century onwards, Dutch men who married into Indonesian clans *accessed* Indonesian life, culture, identity, and interaction *through* women and their matrilineal clans. In the Dutch-Indonesian scenario, women are consistently *there* – a little like hummingbirds, Dutch men 'come' and 'go,' but women remain – they are the focal point of the extended family.

⁴² Oral History Interview. Indonesian Female. Tape 1. May, 2005.

⁴³ Taylor, Jean Gilman (1984) *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

The attributions assigned by Eurasian interviewees to either parent were startling in their similarities. Alie offers a typical example:

...my father a darling.... He had always been a quiet, rather closed man, (compared to my mother)

My mother was very religious, I have mentioned that a few times.... It was a carefree life. My mother was (opgewekt)⁴⁴ open/cheerful and loved life, my father a darling, we all believed that God was good. Well, then came the war. And then.... it was not so easy to believe that anymore. But somehow.....it is embedded... your faith comes back. We were raised, well that there is no difference in race, color. We had an open, free house....laughter, people in and out.. Ahh. The house.. (grins) we had a verandah... and a flat roof, we always climbed up there, naturally because it was strongly forbidden!

This contrast between a quiet, rather reserved father, and a joyful, positive, very 'alive,' and strong mother dominates these family narratives. The qualitative parental distinction did not result in a paradigmatic 'father was the authority and mother was fun' derivative; mothers were very involved in the discipline of their children, often over-riding the father on issues. However, the strength of the mother's influence did result in what I can only characterize as a very 'different' household atmosphere: a freedom, a joy, - indeed an innocence that bubbles throughout the narratives. "A light touch" might be the best way in which to render this impressionistic response to the maternal style conveyed by informants. Life portraits were filled with the sunshine and 'openness' Ali ascribes to her mother, as well as the formidable strength the mother possessed, not only openly, but subtly; *my mother was, well extremely, well (laughs) well really, a dear.*

More often than not, these quiet, beloved fathers had little interest in a return to the Netherlands. Family relations between his Indonesian

⁴⁴ This is one of these concepts that are very difficult to translate. It means "awake," wide "awake," open.

family and his natal family were rarely close, not even subsequent to repatriation.

I only knew my father's mother a little...we had very little contact; well his parents were not happy that he married in the Indies.

Father did go to the Netherlands again..... well the way the holidays worked was – one time a year ‘binnenlands’⁴⁵ holiday, one time in six years – 6 months holiday to the Netherlands, but that included the boat trip and that took two months, so yes, all in all, eight months. *Self: Did you meet you father's family? (since she has not mentioned them at all in 3 hours and I had started to imagine they did not exist) Ali:well yes, we saw my father's family – there was no quaaarrel,⁴⁷ ...but my father felt he had outgrown them. One of his aunts once said.... he was different, he was always different. Yes, he was... he studied and learnt... I did meet my Oma on that side when I was two, and then when I was eight... I remember, I can remember, we arrived at Den Haag.. and then ah! I remember this beautiful big house, and Oms and Tantes and all well – not unkind, no not unkind at all. (Did you go back in the 1930s?) Yes, in 1931 – I was 8. But not in 1937. No, not again, not again. That was it. Papa was not so interested.*

“All well – not unkind....(hesitates) no, not unkind at all.” Alie finds good in everyone; had she found anything to complain of in her father's family I would have been extremely surprised. Nevertheless, the gaps in her text and her wavering voice reveal that the “not unkind” family (but perhaps then, not kind either?) greeted mother, father, and children with – let us say – something less than enthusiasm. Evidently, the Dutch family had decided on good manners when greeting the Indonesian connection, but not much more.

⁴⁵ Within the country.

⁴⁶ One month each way through the Suez canal (interesting narrative that arose from the trip!)

⁴⁷ Emphasis Alie – she stretched the word out long as she uttered it.

I only knew my father's mother a little...we had very little contact; well his parents were not happy that he married in the Indies. Why? This theme emerged consistently in Dutch-Indonesian narratives; when I put the question to informants, it troubled them and they tried to avoid it. I returned to this question in multiple ways in order to evoke a response. As one daughter, (family members were usually present at Dutch-Indonesian interviews) urged: "Oh go on, tell her mama. What does it matter?" The narrator responded:

*We were not Dutch. My mother especially, they objected to her. Not that mama ever let it bother her, no, even when they came to the Netherlands; she just carried on with her life. It hurt her for Papa, because there was no family. You need family. Our family was still in Indonesia, I have told you we were so close, and Oma and Opa – dead. Then there was no one in Holland and that was strange. Papa said it didn't matter, but it did, it hurt, for them both. They said he died of camp sickness, but I think he died of a broken heart. Broken because he loved the Indies, he loved the family, the life and there was nothing left. He gave up. Mamanever did.*⁴⁸

The abhorrence of mingled blood – and this does not signify Nazi like ideology- is not surprising in a society at that time characterized by “pillars,” where children ideally did not marry outside of a religious branch, let alone outside of a ‘Dutch’ ethnicity. Like should stay with like if people are truly to understand one another. Although we currently proclaim this scenario as misguided and old-fashioned, the ancient fear of pollution informs self-determination and the rhetoric of West ‘on’ East. On the one hand, we write ethnographies celebrating difference, thereby identifying the crucial symbols of cultural boundaries that represent specific groups of people. In the political arena, those created cultural boundaries construct political and revolutionary discourses that facilitate ‘self’-identification with its concurrent ideological mandate that culture = governance. This establishment of boundaries signifies an ongoing adherence to the desirability of clear ethnic identification and its maintenance through *segregation*.

⁴⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Female. Tape 2, May, 2005.

While the West is multi-ethnic, cultural/political boundaries inscribed on the previously colonized landscapes of other privileges (segregated) groups of peoples in (segregated) post-colonial landscapes. An academic inability to contemplate merging in the landscapes of Other reinforces mythologies of pollution⁴⁹ parallel to the perspective enacted by Alie's paternal grandparents. The liminal positions of Indische people in the Netherlands or the Métis in Canada who are '*not quite local, but not quite foreign*,'⁵⁰ as well as a rather subdued response to the murder of white populations in former colonial lands, underlines this aversion to muddy categories. Policies adopted by multiple governments articulate the envisioned necessity to clearly categorize, to *delimit* difference. Ethnically, they cling to difference, not differ^{ance}.⁵¹

*"I never witnessed any discrimination although I am sure it happened.....people being what they are and what they do..."*⁵²

The above Dutch-Indonesian interviewee is responding to a question regarding discrimination in Indonesia against Indische people by the Dutch. He had a Dutch father and an Indische mother. His Papa too, 'lost interest,' 'outgrew' his former life and was entrenched in his Indonesian clan. Rather than being *culturally and politically tied to a society thousands of miles away along the shores of the North Sea*"⁵³ fathers, and the families they bore, were firmly entrenched in Indonesia; they saw Holland as "*a far-away item*."⁵⁴

Allegations of discrimination in the Indies are nigh impossible to verify through this database. Dutch-Indonesians state that they did

⁴⁹ Douglas, Mary. (2002) *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. New York: Routledge.

⁵⁰ Cribb, Robert. (2003) "Indisch Identity and Decolonization," *IIAS Newsletter*, # 31, July 2003.

⁵¹ Derrida, Jacques. (1980) translated by Alan Bass. *Writing and Difference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

⁵² Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Correspondence, Cited with permission. May 2005.

⁵³ Van der Veur, Paul W. (1960) *Eurasian Dilemma In Indonesia*. [in] **The Journal of Asian Studies**. Vol. 20, No. 1 (Nov) pages 45-60; page 45.

⁵⁴ Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Correspondence, Cited with permission. May 2005.

not notice or experience discrimination against them by the Dutch in Indonesia, and avow that they did not discriminate against indigenous people; *they were part of our families*. However, they did feel familial discrimination against them in the Netherlands, often subtly in the form of comments on their eating habits, manner of dress, and manners.

*She didn't like us. She didn't. She would say things like... 'yes, well, it is easy to see that you are used to servants looking after you, but you don't have that here. You better get used to it.' Or she would say, 'hmm.. yes, well you people don't like potatoes' if I or my sister left a potato on our plate. All the time, pick, pick, pick. It was so hard after the camp. We longed for home.*⁵⁵

It is interesting to speculate that racism written on the colony may arise from the normative discrimination and aversion ideologies present in the mother society of the scholar so writing. Indische mothers and children were certainly aware of the veiled aversion their papa's natal families displayed towards them in Holland, but cannot identify prejudice against them in Indonesia.

4.4 Servants

Academic narrative emphasis on servants in Indonesia is a result of various etic interpretations of the colonial relationship. Families that had servants in Holland do not preoccupy academics, since the relationship between families and servants in that instance does not elicit academic angst.

Alie resumes [...] (Did you have servants?) Yes, we had a houseboy, cook, laundry girl, gardener.... my father had a company car with a chauffeur. (Jennie and I exclaim! She laughs) But I think – well it was a much different time and different customs. My parents really got along so well with them all, we had a seamstress (we exclaim again!) She responds: – yes well we were used to it, that was the way things were. We all were supposed to sleep in the afternoon, but we young ones, we would sneak out and hang out with the servants.

⁵⁵ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Female. June, 2005.

Our household was assisted by Indonesian servants. We always spoke their language .. they did not have to learn Dutch. By the age of 5 or 6, we were fluent in the native tongue. We played with the servants kids. Also going to school, church or Boy Scouts we had full blooded Indonesians amongst us all the time, and also visiting at our home.....⁵⁶ (emphasis is the narrator's)

Dutch-Indonesian memories of servants differ from the Dutch; they are highly personal, overlap with a number of themes that arise in the narratives of Dutch children born in the Indies, “sneaking out” in the afternoons for example, and deviate completely from “those who came” to Indonesia in terms of their emotional content. Finally, there appears to be a divergence in ‘remembering’ between the interviewees who live in North America, and Alie’s account. Again, I note that I do not claim representative status for her interview, however, further research as to whether Dutch-Indonesian accounts in the Netherlands conform to her schemata, would be interesting.

Highly relevant to servant narrative analysis in these accounts, is the fact that almost all of them had indigenous kin. The servants were not ‘Other,’ nor can they be said to typify the “*Hegelian dilemma and the subaltern condition.*”⁵⁷ Interviewees are specific about servants as family:

“our servants were family, not servants, and my parents had a responsibility to take care of them as if they were their own children. We had a genduk⁵⁸ who was with us from the time she was very young – about 12. My papa was sort of well..strict about boys and he made sure that we kept our morals! It was okay to have fun, but fun is fun. I know that he watched out for her..... if any young men were writing to her..or coming to call..well he checked on them and her letters and so... He had to be able to tell her parents that all

⁵⁶ Dutch-Indonesian-American. Correspondence 2005 to Beaulieu, 2005. Cited with permission. Emphasis his.

⁵⁷ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History: Vol. 42; No. 1* (January) 4 - 48. Page 10.

⁵⁸ A girl who cared for and played with the children – in this case she played with them as there was also a babu.

*was well...we knew them ...and that why I say they were family. It is what he did for us, and it is what did for her.*⁵⁹

Informants were readily familiar with the *gendong*; five of the Dutch-Indonesian mothers I interviewed used them with their own children and grand-children, two tried to teach me how to make and use one; in spite of the fact that I am past child-bearing they said it would be helpful with the grandchildren; *no! look now!* (I am laughing) *you can show your daughters in law.... This is much better than those Snugli things – here! So soft,...the baby just fits into it...!*⁶⁰ North American neighbours and friends greeted this custom with interested enquiries. It had no connotations of Empire, no colonial signification, no us/them denotation, no “indigenous’ qualities. As a daughter-in-law present at an interview exclaimed in delight to a narrator, *So cool! Mom that is so cool! How did you make that?*

Emotional recollections delineate a portrait of servants so loyal that a number chose to go into the camps with Dutch-Indonesian families during their incarceration. While I had no informants that experienced this directly, a male interviewee in the United States concretized his story through pictures of his sister and the remnants of her family, including the *babu*, after repatriation in the Netherlands. When I asked how they had managed the immigration:

Self: How did they get her to Holland?

*Interviewee: (simply) They just said she was their adopted daughter. And that is just what she was.*⁶¹

A Dutch story recounting a similar set of circumstances forms part of Miriam Zwaan van Veen’s terrible childhood camp narrative where she introduces us to Iwa, the young indigenous girl incarcerated with

⁵⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Female. Tape 2. May 2005.

⁶⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Female. Tape 1. July 2005.

⁶¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Tape 2. July 2005.

Miriam's mother and the children, who survived to repatriate with the remnants of the van Veen family to the Netherlands.⁶²

4.4.1 SERVANTS: THE ABSENT SIBLING

The 'Absent Sibling' narrative does not arise in the texts of Canadian and American Dutch-Indonesian narratives, but it does arise in the interview I conducted with Alie, pointing to an interesting deviation in schemata:

(re servants) But, we didn't USE them. We were not abusing them ..

Before the war, our servants they did not live with us. But when mammie and pappie were out then someone would stay with us. Well they slept on the floor. Now **my sister says**, "when I think! I think of those snot nosed kids in their beds and her on the floor! So when I built my house (in Indonesia) I have beautiful rooms for my gardener, well you know I am getting old (she is 86) and put in feather beds... you know where he sleeps? On the floor! He says, ah.. I am too old to learn beds...

Once when **my brother** had ordered the houseboy, my papa,...I have never seen him so angry! Well my brother was severely punished.

Of course, no one had accused Alie's family of abusing the servants when she reassured Jennie and me that the servants received respect. She is addressing unspoken criticism. The fact that North American informants presented their servant-self relationships without this protest is significant. The colonial critique of self that riddles Dutch discussions of their colonial past clearly impacts discourse elicited from interviewees living in the Netherlands. Although it is irresponsible to extrapolate from a single Dutch-

⁶² Zwaan van Veen, Miriam. (1999) Search for Memory. In Tromp, S. (1999). *Four Years Til Tomorrow. Despair and Hope in Wartime Dutch East Indiës*. (A collection of 26 eyewitness stories by members of the August 15th, 1945 Foundation.) Vancouver: Vanderheide Publishing. Pages 55-65.

Indonesian text drawn from a woman who remained in the Netherlands, it is suggestive, to say the least, that she participates in the explicit and implicit messages conveyed through servant discourse. 'Colonialism was not *bad*, we did not mistreat the servants, a.k.a. the people; we showed them the proper respect.'

The North American texts on the other hand, detail familial relations with servants as fact and do not interject the narratives with assurances that they were well treated. Moreover, North American interviewees took self-responsibility for their behaviour in relation to servants:

You know what children are like.... So one day, I ordered the houseboy to get something for me, and you should have heard my mother!

I loved her.. but you know having servants, well it can spoil you. One day when I was 'talking back' to her, my mother came in, and let me tell you, that was the last time I did that.

I got pretty lippy with her one day, and she (the servant!) told me in a quiet voice that she would not tolerate that behaviour. If I continued it, she would let my parents know.

In addition to this narrative acknowledgement of self-responsibility, Dutch-Indonesian narratives display two further significant deviations from "Dutch children born in" Indonesia memories. In the first instance, mother regularly interferes; it is not always father. Secondly, at least one servant addressed the behaviour of the children under her care, and threatened to evoke parental authority if it did not change. In this case, as no general extrapolation is possible from a single incident, the family was kin connected with indigenous families and knew the family of the servant well.

North American Dutch-Indonesian interviewees display no colonial hang-ups in their servant discourse. When depicting the servant-self relationships, the servants were not icons who stood in for Indonesians, but people the narrators had feelings for – including servants they did not particularly like. There was no concern that I would attribute colonial attitudes to them if they conveyed they had acted like 'spoiled children' with the servants, no concern that I understand through servant narratives that colonialism was not (all) bad.

It is clear however, that the relationships did not receive closure. Children and parents alike, torn from cherished servant-self relationships, spoke with melancholic affection of servants they left behind when they went into the camps (if they did), and the fact that there was no time to say good-bye. They participate in the emotion of that relationship and the anguish of parting noted by Stoler and Strassler.⁶³

*Sometimes now, I go back to the time she (babu) held me and hear her voice as she sang me to sleep.*⁶⁴

*In my dreams I see her beloved face. I will never forget her.*⁶⁵

*I loved spending time with him (houseboy). He had a wonderful...you know – grin! I couldn't stay away. My childhood is all memories of following him around.*⁶⁶

*Leaving her was the same feeling as leaving home – as leaving Indonesia. Everything familiar was gone. Everything safe – gone.*⁶⁷

Although remembering the unresolved loss of people so important to their daily life remains difficult for them to articulate, interviews were crucial to the re-evocation of that emotion. As one informant pointed out:

It is not something I think about a lot any more[...] although as I get older I dream about my youth more often. But it was more than half a century ago. The memories are there and the feelings. It is only when someone like you asks, that the pain returns. But even

⁶³ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History: Vol. 42; No. 1* (January) 4 - 48. Page 4.

⁶⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Female. Tape 1. June 2004. (Eurasian)

⁶⁵ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Female. Tape 2. July 2005. (Eurasian)

⁶⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Tape 1. May 2004. (Eurasian)

⁶⁷ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Female. Tape 2. June 2005.(Settler)

*that pain is not as hard to bear as it was then. That's life, it goes on whether you want it to or not. But when I think of them, I pray that life has been good for them and that they have been happy.*⁶⁸

While servants do not stand as icons for the Indonesian people as they clearly do in Dutch narratives, they do signify. As *these* people in *that* place, they are simultaneously a loss of people and land bonds. The relinquishment of connections on a personal level merges with loss of place in narratives that refuse a separation of land and peplescapes. Hence, the emotion surrounding the loss of servants simultaneously expresses the loss of 'my' land, 'my' home, 'my' natal place.

4.4.2 THE SERVANT MANUALS

Dutch-Indonesian database families with servants also derive from Java and the outer islands are represented solely by Sumatra. Secondly, testifying to the veracity of the statement made by the Indonesian female informant that many Dutch-Indonesians that left Indonesia for the Netherlands were well off, none of them were 'poor' or 'destitute' in Indonesia.⁶⁹ Employment backgrounds include plantation owner, government employees, three prolifically employed with multinationals, a pilot, a Doctor, personnel manager (large Dutch firm), an irrigation expert, and two agricultural researchers. Given these backgrounds, they all had servants. Therefore I was *most* interested in their take on the 'how to' manuals written by Dutch-Indonesian women discussed in such a stimulating fashion by Locher-Scholten.⁷⁰ Since I had started interviewing when I first had the pleasure of consulting her work, the contrast between life stories and manual instruction was surreal.

⁶⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Female. Tape 1, June 2005. (Eurasian)

⁶⁹ Goss, Andrew. (2000) From Tong-Tong to Temp Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History, 1957 - 1961. *Indonesia*. Vol. 70. (October) pages 9-36.

⁷⁰ Locher-Scholten, Elsbeth. (2000) Women and the Colonial State. Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies. 1900 - 1942. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

J. Kloppenburgh-Versteegh *held her Indonesian servants in very low esteem indeed. Of all the authors, she demonstrated racism in the most explicit way...*"⁷¹ Having subsequently procured the manual and perused it – although this took some doing – I fully concur with Locher-Scholten. The manual reads as a propaganda rant against iconic Indonesians as servants both in the household writ small and in the country writ large. A more unpleasant example of over-identification with the ‘full-blood’ Dutch is difficult to imagine. Yet the European community in the Indies held this same woman’s book on (indigenous) herbal medicine in high esteem. Given her obvious immersion in traditional indigenous knowledge, what inspired the tone of her manual?

In order to address this query, I turned to the Dutch-Indonesian interviewees. These women are a casual bunch, claiming that they, or their mothers, exhibited little in the way of prescribed manual interaction. Their current social milieu - Dutch-Indonesians in North America eat, entertain, worship, play, and interact with each other as well as children/grandchildren without ethnic ramification or signification – retrospectively frames re-membering. As they go about their daily business – at work, in the park, eating out, socializing, and perhaps at Church, they are part of a cultural mosaic. Unless one has a screamingly obvious accent, or retains indigenous dress of one form or another, no one asks, or cares, where you came from. You are not what you were. If you chose to live your private life according to your cherished cultural customs – fine. As long as it does not impede on the public sector – or you deny anyone’s right to do the same, it is “your business.”⁷² They re-duplicate this cultural and ideological structure as they narrate the Indonesian social mosaic.

⁷¹ Op. cit., page 96.

⁷² Of course, in Canada we do have a situation where some groups wish to impose private traditions on the public sector that are in direct conflict with human rights. The U.S. is absolutely clear on where they stand on these issues, but Canada, with its official policy of Multiculturalism, finds itself consistently trying to balance people’s cultural “rights.” In the United States, ‘culture’ does not have privilege when it comes to law. Hence, Pharaonic Circumcision in the US for example, is illegal and prosecutable, cultural custom or not. Canada is still trying to work out a policy.

Many Dutch-Indonesians became 'more' Indonesian in their North American homes; they felt comfortable integrating and displaying cultural practices derived from both sides of their heritage. Nationalism in America depends on a secular covenant⁷³ since civic ties, not pedigree, define the nation. Dutch-Indonesians in short, are not an identifiable group. A freedom accompanies cutting loose from an ethnic identity that carries 'not quite Dutch' connotations:

*After we immigrated, the first thing I noticed was, nobody knows who I am. I don't mean my name - no one knew I was 'Indische.' And if you told someone they said..Oh yeah? So what is that then? And you explained what it is and how you got here. (United States in this case) And if you told them you were in the camps, they heard you. They said things like 'those Japs were bastards'! Or 'I had a brother in the Pacific'. Or 'my Uncle was in Burma - how did you survive'? That was more than I ever heard in Holland. Here they were **interested**. That doesn't mean you don't get lonely. You do. It was nice to find other Indische people to share memories with. But you can't live in your memories even when they haunt you. So many people in this country came from nothing and have stories to tell. We became citizens here and we had a good life. We are Americans now. Americans.*⁷⁴

Reading Kloppenburgh-Versteegh I discern ethnic shame. Given the alterations Indies society had experienced since the second decade of the 19th century, this is somewhat understandable. During the British inter-regnum under Raffles, Indies society, particularly its mixed blood elite, experienced severe criticism of its manners, dress, social ideology, and in general, its cultural customs. One recalls Taylor's account of Ver Huell's visit to Johanna van IJsseldijk-Oland, whom he found sitting..."*in sarong and kebaya, her hair hanging down, on a mat, on the floor, ringed by a number of women slaves, each one occupied with some kind of work, while the lady of the house was cleaning vegetables..... She addressed me in Dutch, and then appeared to be describing me to her chief slave in Malay...*"⁷⁵ Instead of

⁷³ Kohn, Hans. (1957) *American Nationalism*. New York: MacMillan.

⁷⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian female. April, 2005. Tape 1. (Eurasian)

⁷⁵ Taylor, J. G. (1984). *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. cit., page 116.

extracting the multiple positives of this homey scene, the British, like Ver Huell, were horrified at the manner in which Dutchmen had syncretized to local custom, at the lives and functions of Dutch-Asian women and their semi-purdah state, and at the (British perceived) singular lack of intellectualism that characterized Indies society. During the five years of their tenure, relentless criticism became new policies, as they forced women into public space through diverse plays, and introduced institutions focused on social change.⁷⁶

The British critique that Dutch-Indonesian were ‘fallen’ Europeans⁷⁷ was not lost on Dutch society in the Netherlands and Dutch administrators subsequent to the Raffles regime carried this internalized discourse with them to the Indies as they assumed their positions in the colony. No matter that British criticism perpetuated centuries old English propaganda stereotypes of the Dutch, what is discernable as the State assumed administration of Indonesia is the attempt to ‘purify’ Indies society of its perceived abuses and to imprint it with distinctive Dutch-European ideology. That ideology articulated western society as the pinnacle of Civilization and viewed mixed blood unions as messy and deplorable. This notion, along with the increased immigration of Dutch women who carried that ideology, consistently marginalized the previous way of life under the VOC – one in which men did not assume the dominance of western culture, nor adhere to the conviction that it expressed the ultimate in Civilization. Instead, many of them viewed Asian civilization as offering desirable alternatives to a western way of life. During the 19th century and beyond, the transplanting of the life of the Netherlands onto foreign soil marginalized settler society ideology and its cultural alternatives, although Dutch-Indonesian narratives clarify that it was unable to stamp it out altogether.

Kloppenburgh-Versteeg’s text suggests that she had deeply internalized the critique – in spite of the recognition of her herbal knowledge- that “Indo” was lesser than Dutch and consequently, she

⁷⁶ For an excellent discussion see: Taylor, J. G. (1984). *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

⁷⁷ The British commented on the Boers in precisely the same manner – as fallen Europeans.

was determined to whip into shape those Indische homemakers that continued to perpetuate “indigenous” customs within the household. The text of the manual screams, “*I may be Indische, but I can be even more Dutch than you are!*” In denial of the rich biracial implications of her heritage, she resolved to wipe it out in others. Dutch-Indonesian women would be Dutch in the household, and as a result, the children would be Dutch.

Her narrative however, further suggests an awareness of Dutch-Indonesian resistance to her message and that she had to try ‘doubly hard’ to reform the household habits and ideologies of Indische women potentially reading her work. There is evidence that would confirm this belief; Dutch-Indonesian families did draw on both sides of their heritage and were not all in a hurry to claim, nor privilege, their ‘Dutch’ side. Since the “Asian’ mother pattern established under the VOC continued to be the dominant mixed race formula throughout Dutch tenure in the archipelago, children remained immersed in multiple Asian cultural characteristics and language. Conversely, responding to incessant, continual critiques, other Dutch-Indonesian families did attempt to hire women of European background to initiate their children into the Dutch language and way of life.

Interviewed Eurasian mothers illustrate that Kloppenburgh-Versteegh was right to be concerned that her message would, in some cases, fall on deaf ears. These wives and mothers were not shy about visiting the kitchens (a manual no-no), going to the ‘back’ to visit (proscribed behaviour – this was servant private space) or laughing and joking in a familiar manner with the household staff. In contrast, Alie’s narrative indicates that her parents were more formal in their structural conceptions of servant-family relations even though ‘*my parents really got along so well with them all.*’ While she describes the interaction as happy and relaxed, and the relationship she and her siblings had with the servants was emotional and extremely close in a carefree household, it is equally clear that for her mother, the servants were also employees with a job to do, and that they were expected to do it well.

4.4 The Japanese

Alie resumes [...] (Did you talk about independence?) *No, no we never did. We had a lovely family life, but really, not a lot of politics.*

My father did get the Haagse Post, it was rose coloured, very lively, there were always great satires, drawings you know,Well that paper still exists today, but it is so different... laughs! Not so lovely anymore!

We learned that the Japanese were coming closer and closer. So some of the families...decided to go to ?(Dwajalaja?) on Middle Java – what were we thinking - that the Japs would not get there? So, everything we packed it all up (*gives list*). So, then! We had nothing – there was a house free across from Oma and we lived there. We lived across from Oma. So then – there were the Japs. They got there. And nothing that was important or could help them could fall into their hands. Anything that we could not let the Japs have, we had to burn it. My father, well with a lot of others, they burned everything.

Ahh... My father's life work, his life work, with his own hands, I don't know how long he had worked on those papers; he had to burn it himself. So, we had nothing. That's how that goes. Yes, that is when I saw my father cry. The first time I ever saw him cry. I remember he walked into Oma's house, I still see him today, there was a old-fashioned fridge, there he stood, he leaned... so broken, and ja..... he cried.

Somehow we got back to our old house, some of these things are all mixed up because it was such a difficult time. But, we got back to our house. And they came and got pappie. They took him away. Well then, in 1942, pappie was in the camp. (*Self: Where?*) Well, in the beginning in Batavia. (*Jennie: in the beginning mama? He was moved then?*) Ja, they moved them and moved them... You know it is very sad, we never talked about it, ever afterwards. We never talked. I never saw him again.... (*me - never again?*) no, no, after they took him... (*Alie saw her father again after the war, but was not to see him again during the war*).

We never went, we didn't go into the camps. Well some Indische people did go to camps, some of our family, my cousin, among others. But it depended on where you lived. We had to interact with Japs. Ja....there were anxious moments, but I never had a terrible experience. On the contrary, we had a 'good' Japanese man who lived in our street. (she picks this up

later) Now our father was gone, we had no money, and we had to live. So mammie had to think of something. Well, my mother was very religious, she went to the church often, and she had a lot of contact with the minister. Each year she made up Christmas baskets for the poor and the Minister he decided something had to be done about the poor, everyone was hurting – the Japanese you know. So he decided to redistribute goods to those who needed them, and then he asked my mother one day – do you possibly have a free room that we can use to distribute rice and oil? Do you think you could regulate that for me? Well yes, mammie said she could (regulate it) – ja, then it was done. We used my father's study, and then (whoosh) there came a weight scale and tables, and tombak, well that was the start of the shop. We were not hungry. There was the distribution post. Well we had to live. Something had to be done..... and then it changed even more...

I can't quite remember how it all started, this was all mammie you know. Well – one woman made croquetten, one made bread, the other made crafts from glass, or from straw.... embroidered purses- oh my sister-in- law made beautiful ones she sold with us – quite a family affair! Another made pastries, or – well all kinds of things. (if you come and visit me in Indonesia I can show you everything!) So: we earned everything on commission. We would sell it and then we got a percentage. Well it went wonderfully! Life had to go on. There were birthdays.... I remember, well I remembered later with hindsight. You know (she reflected this completely a propos) Indonesia is an extremely fruitful land, you put something in the ground and it grows.

(Can you remember independence talk in the street?) No, it was the war. Many people were gone, life went on... but not for everyone..... *sighs* a dear friend of mine, well he was a teacher. He was Indische. It was funny. (chuckles) My sister was 7 years younger than me, and was in his class (I have some great anecdotes but I better not tell them - laughs). I had graduated from the HBS the year before. But, I will say that I remember the lengths my sister went to, to charm him. My mother was not pleased. Well life went on, and people

continued to visit. But I later understood my mother, because at the time you know, I could not figure out why she was so upset. My sister was just silly. Well, my friend was in the resistance - well I did not know. But mammie must have known and worried about us. Then one day I was called before the Kempetai. I had to go there. (*we gasp*) Ja, I wasn't that nervous. What had I done? Nothing. So I... I guess I was still protected. You know, I believed that if you had done nothing, well then no one would punish an innocent! I stepped on my bike, yes, on my bike, but .. the tires! Well! nothing left girls! nothing! Just rims! So: on the bike – ½ hour at least to that office.....well there I was. I was asked what did I know? "What? Well nothing"⁷⁸ And then again, and hitting his sword on the desk in front of me, "What do you know"?⁷⁹ "Well, NOTHING." *Ja then.....then* they brought in my friend! Yes, the teacher.. my friend....the man my sister so admired... Oh God! The way he looked.... Oh God! "Well you know this man, don't you"?⁸⁰ "Well, yes. But, what are you doing with him?" (anguished) Well they asked and asked, and I have never understood why I wasn't martyred. No, I never understood. But, I really didn't know anything, NOTHING. But Joop (my friend) him they treated – no I ...it was awful.....with water.... Well no, it was a terrible, TERRIBLE thing. After the war, we heard it all. We knew his family.

What was life like? Well we had curfew. In the beginning, with the bombs we were always under the beds. But, because we were young...well it protects you. It's exciting. The worst was my father's absence. Well my mother felt that the most. And after we left for Holland, my mother refused to ever go back to Indonesia. She wanted to remember it the way it was – when

⁷⁸ This sequence was difficult to render into words as a great deal of body language accompanied her narrative and she took on the roles of the different people involved as 'direct speech.'

⁷⁹ Her emphasis 'know.'

⁸⁰ Takes on role of Japanese commandant. Very stern voice.

we lived there, she wanted to hold that in her memory. My father died shortly after the evacuation. (1949)

4.4.1 THE GOOD JAP

But you know, my mother had fears. She had fears she alone knew. And now I will tell you about the good Japanese man in our street. Someone had seen me at the Kempetai⁸¹ and found out where we lived. (Followed me maybe?) So he started to come into mammie's shop. Looked around. Then he asked her, where is your daughter? And then, mammie was scared, but she never let on! So she said well, gone, not here. And he said, you get her back here then. So mammie called me to speak with her, and she said, we might have to cut off your hair, and you will have to be a boy. You will have to hide. You will have to do this, (because I was not pleased, I did not know how serious this was, what did I know) you must do this if he comes back again, because they will take you.

So one day I was out by the wash-house, outside, by the old wash house, and I was ironing – you know those old irons you had to heat up, and I heard the sound of boots. Clinking. Boots. And I was terrified. I can still hear those boots. And then I remembered Joop. They had taken him and I had seen what they did. Well. The sound got closer and I just stopped – stopped what I was doing, froze.... and then around the corner came our Japanese neighbor. Well he saw. He saw my fright and I was still too frozen to say anything. So he “ja, what is wrong?”... nothing. I could not speak. Now there was relief. So in.. in we went to mammie and she told him and he said, “I will fix this. Do not worry.” “They will not take your daughter.” And ... he did. Ja, I never was a boy. *laughs* (Then becomes quite serious). We were innocent. Completely. We had boyfriends, we flirted. But we were innocent. I did not understand what mammie feared until later. But I knew that

⁸¹ I should mention that I have seen her pictures and she was a very beautiful woman.

she was scared, and that, that was frightening. Then I took notice. Mammie was never scared.

Alie notes later in the interview,

“one day, he was gone. Just gone. After the war, we heard, well we don’t know if it was true, but we heard that the Japanese had picked him up and killed him because he was too ‘soft’. too good to the people. *sighs* I hope not. I remember him with kindness.

The theme of the “Good Jap” also arises in recollection literature. Another of Miriam Zwaan van Veen’s articles, *My Best Friend ‘Papa’* recalls, with love, Japanese Camp Commander Saida, with whom she took walks everyday as a very young girl; a girl that could hardly remember her Dutch papa. *Some children called Mr. Saida “papa,” and I asked my mother, “Is Mr. Saida my papa too?” “No,” my mother said and showed me a picture of my father, who was white. “I don’t think our mothers liked our walks with a Japanese officer very much because we should have hated the Japanese. But how could we hate him? We loved him.”*⁸²

In recalling their walks and talks together, van Veen recounts the details she uncovered of Mr. Saida’s own life and family; his wife, his little girl; *I have not seen my little girl and woman for a long time.*⁸³ Educated as a physician in the United States, he could not construct the Dutch he guarded as ‘alien Other’ and in assisting them – he carried letters to their men folk for example – he paid the price. This tragic tale, one that illustrates the horrors experienced by enemy as well as friend, ends badly. Still a little girl, she attended his beheading while her mother lay sick and unknowing. Mr. Saida had refused to translate the letters that were found on his person, or name the people who had written them. *‘Ieteke,’*⁸⁴ he said in his last

⁸² Zwaan van Veen, Miriam. (1999) *My Best Friend “Papa.”* (in) Tromp, S. (1999). *Four Years Til Tomorrow. Despair and Hope in Wartime Dutch East Indies.* (A collection of 26 eyewitness stories by members of the August 15th, 1945 Foundation.) Vancouver: Vanderheide Publishing. Pages 67-70. Page 68.

⁸³ Op. cit., page 68.

⁸⁴ This was Mr. Saida’s name for the author (Blondy). Op. cit., pages 69-70.

words to her, *'remember, some Japanese are good.'* Van Veen observes, *"I would not remember this until 36 years later."*⁸⁵

Tromp's edited collection contains other memories of 'good' Japanese. Alongside the daily horror and violence inflicted by cruel Japanese masters, they stand as flowers in a barren meadow. The texts are simple and clear: amongst every group, there are good people, people who fight to retain the dignity of humanity. Simultaneously, as all good Japs die at the hands of their own, the message that the Japanese were brutal occupiers is retained. Zwaan van Veen's article closes with a picture of the wreath that she laid on the cenotaph in White Rock, B.C., Canada, on August 18th, 1991; *"In Memory of "Papa" my Dearest Friend. He died so I could live."*⁸⁶

4.4.2 WOMEN AND THE OCCUPATION

As soon as the Japanese established themselves in any area of the Dutch East Indies, they proceeded with the mass incarceration of all Dutch/European men, women, and children. In some areas, Eurasians formed part of the target population, while Settlers in this database were all incarcerated.

"The Japanese occupation was a holocaust battering the very foundations of the Eurasian community. Cleverly devised attempts by the Japanese to lure Eurasians to the Asian side failed; almost everyone looked forward to an ultimate Allied victory and return to normal times. The Japanese surrender brought a brief respite, but the outbreak of the Indonesian revolution cast the Eurasians once more into one of the most aggravating periods of their history. Terror broke loose in certain areas during the frightful Bersiap period of September-October 1945. Pent-up emotions led to the wanton killing of numerous individuals, including women and children. Most Eurasians in Java's interior were placed in Republican internment camps.... The emotional distance between

⁸⁵ Op. Cit., page 69.

⁸⁶ Op. Cit., page 70.

Indonesian and Eurasian which had developed in the latter years of the colonial era widened and intensified.”⁸⁷

Incarcerated or outside of the camps, the Japanese split Dutch-Indonesian families from Dutch husbands. This was blanket policy for all prisoners under the Japanese, all women and children spent the war separated from their men, who suffered in multiple men’s camps, often finding themselves performing hard labour to benefit the Japanese war effort. Boys, taken from their mothers as young as 10 years old, performed worked unbelievably hard in male camps.

Wives, girls, and young boys fashioned resources to survive. Those Dutch-Indonesian women like Alie’s mother, who lived outside of the barbed wire enclosures, harnessed their knowledge of the social environment and possibilities inherent in tight family bonds and clan networks. As Alie notes, *“it was the women and children – they did it together.”* The strong reliance on female kin is evident in the way in which the women supported each other by living together and pooling resources. It emerges again in the structure of her mother’s family shop; almost all of the female kin submitted goods for sale and relied on the distribution center for their extended family’s economic well-being throughout the war.

Alie met her husband through that same shop,

1945 – well then came my husband – well he wasn’t at all my husband then, he came home to his parents and they were people who sold things through our shop. Isn’t it lovely how life links together (muses for a moment).⁸⁸ His mother’s first husband died right before the war, and then she married Opa van Steeg – a wonderful man and he loved her and the kids. Oh! how she loved him and she took SUCH care of him – well because of the four kids you know – he married her and loved them all. – ja. He was also in camp the entire war and so my mother in law, she was not in the camps, she lived with HER

⁸⁷ Van der Veur, Paul W. (1960) Eurasian Dilemma In Indonesia. [in] *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 20, No. 1 (Nov). pages 45-60. page 49.

⁸⁸ A critical oral/narrative mode technique; this is an example of the integration of chance happenings as critical occurrences.

sister in law because her man was in a camp too- yes, it was the women and children, – and they did it all together.⁸⁹

No narrative data emerged from Dutch-Indonesian narratives that would support van der Veur's claim that the Japanese used '*cleverly devised attempts*' to lure her family to the "Asian side" during the war. There is nothing particularly clever about the incarceration of Dutch husbands, although their removal is interpreted by some scholars as a political ploy⁹⁰ designed to carry the message to Eurasian women that being married to a Dutch man was shameful and politically incorrect vis a vis the Japanese occupiers. If that was indeed the intended message, its symbolism was lost in translation. The women banded together and awaited the outcome of events and a return to normalcy, this expectation does bear out van der Veur's statement that everyone waited for a return to 'normal times,' but then, doesn't everyone hold to that hope in war? There is nothing especially significant about this desire on the part of Dutch-Indonesian.

A small number of Dutch informants noted that some Dutch-Indonesian escaped incarceration and I have narrative data that suggests resentment. The Japanese may not have intended to drive a wedge between Dutch and Indische peoples, but Alie's statement, '*well no...not as bad as the camps, no but we did have anxious, yes very anxious moments*, was offered without any provocation from Jennie or myself. We never queried for example, if "inside" was worse than "outside" – such a question would not have occurred to us. Alie's uneasy assessment suggests that she is overtly aware of resentment or criticism – of a 'well we had it worse than you syndrome.' Found in Alie's text and not in the narratives of North American Indische

⁸⁹ An illustration of the manner in which re-marriage was accomplished within the linked circles. More importantly, the parents of the man she will marry were linked to her mother's sister. Finally. her statement: "{...} how she loved him and she took SUCH care of him – well because of the four kids you know – he married her and loved them all – is a wonderful introduction to a possible analysis of an 'understood pact' re economic and other responsibilities in marriage. I intend to probe this sequence and others like it, in a separate article, where I can focus solely on a single set of discourses.

⁹⁰ Dahm, B. (1971) *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*. Translated by P.S. Falla. London; New York: Praeger Publishers.

interviewees, this un-sought explanation answering unspoken criticism points to a discourse in Netherlands – or Netherlands-Indische – society not found in North America.

Alie's mother, who she vividly brings alive through multiple anecdotes, remained a powerful influence on her and later, on her children, in the Netherlands. The message received through the incarceration of husbands was not that there was something shameful in being married to a Dutchmen, but that the Japanese were cruel masters. The *Bersiap* period at the end of the Japanese occupation on Java, characterized by extreme brutality and terror, was more than 'aggravating'⁹¹ and sent a message to Dutch-Indonesian men and women that the new revolutionary regime set them apart as a category and implicitly, that they could not expect integration into Indonesian culture. They were "different" – "Eurasian." van der Veur's assertion that a rift between Indonesians and Dutch-Indonesian occurred before the war does not find support in the database, nor does his claim that after the war "*the emotional distance between Indonesian and Eurasian..... widened and intensified.*"⁹² Dutch-Indonesian narrators do not speak of the Indonesian people as the culprits in their repatriation; they identify the revolutionaries and out-of-control youth as the impulse behind their decision to go to the Netherlands. They do not extend or blanket their critiques to the 'people;' some of them still have relatives in Indonesia.

Whether they were in the camps or outside, Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian women narrate the courage of mothers. Men stress the isolation and physical brutality of their wartime experience. Moved constantly throughout the war, their accounts travel from one location of extreme deprivation and hard labour, to another. Dutch-Indonesian men, who overwhelmingly fought alongside the Dutch against the Japanese invaders (indeed they formed an important part of KNIL forces), formed a significant portion of POWs and were utilized throughout South East Asia as slave labour. They suffered

⁹¹ Van der Veur, Paul W. (1960) Eurasian Dilemma in Indonesia. [in] *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 20, No. 1 (Nov). pages 45-60. page 49.

⁹² op. Cit., Page 49.

with the prisoners taken from other Allied forces, particularly the Australians, British – including a significant contingent of Canadians who fought under British command in WW II - and Americans. Violence, terror, death, and exhaustion permeate the narratives, and desperation resurfaces in the narrative tone. As one camp child recalled to a male survivor, ‘*we were old when we got out.*’⁹³ That feeling of agedness, constituted through pure exhaustion and the deliberate stamping out of life joy and innocence by Japanese action in the camps and on labour crews, haunts the lives of survivors.

While men trudged through the jungles, or toiled in blazing heat to build airfields or railways, women and children engaged in daily acts of resistance in the camps. The interaction between women, children, and Japanese oppressors was at once more intimate and deadly than interaction between men and their Japanese guards. Japanese soldiers guarding POWs certainly had jurisdiction over life and death in the matter of men’s bodies, but Japanese commandants in internment camps held the lives of children, hence the minds of mothers, in their hands. On the “outside,” Japanese command represented an ever-unpredictable source of angst requiring constant circumvention. Intimacy of recall – sanitation conditions, starvation, disease, beatings, love, sadness, small wonders, self-sacrifice, loneliness, rape, and insecurities – characterizes female narratives. Where mothers construct relational narratives – everything through the eyes of children – children themselves – in the typical ego-centered fashion of youth, recount the world through their own eyes. Many do recreate the amazingly courageous acts performed by their mothers or other female adults, but critically for children, this remembering, characterized by terror and loss, was/is part of becoming ‘me.’

4.4.3 PAPA, OR, THE WARTIME FATHER

Mama was known and familiar, but narrators, in particular women, return repeatedly to the effects of the war on Papa, since many were unable to obtain closure in relation to their fathers. If Papa came

⁹³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. (outer islands)Tape 2. July 2005.

back to his family, he was a changed man; Alie's father retreated within, and died in 1949 from camp inflicted illnesses:⁹⁴

Alie: I saw him when he came back. He came back. Ja. *sighs* He had always been a quiet, rather closed man, (aside (laughs) compared to my mother), but he was so closed then... His life work destroyed....

Given that both a mother and father survived, their re-union, at best made difficult through their experiences under the Japanese, often confronted the death of a child. Family members did not know of the fate of the other until the end of the war, neither husbands nor wives (and hence children) were able to ascertain the status of family members unless they were 'on island' **and** able to access 'underground' communication systems. Dutch-Indonesian or indigenous citizens on the 'outside,' who risked their lives as transmitters, endeavoured to pass information between camps.

Yet as Dutch informants also noted, Death is not terror. The trauma derived from the fact that men, women, and children, separated for over three years, lived completely separate lives, and experienced the unspeakable. Women and children discovered resources in themselves they had never had to tap into prior to the war. Children's identities, structured through terror, fear, death, and angst, confronted mothers, who, in the face of hate and their own despair, tried to keep love alive (as did siblings for each other). However, the children *knew* Mama. For many young children – Dutch or Dutch-Indonesian – in the camps or outside – Papa was only a name, a *symbol* of a stable time before the occupation, when the family was together with Papa a strong, reassuring, and at times legitimating, presence within colonial society.

Children's pre-war narratives stress close relationships with their Dutch father. The oral portraits depict a quietly firm, yet loving, utterly reliable, stern, and wise father figure – a man you could '*trust and count on.*' Children who remembered Papa state that the hope of

⁹⁴ The very high death rate among male camp survivors merits further serious study. The pattern of repatriation and almost immediate death for men is consistent and noteworthy.

“seeing father again” kept them going throughout the war, a direct correlation between ‘normal times’ and Papa’s symbolic strength; to see papa was to return to the way we were. However, Papa was not Papa when he came home. Interviewees found this transition unbearably painful; the pre-war papa reduced to a shell of a man when he returned. Home again, but not fully present, they hurt and longed for him. *When he came home, we didn’t know him anymore. Mama would hold him and rock him, and sometimes you would see tears – just quiet tears you know. He died in 1948.*⁹⁵ Unable to recover their bonds with Papa, to re-capture Papa-as-he-was, children silently acknowledged this final symbolic alteration of their lives. There was no turning back.

Children too young to recall papa before the war, envisioned him as an icon of stability through their love for mama and her stories. They were also, in multiple cases, unable to connect with the stranger that returned from the camps. ‘Papa’ became a fictional figure, the hero of stories, a person who ‘had been’ but was no more. Life before the war paralleled the father myth, a fiction, a wonderful place, unreachable, over, alive only in stories. Silence on the part of men regarding their experiences became the great enemy that stood in the way of family, hence life-historical, reconciliation. Unable to reach father, not ever talking through what they had mutually experienced, Papa slipped from life, and past life slipped away, leaving many unanswered questions for surviving children, as well as some of the wives.

(Interview with an Dutch-Indonesian woman in her ‘90s)

Interviewee: The separation during the war changed us both.

Self: How did you handle that?

Interviewee: You couldn’t. I mean- I couldn’t ---reach him. He was happy to be home, happy to see the children... I know he had longed for us to be together. But when I say he was happy – that is the wrong word. He was glad – maybe that is better – glad – content to see us again.

⁹⁵ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Informant. Tape 2. February 2004. (Eurasian)

Self: Did you ever reach him?

Interviewee: No. He died in 1949. From the time he came home until the time he died he was gone from us. Always kind, always courteous, but no longer involved with life... (hesitates and then makes up her mind to go on) Jet, I had changed too. I had gone from being a spoiled woman to having nothing in the war, and I found out that I was pretty strong ... a survivor. Now... in talking about it after all these years, I think – was I too impatient? Did I think, just get on with it, we suffered too? Did I act that way? When we went to Holland, I thought it would be over. A new beginning. Build up 'from scratch' you know? He couldn't do it, didn't want to be there. I took over. Someone had to do it. There were the children to think of still. I did it in the war, I did it after the war.⁹⁶

Men and women utilized widely divergent coping mechanisms throughout this inhumane period in their lives, adjustments that remain unanalyzed in the literature. Each of the genders drew deep on their inner strengths and knowledge to endure and survive, transforming the self in the process. The resolution, grace, and creativity women harnessed to survive under torturous circumstances, many of them women who had been 'spoiled' prior to the war, is significant and worthy of further study.

4.5 Why Did They Turn on Us?⁹⁷

But the manner in which it all happened... and then the terror. Life became so difficult for the people.⁹⁸

We knew their families. Their families. We visited with them. I could never understand afterwards. Never. What happened? Why did they turn on us?⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 1. December, 2004. (Eurasian)

⁹⁷ This question, repeatedly articulated by interviewees, forms the focus of Cribb's attention in his article. Cribb, R. (2007). Misdaad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom.

⁹⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Dutch-Indonesian Female. Tape 2. May, 2004. (Eurasian)

4.5.1 POWER

Alie: I was 19 in 1942..... (long pause.) The Japanese continued to conquer and rob the country..... after Ben and I were married after the war, well my man was flyer. Well speaking of Soekarno, (we weren't) he had to keep in touch with all these areas. So only with a water-boat-flyer could he get to where he had to go. So well – Soekarno was a nice jovial guy, well so great to get along with, well they would have their fun, he and the crew, and then they would get to an island, so he would talk about the Dutch 'blue eyes.' Yes, that's what he called them - "blue eyes"! Well like I said before, the things that had to happen to those blue eyes! Ja, and then they went back. Just politics. And then laughed. It was all over.

Using rhetoric against the "*blue eyes*," Soekarno did not engage racist ideology learned at the colonial system's knee, but illustrated his consummate mastery of politics through the construction of symbols designating Other in order to forge alliances between Indonesian groups that lived in uneasy co-existence. Soekarno had determined on Indonesian Independence with himself wielding power. In harnessing conventional binary expressions of difference characterizing Occident and Orient to his ambition, he isolated and inscribed symbols such as Blue Eyes that signified the (soon to be) oppositional Other. *Blue Eyes*, wielded by Indonesian revolutionary adepts like Soekarno, are not symbols that articulate comprehensive Dutch-Indonesian difference, but point instead to western nationalistic precepts that he embodied. His emphasis on "indigenous" concepts such as village democracy, and the isolation of *musjawarah* and *mufakat* in connection with that democracy, constitutes deliberate, politically calculated rhetoric designed for international consumption. In truth, there were close overlaps with Dutch perceptions of the political process and Soekarno's version of Village Democracy/vergadering/musjawarah ideology, more indeed than could be outlined for Village Democracy and the Regent system. Soekarno's articulations of Indonesian difference depended on an

⁹⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. June 2005. (Settler)

international (and flawed) characterization of an East radically different from the West in terms of its domestic, economic, religious, and political institutions.¹⁰⁰ His consummate play on that misperception facilitated international acceptance of his goals.

A disinclination to ascribe calculated decision-making skills to political artists such as Soekarno is yet another aspect of the tired Uniqueness of the West paradigm.¹⁰¹ Yet Soekarno *was* a consummate politician. During the Occupation, with the entire Dutch/European population, a substantial number of Indo people, and many Indonesians who resisted the Japanese incarcerated, Soekarno utilized collaboration in order to facilitate his rise to power. The fact that this support of Japan earned him the disgust of the Dutch and Indo populations is of small moment. Soekarno's envisioned future did not include a scenario where the opinion of the Dutch would matter. Nor was he overly concerned with the opinion of the Indonesian people, having full confidence in his oratory powers and methods of persuasion. Illustrating his deep acceptance of the traditional hierarchical system on Java, and the support role of the village vis a vis the 'leaders,' Soekarno was complicit in the creation of the ensuing conditions during the Occupation. Starvation, assimilation to the Japanese cause, fascist ideology through propaganda, complete indifference to the traditional structure of Javanese society, and the brutalization of the population, characterize his stance throughout the war. The Village he extolled as the sacred symbol of Javanese life, he sacrificed on the ground.

Alie: Then we were invited to the palace, and yes, I lived through that too, it was wonderful! Jennie, "Everything forgotten and forgiven hey?" (Everyone chuckles) Jennie: "thanks for the country" and Alie: "here's an hors d'oeuvre" (we all laugh) "All friends together"..... Well life went on then too. Absolutely.

¹⁰⁰ Goody, Jack. (1996) *The East in the West*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Page 5.

¹⁰¹ Op. cit., page 3.

An opportunist to the core, Soekarno could throw ‘*such a jolly feast*’ at the palace for Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian while, flying to the outer islands in planes manned by *blue eyes*, he simultaneously utilized his oratory to consign them to the worst of evils. Returning to the plane after his tirade, he grins; “*just politics*” he says, ‘*nothing personal,*’ and they are on their way. Those who knew him among my informants believed he meant that, and noted his great personal charm. For Soekarno politics was a well structured, rule bound game that you played to win.

4.5.2 THE ANTIPATHY WAS THERE ALL ALONG

The interviewee’s question, ...*what happened? Why did they turn on us...*¹⁰² is considered by Dahm. He alludes to the fact that the Dutch understood the Javanese as a gentle people¹⁰³ (the Dutch as naïve colonials theme) and points to the behaviour of the Javanese after the war as indicative of their ‘real’ character (read inscrutable Oriental), remarking that the Dutch never truly understood the Javanese. In truth, this claim is a bit of nonsense that has no hard evidence to back it. The “Javanese” people, who certainly did not participate as a whole in the Terror, experienced three horrendous years of Japanese occupation. The Japanese war machine targeted **male youth** for systematic and brutal reprogramming through multiple fascist organizations. Near the end of the war, these youths were rising against their Japanese occupiers with cries of despair arising from their plight. This was not the ‘true nature’ of the Javanese boy, but anguish born of fascist tactics that in three years had systemically restructured their world as born in, of, and for, violence.

Soekarno’s gift of oratory, and indeed his personal courage, harnessed this anguish to his will to power. The kidnapping of Soekarno by the pemuda just before the proclamation of Independence, arose from their concerns that Soekarno continued to collaborate with the Japanese rather than dissociating himself from

¹⁰² Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. June 2005.

¹⁰³ His analysis serves to signify how far some scholars are prepared to bend an argument or data to prove, in Hegelian terms, that ‘colonizers’ are nothing more than ‘masters’ who have no understanding of their slaves.

them and from the fact that the pemuda were in actuality, gangs. Although he was able to contain the threat to his life at that time, he was not able to restrain later gang activity. Indeed, there is substantial evidence that he deliberately fashioned their terror and violence as an anti-colonial symbol for the consumption of the international community, a signifier of abhorrence of the Dutch and a desire for freedom.

The *Bersiap* period, characterized by gang lawlessness and brutality, extended from 1945 to 1949, in some places longer, in others, far shorter. This was not a revolutionary movement; many Indonesians died, while Europeans, Amboinese, Chinese, and Indische people, my narrators believe, bore the brunt of the hate that three years of propaganda had instilled in their killers. This was not a movement to bring ethical, ethnic, or responsible self-government to Indonesia. *Bersiap* activity represents four long years of indiscriminate violence administered by homeless, brutalized, anomic youth who had no sense of purpose within a post war society that was unable, or refused, to bring the rule of law to bear. Allegations that this terror arose from a desire for freedom, from racism taught by colonial masters, or that it arose from the (Orientalist) "Javanese nature," are spurious. The lust for violence, instilled through fascist programming, was covertly encouraged and augmented, not repressed, during the early post war years.

As I said, it went completely wrong. Initially redirecting the people's pain and abhorrence of the Japanese to the Allies, Soekarno perfected this technique throughout his long career. Utilizing 'Other' as icons/tools of hatred, he discursively transformed anger and hopelessness vis a vis his regime to the Dutch, the British, the Americans, the Malaysians, and the enemies within. Yet it need not necessarily have played out that way, "Unity in Diversity" was a concept that deeply reverberated with the 'foreigners' in the Indonesian social fabric. Hart's quote from a civil servant in the Indies illustrates communalism at work in the shaping of Nationalism – the feeling of working together for a common good during the First World War:

.....An Indonesian nation was being born, not made, born of the will and the efforts of the best of the Indonesians themselves....The European and Chinese elements were becoming conscious of their integration into this new community while the Administration felt that for the first time in history, it was becoming slowly, but quite

*imperceptibly, from a benevolent and progressive superstructure,
the natural and true Government of the Indies.*¹⁰⁴

The stirring of a nationalism predicated on multiple ethnic groups, anchored by the “*best of the Indonesians themselves*” is apparent during the first decades of the 20th century, but it too would fail. Constantly fragmented through etic interference in the form of government officials who were Dutch in ideals and policies, no spokesperson arose, indeed could arise without retribution, for *all* of the peoples in the archipelago.

States Anderson; *Nationalism emerges from the cultural systems that preceded it and against which it came into being.*¹⁰⁵ To make or re-make nation, the will to power requires deliberate and self-conscious articulation. Soekarno was able to do what Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian nationalists did not do; he created a sanitized, wholly oppositional, and mythic Dutch Other in formulating the Indonesian ‘self.’ Although Anderson finds Gellner’s conjunction of imagination and fabrication problematic, the imaginary must precede and inform the real. The will to power indeed, always already encompasses imagination; the dream of self as leader, or as revolutionary for a brave new world, precedes and provokes the Real¹⁰⁶ – the pragmatic action that facilitates the manifestation of the dream. Dutch-Indonesians, who may have imagined ‘Indonesia,’ did not concretize the dream in the world.

4.53 THE DUTCH INDONESIAN AS POLITICAL THREAT

Cribb incorporates the importance of the militarization of Indonesian youth by the Japanese during the Occupation, with ‘reservoirs’ of violence in colonial society, but deems neither sufficient for the terror and violence that arose at the end of WW II on Java against Dutch-Indonesians. Instead he finds the catalyst in

¹⁰⁴ Hart, G.H.C. (1942) *Towards Economic Democracy in the Netherlands Indies*. The Netherlands Information Bureau. N.Y.: Page 21.

¹⁰⁵ Anderson, Benedict. (1983) *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso/New Left Books. Page 12. A very Neuberger-like proposition.

¹⁰⁶ See Godelier: Godelier, Maurice. (1996) *The Enigma of the Gift*. Translated by Nora Scott. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

the political position of Dutch-Indonesians and their potential threat to the fledgling revolutionary ideal and the goal of total severance with the Dutch regime.¹⁰⁷

Dutch-Indonesians mobilized in 1848 when they began to pressure the colonial administration for enhanced education for their children. By the turn of the 19th to 20th centuries, a broad political movement based on a criticism of the hypocrisy and inequalities of the colonial regime advocated political rights for all the peoples of the archipelago regardless of race. Indonesians such as the Javanese radical Soewardi Soerjaningrat, who were as critical of the 'feudal' arrangements in their own society as they were of the Dutch administration, were closely tied to the movement. On the other hand, contra-independence thought could also be found among Dutch Indonesians. In particular, the Indo-Europees Verbond embodied a conservative movement opposed to Indonesian nationalism. However, the ideal of an Indische state where-in Dutch Indonesians played a permanent, prominent and influential role remained an important alternative to the concept of an Indonesia that would place indigenous Indonesians front and center and expel or marginalize newcomers to the archipelago.

Both dreams of the future – the Indische and Indonesian frameworks – sprang from a common impulse and exhibited overlapping moral and emotional critiques of the colonial administration. The divergence between them stemmed from their position on 'outsiders' in their midst; Indonesian nationalists conceptualized them as 'foreigners,' including Chinese and Dutch Indonesians, and took a position whereby both ethnicities would be unable to achieve full citizenship due to their past complicity with the colonial regime. Ethnicity, class and politics combined in a complex manner to support the idea of the marginalized Dutch Indonesian within this paradigm.

The threat of an independent Indonesia under the leadership of Dutch-Indonesians was still a very real one in 1945. Indeed, the

¹⁰⁷ For an extended discussion of this very brief précis, see: Cribb, R. (2007). Misdaad, geweld and uitsluiting in Indonesië. In Bogaerts, E and Raben, R. (eds.) *Van Indië tot Indonesië* (pp. 31-48). Amsterdam: Boom.

perceptual danger that this alternative could achieve fruition is concretized in the policy adopted by the fledgling revolutionary movement who proclaimed that in the future any President of the Republic of Indonesia had to be fully indigenous in descent. Right after the Occupation, Dutch Indonesians were perceived as the enemy of the republican Indonesian state, not because of misdeeds against Indonesians, nor because they represented a return to the colonial alternative, but because they represented a model of independence (with or without association, but always with self playing an important role) inimical to the revolutionaries. The goal of 100% freedom confronted Dutch Indonesians who embodied a threat to that ideal, and even if the revolutionaries were successful in implementing their dream for Indonesia, Dutch Indonesians were still present and still embodied a viable alternative for the archipelago. The fact of their presence, and what they signified, posits Cribb, combined with the militarization of Javanese youth and the anomie post-war on the island to facilitate a situation where Dutch Indonesians were targeted during the *bersiap* period in order to remove them from the ideal future of Indonesia.

4.6 Repatriation and Immigration

The Japanese were central to the revolutionary cause:

“Instead, it was a wartime decision of the Japanese military alone which set the course. At the end of July, 1945, as the Japanese realized how quickly the end of the war might come, they rushed to complete the final arrangements for Indonesia’s independence. Two weeks later Soekarno, Hatta and others were called by the Japanese to Singapore and Saigon. There Marshal Terauchi told the Indonesian group of Japan’s decision: Soekarno was to announce Indonesia’s independence within the week, and Japan had determined that the new Nation would include only the territory of the Dutch East Indies. That decision was made first by the Japanese and thus was an imposed decision.”¹⁰⁸

Subsequent to the Proclamation of Independence by Soekarno on August 17th, 1945, a careful balance of interests composed of the

¹⁰⁸ Gordon, Bernard K. (1964) The Potential for Indonesian Expansionism. [in/ *Pacific Affairs*. Vol. 35. No 4. pages 378 – 393. Page 383-384.

Republican government and the Japanese governed Java. By the beginning of September, cracks were beginning to appear in this balance of power when defiant *pemuda* began to paint nationalist slogans on public buildings in Djakarta and occupied government offices and installations.

In order to comprehend the bitterness that (especially) Dutch interviewees and veterans convey regarding the role of Britain during the really post-occupation period, its needs to be understood that Mountbatten, in charge of South East Asian Allied Command, was given the task of liberating Java and Sumatra, but he was short both men and troops. It was six weeks after the surrender of Japan before Allied troops stepped onto Javanese soil. Although a number of KNIL interviewees hotly deny this assertion, Allied Command claimed later that they were unaware of the explosive situation on Java and they therefore gave priority to the occupation of Saigon. This decision was further justified by the claim that Japanese headquarters and a vast number of troops were located there, but there is no doubt that the extended delay of an Allied presence offered the republican government a chance to entrench itself in Djakarta.

On September 15th, 1945, two Allied warships, the British cruiser *Cumberland* and the Dutch cruiser *Tromp*, arrived at Batavia.¹⁰⁹ The men were under the command of Vice-Admiral Patterson; the representative for the Dutch was Charles van der Plas, commander of the Netherlands Indies Civil Administration. (NICA)¹¹⁰ Mountbatten, supposedly unaware of the circumstances on Java as noted above, had explicitly ordered Patterson to ignore the Indonesians and to deal only with the Japanese. Subsequent to the arrival at Batavia therefore, Patterson ordered that only Recovery of Allied Prisoners of War (RAPWI) teams and British troops were allowed to disembark, no Dutch – as veterans bitterly recall - were to step foot on Java.

¹⁰⁹ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. Page 25.

¹¹⁰ NICA = Was a semi military organization composed of small contingents of Dutch colonial officers attached to Allied forces who were charged with re-establishing the Dutch presence in the Indies.

The Dutch truly suffered from a lack of knowledge with respect to the situation in Djakarta. The Japanese occupation, with its focus on propaganda and the instilling of a military ideology in Javanese youth, had created a situation where, *“it was particularly the younger generation that, unlike many of their elders, was absolutely opposed to the return of the Dutch colonial regime (which) was hated as a result of Japanese indoctrination and military training.”*¹¹¹ This hate was very difficult for the Dutch to comprehend. Yet, given the conditions on Java, *a situation that was further aggravated by a general economic malaise and great suffering caused by hunger, malnutrition and despair....*¹¹² it does not require a great deal of effort to imagine how hate and violence arose. Take a large group of hungry youth, numbering in the millions on Java. Subject them to increasing deprivation and humiliation, while simultaneously inculcating into them the ideology that their manhood depends on their *semangat*. Add the factor that the number of people pressed into forced labour under the Japanese is estimated at almost 10 million in the Dutch East Indies. Stir with large dollops of fascist propaganda and spice with a considerable dose of messianic prophecies and you have all the ingredients for a very flammable brew. Van der Plas to van Mook:

*“We have underestimated the size of the anti-Dutch action and the corroding effects of years of anti-Netherlands propaganda. Certainly the Japs are hated. But we Netherlanders are also.”*¹¹³

Once again, I note how very difficult it is for interviewees, to understand that hate.

“Dutchmen in the Indies, unlike Englishmen in India or West Africa, regarded the islands as genuinely their home. They did not find it absolutely necessary to send their children to Europe for their education. They did not themselves plan to return there for retirement. ... the Indies were their home. ... seeing themselves as a permanent factor in the Indies, the Dutch were forced to grapple with

¹¹¹ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. page 23.

¹¹² Op. cit., page 24.

¹¹³ Op. cit., page 26.

*the sort of relationship that could be maintained between themselves and Indonesian society.....*¹¹⁴

Dutch-Indonesians, like the Dutch, found themselves in an altered world when the Japanese surrendered. Households such as Alie's family and informants that had relatives 'outside' during World War II genuinely did not see the *bersiap* period coming, while those incarcerated were oblivious to the altering circumstances in their island home. Initially rising against the Japanese during the last months of the Occupation, youth rage and frustration later aligned with the deep hate – instilled through multiple Japanese organizations using thoroughgoing fascist tactics - of "Europeans," those people assimilated to them in law, and Indonesians sympathetic to their plight, Indonesians allied with the colonial system, and later other Indonesians and the Chinese. The turn-around shocked Dutch-Indonesians, especially those not incarcerated during the war. They *had Indonesian family*.¹¹⁵ Quite quickly, they would join the others now 'retained' in the camps for their own protection. Once again, the Japanese would stand guard, this time at the request of the absent Allies who utilized defeated Nippon troops as guardians for the (Indo) European population. A strange set of circumstances to be sure and one that was surreal for those who experienced the foe-to-friend transition.

Nevertheless, this was on Java and parts of Sumatra. The consequences of the social despair that reached its peak among the youth on the main island, did not find a strong echo throughout the archipelago. Therefore, the accounts of the situations on those islands articulated by many ex-internment camp prisoners in the Netherlands solidified Dutch resolve to send forces to Indonesia to protect the people from the "made by the Japanese on Java" revolution. Due to the Allied refusal to release Dutch shipping, it was not until 1946 that any of these forces landed on Indonesia;¹¹⁶ their presence in South East Asian waters did not lead to automatic entry

¹¹⁴ Legge, J.D. (1964) *Indonesia*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall. page 88.

¹¹⁵ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Tape 2. June 2005.

¹¹⁶ The tiny number of KNIL units that had escaped to Australia in 1942 were fighting alongside the Australian forces.

into the colony. Instead, as veterans describe, they spent months awaiting permission to land on Java.¹¹⁷ At the micro level, interviewees express their certitude that at the time, they believed the Dutch would put it right. Waiting for the men to return, expecting new recruits, and confident that the Allies would not fail them, they told themselves '*just a little longer*' and all will be well.

Yet some interviewees bitterly observe that the Dutch could not 'put it right,' since their policies were at the mercy of decisions made by Allied command. RAPWI teams and British forces on Java described the situation as extremely volatile. "*During a meeting on September 27, attended by the British Minister of Defence, Lawson, he (Mountbatten) told van der Plas that the British government had firmly decided that not one British soldier was to be used to restore the Dutch to power.*"¹¹⁸ Instead, British troops would focus their attention on two key areas of Jakarta and Surabaya, and would concentrate only on, (1) freeing and taking care of thousands of prisoners in the camps and (2) disarming and evacuating the Japanese. The only circumstance that would modify this mandate was if people in the interior prison camps were in danger. If necessary, the Japanese would continue to work with the Allies to maintain order.

*We can thank the British too for the loss of Indonesia. Typical. Typical of the British. They made sure they took care of themselves first and if that meant that we were in trouble with the Indonesian rebels, well that was just a nice side benefit. They still thought of themselves as bigwigs and they could dictate to us.*¹¹⁹

Mountbatten cautioned van der Plas that if he did not establish contact with Soekarno, so that the British could work with him, he would bypass the Dutch altogether. In response to van der Plas's objection that the Dutch should decide on the best policy for Java, Mountbatten replied that either van der Plas changed his attitude, or

¹¹⁷ Spreeuwers, Rolf. (1980) *De Lange Weg: Als Oorlogsvrijwilliger Naar Ned.* Indië. Groningen: Drukkerij Roorda.

¹¹⁸ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962.* Leiden: KITLV Press. page 28.

¹¹⁹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Male. Tape 1, June, 2005.

he could forget British help. In fact, van der Plas did consult with van Mook and made a radio broadcast inviting leaders of all political persuasions to meet with the Dutch on how to approach reform leading to autonomy. These meetings had started when General Christison, under orders from Mountbatten, issued a broadcast from Singapore that stated:

- British forces were forbidden to operate outside of the key designated areas in Djakarta and Surabaya on Java.
- British forces were forbidden to operate outside of the key designated areas of Pedang and Medan in Sumatra.
- That the responsibility for peace and order on the rest of the islands rested on the Indonesian government (republican) and the Japanese.
- That the British had absolutely no intention of interfering politically and that their objectives were solely limited to the evacuation of camp detainees and the relocation and disarming of the Japanese.
- That the British would bring Indonesian and Dutch leaders to the Conference table (in spite of (4) I can't help noting)
- That in deference to the republic's wishes, no Dutch troops would land in the Indies.

Veterans especially, decry this betrayal. It appears that if these facts are accurate, the British must bear some responsibility for the historical events that followed, including the Revolutionary war, since the next day British Minister of Defence Lawson confirmed Christison's statement and added the lofty rhetorical admonition that neither the French nor the Dutch had a legitimate right to call on Britain to restore their colonial possessions to them. In actuality, the Dutch were clamouring to do *that* themselves, the British were actively engaged in preventing Dutch forces from landing in Indonesia. Christison's address, confirmed by Lawson, amounted to a *de facto* recognition of the Republic. Veterans note that it was not a question of "Indonesia" under the revolutionaries at that time, *de facto* lands held by the Republic were limited to areas on Java and Sumatra. In a sweeping proclamation, Britain, allegedly pledged not to interfere politically (see # 4), handed the "rest of the islands," (see # 3), not consulted by British, Dutch or revolutionaries, to the Republic. Moreover, the British would see to it that all parties convened at the negotiating table. (#5)

Horrified, the Dutch charged that Britain had betrayed a loyal ally. That is indeed true, but the immediate, deeply troubling consequence of Christison's radio broadcast was that it fuelled the explosive situation on Java. Some nationalists read the British position as an admission of weakness, and the pemuda and other youth groups took to the streets, fully armed.¹²⁰ In fact, the British broadcast worsened the *bersiap period* that haunts interviewees in dreams:

“ an amok like frenzy pervaded sections of the revolutionary movement. It raged for three months¹²¹ in the main cities and many rural areas of Java, causing thousands of Dutchmen, Eurasian, Chinese, including women and children, Indonesians suspected of pro Dutch leanings, and also a sizable number of Japanese, to be murdered. Their mutilated bodies became familiar sights floating in rivers or canals. There was little the Allies, or the Indonesian government and its official army (BKR) could do to stop the carnage.¹²²

Dutch survivors assert that they and Dutch Indonesians were thoroughly betrayed by the Allies, who took the position that they were willing to get them out of internment camps alive, but that they could forget about their homes, jobs, families, and lives in their homeland. Reluctantly, they faced their future; stay, fight it out, face the terror and hope for a better future and a return to normalcy under the republicans, or repatriate to the Netherlands. Those who emerged as exhausted POWS, whose houses and possessions were charred remains, and who had lost all ties to the life they knew, made the decision to repatriate in '46. Others stayed until 1949 until they were certain that the country would pass from Dutch jurisdiction. Under the Republicans, their ethnic identity was a burden. *“Even being related to us was trouble for our Indonesian relatives. The pemuda might target them if they found out. We could*

¹²⁰ The youth groups, in addition to the arms they had obtained under the Japanese, had also raided Japanese weapons warehouses subsequent to the Proklamsi.

¹²¹ It raged a lot longer than this in some rural areas. The *bersiap period* is usually dated from 1945 - 1949.

¹²² Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. page 31.

*not see them anymore. It was no life.*¹²³ Four Dutch-Indonesian informants stayed until 1956/57 when they, along with the balance of the 'Dutch' population, faced expulsion. Two of these interviewees, with their families, immigrated directly to the 'New World' through immigration sponsorship from family members who had already left the Netherlands.

4.7 The Netherlands

While commonalities of experience do characterize the repatriation process for Dutch-Indonesian and Dutch Indies citizens upon their arrival in the Netherlands, they diverge on crucial aspects of the adjustment process. The Dutch who came to Indonesia before the war returned to a Netherlands where they had family and other attachments. Ideally, but certainly not always as we have seen, the country was still familiar, and its social structure, culture and morality, remembered.

Many Dutch-Indonesians, even if they had paternal familial ties in the Netherlands, found themselves without kin, while in Indonesia they had lived with large, extended families. Moreover, they were 'identifiable' peoples, their bodies written as colonial by virtue of their color and their divergent customs and dialects. As "Displaced Peoples," the Dutch government quickly identified them as a matter requiring attention;¹²⁴ Goss exhaustively describes the initial and follow-up reports, policy papers, and analyses requested and rendered on their circumstances.

The Netherlands receives the credit for the first formal identification of the 'Indische' as a separate group requiring attention, analysis, and integration. Characteristically Dutch, the ordering of people into

¹²³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Tape 1. August 2005.

¹²⁴ Goss, Andrew. (2000) From Tong-Tong to Tempo Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History, 1957 - 1961. *Indonesia*. Vol. 70. (October) pages 9-36.

groups manifested in Verzuiling ideology as “everything (everyone) in its(his/her) proper place.”¹²⁵

*“Although pillarization (Verzuiling) is primarily understood as fostering sub-cultural separation, it also sustained an important degree of cohesion and cooperation within Dutch society. The national whole, not only the pillarized parts, was important. The nature of this cooperation can easily be demonstrated in Dutch political life, but many variations of it could be found in other areas as well.”*¹²⁶

Furnivall beautifully captures this philosophy, and its results in the Indies, through the babu metaphor he uses to describe Dutch policies in the Indies. As he notes to an Indies audience:¹²⁷

*“..... let me recapitulate for you the main points of difference. (Between British and Dutch rule) Our officers are magistrates; yours are policemen and welfare officers. Our methods are repressive; yours are preventive. Our procedure is formal and legal; yours, informal and personal. Our civil service is an administrative machine; yours is an instrument of Government. Our aim is negative – to suppress disorder; yours is positive – to maintain order. Order – it is a word we both use frequently, but with a significant difference of context. We talk of “law and order” and you of “rust and orde”; but in the absence of a social conscience it is difficult to distinguish between the law and the letter of the law, and between rust and the placidity of a good baby in its perambulator. The caricature which depicts your system as a baboe, a nursemaid, and ours as a babu, a clerk, does emphasize a difference in vital principle. You try to keep a man from going wrong; we make it unpleasant for him if he does go wrong. You believe in protection and welfare; we believe in law – and liberty.”*¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Blom, J.C.H. (1999) *The Netherlands Since 1830*. [in] Blom, J.C.H. and Lamberts, E. (eds.) (1999) **History of the Low Countries**. Translated by James C. Kennedy. New York: Berghahn Books. Page 425.

¹²⁶ Op. cit., page 429.

¹²⁷ Furnivall, J.S. (1956) *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India*. New York: New York University Press. Page 271 ff.

Furnivall's insightful discussion exposes the 'care' principle that has long characterized the Dutch approach to their patrimony and peoples. Buried deep in the Civism paradigm, care was an integral aspect of ongoing attitudes towards, and policies in, the archipelago. It surfaces again in the scrupulous attention paid to the integration of Indische peoples in the Netherlands. However, for a person with a foot on either side of the Atlantic, it exhibits both the strength and the greatest weakness of Dutch Civism, the proclivity to decide for others. As the *babu* metaphor implies, policy makers and experts brought to bear on a problem know best what is required to resolve a particular issue. Potential disruption is envisioned before it occurs – it may indeed, never happen. Programs are in place in anticipation of possible necessities; rules and regulations cover every contingency for the good of the common weal, as well as the people or problem under consideration. Yet in naming what might be, what is possible may become actual. Like a young child that will go out in the street to play precisely because s/he has been told not to, Dutch care can create a situation where some people will immediately go out into the street to test the water. Dutch reaction to the rebel – surprise and sorrow – arises from the fact that they make the house as attractive as possible so the child has no need of the street. Why then, go out and play in it when you know it will bring problems?

This proclivity to analyze, sort, and prescribe is well intentioned and for centuries it created a society that was the envy of other nations. The processual categorization arises from the main tenet of Civism, the emphasis on social order and *rust*. To ensure a well functioning social fabric you must have order, without order, chaos reigns. Indeed, the system in place on Java when the VOC arrived, and later when the Dutch government took over, was well suited to Dutch ideologies of order and peace. While the hierarchy in place did stand in direct contradiction to Dutch republican ideas and individualism at home, their concurrent belief in non-interference with indigenous social forms facilitated the adoption of aboriginal structures utilized to promote *rust* and *orde*.

Schama has addressed this aspect of Dutch ideology through the metaphor of dirt and the Dutch emphasis on cleanliness.¹²⁹ Dirt-as-pollution of nation, peoples, and indeed, individual and national soul, manifests during the immediate post war period, provoked by the chaotic conditions under the Nazis. Integration of the Indische into the Netherlands population was an absolute during the post war rebuilding process; leaving Indische individuals to 'get on with it' meant, in expert opinion, that they would not form part of the national orderly social fabric and would pollute/contaminate the nation, as well as being personally unhappy. Certain policies and steps were required *for their own good*. Perhaps, but certainly also for the national good as perceived by those experts.

Policies were thus *group* prescribed for the Indische, structuring a clear, yet externally imposed identity that carried normative standards. Indische people are '*this*,' '*need that*,' '*should do*,' '*require*,' ... In turn the Nation '*prepared to receive*,' '*recognized*,' '*facilitated*,' '*addressed*,' '*ensured*'....¹³⁰ What is missing in Goss's recapitulation is dialogue between people and experts. At what point did policy makers and analysts of the Indische sit down *with* them in those early years and ask how it was going, what they needed, what they felt? The Dutch pre-answered those questions on the basis of a Civism principle – what was best for the community as a whole – and this tendency to decide *for* the Indische lies at the root of Indische conviction that silence met their articulated experiences.

We could ask, since informants claim this was the reason they immigrated, if the pre-preparation and careful herding of their integration, was wise or necessary. Although the Dutch would not be Dutch without this type of scrupulous planning, evacuees claim they could not 'get lost.' The sudden, prescribed analysis of 'who' they were, the 'ordering' into the category "DP," the remaking of their lives into Dutch lives that had little resemblance to Indies normative living, was felt as an intolerable and intrusive imposition. In addition,

¹²⁹ Schama, Simon. (1991) *The Embarrassment of Riches: Dutch Culture In the Golden Age*. London: Fontana Press.

¹³⁰ Goss, A. (2000). from Tong-Tong to Tempo-Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History. *Indonesia*, 70 (October), 9-36.

the mother country's definition of 'who' the Dutch-Indonesian was – clouded by then current aversions to mingled blood and all of the colonial mythology that for years had enthralled the Dutch 'who never saw' Indonesia - was brought to bear on their pre-formulated identity. Coming from a natal land that featured endless space and water, to a tiny country where room was at a premium, Indische individuals could not lose themselves in Dutch society on multiple levels.

Let me hastily add that this group of interviewees warmly appreciates the Dutch efforts on their behalf. Indeed, they are far less critical of the Netherlands than Dutch database informants are and they do not echo the 'betrayal' motif that dominates Dutch discourse with respect to the Netherlands. It does arise, as I note below, but it is inconsistent, specific where it occurs, and does not dominate the repatriation-immigration myth.

4.7.1 LOSS AND ALIENATION

The occupation radically altered the life trajectories of all Dutch-Indonesians. Since they were firmly entrenched in Indonesia, and none of them had given any thought to life elsewhere before the war, all hopes and plans within the landscape of their natal home dissolved in 1945. The overwhelming emotion permeating Dutch-Indonesian narratives arises from **loss** of family, land, and future. Emerging from the camps or confronting their options as non-incarcerated individuals whose husbands and fathers had experienced Japanese prisoner life, the *bersiap* period quickly taught them that life in Indonesia would be difficult at best.

Of all of the different groups of people targeted during the *bersiap* period, or persecuted later under other policies, only Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian peoples ranked as "Europeans" had clear options in that they were able to go to the Netherlands as Dutch citizens.¹³¹ Those who choose to leave during the first 1945/46 repatriation were exhausted, sick, had lost their homes and all their belongings,

¹³¹ I am leaving aside agreement made with Amboinese etc – those were not "clear" options.

and often had occupied employment positions that they could not take up during the revolutionary period.

In 1946, a number of Dutch-Indonesian women left with their formerly incarcerated husbands for the Netherlands, but in the majority of database cases, while small children accompanied their parents, adult children remained in Indonesia, hoping to make a life in their own country. Wives discuss the very difficult adjustment process for their husbands, rather than focusing on their own emotions and feelings. Offering evidence of the female socialization process that emphasizes a nurturing principle, they marginalize their own fears and alienation, and dismiss any admiration expressed for the strength they illustrated in ensuring that their families were able to carry on.

It is no exaggeration to state that the condition of many of the post-camp men caused their wives great concern, and that the return to the Netherlands was a burden, rather than a solace, for many of these men. Having consciously rejected their biological nation, and chosen to connect fully with their Indonesian localities and kin, no 'precarious belonging' or thoughts of optional obligations marred their dedication to the adopted land they called home.¹³² The coerced return, as many were without other options given their health, previous employment, and state of mind, did little to psychologically assist their burden of loss and the feeling of failure they carried, since they felt alienated from the land of their birth and often, their natal families.

Even under ordinary circumstances, many immigrants perceive a return to the country they have left behind as an admission of failure, that they could not 'make it' in the new country. Dutch men that married in Indonesia and subsequently immersed themselves in land and people through kin were in actuality immigrants to Indonesia, not 'visiting workers' awaiting a return to the land of their birth. The few males who lived long lives after their camp experiences, and immigrated to the 'New World' with their young families from the Netherlands in this database, still convey a sense of

¹³² Anderson, Benedict. (1999) *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*. London: Verso

failure vis a vis the termination of their lives in Indonesia. They admit that this is not rational:

(Self: But it wasn't your fault – you cannot blame yourself that circumstances unfolded the way they did). Interviewee: I know that. But this is about what I feel. Many times I thought we should have seen it coming before the war. We should have taken steps. We should have fought harder. Or the Dutch government should not have given in. Because when we first went to the Netherlands, I thought we would be going back. I truly believed that the revolution was bad for Indonesia and Indonesians and that the Dutch would hold firm, we would go home, and we would do Independence in the right way – all citizens together in a good democracy. It was a big shock when I realized that OUR country had just been handed over to Soekarno. We left.¹³³

Dutch men married to Eurasian women were often not overly concerned to build a life in the Netherlands, hoping instead for employment that would feed their families, while awaiting a return to Indonesia:

Once they sent the volunteers out, I thought, well now we will get somewhere and soon we will go home to rebuild the country. But that was not to be and we could see things change in Holland. You had people saying all kinds of things about colonialism, you had a government that wasn't sure what they stood for, or what to do, and you had lots of international pressure from the USA and others. I don't blame the Dutch. You know, they had just come out of a war too. But they did not do right by Indonesians, and we too, were Indonesians, not Dutch. That was one thing the Dutch people did not seem to understand. They really seemed to think we were pretty much Dutch and that my wife and children, born in another country for Pete's sake, were Dutch because I was the husband and father. At the same time, we heard all kinds of things about how we were colonial, how bad that was, and we thought, what do these people really know? Nothing, really, nothing. They knew nothing about Indonesia. And...all that time the pain... ...our home, our plans.

Self: When did you decide to immigrate?

¹³³ Oral History Interview. (Dutch-Indonesian family) Dutch-American Male. Tape 1, July 2006.

Interviewee: We started to talk about it as early as 1947. I was feeling better, the medication had really helped, they fixed me up, ...we wanted to get on with life. After the first agreement with the Republic, we were pretty sure they would sell us out. So we started to plan and my wife wanted to go somewhere where she could hear and see the sea, and where it was warm! Yes, the climate in Holland was a big surprise for her! So a few years later we left for California. We became American citizens about 10 years after that. We raised our children out here, we have our grandchildren and great-grandchildren now..... I had a great job, we had a good life. Lots of friends.

Self: How did your children find being Indische here in the States?

Interviewee: Well you can ask my daughter tomorrow, she will be here with the kids. But there was no "Indische" (laughs) here in California, they just look tanned. (laughs again) They are all just Americans. I never kept up with my family in Holland, not after the way they treated my wife. So we started from nothing here and this is where we built our lives. Our children know our story of course, and some of the grand-kids have been pretty interested to hear about Indonesia and what it was like. A couple of them have taken trips out there to see it. They really liked Bali. But for them it is just an interesting place. No memories.

Self: What about your wife's family?

Interviewee: Well we helped some of them come over after we had been here a few years. So they also became Americans and we have a big family - reunions every year. We also found some of our connections in Indonesia and wrote letters, some of them have been here to visit us. We helped with that... money wise you know.¹³⁴

Although I suspect this phenomenon may not characterize the Dutch-Indonesian experience in America, these narrators had little contact with Holland or with the Dutch in the American or Canadian communities in which they lived. Yet, Dutch-Indonesian accounts form a significant portion of camp and post camp published recollections, and Dutch-Indonesian play an important role in 'remembering' associations in Canada, in which Dutch, Dutch-

¹³⁴ Op cit. Tape 3, July 2006.

Indonesian, and Indonesians in the New World merge as a single wronged entity. My observations regarding the stance of Dutch-Indonesian to their life in the New World, Indonesia, and the Netherlands derive specifically from these database narratives and do not generalize the Dutch-Indonesian experience; clearly some of them maintain ties with the Dutch-from-Southeast Asia communities, each bound to the other by common experience.

These Dutch-Indonesian narrators however, tended to lose themselves within the social framework of Canadian and American locales, and merged their lives into the politics and economies of their chosen countries. It is curious that Dutch-Indonesians who answered my advertisement for life story narrators share a 'hands off' attitude towards Dutch or Dutch-Indonesian community formation within their new world domiciles and maintain little contact with families in Holland, while emphasizing, in many cases, Indonesian ties. Indeed, four of the woman I interviewed are actively engaged in the reconstruction of their matrilineal kin charts, and have contacted, both by letter and email, members of families to whom they may be related. They were eager to discuss their results during our visits and to share with me the family trees they had constructed in order to illustrate their deep roots into the Indonesian social fabric.

There is evidence of great pride in these family connections, yet narrators simultaneously express contentment with their current national residence. I ascribe the search for roots to a two-fold impulse; (a) many immigrants rooted in familial concepts in Canada and American feel a similar impulse. Stemming from a lack of kin, living in environments characterized by vast space, the reconstruction of family ties assuages a need to 'place' self within a rooted framework. Secondly, (b) these immigrants are willing to share what they correctly perceive as their success in their chosen nations since they remain concerned about the plight of the Indonesian people. Some of them, as I noted above, have not only sponsored immigrants to Canada and the USA, they have also paid for trips that allowed old friends or relatives to come and visit them.

Dutch-Indonesian interviewees offer multiple reasons for the immigration landmark decision. The following dominate:

1. They had nothing left to loose
2. Holland was not home, too small, and had a terrible climate
3. The Netherlands was boring; no ethnic diversity, stiff and intolerant.
4. They could not 'get lost' in the Netherlands; they were an identifiable people. Since they could not go home, they wanted to choose where they would live.

Their narratives reveal that they perceived Canada and the United States as offering many opportunities and ethnic diversity; indeed some men had contact through their imprisonments with soldiers from either country and made the choice re immigration when those contacts offered to help them get settled subsequent to an initiated correspondence. They have been very successful in building their lives; all of my informants held excellent employment positions and their children have gone on to earn degrees in many disciplines, marrying, as is customary in America, people from widely diverse ethnic backgrounds.

The reasons given for immigration therefore, do not offer a clear "Other" in self-formulation after the immigration. While Dutch fathers articulate a 'rejected Netherlands' schema, this is not the case with Indies wives or children, who had minimum time to become acquainted with Holland, and little longing to get to know it better. The discourse of wives focuses on loss of their Indonesian home and family. Revolutionaries, along with the Japanese, are the cause of that loss. While many of them state they were 'shocked' or 'surprised' when it became evident that they could not go home, they do not hold the Dutch accountable for that loss. Having uttered that generality, it should be noted that,

Life for everyone was much better under the Dutch. You will never convince me that it was a good thing that they turned the country over to Soekarno. We know what our families there have gone through, and what life has been like for them in Indonesia. The Dutch seemed to have no confidence in themselves that they were doing the right thing by fighting for the people so that Independence could be done the right way. Look at what happened to the Amboinese. I feel so sorry for them. They truly believed in the Dutch and fought hard for the Indonesian people. Really, they were betrayed. We were all betrayed. But it was so long ago now....so long....and there is nothing left to fight about. My kids sure wouldn't

move there and well...you know I would like to go and see it one last time. But I am getting too old. So I have the memories of when I was young and what was.

Self: So you don't blame the Dutch?

Interviewee: What's to blame? What was is what was. The rest is just talk. Like I said, I am sorry for the Indonesian people. They have suffered and suffered again. We were the lucky ones. Our lives have been so good. It was the Dutch who gave us that chance – they got us out, even though we were not Dutch. So, in a way, they made our lives possible here too. Yes, it was very wrong what happened to Indonesia. The sad thing is, no-one learns from those mistakes.¹³⁵

Perhaps the most significant theme that arises from these narratives and the repatriation-immigration scenario is that Dutch-Indonesians I interviewed experienced closure when they made the decision to immigrate. The schema maps as follows:

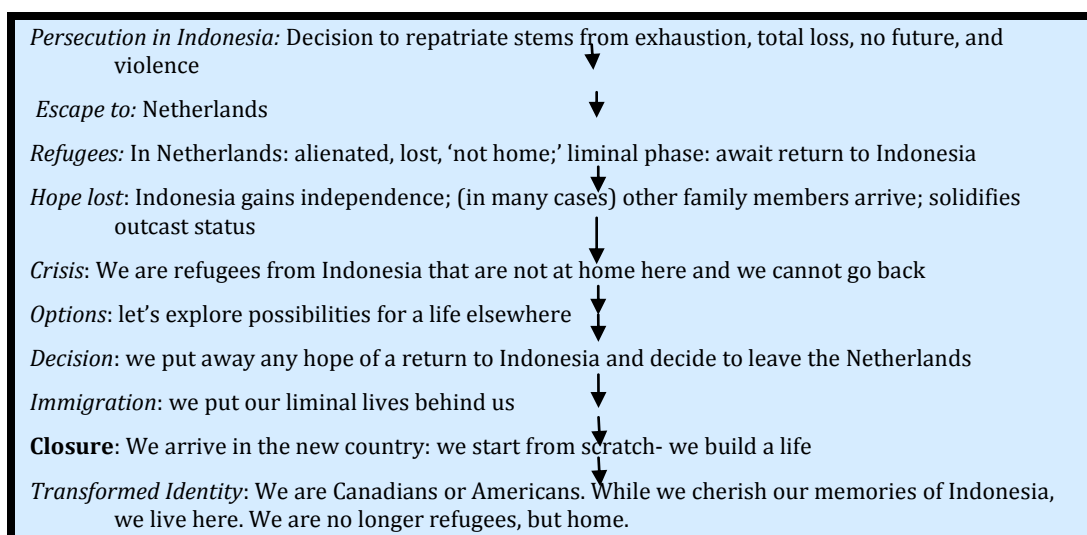


Figure 7: Dutch-Indonesian Immigration schema

¹³⁵ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Female. Tape 2, August, 2005.

The refugee experience in the Netherlands represents a liminal phase in these narratives. Having left their homes under coerced conditions following the persecution phase in Indonesia based on the signification attached to their ethnicity by Japanese, pemuda and revolutionaries, they awaited a return to their natal nation. Although many of them attempted to convey the realities of life in Indonesia to Dutch citizens, they were 'cried down' by self-determination rhetoric, colonial shame felt by those who had never participated in Indies life, and politicians and experts who advised them to forget their lives and start anew in the Netherlands. Continuing to cherish a vague hope that they might someday return, they held aloof from the well-intentioned efforts to integrate them into the Dutch social fabric and awaited the outcome of Dutch-Indonesian negotiations. Interviewees state that they would never have 'fit' into society in the Netherlands, nor did they have had a desire to do so. Many of them were genuinely dismayed by the climate, the size of the country, the lack of linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity, and what they interpreted as a very 'stiff' way of life with a suffocating morality and tendency to 'check to see what the other person is doing.' Finally, there was no hope of 'forgetting' in a country engaged in relentless discussion of self and the colonial period.

Once it became clear that Indonesia would pass to the republic, and many older children, initially left behind, repatriated from Indonesia in 1949/50, potential immigrants came to grips with the fact it was unlikely that they would return to their homeland. The awareness of non-return instigates 'crisis' and initiates the "closure" sequence that will end in Canada or the United States. Families consulted together as to their options. Many of them methodically sent out letters to any contacts they had made with people from Canada and the U.S., as noted POWs had made American and Canadian friends in the camps. Others initiated their immigrant explorations through their churches, these were interviewees whose faith, although severely strained during the Occupation, did not cause them to withdraw from that belief altogether. Interestingly, narrators did not consider Australia as an option, in each case for political reasons. They offer Australia's stance during the negotiations for independence as the source of their aversion, although many of them also noted the stringent color bar in Australia. Yet prior to the war, they perceived Australia as not only their closest neighbour, but also one that they had envisioned as the country most in sympathy with their own lifestyle and world-view.

Lifestyle, climate, contacts, and employment opportunities in a potential immigration destination gravely influenced the decision of final 'place' for these narrators. Once location was determined however, immigrants agree that excitement set in, and planning for their new home began to change their being in the world. Following the long trip overseas and their settlement in the new place of residence, they initiated their lives in the new country. No longer liminal, but now Canadian or American immigrants, they cast their lot with those who had come from all over the world to start anew, exchanging many stories:

In those early years what really struck me is that everyone had a story to tell. There were refugees from all parts of the world and many of them had it even worse than us in the countries they left – far worse. We learned very quickly to value what we had. We were educated, we could get good work and the language we had started to learn it in Indonesia and before we left Holland. Self: In Indonesia? Interviewee: Well sure. There were lots of Americans in Indonesia before the war, and we would have a drink with them and so... Not so strange.. So the language was not a problem and the kids picked it up so fast. In the '50s too, America was booming. Well like I said, jobs were there for the taking, we were educated and soon we were doing really well. Our family thrived.¹³⁶

The impossibility of 'forgetting' (a.k.a. getting lost) and lack of closure in the Netherlands, where the (potential) loss of the Indies was continually re-visited, is important in these narratives. Discourses on the colonial period, the multiple opinions that defined the role of the Dutch in Indonesia for those who had participated, programs and prescribed options put in place for Indische integration; all of these factors facilitated a feeling of 'non-escape' that led to the immigration decision. No, narrators have not forgotten the Indies. What they have been able to do is 'place' their experiences within the context of their wider lives and tie their lives to other immigrants who also dealt with persecution. The wounds on their bodies and psyches have scarred; they are no longer raw. Most importantly, the identity 'Eurasian or settler/blijver' is moot for these narrators. They fully belong in Canada and the U.S.A; not

¹³⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-American Male. Tape 1, August 2005.

conflicted in terms of their national identities, they have embraced their chosen nations while honouring their natal origins.

In this chapter, I have shown that Dutch-Indonesian memories, narrative structures, and immigration schema differ markedly from forms found in the Dutch sub-database. The emphasis on family in Indië that permeates Dutch-Indonesian narratives, also defines immigration life. Immigrants judge their success in the new world through the health and growth of family, the forging of new alliances through marriages, and the successful re-establishment of links to lost kin and friends. Place is the grounding factor in interviewee stories. Whether the narrator is recounting his/her time in Indonesia, describing their sojourn in the Netherlands, or detailing their life in Canada or the U.S., stories link to place through an evocation of atmosphere, a detailing of weather, a focus on and deep love for, landscape, and an expressive attention to context.

5 The Indonesians

Interviewed Indonesians constitute a small, yet diverse group. Of the six people taped at length, two remain in Indonesia, and both are female professionals.¹ One male left Indonesia for the Netherlands in 1950 and ten years later departed for the USA, another left for Holland and then for Canada in the 1960's, and the final two male informants immigrated to North America in the 1970's.

Current Domicile	Gender	No. Interviewed	Background
Java	Female	1	Professional
Sumatra	Female	1	Professional
Canada	Male	2	Retired Minister's Assistant. Businessman-retired
U.S.A.	Male	2	Former chauffeur Businessman retired.

Figure 8: Indonesian Sub-Database

Although the number of Indonesian immigrants to North America is growing, it is not large in comparison with other Asian groups. In the United States for example, Indonesian immigrants constitute 0.4% of the total U.S. Asian population, and that percentage includes many Chinese Indonesians who fled their country during the purges of the 1960s.² Immigrants exhibit a clear preference for larger cities such as Toronto, Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago since those cities have large, established Asian communities, but also because of better employment opportunities. Indonesian neighbourhoods do not exist as separate entities in any North American city; ethnic affiliation is with those of Asian descent or individuals are absorbed into the 'huddled masses.'

¹ Employed in very divergent professions, yet expanding on their backgrounds would endanger anonymity.

² <http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Ha-La/Indonesian-Americans.html>. I did have access to Chinese Indonesians, but in my opinion, their situation cries for a separate research project.

Therefore, I was delighted with the response from a Dutch American interviewee to my offhand comment that I was hoping to find Indonesians in North America, but did not know where to start looking. *'Come with the girls and me on Saturday. We go every week to 'the' Indonesian restaurant for some good food and a chat about old times.'* Well, I thought it would be both interesting and fun, so I took her up on her offer to join ex-pat Dutch-Indonesian "girls" (all over 75) at the restaurant. Contrary to my expectations, the talk about old times was not between the girls. As soon as we settled, Indonesian staff joined them at the table and conversation began. Surprised that personnel sat down to exchange pleasantries during working hours, I looked around the restaurant and noted the absence of customers. Observing this in a whisper to my host, she responded, *'Oh no, they are closed to the public for two more hours. This is just for us. We get together every Saturday to talk and then have lunch when they open.'*

It was certainly an unusual and delightful gathering. Much of the conversation touched on Indonesia and the 'old days.' Upon an exchange of recipes, arguments regarding the proper cooking of certain dishes promptly ensued. Participants revelled in casual insults; *'You never did learn how to cook rice properly'*, or *'what does a Dutchwoman know of curry anyway'?* There were stories about Indonesian locales, families, markets, and pithy exchanges about the current state of Indonesia. Silence overshadowed the gathering briefly, whenever the topic touched on personal or national Indonesian tragedies. It was obvious their friendships were of long standing, as participants offered a running support to one another in the form of gestures, facial expressions, and interjections, when one of the others slipped into memory that evoked strong emotions. They were also fully aware of each other's current political views (terse comments on American politics) and exchanged news of their families.

The event occurred during the early days of this life story research. Travelling around North America, I became aware that the Indonesian restaurant with a dedicated Dutch clientele is a staple of many mid to large sized cities. Moreover, now elderly Dutch had passed on their fondness for Indonesian cuisine to their children and grandchildren and the establishments were consequently thriving. While the restaurant I visited for a two-hour coffee, pastry, and chat session that Saturday morning proved an exceptional arrangement, I visited many eateries with Dutch interviewees, and noted the

enthusiasm that characterized greetings between Indonesians and Dutch as they settled down for a chat. The latter was non-variable, there was always time for lengthy conversation, and quite often, if sons or grandsons ran the restaurant, the elderly father involved with the business had a standing engagement to meet with his Dutch friend-customers on a certain day and time. Although the Indonesians I met in this manner uniformly and flatly refused to participate officially in the project, they were extremely hospitable, offering a window into Dutch-Indonesian interaction in North America.

No doubt, the easy camaraderie found between the participants stems from like thinking, as most of the Indonesians I met under these circumstances were not revolutionaries, quite the contrary. One presumes that those with revolutionary stripes were committed to their cause at home, while those unhappy with the state of affairs in Indonesia sought to leave. This postulate would explain the uniform disaffection with Indonesia that characterized my contacts. The majority of them expressed a mono-perspective re Indonesia's independence and subsequent progress. Given that they had my assurance I would never quote them specifically in the manuscript, they were willing to discuss their perceptions of the past and their native land, but they were careful to delete names from all accounts and remained vague about locale. They neither trust nor believe in a free Indonesia, despite my proposing that the political climate in Indonesia has altered.

In the end, I was fortunate that a number of restaurant employees took pity on me. In one case, a retired owner agreed to a number of interviews, his son, who runs the restaurant, told him about the project. In another instance, a staff member told the father of a friend of his what I was doing, and that interviewee contacted me. Through various connections then, I was able to accumulate the four male interviewees. One of these interviewees did not leave his country with permission, while the two remaining male interviewees shared a remembering – and a legacy left by parents – favourable to the Dutch. The final male interviewee was a Papuan and the unique interaction between Papuans, the Dutch, the U.N. and the Indonesian government, framed his experiences. Personal contacts led me to the two professional women I interviewed; both still reside in Indonesia.

Male	Indonesia Domicile	Age Occupation	Age 1946	Age left Indonesia	Age to North America	Age/Inte w	Immigrated to
# 1	Papua	12	16	(1965) 35	37	July 2006 – 76 years	Canada via Netherlands
# 2	Java	13	17	(1974) 45	45	April 2004 – 74 years	U.S.A.
# 3	Java	22	26	(1950) 30	40	May, July 2004 – 84 years	U.S.A via Netherlands
# 4	Java	19	23	(1972) 48	48	August 2005 – 82 years	Canada

Figure 9: Details Indonesian Male Interviewees

I remain frustrated by the fact that time prohibited an extension of the Indonesian database. There were certainly far more than four males within my reach physically speaking, but they remained light years away from an interview standpoint and I was unable to identify alternatives. However, the interviews in this sub-category, like those that preceded them, underline the vital importance of recording multiple colonial perspectives and the challenges expat discourses pose to narratives derived from those remembering in Indonesia and the Netherlands.

The North American portion of this sub-database exhibits a marked gender imbalance. Interviewed men share political views; all were anti-revolutionary in Indonesia, and a number left their natal country under circumstances they preferred not to discuss. Three arrived alone on the shores of North America; during an interlude in the Netherlands, one acquired a Dutch wife. All four are husbands in inter-ethnic marriages. The two women who live in Indonesia did not experience colonial life, the Occupation, the Bersiap period or the Revolution. One was born in 1963, the other in 1954. Men however, were members of the last colonial regime, albeit two were youths; one served as a Chauffeur for a Dutch family on Java, one as Minister's assistant after the war, and two were extremely reluctant to discuss familial activities during the Occupation and Revolution. The latter two men are both business entrepreneurs in North America. All held strong opinions on Indonesia and her politics both during the time in question, and since Independence.

Throughout this chapter, I utilize the words of the youngest member of this database, a woman of rare sensitivity.³ Fate brought her to me at a key moment in my progress.⁴ She restored my confidence in the project and inspired continued effort to probe the multiple contradictions that appear between academic analyses and the life stories of these survivors. Her love for her Dutch grandmother – conveyed through a remarkable understanding – re-conceptualized the inter-racial household and exposed the infinite creative possibilities of a Dutch-Asian union, a union that struggled through the Occupation, bersiap and revolutionary periods, that politically tore apart her grandmother's sons, and left an indelible mark on her family. Crucially, her narratives introduced the themes that frame the discourse of other database Indonesians: inter-ethnic relationships, freedom, and memory.

5.1 Memory

Throughout the Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian interviews, narrators offered oft spoken memories as well haltingly exposing vignettes rarely shared with others. Although issues around the work of remembering are ever-present in oral history research, they deepen on multiple levels when working with the elderly. As long-term memory increasingly sharpens and short-term memory falters, seniors will reminisce,⁵ formally interviewed or not. Seniors utilize the memory process to review and assess their lives, weaving seemingly unrelated events, relationships, places, and peoples into the tapestry of 'my life.'⁶ Moreover, they are conscious of this process, referring often to how their memory works, challenges, consoles, or fails, them.

Children present at those interviews underlined the disjointed nature of re-call. While they were familiar with some of their elder's

³ Her background must remain necessarily sparse, as she is easily identifiable.

⁴ I feel compelled to note her grace and beauty of form. She is an entirely remarkable person.

⁵ Bornat, Joanna. (1989) Oral History as Social Movement: Reminiscence and Older People. *Oral History*, Vol. 17 no 2. pages 16-22. page 20.

⁶ Lummis, Trevor. (1983) Structure and Validity in Oral Evidence. *International Journal of Oral History*, 1983, Vol. 2 no. 2 pages 109-120 (Meckler Publishing).

stories, at other times they often interjected with; “*why haven’t you ever told me this before*”, or, “*I didn’t know that,*” complicating the nature of the interview process, as parent and child held a side bar regarding memories unshared. Indeed, children left in the dark regarding certain aspects of the parents’ past were often indignant. Mothers and fathers expressed surprise that their offspring were interested, or rejoined that they kept silent in order to protect childhood innocence and to ensure that the lives of their children remained uncontaminated by the terror and fear that blighted their own lives. As the details of their past emerged, and life philosophies and thoughts were shared at a level of intimacy rarely tapped, parents constructed bridges eagerly crossed by children and grandchildren participant in the process.

Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian consultants orally problematized how and what they were able to remember as all too often, they re-confronted memories they believed silenced or marginalized forever. A tortured prisoner of war articulated,

... and now they are back.I don’t think about those memories in the daytime. I don’t put them into words and look at them this way and that. I go on with something else and block them out. But as I get older, I find that more and more I get hit with a wave of emotion. I will panic completely. Or I will be intensely afraid. It comes up on me, just like that.

At night, it’s the pictures...and the pain. At night when I sleep, the pictures – like a movie – they run through my brain. Sometimes they get stuck, over and over, in the same spot.....and my body,.... feels the pain the way it felt the first time. You think I want to remember? But it comes back, over and over.....Why? What is the purpose of this re-living.....⁷

Interviewees are sensitive to the conscious blockage of particular memories, and they state that they refrain from externalizing them in speech, instinctively responding to a certainty that speaking re-concretizes experience. Indeed, they were often able to articulate why they chose silence, referencing the need to get on with life, to heal body and mind, to forget the past terror of a life now repaired,

⁷ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 3, May 2004.

and to refrain from imposing personal grief on public space. Yet this survivor feels his memory has 'failed' him, it works against him. He has no desire to own these memories, has struggled for decades to block them, but they increasingly deny rejection; emotion overwhelms him by day, pictures haunt him at night. Moreover, he ex-experiences the pain inflicted on his body so long ago, and it is excruciating. The text so indelibly inscribed on his body/mind refuses repudiation.

The manner in which Indonesian interviews problematized remembering however, sharply differed from the Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian narratives. Retrospectively assessing their memories, they spoke of the difference between memories not shared by choice, and those forgotten or reconfigured in dialogue with official State memory. This divergence speaks to what, why, and how they situate their colonial past as residents of North America, but the dissimilarities between their narratives and 're-call' in Indonesia is critical. One of my female interviewees attempted to trace this contrast in order to assess the socio-political milieu of the years before the war, the Occupation, and the revolutionary period. Utilizing her knowledge of the official state script for the period, and her grandmother's stories, she tried to separate 'how it was,' from 'how' the State *said* it was, locating multiple discourses as malleable, interactive scripts. Touching on *how societies and bodies remember, but equally important, how they forget and go on to forge viable practical models to help them endure,*"⁸ she went on to explicate how the State managed memory in its citizens, and why:

From the time of Independence, [...] things were clearly not going right for the people... and some began to question what had happened, especially those who had lived before the war and could remember a more prosperous time. So the questions began ...where is the food? Why is there no medicine? Where are the clothes we were promised? Where is that good life under Independence? ... long before the Dutch came, the people did make local decisions yes... but those decisions were always contingent on what was best for the rulers, who could, and did, overturn their lives if necessary.

⁸ Cole, J. (Nov. 1998). The Work of Memory in Madagascar. *American Ethnologist* Vol. 25, 610-633. Page 628.

So they were in way, used to being taken care of; to having some decisions made for them. They had a place in life, and they lived it.

.....now... there was a great deal of violence in the towns and the countryside. The situation was very complicated. My grandmother spoke often about how complex it was. There were those who said it was better under the Dutch. .. more peace, better times and blamed the terrible state of the country after the war on the Japanese, the revolutionaries and the new leaders of Indonesia. That was dangerous. There were those who had lived under the Dutch and were committed to an independent Indonesia, they were willing to do what it took to support that goal, although they did not necessarily hate the Dutch. Others did hate the Dutch and blamed the way things were after the war on Dutch colonialism, on the Dutch still in the country. This was the official position of the revolutionary government and it brooked no dissent. all problems were the fault of the Dutch before the war, and of the Dutch still in Indonesia. During the early years, there was a constant re-writing of pre-war and Occupation life and it rifted my people. Those who preferred the Dutch faced those who recalled the Dutch or those who barely remembered them..anyway there were large groups that learned to hate. Middle aged people and the elderly often had very different ideas than the young. In newspapers and speeches, people were told ... really..who the Dutch were, how they had behaved....and the Dutch were the culprits for many ongoing problems; remember there were still many Dutch involved in business and so forth. In reality, what was happening was a complete upheaval of life as it was lived on Java for millennia, a doing away with the old order that had structured a specific hierarchy for so long.

.....The Japanese left the country in turmoil and directly after that we had the Revolution. On Java, many were homeless and roamed the cities. So when a child went home, and heard a parent or grandparent talk about good times, they challenged their parents or grand-parents. You know – “that can’t be right,” or, “you were brainwashed”, or” you should be ashamed that you were in service to those dogs.” The young need to believe, you cannot blame them, it was their country, their leaders, their future. Those who remembered the Dutch as different than the official version of

*them...well they were stamped on and ridiculed. Sometimes they were attacked and killed. People stopped speaking.*⁹

In this complicated social atmosphere, an official libretto that explained the country's current woes in terms of its colonial past stood as the measuring stick for linguistic deviance. From the perspective of revolutionaries, the imposition of a mono-explanation for past and present served to underpin a singular vision for the future that would ideally function to bind together the diverse peoples of Indonesia against a common enemy. Non-participation in the discourse identified the perpetrator of alternative speech as a non-contributor to the free Indonesia dream. Coupled with the fact that even those who had experienced it disagreed on the quality of life during the pre-war era, and articulated divergent memories of 'how it was,' legitimation for those who considered the Dutch period in a positive light was thin on the ground – and dangerous. Consequently, those who expressed non-compliance with the revolution through positive discourse on the colonial period fell silent. In question was not the event, everyone agreed for example, that Colonialism happened, but the interpretation, the significance of that event. The silent ones thus faced the formidable task of re-working the building blocks of memory - individual relationships and emotions attached to place, kin and networks. Getting on with their lives, people forged 'practical models' for living from available social material, including the official mono-script on Indonesia's past and future. Three hundred long years of brutal Dutch colonialism and a people in thrall to a foreign western power structured that latter memory model.

Other Indonesian interviewees cast light on memory constructs:

"...we were much better off with the Dutch than we have been since Independence... I can say that here, and no one will care. laughs* I said that to a co-worker here once, just to see what he would say, just to say the words out loud...., you know to see how they felt. You know what he said? Self: What? Interviewee: He said...oh yeah? Why did you get rid of them then? *laughs again* That got me. How could I explain how it was during a coffee break?*

⁹ Oral History Interview. Indonesian Female. May, 2005. Tape 1.

But I could not say those words in Indonesia, not during the Occupation, and not after, it would have maybe meant my life. ... I don't know how it is now, but that's how it was after the war. It was a dangerous time and you didn't know who you could trust. You were very cautious about who you spoke to, how you spoke and where. It is a terrible way to live. While my children were young I reminded them, all the time, how lucky they are to live in a country where they are able to say what they wanted, when they wanted, and wherever they wanted. That is a great thing. To be able to speak without worry that your words, your ideas, will lead to your death. You know, the truth is that we could say a lot more under the Dutch. You could speak..grumble.. you know...complain...afterwards, you could not even trust family.¹⁰

State memory that engages and determines individual memory is not dialogic, but monologic. In a milieu that utilizes violence to entrench official thought, power enables and represses, denies and expresses, enforcing the accommodation of private speech to public need to such an extent that speech options are a misnomer. Terror determines individual discourse as state discourse. Speaking to an Indonesian who served as Chauffeur for a Dutch man in Indonesia, he too brought up Agency:

Self: was it difficult to serve a Dutchman as his Chauffeur?

(quirks eyebrow, but very gentle in tone) Now why do you ask that? Your question says that being a Chauffeur is demeaning. Or.... you are stating that being one for a Dutchman is degrading or that Dutch men were difficult? Is that what you are asking?

Self: No.... I did not mean degrading, I guess I was tying it to your being a colonial subject and assuming that you did not want to be one..... so you would chaff under the situation where you worked for a colonialist.¹¹

¹⁰ Oral History informant. Indonesian-Canadian Male. August, 2005. Tape 1.

¹¹ I admit I am somewhat embarrassed by this sequence. The Interviewee was very kind, yet turned the table on my patronizing certainties throughout these first Tapes. Due to this fact, I went back in the summer later that year and interviewed him again. This sequence certainly represents an instance the code slippage discussed in Chapter Two.

He: No... that colonialist got me out of Indonesia and to the Netherlands after he left. I was against Independence..well not against Independence, but the way it was happening.. . It was difficult for him to get me out and I don't want to talk about how it happened. I don't trust anyone in Indonesia and I don't want repercussions.

..... I lived in Holland for over 10 years before a relative persuaded me to join him in his restaurant here. He came over before the War and was getting old. While I was in Holland, I saw my boss and his family regularly and we remain friends. His health is not good and I am worried about him. He lived through the war...he did come back... it was a terrible time – for all of us. During the war I tried to help his family..... that I did so was held against me.....

... I have a picture he gave me of the family... Let me get it.... (Gets up slowly from chair, and moves to a charming hutch which he opens. He takes out a large wooden box that proves to be filled with many loose pictures. Rifles through them.....)... See here I am, right here. (Picture of handsome, smiling young man, sitting cross legged on lawn with many others in shot. He went on to tell me about each person in the picture and their lives; who died during the Occupation, what they did, what happened to them after the war. He reminisced about the children, especially one of the boys, who was crazy about cars).

Self: May I ask why you were against Independence?

He: I was very lucky in my position. I had a very good job, but more than that, the man I worked for was a person who was ready to discuss all kinds of ideas with anyone, including me. He was really interested, you know? In my life, my family, the country.....He went out of his way to ask, to help. You know, I trained young as a Chauffeur... I was promoted with him to Chauffeur....

.....I was able to find jobs for some of my relatives through him. He was a person you could ask easily, because he knew my family already. He visited and his kids came to the kampong too. Maybe others did not have this same experience....but many did...

..... I will tell you. The Dutch really cared about the welfare of the Indies. They built canals, factories, sluices, hospitals, schools. They had law and tried as much as possible to honour adat. They stopped the feuding between peoples that had gone on for so long. When I lived in Holland, I realized that is part of who they are as a people. They take pride in an orderly society, in law, in prosperity. I know

my boss was proud of what they accomplished, and hoped to do, in Indonesia. I believed him. That's who he was. He had integrity. I didn't believe that our new rulers had integrity, or that they cared about the country. They wanted power. And...now you see. You see what Indonesia has been these past 50 years. The killings, the torture, the exterminations, that is Indonesians doing that to Indonesians, not the Dutch. In 300 years, the Dutch never even came close, not close, to the deaths Soekarno or Suharto ordered in a single month. No maybe a bad week. The Dutch are not perfect, no. They have flaws. But they would never have allowed the country to suffer as it has. Bribery, violence, so much death....

....when he came home from the camps and saw the condition of the country..it broke him. He was sick.. so thin.... But what broke him was what had happened to my people, my family, the country...and... the destruction of everything the Dutch had built...hospitals, factories...

*... I tried to help him then too... and his family...Two of his children died in the camps....yes, they did and he still worried about me and my family...all of us. For me, everything that happened under the Japanese meant that we shared a common experience. The Japanese did not love Indonesia. They destroyed our families, our lives..... We had to re-build...*smiles* the Dutch are good are building. They would have gone after it with zeal. I never doubted their love for Indonesia....*

...I was soon in the minority...or at least one of the few that would speak his mind, although people often grumbled quietly. Dangerous thing to do. Dangerous times. You don't know what it is to be able to say what you think, you have always had that privilege. It tears apart families...breeds suspicion... you look at everyone differently...

...I was on the run after this.... I tried to help the Dutch

...I worked hard against Independence. Hard. I was willing to sacrifice my life. But we did not prevail.

...Indonesia is so beautiful... I carry it always in my heart... How I have cried for my country..

Self: Did you never contemplate Independence at the time then?

Interviewee: Of course..of course. But not in the way that it happened. Look at our situation. We had just experienced a brutal occupation and the country needed to be put back on its feet. That

was not going to happen under the revolutionaries. That was about opportunism. Soekarno benefitted from the war disaster and conditions in 1945 and advanced his own ambitions – that was not about Indonesia. In my mind, Independence would certainly have come, but it would have been peaceful and we would have taken our place among the nations of the world..

..Self: ...Did your wife and children leave for the Netherlands with you, and then the U.S.? That must have been quite a change for the kids each time.

*Interviewee: No...no... *quiet* When I left Indonesia, I was running. I left my first wife and children behind. I hadn't seen them for a few years even then.... They were looking for me...I could not endanger their lives...so you know my wife could say, if she had to, that the marriage was over, that I should not be held against her. At least, I hoped.... I have never seen her or my children again. Did they live or die? I don't know.... With all the things that happened over there....*

I left my family...everyone behind... I had to start all over. Well.... 10 years later I went to the U.S. I married again here.¹²

Contrary to my smug set of expectations, that a man who worked as a servant for the Dutch would naturally feel resentment for colonial exploitation and he and I could settle down to a cozy indictment of the colonial period, this gentleman enjoyed his position, felt no animosity toward his boss – and by extension the Dutch – and did not experience the Occupation as a waiting for Independence. The interviewee, through his assumption of the role of 'teacher to misguided interviewer,' taught me not to assume that all Indonesians were anti-Dutch and anti-colonial, that capital "C" Colonialism is mediated through personal contacts with the colonialist, and that Indonesians outside of Indonesia may view their natal country with a great deal of anguish.

If the socio-political environment plays an important role in how and what we remember, and crucially, what we continue to speak into existence, than a denial of personal memories will affect the individual, and hence national, psyche. Indeed, the situation is akin

¹²Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 1. July, 2004.

to that of former Communist countries, where events experienced by individuals or nation were systematically denied or 'spun.' People lived a dual existence; maintaining, of necessity, a public face that aligned with official discourse, all the while querying personal interpretations of what s/he thought they remembered about a particular event or relationship. In those countries, and in Indonesia, the underlying threat of pending violence attendant upon any sign of non-conformity instilled a pervasive fear that permeated public and private life. That this relationship between private experience and public interpretation is vastly different than a public/private face distinction goes without saying. In the latter case, one keeps one's personal life to oneself in order not to insinuate it on others in the public sphere. However, while the individual may maintain public silence on personal events, the structuring of event and emotion, admittedly always already culturally permeated, remains individual and is not in dialogue with an official state script that challenges or denies singularities. Nor is interpretation contingent upon ever-present threat and terror.

Given the impact of national discourse on individual remembering, Stoler and Strassler's work in *New Order Java* takes on added significance. The memories they elicited from former servants of the Dutch on that island, are greatly at odds with the memories elicited of servants in Dutch, Indo-European and Dutch-Indonesian accounts, although there are some exceptions.¹³ The initial disparity is one of affect. Where "colonial" accounts are emotional and well-elaborated, the discourse offered by Stoler and Strassler's interviewees is sparse, largely unemotional, businesslike, and rejects intimacy. Former servants were reluctant to be interviewed, and some remained virtually silent, offering minimal responses to questions posed by interviewers. Many of them muted or denied the 'family' paradigm cherished by Dutch and Dutch-Indonesians as the model of self-servant relations, although this is an area where one uncovers exceptions. Additionally, Stoler and Strassler's analysis is diminished through their neglect of difference, as they assimilate the Dutch to all

¹³ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in *New Order Java*. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. Vol. 42; No. 1 (January) 4 - 48.

sub-categories of Dutch-Indonesians thereby manipulating the 'Dutch' as a single, hegemonic, data category. A critical disparity between the North American interviews and those extracted in New Order Java, is that in spite of the large number of photographs in existence of servants with the households they served, the majority of Stoler and Strassler's interviewees state that they do not recall having their pictures taken and refused evidence to the contrary. Lastly, children of these interviewees were relatively disinterested in their elder's memories.

Stoler and Strassler initiated a study that set out to, *'engage a specific archive on the colonial domestic order, namely that documented and celebrated in personal memoirs and public records of Europeans, and particularly Dutch, who lived and worked in what was then the Netherlands Indies at the close of colonial rule.'*¹⁴ The focus of their attention centered on two caricatures; *'the...threatening image offered in housekeeping guides, childbearing manuals and medical handbooks that warn against the contaminating influences of servants on European children; and two, in stark contrast, that favoured image of servants which is recurrent in colonial memoirs laced with the touch and smell of servants in whose company childhoods were spent – accounts devoted to fond reminiscences of affections shared.'*¹⁵ Through an oral history study of 'subaltern voices,' Stoler and Strassler reject the binary fiction/truth model inherent in a contrast between the 'popular romance' constructed in Dutch servant memoirs/ servant memories drawn from Indonesians that speak truth regarding the colonial past. Instead they utilize their data to explore how *'dissonance'* in perceptions of intimacy and affect *'may unsettle our certainties about what constituted the colonial and how it figures in people's memories today.'*¹⁶ Since their analysis traverses these database interviews, establishing significant dialogic intersects, aspects of that study deserve mention here.

¹⁴ Op. cit., page 5.

¹⁵ Op. cit., page 5.

¹⁶ Op. cit., page 5.

5.1.1 TO SPEAK OR NOT TO SPEAK

Stoler and Strassler note that speech is not free in New Order Java, musing that this constraint *might have* contaminated interviewee response, while refusing to center the importance of polyvalent State/individual speech interfaces and the multiple transformations of that relationship since 1942. In fact, they limit their short discussion to a specific historical time period, the final years of the New Order regime, while observing *en passant* that the fear exhibited by their interviewees under the New Order, *may reference a silenced memory of nationalist violence* against former Dutch servants.¹⁷ Of course! But this silenced memory is not limited to (former) nationalist violence. Buried underneath that violence-memory is its source; an entire range of unacceptable emotions, thoughts, and relationships permeating various placeworlds that, if individually articulated, provoked a violent state response that requires forgetting. The two are intimately entwined; ideally both memories and the response to memory must be silenced and forgotten.

Servants interviewed by Stoler and Strassler lived through the pre-war period, the Occupation, the Soekarno years, the Suharto transition, the Malaysia crisis, the Papuan propaganda, the purge in the '60s, and many like events. The fear they variously exhibited regarding the interview process signified that close attention to conjoined and *diachronic* state/life histories would play no small role in interviewee responses. Oral history respondent Pak Purwo articulated his apprehensions, *'am I going to be tried; 'Later, I'll tell, ... "later I can;"... So nothing's going to happen to me, right?... Later will I be brought to court?... 'don't later say...."that man used to work for the Dutch [ikut belanda].'*¹⁸ The iterative use of the word *'later'* reveals an individual/nation socio-historical reality; Pak Purwo is articulating his personal knowledge of people who were 'interviewed' and (later) taken to court or arrested, their own words used against them. Lingering suspicion of Stoler and Strassler's project is hence understandable since proof that one's own speech

¹⁷ Op. cit., page 14.

¹⁸ Op. cit., page 14.

was used to indict the individual is thick on the ground (*don't later say...work for the Dutch*). Equally obvious, their interviewees have not internalized altered speech structures in New Order Java, as Pak Purwo is concerned that his speech on the Dutch will have grave repercussions in the late 1990s. Under these conditions, self-monitoring played a key role in interviewee responses to a far greater extent than self-other interactive adjustments articulated in a free-speech community.¹⁹ The evident alarm on the part of interviewees begs for a socio-historical excavation of informant speech adjustments that align personal memories with State memory. Indeed, those linguistic tweakings would expose the slippage, gaps in interviewee texts.

Guided by the Indonesian sub-database, some suggestions appear self-evident:

*From the beginning, Soekarno maintained that any misery felt by the people was the fault of the Dutch.*²⁰

Historically then, approving comments about the Dutch were, at minimum, highly unwelcome, if not treasonous, hence speech silenced, and forgetting or denial accordingly imposed, on Dutch-self memories.

*Right after the Occupation, people who had worked for the Dutch, and especially those who still had anything to do with them, or indicated they approved of them, were wise to fear for their lives. Those who helped during the war had to find ways to explain that when challenged...*²¹

Throughout the very difficult Occupation and subsequent revolutionary period, people who had worked for the Dutch, or appeared in any way loyal, contemplated their personal safety and that of their families. During the war, the greatest threat lay with Japanese command, who took a dim view of indigenous support for Europeans of any stripe. After the war, the danger came from

¹⁹ Goffman, Erving (1969) *Strategic Interaction*. New York: Ballantine Books.

²⁰ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 1. April, 2004.

²¹ Op. cit., Tape 2.

multiple groups that formed part of the post-war Indonesian social fabric. Revolutionaries, youth gangs, spies; interviewees speak of an infiltration of interests solely concerned with weeding out dissidents.

*'You could not even trust your kin...you were not sure...what if they had got to so and so? What if he was secretly reporting back to them? ..You were careful all the time, careful not to say anything, anything at all that they could use...'*²²

Summarizing the discourse possibilities articulated by Indonesian interviewees, those in danger could downplay or deny (if in a position to do so) that they had dealings with the Dutch. If that alternative was not ready to hand, they could re-write their self-Dutch interaction, claiming coercion, utilizing the revolutionary discursive script that signified the speaker politically safe. The externalization of particular speech acts however, may lead to the internalization of that spoken, a process that requires the re-visioning of remembrance. *How many times do you say, 'that man was bad', or 'that man was a dog,' before that man becomes bad or a dog in your mind?*²³

Alternatively, citizens could undertake activities on behalf of the revolutionaries or youth gangs, proving that they had merely been biding their time while working for or with the Dutch, and illustrating their new, true, political convictions through fervent activity. This solution required a voluntary re-casting of one's own memories of the colonial period. Every exchange, all actions, would be microscopically examined and re-cognized as evidence of a patronizing "C"olonial attitude and stance to Indonesians. Finally, a citizen could choose silence and become or remain apolitical, illustrating through consequent behaviour that they had adapted to the state of things. Interviewees state that revolutionaries and youths denied the last option to many.

In short, during the immediate post-war period, formulation of Nation ideally developed through a common struggle against a

²² Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. August, 2005. Tape 1.

²³ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. May, 2004. Tape 1.

national enemy; the Dutch stood as the oppositional symbol that facilitated the potential structuring of Nation. State historical discourse did not demonize the Occupation and the Japanese whatever people's experience had been during that period, nor did it form part of Indonesian resistance mythology, until Soekarno cut his ties with his Occupation past. In fact, the denial of individual Indonesian experience under the Japanese by the revolutionary government represents a significant instance of attempted memory alteration/re-inscription – an official interpretation of events at odds with personal and indeed national, realities.

The process of incorporating the Japanese as a negative element in the Indonesian struggle for self-expression achieved finalization with the advent of Suharto. Indeed, Japanese fought alongside Indonesian resistance fighters against the Dutch, while millions of young men trained under Japanese guidance during the Occupation ensured that Japanese warrior ideology permeated the resistance and army world-views at least for the immediate period following the Occupation, although it is easily discernable for decades thereafter. The Occupation would come to form part of revolution watershed mythology and later stories of actions taken against the Japanese, as well as survival strategies during that bleak time, contributed discursively to the retrospective standing of one's revolutionary zeal as the Nation stood on the brink of formation.

5.1.2 OF PICTURES AND FAMILIES

In light of the memory/speech alternatives outlined by database interviewees, Stoler and Strassler's observations regarding Indonesian servants' lack of re-call regarding colonial family pictures can be tangibly addressed. Their research took place considerably after the Dutch left Indonesia. In the intervening years, Indonesian 'us against the world' Nation Mythology received continual reinforcement through the identification of a procession of enemies that threatened national existence. The demonic Dutch were supplanted by equally fiendish British, Americans, Malaysians, the U.N..... and quite a number of other bit players. While speaking well of the Dutch did not carry the same weighty signification in the late 1990s, interviewees had not adjusted to the 'new speech.' They were deeply aware that in the past, you did not admit that you were friends with the Dutch or Dutch-Indonesians assimilated to them. You did not argue that the misery around you had not been caused

by the Dutch. You certainly did not proudly declare that you had your picture taken with your favourite Dutch employers, nor exclaim to one and all that you were as close to them as family. Instead, you downplayed or denied any interaction you may have had with the Dutch and minimized and dismissed any memories to the contrary; *sometimes it's just best to forget*.²⁴

Past servants did not recall participating in photo-shoots, expressing surprise at their existence and refusing their existential implications. From an empirical perspective, this presents us with a conundrum. Fact: the pictures exist and there are many. Fact: In many of the photos, Asian servants are holding children who look cozy and entirely at home; indeed comfortable and loved in their arms. Image analysis does not show Asian bodies straining to exit the family space or moving to the margins. True, Indonesian kinetic structures may inhibit the use of body language to indicate unease, but surely there should be slippage since the gesture-call system is not ordinarily under conscious control, and stressful situations - having one's picture taken and feeling resentful that you are being asked to pose as family when clearly you mean nothing to your employers - provoke pictorial gaps. While it is true that many servants present with serious faces and formal aspect, this is likely the result of their response to the camera and ideas of public demeanour, rather than expressed resentment of their situation.²⁵ Fact: Many pictures exist that were taken only of servants, pictures where no 'white' people appear at all. Multiple examples of servants with children, yet without 'white' parents, also exist. Fact: Indonesians outside of Indonesia clearly recall that pictures were taken, the day and details surrounding the pictorial occasion, and everything about the families that employed them.²⁶

²⁴ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. August, 2005. Tape 1.

²⁵ Indeed, facing the camera with a serious and studied demeanor characterizes early pictures from multiple cultures, including the 'west,' where some photos are unbearably stiff.

²⁶ My interviewee had pictures that included servants left to her by her grandmother. Her Oma had relayed many stories to her about the people, including servants, in those pictures. She scanned some of them and sent them to me by email. The dynamics of servant-family relations in her Oma's household were far more

What are we to make of these discrepancies? Tentative responses are located in the space between the memories of those still residing in Indonesia, and those who have left. For years, at least 40 or more in late New Order Java, former servants had been hiding, denying, and/or re-structuring interaction with Dutch families or employees; their re-experiences emerging from a self-state dialogue rooted in mechanisms for survival. Thus there was no intimacy between Dutch employers and servants, it was all business. In addition, the job was not always a good one because_____.

Western discourse speaks of servants as 'subaltern,' 'dominated,' 'exploited' under the colonial regime.²⁷ The event/relationship that required revolutionary re-interpretation was not being a servant, but being a servant to the *Dutch*, since the West itself inscribes the relationship, and the people in it, in terms of a power over/servility paradigm, denying and marginalizing any claims to friendship, patron, or family-like links. Since the revolutionary state and the West participated in identical discursive understandings - indeed, given Soekarno's intimate knowledge of Occident/Oriental mythology this cooptation was deliberate -legitimization of the employer-servant relationship was accomplished through the marginalization of any tincture of servility - it was just a job and like all jobs it had its ups and downs.

The discourse calls forth the old adage, *if you say something often enough, people will believe it*. If for 40 years you deny familiarity with what was once deeply familiar, or externalize those relations to conform to a discursive mandate, memories of what was would be long forgotten in favour of how you speak about it now. Indeed, how you speak it now is precisely how it was. The attendant divergence

Javanese than in the families I interviewed. Her Oma did mitigate these relations somewhat. However, servants occupied a very formal position and certainly showed great deference to members of the household, including assuming a lower (squat) position when spoken to. Interviewee claims that servant demeanour arose from Javanese norms and mores therefore has an impact on 'colonial' and colonial 'subaltern' discourses.

²⁷ Locher-Scholten, E. (1994) Orientalism and the Rhetoric of the Family: Javanese Servants in European Household Manuals and Children's Fiction. *Indonesia* 58: October. Page 19.

in memories; Indonesians at home, opposed to Dutch and Dutch-Indonesians on the matter of pictures, points to the grave problems with the correspondence memory metaphor – the assertion that there is truth ‘out there’ and that memories must be judged on how closely they overlap with the ‘real.’ (The event and its interpretation) These memory sets cannot be reduced to an either/or: Indonesians abroad/Dutch/Dutch-Indonesians are lying or Indonesians at home are lying. They are all telling truth based on enabled recall and experiential interpretation. Ponder the vast differences in their lives subsequent to the Occupation. Dutch, Dutch-Indonesians, and Indonesians abroad, anguished at their loss of land, country, peoples, and future, invested weighty symbolic value in the peoples, relationships, and landscapes of Indonesia. *They would not forget. These people and this place symbolize this time, this house, and this life.* The servant role, and servants themselves, embody oft-elaborated placeworlds and emotions, not repressed ones.

On the other hand, no benefits for remembering the Dutch are traceable for Indonesians in Indonesia so lovingly recalled by their Dutch, Dutch-Indonesian, Indo-European and ex-pat Indonesian friends, families, and employers. Imagine the consequences of recounting stories of the closeness of your relationships with the enemy. Why, directly after the Occupation, attempt revisions of an official script when you believed that doing so could lead to your own arrest or put your family at risk? Why set yourself against your children or those who have acquired the official party cant on the colonial period? If, in a private moment, you shared that you were happy in that time and place, and you escaped arrest, you were marked – an Indonesian “Uncle Tom” - who signified danger for those in his/her immediate environment. Better then, to forget Dutch children, the families, the life, the job, the photos, indeed, the entire era. Forty years later, it never existed except in its transformational, formally approved guise. Indonesians forgot to survive. To survive, Dutch, Indonesians abroad, and Dutch-Indonesian men and women, remembered.

For Indonesian interviewees, the decision not to speak initiated as a survival mechanism and should not be confused with the “making of the self” analytic school of remembering, which adheres to the notion that memories are either silenced or articulated to align with an emerging self-concept and resulting self-presentations. Silence or remembering constrained by violence is not a ‘choice’ - I refute

Stoler and Strassler's selection of the label 'choice' when speaking of interviewee memories: *the memories they chose to recall present.....*²⁸ Choice has little to do with memory implantation, memory spin, or discursive alterations backed by terror and violence. Terror delimits memory selection and even if that threat is removed, as was presumably the case in New Order Java regarding discourse on the Dutch, the ever-present threat of *terror past* imposes parallel restrictions in a New Order Java Society of Surveillance.

The explanation offered for forgotten photos informs the problem of alternate memories regarding the servant/family relationship. Yet here there are gaps in the texts collected by Stoler and Strassler. Some ex-servants did recall familial relationships; curiously, the only time Stoler and Strassler was attentive to Dutch-Indonesian difference is when they partially dismiss this memory with the observation that after all, it was a Dutch-Indonesian (Eurasian) household where their informant was so at home. Poignant, and I think critical, are the glimpses we get of recalled mischief carried out by servants and the children of the household. Children, and their attempts to circumvent Mama and Papa's rules, evoke a small smile, a dim ray of light that threatens, but does not re-birth, memories long denied. Although hard data is sparse around this issue in Stoler and Strassler's article, the reader receives the impression that servants took an "I can't go there" approach to memories of children that threatened to resurface.

Interviewing techniques employed by Stoler and Strassler's team raise a number of concerns. In the first instance, the text reveals pre-judgment on their part; it is permeated by the same mistaken attitude I held when interviewing the Indonesian gentleman quoted above. An oblique certitude that all Indonesians naturally resent both colonialists and Colonialism, as well as an adherence to the mandate that colonialists offer fictionalized accounts of their lives in Indonesia, informs the content of, and the manner in which, questions were posed to interviewees. What are we to make of the

²⁸ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. Vol. 42; No. 1 (January) 4 - 48. Page 5.

statement that, when investigating Dutch male-servant sexuality, they 'returned' to it (issue) a number of times with the same informant and 'pressed' their interviewee to remember, when she/they said they didn't? ²⁹While these interviewers ultimately rejected the simple fiction/truth binary, they utilized it throughout their interviews. Confronted with denial or silence on the part of former servants regarding interviewer pre-determined answers, they pressed informants to such an extent that when they finally provoked a memory, it appears rote-like; a narrative form trotted out for consumption. The fact that Stoler and Strassler did not hide their expectations in their published article, indeed they admit that they brought certain pre-formed judgments to the interviews, begs the question of how much prejudice they exposed to their interviewees and its impact on these servants. Did they convey their certitude that the memories being collected would speak 'truth' and throw into high relief the 'false' glorification or legitimization of Colonialism found in 'Dutch accounts'?

Secondly, the palpable fear that seeps through interviewee texts queries interviewer sensitivity to interview dynamics. Informants who worry that their words might lead to an arrest, should be able to expect, at minimum, that this fear and what it signifies regarding their past and present social sphere, is sensitively handled, that respectful attention is paid to their social and psychological fears, and that the symbolic value of that fear will be incorporated into subsequent analysis. To press an already recalcitrant interviewee, one who displayed a decided disinclination to cooperate with questions even though Stoler and Strassler were eager to 'commiserate' with her, for example, seems questionable. Indeed, their eagerness to engage in commiseration may be precisely what silenced this interviewee.

Don't think that some people did not see through the government's attempt to redirect their thinking. They aren't stupid. But when a

²⁹ op. Cit.

*regime backs that redirection with limitless force on the basis of little provocation, a careful man takes the wisest route.*³⁰

It is just possible that their interviewee was a cynic who recognized yet another situation where someone came to her with their mind made up about what she should say, and then set out to ensure she said it. Given her age, she had lived through the transformation and state denial of multiple discourses, including internalization of a premise that no-one was interested in *her*, but only that her discourse could validate or conform to a particular set of external interests. The self-admitted prejudice on the part of interviewers ensured that their expectations were central to the life story exchanges. Informants on the project would correctly judge that fulfilling discursive expectations for the benefit of the interviewers formed an important part of their interactive task. Although threatened violence did not directly form part of this complicated interactive process, perceptually it looms large in the form of feared betrayal of interviewees by interviewers. Commiseration does not mitigate the silent fear that words spoken may be passed on to authorities if they are not 'articulated correctly.' Nor does commiseration³¹ ensure that the interviewee's past will be revealed as she knew it; since the interviewer has already indicated it is a past that requires commiseration, any emergent dialogue must needs fulfill that expectation.

Decoupling occurred between the socio-historical worlds of these late 20th century academics and interviewees. The latter spoke from a self-monitored to state speech perspective with the full knowledge that articulation should conform to interviewer expectations, not tell a life. These divergences in speech communities – the lack of shared code – proved an indissoluble barrier. Stoler and Strassler interpret Ibu Darmo's lack of response as a lingering resentment against the Dutch. Her lack of cooperation can just as easily be explained by the proposition that this interviewee resented her role as prop – no

³⁰ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. August, 2005.

³¹ Although the Interviewers deployed commiseration, this tactic that is not necessarily seen as genuine, indeed may backfire, as it did when I tried to 'commiserate' with a chauffeur working for an colonial personage.

genuine interest in her life, but rather what she might say that would (once again) reinforce a narrative script that she had not authored. Finally, interviewers seem strangely blind to the narrative of 'Americans as Imperialists' in Indonesia; a discourse that could potentially frame interview response to the interviewers themselves.

³²

Yet the prospective for instruction from this interviewee is palpable. She did not welcome the interviewers, did not follow Javanese protocol in terms of offering them refreshment, and did not 'bond' with the interviewer when Stoler shared that her own mother was the same age as the interviewee. Instead the informant noted that she did not know whites lived that long. I found that comment fascinating. Was it an expression of animosity vis a vis Stoler-whites? Alternatively, what had her experience been with whites, age and death? Life story interviewing can expose unexpected and provocative material, thus interviewers are best guided by interviewee narrative journeys, not by a pre-set script of topics and questions. Perhaps seizing upon this comment – one obviously personal and referential – might have provided a way 'in' to the life of Ibu Darmo.

5.1.3 SEXUALITY

Despite the pressure to remember against the colonial grain, in the matter of Dutch man on Asian servant sexuality, Stoler and Strassler's past servant responses overlap with Dutch informants.³³ Like Dutch wives alluded to earlier, servants also received their information from so and so.³⁴ In other words, the 'word was out' that

³² Indeed, this propensity to marginalize the role of America in terms of its foreign policy merges with an American perception of self and the birth of their country.

³³ Stoler, A. L. & Strassler, Karen. (2000). Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in New Order Java. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. Vol. 42; No. 1 (January) 4 - 48. Page 15 ff.

³⁴ As a reminder of an earlier quote: ... (self) Well some discussions about Dutch men in Indonesia talk about sexuality – relations between Dutch men and Indonesian women – sometimes against the will of the woman. (Long pause; Interviewee:) Ahhh. Yes. Well that is a case of "I heard that so and so." (Self) I'm sorry? [Body language: eyebrows up; don't understand] (Interviewee) You heard about it happening but never to anyone you knew,..they heard from a friend, who

it happened, but it was always unverifiable because the information was received through long and torturous chains of contacts.

Pondering the impact of society and history on memory, Stoler and Strassler problematize why past female servants will not discuss Dutch male attacks on their virtue, a topic that obviously fascinates this interviewing team. They theorize that admitting past association with the Dutch is still a negative that would tell against their informants. Moreover, if that association was sexual, the women may be doubly implicated, - what if listeners believe that the female interviewee solicited Dutch male desire? Hence, they muse, in speaking of assault happening to others, the women can discuss it, while simultaneously displacing - or forgetting - violation. There is evidence in their interviews to support this proposition since some women deny advances while simultaneously speaking of a proposition personally received. It is somewhat troubling, to say the least, that it is difficult to determine from their proffered data whether these memories were produced for Stoler and Strassler's benefit, if they are the products of national remembering, or if they refer to embodied speaker experiences.

It is also a disingenuous proposal. For if the Dutch male is the predatory creature of their imagination, could recipients of male lust not cast their experiences within a victim discourse that compellingly increases the dark stature of the Dutchman while simultaneously evoking pity for their own helpless circumstances? In fact, is rape not the ideal crime with which to confront the Colonizer? As a symbol it reverberates on multiple levels; rape of a woman = rape of (feminized) Indonesia. Simultaneously, the feminization of Indonesia feminizes Indonesian males emasculated through their inability to protect their womenfolk = the people of Indonesia as

heard from a friend, who heard from so and so and it was always somewhere else - not in your circle, not in your city. So you could not verify anything. (self) Do you think it truly happened? (Interviewee) Gossip (geklets) People with nothing better to do. (Self - pressing) So you think there is no truth to those stories? (Interviewee) Well...I think there is no smoke without fire. So I think it did happen..but I can tell you this. In my household, in my circle, if any of our husbands, or our sons, had even thought about it, they would have heard about it from us. You can "take that to the bank." Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 1, June, 2004.

subservient, helpless and the playthings of the Colonizer, as noted in Smith's work.³⁵ Surely raped women are ideal revolutionary icons to remind the Indonesian people of how much they gained when the Dutch finally left Indonesia?

Yet this is not the case. There is little in anti-colonial rhetoric – except academic continuation of the motherland's condemnation – that extracts Dutch male sexuality as the exemplar of the evils of Dutch Colonialism. One searches in vain for any mention of it by Soekarno, Hatta, or other revolutionary leaders. Yet academics depict the Dutch inter-racial household, where mother and father are Dutch and the servants Indonesians, as a hot-bed of inter-racial sexual tension. We are back in the realm of mythology that frames the colony. Discussions with my interviewee revealed that no-one ever queried her (Javanese) grandfather's potential assaults on Indonesian servants. Apparently, scholars cling to the opinion that if Javanese men approached their servants, (as historically, they did) those acts can be dismissed as cultural custom and consequently, the plight of women under these circumstances does not merit attention or any comment that might cast suspicion on our sensitivity to cultural difference. Few Dutch-Indonesians are familiar with this discourse either; one derives, in terms of the mythology, that the Dutch man has his longed for and forbidden Asian sexual partner in his wife. Similarly, Indonesian consultants normalize these potential relationships; they eloquently elaborate on the multi-racial marriages that bound communities and families to one another and conceptualized multi-ethnic relations as a way of expanding life's possibilities, including relations with the Dutch.

The equation between raped women and the rape of Indonesia plays no small role in this area of study. As I noted in Chapter Two, the metaphors are so closely linked, they share the same linguistic sets. Deconstruction reveals an iterative, binary, Colonized-Indonesia to Indonesian-women façade that situates the Indonesian woman, as noted by feminists, as doubly colonized:

³⁵ Smith, A. (2005) *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. Cambridge: Southend Press.

COLONIZER	COLONIZED
DUTCH	INDONESIA
MEN (MALE)	WOMEN (FEMALE)
ACTIVE	PASSIVE
STRONG	WEAK
US (SAME)	THEM (Other)
EXPLOITER	EXPLOITED.

Figure 10: Dualism: Dutch men + Indonesia + Indonesian Women

Passivity and weakness that lead to exploitation; the identical equation challenged by feminists as they dismantled the symbol 'female,' are stipulated attributes of a colonized/feminized Indonesia. As Tadiar points out, colonizing the (passive) female body and colonizing the (passive) body of a nation both stem from a male (conquest-power over) imagination – they are one and the same.³⁶ In spite of local studies of resistance that set aside the binary sets, opposed ascriptions continue to dominate analyses of inter-ethnic colonial relations precisely because they offer a neat, tidy, and binary framework of understanding. As the Dutch raped Indonesia, so too, they raped its women, while Dutch women, who participate on this level in the 'dominator/male' paradigm, ignored these assaults.

Taylor's discussion of novels written by women in the Indies, encapsulates the contradictory forces at play, while illustrating Stoler's assertion that colonial discourses *cast white women as the bearers of a more racist imperial order.*³⁷ In the late 19th century, women novelists disseminated text after text that explored their concerns regarding the phenomenon of Dutch man and Asian female sexuality. Particular attention was paid to the Colony's laws regarding ethnicity, identity, and legal standing, with a focus on the children that fell through the cracks. In the 19th century the narrative is set, or, considering the Motherland's historical preoccupation with Dutch sexuality in the tropics, the plot continues. It is the relationships between Dutch men and indigenous women that concern the authors; no like discussion of children fathered by

³⁶ Tadiar, N. (1993) *Sexual Economies of the Asia-Pacific*. [in] Dirlik, A. (1993) *What's in a Rim? Critical Perspectives on the Pacific Region Idea*. Boulder: Westview Press.

³⁷ Stoler, Ann. (1997) *Race and the Education of Desire*. Chapel Hill: Duke University Press.

indigenous men on 'exploited' indigenous mothers pre-occupies their prose. In this capacity, Dutch women not only operated as 'strong' to the colonized 'weak,' they have assumed the role as bearers of the colonial order that Smith indicates they must inevitably take on³⁸ and they are clearly opposed to the ultimate keepers on the non-colonial order – indigenous women. The non-impact of this literature is equally revealing, the novels circulated among women. No action is taken regarding the issues until males problematize and mediate those concerns (mediation between two sets of women that leaves men in control) at the government level. Here Dutch women, historically concerned with the permutations of non-regulated Dutch-Asian sexuality, operated at the level of passive/weak to Dutch male action/strength.³⁹

Summing up the information conveyed through life story texts, Dutch women and Indonesian servants think it happened, but not to them or their servants and not in their households. They did however, hear about it happening to someone else, somewhere else. Simultaneously, when 'pressed,' by Stoler and Strassler, a few servants did describe sexual advances made by Dutch male employers. Looking at the data sets, can it be possible that both sets of women engage in overlapping denial for their own purposes? From the perspective of Dutch women as head of household, denying that her husband engaged in sexual activity with servants has a number of consequences that it would be irresponsible to ignore. Firstly, as one informant observed, the act violated religious precepts, both in terms of the honour and fidelity a man owed his wife, but also in relation to the woman he assaulted. Secondly, for some women – but not all, since this depended on a woman's view of man's (potentially insatiable) sexual appetites - a husband that turned to servants for sexual pleasure made a negative statement about the marriage. Thirdly, the admission that Dutch male-on-servant sexuality was common in Indonesia and that Dutch women

³⁸ Smith, A. (2005) *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. Cambridge: Southend Press.

³⁹ Taylor, J. G. (1984) *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

accepted it as part of life, sets the colony apart from the mother country. Such behaviour would vindicate claims in the Netherlands that the Dutch in Indonesia were no longer quite civilized and evinced morals corrupted by the tropics. However, speaking this sexuality into (re) existence is certainly possible for Dutch interviewees in North America. Not only has the climate for public 'sex-talk' altered radically over the past decades, no political implications or back-lash, let alone public scrutiny, would result from this revelation. They could have been quoted anonymously without personal repercussions, while speaking truths long unuttered. Yet, no fissure appeared in the hegemonic wall of discursive denial that untoward Dutch male-Asian woman sexuality occurred in *my* household.

Finally, admission would expose an element of racism in the act and its presumed acceptance by Dutch women, the premise that Indonesian women could be used in ways that Dutch women could not; that the lives and feelings of Indonesian women were of less import; an instance of 'thingification.'⁴⁰ That racism would certainly not play well today. Any Dutch woman who admitted that her husband made free with the servants, and that she ignored it, would have to address interviewer enquiries as to her motivations in this regard. Yet the outline of the same racist paradigm is clearly discernable in academic concerns regarding Dutch-Asian sexuality and the attendant neglect of Asian-Asian cases of potential assault, even though the Asian men involved held power over the women they abused. The academic fascination is with the sexuality of Dutch men and their abuse of (faceless) indigenous women, a critique that has the happy consequence of facilitating a side-along indictment of colonialism.

Turning to past servants, their denials and/or silence might proceed from different impulses. There is the problem of sleeping with the enemy, especially if one had not raised the issue when it actually occurred. In discussing the plight of Dutch-Indonesians after the war, an informant noted:

⁴⁰ Smith, A. (2005) *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. Cambridge: Southend Press. P. 9.

*....(answers my question about violence against Dutch-Indonesian)
Yes, there was a lot of violence against them after the war.....I
would say that for some, there was hate. It was different ..how
people felt about Dutch men in the marriage and the wives. They
could hate the men for being Dutch, they would hate them for
taking Indonesian women....but...see, the wives were part
Indonesian.. some were very Indonesian. So they slept with the
Dutch..well that spurred hate. They were seen as enemies, traitors.
The children... were part Dutch and part Indonesian. Well, were
would their loyalties be? That's what worried some. So they
punished....some of the women, yes. The violence was terrible, even
against the children.⁴¹*

Dutch-Indonesian women, children and their husbands carried transformed symbolic value after 1942, since the Japanese also recognized them as 'different.' The equation between the colonial rape of Indonesia = assault on Indonesian women by Dutch men is straightforward in this model, while the signification of Indische or Indonesian wives reverberates connotatively. They were traitors within, while their children were anomalies with no clear ethnic identity, compounded by the fact that they were the offspring of a rapist and a traitor. Past servants would not be blind to the implications of this discourse for themselves, and hence maintain silence on any past relations with Dutch masters. On the other hand, servants now discussing advances made by employers may be responding to an enabled or stipulated narrative theme either at the national or academic level. This too, is a possibility that cannot be ignored.

The consequences of speaking for both sets of women were considerable and it is not out of the question that the Great Silence regarding Dutch-Asian sexuality in the household represents an unplanned, but mutually beneficial blanket over male behaviour; discussion benefits neither group of women. If men commonly sought out servants, then the female victims of assault have tried to repress memories that now insist on recognition, just as concentration camp victims work to forget bodily degradation that refuses silence. Dutch women, in turn, have constructed lives of

⁴¹ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. August, 2005.

forgetting. This silence of necessity would be particularly crucial after Repatriation, when they occupied a socio-political milieu in the Netherlands not conducive to, except to condemn, master on servant sexuality. Indeed, any potential discourse on this topic would have added fuel to the fire stoked by those in the Netherlands who argued for Indonesian independence. Yet.....there may indeed be little to tell. Many of Strassler and Stoler's, and my interviewees, were forthright in their assertions that they heard of it from others, but it did not happen to them.⁴²

5.1.4 MEMORIES OF THE ELDERS

Children's lack of interest in their elder's discourse in Stoler and Strassler's study derives from socio-historical repressions of memory and concretization of correct speech. Envision parent-child relations in a community that harnesses a single vision of past to the present. There is only one script; one explanation for particular historical events, places, and relationships; memory articulation must develop the narrative line. The younger generation would be infinitely bored with a regurgitation of a past they already knew. Since nothing new would emerge, the past would hold little in the way of lessons, morals, shared experiences, or interest for children. As well, any deviation from official script would not only embarrass them, it might threaten their future. Working as a servant to a colonialist for example, reinscribed as servility to Europeans - a mortifying mentality in a parent - signifies a historical period best dismissed. That same servant-Dutch master relationship, if acknowledged as memory, had the potential to harm the child politically.

Where we do see grown-child involvement in Stoler and Strassler's interviews, the child either patronizes the elder, or urges her on to juicy revelation that supports the prejudice of the interviewer; in other words the child colludes in eliciting the correct interviewee response, based on the child's assessment of interviewer expectations. This interaction sharply contrasts with the role of offspring in other database sub-categories. They knew some of the

⁴² Stoler and Strassler, I believe, hold to the conviction that it is a silenced discourse and one that women, using denial, work hard to forget.

stories told and enjoyed them all over again, got out pictures to stimulate further conversation, reminded the narrator if they forgot a detail or sequence, and were angry or curious when they heard a story for the first time that they thought interesting or important, something they *should have known*. Over the course of the interviews, children and grandchildren became aware that their parents had made many mistakes, had struggled with *their* parents, felt pain, laughter, and loss. Through memory, they *connected*.

Despite the shame attached to the previous 'servility' of their elders that underlies the patronage exhibited by children of former servants in Stoler and Strassler's study, a double edged "less said, the better" is evident. Even though a new approach to the West permeated the official policy of the New Order, and the Dutch are not the demons they were, it is clear that the permissiveness in speech vis a vis the Dutch has not quite set in, is not yet trusted. No-one is comfortable with the change- or quite believes it yet. A palpable fear remains when speaking of self-Dutch interaction.

A number of forces are thus at work in the negation of elder's memories. In the first instance, children don't believe that there is much to remember. Indeed, memories of Colonialism, and Indonesian participation in the paradigm, are scripted and they 'already know it all.' Secondly, any memories of collusion between former servants and the Dutch are best forgotten, no-one wants to own servility to the west as a past familial trait. Lastly, since memories cannot be personalized in a script society, elders and children cannot share. In fact, they do not even occupy remotely similar speech communities. Between 'before' the war, and after the 'war' lies the Occupation and the Occupation forms the focus of past remembering; on the other side of that chasm lies the colonial period. No bridge exists between then and now and even if, as often occurred in the other interviews, elders could evoke commonalities of pain through a relation of their youth and lives, that possibility is largely closed in a society that silences personalized memory forms.

I told my children as much as I could... even about the other side.. I understood, and I wanted the kids to understand, why we fought each other. I had family that was revolutionary..that grew to view

*me with contempt. That does not mean that I didn't, and do not, love them. You pass on your memories hoping that your kids will learn something from what you have experienced. That maybe you can spare them some pain if they avoid the mistakes you made...*⁴³

Parent to child memories have divergent functions for the Indonesians interviewed in Stoler and Strassler's fieldwork, and Indonesian, Dutch, and Dutch-Indonesian database informants. Expats use memories to teach: transmit life lessons, morals, history, and to share human cross-generational commonalities. The memories of Stoler and Strassler's interviewees confirm an official past. This is not to say that memories do not serve versions of the past for other database consultants. They most certainly do. However, they are always in conversation with one another and with Indonesia, and rarely endorse a singular script.

5.1.5 MEMORY IN INDONESIA.

Narratives transmitted by Indonesians speak directly of an ability to think and speak for oneself and North American Indonesians identify this right as the key difference in the lives they led after 1942 at home and their lives in Canada or the U.S. Discussing freedom and speech in Indonesia, a female interviewee elaborates:

Interviewee: We are still not free in Indonesia.

Self: What is lacking?

Interviewee: We have not grown into freedom yet, our minds are not yet free. It started with the Japanese and then continued.....even once we gained Independence, we were not free to think for ourselves or say what we thought... World politics were interpreted for us – in the manner that would best benefit a particular leader. . . I am so lucky...to have traveled to many parts of the world and to hear other stories, other sides.....my grandmother first gave me that gift with her stories, her memories of the way things were for her.

.....We had no free press to challenge interpretations. People who stood up, who protested, who thought for themselves, died. Under

⁴³ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. April, 2004. Tape 3.

Soekarno, under Suharto. Areas of Indonesia that opposed Djakarta were ruthlessly treated. Now we have a free press. We have elections. But we still have bribery and corruption in every part of government. You can't cut out the cancer with an election or two.....

..The hate stays. People have been taught to hate. We are good at it. We are good at blaming others. The hate against the Americans is strong. When the economy crashed in the 90s, and the IMF imposed massive structural adjustments on my government and people, the Americans – the stock market – got the blame. Not Suharto who set us up to fall. People overwhelmingly believe it was America. They hate Americans, and there are groups in Indonesia who fan that hate... hate is a poison in the body of a nation. Someday we will pay for the hate...⁴⁴

She later adds,

*I must say something because I too am contaminated by a fear of speaking and must ease my guilt that I am doing so. I love my country. I would never want to live anywhere else. I delight in its history. I love its beauty and its people. I want to be part of any change, good or bad, that may happen. I am utterly committed to Indonesia. So when I criticize, it is like you if you criticized Canada...only you don't worry about that do you? *laughs* you just do it because you can – you can speak if your government or someone else offends you and you take that right for granted. I am talking now as if I have always had that right – but I haven't had that right for a great part of my life..... I may criticize, but Indonesia is my home. Always. I criticize that we may improve.⁴⁵*

Official discourse, in interaction with individual speech, not only affects what people say, but ultimately, how they think. At what point for Indonesians/Dutch-Indonesians/Indo-Europeans/Dutch in Canada, did it become possible to discuss the good Japanese during WW II? Toward the end of the last century, as Dutch 'Ieteke' laid her wreath for Camp Commander Saida on the cenotaph in White Rock,⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Oral History Interview, Indonesian Female. May, 2005. Tape 2.

⁴⁵ Op. cit., Tape 3.

⁴⁶ Zwaan van Veen, Miriam. (1999) My Best Friend "Papa." (in) Tromp, S. (1999). *Four Years Til Tomorrow. Despair and Hope in Wartime Dutch East Indies.* (A

she silently stated that it was acceptable to speak well of this foe in war, that the speech climate, both in Canada and in her war-survivor community, allowed it. In short, she made a gesture of reconciliation facilitated by her socio-political and peer-group climate.

People in Canada who survived the horrors of war in South East Asia, whatever their ethnic background, did not uniformly appreciate the gesture. The critical point is that it was possible to make it; she has Agency. No official discourse barred her ability to think with love of an enemy, nor to make that public. She did not fear arrest or a day in Court. Simultaneously, she read her peer-group, always indicative of acceptable speech trends, as open to the possibility of this articulation. In a free speech society, conflicting points of view, pushing the envelope, challenging silence, is common. Through her act she, along with like-minded others, concretized a discourse of mutual recognition and pain.

Indonesians abroad maintain that the ability to speak under the Dutch did not interact with technologies of terror, and trace the initiation of discursive self-monitoring and national scripting to the Occupation and beyond. Indonesian memories remained of necessity highly selective:

“...but she didn't know – the full story of the coup and the purge was slow to appear in American newspapers. Indonesians didn't talk about it either. My stepfather, who had seen his student visa revoked while still in Hawaii and had been conscripted into the Indonesian army a few months before our arrival, refused to talk politics with my mother, advising her that some things were best forgotten.”⁴⁷

To remember in Indonesia is to remember to forget, invoking the necessity for constant and relentless self-monitoring. White and

collection of 26 eyewitness stories by members of the August 15th, 1945 Foundation.) Vancouver: Vanderheide Publishing. Pages 67-70. Page 68.

⁴⁷ Obama, Barrack. (2006) *The Audacity of Hope*. New York: Three Rivers Press. Page 273. His mother worked at the American embassy where she had access to American newspapers. Indonesian newspapers of course, carried the official version of the purge.

Langer's discussion concerning 'sense making practices'⁴⁸ raises the question of impact on a psyche that experiences one set of circumstances, but is told that those experiences never happened or that they were something quite different. Does this process split self from memory, or self from social world, or does it depend on the level at which alternate explanations are internalized? If, for example, you come to believe that yes, the experiences you had are the ones you are told you had, and dismiss what you initially thought they were, then your perception is at one with your social world, you share sense making practices; shared reality-delusions if you will. If however, you do not, or will not, accept an alternate version of your experience, clinging instead to what you 'know' - and torture records attest that people cling fiercely to their own realities - then conceivably, self no longer shares sense making practices with social beings in his/her environment and experiences disjunction; dissonance in relation to other social beings. When retribution is ever present as punishment for non-conformity to script (terror internalized) then self loses intentionality and agency. An interesting catch 22 - Soekarno did not perceive the masses as having either intentionality or agency and shaped his policies to ensure the non-development of either quality.

Both during and after the war then, reconstruction of whole peoples and history proceeded at the level of an official power that comprehensively penetrated the Indonesian social fabric. Initially, the Japanese, openly bent on the reconceptualization of the 'European' by the Asian, introduced national propaganda that illustrated the superiority of Eastern peoples by denigrating and humiliating western citizens in Eastern countries. Through the systematic dismantling of all signs of hierarchical legitimation, the denigration of European spirituality, secular power, any legitimate claims to land and peoples (no right of inheritance), and the illustration that European force had fallen to the Asian, the Japanese announced, *nothing about the European entitles him to hold power over an Asian people. On the contrary, the limit of their aspiration is to serve us.*

⁴⁸Langer, L. (1991) *Holocaust Testimonies: the Ruins of Memory*. New Haven: Yale University press. Pages 63-64.

More specifically however, this message compellingly reiterated the seductive refrain of revolutionary power appropriation: *nothing about a Dutch man or woman entitles him or her to hold power over the Indonesian people. On the contrary, you must limit their aspirations to serving you.* Reinforced by propaganda that placed the blame for any contingent problems on the Dutch, the Japanese moved swiftly and cruelly against Indonesians – be they Chinese, Dutch-Indonesian, Arab, or of any Indonesian ethnic background – if they assisted a European. Finally, the Japanese focused keen attention on the young men of Indonesia, indoctrinating them with fascist policies through an impressive array of military institutions. By the end of the war, membership in these organizations numbered in the millions.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ For example: The *Seinendan*: A Java wide paramilitary youth movement, the *Seinendan*, was set up to train men for local defence and to spread Japanese war propaganda. Soekarno exhorted the youth to join the organization as well as various other auxiliary armed services set up by the Japanese. Japanese records reveal that the *Seinendan* had half a million members in 1945. *Barisan Nerani Mati*: From 1944 onwards, some of the *Seinendan* branches, following the Japanese model, established suicide units. *Keibodan*: The *Keibodan*, an auxiliary police force, was more than one million strong by the end of the war. The *Heiho*: In mid 1943, an Indonesian auxiliary force that formed an integral part of the Japanese Army, and containing many former Indonesian KNIL officers and NCOs, was formed to man aircraft batteries and to defend airfields and other military installations. The officers were Japanese and Indonesians could not advance above the rank of Sergeant. By the end of the war, more than two million men had been recruited for the *Giyugan* and *Heiho* auxiliaries. *Heiho* men were often utilized as guards in internment camps. *Pembela Tanah Air (PETA)*: In October 1943, yet another military organization, the Indonesian volunteer defence, was constituted on Java and Sumatra. In this case, Indonesians could advance to battalion level. “Not entirely sure of Indonesian loyalty” the Japanese left PETA without a central command structure; it remained a lightly armed infantry force of individual battalions bound to defend a particular region. Training emphasized the instillation of “fighting spirit” (*semangat*). In 1945, PETA included 120,000 armed fighting men. This group would later form the core of the new Indonesian Armed Forces (TRI – later known as ABRI). *Barisan Pelopor* (Vanguard Corps): In August of 1944, the Japanese allowed Soekarno to found the *Barisan Pelopor*, another paramilitary youth movement that attracted a great number of radical nationalist recruits. *Hisbullah* (Army of God): In December 1944, the *Masjumi* was given permission to set up its own military organization, under Japanese guidance. The *Hisbullah* was composed mainly of Muslim youths associated with *Masjumi*. Members of the *Hisbullah* and the *Barisan Pelopor* were armed with sticks and sharpened bamboo poles (*bambu runcing*). Youth armed with

Independence rhetoric of the pre-war years proved malleable during the Occupation since Japanese intent clearly aligned with revolutionary dreams. Harnessing his cart to the Japanese war effort, Soekarno harangued many a boy to serve as a romusha to assist the Japanese war effort, while referring incessantly to the evils of the Dutch as masters. Countless families lost a son, brother, or husband in this heartless quest; the greater percentage of the boys gave their lives on hard labour/press gangs.

*My brother's boy lost his life when he went to work for the Japanese after listening to Soekarno speak. He just never came back....after the war..... my brother.. was determined that his boy would not die in vain. He would fight for the cause - for the Revolution, as his son had done. He was grieving, he didn't even make sense. he died during the revolution.*⁵⁰

*Hatta. Now there was a reasonable man, a man you could talk to, he could understand all sides. Self: But didn't he collaborate with the Japanese? Interviewee: Bah! They kept him under their noses so they could watch what he was doing. He was no friend to the Japs and you can't blame HIM for the things that happened.⁵¹ You know who you can blame? That Soekarno. I'll tell you about that Soekarno. HE was the collaborator. He sold his own people down the river....*⁵²

Japanese command did not observe the niceties of village life, Java's hierarchical social norms, or the religious boundaries that so preoccupied the Dutch. Nippon consistently and perniciously bled the people dry of foodstuffs, clothing, and infrastructure, as contributions to the war effort on behalf of 'Asian peoples.' Consequently desperate, many people roamed the countryside in search of food and upon Surrender; anomie characterized the island

bamboo poles represent a landmark memory for Interviewees who experienced the *bersiap* period 1945-1949.

⁵⁰ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. August, 2005.

⁵¹ Indeed Penders suggests that Hatta may have complied with the Japanese at gunpoint. Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. Sourcing Hatta on page 16.

⁵² Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. July, 2004. Tape 1.

of Java. The memberships of multiple fascist militias found themselves without an enemy and time on their hands.

The Japanese occupation of Indonesia represents *the* watershed in Indonesian-colonial politics. The tenure of the Japanese facilitated the militarization of the young men, and the oft-times brutal impact of the regime aroused the passion of many Javanese and Sumatran groups. *Broad based* nationalist rhetoric arose as a reaction to Japanese oppression and interviewees blame Soekarno for reformulating the passion against the Japanese into a weapon against the “West.” In this re-formulation, three years of Japanese propaganda that depicted the Allies as evil incarnate while extolling the virtues of Asian nationalism, greatly assisted his cause. Soekarno offered the disenfranchised and anomic young men of Java symbols against which they could publicly direct their hatred. Notwithstanding the re-direction of passion from Japan to the West however, revolutionary leaders pressed hard to maintain that state of affairs, and uprisings against Japan manifested in spite of their efforts to the contrary. In the final analysis, Soekarno’s consummate political skills rallied the pain, the hunger, the poverty, the undirected hate, well-trained young men, and civilians. He gave the rootless, the disenfranchised, the hungry, the intellectuals, and those in pain, purpose.

Yet in outlining national purpose, Ruth T. McVey claims that Soekarno and other leaders failed to define independence as anything other than the dismissal of the Dutch. Dismissing ideas like Panca Sila, cooperatives, and socialist programs as outworn material articulated by others, McVey proposes that nationalism on Indonesia arose within the confines of an indigenous political elite exposed to western education that lived primarily in Batavia and environs. Although they rejected the status quo with respect to the colonial system on Java, they were not ideologically motivated, or indeed psychologically inclined, to replace it with a well-articulated alternative political philosophy.⁵³

⁵³ This is my very short synopsis of a far more extended argument made by McVey. McVey, Ruth T. (1970) Introduction. [in] Soekarno. (1970) *Nationalism, Islam and*

If theorists such as Neuberger are correct, then the innate need to realize a dream of nation under one's chosen rulers, depends on the Creation of a 'wholly Other.' Prior to the Occupation, the Dutch were not wholly other; the interpenetration of colonizer/colonized was well advanced. Indeed, the student of history surveying relations between the colonial regime and revolutionary leaders is somewhat taken aback at the almost incestuous, at times extremely cordial, but always interactive relationship between them. When German troops invaded the Netherlands in 1940, and the Queen left for England, nationalist leaders in exile, such as Hatta and Mangunkusomo, sent telegrams of condolences to the Queen and people of the Netherlands, assuring them of their heartfelt sympathy and support. Notwithstanding this show of solidarity, members of the Volksraad, declaring that they were not attempting to make use of the current plight of the Netherlands, held out for political reform before pledging their support in the event of a Japanese attack. The Queen issued a formal statement from London on two occasions that she would agree to constitutional changes, but Minister for Colonies Welter's response was characteristically Dutch and lamented by database informants, who felt that the declaration should have been much stronger. *Any alterations must wait stated Welter, until after the war, since the States General could not meet under the Nazi occupation and the Constitution required legal emendation by due process.* Dutch commitment to legal principle inhibited their ability to move swiftly, but as Lijphart noted the, "*concern for constitutional processes and the rejection of unconstitutional means were completely genuine and certainly not opportunistic.*"⁵⁴

Since Soekarno was not opposing Colonialism with a long list of grievances in hand, and he held no particular personal animosity against the *Blue Eyes*, no reaction formation against Other prompted the working out of a decisive and alternate vision for the people, beyond the replacement of Dutch with self. Indeed, the revolution in Indonesia, when stripped of its rhetoric, confronts Neuberger's claim

Marxism. Translated by Karel H. Warouw and Peter D. Weldon. Ithaca, N.Y.: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell.

⁵⁴ Lijphart, Arend. (1966) *The Trauma of Decolonization. The Dutch and West New Guinea.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press. Page 110.

that self must define self in opposition to Other. It is, in fact, perfectly possible to exist relationally with others and to formulate self-ambition as opportunities arise. The will to power is not ethnic specific.

5.1.6 CONTRASTIVE MEMORIES

Interviewees in Stoler and Strassler's account were uncomfortable talking about the colonial period and its relationships, redirecting interviewer attention to the Occupation and focusing their narratives on their roles against the Japanese. Labels such as 'good,' used, according to Stoler and Strassler, in a monotonic fashion to describe the Dutch, articulate non-memories, ones that died in silence, sputtered out, leaving a lifeless, yet supportive synchronicity with a national script slowly being dismantled in New Order Java. In contrast, Indonesian interviewees were remarkably comfortable discussing their lives before the war and their discomfort increased as they approached the Occupation, reaching a peak level of angst with the defeat of the Japanese and the ensuing period of terror on Java. Clearly, Indonesian memories told in North America diverge from memories narrated in Indonesia, although a great deal of oral history work requires completion in both regions.

Encountering narrative, a reader attempts to unlock the code that provides access to the text. When we enter the past, current access codes meet with silence, provoking discursive acts rooted in a reader-to-writer transformation that facilitates both the creation of accommodating histories, and constructions that speak to current prejudice.

Of all dominated groups in the former colonies, dominated servants were the most 'subaltern.' Silenced by the subservient nature of their work and the subordinated social class they came from, Indonesian and Javanese servants in the former Dutch East Indies were neither expected nor allowed to speak for themselves.... For all

*these reasons, it is impossible to present these servants' historical voices and experiences directly from original source material.*⁵⁵

Said's *Orientalism* inspired multiple discussions on how the 'Oriental voice' could be recaptured, and sparked a genuine interest in locating the voice of agentive other. The formation of Subaltern Studies responded to this quest, seeking to illuminate essential aspects of the colonial experience through the 'eyes of the colonized,' while probing their roles as harbingers of political and social change.⁵⁶ Conversely, writers like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak conceived of Subaltern Studies as the 'worlding' of the Third World. Her typically severe criticism of intellectual elites that give themselves 'permission to narrate'⁵⁷ asserts that there is no pure form of subaltern consciousness and that any bottom up postcolonial study is simply a European construction of the underclass. An academic cannot process the true subaltern of history because the true subaltern has been rewritten as Subject through the colonial enterprise. Synthesizing neo-Marxism and Derrida, her argument stresses an essential point - that ethnocentrism, everywhere and always - frames text.⁵⁸ Commenting on the tropes of fabrication derived through deconstruction, Spivak makes a final observation. "If" she states, "*in the context of colonial production the subaltern has*

⁵⁵ Locher-Scholten, E. (1994) *Orientalism and the Rhetoric of the Family: Javanese Servants in European Household Manuals and Children's Fiction. Indonesia* 58: October. Page 19.

⁵⁶ Subaltern studies perpetuate binary constructions in the postcolonial world. For a literary example of west-east colonial experience see: Ashcroft, Bill; Griffiths, Gareth; Tiffin, Helen. (2002) *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literature 2nd edition*. New York: Routledge.

⁵⁷ Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Grossberg, L and Nelson, C (eds.) (1988) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988. Pages 283-285.

⁵⁸ Derrida, Jacques. (1976) *Of Grammatology*, Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press. Page 4.

*no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow.”*⁵⁹

Locher-Scholten, commenting on the subaltern condition of servants, concurs that the servant cannot speak. The manner in which she makes this claim reinforces Spivak's observations regarding 'always already' ethnocentrism and the creation of the subject. Indeed *using the servant*, and their retrospectively projected qualities, *dominated, subaltern, silenced, subordinated*, Locher-Scholten uses the servant to recreate colonialism, rendering the servant an instrument in the indictment of Colonialism.

Current guilt notwithstanding, the use of slaves and servants and their expected demeanour, long pre-date the Dutch period in Indonesia. Since servants did not leave records, indeed the idea of their ability to write is laughable given the ideology of hierarchy on Java, can we assert that servants self-described as *dominated, subaltern, silenced, subordinated*? The framework of Hinduism, or animistic religions, dominant forms of worship on the island prior to the coming of Islam, suggests not. Indeed, it is quite conceivable that a servant would perceive function and place in life as conflated and accept as their spiritual work in this lifetime the niche they occupied. To postulate that the 'face' or the servant role represents that person's humanity is equally problematic. Many servants had children, were themselves always members of families, and linked to kin and community. To marginalize agency in all aspects of their '*dominated, subaltern, silenced, and subordinated*' lives, illustrates Spivak's point that we speak a Subaltern that never existed,⁶⁰ albeit not in the manner she may have intended.

From the perspective of the present, inscriptions of past servants serve to convey current judgments on colonialism (oppressive structures), while reflecting concurrent opinions of the role of (female) servants. It would be inappropriate to examine here the

⁵⁹ Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Grossberg, L and Nelson, C (eds.) (1988) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988. page 287

⁶⁰ Op. cit., Pages 276-277.

reasons why the Dutch did not ‘emancipate’ the servant class during their tenure in the East Indies, except to observe again that the Dutch did little in the way of altering the rigid hierarchy on Java, adapting themselves instead to the structural framework. Historical data, or interviewees of any stripe, do not support the implication inherent in Locher-Scholten’s observation: that the Dutch were responsible for the subaltern status of Javanese or Indonesian servants. Especially critical is the evidence of K, who related that the servants in her grandmother’s Javanese household were completely subservient, squatting in the presence of their ‘superiors,’ and that this fretted her grandmother. Contrasting descriptions of Indonesian with Dutch-Indonesian and Dutch households, the latter appear to have relaxed demands on the servants in comparison with the rigid structure imposed by the Javanese.

Given the status of the servant class across cultures, one could just as easily write, *of all dominated groups in the Netherlands, dominated servants were the most ‘subaltern.’ Silenced by the subservient nature of their work and the subordinated social class they came from, servants in Holland were neither expected nor allowed to speak for themselves.*” Servants in the Netherlands likewise engaged in “subservient work” and came from the less than moneyed classes. True, they might speak for themselves, although one doubts employers appreciated or rewarded that behaviour, indeed that it often occurred if a servant or his/her family was wholly dependent on the salary earned or a roof over their head. The necessity to endure would ensure silence under these conditions. Dutch servants certainly did not take up a squat position as K notes for her Oma’s Javanese household, but they “knew their place” and utilized comparable Dutch cultural kinetic indicators, such as lowered eyes, specific clothing, and a modest demeanour, to conform to their roles. They too, experienced sexual advances from some of their employers.

The “upstairs, downstairs” lives of servants and masters, whether in the Netherlands, Britain or Indonesia, alerts us to the fact that the ‘subalterns’ of our imagination had lives of their own and maintained agency to the extent that they had opinions of their ‘betters’ – the master/slave relationship enunciates a knowledge of the dominator by the dominated of intimate proportions. In choosing to locate the colonial servant as the most oppressed and dominated of creatures, we serve the end goal of indicting colonialism on the back of a non-

existent servant utilizing premises drawn from the female-colony paradigm. (no angst regarding male chauffeurs surfaces in the literature) While we justify our power to create Subaltern by claiming a resurrection of the subaltern on Subaltern's behalf, in reality they are simply tools for the indictment of past western values, roles, and cultural specifics through the eyes of current understandings. As Mohanty observes:

*The relationship between Woman, the cultural and composite Other constructed through diverse representational discourse (scientific, literary, juridical, linguistic, cinematic, etc.)- and women- real, material subjects of their collective histories- is one of the central questions the practice of feminist scholarship seeks to address...I would like to suggest that the feminist writing I analyze here **discursively colonizes the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the third world, thereby producing/representing a composite, singular, third-world woman- an image which appears arbitrarily constructed but nevertheless carries with it the authorizing signature of western humanist discourse.**⁶¹ (emphasis mine)*

The concern for the dominated and oppressed (female) servant does not lead to critiques of their contemporary status in modern Indonesia. Post-independence governments did not alter the status quo. They too justify potential abuses through cultural relativism; ancient cultural customs prescribe, and hence legitimize, servant roles:

...There we were the second day (with friends)..... and the servants.. they were older women with grey hair and they crept, they crept along the wall (literally the plinten – the baseboards) because their heads could not be above ours.... It was very difficult, it was terrible,...awful. Mother: Ja. And you know that was not a colonial thing. We did not teach them that. You know where they

⁶¹ Mohanty, Chandra T. Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse. [in] Chrisman, Laura and Williams, Patrick (eds.) (1994) *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*, Toronto: Harvester Wheatsheaf. page 197.

*learned that - from their Regents, Their Regents. That was NOT
us.....*⁶²

Locher-Scholten is completely correct that we cannot now excavate the voices of servants from past eras in the Dutch East Indies, but this holds true of servants across ethnicities. We can however, collect the memories of those still living, as Stoler and Strassler did, consider their cultural contextualization, and extend that process to include those who reside outside Indonesia, as I have attempted to do. These men, two of whom were in their teens when the war ended, carry significant generational memory passed from their elders to themselves regarding parental lives before the war. The stories they heard from kin who worked for the Dutch, and they re-tell with amazing clarity, indicate that before 1942, memory transmission took a different form than it was to do during the Occupation and after Independence. Narratives spoke directly to the pre-war 'subaltern' ability to assess, adapt, resist, conform, or judge:

Mother chuckled about Dutch habits ... She was a cook and when she first went to work for a Dutch family, she had to get used to peeling and cooking potatoes.... (stops for a minute and grins) Its quite a bit different than doing up rice. Well the peeling – that was a challenge – yes. I remember her stories about how she would lose her grip on the potato and it would go flying...

(in answer to my question) yes, she trained under a cook when she was young, so of course I was not born yet, and then she became a cook in her own right later. So I guess we would call that a kitchen help now...when she was young.. Of course by the time she was a cook, no trouble with the potatoes!

(in answer to question regarding the Dutch family his mother worked for) Yes, she did, She talked a lot about the children..they used to go to the kitchen to visit the staff. I met the son a few times before the war, he followed my dad around a bit...I know the children did visit the babu's family...

(In answer to question) She liked the mother. Liked her a lot. Looking back, I think... I think she felt a bit sorry for the mother.

⁶² Compilation of various speech sequences from Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. Tape 3. May 2004. Trip was in the 1970s.

The husband was not home much, and the wife she organized everything. Yes, I remember my mother talking about how organized she was (Dutch wife) and how she supervised everything, but I also remember her saying – a bit disapproving you know – that she was alone a lot and didn't have enough to do.

(in answer to question) It was a steady life, a good job, both my mother and father worked for the same family. My father did the outside work and so. He really liked the family and got on well with the older son. It was a restful life, routine, safe.

.... My father did what he could when the Japanese came for them. I think that it was our life before the war – the way my parents were, the way we lived – that was the big reason I hated the Japanese – they tore it apart. It was a life we wanted back and there was no going back. But we fought for it, we fought to get it back.. and we paid.⁶³

Not only do memories re-spoken point to transferred legacies with children as interactive remembering receptacles, they highlight the *impact magnitude* of the Occupation's role as revolutionary facilitator. Crucially, while they explain ex-pat Indonesian perceptions that the pre-war period was/is perceived as happier, idyllic, and personally secure, Indonesian legacy memories in the database assert a now deviant form of Indonesian memory making. Personal remembering, national memory, speech, and generational transference did not interact ideologically with pervasive technologies of terror in the form of state memory intervention and violence. Remembering was not state scripted before the war. Instead, it exhibits agency and operated on the same basis as Dutch, Indo and Indonesians abroad memory making; to transmit life lessons, morals, history, and to share human cross-generational commonalities; in short, the transmission of knowledge through orality.

5.2 Freedom

The interviewee from Sumatra offered a number of interesting perspectives:

⁶³ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. April 2004. Tape 2.

I didn't live under the Dutch of course, but my parents did. They lived in a small village and had little to do with Dutch people, my mother did not recall ever meeting a Dutch person. Well you know we are Islamic, so she lived her life in a certain way and never went far from home. My father and his brothers though, now they were very involved in Independence through our faith. They went to an Islamic school and many of the boys were political. ...I don't know much about what they did,I know they believed strongly, they do believe strongly, in an independent Indonesia. I know you are Dutch, and I have nothing against the Dutch, but people should rule themselves, so it was good what happened, that Colonialism is over. The Dutch did not understand us.

(In answer to my question about the current state of Indonesia) Well things are not perfect. Independence is a long process and we are divided over many things. In my own religion, there is dissent over the role of Islam, and what kind of Islam in Indonesia. That is becoming more of a problem, since I am a professional woman and I am comfortable in the faith I was raised in. Now people want to change that – they want to change things for women and that is difficult for me because it could take away the life I love and have chosen.

Self: I hope you don't mind my asking, but the changes you speak of in Islam, are they not strains of Islam that come from outside Indonesia? I mean, Islam in Indonesia was a fluid faith, and it seems as if more rigid forms of Islam, foreign forms, are coming from outside. Is that not a form of Colonialism – at least of the mind?

Interviewee: No, I don't think so. We are talking of religion, and different ways to interpret scripture. It is not about a foreign people having power over us.

Self: (treading softly) Religion can be political. It can have great power over the mind. Look at Europe - the Catholics and the Reformation. Same scripture, different interpretations. Or look at the Reformation: multiple churches and scriptural interpretations. People were willing to die for their beliefs. And....when Religion is joined to State, then those interpretations can be imposed..or at least, those in power can try to impose them. I know that Islamic political parties – as a Bloc – are a powerful dynamic in Indonesian politics. Will the threat of the imposition of interpretations that vary with yours not impact your life as you live it...maybe even a step at a time.... And would that not colonize you to a certain extent?.....I ask because you did say it was difficult for you.

Interviewee: Yes, I suppose it may.... But it is one religion, so this is difficult and.....you are wrong though, that militancy is not made in Indonesia, since Aceh – you know Aceh? – well it has been militant for a long time. I will have to accept what comes. See, you don't understand. You can't understand. You are a nice lady, but you are western and you cannot understand us. That is the difference. All of us who are Islam in Indonesia, are still Indonesian. But the Dutch were not Indonesian. They didn't understand us. (I decided to change the topic here, as I did not have the kind of relationship with her that would allow for a free exchange of viewpoints).⁶⁴

This interviewee's father transferred a Dutch as Other memory structure, drawn from revolutionary national discourse that focused on colonials as alien invaders incapable of understanding Indonesian (or Islamic) mentalities or lifeways. The thematic is ahistorical, draws on precepts of Occidentalism, and is applicable to current western peoples who also embody the misunderstanding/inability to empathize with Indonesians. It is better, as per the paradigm of self-determination and this interviewee, to live partially free, or in a regime that disavows freedom for some, if the rulers are ethnically at one with the populace (although given the polyglot composition of Indonesian society, this is ideal rather than real).

Content not to know anything about the Dutch historical period in her country, this informant found it utterly irrelevant to her current circumstances and the future.

*'well it's not that the Dutch were bad. No, there are some people now that think it was better then. But all of that does not matter. They are gone. They did not understand Islam and the situation with Aceh – well that **was** bad and a lot of people resented it and didn't like them interfering. I have said it before – it is not good for foreigners to rule over other people. It is better that we make our own mistakes.⁶⁵*

Best forgotten, the Netherlands Indies past stands as a partially shameful time when foreign peoples held power over her own. When I tried to discuss the actual implications of that power – the very

⁶⁴ Oral History Interview. Indonesian Female. July 2006. Tape 1.

⁶⁵ Op. cit., Tape 1.

small number of actual Dutchman in the archipelago, even after the 19th-century increase - and touched on the fact that her own mother had no contact with the Dutch so that many people continued their lives with little actual interference, she waved this point away. Since she accepts the official historical dissemination of Indonesia's past, her understanding is largely rhetorical. Critically, this perspective has the advantage of clarity; no angst muddies the waters. Had the Dutch been the most magnanimous colonialists ever identified, they did not belong in Indonesia. Quality of governance is irrelevant to this viewpoint, shared 'mentality,' albeit that this may be problematic in Indonesia, is paramount. The Dutch, with their 'western' mentality, could never understand Indonesians.

This interviewee wrestles with the possibility that she may lose personal freedom in order to ensure an alignment between religious and ethnic governance especially if a militant Islamic party assumes power and radically alters women's rights in Indonesia. While struggling with what could happen to her life if this scenario took place, contemplating resistance to maintain her liberties did not come easy, but she was not prepared to create militant Islam as 'Other.' In answer to my observation that some scholars noted radical Muslim ideologies as foreign to Indonesia, facilitating an ability to disown the dogma as non-Indonesian, she quickly denied that this was so, noting that Aceh has a history of Islamic militancy. In short, she will find it difficult to formulate a self-identity encompassing resistance, as for her, militant Islam is Indonesian and Islamic and both form part of her identity and potentially have claim on her allegiance. Participating in both identities and unwilling, at this point, to outline a resistant one, she confronts a problem similar to the one faced by Dutch-Indonesian.

5.2.1 DISCUSSIONS WITH A FEMALE INTERVIEWEE

My other female interviewee does not struggle with like issues. In her words, "*ethnic identity or culture must never trump freedom.*" Rather than a discussion of the points she raised during our many

conversations, I offer a number of verbatim transcriptions that raised vital issues concerning the research: ⁶⁶

(we are discussing the role of the United States in Indonesia)....Self: The U.S. helped you gain your Independence and certainly played a role in the transfer of Papua.

Interviewee: Out of the goodness of their hearts? Let us be realistic. We have resources. They wanted them. So they pandered to Soekarno. When they found out later that Soekarno was not easy to handle, they immediately started to look for someone else to work with and they tried to have Soekarno killed.

Self: I know that U.S. foreign policy is often simply dreadful and ill-considered. I have a lot of American friends though and really like the U.S. I always find myself trying to separate the actions of some of their governments, from the American people.

Interviewee: I too. I am not starry eyed about Canada or the United States – not about Europe either. But I do love the sense of freedom, the debates, the way people take outrageous positions and the press prints what they want.... And people can make choices as individuals to be who they are.

(new stream) Self: But not everyone in Indonesia was sad and angry about 9/11.

Interviewee: No. That's part of hate. (does not elaborate)

Self: (another sequence) So what are you saying then...how are you assessing Colonialism?

Interviewee: I think it has become a word with a lot of different uses. It's a bad thing..so you can cover up a lot of things if you...well look at the situation in African states. A country can use it politically to justify human rights abuses, poverty, wars – "it's because we were colonized." It's a weapon that can be used

⁶⁶ In order to assist in the determination of who is speaking, I use the following definite fonts: Self and for K's discourse: *K's discourse*.

against the west. In fact, even though there were many local power struggles and wars, the west itself...always regards Colonialism as worse, or larger. They don't see Colonialism as a stage in history but more as THE stage in history...

*Self: Do you think that attitude – Colonialism as **the** stage – still shows how preoccupied we in the west are with self? That in spite of “post-colonial” studies – and the term itself centers Colonialism – we cannot get past the colonial period and take a long view?*

Interviewee: Absolutely.

Self: I think this as well. The colonial period represents some kind of watershed for western scholars, something they cannot get past.

Critics such as Aijaz Ahmad have also assessed postcolonial studies and proclaimed:

In periodising our history in the triadic terms of precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial, the conceptual apparatus of ‘postcolonial criticism’ privileges as primary the role of colonialism as the principle of structuration in that history, so that all that came before colonialism becomes its own prehistory and whatever comes after can only be lived as infinite aftermath.⁶⁷

(Interlude - (K:).... Okay...Let me go back a minute to the Colonial question. [...] I have been to the Netherlands ... It's a little bit mine too, you know? [...] Although Java changed many a Dutchman, in the end freedom would have come to us too.

*Self: ...in the end...*grin* Certainly there would have been infinite preparation. The Dutch excel at that.*

*Interviewee: *grins back* Yes. That's true. But would that not have been perhaps better than what did happen? If all of the*

⁶⁷ Ahmad, Aijaz (1996) “The Politics of Literary Postcoloniality” in Mongia, A. (1996) (ed.) *Contemporary Post Colonial Theory: A Reader*. London: Arnold. pages 280-281

*islands sat down, if all interests had been reconciled. If families had not been irrevocably torn apart.....?*sighs**

Self: I can see that. I agree that it would have been better and many of my interviewees believe that it could have happened. ..

but you know , there was a rather pig-headed stance taken by some administrators regarding the Indies, a wilful blindness to new times coming. In retrospect, it is sad. Like over protective parents, they could not let go.

*Interviewee: Ahhhh, but that is precisely right. They were parents worried that some of the kids had not grown up enough yet. *laughs* Don't they say that when parents hang on too long, the children will rebel? They want to grow up, they want Mom and Dad to be proud. Only some of the children got so angry at their parents they acted out just to show them they could..as if they didn't care what the parents thought.. They wanted to hurt them. *long chuckle*there you go – I have just explained Soekarno to you. Are you not grateful?*

*Self to interviewee: In a way, **all** of the interviewees in my database have been silenced. You spoke of the way in which speech has been silenced in Indonesia and that is easy to trace. But public speech by Dutch and Dutch-Indonesians has also been silenced – it's very subtle K, but it is there. And.. when they do speak, others re-interpret what they say. So people like the veterans do not speak. You have relatives that fought in that war... Do they speak? (K shakes her head)*

(self re interviewees narratives) ... constant reinterpretation or silence. They were told to get on with their lives, or it could not have been as bad as they said, and that they were not Indies people but Dutch. That was a denial of their realities, of who they were and where they belonged. On an academic level, we do it too. We don't talk about them at all, or when we do it is to bring them in to make a negative colonial point.or their

*voices are 'sentimental' or 'nostalgic;' – their perceived realities denied.*⁶⁸

5.2.2 A COMMENT ON FREEDOM

Those who have experienced the terror and fear endured by Indonesians, Dutch-Indonesian, and Dutch interviewees, recognize the fragility of freedom, and Indonesian interviewees return to it repeatedly. Three of the four men were politically involved against the Revolution, while another requested a transfer out of Papua when he realized that Djakarta would inevitably receive control of Irian Jaya. While K is clear on Freedom, and what it means to her and her country, I suspect that the Sumatran interviewee will shape and re-shape her understandings of the term in the years ahead.

“Freedom” is the motif that unites Dutch, Dutch-Indonesian, Indo-European, and Indonesian sub-databases. No informant takes it for granted. By varying accounts, it is ‘precious,’ ‘fragile,’ and something to fight and die for. Having experienced or lived with its loss, interviewees are fully aware of both sides of the coin. It will not come as a surprise therefore, that all of them equally express a concern – bar the Sumatran interviewee, although she touched on it in relation to her own country - that freedom is taken for granted in the West, is not cherished, is slowly eroding away.

We cannot simply dismiss this concern as the older generation’s worry that the younger ones do not value what they have, although this is surely part of it. For the majority of those in this database detailed why, how, and where they perceive freedom undermined. The Indonesians in North America were especially critical.

In spite of the terrorist scare, American society is very complacent. No one really believes that what they have, can be taken away. In fact, I think that many of the people I talk to cannot believe that anyone truly and seriously wants to take it away. They have no concept at all of evil. They are naïve, they can't see that anyone would want to do them harm. They simply can't feel that. You can tell them that so and so hates Americans. And they will say.. 'oh, yes

⁶⁸ Oral History Interview, Indonesian Female. May, 2005. Extracts from Tapes 1, 3 and 4.

*I know'. But they can't feel it. They cannot internalize hate. So they go on..always believing the best.*⁶⁹

Or:

*You cannot have Multiculturalism without the application of Universal law. I have no problem with people keeping their Arts, their beliefs.. But where those clash with the laws of the Nation, you cannot say, culture overrides our laws. If we truly believe that all men and women are equal, we cannot allow some women to be oppressed because another culture states it is customary. It is time for Canada to decide where it stands on Universal Rights and then apply them across the board. No exceptions. It is time to sort religion out from culture and to remember that church and state are separate and if you act against the laws, religious belief does not excuse the act. People come to this nation because it is free. Because they can say, and do, and think for themselves. What is happening now is that some of those people scorn the very freedom that brought them here and want to make it less free – so that we start to look like the countries they left. This makes no sense to me. That is what needs to be recognized. They are working at taking away OUR freedom. A step at a time. I have seen it before. They may say, oh no, this is only about our people, but it's not.*⁷⁰

As a Dutch woman put it:

*When you go to Rome, you do as the Romans do. You do not tell the Romans what you want to do and expect them to enact that into law.*⁷¹

Truly, some of these interviewees express the type of sentiment that is often characterized as 'trouble making,' 'fear-mongering,' or insensitive to the difference of other cultures. Yet the circumstances in their backgrounds, and the historical times and socio-political climates they have lived through, demand a thoughtful engagement with their observations. Their experience prohibits a dismissal of their observations because they are elderly and tend not to see that

⁶⁹ Oral History Informant. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 2. April, 2004.

⁷⁰ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 1. August, 2005.

⁷¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian (Female.) Tape 3. June, 2005.

the world has changed. Indeed this is precisely their point: they do not think the world has changed; they simply point to the same problems in new places and identical responses (conciliation or violence) to like historical circumstances.

Informants identify an additional area of concern that leads them to fear for the future: a lack of confidence in western civilization that leads to the 'erosion' of freedoms. During their youth, they say, the 'west' had confidence in its own ideas, its lifeways and its ideologies, a certainty that it was on the 'right path.' Interviewees query the loss of this self-confidence and express great concern regarding its consequences. None adheres to the notion that a country, say Canada as this was an explicit instance brought forward, can adopt a parallel law system; the coupling of Canadian and Sharia law as (was) proposed in Ontario. In my informant's opinion, adoption of Sharia law for a portion of the Canadian population would clearly violate the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, a document that guarantees equality under the law to all Canadian citizens. Enacting Sharia law takes away that fundamental equality for a specified portion of the population.⁷²

Indonesian interviewees, having lived under a state system that was not free, rather than a state of war as is the case with the Dutch and Indo narrators, were crystal-clear on the difference between a country that facilitates free speech and freedom and one that does not. They returned repeatedly to the impact self monitoring has on individual and social relationships:

(in response to my question)..No what I mean is, well we all watch what we say in public or among certain people, I mean you do that anyway. My grandson swears like a trooper – I know he does because I have heard him. But he never, ever does in front of me. Now that means he doesn't speak certain words in front of me.

*That is different from what I am trying to explain to you. If he did swear in front of me, I might get angry with him yes, and he would feel bad. He might even think about why I don't like him to swear, but I doubt it. *grins* What I am saying is I wouldn't take away his*

⁷²Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. August, 2005.

*freedom, he wouldn't be worried about it every minute of the day, he wouldn't be scared that if he swore, someone might tell me and I would arrest him or shoot him. He wouldn't be looking sideways at everyone in his life because they might betray him.*⁷³

*When you live in a society where no one trusts each other, and you have to look out for yourself all the time, never relax because you are worried about what you might say or do, or have said and done..then you have no society. You don't have laughter. You have only anxiety.*⁷⁴

They discuss how long it took them to accept that they could speak out without fear of retribution:

*I would be in a restaurant, talking loudly with friends, and giving my opinion about something. Then I would go home, and for hours I would try to remember who else was in the restaurant, what they might have heard me say...Who they might tell... That was HERE! I had no reason to be afraid! But I was afraid, so careful, for so long, I couldn't shake it. You cannot imagine what that is like.*⁷⁵

*I told my children everything so that they will keep freedom alive. Our young people must know what we experienced so that when the time comes, they will act to save the precious freedom they have to be themselves.*⁷⁶

*I fear for the west. I am not all for war, but very few, except the aging, have any idea what it is to live without freedom. We pass our memories and experiences to our children hoping they will mean something, but I don't think they hear much. North America knows nothing of Occupation or invasion. Young people here are cut off from reality. 9/11 was terrible, but that is nothing to what has happened in other places and other countries. I fear that they may not see trouble before it is too late.*⁷⁷

⁷³ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 1. August, 2005.

⁷⁴ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. July 2004. Tape 2.

⁷⁵ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. April 2004. Tape 2.

⁷⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Indonesian-Canadian Female. Tape 1, August, 2005.

⁷⁷ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 2. May 2004.

Politically, interviewees exhibit conflict in that they tend towards Conservatism in foreign affairs, while supporting social programs on the domestic scene. In the U.S. for example, interviewees are virtually uniform regarding their support of the American presence in Iraq (Republican), a position that numbers them amongst a small portion of the current U.S. population, while simultaneously supporting Universal Health care (Democrat). They sincerely believe that militant Islam poses an enormous threat to freedom, and back any effort on the part of governments to mitigate the peril. At the same time, they have many Muslim friends and are clearly able to separate the various strands of the Islamic faith. Nevertheless, they draw sharp parallels between youth gangs and Indonesian revolutionaries after the war and current Islamic terrorism and terrorist youth/groups.

Self: You were a youth on Java when the war broke out. A lot of material on the Occupation and the post-war period talks about the role of youth during both those periods. What were you doing?

Interviewee: I was hiding for most of the Japanese period and then afterwards it became necessary too for a while, until the Dutch came back. (He lived outside of Soerabaja) See, when the Japanese took the family, my father and I both tried to do what we could, we tried to help. Someone told the Japs and they came looking for us. We were lucky we were out at the time they came. Life is like that sometimes, you get a break. But we couldn't go back. So we separated. We had to rely on family and people we knew thought the way we did, to help us, keep us hidden, give us food. We spent a lot of time in rice fields and so. Under the Japanese, families fell apart. In the old days, it mattered what your parents and grandparents thought and what they said – you listened. But with the Japanese, a lot of boys went into different organizations, some went to work for the war effort (Self: the romushas; interviewee: yes, nods) well they came back and didn't care what the elders said..and they were angry..some of them at the Japanese even, but they had to get that anger out against someone. The old ways were gone under the Japanese. THAT was the critical time. The Occupation. People were homeless, people were hungry and families didn't matter anymore. There was no law, except never to do anything the Japs didn't like.

I didn't go in for training or anything of course, because I was wanted. I'll tell you, I grew up fast. Well we grew up faster in those days anyway, but REALLY fast after 1942.

..The youth, the revolutionaries,... not always the same thing you know – they were ummm radical, yes that's it, radical. It's the youth a lot of the time – just like now. The radical Muslims, those are the youth. They condemn things they know nothing about, just like in Indonesia in my time. They don't know when they have it good, they can be taught to hate. Some of them were brought up here, or in England or in Canada. What is that, for Pete's sake?

Ignoring the reality of the changing face of Soekarno's power between the years 1942 and 1957/59, interviewees, across the databases, utilize his name as the symbol for all that they deplore regarding that historical period in Indonesia:

*You know, Java is an island full of people. There were youths raising hell that never really had anything to do with the Dutch directly, didn't know anything about what they did or how they thought. That's what you got now, young guys screaming for American blood that know nothing about real Americans or see that they are people, just like they are. Its ..well you get people you know, like some Imams or Soekarno, well they whip up hate..and then the hate has to go somewhere. So you have men hating the West that have never been there, and men who live in the West still hating it because what they see has been warped; they have been completely warped. Speak..reality again you know. They tell the Imam or whoever... maybe, they tell him that things are good at school. And he tells them, 'no that can't be right, how can it be good in such a degenerate place?' or 'see the sin around you' or 'look at those girls and the money they spend on themselves' or 'they don't really like you' ..and that is how it starts. Plant the seeds. You only have to look around you to understand what happened with the Dutch. You can teach the young to hate the people who made a good life possible, to "shit' (sic) on the society that gives them the right to speak, and they want to turn around and take it away. It will be just like Soekarno. Take all the rights from the people, instil terror, and let them feel your power. That makes those guys feel good. Watch how fast those guys would react if you take the rights they want to take away from you, away from them!*⁷⁸

5.3 Inter-Ethnic Relationships

⁷⁸ Oral History Interview. American Indonesian Male. Tape 2, April 2004.

*Of course I had Dutch family. In my parent's generation, my mother's sister married a Dutch man.*⁷⁹

*My sister worked as a babu for another family in Batavia.*⁸⁰

*In Papua, things were different than on Java. There were not that many Dutch men and women and as kids everyone played together, all backgrounds. As an Indonesian, I was in the minority and Papuans didn't care for us much.*⁸¹

*In spite of all the hard times Oma and Opa went through, they passed on the best of the Javanese and Dutch cultures, of my dual heritage.....I have benefitted greatly...so much..... from both sides.*⁸²

*Family was everything. If you went up in the world, they went up in the world. So they were there for you. They put you in touch with people. They looked out for you. And you did the same for them. Family was everything.*⁸³

Due to a sub-database as small as this one, and considering its biases, I note possibilities, but extrapolate no claims for the data that addresses inter-ethnic relationships. Of the six interviewees, one had a Dutch grandmother, another claimed a Dutch uncle and an Indo brother-in-law, one had Chinese relatives and Indo relations, two had siblings that married Indonesians of different backgrounds than their own and of those, one had a sister who married a Dutch man. In short, with the exception of the interviewee from Sumatra, these men linked into multiple ethnic communities. In addition, all four men married spouses of different ethnic backgrounds: Dutch-Indonesian, Dutch, Philippine, and Chinese women, and I have not taken into account the new links created by these marriages.

On the topic of mixed marriages, the Sumatran interviewee held a conservative view; unexpected and surprising, as I assumed that she

⁷⁹ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 1. April, 2004.

⁸⁰ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 2. July, 2004.

⁸¹ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 1. July, 2006.

⁸² Oral History Interview, Indonesian Female. May, 2005. Tape 1.

⁸³ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. August, 2005. Tape 1.

would hold liberal views as a professional. She felt that such a marriage would be too difficult given that the man and woman might not have the same religion, the same ideologies, the same aspirations, or ideas about raising children. She added that it does work at times, but she thought this was rare. Asked if she knew any people in the Belanda-Indo community she replied in the negative, and added that from what she knows from newspapers, they are responsible for a great deal of crime; a clear example of group labelling.

Setting her objection aside, the rest of these Indonesian informants have a positive view of inter-racial relations and marriage. K honours her bi-racial heritage, as she believes both of her grandparents transferred the best of what they had to offer, giving her, *'a foot in the East, and a foot in the West.'* The four males were equally positive. In addition to the fact that their own marriages have been very successful, an ideology of tolerance towards biracial marriages was transferred to them in their youth. Reasons given for the acceptance were highly pragmatic. Kin connections in other Indonesian communities expanded the possibilities of mobility and a familial hold in other cultural enclaves. One informant discussed the benefits he personally derived from his family's Chinese connection, while the gentleman-Chauffeur stated that he assisted his sister in finding an excellent place with a Dutch family through the established position he enjoyed with his Dutch employer. He went on to find positions for three additional relatives before the Occupation intervened.

The leitmotif of Indonesian texts is cultural diversity.

There were many people, many cultures, many faiths in Indonesia. The Dutch were one people that did things a certain way. That was who they were. We did things another way. That is who we were. There were so many people and so many ways....All those ways..all those ideas..they met together and it pretty much worked fine. No one told my wife what to cook or what to eat. No one told me where to go to church...What I did on my own time was my business, you know.. as long as I didn't break the law.

You went out in the streets of the city and it was wonderful. Different peoples, different dress, everyone going about their business. You heard different languages... people stopping to

*chat..have a smoke..carts everywhere...Afterwards, Holland was so drab... just ..I don't know...monotone?*⁸⁴

As each informant expanded on the familial links that connected them to multiple social groups and ethnic peoples, I became fascinated with the cultural pluralism that emerged in their narratives. The extended family links – second cousins appear as close as brothers – ensured that all male informants were multiply exposed to other ways of viewing the warp and woof of life – raising children, courting, marriage, and gender customs, cooking, manners, dress, family structures, and belief systems.

The variety of religious affiliation that emerged in one informant's family was almost bewildering. Prior to the interviews, I assumed specific group boundaries remained relatively inviolate; in particular, I assumed religious and ethnic endogamy. Yet clear narrative evidence of inter-faith marriages forced a rapid revision of my assumption. In the Indonesian families in this database, exempting always the Sumatran interview, men and women with different religious backgrounds married one another and:

After you married, or before maybe you talked about it...well before there were kids.. you had to make a decision I suppose.... If you were going to keep up a religion, and you know there were people who didn't – well if you were you had to decide on one, you couldn't really do both.... Well no, that's not right either, you did sometimes do both... So in my case, well I started to go to a Christian church when I worked for my boss. My wife's family had a mixed belief. Self: Mixed? Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah when I think about it now, that's how I describe it, but at the time, I didn't think about it much at all. ..anyway, the children and my wife started to go to church with me...

...Don't think it changed my wife's mind that much. She went on believing like she always had, and just added on my Church. But healing and so....she did what she learned from her mother.

Self: Did you live in Batavia?

⁸⁴ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. August, 2005.

*Interviewee: on the edge I guess you might say. In the kampong. *grins* Always something going on there. What a place to grow up!*

Self: Was you wife from the same place?

*Interviewee: No. I met her through a cousin.....he played matchmaker...of course my parents had some say.. *grins**

Self: So help me to understand this. Did your parents, and other relatives live with you? Did your brothers and sisters?

Interviewee: (patiently) No. Now listen. My parents lived in the same kampong, yes. But my mother's sister married a Dutchman and they lived in a very nice house. So they were Christians, well she became one. Then my sister married a Belanda Indo and he worked for an American company – I used some of his connections to get to the USA by the way. Then another sister lived in with the Dutch family she worked for. That was not usual, but their house was difficult to get to, so they had room for her. Then she was with the children when they needed her. Other sisters married Indonesians and they went to live with their husbands. My wife came to live with us. So you see, we were spread all over but we visited yes, we visit all the time. You have to keep up with family.

Even in the kampong you know, it kind of emptied out in the mornings... small children, moms, shopkeepers and the like... and people with no jobs left behind, but everyone else gone to do what they did during the daytime.

Self (bit hesitant as I have made mistakes before with this interviewee) So you visited at your Aunt's and your Dutch Uncle?

Interviewee: Well we did. But not that much. She came to visit us ..she got a bit funny about us dropping by.

Self: (still cautious) Do you think maybe her husband didn't like it?

*Interviewee: No, I think **she** didn't like it, I think she was..I don't know getting ideas? Anyway, my boss, he knew my Uncle and they visited. When my Uncle came to the Boss's house, he would stop and chat with me..have a smoke... never gave me the impression that he wanted little to do with us. No, I think it was her. But that's alright. She had an opportunity...as long as she didn't forget the family...you know..a leg up here and there... that was okay. And she didn't do that. No..she remembered.*

Self: Did you keep in touch?

Interviewee: (shortly) No. She died in a camp and so did he. Their kids were orphans after the war – Indo orphans.

Self: Silent for a moment. Tentatively: So __, this wife was..the one you had to leave behind?

Interviewee: Yes. (we left it here, but picked up a discussion about this wife a bit later – he needed to expand on the circumstances).⁸⁵

It is noteworthy that of all the inter-ethnic/inter-religious marriages described in the sub-database, Islam does not appear. With the exception of the Sumatran interviewee, none of the informants are Islamic and none married, or describe relatives marrying, anyone of the Islamic faith. At best, from a 6-person sample and the discourse offered by the woman from Sumatra, I would suggest, and nothing more, that Muslims were indeed faith endogamous. The non-Muslim male interviewees remain extremely tolerant of other faiths; one is now a practicing Buddhist, another remains a strong Christian, while the remaining two describe themselves, in the words of one narrator; *well yes, I have religion, but not Church. I don't believe in Church.*⁸⁶

Database Indonesians, paralleling Dutch and Indo interviewees, speak of the pre-war period in idyllic terms. Given the horror of the Occupation, and the Revolution that followed on the heels of the Japanese, this is understandable. In fact, it could not be otherwise for any of the people I interviewed, as the memories that shape their anti-revolutionary attitudes reverberate with pain, loss, and terror.

My brother-in-law was all for Independence. Poor fool. He talked about it constantly before the war. In fact he got himself involved with some other guys working for Independence.

Self: Why do you say, 'poor fool'?

Interviewee: he lost his life in the bersiap period. They didn't stop to ask him about his politics.

⁸⁵ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 3. May, 2004.

⁸⁶ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. August, 2005. Tape 2.

Self: I don't understand – why was he killed?

*Interviewee: That was my Indo brother-in-law.*⁸⁷

Although Indonesian interviewees are in a position to speak openly of their pre-war, war, and post war memories, all of the men, to some extent, continue to mute details of their activities since the silence on speech imposed in Indonesia continues to impact the psyche and they have developed habits of '*never say (ing) anymore than I have to. It's the best way.*'⁸⁸

5.3.1 RELATIONSHIP LINKS

The structure of Indonesian and Indo-European narratives run parallel; the oral outlines originate in Indonesian cultures. Storytellers begin with an introduction to family, but in this case, both father and mother's line receive articulation, with a slight emphasis on the patriline. Since kin effected life transformations, and affines played a central role in the lives of these men, interviewees carefully enumerated the marriages in his, and his parent's generation. Thus, the large, supportive, involved, and obligated extended family that characterizes the Indo-European household is also Indonesian in origin. Pre-war memories pay close attention to place; narratives vividly bring forth the urban and rural landscapes of Indonesia; the mud under one's feet, the sound of relentless rain, animals moving in the street, rickshaws, playing marbles, running as boys through the narrow streets of the kampong, planning mischief.

In addition to the emphasis on extended and affinal family, narrators offer a carefully detailed overview of *obligatory relationships*. I use the term to describe a form of generalized reciprocity that characterized the life of these informants before the war. Interviewee males spent considerable time outlining what/why someone owed them, and what/why, they owed someone, as they introduced particular people into the narrative.

⁸⁷ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 3. April, 2004.

⁸⁸ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. July 2006. Tape 1.

..so I needed to get away for a while and I had to think of how I could manage it. So I thought things through and decided to call on my brother's son. He owed me you see. I was going to have to ask him to do a risky thing here, but he owed me because I got him a job that allowed him to marry. So it was not too much to ask.⁸⁹

Then I heard that X was looking for me. Three years before that he did me a great favour that kept me out of trouble when I was young and foolish. I owed him and he knew he could call on me if he needed something I could help with. Well, now he had come to collect..⁹⁰

He helped me out of the country because he said he owed me for doing what I did for his wife and children while they were in the camps.⁹¹

Obligatory relationships are not kin specific, although they do occur between family members. Instead, they create bonds between unrelated men that derive from what each can offer the other. The careful nourishing of contacts, such as a helpful Dutch employer, allowed men to do for others while simultaneously placing the recipients in debt. Those debtors would have connections, or perhaps material goods or monies that the initial giver might benefit from in the future. Note in the quote above that a Dutch man conceptualizes his own commitment through the language of obligatory relationship. In fact, that exchange was one in series of transactions:

⁸⁹ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. March, 2006. Tape 2.

⁹⁰ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. August, 2005.

⁹¹ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 3. April, 2004.

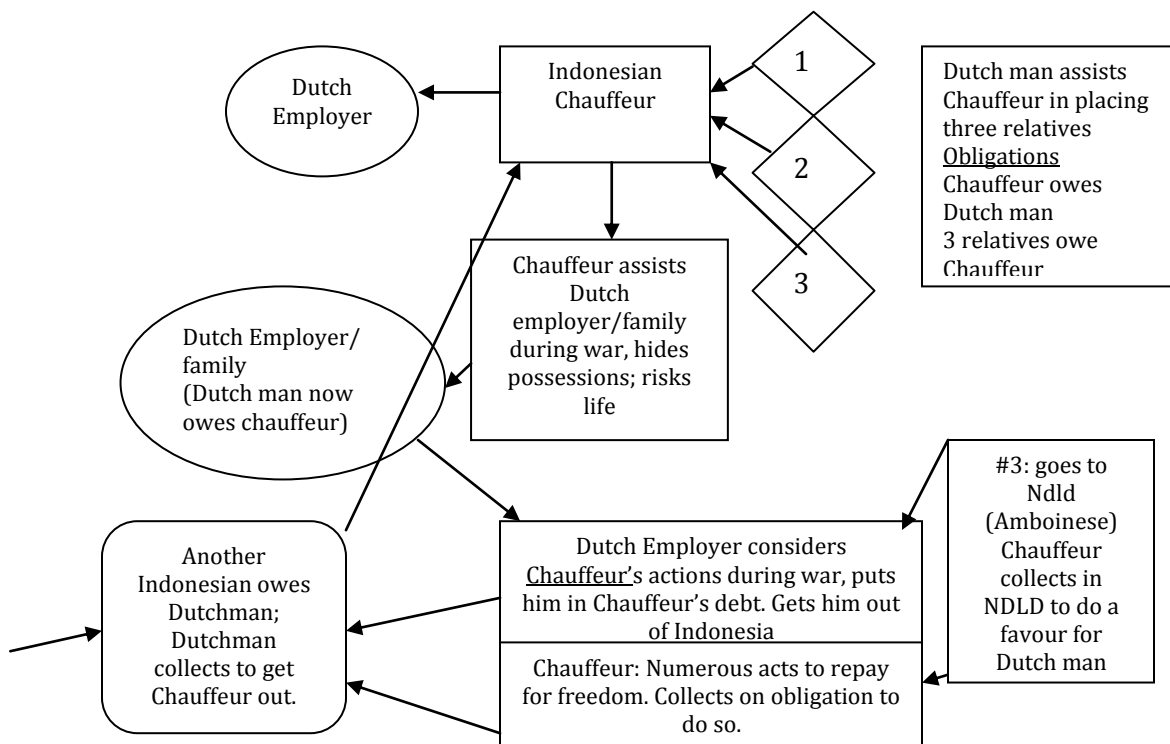


Figure 11: Interconnections

The Dutch man/Chauffeur transaction that sets in motion the chart above, is an arbitrary point of entry into a linked transaction series reaching back in time, and moving well into the future. Web-like obligatory bonds cross ethnic and class barriers. The simple transaction outlined above has numerous secondary linked transactions. The three new employees who owed the Chauffeur for their jobs did in fact cancel their debt. In return for his freedom, the former Chauffeur engaged in multiple small deeds to make his former employer’s life more pleasant, in one instance, calling in an obligatory debt to do so. The bonds of you do for me, I do for you exchange, created an unspoken, but clearly understood cross-cultural honour standard that bound males from multiple ethnic backgrounds to each other, redistributing knowledge, social prestige and wealth.

5.4 On the Margins: The Uniqueness of Papua

The experience of the North American male interviewee who derived from Papua New Guinea, and immigrated to Canada via the Netherlands, diverges from males who lived on Java. His father left Java for Papua well before the war, bringing with him his wife and small son, who states that he was unsure of his father's employment, but thought he worked for a corporation. Similarly, the narrator was tight-lipped about his father's activity during the Occupation and the post war period, and I was unable to discern whether he had suspicions, but did not want to talk about it, or if he genuinely did not know because his father had not shared any details with his family. He does not appear to have been close to this parent, who died in 1947; again, he stated that his father's death was unexplained even at that time and he could offer no details.

He himself was in his pre-teens when the war started and recalls clearly that when he was small, he realized that he was part of a minority group viewed with some suspicion in Papua. Whether this experience was due to his father's role there, or reflects a genuine Papuan suspicion of the Javanese, is not derivable from a single example. During the pre-war period, he attended a Dutch missionary school with Dutch children as well as others of various minority backgrounds, including various Papuan peoples:

Colonialism on Papua – well that is an interesting question. How colonized was Papua?... I say to you..not very. The Dutch were there certainly. Mostly on the coast. The church had larger presence than the colonial government, truly. My school was... a missionary school....(answers my question as to which missions) Dutch missions, yes. All kinds of children from many different backgrounds, including some Dutch. There was not a lot to choose from for schooling and my father wanted me to have an education, so I went. I am sure that he was not a Christian.

There were many, many Papuan tribes and many different languages. Now some Papuan children went to the school - that was the result of missionizing among their peoples. There were missions in out of the way places all over the island, and many of those people rarely left their villages.... So they were not exposed to

*the colonial government. No, there were many that did not see missionaries either... Papua was still untamed.*⁹²

He recalls the pre-war period as a happy one and returned often to the mischief the boys devised both in school and after hours. His experience at the school influenced his decision to become a Christian, and he remains a devout believer to this day. Characterized by a plurality of cultures and experiences, his life story exposed a deep love of the Papuan landscape and its peoples.⁹³ According to his evidence, the Japanese were present on Papua before the war, forming part of the cultural mosaic. As a youth, he often heard exchanges between adults as to their intentions on the island. However, he states that these discussions did not betray fear or a sense of impending history; rather he states that he discerned suspicion that Japanese motivations might not be what they seemed on the surface, although this interpretation can be legitimately assessed as “wisdom in hindsight.”

His life altered radically when the Japanese invaded. Unlike the Dutch children who attended school with him, the Japanese did not wake him in the middle of an afternoon siesta and hurry him off island to an internment camp; he was Asian. He does relate that his father began to disappear for long periods and came home only fleetingly and at odd times, while his mother remained silent on the reasons for this alteration. A boy of 12 when the Japanese arrived, he felt the loss of his Dutch friends keenly, and resisted the Japanese representation of his former comrades; an interpretation that he would never accept and consciously resisted:

I don't think - although I am not sure - that the Japanese propaganda toward the Dutch was as fierce on Papua as it was in other places. Certainly I was quickly aware that they had contempt for the Dutch and they acted on it. They tried to denigrate them and they took away the families, many mission families went...the church was almost empty... I missed my friends. But the Japanese soon had their hands full with other problems on Papua. Papuans

⁹² Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 1. July, 2006

⁹³ Hence, this young man who left for Papua when he was very young, immigrated to Papua and shifted his identity as Papuan, since he did not identify with Java.

were not interested in the message of Asian superiority and they began to act against it. I was of the same mind. To this day, I regret that I did nothing – nothing – concrete against them.

Self: You were 12!

Interviewee: Nevertheless, even at 12 you know what is right or wrong. I could have joined in with others, I knew that others were acting against the Japanese. I did nothing.

One thing that did happen as a result of the war. I realized that I was Papuan. I did not have memories of any other place. It was my home, my peoples – so many – and it was unique.⁹⁴

The Japanese presence in New Guinea was neither protracted nor intense over the course of the war; by 1944, their presence was negligible. Recruitment of labour proved exceedingly difficult as New Guinea tribesmen disappeared into the landscape and resisted large-scale round-ups. New Guinea however, did see significant battles between Axis and Allied powers in her vicinity and on island.

The concretized identity experience claimed by this interviewee as a result of the war, *'I realized that I was Papuan, it was the only home I could recall*, found an echo in other New Guineans, and would manifest after the war as opposition to Indonesian independence.

Quite frankly, we did not have a clue what was going on after the war on Java. Not a clue. It was not until things normalized somewhat, people came back from the camps, but so few! Some never came back even if they lived..... and when some Dutch administrators came back.... And we heard from the survivors what the Japanese had done... we also got the news then – about the revolution. It meant nothing to us.⁹⁵

Java was a faraway place with concerns that differed substantially from those of Papuans.

Everything we heard was second-hand...people told each other in the street and they had heard from someone else and so on. Our

⁹⁴ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 1. July, 2006

⁹⁵ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 1. July, 2006

best information came from the Dutch on the island who were in contact with Dutch on other islands and with the Netherlands. But we didn't talk about it that much, it was not central to our lives right after the war. (in answer to my question).. yes we knew that Independence had been declared for Indonesia, but that was largely irrelevant to us. Of course, people started to talk about what it meant for our future and what the possibilities were for Papua in the future, but the people I talked to did not believe that lay with Java.

Self: You were 16 after the war. What were you doing?

Well during the war I did not go to school...for a few years we tried to keep it up but most of our teachers were in concentration camps – they were Dutch or Dutch-Indonesians you know. We had one or two Indonesians – Christians – but they were suspects to the Japanese...one family was killed.. my family...well my mother because my father was always gone.. they questioned her because I was at a Christian school. I guess it went all right because nothing bad happened to us – we were not taken away or anything. But circumstances got really bad...food and so on..

..yes you asked about after the war and what I was doing. Well slowly some of the missions came back and I started to work for one of the families. I became a Christian myself and I think that kept me out of trouble.

Self: Trouble?

Interviewee: After the war things were in a bit of a turmoil..when people are hungry..they do and say things they may regret afterwards. The youth – the kids my age left behind – there were no more Dutch kids at first – got inspired – some of them got inspired, yes. So talk started – some kids wanted to have freedom for Papua and some wanted to go along with Java. We had no one who could speak for Papua except the Dutch. In those early days we had no leaders. In 1946, we heard about the Union with the Dutch involved and I think we were part of eastern Indonesia. Truly, I don't know for sure. But I think so. The future of how we would live was being decided for us. At the same time more Dutch started to come out ..other people too, immigrants... then we got radicals from Java; they were sent out to stir passion among the Papuans. .. there were some during the war too, but afterwards it got intense...

Self: The Union did not last long.

Interviewee: No. No we heard that and there were many disappointed people. You see, the Dutch were involved in that Union, and Java was almost a foreign place to most Papuans. We had more knowledge of the Dutch than we did the Javanese and we knew them, we understood how they did things, how they thought. Papuans had little to no concept of Java really, and no relations with it. The relations were between Dutch on Papua and Dutch on Java mostly...before the war. Why should something that happened on Java affect our lives on Papua? It sounded to many of us that those who were running things on Java were very ambitious men. So during the next few years we just kept up with the news to see what would happen....

Self: You knew that the revolutionaries had claimed the "entire" area administered by the Dutch? You knew that included Papua?

Interviewee: yes we heard that. Many people were not pleased – who had consulted us? And it was not – never was..a sure thing. The Dutch on Papua said they wouldn't let us down, they would protect our interests. You know they started to build in a big way after the war; schools and so... and in 1949, they kept us safe from Java and talked about getting us ready to govern ourselves.

Self: How did you feel? Where did you stand?

Interviewee: Oh..with the Dutch. Yes, with the Dutch. In fact, I was really aligned with them as I worked with youth through the Church..so I discussed these things with the young – well I was young so I was a good youth worker. Yes, with the Dutch. They would have given us Independence. Today there would be a proud Papuan nation.⁹⁶

The New Guinea situation is interesting in that it exposes disparities between Dutch perceptions of their task and international political interpretations of colonial rule and self-determination. Convincingly exhibited by multiple analysts, the Dutch spent a great deal of their own resources in Papua New Guinea and they were not involved on the island for economic gain – economic reasons coming high on the

⁹⁶Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. July, 2006

list of reasons usually attributed by scholars to Dutch expansion.⁹⁷ Lijphart and Penders both note that after the devastation of the Netherlands during the Second World War, the Netherlands direly required the monies that went to Papua New Guinea for the reconstitution of the motherland. Therefore, both scholars express confusion re the motivations of the Dutch regarding their reluctance to release New Guinea to Indonesia, given that the “exploitation” criteria inherent in Colonialism did not hold for the Dutch-New Guinea relationship.

Furthermore, the Dutch were prepared to go on putting money into New Guinea in spite of the fact that the Netherlands was struggling to recover from the Nazi occupation. Claiming a moral responsibility to New Guinea, recognizing that no one else could yet speak for her, the Dutch accelerated the political readiness process so that New Guinea could achieve self-rule by 1970. Within the international community, they argued that Dutch Papua New Guinea was culturally, linguistically, and geographically distinct from the rest of Indonesia and stressed that Papua’s needs would dissolve in any association with the Indonesian Republic. Indeed, when revolutionary rulers scouted the discussion of “Indonesia’s” boundaries, Hatta himself had noted that New Guinea did not form part of the linguistic-cultural complex of Indonesia and that she should not form part of the proposed republic, adding that Indonesia would not be financially capable of taking care of the needs of Irian Barat’s people. The irredentism that permeated other leaders however, prevailed, and Irian Barat subsequently became a symbol of the power struggle that Soekarno continually waged with western powers.

Why did the Dutch struggle to maintain their vision for New Guinea when it almost cost them their relationship with Indonesia, the United States, and a number of other critical political powers? Lijphart worked on the assumption that (national) psychological

⁹⁷ Lijphart, Arend. (1966) *The Trauma of Decolonization. The Dutch and West New Guinea*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press.

dispositions are critical to an understanding of Colonialism based on a vital passage from Schumpeter:

“...psychological dispositions and social structures acquired in the dim past..... [that] once firmly established, tend to maintain themselves and to continue in effect long after they have lost their meaning and life-preserving function”⁹⁸

However, Lijphart’s use of Schumpeter was regrettably selective. He did not devote any attention to *“psychological dispositions and social structures acquired in the dim past”* and this lack of analysis led him to posit a Dutch ‘pathological’⁹⁹ response to the West New Guinea decolonization process. Indeed, his focus on a local phenomenon, the “West New Guinea problem,” without any corresponding global contextualization, mutes any historical discussion in relation to Dutch moral paradigms *‘acquired in the dim past,’* and facilitates his dismissal of Dutch motivation as self-righteous, resentful and pseudo-moral.¹⁰⁰

In his discussion of the links between the Netherlands and Papua, Lijphart, along with scholars such as Penders, offers a thorough overview of the proposition to utilize land in Papua for Indo-Europeans who did not want to leave Indonesia, or were not welcome in the Netherlands by some groups. Although a small number of Indo-Europeans did take up residence on Papua, the experiment was largely a failure, and by 1949 the argument for an “Indo-European homeland” had ceased to play a major role in the Netherlands.¹⁰¹ Finally, multiple scholars attribute Dutch resistance to the loss of Papua as a Netherlandish reluctance to lose her prestige.

⁹⁸ Schumpeter, Joseph A. (1955) *The Sociology of Imperialism*. [in] *Imperialism and Social Classes*. Translated by Heinz Norden. New York: Meridian Books. Pages 64-54.

⁹⁹ Lijphart, Arend. (1966) *The Trauma of Decolonization. The Dutch and West New Guinea*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

¹⁰⁰ Op. cit., page 265. His lack of knowledge of the role of the USA in the decolonization of Irian Barat is also problematic for his conclusions.

¹⁰¹ Op. cit., and see also Penders.

Deconstruction of the English speaking texts on the Dutch-Papua political situation, as well as interaction between both, Djakarta, the U.S. and the U.N. suggests that none capture the vital importance of Dutch “*psychological dispositions and social structures acquired in the dim past*” as they lay out their argument for her relationships with Papua. Although I cannot do justice to my own independent analysis here, I suggest we summarily dismiss many of the postulates regarding Dutch response and focus instead on Dutch Civism,¹⁰² a concept dominating Netherlands history acquired in that dim past of which Schumpeter speaks, and one that offers deeper insight into the Dutch approach to Papua New Guinea. For the Dutch, the colonial relationship established with landscape and people was not one of maintainer/maintained, but a relationship of *care* permeated by *vigilance*. This principle framed their interaction with their own homeland, while in the colonial sphere it included a responsibility to care for land and peoples and to ensure they did right by both.¹⁰³ The paradigm of Civism incorporates a view of economics that harnessed economy to the *public good*. The economy was not an end in and of itself, but a tool that formed an important aspect of vigilant care for the Nation.

On the Nation and trade, Dutch discourse is clear; the *Nation is free and self sufficient by virtue of successful trade*.

Domain (Nation) (attributes) Free/self sufficient (cause/effect) (sub Domain of Nation by Inclusion) Trade

Figure 12: Nation and Trade Domain Linkage

Since economy does not supersede care, but is subservient to it, economic return did not dictate the perspective on Papua. Again, under the same principle, an unfinished task remained in Dutch Papua. The Papuan economy was not ready to serve a Papuan independent nation on the world stage; to facilitate immediate

¹⁰² Schama, S. (1991). *The Embarrassment of Riches: Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*. London: Fontana Press.

¹⁰³ There are many periods during her colonial interaction when she got seriously “off course” only to be brought around again by a consideration of these civic principles.

independence meant a Papua doomed to endless squabbles and war as it came of age. Equally certain that Djakarta had no intention of preparing the Papuan people, or their economy, for self-sufficiency, the Dutch choice was to abdicate responsibility or offer to finance her preparation for Independence under Netherlands auspices. She chose the latter option and greatly accelerated her investment in Papua, for naught.

Scholars who elsewhere analyzed the interaction between the Dutch, UN, U.S., and Djakarta,¹⁰⁴ offer clear evidence that international neglect and suspicion of Dutch morality as a vital factor in their perception of Indonesia, informs international marginalization of moral economy during the Papuan crisis, leading to international and academic assessments of both situations that are fatally flawed. Ministers such as Stikker and Luns attempted to play the political game utilizing a rhetoric with which they had little familiarity. Since responsible morality was ridiculed as a 'real reason' at the international level, the Dutch utilized other arguments catering to international and national understanding; the short-lived Eurasian homeland scenario, the bulwark against Communism argument, the possibility of merging with Australian Papua, and the attempt to build a case for the Papuans as a people deserving of "self determination." Saltford has adequately shown that the marginal acceptance of Papuan "difference" by the international community represented a temporary decoy to remove the Dutch from the picture, replace them with an emasculated U.N. taskforce, and turn the area over to Djakarta as quickly and quietly as possible. At no time was Djakarta, the U.S., or the U.N. ever concerned with *Papuans*.

Saltford's attendant accusation, that the Dutch no longer cared about Papua, refuses recognition of Dutch emasculation in the international political scenario of the 1960s. Scorn and disbelief

¹⁰⁴ Lijphart, Arend. (1966) *The Trauma of Decolonization. The Dutch and West New Guinea*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. Bone, R.C. Jr. (1958) *The Dynamics of the Western New Guinea (Irian Barat) Problem*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Modern Indonesia project, Cornell University. Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. Saltford, John. (2002) *United Nations and the Indonesian Takeover of West Papua: 1962-1969; The Anatomy of Betrayal*. New York: Routledge/Curzon Publishers.

characterized the international reaction to Dutch explanations of the principle of care, and their attempts to assist New Guinea were marginalized from the onset of the 'crises.' The United Nations and United States (not always separable) rendered it crystal clear that Dutch involvement in New Guinea and all negotiation over Papua was to be carried out on U.S. /U.N. terms and conditions. "Caring" to the extent that they had militarily mobilized to protect New Guinea, and finding that the U.S. had closed all air space possibilities to her in order to ensure that she could not fly supplies or men into New Guinea, the Dutch realized quickly that they stood alone for the Papuan people. It is difficult to see how Saltford can conceptualize any way in which the Dutch could have arrested the snowball of betrayal of the Papuans set in motion by the U.N., Djakarta, and the U.S.

*"well there we were in a no win situation. From 1945 to 1949 we tried to save something of it, because we knew what would happen with Java running things. So we tried a Union – you know a federation of Indonesia. But that didn't last a year – did it even last a year? – before Java got what it wanted. We had no power to enforce anything but we knew what would happen. If you have no powerful friends to back you politically, you are playing with a losing hand. For over 15 years we tried to make the point over New Guinea. We tried every legal argument. We tried cultural arguments. We won in the U.N. But in the final analysis none of it mattered because, frankly, none of the Powers cared a damn about the people of New Guinea and they didn't want to believe that we actually did. So we tried the law, and we tried culture, and we talked about self-determination and we proposed a plan to make New Guinea self sufficient by 1970. We stood our ground, but we stood alone. The U.S. would not let us cross their air space to get supplies to Papua and we sure couldn't fly over Indonesia at that time. The USA made it clear if we went to War, and don't kid yourself, the Javanese government had already sent in troops to Papua, and there we were, we would stand alone. We could not even get men or our ships out there. Thank you United States. In the final analysis, what mattered was keeping Soekarno happy. It's not about the people. Don't kid yourself Jetty. It has never been about the people. If it was about the **people**, things would have gone quite differently.*

..... I read a lot about the history.. Some of the writers.. well they can't say we were making money out of New Guinea. So they say the Papuans did not want us, although it was clear that it was Java

*they did not want. And when the Papuans went to the U.N. and said let us keep the Dutch.....well then, they said we bought them off. And now you look at the history. You **look**. What we said would happen to Indonesia has happened although never, never did any of us think it would be so bad. And the Papuans today are fighting, still, against a government they did not want in the first place. It's all a mess. People dying. Corruption everywhere."*¹⁰⁵

The narrator remained in Papua during the years that the Dutch accelerated investment on the island and encouraged political participation amongst Papuans. From his perspective, the people overwhelmingly supported the Dutch position and rejected entry into the Indonesian union. He notes:

Over the years after 1950 more and more revolutionary minded men came to Papua to whip people up for the cause and to excite them about a union with Java. I know for a fact that it did not stop with talk. They intimidated, even killed people. The Dutch tried to root that out, to get rid of the troublemakers. It was an ongoing problem. Some of the tribal peoples got involved. (The Papuans..just live you know, they have a great sense of humour..very friendly..) Under the U.N. it got worse. It was a farce. They made no attempt to stop Indonesian indoctrination before the so-called vote and many people fled to the other side (Australian) New Guinea to get away from what was coming. We could see it. It was an absolute farce, a puppet administration for Djakarta.

I left for Holland. Strange isn't it?.. A boy from Java who became a Papuan, had no interest in the politics and ideas of the people of his birthplace, and then fled to live in the homeland of the Colonial power. The last years that I was on Papua, I started to work against Djakarta... yes, I was in trouble with them by the time the U.N. got there and I could see that the writing was on the wall for my Home.

When I think of Indonesia, I think of Papua. Just Papua. And..I think about the foreigners who govern – if you can call it that – now.

The international community and the ideas about aboriginal peoples and self determining is a farce. A complete farce. The U.N. betrayed the Papuan people and has ignored the situation with Papua ever since. How could they not agree that Papuans are

¹⁰⁵ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. Tape 1. May, 2003.

*completely different people from the Javanese? And I tell you....because they didn't care. The power lay with Djakarta. Papua had no power. That is what it came down too. Not all those fancy ideas about culture and aboriginal people, just power and who can play the game.*¹⁰⁶

5.5 Closing Comment

As with all sub-databases that contribute to this research, the Indonesian data deserves far more than a critical overview of a pittance of the discourse. A great deal of analysis requires completion and dissemination. It is possible for example, from the information of only four men in North America, to re-constitute significant aspects of daily life in a kampong, to discuss resistance methods against the Revolution, to chart out clan lines, and to offer detailed immigration stories in their new home countries. That being said, it is equally evident that I could not cover all of that rich material in a single work.

It would be negligent to close this chapter without alluding to the deep and continual love that informants discuss in relation to their natal land(s) and the grief that characterizes how they view subsequent events in that country.

*It's funny.... As I get older, I think about it more. Not the Occupation, but Indonesia, no - Java itself. Her beauty. Her unbelievable vitality. The rich heritage.....*¹⁰⁷

*Retiring here in California..that was the closest I could come to Indonesia, except maybe Hawaii and that was too far from the grandchildren. I think about the good times..you know..when we could still.. all..of us, all of us.. appreciate what the country offered us.. steady life... time with family. Yes, I think about what came after too, but I made those choices and I was luckier than prisoners of war and all the dead.... I ache for the people of Indonesia..and hope, always hope that all will be well.*¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. July, 2006.

¹⁰⁷ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 3. August 2005.

¹⁰⁸ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 2. July 2004.

*I try, the last few days you have been here, I have tried to explain Papua to you. Papua itself. It had a certain air... smells you can only smell there..birds you can only see there..an atmosphere you can only get there. I think I have failed because those are not things you can put into words. That's why I gave you the pictures... to help you see it. So I don't live there anymore, now I am in the cold. *smiles* But it lives in my heart and I think about it often.*¹⁰⁹

*The country I loved, the country I was allowed to love, the time I loved..I don't think it exists anymore. Its more than 50 years ago now. 50 years can you believe that? There is no going back to that time. I am sure it is still beautiful; the air is still fine, the sun stills shines, and the rains come when its time. There is no place quite like it on earth. Happy as I am here, never have I been able to replace my home. But that home is gone. It's a memory I love.*¹¹⁰

All of them – without exception – also carry anger; anger at a ‘failed’ revolution, anger at international support for men who grasped power in Indonesia, anger at the *international farce* that characterized negotiations over Papua New Guinea. Finally, they express grief for and solidarity with, the people of the islands, people deserving of a fair, democratic regime who experienced terror, violence and poverty.

¹⁰⁹ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-Canadian Male. Tape 2. July, 2006

¹¹⁰ Oral History Interview. Indonesian-American Male. Tape 4. July 2004.

6 Conclusion

This database of North American Indonesian expatriate narratives speaks directly to the making of colonial identities, the bond to natal place fundamental to the formation of self, its impact on immigration and/or repatriation, and the potential misapplication of the tenets of the “Colonial” paradigm to complicated colonial encounters. In truth, these themes are so intertwined, it is almost impossible to discuss one strand without referring to the other. In this closing discussion however, I begin with colonial identities, integrating an analysis of immigration and repatriation, and closing with a summation of the challenges posed by these texts to scholarly dissertations on Colonialism. A crucial issue that arises from the narratives is that *if the Dutch-Indonesian identity has been misidentified, what are the implications of that misidentification for scholarship, ethnic relations and ethnic interaction, if any?*

6.1 Those That Went to Indonesia

I remember my first sight of the coastline. It was dawn, there was mist on the water, the scent in the air was so different, so rich. The land was a dark cut-out – a shadow against the morning sky. As the sun came up I caught my breath. Beautiful. So different than the coast at home. Rich with trees, mountains on the horizon, really a .. tapestry of color... Well... this would be my new home.¹

*Mother and father had been in Papua for 25 years when the Japanese invaded. They loved it. All of us (5 children) were born there. They were utterly committed to the Papuan people. I know missionaries are very unpopular these days, but I **knew** my parents. My father was so relaxed and so interested in the culture. He did not try to change that. He wanted them to know God but he wasn't trying to make them into Europeans.²*

¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. August, 2005. Tape 1.

² Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. May, 2005. Tape 1.

*I was married to the love of my life there. The Army gave us a wedding with a full honour guard –.*³

I knew it would be different than Holland, but you are never really ready for that kind of change. Everything was different and I had a long adjustment process. I was homesick for a long time. But my children were born there...you make friends. When the war broke out, it was my home.

*Oh, it was a great place. Wonderful. Loved the pace of life there. People took the time to enjoy life.*⁴

In this collection of life stories, Dutch men and women that went to Indonesia encompass single Dutch men and married couples. No representative Dutch women left for Indonesia on their own, except one, and any elaboration on her story will immediately reveal her identity. In Indonesia, she married the 'love of her life,' the result of a courtship initiated in the Netherlands. Of Dutch single men, a majority of them married Dutch-Indonesian women, and one married a girl born in Indonesia of Dutch parents. Two of them were still single when the war broke out; they survived their camp/labour ordeal, repatriated, immigrated, and married in North America.

The very different life trajectories in this database offer a composite portrait of Indonesian life. Dutch men that married Dutch-Indonesian women integrated into the clans of their womenfolk, immersed themselves in the Indonesian social fabric, had children and grandchildren, and planned for retirement and their eventual deaths in Indonesia. For them, Indonesia was home, and they uniformly rejected a "Dutch identity," understanding themselves as Dutch-Indonesians committed to the prosperity of their adopted country. In short, their experience parallels the trajectory of immigrants elsewhere, including the familiar construction of the Netherlands as 'other.' Given that any one of them had immigrated to the New World directly from Holland in their youth, they would have been Dutch-Canadians or Dutch-Americans, and they perceive their relationship with the Indies in precisely this manner; they too,

³ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Female. June, 2005. Tape 1.

⁴ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. May, 2004. Tape 3.

were Dutch Indonesians by self-identification and a number of them politically aspired to a free Indonesia with themselves as full citizens.

Dutch married couples diverged in their adjustment to their new home and their colonial identities. Overall, women suffered through a longer adaptive process on Java and Sumatra, but women who left with husbands for the outer islands spoke of it as an adventurous undertaking, noting that they were far too busy to have time for homesickness. Their contact with, and often immersion into, indigenous life was far more comprehensive than that of women in urban centers, and their political views were clearly developed prior to the War.⁵ In Indonesia for the long haul, their children were born there and they envisioned a future that included not returning to Holland. In other words, they began to perceive their position through the tenets of the immigration paradigm, reorienting themselves to the land in which they now resided, rather than the land they had left. As one wife noted,

*“ I always assumed we would go back, the whole idea was that we would go, do what needed to be done, and come back to Holland. Well we had been there 6 years – years of hard work and wonderful memories. We took our leave and brought our two babies, XX and YY,- to Holland. Well, when we got there – it was not so much home anymore. On the way back... yes I think we had already left Java for _ (outer islands) X and I looked at each other and he said, you know, I am not so sure about retiring back in Holland, and I said! Oh good,! because I am not sure either! ..we both smiled...we were looking forward to home - and so the decision was made. You know, it was the children too – do you know how free they were and how safe on the island? Well **you** know the difference even between here and Holland. We have room here. That was just the way in Indonesia. Holland was so cramped and... normal?.. boring?.. after our life on ___.”⁶*

⁵ A number of Dutch wives living in cities admitted that they had not given much thought to Indonesian politics before the war, and that they began to reflect on it during the Occupation.

⁶ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. June 2005. Tape 1. Three years later, the Japanese invaded. This husband died in a labor camp. She married a

The multifaceted variety of 'Dutch' experience in the Indies addresses the production of mutable and mutual identity through interstitial performance. Women active in Indonesian communities were particularly disdainful of the notion that they were 'colonials.' Their connection to the archipelago was Dutch-to-Indonesian women; dissimilarities of their cultures notwithstanding, commonalities of 'being female' led to mutual recognition and shared emotional moments. Crossing the ethnic bridge through gender identification, these women did not live in Indonesian circumstances that indicated wealth, power, or prestige. Instead, they too went hungry if food shortage occurred, they also recycled, and made over clothes, they too buried babies, had miscarriages, or experienced troubles with misbehaved children.⁷ Given their material circumstances, they could not afford pretence, and were "*so glad that he (indigenous inhabitant of the island) took the time to show us how to do it (making a type of hammock) right. We had no knowledge of that kind of thing – where would you use that in Holland. Later we were able to teach them something too. It went back and forth.*"⁸

These novelistic life stories, living, breathing interactions that illuminate inter-ethnic relations, confront vapid, essentialist, and sterile textual analyses. They are by no means sentimental; if anything the outer island life histories are brutally honest regarding the difficulties of environmental adaptation, leaving the 'trappings' of European civilization to live with no frills whatsoever – in some cases not even a house when they arrived – and 'getting to know the people.' Interviewee self-assessments recognize their own prejudices and women candidly acknowledge recoil:

I never knew before I arrived there that people can smell different. Well I noticed it right away. I did not find it pleasant. Years later, we had a person from the church visit us, and he said something about the smell. Well (she grins) I glared at him and told him he smells to them too. (aside: One of the women told me that about a year after we came. We were washing at the river. You ___she said.

repatriated man who lost his wife during the Occupation and they immigrated to the U.S.

⁷ It is my intent to analyze these particular Interviews in detail in a later work.

⁸ Oral History Interview. Dutch-American Female. August, 2005. Tape 1.

I didn't know the word, so I looked puzzled. She said phew! And then the word again and pinched her nose and made a face. Oh! (Well you see Jet, there I learned another word for smell! I bet it was more like 'stink' because I already knew 'smell.' She bubbles with laughter)

Interviewee picks up the story... Well then,.. where was I – oh yes – well then -Yes? I said. (to the woman at the river with her) Yes, she said, when you came here. And I said, you too, and held my nose. We both laughed)

Really, I should not have snapped at the man. Didn't he say what I had been thinking when I came? I could not even smell it anymore. When we went back to Holland, well THAT smelt funny.

.... (she added later) I found out later that body smell comes from the food you eat. (grins) Well we ate the same food as everyone else, so maybe de Heer XXX (man from the church) was smelling me!⁹

Typically, in analysis, the fact that this woman admits an initial aversion to the smells of “Other” is used to highlight the notion of colonial racism in multiple texts. Her initial ‘arrogance’ in relation to the indigenous inhabitant on the island would be underscored and the white-Other paradigm would remain intact; the essential ‘Colonial’ of the colonial-other script nicely reinforced. However, that analysis tells us nothing about colonial or ethnic interaction. It simply reinforces the ‘already known’ while marginalizing the truly interesting aspects of the discourse.

For example: what had happened to the relationship between the ‘colonial’ woman and her indigenous counterpart that when the two women were by the river, the one felt free enough to tell the other that she had smelt? What *type* of relationship characterized their interaction? Add the very fact that both were washing (clothes) at the river; how do these two facts speak to notions of othering? Refusal to engage in analysis of interaction through the maintenance of the proposition that it did not happen, or only occurred with the context of the power over paradigm, rarefies colonial relationships/analysis, but does not tell us anything *about* them.

⁹ Op, cit., Tape 1.

While scholars such as Bhabha speak about mutability and mutuality, we need 'on-the-ground' explications of those forces at play.

Interviewees were frankly interested in interaction; indeed in relation to their colonial period, it formed the focus of their analysis of self. They forthrightly probed questionable behaviour vis a vis indigenous peoples on their own part as well as other Dutch men and women, situating cross-cultural gaffes in contextualized space. Discussing the multicultural fabric of Javanese society, an interviewee observed that each ethnic group, including the Dutch, had elaborate protocols and their own way of doing things. The finely tuned etiquette necessary in particular social situations was acquired by others, interviewees affirm, because that is precisely what made Indonesian society "work." *They learned our ways and we learned theirs; I went to another Dutch man to ask about Chinese ways of doing things before I accepted a dinner invitation from a Chinaman who became a good friend. (On another tape) ...I ate at the home of a bupati – that was whole other set of protocols! He (bupati) was very skilled in Dutch and he acted as a guide for me in what I should do in certain indigenous situations.*¹⁰ Mutuality and mutability.

Of the database sub-groups, these individuals most clearly meet the prescribed requirements that constitute the colonial label; they are citizens of the 'colonial power,' they went to Indonesia to work or as missionaries; the culture that formed them was the colonial culture. Yet one after another, they reject the appellative 'colonizer.' Conceding that they were indeed citizens of a country that was a 'colonial power' they nevertheless assign highly divergent attributions to their role there when contrasted with the modifications of the word 'colonial' in the literature.

Male interviewees that held government positions of one type or another do not frame their understanding of their self-other relations as power over, but as exchange. They flatly deny that colonial society was structured along the lines of a hierarchy with members of the colonial society "on top," arguing instead that

¹⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch- American Male. August 2005, Tapes 2 and 3.

although they held power positions over some people, including other whites, this situation is reflected in every society including their current nations, where many of them were 'bosses' over other employees. Decrying the idea that simply because you have an employee of a different skin color underneath your jurisdiction, that race dynamics will immediately become the determining factor of the relationship, they contend that this is akin to saying that every employee of color that worked for them in Canada or the U.S.A. was therefore subservient to them by virtue of both race and power relations. In response to my comment that indeed, some scholars would argue for double subjugation under those circumstances, one interviewee responded that the entire notion was in itself, racist. Retorting in turn, that ultimately, the colonial administration held power over the indigenous inhabitants of Indonesia, and that 'wrongful' behavior on the part of an Indonesian could lead to repercussions, he reacted:

'What are you saying there? That if I had a problem with an Indonesian that did not follow orders when he worked for me, or I did not like the way he talked or behaved in the street, I would run to the administration and have him arrested? Do you think for a minute that that was the way we did things in Indonesia? Do you think I could not take care of my own problems with an employee and I would run to the colonial administration?'

Self: Not for ordinary differences, no. But what if that Indonesian was openly against the administration, or was difficult... .say... talked back and was insolent about the administration...gave you the idea that he would not do his job properly because you were Dutch?

Interviewee: Let me tell you something. I have never had an insolent Indonesian working for me, not in the company and not a servant; they were not the kind of people to show that on the job. Do you think that I did not know that there were Indonesians who were sick and tired of the way things were run in the country? I would have had to be dumb, deaf and blind. I had problems with the ways things were going. Change had to come. But if you think we had some kind of police state going over there you are so wrong. That was not my problem with it. It was just that [...] the old ways had to go. The Indies was ready to govern herself. If we had picked up everyone that spoke against the administration, we would have had the jails full, and let me tell you that they would be picking up a lot more than Indonesians.

Self: But they did pick up people and they exiled leaders.

*Interviewee: That was something else again, because those people were actively working against the administration. If that happened here (U.S.) they would be picked up too. I may not have liked it, it needed change, but it was the government and if you want change, you work for it. If you use violence, then you threaten the lives of other people in the society.*¹¹

The above sequence speaks directly to relations between ‘colonials’ and ‘Indonesians’ at the power level, and again, the discourse can be used to underscore “colonial attitudes,” or conversely, deconstructed for the complicated vision of ‘self’ in Indonesia revealed by this narrator. Clearly, whether he approved of it or not, the colonial administration was the *legitimate* government of the time, and although change was required, it had to occur through legal channels. This interviewee and I went on to have a discussion of “legitimacy;” I pointed out that the crux of the matter was that the difference between him and some revolutionary leaders was that the colonial administration was not seen as *legitimate* by those leaders. He certainly understood that – it did not take my explication of the point for him to recognize that as he had worked it out long ago – but he in turn, was not prepared to accept the revolutionary view of the colonial government. While he had a great deal of empathy for many revolutionary positions, he felt that the manner in which they wanted to seize power was “counter-productive” for the country.

Overall, a number of interviews in this sub-category were frustrated because they did not feel they could properly convey life in Indonesia in a manner that would allow me to grasp it. It would not be an exaggeration to state that some of them felt that a bold new experiment in societal arrangements was taking place in Indonesia, a vision cut short by the Occupation. Dutch men in the database were surprisingly (for me) involved with multiple levels of Indonesian society, and this immersion included interaction with people of multiple different ethnic backgrounds. They were ‘captivated’ by the Indies, and that fascination fundamentally informs their later rejection of the Netherlands.

¹¹ Oral History Interview. Dutch- American Male. August 2005, Tapes 2 and 3.

Unlike many Dutch men, women on Java, and two on Sumatra, were not deeply involved in Indies society beyond their own circles. Their identity did not shift and the self-space process that formed them remained specific to particular Netherlands locales. No matter how at 'home' they felt in Indonesia, part of the 'self' remained tied to a sliver of a North Sea country thousands of miles away. Indeed, as they age they out this fact in culinary choices: some elderly Dutch households in North America always have Dutch cheese and will travel long distances to obtain rookvlees, vla, boterkoek, or bloedworst; some of them have delivery arrangements with the stores that stock these delectable items. Even when immigrants consciously reject their natal land, constructing it as negative foil for all the things that are good about "here," they are unable to refuse totally the intimacy of that early formative land bond. Indications of its impact surfaces as the immigrant ages; they use words native to their mother tongue or, if speaking to someone who shares knowledge of the language, will slip back into it altogether, when they have not used it for years. Memory, that betrayer of thoughts and dreams, dwells more and more often on the homeland.

6.2 To Indonesia: The Veterans

Paralleling their relationship to the central discourses in this work, veterans in some ways represent the most marginalized – both scholarly and in terms of their official recognition – of these groups. The 'Indische' are at least engaged in symbolic dialogue with their society, but veterans only speak with each other, brethren overseas and perhaps loved ones. Trying to find extended references to their experience in the academic literature is entirely non-productive; it does not exist. Condensed to the First and Second Police Actions, or the largest army ever mounted by the Netherlands, the voices of Dutch veterans in the Indies have been completely silenced. As a quoted interviewee noted, the public is not interested in what they experienced, what they saw, or what they know, it has only expressed curiosity about their behaviour. Veterans attribute the need to air the 'dirty laundry' as connected to the colonial project and attendant guilt. They doubt that Indonesia will be required to account for her actions during the bersiap period or the

revolutionary war. Even if this were to occur, a veteran observes, *'Indonesia will excuse whatever she did by saying they were fighting for their lives as a Nation. If we say we were fighting for the people, we are laughed at. But that pathetic excuse – that will stand.'*¹² His comment underscores that veterans hold to the conviction that there are two sets of standards operative in discussions of their time in the Indies; one for "Dutch" soldiers, and one for the revolutionary army, and that criteria for their behavior are often set at an unattainable level and offer no evidence that they take into account – indeed that there is even an awareness of – the reality of the revolutionary battlefield.

Soldiers that fought in the war against Indonesia were committed to the freedom of the Indonesian people. That their perceived task was externally re-inscribed did not alter their understanding; they hold to that conviction. Cynically aware that all sides – revolutionaries, the international community, and the Dutch – bandied the word 'free' about – they articulate their perceptions of the term 'free' for each group. Veterans interpret the revolutionary use of 'free' as "freedom to seize power," while freedom for the international community is understood as "freedom to pursue our interests in Indonesia." For the veterans, and they thought, the Dutch nation, 'free' meant freedom from tyranny, freedom of speech, and full participation in civic life. In time, they assert, the Netherlands shifted to the revolutionary meaning of the term, 'free.'

The guerrilla warfare that characterized the Dutch-Indonesian war in narratives recounted by soldiers, eerily resemble accounts collected from Vietnam veterans.¹³ Post-Traumatic Shock syndrome – for which many Vietnam vets receive treatment – similarly afflicts Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian-North American veterans and a small number of them have sought help from agencies specializing in PTSD. Participating with other soldiers in group therapy largely focused on owning and articulating the battlefield to facilitate healing, narrative exchange contributes to mutual recognition. Indies

¹² Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. July 2005, Tape 2.

¹³ Under my research grant, one of the sub-projects was the interviewing of American veterans. Thus, I have a formidable amount of comparative materials from diverse wars and veterans. (World war II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm etc)

and Vietnam combatants identify substantial commonalities, including familiar terror and torture techniques utilized by both 'enemies.' A Netherlands Indies veteran shared that through his close friendship with a Vietnam War survivor, movies about Vietnam now spoke directly to his own experience.

In discussing his assertion, we spoke at length about the social climate in the Netherlands post World War II. In 1945, the Netherlands was clawing its way back from five years of Nazi occupation and the "Hunger Winter" of 1944 in North Holland. The Queen and her family had just returned and the government reconvened when rumours that Nationalists had taken over the government in Batavia and random mobs were indiscriminately killing Europeans, Eurasians, Chinese, and Indonesians. This left the Dutch, whose shipping was in possession of the Allies, in an extremely vulnerable position vis a vis her citizens in the Indies and her perception of care for the colony. The initial Dutch reaction, that the Revolution was "made in Japan," found an echo in the stories related by ex South-East-Asian internment camp inmates and a number of scholars concur.¹⁴

That the Dutch revised their constitution to render conscription possible¹⁵ (the three eldest boys in every family were required to enlist and serve) is noteworthy for this pacifistic¹⁶ Nation. When we link her abhorrence of war and five long years of Nazi occupation with conscription, and note that in spite of these factors, she sent the 'largest army (she) ever mounted'¹⁷ to Indonesia, all indicators point to the high priority she placed on this mission. Approximately

¹⁴ Gordon, Bernard K. (1964) *The Potential for Indonesian Expansionism*. [in] *Pacific Affairs*. Vol. 35. No 4. pages 378 – 393. Page 383-384.

¹⁵ Wesseling, H. (Jan, 1980) *Post-Imperial Holland*. [in] *Journal of Contemporary History*. Vol. 15, No.1 *Imperial Hangovers*. Pages 125-142. Page 125.

¹⁶ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. Pacifism as a quality of the Dutch, and its evolution as a source characteristic, is probed by Schama, Simon. (1991) *The Embarrassment of Riches: Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*. London: Fontana Press.

¹⁷ Wesseling, H. (Jan, 1980) *Post-Imperial Holland*. [in] *Journal of Contemporary History*. Vol. 15, No.1 *Imperial Hangovers*. Pages 125-142. page 125-126.

170,000 men served, a truly remarkable figure given the casualties of the Second World War.

In the middle of utter Chaos in the fatherland therefore, we find the Dutch undertaking a gargantuan effort in Indonesia. What prompted that effort? I have noted that Dutch emotions regarding the Indies expressed by interviewees arise in the literature.¹⁸ Therefore, it is possible that true emotion, based on a deep and personal bond to colony and peoples, spurred the response. It is equally likely that a combination of perceived relationship and the certainty that the revolutionaries, a *'superficial layer of the population, as thin as the silver skin of a grain of rice,'*¹⁹ were imposing their will on the people of Indonesia, provoked Dutch reaction. Certainly, the responsibility to the people of Indonesia discourse speaks to this proposition. The common scholarly explanation however, which dismisses both responsibility and the bond to Indonesia as either irrelevant or non-believable, asserts that the Dutch were unwilling to confront the end of Colonialism in general, and their colonies in particular. Sometimes affiliated with the 'personal' quality of the bond between the Netherlands and the Indies, the lack of enthusiasm to let the Indies 'go' is more often coupled with loss of revenue, in spite of the fact that this thesis cannot be supported by economic data.

Interviewees point out that the Queen spoke to the issue of Independence for the Indies on two occasions during the war, assuring the people of Indonesia that discussions would commence subsequent to Nazi defeat. The Indies civil servant²⁰ quoted by Hart eloquently articulates an Indonesian nation arising during the Depression, a time when the Indies was entirely dependent upon her own resources due to economic circumstances in the Motherland. His discourse overlaps neatly with interviewees that discussed the

¹⁸ Furnivall, J.S.(1948) *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India*. New York: New York University Press. Lijphart, A. (1966) *The Trauma of Decolonization: The Dutch and West New Guinea*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

¹⁹ Colijn served in the Indies in many capacities. Colijn, H. (1928) *Koloniale Vraagstukken van Heden en Morgen*. Amsterdam.

²⁰ Hart, G.H.C. (1942) *Towards Economic Democracy in the Netherlands Indies*. The Netherlands Information Bureau. N.Y.: Page 21.

political situation in Indonesia and the words of the Queen. *The European and Chinese elements (who) were becoming conscious of their integration into this new community*²¹ self-identified as citizens of that community and tied their identities to emerging national sentiment. Dismissing Minister for Colonies Welter as a 'windbag,'²² narrators trusted in the Queen, certain that she would keep faith with her Indies charges. Like the veterans, many Dutch and Dutch-Indonesians in Indonesia were also concerned with the dismissal of due process and what they perceived as the opportunistic seizure of power by Indonesian revolutionaries who did not speak for the people of the archipelago. The Queen made a promise, honourable men would therefore engage her in discussion, and carefully map Indonesia's independence for the benefit of all of her people.²³

Whatever the reason, or combination of reasons, that fired the Dutch to intervene with Revolutionary plans, immediate post-war discourse certainly avowed that veterans were clearly fighting for Indonesia, her peoples, and due process of law regarding future Independence. Soldiers were thus engaged in a 'heroic' enterprise and this knowledge supported them throughout their tenure in Indie. In the Netherlands however, the Hero increasingly took on Bully attributes. As Baudet notes:

"As one event succeeded another, and one situation merged into its sequel, from the Proclamation of the Republic of Indonesia to the Conference at the Hoge Veluwe in that memorable Spring of 1946, from the discussions at Linggadjati, Malino, Delpassar, to the first military action, and then through the dramatic summer of 1947 and the cease-fire and Renville talks in the following year to the

²¹ Op. cit. page 21.

²² Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. July 2005, Tape 2.

²³ This trepidation assuredly underlies their reluctant acceptance of British-brokered Linggadjati Agreement, initialed on November 12, 1946. The agreement provided for Dutch recognition of republican rule on Java and Sumatra, and the Netherlands-Indonesian Union under the Dutch crown (consisting of the Netherlands, the Republic, and the eastern archipelago). The archipelago was to have a loose federal arrangement, the Republic of the United States of Indonesia (RUSI), comprising the republic (on Java and Sumatra), southern Kalimantan, and the "Great East" consisting of Sulawesi, Maluku, the Lesser Sunda Islands, and West New Guinea.

second military action; and ultimately by way of intervention of the Security Council, to the final unconditional transfer of sovereignty – throughout this long-drawn chain of events the Netherlands air was disturbed by the continual violent ²⁴ actions and reactions of political parties and groups in and outside Parliament which felt involved in the great drama one way or another, by demonstrations, mass meetings, petitions from right and left. The voice of the former colonials, of whom van Mook spoke disapprovingly, rang out clear and carried far, at least in the early stages. But it was neither the only or the most powerful sound in the political tumult: it was in turn accompanied and drowned out by protests, declarations of sympathy, initiatives of all kinds, threats of strike action from the unions that were inspired by feelings of solidarity with the Indonesian revolutionaries.²⁵

The (singular!) voice of former colonials that ‘rang out clear and carried far’²⁶ in the early stages of the struggle against the Revolutionaries, foreshadows the backlash against that voice(s). In Baudet’s text, interviewees are already ‘former colonials’ – a generic group that speaks with a single voice, signified only through their ‘colonial’ attribute. They provide the necessary discursive foil for van Mook’s disapproval and the protests, sympathy, initiatives, threats of strike, and solidarity the Dutch exhibited with the revolutionary cause. The ‘Motherland’ is detaching herself from the colonial attribute, while former ‘colonials,’ the vipers in her bosom so to speak – carry her sin.²⁷

As the people of Netherlands re-inscribed the national self, they had a large army in the field that thought it was still ‘fighting for the freedom’ of the people of Indonesia. But since the voice of the revolutionaries IS the voice of the people in international self-

²⁴ This Dutch word is better rendered as “impassioned.”

²⁵ Baudet, Henry. (Jan 1969) *The Netherlands After the Loss of Empire*. [in] *Journal of Contemporary History*. Vol. 4, No. 1: Colonialism and Decolonization. Pages 127 – 139. pages 130-131.

²⁶ One suspects that this is the last time “loud and clear” can be applied to the voices of Colonizers within their mother countries.

²⁷ Once again, lack of space prohibits a thorough analysis of the socio-historical transformations that led to a rather rapid turn-about re the Netherlands Indies relationship in the mother country.

determination discourse and since that theme informs Dutch colonial detachment, the army was fighting *against* the conflated people/revolutionaries championed by various Netherlands groups. The rhetorical transformation of soldiers and their task now aligned them with Colonialism – a position they hold to this day.

Outer island residents were especially vociferous as regards outer island concerns, holding to the conviction that the Dutch had – in some cases ‘have’ - a moral responsibility to the rest of Indonesia and to the Indonesians integrated into the Army. It is right to remind ourselves that the Army’s composition was by no means all “Dutch.” Moluccans, in particular, participated in the First and Second Police Actions. A weakened post-war Netherlands, who had administered the archipelago as a tapestry of people, traditions, languages and interests, found herself strongly opposed by an international community who accepted the republican discourse that they represented all of *Indonesia*. In 1948, in the strongest position they would ever hold vis a vis the revolutionary government, the best the Dutch could do was to again insist on a Federation in light of their moral obligations to the rest of the archipelago.

The recoil against colonialism has prevented the Dutch nation from carrying out an objective review of the army’s role in Indonesia, acknowledging its success in carrying out the tasks required of it, and thanking the soldiers for their efforts, their belief, their commitment and their lives. Assessing the situation from ‘outside’ the Netherlands, the focus on suspected crimes against humanity committed by Dutch forces is a great source of pain – for many of them a betrayal - for the young boys who irrevocably lost their innocence in the Indonesian warzone; some of them have now spent 50 years sickened, haunted, and tormented by memories of what man does to man. From their perspective the government of the Netherlands owed them, at the very least, an explanation for the perceptual transformation of their task in Indonesia and an extended explanation for why so many of their comrades died for a cause that the nation – seemingly – no longer believed in.

Now burdened with silence regarding their experiences - they were not heroes that opposed a common enemy such as the soldiers of previous wars – their humanity and combat duty is relegated to the margins as distasteful reminders of the colonial project; an army that ‘fought for Colonialism.’ This re-inscription of their actual task is

perhaps unworthy of an always self-reflective Nation as the Netherlands has time and again proven herself to be. While it is almost certainly the case that 'loose cannons' in the Netherlands Indies army committed acts now considered war crimes, probing the battle zone from an interactive perspective does not nullify those acts, but does engage the psychological reality of guerrilla warfare and an awareness of the "enemy's" role in the interaction between the armies. Veterans stand as reminders of the multifaceted relationships and issues that characterized the Indies-Dutch bond, a perhaps sometimes painful reminder that refuses recognition that former beloved other became a (brutal) enemy. Netherlands silence may arise from notions of power-over 'Other' that paradoxically refuses the very real fact that revolutionaries had appropriated their own power and were meeting them on a level playing field. That latter actuality is one that veterans fully recognize and acknowledge.

6.3 Of Indonesia: Dutch Indonesians and Indonesians

I have argued that children born in Indonesia diverged from their parents in terms of ethnic identity. In making that claim, the second strand of investigation must be drawn into our discussion; the relationship between individual and native land. Born in Indonesia children, Dutch-Indonesians, and Indonesians, also express food preferences that signify their natal ties. Dutch-Indonesians descended from long-term Indies families prefer the same foods as Indonesian interviewees. They are completely oriented to the "Indies" diet, rarely glancing at a potato, eating everything with rice, and preferring their food well spiced. Other Dutch-Indonesians and Dutch children born in the Indies display their mixed ethnic backgrounds; Indonesian and Dutch dishes sit cheerfully side by side on the buffet or table.

Linguistic idiosyncrasies utilized by all these interviewees, especially the purposeful use of terms derived from multiple Indonesian languages or Malay, speaks directly to Memory and the fact that, while many "Dutch" thoughts return to the Netherlands, these interviews continually revisit their formative years in Indonesia; their homeland. Quite a number of narrators, in a North American atmosphere they read as facilitating this possibility, have reinstated Indonesian cultural dress and customs; the gendong is one example of an artefact passed by grandmothers to

granddaughters who often have only a genetic or story bond to Indonesia or, in the case of affinal kin, no link whatsoever. Indonesian style skirts and long blouses – ‘*much more comfortable my dear*’ – are back in the closet, and beaded slipper type shoes the footwear of choice.

Residing in a social environment that does not challenge the self-ascribed ‘Dutch-Indonesian’ identity, while validations of that self-perception are offered by Indonesians in their midst, interviewees do not struggle with Be-longing. When asked, ‘*Where are you from?*’ (a question one is often asked in North America, usually phrased as, ‘*Were you born here? Where are you from?*’) Dutch-Indonesians and Indonesians name their place of birth. Quite often, the questioner will not recognize the answer (unless it is Djakarta – still called Batavia by a majority of interviewees), prompting an inquiry, ‘*where is that?*’ Interviewees love that question – it gives them the chance to talk about home to any person interested enough to query their origins. But their enthusiasm stems from more than the ability to expand on natal place; it rests on the fact that no one ever questions their claim to identity and says – *how can you call yourself a Dutch-Indonesian? You mean you were a colonial right?*

Indeed, many narrators now have grandchildren in the Canadian or U.S. University systems. These descendents appropriate the Dutch-Indonesian identity. A granddaughter of an American informant, currently attending a high profile U.S. University, told me that when people ask about her ancestry she tells them that her maternal grandmother and grandfather were Dutch-Indonesians. Indeed, this same woman wrote a paper at the University level for a Sociology class on Ethnicity in which she articulated that ethnic descent; apparently, her Professor saw nothing strange in the claim, as the marked copy (in which she recorded her Indies roots in a kin chart that went back 7 generations) made no comment at all.

The contradiction between self-perceived identities (Dutch-Indonesian) and assigned identity (European/Dutch) is stark. On the one hand, interviewees enunciate their natal-place ties and the formation of self-identity that forms them today. On the other hand, academics misidentify their natal bond and assign the Dutch identity to these groups, thereby facilitating the necessary us/them binary utilized in colonial analyses, while regrettably retaining a framework

that distorts, rather than illuminates, the complex multiplicity of colonial self-formations. In sum:

1. Families of Dutch ancestry with a long history in Indonesia, were not Dutch, they were Dutch-Indonesians. In North America, hyphenated identity usually holds until the second generation (children born in Canada or the U.S.) when descendants simply become Americans or Canadians. Since there was no such thing as an Indonesian identity until after 1949, people identified locally – with place. Dutch-Indonesians and Indonesians still have this tendency in their narratives; although Dutch-Indonesians often frame answers to questions that clearly query their national background with the hyphenated description.
 - a. Dutch-Indonesians are not “Dutch” but descendents of deep Indonesian or Eurasian matriline in which women married white men. Cultural patterns, ethnic affiliation, and kin ties may be largely Indonesian; very few know details of their father’s line or history, unless of course, their fathers were Eurasian in which case they too, are contextualized in their matriline. In short, they are an alternate ethnicity whose cultural heritage is not simply a sum of Dutch and Indonesian ‘parts,’ but a syncretized, fluid structure that produced wholly new cultural forms and a divergent world view. “Liminal” in the sense that they refuse neat ethnic packaging within the colonial sphere, their enforced occupation of us/them ethnic space by others, denies their multiplicity.

In short Dutch-Indonesians were/are Indonesian by ‘blood,’ ‘length of residence,’ and ‘place of birth.’

2. Children born in the Indies of Dutch parents also claim the Indonesian, rather than - or, depending on age at Occupation as well as - the Dutch affiliation. Although their claim may be perceived as scurrilous by some scholars or listeners, it parallels the fostered identities of immigrant children. The children that fall into this category in the database clearly felt free to engage with the land of their birth and do not appear to have been constrained by parents who felt antipathy, animosity, or ambivalence toward Indonesia; clearly, they also did not anticipate any circumstances that might change the Indies-child relationship. Moreover, the primary

influences during infancy and childhood on these children was indigenous through their relationship with babus etc. or their immersion in indigenous life on the outer islands.²⁸

3. Dutch-Indonesians speak of the departure from Indonesia as enforced, refugees from an Indonesian racial policy that threatened violence to self and children at every turn. They did not repatriate; the Netherlands evacuated them – for which they are very grateful. As evacuees however, they perceived their tenure in the Netherlands as temporary – until things ‘straightened out’ or normalized. With that possibility blocked, they faced imminent decisions. The refugee discourse is ‘rite of passage’ framed – the separation (evacuation) leading to waiting (liminality) illustrates that the refugee sub-group did not leave Indonesia after arriving at a deliberate decision to make Holland home, (an immigrant decision) but rather imagined it as a temporary fleeing to a safe place until the ‘return’.

My discussion of the intimate relationship between body and environment and the subconscious self-formation that occurs through interaction with place was intended to focus attention on a number of critical points. Dutch Indonesians, nestled in their Indonesian locales, closely bound to the cultures and peoples in their environment, especially those outside of the urban centers, were not Dutch. Moreover, the reality of their Dutch-Indonesian identity meant that when they fled their homeland, they represent the first great refugee influx into the modern Netherlands; they were far more than simply “emotionally tied” to their land. They had family and patron links in that country. Their futures were vested in its landscapes. They had never known another home. We do great

²⁸ Note: Some immigrant children grow up in households that disparage everything about the ‘new country,’ usually families that, for a number of divergent reasons, have no recourse to their homelands. Immigrants that do not like their new country and feel they made an immigration mistake, will return ‘home,’ if home is a free nation and false pride does not inhibit it. Inevitable identity conflict arises for children raised in households that hate the country of domicile, while simultaneously exposed to the public life (schools etc) of that country. This is one reason those particular families may try to minimize social interaction with ‘others’ for those children.

disservice to them – indeed violate their realities, when we harness their identities to serve our analytic cause.

If it is true, as I maintain, that we misidentify the homeland, identity and personal realities of Dutch Indonesians, what are the implications for scholarship on the East Indies colonial relationship, the making of colonial identities, and ethnic interaction? A few suggestions, nothing more, are made here.

In the first instance, we certainly complicate and muddy the Colonial/Other paradigm. In and of themselves, the bodies of Dutch Indonesians deny the binary, as multiple identities are conjoined in their persons. Secondly, given the colonial classificatory system, identity by association enters into a comprehensive re-evaluation of Dutch Indonesian identities in particular and colonial identities in general. If certain Dutch Indonesians made choices (as some did) to privilege one aspect of their heritage over other potential components, what discursive choices will be required in order to convey the heteroglossic nature of the Dutch-Indonesian community itself, let alone the “Dutch” community or the “European” category?

Thirdly, an acknowledgement of potential indigenous contributions to the Dutch-Indonesian identity suggests that we can no longer appropriate the discourse of (all) Dutch Indonesians as Dutch colonials in studies such as Stoler and Strassler’s. Indeed, domain analysis offered in this work suggests that we cannot even harness the narratives of Dutch children to a singular analytic cause. Additionally, - this must be noted – place of domicile in Indonesia clearly separates ‘colonial’ discourse in terms of perception of self-in-place and self-in-interaction, as does gender. There is in fact, no “uniform” colonial. If nothing else, the database confirms the multiplicities of the “Dutch identity.”

Fourthly, if Cribb is correct that Dutch-Indonesians were targeted during the *bersiap* period because they represented an alternative to Independence arising from their pre-war vision of an Indonesia with themselves as prominent citizens, and taking into account that pre-Occupation revolutionary discourse already marginalized them as outsiders, investigations of the uses of ethnicity rhetoric to cover political aspirations is suggested. In this particular case, Dutch-Indonesian identities, inscribed by scholars as Dutch in the one case, and as ‘colonial’ and ‘outside’ the indigenous social fabric in the

other, serve the goals of the writers. Whether we speak of academics or revolutionaries in this regard, both wield violence vis a vis the Dutch-Indonesian identity – in the one case textual, in the other empirical terror.

Dutch Indonesians exhibit a full spectrum of political affiliations – from revolutionary principles to independence with association under the Dutch crown; therefore diverse analyses are required to plumb both self and political identity. In this context, it is desirable to point out that the identity formation of Dutch Indonesians has always taken place in the context of the Dutch-and-Indies relationships; indeed is predicated on a Dutch Indies. No Dutch Indonesian had ever resided in a regime where Dutch administration was not critical to the manner in which the society was structured, until after Independence where they were truly seen as suspect. That very fact illuminates a decisive aspect of Dutch-Indonesian identity formation; in terms of their socio-environment, the land they love and honour was shaped by Dutch traditions and particular political principles in combination with the Indonesian/Dutch Indonesian (the Indonesian identity on Java also affected to some extent by the long tenure of the Dutch) kin and patron links that characterize their communities and the deep love of particular Indies locales.

Narratives provided by Indonesians in this database compound the complexity of the colonial identity, colonial life, and colonial interaction. I was particularly struck by the personalization of state and youth violence in their narratives, a singularly silenced aspect of the revolutionary period directly after the surrender of the Japanese. Their discourses expose the composite adaptations of the (in these cases) Javanese people to changing circumstances, and speaks to ideological separations based on age that impacted at least some families and communities. That the male narratives also speak to the formation of colonial identities cannot be denied, but rather than perceiving their sympathetic to the colonial period discourses as instances of the colonization of the Indonesian mind, I suggest that their self reflections regarding the divergences in freedom of speech for example, between the colonial, Occupation and revolutionary periods are worthy of further investigation.

My inclination to dismiss an emphasis on these men's colonial mindset is prompted by the interviews of the two women from Indonesia who address these issues of memory and speech in a

similar fashion to North American interviewees. Additionally, when these men spoke to me, they had resided for long period in countries (U.S.A and Canada) that they perceived as facilitating critique and openness. Through that filter they certainly were able to assess the relations and motivations of Dutch, revolutionaries and international communities, without the notion that they had to follow a particular script; indeed in these interviews, some accomplished early in my fieldwork, I conveyed that I expected to engage in a critical indictment of Colonialism, and pleasing me as interviewer should have led to a discourse that facilitated those expectations, given that they were focussed on performing in terms of a macro script. They were not thus focussed; in spite my offering to retrospectively engage the colonial period in a critical manner, they largely negated that possibility, neatly turning the tables on my preconceived notions through analyses of state-self memory and speech relations facilitated under that regime. Their aptitude for analyzing certain forms of historical, memory and speech possibilities, their skill in separating cultural Indonesian norms and mores *as* Indonesian rather than Dutch, and their musings on the will to power, is not only fascinating, but demands a thorough oral history project in Indonesia. Given (1) that this can be facilitated and (2) that analysts working on the project do not proceed from a pre-conceived script, but are there to facilitate the telling of a life in a (past) political climate that has officially engaged in historical and emotional erasure, a comparative project would facilitate a qualified scrutiny of the ideas and ideals my informants embody and their roots in a particular revolutionary context. A project in Indonesia must incorporate and honour the mental and emotional residue that lingers from state-self discursive interaction over the lifetime of the life storyteller, particularly I suspect, on Java.²⁹

²⁹ For a fascinating, but contextually divergent discussion of the ways in which the state is intimately connected with household and community on Java see: Newberry, Jan (2006) *Back Door Java: State Formation and the Domestic in Working Class Java*. Buffalo/Peterborough: Broadview Press.

6.4 Writing Colonialism: Shifts in Western Thought

Dutch-Indonesians join the Dutch as the Colonial in scholarship. "They" held power, they "fought for colonialism," they were Orientalist to the bone, and they mask the reality of their lives in Indonesia with sentimental and nostalgic rhetoric or remain silent because they will not acknowledge their participation in a shameful past. We know that the lives they led and the emotions they felt were rooted in a false power proposition, hence to acknowledge their reality evokes embarrassment and a sincere desire that they stop talking. Although the people in this database have led a fascinating existence, and have something to say about identities, colonial analysis, inter-ethnic relations, and international politics, their heteroglossic narratives are negated through a monologic interpretation of Colonialism.

After the War, Europe was finally exhausted. Centuries of war, two huge Wars within 30 years of one another – tired. So many dead, ruination, so many abuses of human rights. I believe it shocked Europe, shocked them...and shock made them quiet; no confidence – the war reduced them. What happened with Germany – well being enemies is one thing – European countries fought for this reason and that throughout their history. But the wars, especially the Second World War and what happened with the Jews, that was something else again. The way in which we went to war, destroy everyone and everything...

...I think that she (Europe) has become middle-aged, maybe even entered old age. The countries are reflecting. You know, the young they believe and will fight for anything, lash out...sometimes without thinking. Well she is not young anymore, and she is thinking about her past and learning from it. During the last war, they were occupied by a power that stripped them of what they most believed in.. I think we..they, have learned that you have to give up some ideas, maybe some ambition, to get things that are even more important. Peace is more important... than your status...than power...³⁰

³⁰ Oral History Interview. Dutch-Canadian Male. August, 2005. Tape 3.

The principle of self-determination that informed European acquiescence to post-war decolonization is at least partially linked to the exhaustion noted by the above informant. Increasing awareness of global responsibility and the role of media as broker between western peoples and official institutions were other factors. Yet 'on-the-ground' mentality in North America – not occupied during the Second World War – did not respond to transformational impulses until a few decades later. While the rhetoric of self-determination proved expedient at the political level for Roosevelt shortly after the War, its full ideological integration at the level of the 'street' set in during the turbulent sixties. The shadow of the Cold War and North American generational landmarks³¹ such as the Bay of Pigs and the Kennedy assassination provoked the transition in North America. (Like expressions of threat to be sure, occupied Europeans.) Many North American children experienced nuclear drills at school during the Kennedy-Khrushchev stand-off, leading to a profound awareness that the powerful could end North American lives, as well as the world of unsuspecting and uninvolved Others, in the flash of a moment. As an entire generation re-evaluated society and its potential evils, rejections of Hiroshima and "On the Beach"³² scenarios were inevitable.

Sixties evaluatory discourse reassigned value to the good/evil binary poles in the western mythological tapestry. Incestuously interwoven with the rape of nature by corporate interests, the 'return to the land' narrative, and the recoil from violence, Culture, formerly "good" in the mythological binary set characteristic of the West, became problematic if not downright evil, while Nature was reinscribed as good/exalted. Enemy – formerly other in the

³¹ Linde, C. (1993) *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence*. New York, London: Oxford University Press. Generational cohorts include landmark events in their narratives. For example, anyone in my generation can answer the question: Where were you/what were you doing when Kennedy was shot? They can also articulate the impact the events had on their lives.

³² Shute, Neville. (1983) *On the Beach*. New York: Ballantine Books.

oppositional paradigm, became Victim³³ as Other became desirable and ‘we’ rejected ourselves.

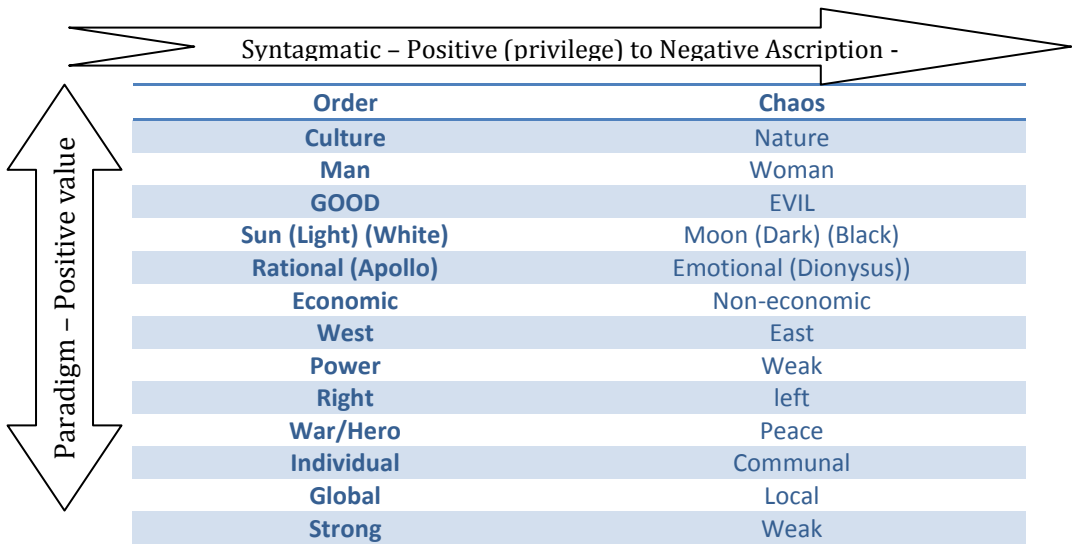


Figure 13: Standard, abbreviated, classic western mythological binaries

On the syntagmatic plane, Domains in opposition such as Culture-Nature carry Value. Greek and Biblical sources that frame the Judeo-Christian worldview emphasize Culture over Nature; culture therefore carries (carried) positive value, while domination over (weak, chaotic) Nature was - at least per Holy Writ - the prerogative of (Strong) man. In each binary, one pole carries privilege; within the classic western worldview, Culture, Men, etc are both positive and mythically privileged OVER³⁴ its negative pole.

On the paradigmatic plane, the terms align to form a paradigm. Thus Order, Culture, Man, Sun, Rationality, Economics, West, Power, Global, Strong and War (etc.) link with/are *Good* and inter-signify in Myth; use of one Domain implies the others. Transposing from the

³³ This paradigm’s reversal was pre-figured in Indonesia, as the “Forgotten Army’s” mission altered from ‘ensuring freedom’ for the people to ‘fighting for Colonialism’ a.k.a the maintenance of European power over Others.

³⁴ Up/Down is a binary where “Up” is good (heaven) and down (hell) is bad. This is a dominant binary motif in western life. Are you up for it? I feel up today? Expressions such as “get down” play with the binary poles.

binary schema, the paradigm, characterized by uniformly positive terms, similarly carries mythic privilege OVER the negative paradigm, Chaos (Nature continually Descends (down) into Chaos and that is why we (Culture) must dominate 'her'/Woman), Nature, Woman, Moon, Emotion, Weakness, Peace, and non-economic peoples.

Sixties counter-myth reversed paradigmatic Value:

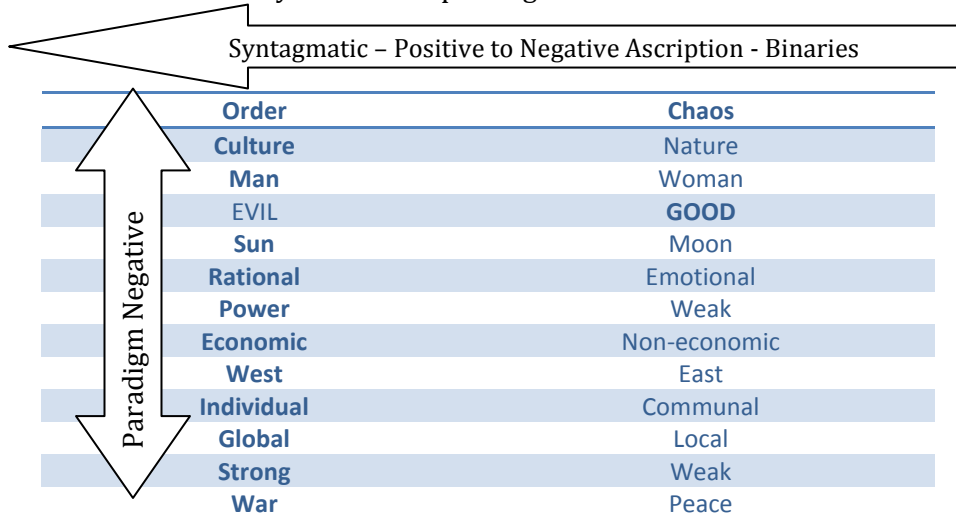


Figure 14: Sixties counter myth

Re-inscription of the paradigms proceeded through the reversal of Value placement on a single binary: Good/Evil. Suddenly, Chaos (Postmodernism was born of the paradigmatic shift), Nature, Woman, Emotionality, etc paradigmatically combined to express a revised perception of what was Good/desirable, while Order/Culture/man/rationality etc. became inherently evil.³⁵ Reversed good/evil value is NOT uniform within western society. While it largely characterizes the Academy, it does not frame, for example, Republican understandings in the U.S., who cling to the classic models.

³⁵ The binaries and paradigmatic sets offer fertile ground for creative artists of all stripes. In film for example, it is common for entire scripts to be rooted in the exploration of binary reversals or reinscribed value. The Western has proceeded through the 'Classic, transitional and professional' stages based on this technique.

Critiques of western society by western individuals during this period extended to representation, particularly as the Civil Rights Movement, Feminism, and the rhetoric that created black, indigenous, and female Others, sensitized people to the power of “speaking into existence.” All in all, from the late 50s to the early 70’s, western society experienced a turbulent, creative, liminal phase, culminating in a reconsolidation period noteworthy for its reincorporation of revised statuses and identities – the re-visioning of women and ethnic others such as Afro-Americans. The alterations of West’s position (evil) in relation to other (good) within the global community, parallels the transformation of the society-of-the-individual (bad) to communal society (good). “Global” required textual integration and/or modification; re-ascription proceeded in two basic ways. Either global signifies global *community*, expressing the Good if aligned with Nature, etc. or global links to (evil) economic interests that pervert the (good) local (Nature, nature peoples etc).

Radically modified, the social contract at both micro and macro levels reflected the deep-seated uncertainty regarding western/self identity, precisely because self-critique located Self as situated within a society rejected. Today’s intellectuals are progeny of the mythological revisionism and this dominant ideology evokes solidarity amongst western academics, often leading to a ‘mono’ view of self and other. Although New World analysts participate in that discourse, they perpetuate rhetorical displacement when ‘writing’ Colonialism, remaining blind to their own Colonial situations, joining, or leading, the censure-chorus that criticizes “Europe” for administrative, judicial, and temporal power over Others.

As Other and other’s cultures were reinscribed as desirable manifestations of unpolluted Nature largely uncontaminated by western ideology and practice, a resurgent interest in their lives and histories emerged in the Academy; they might be able to teach *us* something, show *us* what ‘we’ have manifestly lost. Moreover, this expanded focus expressed itself not only in studies of Other, but as studies of the Other-within. The discipline of History for example, became concerned with the (diachronic) voices of women, the working class, and other silent voices barely recoverable from historical documents.

As new methodologies dedicated to the excavation of marginalized peoples and voice developed, a comprehension that descriptive commentaries of the emotions, life-ways and/or cultures of other led to a (re)-colonization of the (previously) colonized or (never) colonized mind, quickly followed.³⁶ Narratives normalized – all of humanity shares inherent characteristics and we differ only in categorical elaborations, - or exoticized, – this group exhibits a fundamental strangeness.³⁷ In either case, the writer simultaneously inscribed both Other and Self. Recognition of this process exposed axioms highly unpleasant to scholars profoundly aware of western society's shortcomings. In the first instance, there is the unspoken power appropriation inherent in writing other; one assumes the power to observe, evaluate, and analyze other. Additionally, this representative power, through the use of western theory and methods, intensified the colonization of Other's lives and ideologies. Once we grasped the outcome of inscription, we tried to torpedo the entire classical participant observation process. Asserting that Western scholars did not have the right to evaluate, and were largely incapable of understanding, how other lived or emoted, we found ourselves in a quandary. Ethnographers, culturally participant and coincidentally observing, must needs evoke western thought to reinscribe; yet in order re-inscribe, it appeared that objectification of other was a necessity once a scholar 'got home', re-evaluated their fieldwork, and set out to fulfill their obligations to the Academy qua that research. A resulting abhorrence of the entire enterprise by many scholars, led to attempts to re-orient authorial voice through experimental ethnographies that featured 'giving voice to' or "presenting the voice" of Other.³⁸ That a cultural subject understands

³⁶ History, in North America, is largely concerned with documentary data. The study of peoples and cultures (anthropology) interpenetrates history, although historical scholars in the New World were slow to recognize that fact. Indeed, when Anthropologists were experiencing an existential (representation) crisis, historians (I was told gleefully) focused on documents that could not talk back. I doubt that any historian today (although I may be wrong) would make that claim.

³⁷ Note the connection between monogenesis and polygenesis.

³⁸ As previously noted, this entire scenario is discussed at length by Marcus and Fisher: Marcus, George E. and Fisher, Michael M.J. (1999) *Anthropology As Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

his/her culture from a singular perspective and does not speak for the “culture” mattered little. Nor did the maxim that it requires more effort to assess one’s own culture than the culture of others discourage attempts to remove western voice from the othering of Other.

Loss of confidence in western ideology and recognition that we inscribed an Other that never was, coincided with an acute self-awareness that Other was gazing at ‘us.’ As works like Said’s, invariably informed by Occidentalism, - to write an Orient seen by Occident, is to write the Occident - obtruded on the consciousness of western scholars; Other articulating the west fed into the need for (western) scholarly apologia. It turned out that the concern others had about us neatly coincided with the critiques we made of self. Nourishing the western recoil of what the Self had wrought, identification with other was inevitable, leading finally to the bilateral condemnation of the west that characterizes post-colonial studies. A quick summary of the principal tenets of agreement between East and West runs as follows:

- Colonial countries/the “west” is evil/wrong
- Colonial countries/the “west” should feel guilt; should apologize, should ‘own’ their past
- Colonial countries/the “west” constructed/construct the East as Oriental-Other
- Colonial countries/the “west” ‘wrote’ the non-existent colonial subjects they brutally repressed
- Colonial/Imperial countries/the “west” did exploit, and continues to exploit, the East and its resources, while preying on eastern peoples as cheap labour to feed the deplorable level of western consumption
- Colonial countries/the “west” are responsible for the defining moment in the planet’s history – the advent of Colonialism
- Colonial countries/the ‘west’ did threaten, and continues to threaten, the global *community* through corporate gluttony.

- Colonial countries/the 'west' (the U.S.A) did threaten, and continues to threaten, the global *community* through a shameless abuse of power.
- Colonial countries/the 'west' abuse Nature and rape the environment

*Colonial countries = mother/fatherlands

'Othering' works both ways. While the label "East" is as nebulous and hegemonic as the "West," scholars play 'let's pretend we're all the same so we can compare ourselves to Them' in order to maintain the binary- a form of imagined community if you will³⁹- on both sides of the binary fence. More significantly, scholars imagine the fence itself. Post-colonial scholars from previously colonized other countries are not Other. Not only are privileged intellectuals not "Other," Western epistemology/phenomenology is not 'western.' It is global thought. Wielding scholarly discourse, Other participates fully in the on-going monologue that frames self-other relations. A full acceptance of the post-sixties mythic structure characterizes their stance, bar the fact that they can use the pronoun 'we,' - as in we are nature/spiritual/communal peoples - with more authority. Western scholars intimate they are limited to proclaiming, 'we identify with/are you the nature/spiritual/communal peoples, since we reject (former selves) the historical, corrupt, regimes that oppressed and defined you.' Orientalism and Occidentalism are not dead in the Academy. Instead they are pervasive.

The incestuous "guilty west/condemning east" relationship results in the perpetuation of Victimology, since the qualities normatively ascribed to ex-European colonial powers - the 'shame,' the will to 'forget,' the necessary healing, the accusation of domination and rape, are prescriptive. Elaborations of the subaltern and the subjected state/consciousness of eastern peoples by writers East and West that simultaneously refuse voice facilitate the reduction of the colonized to hapless, non-agentive victims of demonic Europeans, while re-eliciting western guilt. The very idea that a colonial period represents the defining moment in a country with a

³⁹ Anderson, Benedict (1983, 1991) *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso (New Left Books). Page 6.

long, deeply philosophical, and rich history such as India, is somewhat ludicrous. No doubt, English colonialism had a deep impact on Indian institutions. Truly, she will need to integrate past with present. Looking back over the long course of India's history however, so did Asoka, and other important historical episodes (including the disputed Aryan invasion and conquest) that required amalgamation and assimilation of past and present to achieve future.

A number of fundamental concerns and assumptions thus inscribe (post)-colonial analyses. In the first instance, Colonialism is wrong, particularly because it comprehensively signifies the negative paradigm (Men, power, corporate economics, rationality etc) we reject, while oppressing the positive paradigm we advocate. Therefore my Dutch interviewees –leaving aside the problematic classificatory identity of Dutch-Indonesians for the moment - were dominators that exploited raped indigenous people to serve their own ends. A priori rejection of the institution leads to scholarly subtexts and authorial techniques that reinforce and re-instil that position. Colonialism is predicated on sex-power metaphors; therefore we will, we must, find evidence of the consistent rape of female indigenous bodies and their exploitation, just as we see the rape and exploitation of Indonesia.

Arising from the anguished discussion of the effects of writing Other, transformational western ideologies regarding ethnic interaction, revised understandings of western self/society, and the determination to re-present current self as 'different,' scholars narratively identify their Other-Sameness through the implicit chastising of pre-60s mythic revisionism. Historical western selves serve as foils for our current empathetic self-presentation and become the new Other. This marginalization/denial of our intimate ties to western historical trajectories springs from a deep-seated longing for the mythological, natural, pristine, and peaceful "Garden;"⁴⁰ indeed that desire prompted the mythological transformations of the 60s. The willingness, even eagerness, to construct current self as worthy citizen of a global Eden, derives from yearning.

⁴⁰With apologies to Joni Mitchell.

This aspiration to enter the garden peopled with the eastern/dispossessed/nature peoples of our imagination, expresses a 'need to believe' that people elsewhere are different and defers the recognition that other human beings share in the shortcomings we designate as 'western.' Demonic males,⁴¹ Wrangham and Peterson assert, are a species phenomenon, and judging by historical bloodshed and the continued violence that characterizes the planet, their claim has obvious merit. They argue however, that the aggression instinct is under cultural control and that the suppression of violence requires global exertion. That effort, I believe, must incorporate recognition that 'western' evils are an integral aspect of other cultural processes. It may even recognize, perhaps, that multiple western nations have engaged more sustained dialogue regarding the effects of aggression on humans and environment than any other culture.

Interviewees, who challenge the west in terms of its 'dalliance' with other political forms and ideologies, speculate that a year under a totalitarian regime or dictatorship would transform the current self-critique of the western system. Certainly, the west has and had, multiple flaws, and critiques of its excesses and many mistakes are necessary to identify – and improve on – those defects. What is required however, is a frank assessment of colonial relations in context. While articles on representation are truly fascinating – and indispensable – they are unproductive if not connected to the act – to pragmatic interaction and local solutions and relationships. Indeed, our own 'representation of representation' leaves much to be desired, since the focus on self-presentation, masked by concern for Others while facilitating self-flagellation, is a tale oft told to no one listening. Instead, exchanges based on non-identification with other similar to the process established between self and interviewees, leads to the recognition that one can empathize, while allowing that 'you did have to be there' in order to fully apprehend. What is important is *listening* and *facilitating* – by both parties to the communicative process. Communication must be free of guilt on one side, and lose the intent to provoke guilt, or feel shame, for a past

⁴¹ Wrangham, R and Peterson, D. (1997) *Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence*. Boston: Mariner Books.

'subaltern status,' on the other. Indeed, it merits repeating – not as an excuse for Colonialism but as a fact of human interaction – that almost all peoples/nations have been 'subaltern' at one time or another during the course of their history. In short, dialogue would consist of communicative partners that recognize separate and long histories, their subsequent periodic merging, and the re-separation that left them altered. The consequences of merging and separation require evaluation that travels well beyond the Colonizer-brutal-shame-guilt-admission context and the Colonized-brutalized-silenced-victim paradigm.

The 'trauma' that accompanies the Dutch 'loss,' or relinquishment, of her colonies, directly connects to the traumatic experiences of Dutch, Dutch-Indonesians, and Indonesian peoples. Furnivall was quite right; the relationship between the Indies and the Netherlands went far deeper than colonizer/colonized. North-American Dutch, Indonesians, and Dutch-Indonesians, and Indonesians I spoke to, signify the extent to which the colonizer/colonized interpenetrated each other and the very rich intertextuality of the emerging Indies identity in which 'blood' Dutch men and women fully participated. Indeed the very use of the colonizer/colonized binary causes one to cringe in the Indonesian context. As an archipelago with innumerable cultures, languages, and histories, characterized by pluralities long before the Dutch arrived on Java's shores, the VOC and colonial regimes facilitated her multiculturalism while simultaneously making the appearance of new identities and ethnicities, possible.

Subsequent to a brutal occupation that re-ascribed their identity, and in the Dutch-Indonesian case, officially privileged the Dutch ethnic component over the profound contributions of their indigenous maternal lines, interviewees emerged into a chaotic revolutionary environment that sustained Japanese anti-Dutch discourse while upping the ante in terms of terror and violence. From the Japanese instigation of decolonization in 1942, to the individual point of departure for the Netherlands, and at times, well beyond, the "decolonization" of Indonesia is a torment of pain for the Colonizers and Indonesian citizens rendered subaltern by their own governments. Listening to informant – and like – discourses, while facilitating interaction with our texts, not only acknowledges the suffering and lives of those silenced, it leads to greatly extended concepts of colonial identities, facilitates an understanding of the

prominent role of space/place in the formations of identity and its subsequent impact on immigration/repatriation, and has the potential to deconstruct the monolithic edifice that serves as the colonial paradigm. By extension, the database narratives illuminate post-colonial, inter-ethnic, multicultural, self-determination, immigration, decolonization, and race/ethnicity discourse through their heteroglossic insistence on mutuality and mutability.

It is time to engage the silenced Colonial.

Appendix A: Main Themes in Life Story Discourse

- Note: Themes are DERIVED from Domain analysis performed on the texts, they are not a priori imposed.

THEME/DOMAINS	LINKED-SUB THEMES
Indonesia	Love/Home The Land
Family	Self/Other Interaction Mothers and fathers (children) Servants Holidays Kin, Clans and Extended families (Indo/Indonesian)
Betrayal	Work Of the colonial mission Of Indonesians Of Dutch Of Dutch-Indonesian Of Veterans
Republican betrayal	(cause/effect) made possible by Dutch Of international community Of Indonesians
The Japanese	Internment camp/POWs Occupation life Bersiap "The Good Jap"
War	Veterans narratives
Repatriation	Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian trauma
Immigration	"Not belonging" Cultural conflicts
Silence/Reinterpretation	Imposed on narrator's voices Silence/re-interpret historical events Reinterpretation of their pasts
Dutch Difference	Different 'kinds' of colonists Different from other Europeans

Figure 15: Interviewee Discourse Main Themes

Appendix B: Main Themes in Scholarly Discourse:

- Note: Themes are DERIVED from Domain analysis performed on the texts, they are not a priori imposed.

THEMES/DOMAINS	LINKED SUB THEMES	Sub themes of secondary domains
Dutch and Indonesia	<p>the Dutch wilfully misunderstood that colonialism was “over” in the world because they <i>could not bear</i> to let Indonesia (and later Papua) “go”</p> <p>The Dutch were naïve in their assessment of their relationships with their colonies.</p>	<p>A number of authors utilize “naïve” in their analyses of USA/Dutch interaction over the Papua crisis, while Saltford accuses them of blatant self-interest² Naïve is also used in to describe the Dutch understanding of their relationship with (in particular) the Javanese.</p>
	<p>Dutch feared self-reduction to a “tiny strip of land (or farm) along the North Sea”; i.e. they would no longer be considered a power.= (Hubris)</p> <p>Dutch did not want to let their profitable colony ‘go’ (link to Dutch as traders/mercantilist/money oriented)</p>	
The Dutch as Colonial masters	<p>Classical Scholars: Dutch record is better than other colonial records.³ Other scholars dispute this/find this irrelevant.⁴</p>	<p>Overviews of : <i>Cultuurstelsel</i>, the <i>Liberal System</i>, and especially the Ethical Policy</p>

¹ See especially, Penders and Lijphart.

² Saltford, John. (2002) *United Nations and the Indonesian Takeover of West Papua: 1962-1969; The Anatomy of Betrayal*. New York: Routledge/Curzon Publishers.

³ Furnivall, J.S.(1948) *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India*. New York: New York University Press. Lijphart, A. (1966) *The Trauma of Decolonization: The Dutch and West New Guinea*. New Haven and London:

Dutch “Difference”	The Dutch “felt” something for their colonies	Furnivall: (Dutch feelings; babu metaphor) Lijphart: trauma ⁵
	Dutch Difference in Europe ⁶	
Dutch Worldview	Dutch are traders	Dutch are money oriented; everything=financial return.
	Dutch mercantilism	
	Dutch as early capitalist	
	Dutch as bourgeois	
The “nature” of Colonialism	Violent	Includes “pacification”
	degrading	
	Sexual	
	Hierarchical	
	Emasculating	
The family	Servants	
	Sexuality	
Claimed Cover-ups	Behavior of Army In Indonesia	
	Ex-colonials will not admit to, or do not recognize, the pernicious nature of the colonial relationship. They must do this.(even if only to “heal”)	“Sentiment” (sentimentalizing) and “nostalgia” are the attributes that describe oral history accounts of Indonesia.
	Netherlands must openly admit what she did as a colonial power (apologize for being colonial) and her role in the war for Independence (i.e. that she did not immediately recognize the right of Indonesia to be ‘free).	

Figure 16: Main Themes in Scholarly Discourse

Yale University Press. Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. Legge, J.D. (1964) *Indonesia*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall. Dahm, B. (1971) *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*. Translated by P.S. Falla. London; New York: Praeger Publishers. Algra, A and H. (1956) *Dispereert Niet: Twintig Eeuwen Historie van de Nederlanden*. Franeker: Uitgeverij T.Weaver. Vol. 4.

⁴ Bone, R.C. Jr. (1958) *The Dynamics of the Western New Guinea (Irian Barat) Problem*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University.

⁵ Lijphart, A. (1966). *The Trauma of Decolonization: The Dutch and West New Guinea*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

⁶ See for example, Schama, Simon. (1991) *The Embarrassment of Riches: Dutch Culture In the Golden Age*. London: Fontana Press.

On the following page, I summarize the main overlaps between the two sets of data. As I discuss in the preceding chapters, even when there is overlap, the scholarly literature has reduced some of the themes to mere comments, and greatly elaborated others. On the chart, I provide a legend that explains the symbols I have used to delineate well-elaborated discourses and those marginalized by either group. Categories such as “sexualities” receive quite different attributions in the two databases.

Appendix C: DATABASE THEMATICS

	Place	Parents	Servants	Holidays	Kin	Work	Dutch betrayal Indonesia	Dutch betrayal Dutch and Dutch-Indonesian	Dutch betrayal Vets	Ind leaders betray people	Camps	Bersiap	Occupation Life	Revolution	Dutch Col. Divergence	Dutch Historical Difference	repatriation	Immigration	Silence on narratives	Reinterpretation of past**	The Good Jap	Colonialism Violent	sexualities	Cover-ups	Hierarchy and degradation	Pacification
Oral Histories	▲	X	▲	X	▲	X	▲	▲	▲	▲	X	X	X	X	X	X	▲	X	▲	▲	X		▷	▷	▷	
Academic Studies	▷	▷	▲				▷	▷	▷		▷	▷		▲	▷	▲	X		▶	▲		▲	▲	▲	▲	▲

Figure 17: Themes - both databases

LEGEND

X - DISCUSSED

Blank - NOT NOTED

Notes on Appendix “C”

- ⬆- NOT ELABORATED – BUT NOTED
- ▲ WELL ELABORATED
- ▶ Interviewees hold academics and governments responsible for these categories

** (category) *Reinterpretation of past*: here we find mutual recrimination. Oral History Interviewees feel that their role in the archipelago is consistently misrepresented; while scholars claim that oral history accounts “sentimentalize’ colonialism and are filled with nostalgia.

- Note: Themes are DERIVED from Domain analysis performed on the texts, they are not a priori imposed.

Appendix D: The Japanese

The possibility for quick Japanese victories in South East Asia was rooted in western cooperation. In 1902, Britain abandoned her two ocean naval policy and concluded a defence treaty with Japan.¹ During World War I, the protection of Britain's colonies in Asia fell to the Japanese. Concurrently, the American occupation of the Philippines made British reliance for the defence of South East Asia on the USA Pacific fleet, possible. The British themselves focused their defence preparations on the establishment of a strong naval fortress on Singapore with the expectation that she could deploy the home fleet as back up if foreign aggressors threatened the area.²

Holland, New Zealand and Australia had been seriously opposed to the British-Japanese defence treaty, which they perceived as dangerous to the security of New Zealand, Australia, and the East Indies. During World War I, Holland remained neutral but the presence of Japanese intervention in the area, ostensibly on behalf of Britain, caused serious misgivings in Batavia.³ Since the USA did not enter the war until 1917, Allied presence in Asian waters was almost solely Japanese; Japanese cooperation with the British extended to the point that Japan sent destroyers to the *Mediterranean* for anti-submarine duty on the Allies' behalf. During 1915, the British Foreign Office suggested the use of Japanese forces to protect the north-west frontier of India against Russian attack. Cried down as "*hugely damaging to British prestige in indigenous society,*"⁴ Japanese marines did see action against the uprising of the Indian garrison at Singapore.⁵

¹ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. page 6.

² That this policy was hopeful rather than real is borne out by subsequent events.

³ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. page 6.

⁴ It should be noted that there was a substantial radicalization of the Indian nationalist movement at this same time in India. Op. cit., page 7.

⁵ Dignan, Gon. (1983) *The Indian Revolutionary problem in British Diplomacy 1914-1919*. New Delhi: Allied Publishers. page 16-17.

This increased reliance on Japan caused serious misgivings in Batavia and on Australia, and heightened Dutch concern that Britain might show her gratitude to Japan at the expense of Dutch East Indies territory. Since British Consul General Becket in Batavia argued that, “*the reality of Japanese dominance would have to be recognized and suggested the partitioning of the Netherlands Indies between Britain and Japan, leaving the Dutch only Java,*”⁶ Dutch trepidation was based in fact, although the British government disagreed with Becket and retained the informal treaty with the Dutch.⁷

Concern with British policy prompted a Dutch proposal to build a powerful naval presence in the archipelago. The Navy Bill caused turmoil in the Netherlands; 1.3 million people signed a petition condemning it and it was defeated in Parliament by the narrowest of margins – one vote – after members of the Catholic party crossed the floor to vote with the Bill’s opposition.⁸ *The proverbial national stinginess in defence matters finally won out again,* Penders moralizes, and “*the principle of self sufficiency in the defence of the Indies adopted in 1913 was again dropped.*”⁹ This mass protest in the Netherlands speaks more to pacifism than it does to Penders’ predictable accusation of stinginess, as the analysis he himself provides only pages before would indicate:

“The distinct anti-militarist strain that runs through Dutch history flows from the staunch anti-feudalism, fierce individualism, and strong attachment to personal freedom and particularism underlying the national character. Furthermore, pacifism was especially germane in the Low Countries with its long humanist and internationally oriented tradition, exemplified by the celebrated figure of Erasmus. The pacifist movement was further reinforced at

⁶ Beckett opined that the Dutch in Europe and in the East Indies were too pro-German. Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. page 7.

⁷ Tarling, N. (1993) *The Fall of Imperial Britain in South East Asia*. Singapore: Oxford University Press. page 100.

⁸ De Jong, L. (1984) *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Nederlands Indië*. Den Hague: Staatsuitgeverij. Vol. IIa: pages 600-603.

⁹ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. page 8.

*the end of the last century(19th) by the rise of socialism, which started to exert a strong influence on Dutch politics.*¹⁰

The vote outcome ensured that the ultimate security of the Indies lay primarily with the USA and Britain. The Dutch were to take the responsibility of retarding the advance of any enemy.

From 1940 to 1942,¹¹ Japanese 'business' contingents arrived at Batavia. Ostensibly to close important commercial transactions regarding East Indies resources, the Japanese utilized their personal presence on Java to contact Indonesian nationalists, and the Dutch became increasingly concerned. On June 28th, 1940, Japan announced that it would endeavour to re-negotiate its trade agreements with the Netherlands. In July of that same year, Indonesia terminated her exports to Japan, while in August Japan countered this move through a suggestion that French Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies voluntarily incorporate themselves into the "East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere;" the threat inherent in a lack of voluntary cooperation is clear.

In September, as Japanese troops moved into Indo-China, Kobayashi arrived at Batavia to begin trade talks. Lieutenant Governor van Mook refused to concede to Japanese demands for aviation fuel and on October 26th, Japan and the Netherlands issued a joint declaration that the Indies would not form part of the Co-prosperity sphere and that a quota on oil sales to Japan had been set by mutual agreement. In December, Kobayashi returned to Tokyo, but on January 11th 1941, the Japanese tried again. An aggressive negotiating team, led by Yoshizawa, arrived in Batavia, once again to attempt the inclusion of the Indies into the Co-prosperity sphere, once again rebuffed by van Mook. In May, the Japanese government issued an ultimatum to the East Indies government demanding Japanese influence and a presence in the region. Finally, in June all talks collapsed and van Mook announced that no concessions would be made to Japan and that all strategic products, including oil and rubber, had been

¹⁰ Op. cit., page 4.

¹¹ Business contingents from Japan had been consulting with the Indies government throughout the decades. It was between 1940-1942 that these meetings were intensified and included new demands and topics.

contracted for shipment to Britain and the United States. Japanese assets in Indonesia were frozen.

During those same years, the Dutch government and public were again embroiled with defence plans for the Indies; this time government approved a bill expanding naval defences in South East Asia. Parliamentary debate¹² began on the morning of May 9th, hours before the Nazi invasion of the Netherlands.¹³ Dutch defensive forces in the archipelago were consequently dismal. Equipment ordered from the U.S. was undeliverable due to WW II, and the KNIL was essentially a police force trained to deal with internal problems of rust and order. Changes to KNIL structure, initiated in 1937 in order to create an efficient defence force, remained partially implemented before the Japanese attack. The arms order from Britain was incomplete and none of the American weapons arrived; indeed the 100,000 rifles ordered in the U.S. were "*stopped by the U.S. war department because they were needed for the American forces themselves.*"¹⁴

At the outbreak of war in the Pacific theatre therefore, KNIL troops consisted of 42,000 men; 10,000 were Europeans (including Dutch-Indonesian) and the remaining were indigenous troops composed of approximately 13,000 Javanese, 2000 Sundanese, 5000 Menadonese, 4000 Amboinese and 1000 Timorese. The male European population between the ages of 18 to 45 was called up, adding an additional 32,000 men used mainly for police work and guard duty, as well as internal security.¹⁵ That internal security system had been complicated by the rise of nationalism, but like Dahm, Penders

¹² Under the system in the Netherlands, government ministers do not sit in either Chamber, and once the government approves a bill it is submitted to the house for approval. The 2e chamber also has the right to initiate legislation. This same split surfaced in the composition of the Volksraad.

¹³ De Jong, L. (1984) *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog*. Nederlands Indië. Den Hague: Staatsuitgeverij. Vol. IIa: pages 600-603.

¹⁴ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. Page 11.

¹⁵ Op. cit., page 11.

agrees that the *“Indonesian nationalist movement was still too weak to pose a real danger to the colonial regime.”*¹⁶

The Japanese moved quickly through South East Asia and after the fall of Singapore, and the imprisonment of many British, Indian, and Australian forces,¹⁷ the fall of the Indies was inevitable. General Wavell classified the situation as “hopeless,” and cabling Churchill on February 25th he stated: *“I hate the idea of leaving these stout hearted Dutchmen,”* and returned to India.¹⁸ After a *“valiant stand by the outclassed and outgunned Dutch air force and navy, supported only by a token Allied force, their heroic feats, performed mainly out of sight of the Javanese population, failed to stop the landings on Java and Sumatra. On 8 March, 1942, the Dutch Commander, General ter Poorten, surrendered his forces to the Japanese.”*¹⁹

A number of Dutch merchant vessels, naval ships, and air force planes reached Ceylon and then Australia, but the bulk of Dutch forces spent the rest of the war as POWs. In April of 1942, the British and Americans partitioned their responsibilities for the theatre of war in South East Asia. The British would re-take Malaya, Burma and Sumatra, while the United States, along with Australian forces, received the responsibility for the Pacific, including the rest of Indonesia. Critically, unlike their British and American allies, the Dutch could not rebuild or augment their army, navy, or air force. They were under German occupation. In a nutshell, all that they could contribute to the Allied effort was the residue of escapees from the Indies; the subsequent role they could and would play depended solely upon decisions made by the Allied High Command and the goodwill of those nations.

The Dutch reluctance to engage in defence spending throughout her career as a Nation – both at home and abroad – consistently placed

¹⁶ Op. cit., page 12.

¹⁷ Many Canadians were taken prisoner in this battle, fighting under British command.

¹⁸ Wavell, [cited in] Wright, Michael (ed.) (1989) *Death in the Dutch East Indies*, [in] **The World At Arms**. New York: Readers Digest. Page 152.

¹⁹ Penders, C.L.M. (2002) *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Colonization and Indonesia 1945-1962*. Leiden: KITLV Press. page 12.

the mother country and the colonies in a vulnerable position. In spite of the enormous emotional and material investment inherent in her patrimony, and again in the colonies, she never took steps to protect them bar her contracts and her agreements with other Nations. This reliance on international agreements was either foolish or hopeful. The Netherlands came of age in a European milieu that theoretically taught her that the fruits of aggression trumped written agreements. Her reliance on Civism, her pacifism, her perception of international community, her adherence to law, and her small population, confronted the very real need for an army and navy capable of defending her way of life. She never resolved that contradiction. There is no doubt that her unwillingness to adequately arm, and her reliance on contracts with well-armed Nations, were interpreted as weaknesses by powers that protected their assets with a strong military. The Dutch inability to protect what was 'theirs,' rendered the right to hold it questionable to those who had the power to take and defend it.

Appendix E: Domains, Attributions, Relationships

The designation of terms as a label for a Domain, or a sub-category, and the attendant syntactic relations, requires that the analyst focus on structural questions in relation to the text. For example:

1] Strict Inclusion: X is a kind of Y	'What kind of a thing is X?
2] Spatial: X is a place in Y, X is a part of Y	Where can I find X? What is X?
3] Cause-Effect: X is a result of Y, X is a cause of Y	What are the consequences of doing Y?
4] Rationale: X is a reason for doing Y	Why did you do Y? Why are the reasons for doing Y?
5] Location for Action: X is a place for doing Y	Where can one do Y? Where do you do Y?
6] Function: X is used for Y	What is X used for?
7] Means-End: X is a way to do Y	What are the ways to do Y?
8] Sequence: X is a step [stage] in Y	What are the steps in Y?
9] Attribution: X is a [characteristic] of Y	What is "Y" like?

Figure 18: Spradley's Semantic Categories⁸¹⁴

Here is an analytic example taken from my database on the work of Dutch anthropologist Dr. J. PH. Duyvendak:

Primair is de studie van de menigvuldighied van cultuurtypen, die de mensenheid heeft voortgebracht.

Translation literal: Primary is the study of the multiplicity of cultural types, that (the) humankind has forth brought.

Translation Arranged: (The) primary (task of Ethnology) is the study of the multiplicity of cultural types brought into existence by humankind.

The words that present themselves as names of things in this quote are:

- *studie* (study),
- *cultuurtypen* (cultural types),
- *menigvuldigheid* (state of being full of meaning, significations),
- *mensenheid* (humankind), and
- *Ethnology*.

⁸¹⁴ Spradley, James (1979) *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston. page 111.

In order to determine value, relations between signs in the sentence are established. In this example, *study* appears in a Functional relationship; study uncovers the meaningfulness of cultural types. Yet, a note of caution is in order. The designation of Function to study depends on my translation. If I use Spradley to analyze the Dutch syntax, study is a noun and answers the question, *what kind of a thing is study?* To which the answer runs: Attribution of study – Primary – is the (INCLUSION – study) – of the (Rationale – meaningfulness) of (Inclusion – Cultural Types) that (Inclusion – Humankind) has (Attribution – forth brought).

This example poignantly illustrates the problems with a translation from an SVO to an SOV structure. In order to arrive at the manner in which my Dutch writers, and informants, designate categories and assign attributes to them, I re-arranged compound ideas into simpler frameworks. The quote above:

- (1) Humankind has brought forth meaning-filled cultural types.
- (2) The task of Ethnology is to study them.

CATEGORY: HUMANKIND

→[attribution] brings forth
 →(sub category) Cultural types
 →[attribution] multiplicity

The type of attributive relationship constructed between humans and cultural types is significant. Cultural types are not passive characteristics of humankind; humankind *actively* brings forth cultural types. Humankind and cultural types are (spatial) linked by human agency.

Combine Statements One and Two:

CATEGORY: Humankind

→[Attribution] brings forth
 →SUB-CATEGORY: Cultural Types
 →[Attribution] Signification

CATEGORY: Ethnology

→RATIONALE: task
 →FUNCTION: study [go to sub-Category Cultural Types]

Figure 19: Example of Spradley Analysis

Ethnology's *raison d'être*, according to Duyvendak, - its Function and Rationale - is to study [attribution of Humankind] the cultural types humans [*actively*] *bring forth*. Humankind is a stand- alone category [Humankind would prove to be a Domain with many sub-categories in Duyvendak's work] that has an important characteristic: it/they bring forth Cultural types. The fact of humankind's cultural types is directly linked to

Ethnology [which as a Category would prove to represent a sub-category of Disciplines that *study humankind*; [a characteristic/attribution of certain Disciplines; in turn a sub-category of Disciplines]. As per Duyvendak then:

CATEGORY: Disciplines

→SUB-CATEGORY: Disciplines

→ATTRIBUTION: that study humankind

→Sub-category: *Ethnology*

APPENDIX F: A NOTE ON DUTCH-INDONESIAN INDEPENDENCE POLITICS

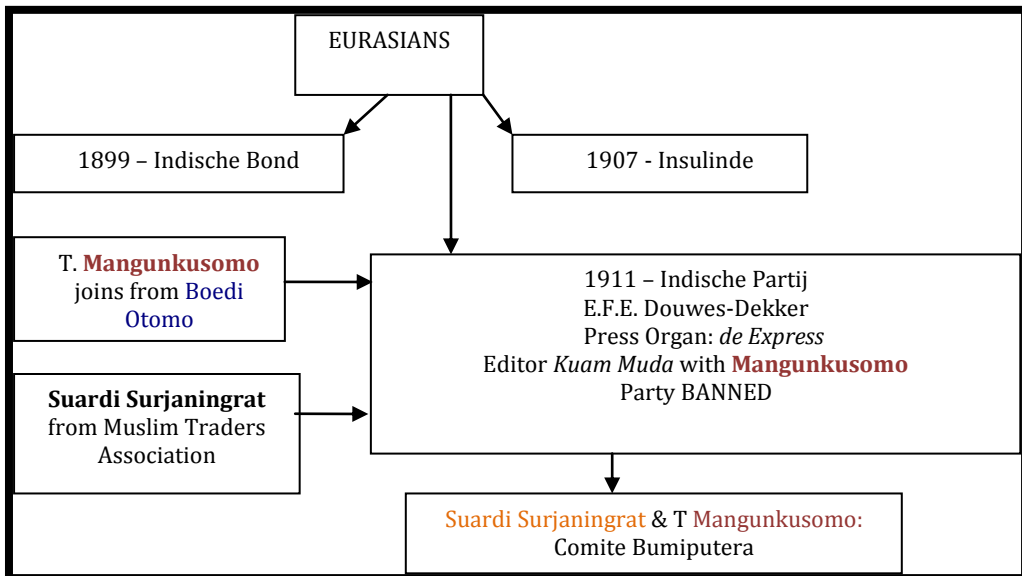


Figure 20: Dutch-Indonesian Political Organization

In order to overcome ideological fragmentation, Douwes-Dekker attempted to unite the Indische Bond and Insulinde, two important Dutch-Indonesian organizations, into one effective party known as the Indische Partij. Both declined to enter into a joint agreement, as each held to the ideologies of cooperation and association with the colonial government. Dekker did not. Instead, his articulate political position formulated independence for the colony based on a unique perception of emerging national identity that rejected colonial administration, an essential requirement for ‘second phase’ settler politics.

Having failed to infect the association parties with his vision, Douwes-Dekker proceeded with plans to form his own, and in 1910, he went to Europe to investigate financial sources and to elicit

support for his ideas.¹ Upon his return to Java, he contacted Mangunkusomo, who promised his cooperation. In December 1911, in a speech delivered at Bandung and through his newspaper *De Express*, he succinctly developed the Indische Partij platform under the logo *Indië Voor Ons*. The party platform included the equality of all races, equal pay for equal work and separation from the Netherlands. During 1912, Douwes-Dekker embarked on a tour of Java, provoking celebrations among Indonesians, Eurasians, and Chinese even at places he did not visit, for example, at Banten.² The constituent assembly of the party, held at Bandung in December 1912, voted him President of the Party, with Mangunkusomo as Deputy-President.

Its specific aims:³

- *To awaken the love of all east Indians for the country that nourishes them*
- *to bring them into cooperation on the basis of political equality*
- *to prepare our country for independence.*

THROUGH

- *the promotion of the spirit of nationalism throughout the archipelago*
- *an emphasis on unity for all peoples*
- *the equipage of the nation with enough military power to defend the homeland against any aggressor.*
- *The opening of party membership to anyone who felt him/herself to be Indian. (cross cultural solidarity)*

Given the occasions on which Douwes-Dekker had advocated his acceptance or his anticipation and/or approval of violence against the Dutch government on Batavia, Governor General van Idenburg, well informed on Douwes-Dekker's radical utterances, denied approval for the formation of the Indische partij. He made it clear that if Douwes-Dekker "*proposed there and then to declare war on the colonial regime, he could not expect the government's help in that*

¹ While in Europe, Douwes-Dekker wrote *Letters of a Barbarian From A Civilized World*, which caused an uproar even in Indonesian circles.

² Dahm, B. (1971) *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*. Translated by P.S. Falla. London; New York: Praeger Publishers. page 34.

³ op. cit., page 35.

*endeavour.*⁴ In 1912, the government in Batavia exiled Douwes-Dekker, Mangunkusomo, and Surjaningrat from Java; Surjaningrat chose to depart for the Netherlands.

In hindsight, this was an extremely regrettable reaction by the colonial government, although befitting men that did not intend to release the colonial reins and who had no emic perspective of Indonesia. Douwes-Dekker however, did, and spoke for a settler community, as well as many indigenous voices and Europeans who favoured Independence. The Dutch-Indonesian community in the East Indies would not produce another advocate of his calibre, and thoughts of independence, such as those noted by informants, did not find a public outlet.

SIDE NOTE ON INSTITUTIONAL EURO-ASIAN FORMS.

The proposition that the Dutch instilled racism in “Indonesians,” and that subsequent policies regarding “Eurasians” or the *bersiap* period were examples of the Dutch ‘hoist by their own petard,’ overlooks a number of important facts that belie this claim. In West *and* East, the custom of establishing permanent quarters for traders within urban centers is an ancient one; we find it in the archaeological records of the early cities of Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, India, Japan, Asia Minor etc. The Dutch enjoyed their own assigned ‘quarters’ in Moscow and Portugal. It is the same system that scholars proposed – wrongly – as the transmission conduit for Hinduism throughout the archipelago and it represents the manner in which Islam, in fact, did travel. In some cases, cities simply set aside areas where all traders of foreign extraction lived in a specific section of town. Alternatively, the ‘host’ country or city appointed discrete areas to traders based on their linguistic or ethnic traits. In terms of internal security, the system makes excellent sense; people of different ethnic backgrounds living in discrete locations are easier to trace, locate, and engage with as a corporate group. For traders, it facilitates year round access to goods and trade contacts, while instilling intimate acquaintance with the host society, its cultural customs, and often, the language, resulting in increasingly successful exchange.

⁴ *op. cit.*, page 35.

Early VOC reports to the Heeren 17 contain summaries that create *order* out of the composite social and economic structures of the archipelago. Endless pages outline the interpersonal, inter-group connections and boundaries between peoples, customs, languages, trade goods, and religious observation. Layouts of cities are detailed; urban social organization addressed in terms of the quarters characterizing every harbour town. The VOC imposed a tried and true method of organization on the areas it controlled, utilizing trade quarter strategies they encountered around the known globe and that Dutch sailors abided by for centuries, including the appointment of a single “Captain” who spoke for the group. Subsequently, outside of urban centers, the Company, in its pursuit of trade monopolies, adapted the entrenched hierarchical system of order long in place on Java, to its own ends:

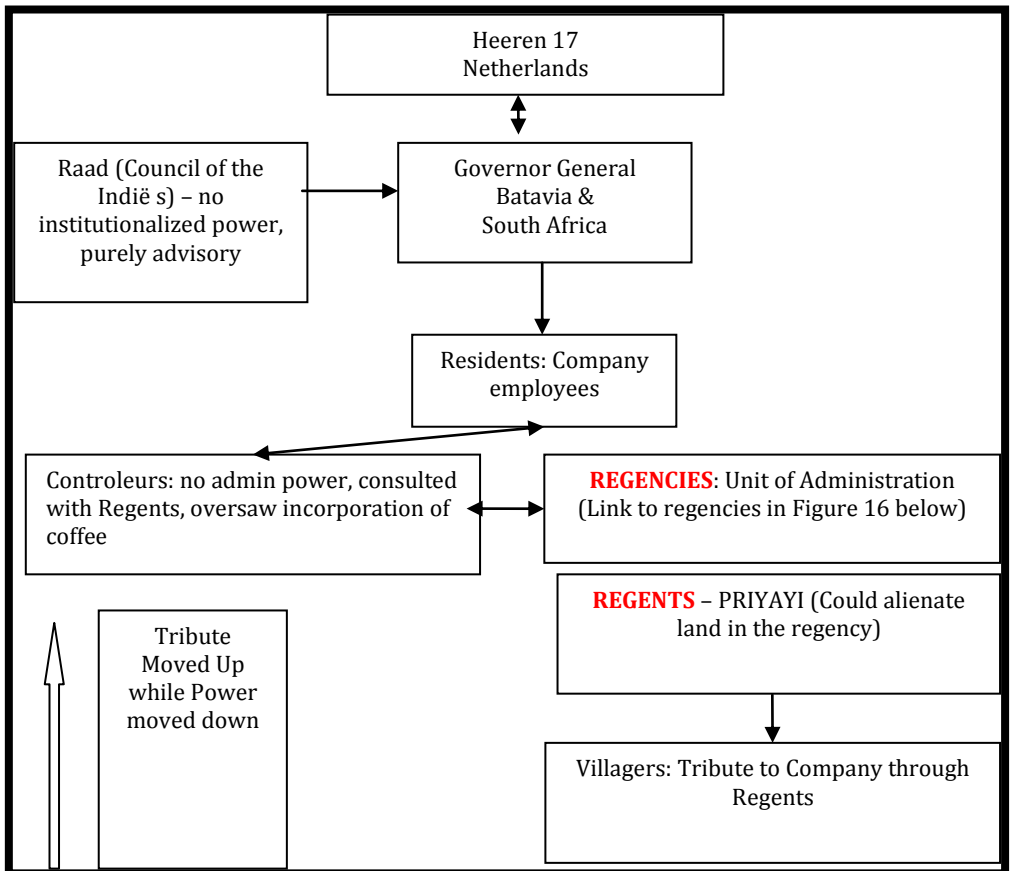


Figure 21: VOC Authorial Structure on Java ⁵

The Dutch government inherited this complex system of imposing order in cities from the VOC, including the use of trading quarters common throughout West and East, as well as the rural institutional system. It is not my intention to review the multiple modifications that the Dutch attempted under the Cultuurstelsel, and the Liberal and Ethical policies. I focus on the system the Dutch State assumed from the VOC in order to stress a fundamental point that, in light of the charge of imposed racism on Indonesia, requires reflection. Javanese society was rigidly tiered. This ideology stands in direct contradiction to Dutch concepts of Individualism, Civism, and Republican ideals in the mother country. In Indonesia, the Dutch favoured adaptation to local institutions over the imposition of foreign forms throughout the majority of their tenure. The order outlined above is the VOC's accommodation to the Javanese hierarchical system (below) to serve VOC goals of profit and monopoly with a minimum of fuss (rust and orde.) Note the somewhat humorous replacement of the God-King by the Heeren 17 in the superimposed structure:

⁵ The charted representations in Figures 22 and 23 are mine.

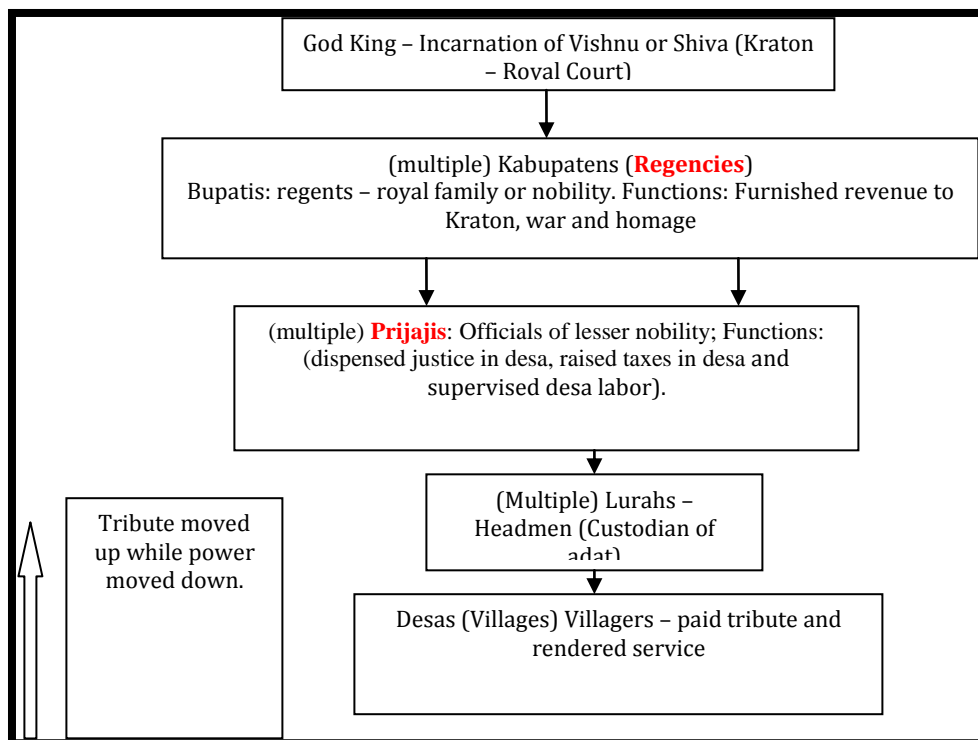


Figure 22: Simplified Javanese Social Structure

The West did not corner the market on Racism, while the East can teach the West quite a bit about Hierarchy, especially its political and symbolic entrenchment. Nor can the West claim a monopoly on the brutalization of the poor or Imperialism. The identification of multiple groups in Indië was in place before the VOC arrived and their social identification served the ordering of social spheres while facilitating the use of native, later colonial, instruments of power.

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SAMENVATTING

Dit onderzoek vertolkt de stem van een aantal personen in Noord-Amerika die aan het eind van de koloniale periode ingezetenen waren van Nederlands-Indië en Indonesië. Het verdiept de kennis over de constructie van koloniale identiteiten. De band met het geboorteland is fundamenteel voor de vorming van het 'zelf' en het effect van die band op de immigratie/repatriëring is cruciaal, evenals de hegemonische toepassing van het paradigma van Kolonialisme op zeer diverse koloniale ontmoetingen. Deze deelnemers in een *'politieke orde die een nieuwe conceptie van ruimte en nieuwe vormen van persoonlijkheid'* inhoudt, bekijken de Japanse invasie en het vervolg daarvan vanuit een geheel eigen perspectief. Meer dan 2/3 van de geïnterviewden overspant de Bersiap-periode en de conflicten van 1945-1949 met de Republiek, terwijl anderen worstelen met hun Indonesische identiteit tot de crisisjaren 1956-1957. Een significant aantal is tijdens één van die kritieke confrontaties gerepatriëerd of gevlucht en heeft Nederland gemedan of verlaten voor Noord-Amerika. De levensverhalen van de ballingen in Nederland vóór hun vertrek naar de Nieuwe Wereld omvatten zowel de evacuatie- als immigratie-ervaring. In alle gevallen zijn de geïnterviewden slechts gedeeltelijk bekend met de gangbare dialogen in Nederland en Indonesië. Vandaar dat zij andere schema's hanteren om zich het 'hoe', 'wat', 'en' en 'waarom' van de gebeurtenissen te herinneren.

Deze Noord-Amerikaanse levensverhalen vormen een belangrijke uitdagende, confronterende, bevestigende, en aanvullende uitwerking van de bekende levensgeschiedenissen in wetenschappelijke onderzoeken. Zij tonen systematische afwijkingen in de herinnering aan tussen de Noord-Amerikaanse informanten, de emigranten in Nederland en België, en de personen die in Indonesië zijn gebleven. Het effect van de huidige omgeving op de waarneming en herinnering van een individu is zeer krachtig. Bepaalde thema's worden daardoor sterk benadrukt en andere thema's worden marginaal. Het is belangrijk te begrijpen *'hoe maatschappijen en mensen zich herinneren, maar ook hoe zij vergeten, om haalbare praktische modellen te ontwikkelen zodat zij het verleden kunnen verdragen.'*

Om inzicht in de koloniale identiteit te verkrijgen is het ervaren en vastleggen van ex-koloniale stemmen over immigratie/repatriëring en koloniale ontmoetingen essentieel. De verhalen herschrijven de ruimte, de identiteit, en de werkelijkheden van zowel de gekoloniseerde als de koloniale overheerser. De verhalen van de Nederlands-Indische informanten leggen een sterke band met het geboorteland bloot; *'de Indonesische topografie bepaalde hun visie op de wereld.'* De vertrouwde Nederlands-Indische ruimtelijke en sociale verhoudingen gebaseerd op een rijk cultureel mozaïek, uitgebreide familierelaties en patronagenetwerken bleven domineren; Indonesië was het thuis van de repatrianten. De ontkenning van hun identiteit door het etiket van 'repatriant' dat door overheden en wetenschappers op de 'vluchtelingen' wordt geplakt en de verdere academische stilte betreffende hun ervaring wordt zorgvuldige geanalyseerd. Ik daag bepaalde meningen over het Nederlandse kolonialisme in Indië uit en zet vraagtekens bij het huidige gebrek aan gefundeerde theorieën. In dit proefschrift behandel ik drie gerelateerde thema's: de constructie van koloniale identiteiten en interacties, de retrospectieve visie van informanten op die identiteiten onder invloed van het immigratie- en repatriëringproces en hun huidige sociaal-politieke milieu, en de analytische opvattingen over de koloniale werkelijkheid ontworpen in (Engelstalige) wetenschappelijke studies.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Hendrika Beaulieu-Boon was born in Amsterdam, The Netherlands on December 6th, 1951. Subsequent to her immigration to Canada, she received her schooling in that country and after a successful career as a businessperson returned to university in 1991. She completed her undergraduate degree in Anthropology with Great Distinction at the University of Lethbridge in 1993. Her M.A. thesis, *Gender and Discourse on Anthro-L: An Anthropological Analysis of an Internet Bulletin Board*, focused on textual constructions of self during the early days of cyberspace communication, paying particular attention to gender and discourse. She finished her M.A. in May of 1995, achieving a perfect 4.0 grade point and a nomination for the Governor General's Gold Medal. In 1996, she began her Ph.D. studies at the University of Alberta where she completed her coursework and successfully defended her Ph.D. Candidacy. Upon receipt of a substantial SSHRC award from the Government of Canada, she commenced her oral history research into colonial relations, focusing on Dutch-Indonesian interaction during the last colonial regime. Personal circumstances dictated a hiatus from this study and she commenced her teaching career at the University of Lethbridge where she taught in the Department of Anthropology. Continuing her oral history fieldwork with North American residents who participated in the last Dutch colonial regime, as well as the years during and after the Japanese Occupation, she also received a significant grant for aboriginal research from Ottawa. Subsequent to receipt of that grant, she moved to a position in the Department of Native American Studies at the University of Lethbridge in 2005.