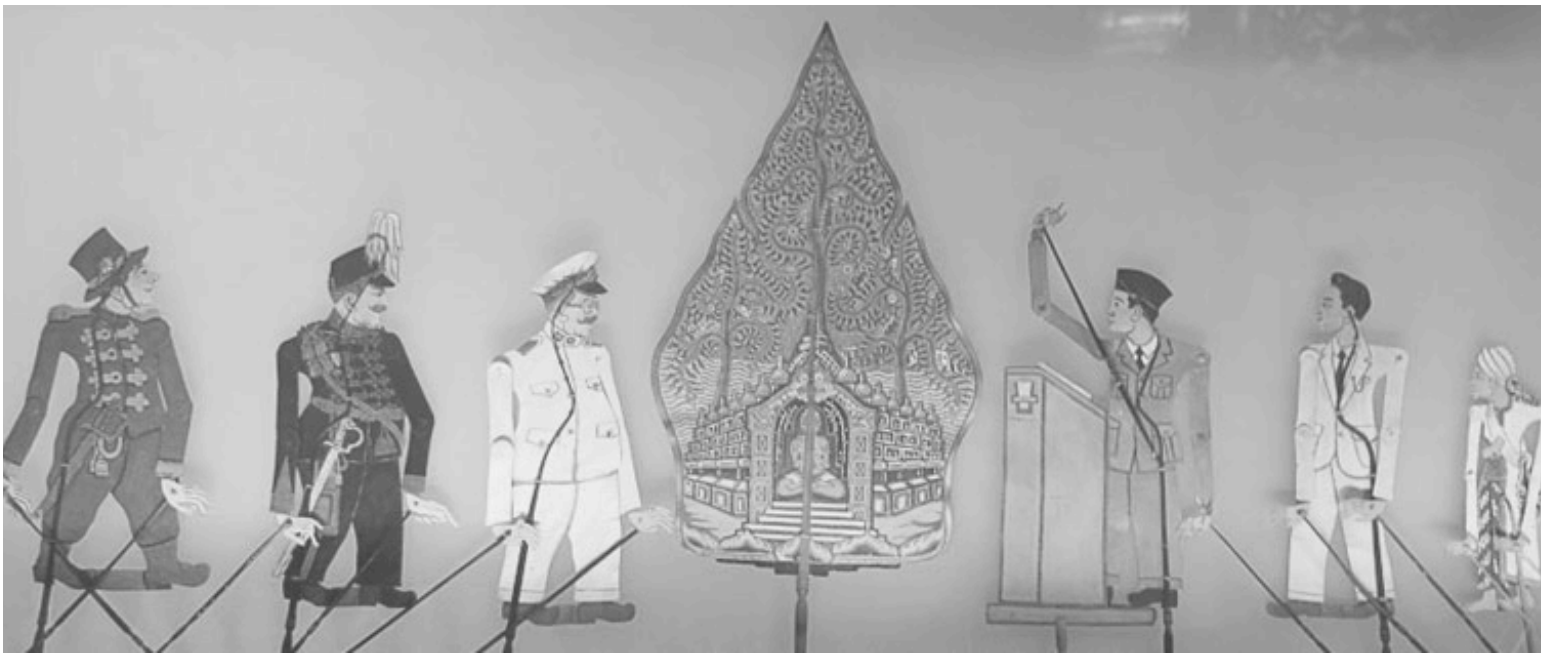


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Familiar Grounds, Foreign Soil

Gendered spaces, Boundary Maintenance, Discourse and Identity of Dutch Expatriates in Decolonizing Indonesia, 1945-1949

Master's Thesis



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1. Introduction

In the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Dutch established the Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, VOC). What followed were two and a half centuries of Dutch imperial rule over Indonesia: an immeasurably important aspect of the histories of the Dutch and Indonesian nations as we know them today. The Dutch surrendered to the invading Japanese army in March 1942. This initially made for a happy welcoming to the Japanese by the Indonesians, who saw them as their liberators from Dutch colonial rule. A sentiment that was short lived however, when hundreds of thousands of Indonesians were recruited by the Japanese for military duty in other South East Asian countries, many of whom never returned.¹ The imperial rule of Indonesia by other nations officially came to an end in 1945, when in the capital city of Jakarta, on August 17th at 10:00, Soekarno and Mohammad Hatta proclaimed the declaration of independence upon Japanese surrender to the allied forces. Soekarno was appointed as first president.² What followed was a period of four years in which the Dutch attempted to recolonize Indonesia through diplomatic and military forces. International and national pressure on the Dutch to renounce their claims eventually led to the Netherlands acknowledging Indonesian independence in late 1949.

Much has been written about Indonesia after decolonization and the nation has known many tumultuous periods since 1949. Much has also been written about (Dutch) colonial, military, diplomatic and missionaries residing in Indonesia at the time. A group less discussed are the Dutch expatriates. The concept of expatriates is ambiguous, particularly when looking at the Dutch in Indonesia, because it holds different cultural and legal connotations and statuses. The term ‘expatriate’ derives from ‘*ex patria*’, meaning ‘outside of the fatherland’. Indonesia being part of the Dutch Kingdom during colonial rule meant that any Dutch people living there at that time were inherently not *ex patria*: The Dutch East Indies were, after all, part of their fatherland. When the East Indies became Indonesia, the Dutch residing there became by default expatriates. However, the cultural connotations connected to this concept portray otherwise. A large number of Dutch people residing temporarily in the Dutch East Indies already identified themselves as expatriates: according to them, one could be expatriate within the Kingdom of the Netherlands too. By being labelled expatriate, either by themselves or others, this group of people to a certain extent disassociated themselves from the Dutch

¹ Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability* (Boulder 2000) 4.

² The spelling of Soekarno’s name varies: in English it is commonly written as ‘Sukarno.’ In this thesis, however, I give preference to the Dutch and Indonesian spelling of Soekarno.

colonials in the East Indies. The concept of being an expatriate – living outside the fatherland – is a relatively new one. It refers not so much to a theory but rather constitutes a definition applied to a certain group of people. The term ‘expatriate’, often abbreviated as ‘expat’, commonly refers to ‘A person settled outside their country of origin [...]. In practice the term is generally applied to professionals, skilled workers, or artists from affluent countries, often transferred by companies, rather than to all immigrants in general.’³ Expat studies are, as the term already suggests, the studying of expats as an entity with their own discourses, agency and identities. The field of expatriate studies is small and largely undiscovered, particularly in the fields of historical, anthropological and ethnographic research. This is problematic because as a result the field of expatriate studies has become very one-dimensional. Expatriate studies focuses on only one side of expatriate life, namely working life, ignoring much of the historical context of it. In doing so, it also ignores many of the issues expatriates have experienced on a social and communal level throughout history. A study on nationalism, transnationalism, discourse, identity and gendered dimensions of Dutch expatriates in decolonizing Indonesia will contribute to the debates in several different academic disciplines such as postcolonialism and discourse studies. This thesis is an attempt to add to this field of studies. It is also a criticism on the flat, one-dimensional representation that has been created of the expatriate identity in academia so far.

This thesis answers the following research question: Can gendered and colonial constructions be found in the dominant discourse and identity of Dutch expatriates in Indonesia during the Indonesian decolonization period between 1945 and 1949? One of my aims in this thesis is to show that the expatriate identity is layered and multidimensional in respect to the private and public domains, and within the context of Indonesian independence was ambivalent in several ways. I do so through a discourse analysis of three different autobiographies. I have separated this analysis into four different chapters. These chapters are as follows: the historical context that preceded the time in which the narrators lived in Indonesia; ‘entering a decolonizing world’, in which I focus mostly on the opinions of the narrators on Indonesia at their time of residency; the ‘public domain’, in which I focus on their communal lives; and the ‘private domain’, in which I focus on their lives within the private spheres of their homes and households. In these chapters I aim to answer the following sub-questions: What is the historical context of this period? How do the Dutch expatriates in Indonesia reflect upon and conform to the ambivalent colonial surroundings they were living

³ Noel Castree, Rob Kitchin and Alisdair Rogers, *Oxford Dictionary of Human Geography* (Oxford 2013).

in, and how did this influence their agency and discourse? How did the narrators reflect on the political situation of Indonesia, life after World War II and on the increasingly anti-Dutch sentiments of the nation? How do the narrators of these memoirs negotiate their agency and their ambivalent position in their Dutch expatriate community in Indonesia? How do the expatriate women negotiate their gendered dominant discourse within the private domain? And how do they negotiate their ambivalent positions within their household and act upon boundary maintenance?

1.1 Historical debate and concepts

Academic papers written on expatriates mostly come from the disciplines of Human Resources and International Economics. One example of this is the '*Research Handbook on International Management*', which includes chapters on female expatriates and 'non-traditional expatriate families'.⁴ Other examples include McNulty's '*Expatriate Return on Investment: Past, Present, and Future.*', Wilkinson and Singh's '*Managing Stress in the Expatriate Family: A Case Study of the State Department of the United States of America.*' and Rosenbusch and Cseh's '*The Cross-Cultural Adjustment Process of Expatriate Families in a Multinational Organization: A Family System Theory Perspective.*'.^{5,6,7} Other articles focus more on the impact of expatriate life on the spouses or children, such as Week et al.'s '*The Adjustment of Expatriate Teenagers.*', Pascoe's '*A Moveable Marriage: Relocating Your Relationship Without Breaking It*', De Cieri et al.'s '*The Psychological Impact of Expatriate Relocation on Partners*', and Andreason's '*Expatriate Adjustment of Spouses and Expatriate Managers: An Integrative Research Review.*'.^{8,9,10,11} These articles focus on expatriates because within multinational organizations they are considered a separate category from local

⁴ Kate Hutchings and Snezhina Michailova, *Research Handbook on Women in International Management* (Cheltenham 2014).

⁵ Yvonne McNulty, 'Expatriate Return on Investment: Past, Present, and Future', in David Collings, Geoffrey Wood and Paula Caligiuri (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to International Human Resource Management*. (New York 2014) 1-28.

⁶ Amanda Wilkinson and Gangaram Singh, 'Managing Stress in the Expatriate Family: A Case Study of the State Department of the United States of America' in *Public Personnel Management* 39.2 (2010) 169-81.

⁷ Katherine Rosenbusch and Maria Cseh, 'The Cross-cultural Adjustment Process of Expatriate Families in a Multinational Organization: A Family System Theory Perspective' in *Human Resource Development International* 15.1 (2012) 61-77.

⁸ Kelly Weeks, Matthew Weeks and Katherine Willis-Muller, 'The Adjustment of Expatriate Teenagers' In *Personnel Review* 39.1 (2009) 24-43.

⁹ Robin Pascoe, *A Moveable Marriage: Relocate Your Relationship Without Breaking It* (Vancouver 2003).

¹⁰ Helen De Cieri, Peter J. Dowling and Keith. F. Taylor, 'The Psychological Impact of Expatriate Relocation on Partners' in *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 2.3 (1991) 377-414.

¹¹ Aaron Andreason, 'Expatriate Adjustment of Spouses and Expatriate Managers: An Integrative Research Review' in *International Journal of Management* 25.2 (2008) 382-395.

workers, often with contracts adjusted to what are considered the needs of expatriate life and extra support that local employees would generally not receive, such as financing the schooling of expatriate children and financing holidays to the home countries. The disciplines of human resources and international economics do make a distinction between expatriate employees, local employees and migrant employees. This confirms the idea that there could be a unique ‘expatriate identity’ found amongst expatriate communities, but does not always tell us a lot about their lives outside of the office or about the history of this expatriate identity. In order to be able to understand more about the concepts of identity and gender of Europeans in colonized areas, I have to make use of texts written by scholars about discourse and the role of women in the colonial world.

Traditionally, earlier scholars of colonial studies rarely paid specific attention to the role of women in the empire.¹² A number of scholars have changed this tendency, as we can see with texts such as Annelies Moors’ *Women and the Orient – a Note on Difference*’ and Elsbeth Locher-Scholten’s *Women and the Colonial State: Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942*’.^{13,14} These authors both research the overlapping topics of European women in the East, feminism and Orientalism. This makes the texts important and useful as analytical information for this thesis but limited in their relevance because they discuss European women that generally stayed in the colonized world for several decades or their whole lives, whereas this thesis focuses specifically on those women who stayed in Indonesia for only a few years. Similar research includes Frances Gouda’s *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942*’, Jeske Reys’ *Vrouwen in de Nederlandse Koloniën*’ and Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel’s *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance*’, which again offer relevant insights into the colonized world but less into that of short-stay expatriates in the colonies.^{15, 16, 17} This continues with texts such as *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism*’ edited by Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda and *Colonialism and the Modern World: Selected Studies*’ edited by Gregory Blue, Martin

¹² Julia Ann Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (Charlottesville, VA 1998) 1.

¹³ Annelies Moors, ‘Women and the Orient: A Note on Difference.’ in Lorraine Nencel and Peter Pels (eds.), *Constructing Knowledge: Authority and Critique in Social Science* (London 1991) 114-23.

¹⁴ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Women and the Colonial State: Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam 2000).

¹⁵ Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam 1995).

¹⁶ Jeske Reys, *Vrouwen in De Nederlandse Koloniën* (Nijmegen 1986).

¹⁷ Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel, *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance*. (Bloomington 1992).

Bunton and Ralph Croizier.¹⁸ This thesis also builds upon some of the ‘classic’ works on orientalism and (post)colonial discourse, such as those by Edward Said and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak.^{19, 20, 21} Key to this thesis is Ann Laura Stoler’s ‘Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia’.²² This text offers a clear and chronological overview of European colonization, gender, sexuality, class and power in Asian colonies. I have chosen to use this text as the key source to which I compare fragments from the expatriates’ memoirs. Whilst these texts offered me insights into colonial discourse, gender and identity, I also needed texts that could help me with the analysis of my primary sources, which is why I also made use of several more technical sources on discourse analysis.

Relevant texts written on discourse that this thesis builds upon include Sara Mills’ book ‘*Discourse*’, which includes chapters on colonial and postcolonial discourses.²³ This text is particularly useful as background information for the analyses found in this thesis. Other relevant texts that helped me in my analyses include Michael Billig’s ‘*Arguing and Thinking: A Rhetorical Approach to Social Psychology*’, Teun van Dijk’s ‘*The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*’, and Michel Foucault’s ‘*The Order of Discourse: An Archeology of the Human Sciences*’, ‘*The Archeology of Knowledge*’ and ‘*Power, Truth, Strategy*’.^{24, 25, 26, 27, 28}

Ample literature is also available on modern Indonesian history, particularly in popular literature. Examples are two in depth biographies on President Soekarno by Lambert Giebels, ‘*Soekarno, Nederlandsch Onderdaan. Een biografie 1901-1950*’ and ‘*Soekarno, President. Een biografie 1950-1970*’, which gives a good insight into Soekarno’s history with and (changing) viewpoints on the Dutch living in Indonesia during his lifetime.^{29,30} Other texts that

¹⁸ Margaret Strobel, ‘Women’s History, Gender History, and European Colonialism.’ In Gregory Blue, Martin Bunton, and Ralph Croizier (eds.), *Colonialism and the Modern World: Selected Studies*. Armonk, NY 2002. 51-68.

¹⁹ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London 2003).

²⁰ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, MA 1999).

²¹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (Basingstoke 1988).

²² Ann Laura Stoler. ‘Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia’ in Micaela Di Leonardo (ed.) *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1991) 51-102.

²³ Sara Mills, *Discourse* (London 2009).

²⁴ Michael Billig, *Arguing and Thinking: A Rhetorical Approach to Social Psychology*. Cambridge 1996.

²⁵ Teun van Dijk, ‘Critical Discourse Analysis’ in Deborah Schiffrin, Deborah Tannen and Heidi E. Hamilton (eds.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (Oxford 2001) 349-71.

²⁶ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York 1994).

²⁷ Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge* (London 1989).

²⁸ Michel Foucault Meaghan Morris, and Paul Patton, *Power, Truth, Strategy* (Sydney 1979).

²⁹ Lambert Giebels. *Soekarno: Nederlandsch Onderdaan: Biografie 1901-1950* (Amsterdam 1999).

³⁰ Lambert Giebels, *Soekarno President: Biografie 1950-1970* (Amsterdam 2001).

have provided background information include ‘*Afscheid van de Koloniën: Het Nederlandse Dekolonisatiebeleid 1942-2012*’ by John Jansen van Galen, ‘*In the Ruins of Empire: The Japanese Surrender and the Battle for Postwar Asia*’ by Ronald H. Spector, ‘*Ontsporing van Geweld: Het Nederlands-Indonesisch Conflict*’ by J.A.A. van Doorn and W.J. Hendrix, ‘*Nederland Valt Aan: Op Weg Naar Oorlog Met Indonesië 1947*’ by Ad van Liempt (also largely based on ego-documents), ‘*A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia’s Search for Stability*’ by Adam Schwartz, and ‘*Interpreting Indonesian Politics*’ by Leo Suryadinata.^{31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36}

1.2 Conceptual framework

Before being able to discuss the discourse and identity of Dutch expatriates in decolonizing Indonesia, it is crucial that I first offer relevant definitions of the terms I use. I discuss the issue of boundary maintenance throughout this, which refers to ‘The ways in which societies (or social systems) maintain distinctions between themselves and others’.³⁷ In this thesis I look for boundary maintenance by the expatriates between the private and public spheres, colonials and expatriates and expatriates and their local servants. An important concept for analysing boundary maintenance is discourse, which is why I focus on it in this thesis. Discourse is a term that derives is applied in a variety of disciplines, including critical theory, sociology and linguistics, and is commonly used in analysing literary and non-literary texts.³⁸ A key contributor to the field of discourse is Michel Foucault, whose work has shaped and developed the theme immensely. Foucault argues that discourse has many different meanings and that with his work he has added to these meanings. In short, discourse can best be summarized as any written or spoken expression, including its structure and social context, which is inherited from ones’ surroundings. Power plays a key role in discourse because the narrator uses language and materiality to position themselves within their discourses. The most important aspect of discourse, I believe, is that it only covers text (either written or spoken) that is part of communication between a speaker and a listener. This listener can be both a defined and an undefined audience, meaning that the speaker could literally be talking

³¹ John Jansen van Galen. *Afscheid Van De Koloniën: Het Nederlandse Dekolonisatiebeleid 1942-2012* (Amsterdam 2013).

³² Ronald H. Spector, *In the Ruins of Empire: The Japanese Surrender and the Battle for Postwar Asia* (New York 2007).

³³ J. A. A. van Doorn and W. J. Hendrix, *Ontsporing Van Geweld: Over Het Nederlands/Indisch/Indonesisch Conflict* (Rotterdam 1970).

³⁴ Ad van Liempt, *Nederland Valt Aan: Op Weg Naar Oorlog Met Indonesië, 1947* (Amsterdam 2012).

³⁵ Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting*.

³⁶ Leo Suryadinata, *Interpreting Indonesian Politics* (Singapore 1998).

³⁷ John Scott and Gordon Marshall, *A Dictionary of Sociology (3 rev. ed.)* (Oxford 2009).

³⁸ Mills, *Discourse*, 1.

to someone in front of him or her, or he or she could for example be telling a story that is meant to be listened to but not by a specific audience.³⁹ The speaker, however, will always have a certain audience in mind: will people I know be listening, or only people I don't know? Am I talking to a friend, father, an interviewer or a stranger? The speaker will alter the position within the discourse they use according to their audience.⁴⁰ Foucault argues that discourse is 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak'.⁴¹ A person is always shaped by the discourses they are in. This therefore also means that the text spoken or written by an individual is inherently a representation of the system of thinking and speaking that they function in.⁴² This text can therefore be seen as a demonstration of the discourses present at the time of speaking or writing. The way I analyse the memoirs represented in this thesis also makes use of this theory, making them a representation of the discourse of Dutch expatriates in Indonesia from 1945 to 1949.

Different disciplines use discourse analysis in different ways, as for example Sara Mills shows us with her book.⁴³ Colonial and postcolonial discourses play very significant roles in this thesis. Postcolonial studies are the academic discipline of studying and analyzing the cultural legacies of former colony. Throughout most of this thesis, I use the term 'postcolonialism' in its most simplistic form: meaning the period after decolonization of the Dutch in Indonesia. One aspect of the study of postcolonialism is Edward Said's concept of orientalism, which is that the East (the Orient) and the West (the Occident) were traditionally seen as binary opposites of each other.⁴⁴ Postcolonial discourse analysis has a strongly political focus, encompassing social issues such as 'othering' and boundary maintenance. The concept of discourse cannot be seen as separate from the concept of identity.

Discourse and identity are closely related and consequently the theoretical concept of identity also plays a key role in my thesis, particularly cultural identity and national identity. The definition of identity that I prefer in this thesis is that by Stuart Hall. Hall states that identities are a construction that are created within a discourse and that 'we need to understand them as produced in specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies'.⁴⁵ He also argues that identities 'emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and

³⁹ Mills, *Discourse*, 1.

⁴⁰ Diane MacDonnell, *Theories of Discourse: An Introduction*. (Oxford 1986) 1.

⁴¹ Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge* (London 1989) 49.

⁴² Mills, *Discourse*, 15.

⁴³ Mills, *Discourse*.

⁴⁴ Said, *Orientalism*.

⁴⁵ Stuart Hall, 'Who Needs 'Identity'?' in P. du Gay, J. Evans and P. Redman (eds.), *Identity: A Reader* 155.2 (2000) 17.

exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally constituted unity'.⁴⁶ This means that identity is not created by a certain set of characteristics, but rather within a discourse and marking of power, where one is included in or excluded from certain markings. Similarly, Bordieu argues that an identity consists of certain characteristics and criteria that 'once they are perceived and evaluated as they are in practice, function as signs, emblems or stigmata, and also as powers'.⁴⁷ The difference between Hall and Bordieu is that Hall states that an identity is 'everything that someone is not', meaning that the characteristics of an identity are formed in opposition to other characteristics, making an identity a binary opposite of other identities, whilst Bordieu states that an identity does indeed hold certain characteristics and criteria.⁴⁸ Both agree, however, that an identity is a form of power struggle, where the individual is placed within a discourse and continuously positions and repositions him or herself in terms of power, using the practices and signs, emblems or stigmata of the identity to negotiate his or her power. The unanimities that identities proclaim are, according to Hall, constructed within this negotiation.⁴⁹ As for the expatriates, this thesis will show that they too continuously use different signs of their identity to position and reposition themselves within their society. This power struggle is also referred to as 'agency'.

An important aspect in relation to discourse analysis is agency. Agency refers to the power struggle that is found in discourses and is a crucial aspect of feminist and postcolonial discourses, where power causes constant struggles.⁵⁰ Foucault argues that power is all encompassing, meaning that all relationships between individuals are constantly subject to shifts in power: relations that are dichotomies are intrinsically relationships of power. Others argue that within gendered relationships, gender can be seen as an apparatus that men can use to subordinate women.⁵¹ Colonial agency can also be an apparatus for the colonizer to dominate the colonized. Agency is characterized as being open to different interpretations, meaning that discourse and agency do not consist of static modes of knowing and thinking. In this thesis I research the resistance of the expatriate wives against the dominant expatriate discourse that they were in.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, MA 1992) 223.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Hall, 'Who Needs 'Identity'?', 18.

⁵⁰ Mills, *Discourse*, 38.

⁵¹ P. Amigot and M. Pujal, 'On Power, Freedom, and Gender: A Fruitful Tension between Foucault and Feminism' in *Theory & Psychology* 19.5 (2009) 647.

1.3 Source criticism: primary sources, secondary sources and self-reflexivity

In preparation of this thesis, I conducted research at the Expatriate Archive Centre in The Hague. The Expatriate Archive Centre was initiated in 1992 by a group of women living in the Netherlands who call themselves ‘Shell wives’, which refers to the fact that they were all married to men who worked for Royal Dutch Shell. As part of the commemoration of the centenary of Shell, they started collecting life stories of expatriates from around the world in any type of egodocuments, be it letters, photographs or (auto)biographies. These expatriates were initially mostly ‘Shell families’, but later this notion extended to expatriates from all different international companies and nationalities. They were asked to write contributions about issues that were considered typical expatriate issues, such as leaving friends and family, schooling, medical care, learning new languages, adjusting to new cultures and dual-careers. Over the past two decades, the collection has grown into a small archive located in a small office in The Hague. When I started my research, I knew what I was looking for, but not what I could eventually find. In my proposal I stated that I aimed to discover traces of colonialism in the discourse of Dutch expatriates in Indonesia, assuming that I would need to find perhaps ten to twenty useful letters and egodocuments. What I ended up finding were indeed approximately ten useful egodocuments, three of which captured my specific attention, being memoirs written by one man and two women about their respective families and their lives as expatriates in Indonesia. I chose these three memoirs because they were very personal: in all three I got a sense of the people and personalities behind the words. This was very important for me because I felt that this brought me very close to their negotiations of discourse and identities too. Since the narrators all wrote these memoirs for private keep, and not to be published, they were more likely to say things that they might otherwise have been hesitant to state, such as derogatory or ‘inappropriate’ comments about other people. These kinds of details were exactly what I was looking for. Moreover, since all three memoirs were quite lengthy, they touched upon many different elements of life, more than one may find in a shorter piece of writing such as a letter. This gave me a lot of material to work with. It also created a new challenge of selecting which parts of the memoirs I would analyse and which I would leave out. I ultimately decided to select the quotes where I could see a strong personal dimension, for example with a personal opinion or personal analyses of the situations they are describing. I also chose quotes that show ambiguity in their self-identification, as this is something I extensively discuss in this thesis.

Finding all my research sources at the Expatriate Archive Centre in The Hague was very useful and offered many benefits, but naturally also came with limitations. Firstly, the

memoires I found in an archive that originally focused strictly on Shell expatriates means that the authors of these pieces see and treat themselves as expatriates and not colonials. As all three families were indeed 'Shell families' who lived as expatriates and in strongly regulated communities, the sources are limited in what they can tell us about the colonial discourse of Dutch expatriates in Indonesia who worked for non-colonial companies. Moreover, these memoires were sent in in response to a call by the archive for egodocuments, which means that the authors or their children felt that their stories were relevant enough to be shared with the archive. They were all also written quite recently. The reflections are therefore not on the lives in Indonesia of these authors while being there, as a document such as a diary would be, but rather a reflection from more than fifty years later. This means that everything was written by the authors including all the knowledge they have on their past and the national histories of Indonesia and the Netherlands nowadays, which fundamentally shapes the memoires differently than if they had been written at the time of the events. The memoires therefore present two separate discourses: the discourse of production (the time in which the memoire takes place) and the discourse of narration (the time in which the memoire is written). This means that the memoires are ambiguous in themselves, since they offer a view into the past from the perspective of the narrator's positioning within current discourses. Concretely, this could mean that knowing what they know now, the narrators may have changed their opinions on certain sensitive issues. This is something that I therefore also look for in my analyses. Furthermore, the fact that the memoires were written much later also means that the particular events mentioned by the narrators are the ones they still remember now, and smaller day-to-day events that they might have considered less relevant or forgotten are omitted.

All three memoires used in this thesis were originally written in Dutch and I translated them to English. Whenever the author of a memoire used an Indonesian word, this is not translated but rather left in Indonesian, due to its significant role in the discourse of this person. Accordingly, a glossary is attached as an appendix to this thesis, offering translations and explanations on these Indonesian words. I must note that when the focus of a research is so much on the text itself, as it is with discourse analysis, translations of texts can cause quite a problem. Some words are untranslatable or lose their connotations and denotations when translated. Examples of this are also found within this thesis. For this reason, I have decided to place all the original Dutch texts in the footnotes of each translated quote, so that any reader of this thesis who speaks both Dutch and English can also easily glance at the original Dutch texts. I have also, in some cases, added information in the quotes for extra clarification.

Any information placed between square brackets is information added by me, and any information placed between parentheses is written by the original author.

The Families of the Memoires

This thesis focuses on three different memoires written by Dutch expatriates living in Indonesia in the 1950's. All three families also resided in Indonesia during the very specific period of the decolonisation war between 1945 and 1949, and all three had moved to Indonesia to rebuild or restart the Shell factories that were destroyed or shut down during World War II. This made that their stories were very similar, which I found all the more interesting because it could make it even more fascinating to read how their thoughts and ideas differed and agreed. This was enough motivation and offered me enough inspiration to continue on with only these three memoires.

Due to privacy reasons enforced by the Expatriate Archive Centre in The Hague that archives these memoires, all identifiable names have to be omitted from the memoires. As such, I have renamed the families as X, Y and Z. Names of relatives mentioned by the narrators will be replaced by their relationship to one another instead, meaning that when, for example, a narrator says 'Jim loved to cook', I will change it to '[My husband] loved to cook'. This also immediately makes it clear what the connection of the narrator is to the person he or she is talking about.

The wife of the Z family, henceforth known as Mrs Z, wrote the memoire analyzed in this thesis. In 1938, her husband started working for Royal Dutch Shell. In that same year, he moved to Curaçao to work the company. In 1940, he married Mrs Z through a proxy wedding performed by his father, which allowed for the two to be reunited in Curaçao. Their first son was born in January 1942. When Shell's oil refinery in Balikpapan was destroyed in 1943 because of World War II, Shell called up all its staff with a military background for training in the United States of America in order to be able to rebuild the refinery once it was deemed safe enough to go back. After having lived together in the US for a total of three months, the couple returned to Curaçao. In September 1945, a month after Indonesia had declared itself an independent nation, Mr Z was sent to Jakarta by Shell in order to help continue the rebuilding and expanding of the company. Mrs Z was three months pregnant at the time with their second son, to whom she gave birth in March 1946 on Curaçao. In May of that year, Shell sent Mrs Z to the Netherlands by plane with her two sons and in December, Mr X was also

sent back and was reunited with his family. In August 1947, he was sent to Pladju (nowadays spelled 'Plaju'), a small town on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, and Mrs X and the children followed in January 1948, where they stayed until February 1954. In Pladju, Mrs X gave birth to their third son in 1949.

The memoire of the Y family was written by the husband, henceforth known as Mr Y. Mr Y started working for the Shell in 1934. After a few years of working for another company in the Netherlands, he returned to Shell in 1946. The couple moved to Balikpapan, a city on the coast of the island of Borneo, Indonesia, in 1947 with their two daughters. Mr Y wrote his memoire particularly for his children and grandchildren as a keepsake about their lives. One of his sons donated the memoire to the Expatriate Archive Centre. The family stayed in Balikpapan until 1948, after which they moved back to the Netherlands.

The memoire of the X family was written by the wife, henceforth known as Mrs X. Mr X started working for Shell in 1937. In May 1938, he was sent to Curaçao for a period of four years by the company and not long after he became engaged to Mrs X. The two married by proxy on 13 September 1939 and Mrs X joined Mr X in Curaçao not long after. In January 1946, the family returned to the Netherlands and in May of that year, Mr X was sent to the Dutch Indies, after which Mrs X joined him to live in Pladju in April 1947. Of the three memoires, the X family spent the shortest time in the Indies. Mrs X returned to the Netherlands with her children in February 1958 whilst Mr X moved to Balikpapan for six months. A year later, the family moved to Persia (Iran) where they lived until 1960, after which the family returned to the Netherlands and Mr X left Shell.

Shell put effort into taking good care of its Dutch employees in Indonesia. They lived in compounds located nearby the refineries. Compounds were homogenous per company, meaning that all the men of one compound would work for the same factory and all the families would be cared for and looked after by this company. During the times in which the narrators of these memoires lived housing was provided by Shell and the inhabitants had little say in which house they were to live in. Shell also provided the families with food and leisure and had strict laws about vacations. The impact of the company on the lives of these families is also something that is discussed in this thesis.

We see that there are certain overlaps in the lives of these three families. The Z and X family both lived in Curaçao before moving to Indonesia. The Y family lived in Balikpapan during their stay in Indonesia and Mr Z worked there too before moving to Pladju with his family. The X family lived in Pladju together and Mr X worked in Balikpapan for another half a year whilst his family had moved back to the Netherlands. The Z family moved to

Indonesia in 1945 and the X and Y families in 1947, meaning that they all experienced the decolonization period. This all shows us that their life stories in Indonesia are very similar, making them all the more interesting to analyse and compare.

Self reflexivity

One aspect that should not be overlooked in this thesis is the role that my own background plays in my research: my interest in this topic stems largely from my own upbringing as a child of expatriates in Indonesia and Singapore. Having lived a life as an expatriate child in Jakarta, Indonesia, for a total of five years from ages 5 to 10, means that I have extensive background knowledge on the topic, but can also mean that I have certain expectations, presumptions and prejudices about the lives of the people in the egodocuments. I have therefore had to be aware that I do not overlook things that I assume to be common knowledge. My main way of overcoming this (as far as this is possible, since no one can ever completely distance oneself from one's background) was through my (peer) reviewers, who pointed out any points of expectations, presumptions and prejudice. Taking all of this into account, it is important that I am aware of some of the limitations of critical discourse analysis, which I will explain hereafter.⁵² Van Dijk, an author who has written extensively on critical discourse analysis, states that as a discourse analyst it is crucial at all times to be explicitly aware of one's own position in society.⁵³ This is something that is often emphasized in other writing on discourse analysis, for example Tine Davids in her article '*The micro dynamics of agency: Repetition and subversion in a Mexican right-wing female politician's life story*', shows us that she was initially blinded and too prejudiced to be able to properly interview and analyse her main subject.⁵⁴ Her initial expectations and bias got in the way of being able to perform an 'as-neutral-as-possible' discourse analysis. Although both Van Dijk and Davids agree that there is no such thing as 'value-free science', we can conclude that it is crucial to constantly be aware of and reflect upon one's own position in society when conducting discourse analysis. In the larger sense, it is important to constantly reflect upon one's own research and possible prejudice, a concept also known as self-reflexivity and found

⁵² Please note that the following paragraph is also taken partially from my other paper, "Reading Between the Lines: The Art and Act of Narrative Analysis on an Autobiographical Essay on Indonesian Independence Day". Overlap between the two versions occurs.

⁵³ Van Dijk, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, 352.

⁵⁴ T. Davids, 'The Micro Dynamics of Agency: Repetition and Subversion in a Mexican Right-wing Female Politician's Life Story' in *European Journal of Women's Studies* 18.2 (2011) 155-68.

in research done by other discourse analysts such as Borland, Willemse and Van Stapele.^{55, 56,}

57.

1.4 Methodology

The methodology used in order to apply critical discourse analysis, is based on two different main analytical methods, namely ‘reading against the grain’, a term coined by Karin Willemse, and rhetorical psychology.⁵⁸ Critical discourse analysis is ‘a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context’.⁵⁹ This is comparable to the rhetorical approach, where the focus lies on power relationships.

With the method of ‘reading against the grain’ one does not look solely at what is literally written, but rather at the context in which it was written as well as what was *not* written. By looking at the context, one can often find out why certain things were said. The positioning by subjects within discourses is related to the contexts in which these have meaning. By looking at what was *not* written, at the silences, one can often tell much about reasons why some things were perhaps not written while others were, which is very interesting when attempting to analyse a discourse. These ‘silences’ can tell us things about the political and cultural situations at the time. I will also focus on what the writer considers to be taboos and self-evident notions of morality, a strategy that can also be found in Willemse’s work.⁶⁰ Analyzing the context of this ‘common sense’ can tell us a lot about the common discourse at the time of writing, specifically the positioning of the writer and their power relations.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Katherine Borland ‘“That’s not what I Said”. Interpretive conflict in Oral Narrative Research’ in Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai, *Women’s Words, The Feminist Practice of Oral History* (New York 1991): 63-75.

⁵⁶ Karin Willemse, ‘“Everything I Told You was True”. The Biographic Narrative as a Method of Critical Feminist Knowledge Production’ in *Women Studies International Forum* (2014) 38-49.

⁵⁷ Naomi van Stapele, ‘Intersubjectivity, Self-Reflexivity and Agency: Narrating About ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ in Feminist Research’ in *Women Studies International Forum* (2014) 13-21.

⁵⁸ Willemse, *Everything I Told You Was True*, 38-49.

⁵⁹ Van Dijk, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, 352.

⁶⁰ Willemse, *Everything I Told You Was True*, 45.

⁶¹ Billig, *Arguing and Thinking*, 1.

2. Historical Context

In order to understand the position of the narrators of the memoirs as expatriates in Indonesia, it is crucial to first have an understanding of the colonial world they had moved into. The proclamation of independence of Indonesia was signed on August 17th 1945 and in the ensuing four years the Netherlands attempted keeping colonial power over Indonesia through diplomatic and military forces. International and national pressure on the Dutch to renounce their claims eventually led to the Netherlands acknowledging Indonesian independence in December 1949. The period between August 1945 and December 1949 are nowadays known as the Indonesian National Revolution. This was an ambiguous period for the Dutch living in Indonesia: the country was neither independent nor under the Netherlands rule anymore. This meant that the expatriates were living in an ambiguous time, in a world based on social and political constructions established in the past 300 years after Dutch merchants first set foot in Indonesia. I have based this thesis upon the notion that the role of women in empire building is very important and I aim to prove that the role of women in these specific expatriate communities is also very important in terms of building community and Western supremacy in the postcolonial world. Accordingly, this chapter first offers a brief history of women in the Dutch Indies. Moreover, the male figures of all three families worked for Shell; a company that had a strong impact on their lives, as this thesis will also show. This is why I will first give a brief history of Shell in Indonesia.

2.1 The History of Shell in Indonesia

Royal Dutch Shell owes much of its modern day success to Indonesia. In 1880, Dutch tobacco planter Aeilko Jans Zijlker was traveling around the Dutch East Indies island of Sumatra's east coast when he struck upon traces of oil. After obtaining a license from the local ruler, the Sultan of Langkat, he was able to drill his first well, which turned out to be dry. In the following year, he drilled a second well in the north of Sumatra, and this time he was successful. With this well, named Telaga Tunggal No 1, the former tobacco planter managed to produce commercial quantities of oil and on June 16th 1890 his 'Provisional Sumatra Petroleum Company' became the 'Royal Dutch Company for the Working of Petroleum Wells in the Dutch Indies'. Zijlker passed away half a year later whilst on a business trip in Singapore. After his death, his part of the company was taken over by colleagues who continued the search for new oil fields in the Dutch East Indies and by 1898,

the construction of storage and harbor facilities in Sumatra were completed, making it Indonesia's first oil shipping port.⁶²

Meanwhile, in the mid 19th century, two brothers in London had set up a trading business in seashells. By 1897, their company was seeking to extend their business and consequently immersed themselves in oil trade. Its roots in the shipping of shells led to their new name: Shell Transport and Trading Company Ltd. In 1897, this company discovered oil in East Borneo in the East of the island of Kalimantan, and it also set up a small refinery at Balikpapan in 1899.

By the turn of the century, 18 companies were exploring for and producing oil in Indonesia, and refineries had been set up in North Sumatra, South Sumatra, Central and Eastern Java and East Kalimantan. In 1902, Shell and Royal Dutch formed a joint company and became the Shell Transport and Royal Dutch Petroleum Co. Ltd. On 24 February 1907, the two companies completely merged into the company that is now known simply as 'Shell'. In 1910, the Shell group absorbed another oil producing company in the Indies and in 1911 it bought out the last independent producer, the Dordtsche Petroleum Maatschappij, making Shell the most dominant company of the Indonesian oil industry as well as one of the world's leading gas and oil companies to this day. Royal Dutch Shell shares a history with Indonesia that goes back over a hundred years and the two are inextricably linked as such.

2.2 Women in the Dutch Indies: From the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century

Shell's presence in The Dutch East Indies was not without reason. The Netherlands East Indies came under Dutch governmental administration in 1800, which explains Shell's presence in the area. Dutch activity in the area started in 1596, when four Dutch merchant vessels reached the Indonesian archipelago for the first time. Several Asia trade companies were initiated, which 1602 were merged to become the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC), or the Dutch East India Company. The VOC was given a trading monopoly and therefore had a substantial influence on the interior affairs of the Dutch East Indies. This included decision-making and who was and who was not to be sent out to the East.

European women in the Dutch East Indies were a minority. In 1880, there were 472 European women for every 1000 European men in the Dutch East Indies. Of these women, 123 were born outside the Dutch East Indies and 349 inside. By 1930, this number had increased to 884 European women for every 1000 European men. Of these women, 582 were

⁶² Shell Indonesia, 'History of Shell in Indonesia': <http://www.shell.co.id/en/aboutshell/who-we-are/history/country.html> (09-02-2016)

born outside the Dutch East Indies and 302 inside.⁶³ From the time European colonizers first set foot in the 'Orient' up until at least the early twentieth century, the world of these women was regulated by a male discourse, making the colonial space a gendered space.⁶⁴ From the early 1600's through the twentieth century, European women in the Dutch East Indies were regulated and debated upon, mostly in reflection of what would be best for the European men. Many European women in the colonies found themselves under authoritarian constraints that limited their domestic, economic and political options; more so than their female counterparts who stayed in metropolitan Europe at the time.⁶⁵

In the earliest periods the VOC recruited only bachelors, mainly because of financial reasons.⁶⁶ Extramarital relations in the form of concubinage were seen as a good solution to several of the problems the colonial rulers had with their young bachelors. Concubinage meant that these bachelors would find a local woman who would sometimes live with them and/or work as their servant too, but would most importantly require to their sexual needs. Sex was thought to relieve physical and psychological illnesses. These European men and local women could not get married and the women could not call upon any of the men's resources unless they were offered to them. Concubinage solved the following 'problems' the colonial rulers saw: it allowed for a low-cost way of enforcing permanent settlement of their men in the Indies, because having a local woman would mean that the men would want to stay with them rather than return to Holland. It was also cheaper and easier than transporting European women to the Indies, because they believed that women should and could not work themselves, and would therefore only be using up their resources rather than adding to them. Moreover, it was a cheap and simple way of causing rapid growth, if these men and their concubinages were to have children.⁶⁷ The Netherlands also feared that single white women in the East Indies would enter into prostitution, which would negatively impact the status of the colonial government. However, colonial governments ultimately found that concubinage also created new problems, because whilst concubinage at first seemed to reinforce hierarchies in the colonial societies, it also challenged them. Unequal sex ratios led to

⁶³ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'Familie En Liefde: Europese Mannen En Indonesische Vrouwen' in Esther Captain, Marieke Hellevoort, and Marian Van Der Klein (eds.), *Vertrouwd En Vreemd: Ontmoetingen Tussen Nederland, Indië En Indonesië*. (Hilversum 2000) 45.

⁶⁴ Margaret Strobel, 'Women's History, Gender History, and European Colonialism.' in Gregory Blue, Martin Buntun, and Ralph Croizier (eds.), *Colonialism and the Modern World: Selected Studies* (Armonk, NY 2002) 65.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'Familie En Liefde: Europese Mannen En Indonesische Vrouwen', in Esther Captain, Marieke Hellevoort, and Marian Van Der Klein (eds.), *Vertrouwd En Vreemd: Ontmoetingen Tussen Nederland, Indië En Indonesië* (Hilversum 2000) 45.

⁶⁷ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 58.

competition between European men over the scarce number of indigenous women, which created opportunities of power for indigenous women.⁶⁸ Some relationships became emotionally significant for the men, and mixed children challenged the hierarchical racial divide, particularly when Indo-European women fell into prostitution or concubinage, subsequently disgracing the European race according to the Dutch.⁶⁹ Ultimately, concubinage was no longer seen as attractive by the Dutch policy makers, since it only ‘worked’ as it was supposed to when it did not challenge European identity, European supremacy and gender inequality, which it eventually did.⁷⁰

Accordingly, concubinage started making place for structured sex in the politically safe context of prostitution and marriage between ‘full-blooded’ Europeans around the late 19th century and early 20th century.⁷¹ The ban on marriage with European women in the colonies was lifted, and large numbers of European women were sent to the colonies to accompany the men. Marriages were often by proxy, in Dutch referred to as a ‘marriage by glove’, and the women were sent over with the incentive of installing a sense of European family life and family values in the colonies. This caused quite drastic changes for some of the colonial areas, as women were considered to be more fragile both in psychological and physical terms, and therefore demanded more servants for their chores. They were expected not to do many chores themselves but instead rule over their servants, so as to live a life in the colonies at elevated, superior standards of living. This also introduced a new challenge to the racial dominance of the colonizers over the colonized. A fear arose for the protection of European wives: they were to be protected from the men of colour and their ‘primitive’ sexual urges and uncontrollable lust, aroused by the sight of white women.⁷² At the same time however, European women were often accused of being too friendly with their servants, and of not dressing modestly enough, meaning that any form of sexual assault by these ‘primitive’, sexualized men, was as much the colonial woman’s fault as the colonized man’s since she was behaving ‘improperly and thus undermining white prestige’.^{73,74} The reaction of the colonial governments to this problem was to constantly reinforce the vulnerable position of the European women and the necessity of increased control and white male dominance, again reinforcing the sexual and racial dominance of the male colonizers. This control of

⁶⁸ Strobel, *Women’s History, Gender History, and European Colonialism*, 65.

⁶⁹ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 60.

⁷⁰ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 60-61.

⁷¹ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 61.

⁷² Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 67.

⁷³ Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942*. (Amsterdam 1995) 184.

⁷⁴ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 70.

white women's behaviour in the Indies consequently became a concealed element of Dutch colonial mastery: presented as the white males protecting the white females from the sexual advances of the indigenous, but in reality keeping intact the hierarchy that put white male colonizers at the top and indigenous women at the bottom.⁷⁵ The European women continuously had to reinforce these hierarchical distinctions onto their servants as well, which inadvertently made the European women 'foot soldiers' of the colonial hierarchy.⁷⁶ This made their position within their household with servants all the more ambiguous.

Many women's advice manuals on how to take care of a household in the Indies frequently depicted indigenous servants as 'mysterious and untrustworthy, or as unhygienic and dirty, even perverse, in their private habits. ... White-skinned people, in contrast, personified competence and safety.'⁷⁷ According to the manuals written in the twentieth century, 'a *cordon sanitaire* should be constructed socially around each home as well as around each individual within the home.'⁷⁸ The *cordon sanitaire* extended to at least hygiene, culture and sex. It meant that European children should not eat food given to them by servants but should be fed by their mothers instead. They should also not socialize with the servants (in particularly the teenagers because of the aforementioned 'sexual urges' of the servants). The servants were to never wash their own clothes together with that of their masters nor touch the naked bodies of European children. The servant quarters were not to be entered by the European masters. Clancy-Smith and Gouda note that in the 1930's, a medical doctor even 'cautioned mothers against surrendering their children to the care of the native nurse, since her unclean hands might infect small girls with venereal disease.'⁷⁹ The irony of hiring people who were supposedly inherently dirty and unhygienic to clean one's house and clothes and cook one's food did not go unnoticed among these European women and were frequent topics of concern for them.⁸⁰ European women were to 'rescue and save' their servants from making their 'inevitable mistakes and expect ever-lasting gratitude in exchange'⁸¹ and educate them about hygiene and elevated standards of living.⁸²

⁷⁵ Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 184.

⁷⁶ Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 162.

⁷⁷ Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 160.

⁷⁸ Julia Ann Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (Charlottesville, VA 1998) 139.

⁷⁹ Clancy-Smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire*, 140.

⁸⁰ Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 160.

⁸¹ Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 160.

⁸² Clancy-Smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire*, 141.

2.3 Conclusion

What this chapter shows is that the position of the colonizing male has shifted significantly since the beginning of the Dutch colonial rule in Indonesia. They first ought to be single with a concubinage for sexual relief so as to maintain physical and mental health, they were now (around the 1920's) to be good husbands with European elite wives and children for their mental health and to exercise for their physical health.⁸³ The European women were to provide this leisure, comfort and family life. These colonial values remained relatively unchanged up to the end of the Dutch colonial era in the Indies. Consequently, any Dutch person or family moving to the country in that period, moved into a society where Dutch, elite family life was central and where colonial women were subordinate to their colonial husbands, but dominant over their colonized servants. The expatriate women fit seamlessly into a system of power created by colonial predecessors and their position was ambiguous as they faced the constant struggle of power. The men of these memoirs worked for a company that was rooted deeply in the colonial rule of the Dutch Indies and can therefore also be seen as an important player when it comes to the colonial discourse and identity that the expatriates may or may not have adopted from their colonial predecessors.

⁸³ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 81.

3. Entering a Decolonizing World

Moving to Indonesia meant that the narrators of these memoirs and their families had to adjust to their new surroundings on different levels. It also meant transgressing from the societal norms and values of their homes to that of the foreign place. As Stoler states, for the women it meant that they were now living in a world that was defined *for* them, rather than *by* them.⁸⁴ They moved into a place where for European women, restrictions on their domestic, economic and political options were still rigid and more limiting than in metropolitan Europe itself: in sharp contrast to that of the European men in the colonies.⁸⁵ More specifically, the three families moved to Indonesia at an ambiguous time where Indonesia was in between colonization and independence. It was the time of the Indonesian National Revolution and this unquestionably impacted the way the expatriates could and had to shape their lives there. It is therefore not surprising that all three narrators discuss both these external (political) influences and the impact that living in Indonesia had on their social and private lives. By looking closely at what the three narrators say about these different aspects of their lives, differences and similarities between the three become clear and this can give us more insight into Dutch expatriate life in Indonesia. This chapter focuses on how Dutch expatriate life was after World War II in Indonesia. How do the Dutch expatriates in Indonesia reflect upon and conform to the ambivalent colonial surroundings they were living in, and how did this influence their agency and discourse? How did the narrators reflect on the political situation of Indonesia, life after World War II and on the increasingly anti-Dutch sentiments of the nation?

3.1 1945-1949: Moving to Indonesia after World War II

All three families moved to Indonesia only shortly after the end of World War II, and Mr Z was even given the responsibility to help rebuild the Shell refinery in Balikpapan that had been destroyed during the war.⁸⁶ Mr Y tells us the following about his first moments in Indonesia, which was in 1947:

⁸⁴ Ann Laura Stoler, 'Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia', in Micaela Di Leonardo (ed), *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1991) 52.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ On January 18th 1942 the Dutch began destroying their oil refineries on Balikpapan in a strategic move to prevent Japanese use of the oil wells. The first Japanese troops landed in Borneo (the island on which Balikpapan is situated) the following morning.

‘On my way to the *pasangrahan* [sic. Translates to ‘guest house’. Correct spelling: ‘*pesanggrahan*’], where a room had been reserved for me, [the head of human resources] told me everything about it. We passed the remnants of an old *trumble*, destroyed by its own people before the rapidly advancing Japanese could make good use of it. In that *pasangrahan*, temporarily in use as a shelter just after the war, I encountered multiple single new colleagues that were in the same boat as I, waiting to be reunited with their families. The new accommodation was kept as simple as possible because it was really meant to be temporary lodging to support the people who were there to rebuild the company. But everything we needed was there and for the meals we would go to the Hollandia Hotel (sounds more expensive than it was). It *was* more spacious, but also breathed the atmosphere of temporariness.

The next morning I went to my new office. A few nissen huts had been scrambled together and made useable for office work. The nissen huts belonged to the army. They were used in the war a lot by the allied forces.’⁸⁷

We see that Mr Y and his colleagues are still physically surrounded by the war. His choice of words draws an image of decay and simplicity: the remnants of destroyed buildings; shelters; rebuilding the company; temporariness; scrambled together nissen huts. A nissen hut is ‘a building shaped like a tube cut in half along the middle, made from corrugated iron sheets’.⁸⁸ The war therefore becomes a break in time: there was a time before the war and the time after the war in which only remnants of the ‘other’ time remain. This means that the Y’s enter a space that is not only in a temporally but also a physically different space than that of the colonials. One could argue that this could also give the expatriates an entirely different goal and experience in their time in Indonesia; they were not there to support and increase the colonial rule, but rather to rebuild it. I believe that this therefore formally means that these expatriates lived in a place that was no longer the colonial world, since this physically and politically no longer existed by the time they arrived in Indonesia. Instead, they lived in the earliest stages of the postcolonial world, and they reflect on their time in Indonesia more as

⁸⁷ ‘Onderweg naar de *pasangrahan*, waar een kamer voor me was gereserveerd, vertelde [het hoofd van personeelszaken] me er honderd uit over. We passeerden de restanten van een oude *trumble*, verwoest door de eigen mensen voordat de snel oprukkende Japanners er dankbaar gebruik van zouden gaan maken. In die *pasangrahan*, als tijdelijke opvang ingericht vlak na de oorlog, trof ik meerdere alleenstaande nieuwe collega’s die in hetzelfde schuitje zaten als ik, wachtend op gezinshereniging. De nieuwe accommodatie was zo simpel mogelijk gehouden en was echt bedoeld al seen voorlopig onderkomen om de mensen te kunnen opvangen die voor de wederopbouw van het bedrijf daar nodig waren. Maar alles was er en voor de maaltijden gingen we naar het Hollandia Hotel (klinkt duurder dan het was). Wél wat ruimer opgezet, maar ook de sfeer van tijdelijkheid ademend.

De volgende morgen naar mijn nieuwe kantoor. Daarvoor waren een paar Nissenhutten bij elkaar gepoot en bruikbaar gemaakt voor kantoorwerk. Die Nissenhutten waren afkomstig van het leger. Ze werden in de oorlog veel gebruikt door de geallieerde troepen.’

⁸⁸ ‘Nissen Hut Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary’:

<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/nissen-hut> (11-02-2016)

living in a nation that formerly belonged to the Netherlands but no longer as a colony of the Netherlands.

Mrs Z tells us the following about their move to Indonesia:

‘In August 1947 [my husband] left for Indonesia, to Pladju on Sumatra. The refinery there was starting to work again. (Maybe the factory also worked during the Japanese occupation? It wasn’t destroyed.) I stayed in Holland with the kids until January 1948. Then we flew to Djakarta, a journey that took two nights back then. Housing was scarce in Pladju too and the big houses were split into two. (That is to say: doors between the two parts were just locked...) Thereby leaving sounds so audible that it caused irritation at both sides. We had two lively boys and next to us lived a quiet couple. [My husband] asked Human Resources for another house which we got in *Bagoes Kuning* (that means: ‘pretty yellow’), in an neighbourhood that was not gated, about a kilometre outside of Pladju, but with its own guards. You reached it by going through the ‘*Ladang*’, a street through the *kampung* en past the Chinese shops. My eight-year-old son would bike to school, but sometimes people would throw mud at us. A bus frequently drove to Pladju. [My husband] worked mostly in the refinery and had to be at the laboratory a lot. Where still much was amiss (but: a laboratory had to be perfect)’⁸⁹

The image Mrs Z draws of their first house is far from luxurious. Particularly interesting is that she states that ‘people’ would sometimes throw mud at her son. This sentence most likely suggests that life outside the gates of Pladju was certainly not safe for them and that the mud throwing could very well be a discriminating act against her European son by the people living in the *kampung*. The fact that she does not give any further explanation implies that Mrs Z presumes her readers understand what she means: her audience is clearly expected to know that they, as a Dutch family, were discriminated against by the people living in the *kampung*.

3.2 1945-1949: From the Dutch East Indies to the Independent Republic of Indonesia

The Dutch expatriates feared that once Indonesia would become independent state – which in their eyes it still was not before 1949 – their servants would no longer want to work

⁸⁹ ‘In augustus 1947 vertrok [mijn man] naar Indonesië, naar Pladju op Sumatra. Daar was de raffinaderij weer op gang gekomen. (Misschien heeft die fabriek ook wel gewerkt tijdens de Japanse bezetting? Verwoest is hij niet geweest.) Ik bleef met de kinderen nog in Holland tot januari 1948. Toen vlogen we ook richting Djakarta, een reis met toen nog met twee overnachtingen tijdens de reis. Ook in Pladju waren huizen schaars en werden de grote huizen in tweeën gedeeld. (Dat wil zeggen: tussendeuren werden gewoon op slot gedaan...) Waardoor de geluiden zo hoorbaar bleven dat het irriteerde aan beide kanten. Wij hadden twee levendige jongens en naast ons woonde een rustig echtpaar. [Mijn man] vroeg bij personeelszaken om een ander huis en dat kregen we in Bagoes Kuning (dat betekent: ‘mooi geel’), een woonwijk zonder hek, zo’n kilometer buiten Pladju gelegen, maar wel met wachtpost. Je bereikte het door de ‘Ladang’, een straat door de kampong en langs chinese [sic] winkeltjes. Mijn zoon van acht fietste het wel naar school, maar werd soms met modder gegooid. Regelmatig reed er een busje naar Pladju. [Mijn man] werkte voornamelijk op de fabriek en kwam veel in het laboratorium. Waar nog veel niet in orde was (maar: een laboratorium moet perfect zijn)’

for them. This would obviously result major shifts in their societal power relations because they would no longer rule over the local population. Mr Y states:

‘For a short while, people thought that the Indonesians would no longer want to work for the Dutch after independence. But that turned out to be a wrong assumption of the company. They were very happy with their beautiful rooms at the *blakan* with their own showers. And when at one point there was tension between the Timorese and Buginese, they felt most safe behind our houses. The warring groups were not interested in us as Dutch. A nice bonus. What our servants did love was little [youngest daughter]’s white-blonde head of hair. Family members who visited them definitely had to see it, if they got the chance. Mum always noticed it when her mouth smelled of *dodol*, the famous Indonesian delicacy.’⁹⁰

Mr Y states here that this fear – expressed apparently not by the Dutch expatriates themselves, but rather by anonymous faces from ‘the company’ – did not turn into reality. In fact, Mr Y explains that the servants were happy to work for a Dutch family. It even seems that Mr Y argues that they took much better care of their servants than the Indonesian government could: they provided them with comfortable, hygienic and safe housing, something he would have the reader believe they could not find elsewhere. This could be seen as ‘proof’ for Mr Y that the boundaries set between his family and the local population could be maintained. Apparently the servants could also take pride in still being allowed to take care of Europeans, and could even ‘show off’ having a European child under their supervision, which can be seen as a reinforcement rather than a challenge of the boundary maintenance. Mr Y implies that being able to show to their own family that one was taking care of a European child was something for the servants proud of: proximity to Europeans accordingly still gave status despite the political situation at the time. What is also interesting to see is that this is one of the few times that either Mrs X or Mr Y make a distinction amongst the Indonesians, namely when Mr Y refers to the Timorese and the Buginese, referring to people from the Indonesian islands of Timor and South Sulawesi. This again shows that he is aware of the political situation he was in, and he reflects much more upon society in general than on his family life.

⁹⁰ ‘Er was even gedacht dat de Indonesiërs na de machtsoverdracht niet meer bij de Hollanders zouden willen werken. Maar dat bleek een verkeerde inschatting van de company. Ze waren maar wat blij met hun mooie kamers op de *blakan* (het achtererf) met eigen douche. En toen er op een gegeven moment spanningen waren tussen Timorezen en Bunginezen [sic], voelden ze zich het veiligst achter onze huizen. In ons als Hollanders waren die strijdende groepen niet geïnteresseerd. Mooi meegenomen dus. Wat onze bedienden wel prachtig vonden was de witblonde pruikbol van de kleine [meid]. Dat moesten familieleden die op bezoek kwamen bij hen, wel zien als ze de kans kregen. Ma merkte het als ze weer uit haar mondje naar *dodol* rook, de bekende Indonesische zoetigheid. [Onze oudste dochter] ging toen elke morgen met de bus naar de kleuterschool bij de nonnen. Wel akelig was dat ze in die periode van ethnische strijd soms thuiskwamen met verhalen van slachtoffers die daar ’s nachts waren achtergelaten. Maar je merkte: een blijvende herinnering heeft dat niet op haar gemaakt. Naar onze inschatting tenminste.’

This is very different compared to Mrs X who sticks to general claims about ‘natives’ or ‘Indonesians’ as an entity.

Restrictions were also economic, as Mr Y tells us:

‘One day, suddenly, the Indonesian government commanded us – subjects to the government – to cut our banknotes in two (!) Almost all the money was paper money, even 1 roepia [the Indonesian currency]! The right side was now worth half as much for us, and the left side we had to save and this would be disbursed to us in 40 years... But it would be better if we donated this left side to an association or church! We luckily only had a few banknotes at home, but for the merchants and the chinese [sic] shop owners it must have been a disaster. We have never heard or read anywhere about any of this money ever being paid back by the Indonesian government after 40 years.’⁹¹

The word that jumps out here is ‘subjects’ (in the original Dutch text noted as ‘onderdanen’); Mr Y places himself and his family below the Indonesian government, but in hindsight, and arguably with a somewhat ironic tone. He shows us how the Indonesian government forced them, the subjects, to be submissive to them, but does so through the example of something that he clearly thinks is ridiculous and unjust. However, with this term, he does not only refer to the Dutch, but to all citizens of Indonesia. By doing so he places himself in the same category as the Chinese shop owners, his servants and his neighbours. However, a few sentences on he states that he considers himself lucky because he only had a few banknotes at home, and he shows pity for the merchants and Chinese shop owners. By showing pity for these people, Mr Y once again goes back to distancing himself from them, saying they were better off. We see distinctions still being made between the different ‘submissive’ groups of the Indonesian government, and that the Dutch were, according to him, better off than – or even superior to – the Chinese. Another interesting point Mr Y makes in this citation is that it would have been ‘better’ if they had donated the left side of the banknotes to an association or a church. It does not become clear if this is his personal opinion or that of the government, but his sentence structure leans towards the latter. This calls for some questions: which associations would have been good to donate to, would these be Dutch or Indonesian? And why would it be good to donate to a church, and not a mosque in this Muslim country? Was this something that the Dutch discussed amongst each other? The answer for this family is most likely that Christianity was an important part of their identity and therefore an institution

⁹¹ ‘Op een dag, zomaar, beval de Indonesische regering ons – onderdanen – om onze bankbiljetten in tweeën te knippen (!) Bijna al het geld was papiergeld, ook 1 roepia! De rechterhelft had nu voortaan de halve waarde voor ons, de linkerhelft moesten we bewaren en zou over 40 jaar aan ons uitbetaald worden... Maar we deden er beter aan die linkerhelft aan een vereniging of kerk te geven! Wij hadden gelukkig maar een paar biljetten in huis, maar voor de handelaars en voor de chinese [sic] winkeliers moet het een ramp geweest zijn. We hebben nooit gehoord of gelezen of 40 jaar later nog iets is terugbetaald door de Indonesische regering.’

close to their hearts. Donating money to the church would therefore be a logical step since it would keep their earned money within the spheres of their own identity and in a sense ‘close’ to themselves. This therefore emphasizes again the significant role that religion could play in the lives of the expatriates.

As for the X family, they also came across dubious economic occurrences. Whilst she does not tell us about any banknotes being cut into two, she does tell us about the rather flexible exchange rates used locally:

‘For us there was also something else: our salary would be transferred in Dutch guilders to our ‘bankroll’ that was maintained at the office. There, the currency rate with the roepiah was officially 1 to 3. But you could also trade with items from the ‘toko’ (that was only accessible for employees). And there was a lot you could buy there, and with those items you could easily trade with the Chinese shop owners at the ‘*Ladang*’ (a little ‘outside of the gate’). In all of Indonesia there were shortages of everything; that’s why the chinese [sic] really liked to buy from us: tobacco, baby powder, and brandy (of this we could only buy 1 bottle per month). But the exchange rate at the ‘*Ladang*’ was rather different: 1 to 4, 1 to 9 or for brandy even 1 to 12! That was generally done: it was an acceptable way of obtaining roepiahs and to pay the servants with. No one took their salary from the bank. I think only [my husband] did. He resented this whole thing: working for Shell and then messing with tobacco... he didn’t want to take part in it. I spoke to a bachelor and he said: ‘I now have 100.000, and I will soon stay in Holland.’ You could also trade with the Chinese in Holland by transferring money to them; you would then get the roepiahs here. But because we did not partake in any of this we were poor when we moved back to Holland (believe it or not) Only our organ came back with us!’⁹²

Outside of the safe, gated community of the Dutch, lies the *ladang*, a lawless place of corruption – if we are to believe Mrs X. The term ‘ladang’ itself actually simply translates to ‘field’. It again shows how she has made the country she was living in part of her discourse, yet at the same time she uses it here to construct a difference between the proper Dutch world within the gates, and the dangerous and corrupt world outside them. She subsequently tells us that it was commonly accepted amongst her fellow residents within the gates to trade goods at

⁹² ‘Voor ons kwam daar nog iets bij: ons salaris werd, in Hollandse guldens, overgeschreven naar ons ‘banktegoed’, dat op het kantoor werd bijgehouden. Daar was de koers met de roepiah officieel 1 op 3. Maar je kon ook handelen met artikelen uit de ‘toko’ (die alleen voor de employees toegankelijk was). Er was daar veel te koop, en met die artikelen kon je goed verhandelen bij de Chinese winkeliers op de ‘Ladang’ (even ‘buiten het hek’). In heel Indonesië was een tekort aan alles; daarom kochten de chinezen [sic] graag van ons: shag, babypoeder, ook cognac (van dit laatste mochten we per maand 1 fles kopen). Maar de koers op de ‘Ladang’ lag wel even anders: 1 op 4, 1 op 9 of voor cognac zelfs 1 op 12! Dat werd algemeen gedaan; het was een gangbare manier om aan roepiahs te komen en de bedienden mee te betalen. Niemand nam zijn salaris op van de bank. Ik denk alleen Ben. Dit hele gedoe stond hem tegen: werken voor Shell en dan rommelen met shag... hij wilde er niet aan meedoen. Ik sprak een vrijgezel en die vertelde: ‘ik heb nu 100.000 binnen, en blijf straks in Holland.’ Ook kon je met Chinezen in Holland handelen door daar geld naar over te maken; de roepiahs kreeg je dan hier. Maar door daar niet aan mee te doen waren we arm toen we naar Holland teruggingen (geloof het of niet) Alleen ons orgel ging mee terug!’

the ladang, and that they were the only ‘honest’ and ‘good’ people there, because they simply took their salary from the bank. She draws a picture of herself and her husband as victims and resisters of a system implemented into their society against their will. The fact that they returned to Holland as poor people, is something that is clearly unexpected for her and her audience, as we can tell by her ‘believe it or not’. Perhaps they were much better off at the time of writing this memoire, but most likely it also reflects upon the image of wealthy Dutch people living in the Indies; as expatriates, they were supposed to be of (upper) middle class and well provisioned. Instead, they came back poor, with only their organ: a religious item that symbolises the importance of their Protestant faith. The only thing this family had left, according to Mrs X, was their religion. This shows us that similarly to the Y family, Christianity formed an important aspect of their identity. In the end, it was quite literally all they had left. The organ can therefore be seen as a symbol of the political situation they found themselves in. They were stripped of all their possessions except the religious item, meaning that when they returned to the Netherlands they no longer owned any objects that could represent them as former expatriates from the colonies but only as people who had lost almost everything except their religion. This in turn also shows us how Mr and Mrs X had lost the powerful position they had in Indonesia in the beginning and how decolonization forced them into poverty.

As we can see, both the X and Y family transition into a state of estrangement from the nation-state they are in. Mrs X even, quite poetically, says:

‘It [the increasing social and political tension] certainly did not make our stay in Indonesia any nicer. If you would walk through Palembang (to visit the hairdresser) then Indonesians would spit right in front of your feet. We had always felt nice and safe on Curaçao, that was ‘our’ soil. But this was becoming ‘foreign’ land for us Dutch.’⁹³

I found this passage to be so all-encompassing of some of the feelings these expatriates describe of living in a foreign country that is no longer under Dutch colonial rule that I decided to incorporate it into the title of this thesis. Mrs X tells us that Curaçao, another Dutch colony still under Dutch ruling nowadays and back then, felt like part of her national identity (‘our’ soil; ‘us Dutch’) and that Indonesia used to as well, but no longer did. This, I feel, is one of the most personal but also accurate descriptions she gives us of the ambiguous period she was living in. It is ambiguous because we see that social and political power is shifting: the local population is publicly showing signs of disapproval towards the Dutch. The

⁹³ ‘Ons verblijf in Indonesië werd er niet gezelliger op. Liep je in Palembang (bezoek aan de kapper) dan werd er door Indonesiërs gespuugd vlak voor je voeten. We voelden ons op Curaçao altijd veilig en prettig; dat was ‘eigen’ bodem. Maar dit werd ‘vreemd’ land voor ons, Nederlanders.’

national identity of the expatriates is now working against them. Spitting in front of the feet of the Dutch is an act that crossed all the European ideas of hygienic boundaries: the Indonesian population breaks the *cordon sanitaire*. The colonial Dutch rule over the Indonesians is changing through acts of rebellion such as spitting, and with that, the narrator feels that the earth underneath her feet is changing. She no longer feels the respect that she believes ought to be given by the local population. It must be noted, however, that the narrator of course writes this from a modern perspective. She felt that Dutch 'ownership' over Indonesia was decreasing, but we cannot be sure from this text if that is also how she felt at the time. This is a good example where we see the discourse of narrative possibly being different to the discourse of production.

Another interesting example that Mrs Z gives us of the political tensions between the Dutch and Indonesian officials at the time is the following:

'I made a little tent for the children to play in, for in the garden. We had a nice garden, even though the grass was not as soft as in Holland. It was January 26th, the birthday of our son, and as camping tents were supposed to look: I put a little flag on it. Very realistic, but: red, white and blue. Stupid, because you obviously could not do that anymore after the transmission! An Indonesian soldier, with Sten gun, walked towards it furiously. 'Bandera' (= flag) he yelled, and the flag had to go... Ben was taken to the police station (which was at the Shell terrain) ... he was there for two hours. A few hours later I also had to come to the station. In Pladju this was later referred to as: the 'flag incidence'.⁹⁴

Similarly to Mrs X and her organ, we see that Mrs Z uses this incident involving a Dutch flag as a symbol for the increasing Indonesian resistance against the Dutch boundaries between the two. She discusses the issue as if it were an innocent mishap on her behalf and the question remains of course how aware Mrs Z was of the fact that she was resisting increasing Indonesian power against the Dutch. One can assume that she knew very well what she was doing and that she knew that presenting a Dutch flag would cause tension with the local Indonesian officials. We can therefore argue that this was in fact a very clear sign of rebellion by Mrs Z and an attempt at boundary maintenance and regaining power.

3.3 1945 Onwards: Life in an Increasingly Anti-Dutch Indonesia

How did the growing resentment towards the Dutch impact the lives of the expatriate families in Indonesia? The narrators felt it not only in their immediate surroundings, as Mrs X has shown us for example in the previous paragraph. The Indonesian government also started

⁹⁴ Italics as used by narrator.

applying laws that restricted items that were considered typically Dutch, as we see from an example given by Mr Y:

‘The situation in Indonesia [in 1958] became more difficult for the Dutch. We were not allowed to read Dutch newspapers anymore, even the Donald Duck magazine was banned. ... The Indonesian government was very anti-Dutch at the time.’⁹⁵

Any references to Dutch culture were banned: as the narrator states, even the popular children’s magazine Donald Duck was not allowed in Indonesia anymore. This is something that continued to occur well into the latter half of the twentieth century, when for example the movie version of Max Havelaar was banned.⁹⁶ It is also interesting that the narrator explicitly mentions the Donald Duck magazine as an example of Dutch items that were banned by the Indonesian government. The magazine was, and still is, the most popular children’s magazine in the Netherlands and can therefore be commonly associated with typical Dutchness.⁹⁷ It being a magazine for children also gives it this sense of innocence, and as the narrator implies this makes it all the more strange and unnecessary for the Indonesian government to ban such an item.

The Dutch expatriates were very well aware of the changing political situation of Indonesia after the war, and particularly its growing resentment towards the Dutch. In this sense, they were very well aware that at least to the Indonesian government, the expatriates were no different than the colonials, missionaries or any other Dutch person. One could assume that the transfer of sovereignty on December 27th 1949 was a pivotal point for the Dutch in Indonesia. Mr Y moved to Indonesia mid-1949 and were temporarily living in a Dutch hotel (Hotel Hollandia), tells us about the new years eve of 1949 into 1950:

‘[After the first few months] there was some tension, because the transfer of sovereignty took place and the old Dutch East Indies became the new Indonesia. After all the bickering, negotiations and even police actions that had preceded, the Netherlands recognised Republic of Indonesia that was proclaimed by Soekarno and Mohammed Hatta in 1945. It is sad that lives were lost for this, but the time of colonialism had come to an end. This was not only the case for the Netherlands, but in fact for all countries that still had colonial rule before the war. The then still present Dutch authorities in Balikpapan and Shell too were scared that this transfer would be accompanied with disturbances. Extra alertness was necessary. We therefore guarded our hotel residences with several men that New Year’s Eve. Dad too with that gun, which he didn’t

⁹⁵ ‘De toestand in Ind. [in 1958] begon voor de Hollanders moeilijk te worden. We mochten geen Hollandse kranten meer lezen, zelfs de Donald Duck was verboden. ... De Ind. regering was toen sterk anti-Hollands.’

⁹⁶ The movie ‘Max Havelaar’ is based on Multatuli’s book of the same name. It portrays the corrupt and exploitive practices of the local gentry within the Dutch colonial system during the time of Dutch colonial ruling. See: Carmel Budiardjo, ‘Dutch Film Banned’ in *Index on Censorship* 7.2 (1978) 52.

⁹⁷ <http://www.hoi-online.nl/878458/HOI-Harde-Cijfers-2012.pdf?v=0> (11-06-2015)

actually really know what do with in case of an emergency. But thankfully that turned out not to be necessary. The local Indonesians took the whole transition for granted, it seemed.’⁹⁸

What we see here is a narrator who is clearly reflecting upon this period of time with everything he now knows in the back of his mind: this is where we clearly see that this piece of writing is a memoir and not a diary. He talks about the situation in hindsight, knowing what he knows now, and it would have been interesting to see what his thoughts were on this situation when it was happening. For example, when he states that ‘it is sad that lives were lost for this, but colonialism had to come to an end’. Is this really what he thought back in 1947 as well? And who’s lost lives is he talking about: only the Indonesians or also the Dutch? He exudes calmness as he swiftly flies through this period of political and social unrest that he and his family most likely experienced differently back in the day. Mr Y also tells us that they were scared for social repercussions after ‘the old Dutch East Indies became the new Indonesia’ but we also almost immediately see him downplay this fear as he says that ‘The local Indonesians took the whole transition for granted, it seemed.’ Again, this is what he tells us in hindsight, and it raises questions about what he truly thought of the situation back then.

3.4 Analysis

The narrators of these memoirs lived in a space that was physically and temporally different to that of their colonial predecessors. World War II had changed it physically: buildings were destroyed, housing and food was scarce and the refineries had to be rebuilt or restarted again. The narrators emphasize that there was little luxury for them in Indonesia at the time and life was sober. They also discuss experiencing discrimination against them: locals would throw mud at their children or spit in front of their feet. This shows us that social boundaries were changing and boundary maintenance was no longer only in hands of the Dutch. The agency of the Dutch expatriates was constantly shifting since they were no longer dominant over the local population. The narrators felt very strongly that the space they were

⁹⁸ ‘[Na de eerste maanden] was er even spanning, omdat de soevereiniteitsoverdracht plaats vond en het oude Nederlandsch Indië het nieuwe Indonesië werd. Na alle geharrewar, onderhandelingen en zelfs politieke acties die daaraan vooraf gegaan waren, erkende Nederland de al in 1945 door Soekarno en Mohammed Hatta uitgeroepen Republiek Indonesië. Triest was dat daarvoor levens verloren waren gegaan, maar de tijd van het kolonialisme was aan haar einde gekomen. Dat was niet alleen het geval voor Nederland, maar in feite voor alle landen die vóór de oorlog het beheer hadden over koloniën. De toen nog aanwezige Nederlandse autoriteiten in Balikpapan en ook Shell waren bang dat deze overdracht met ongeregeldeheden gepaard zou kunnen gaan. Extra waakzaamheid geboden dus. Met enkele mannen van onze hotel-woningen liepen we daarom de wacht in die oudejaarsnacht. Pa ook met dat geweer, waarmee hij eigenlijk niet goed wist wat te doen in geval van nood. Maar dat bleek gelukkig niet nodig te zijn. De Indonesiërs ter plaatse namen die hele overgang voor kennisgeving aan, leek het.’

in was changing: common ground became foreign soil. Their 'typically Dutch' items such as newspapers became symbolic for the increasingly anti-Dutch attitude that they felt was spreading throughout Indonesian officials and civilians. We see the narrators use different aspects of their identity to prove or explain certain situations: sometimes their national identity is more important and other times their identity as a company employee is more important. For two of the narrators, religion plays a key role in their identity and they felt that at the end of their time in Indonesia their Christianity was one of the few things they had left. This all shows us the ambiguity of the times they were living in: a period that was no longer completely colonial, but not postcolonial yet either. Indonesia was neither part of the Netherlands anymore, nor was it a completely sovereign nation yet. This meant that social boundaries were shifting and often blurry: the expatriates felt that it was not always clear what they could expect from the local population. This left them with questions such as whether their servants would still want to work for them and negative experiences such as mud-throwing and being spat at. If we compare these experiences to what we know about European dominance over the colonized, we see that these boundary shifts are very significant. If the expatriates could no longer reinforce their dominance over the colonized because these colonized were presenting acts of rebellion, how could they sustain their colonial power? This change in power is what arguably separates the expatriates from their colonial predecessors the most and also shows us that in hindsight, the narrators certainly entered a space that was both physically and temporally significantly different to that of the colonial period.

4. Defining a Female Identity in the Expatriate Community

The women that joined their husbands on their journeys as expatriates for Shell found themselves with an identity that was presented as much flatter than back in the Netherlands. They were labeled as ‘Shell wives’ and their formal tasks were only to take care of their husband, children and household, and to control their servants. What I aim to analyze in this chapter is whether this can be said for the Dutch expatriates in Indonesia too and if the expatriate women experienced racial and social cleavages between themselves and the men in their communities. This chapter focuses on the public lives of the expatriates and how the women positioned themselves within their communities and maintained boundaries with the local population. How do the women in these memoirs show their layered identities? The main question that I aim to answer in this chapter is: how do the narrators of these memoirs negotiate their agency and their ambivalent position in their Dutch expatriate community in Indonesia?

4.1 Travelling to a New Life in Indonesia

When did the new lives of these expatriates begin? When they set foot on Indonesian soil, when they entered the planes or boats taking them there, or when they first found out they would be moving and started their preparations? If the expatriates did indeed experience different cleavages of racial and social dominance and distinctions in Indonesia than they did in the Netherlands, there could have been a point in time when they see these changes happening. Mr Y, for example, tells us about the separate journeys of himself and his wife and children to Indonesia:

‘The airplane had several mothers with children on board, not only Shell people, because many companies that worked in Indonesia knew the problem of family men who had started alone and had to be reunited with their families. That also meant – as mum liked to emphasize – that her journey was very different than that of mine; me, with my briefcase, surrounded by mostly ‘important men’, pampered by compassionate stewardesses. Her with [our daughter] in a chair next to her and [our son] in a carrycot in front of her feet’.⁹⁹

The Y’s appear to be very aware of the distinction made by the companies between the male expatriates and the wives; how do they Y’s make this clear? To Mr Y, this distinction is

⁹⁹ ‘Het vliegtuig had meerdere moeders met kinderen aan boord, niet alleen Shell mensen, want veel maatschappijen die in Indonesië werkten kenden hetzelfde probleem van alleen gestartte [sic] huisvaders die met hun gezin herenigd moesten worden. Het hield ook in – zoals ma graag benadrukte – dat het een andere reis werd dan die van mij; ik met m’n actetasje tussen overwegend “belangrijke mannen”, vertroeteld door meelevende stewardessen. Zij met [onze dochter] in een stoel naast zich en [onze zoon] in de reiswieg voor haar voeten.’

clearly something that bothered Mrs Y and that she feels her husband should know too. Can this be considered a form of resistance to the system of male superiority that they found themselves in? In this passage, all females mentioned are in the roles of caretakers (the pampering stewardesses and the caring mother) and the males are the ones being taken care of. Mr Y attempts to place himself outside of this group of ‘important men’ through the use of quotation marks, but this attempt seems destined to fail since he is as much part of the male dominant system with his briefcase and the pampering stewardesses as any other male on that plane. We again see how the discourse of production and the discourse of narration seem to differ from each other. The system of divide between the expatriate men, who were sent out first to ‘get settled’, and their wives and children who were sent out to join them several weeks later, was strongly embedded into the expatriate life. The women were sent out as housewives, giving them a prescribed, flat identity which raises the question of how much space they were given to move around within this prescribed identity. We see that the Y’s were aware of the male superiority amongst the expatriate families because they highlight the fact that the men were given a more luxurious treatment during their journey than the women. Nevertheless, they were as much part of the system as any other expatriate husband or wife and therefore I would argue that their resistance towards it was still very limited.

4.2 (Re)Building a Communal Life After World War II

The three expatriate families arrived in Indonesia in respectively in 1945 and 1947: (very) shortly after the end of World War II and during the political unrest in Indonesia between 1945 and 1949. Resources were scarce in both the Netherlands and Indonesia and for the expatriates it meant that none of them were initially able to buy their own food, which was instead provided by their companies. Mrs X explains:

‘In the beginning [in 1948] there was nothing to buy in Pladju. Shell bought food in bulk and every day, all families would receive a big wooden crate without a cover at home. This crate consisted of: half a loaf of bread, butter, spreads, a warm meal and fruit. Sometimes the soup would have spilled over the bread and it would become a mess. It wasn’t always nice, but most people had gone through the war and weren’t used to having much. We had always been privileged because we lived on Curacao at that time, where we could get everything from America. In the beginning we didn’t like Indonesia, but later we did, when the situation started improving. When the Shell *toko*’s supplies improved, we could decide ourselves what we wanted to eat. Gradually we could also buy more at the *pasar* (market). I would bike there, had

one bike seat in front for [our daughter], one on the back for [our son] and shopping bags hanging from both sides of the handlebars.¹⁰⁰

Mrs X talks about ‘people’ and ‘the war’ without explaining what she means by these terms. We can assume that with ‘people’ she is in fact referring to the Dutch who had survived World War II, and ‘the war’ being World War II, which had just ended. In the following sentence, where she tells us that they lived in Curaçao during World War II, she emphasizes how privileged she and her family felt. Their expatriate status meant that they did not have to stay in the Netherlands during the war, and instead they could live a comfortable life with an abundance of goods surrounding them. Being expatriate therefore denotes a sense of privilege here. Moving to Indonesia also meant leaving behind the comforts of being in close proximity to the United States of America, and moving into a place that was recovering from a very heavy period of war and unrest - and arguably in the midst of a new war. This also meant that their move to Indonesia meant that forced the family to react upon the political situation they now found themselves in. Mrs X subsequently states that at first she and her family did not like Indonesia, but that later, when ‘the situation started improving’, it did. What was this improving ‘situation’ she was talking about? There were certainly no political or social improvements for the Dutch, as the Indonesian government started to become increasingly anti-Dutch. The economic situation improved slightly, as she continues to explain. However, we do see in her language that she started to feel a sense of comfort and ownership of Indonesia. She uses Indonesian terms when talking about the Shell *toko* and the *pasar*. Particularly the latter one I find significant, because she even gives the original translation of this herself. In this passage, she uses Indonesian terms when she describes how she grew closer to the country, which in turn allowed for her to become more free. She paints a very Dutch image of herself with two kids and two grocery bags on a bike. In this example we see that Mrs X feels that portraying this almost stereotypical image of Dutchness, with her children and groceries on her bike, is valid because it was her claim to being independent; it signifies her transmission from being a captive of the company who could not even choose what to eat to a free woman who could make her own decisions. She also shows us that she

¹⁰⁰ ‘In ’t begin [in 1948] was er in Pladju niets te koop. De Shell kocht in grote hoeveelheden in en iedere familie kreeg elke dag een grote platte houten kist zonder deksel thuisbezorgd. Daar zat dan in: een half brood, boter, beleg, een warme maaltijd en fruit. Soms echter was er soep gemorst over het brood en was het maar troep. Het was niet altijd even lekker, maar de meeste mensen hadden de oorlog meegemaakt en waren niet veel gewend. Wij waren bevoorrecht geweest dat we in die tijd op Curaçao hadden gewoond, waar we alles uit Amerika konden krijgen. In ’t begin vonden we Ind. dan ook niet fijn, maar later wel toen de toestanden wat beter werden. Toen de Shell-toko wat beter bevoorrad was, konden we zelf uitzoeken wat we wilden eten. Langzamerhand konden we ook meer kopen op de Pasar (markt). Ik ging daar dan op de fiets naar toe, had een fietsstoeltje vóór met Norma erin, een fietsstoeltje achter voor Bob en aan elke kant van het stuur een boodschappentas.’

was certainly not a stereotypical privileged housewife. This shows us that similar texts, namely being a representation of excessive Dutchness (either by being a proper Dutch housewife or by being a mother on a bicycle) can make for different arguments that can signify either something positive or something negative.

As for the food supplies by the companies, Mr Y tells an almost identical story of crates of food:

‘[Your] Mum would make sure that everything went smoothly at home and with the children. And then... food was delivered daily by a man from the company, ample amounts for both the family and the servants. The *CIVO toko* sold everything else we needed. Conclusion: for us the remnants of the war were no longer noticeable, even though Holland was not that far along yet. We felt *senang*! Even *senang, senang sadja*!’¹⁰¹

Mrs X makes no mention of the servants or how they got their food. Mr Y, on the other hand, does not explicitly name which items were in the crate like Mrs X does. This shows us that the two narrators clearly give different levels of importance to the way they got their food. Mrs X implicitly presents herself more as a caretaker, focusing on family life and her role as the mother of the family. Mr Y only refers to the public domain: to life in general which was good, according to him. He did not feel that they were missing anything in their lives, it was all either in the crates or at the *toko*. It seems quite strange that he even says that ‘remnants of the war were no longer noticeable’ (referring to World War II) while they were still receiving their food in crates because of the scarcity in supplies caused by World War II. However, this is perhaps also because he is talking about the past in hindsight and it would have been interesting to hear what he thought about this back in the day. Would his wife also agree with him that they felt *senang* at the time? The feeling of *senang* in itself is very interesting: *senang*, which means as much as feeling comfortable and satisfied, is an Indonesian word that had become so common in the East Indies that it found its way over to the Netherlands, and is still used in modern Dutch nowadays. During the latter colonial periods, when ‘proper’ family life began to play a key role in the lives of the Dutch colonials in the East Indies, it became the role of the women to provide leisure, good spirit and comfort and a preference was created for the recruitment of men with families so that these men could feel *senang* and ‘at home’.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ ‘Ma zorgde dat thuis en met de kinders alles op rolletjes liep. En dan... voedsel werd dagelijks gebracht door een man van de company, in ruim voldoende hoeveelheid voor gezien én bedienden. De *CIVO toko* verkocht alles wat we verder nog nodig hadden. Conclusie: voor ons waren de gevolgen van de oorlog niet langer merkbaar, ook al was het in Holland nog niet zover. We hadden vriendschappelijke contacten met collega’s. We voelden ons *senang*! Zelfs *senang, senang sadja*!’

¹⁰² Laura Ann Stoler, *Capitalism and Confrontation in Sumatra’s Plantation Belt, 1870-1979* (New Haven 1985) 42-44.

This much like the recruitment of expatriate men with families, who as Mr. Y shows us, particularly enjoyed feeling *senang* too.

Mr Y continues with the following statement about the *toko*:

‘A good thing about our new situation was that in the Shell shop (the *CIVO*) there was so much more you could buy than in Holland. This made it possible to send home items such as bath towels, which made mum very happy because they were not available there yet.’¹⁰³

His male perspective on the situation is interesting: again, we hear his positivity about that is less apparent amongst the female narrators. According to Mr Y, his wife was happy that supplies were easier to come by in Indonesia than in the Netherlands. What we also see is that again, he speaks on behalf of his wife, leaving us to wonder: what would she have said about this situation? How would she have described having food crates delivered to her house and having to buy all her household supplies from one company-owned shop? Did she also feel this was better than back in the Netherlands, or would she perhaps have offered us some different insights?

The working life of the expatriate men in these memoirs is something their wives generally had little to do with, if we see what Mrs Z says about this:

‘Something like that [how the refinery works] is somewhat interesting to hear, but other than that all that ‘*oil fuss*’ wasn’t really exciting for the women. We could make a tour around the area and saw all the installations (but not a drip of oil of course!) [My husband] told me very little about his work; only that he ‘made gasoline’. With 1% lead, that was necessary. (But when I refuel my car nowadays, it is unleaded...) After that he kept himself occupied with bitumen.’¹⁰⁴

This passage reveals quite a lot about Mrs Z perception on her husband's work, but perhaps even more interestingly on her own perceptions in regard to it. She states that 'all that '*oil fuss*' wasn't really exciting for the women'. Why would Mrs Z feel inclined to make such a sweeping statement? As she continues, it becomes clear that Mr Z also emphasized this divide between himself and his wife by telling her very little about his job. By saying that he only 'made gasoline', he mystifies his daily work and as a result the time he spends at the refinery becomes a very abstract concept to Mrs Z. This in itself could signify that the Z couple felt they had very specific roles within their marriage and did not feel any desire to enquire upon

¹⁰³ ‘Winst was in de nieuwe situatie dat er in de Shell winkel (de *CIVO*) zoveel meer te koop was dan in Holland. Het was me dus mogelijk om zoiets als badhanddoeken naar huis te sturen, waar ma heel blij mee was omdat deze bij haar nog niet te krijgen waren.’

¹⁰⁴ ‘Zoiets [hoe de raffinaderij werkt] is nog wel interessant om te horen, maar verder was er voor vrouwen aan dat ‘olie-gedoe’ niet zoveel leuk te beleven. We mochten een ritje maken over het terrein en zagen de installaties (Maar geen druppel olie natuurlijk!) Ben vertelde weinig over zijn werk; alleen dat hij ‘benzine maakte’. Met 1% lood, dat moest. (Maar als ik nu benzine tank, dan is dat loodvrij...) Daarna hield hij zich bezig met bitumen.’

each other's separate tasks within the expatriate community. Mr Z simply fulfilled his duty as a male member, and Mrs Z hers as a female member. Could these attitudes towards each other's gendered tasks confirm Stoler's idea that proper colonial living, and in this case, proper expatriate living, meant hard work for the men and a focus on (heightened) domesticity for the women?

4.3 Experiencing Indonesia

Moving to Indonesia meant moving into the world of the exotic tropics. In the narrators' descriptions of Indonesia we clearly see strong imagery of exoticness. Mrs Z describes Pladju as follows:

*'Bagoes Kuning was a neighbourhood located at the Musi river, a river full of crocodiles... in Pladju there were: a hospital, a doctor's office, the 'soos', the 'toko', a swimming pool and the fun. There was also a little 'Pasar', a (roofed) market, with vegetables.'*¹⁰⁵

Mrs Z uses the Indonesian word for 'market', most likely to emphasize that this market was significantly different to those found back home. In general, there seems to be an unspoken emphasis on the foreignness of Pladju using words that were uncommon in Dutch life in the Netherlands: the *soos* (although this is a Dutch word, the concept of a *soos* was more common to communities living abroad such as this one), the *toko* (shop) and the aforementioned *pasar*. This description of Pladju also shows us that Shell had transformed the town into a largely self-sufficient place where their employees could find everything they needed in daily life. In fact, Shell even provided its employees with its own hotel for domestic holidays, as Mrs X tells us:

*'Every year we could go on a two week domestic holiday. That was lovely. The first time we went to Brastagi, a lovely place. [Our son and daughter] joined us. There was a hotel there especially for the Shell people, with a swimming pool and a tennis court.'*¹⁰⁶

Just like at home, swimming was an important leisure activity. It was an easy way to cool off in the hot tropics and provided entertainment for the whole family. When describing these places, we see both Mrs Z and Mrs X use positive terms: the towns were 'lovely', you could find 'the fun' there and all the basics one needed for proper health and leisure. This shows us that Shell in fact provided their employees with everything Stoler says was necessary for 'proper' colonial life. This way, the husbands could work hard and find good comfort at

¹⁰⁵ 'Bagoes Kuning was alleen een woonwijk aan de Musi (spreek uit: 'moesi'), een rivier vol krokodillen... In Pladju waren: het ziekenhuis, de dokterskamer, de 'soos', de 'toko', het zwembad en de gezelligheid. Ook een kleine 'Pasar', een (overdekte) markt, met groente.'

¹⁰⁶ 'Elk jaar mochten we 2 weken met binnenlands verlof. Dat was heerlijk. De 1e keer gingen we naar Brastagi, een heerlijk oord. [Onze zoon en dochter] gingen mee. Er was daar een hotel, speciaal voor Shell mensen met een zwembad en een tennisbaan erbij.'

home, which was provided by their wives with support of the company. In the next chapter, I will look further into the daily lives of the expatriate families and how their households were run during their time in Indonesia.

4.4 Daily life in Indonesia

The two female narrators of the memoirs both give extensive descriptions of daily life in Indonesia; something the male narrator does not. They discuss topics such as social life, religion, daytime activities and hygiene. While the men were kept busy by their jobs at the refineries, the women struggled with filling their days with activities other than taking care of the children, the house and the servants. The children of the expatriate families lived with their parents until the age of 12 because the Dutch communities only had primary schools. Stoler states that in the Dutch East Indies, 'it was deemed imperative to send them back to Holland to avoid "precocity" associated with the tropics and the "danger" of contact with *Indische* youths not from "full-blooded European elements".¹¹⁰⁷ This trend clearly continued among the Dutch expatriate communities in Indonesia at the time, where, once the children were of middle school age, they would always be sent back to the Netherlands to attend a boarding school there. As for the X family, their eldest son had finished primary school in 1955 and accordingly moved to The Hague to attend a boarding school there. The X family lived in Indonesia the longest and although this situation did not take place between 1945 and 1949, I felt it was still relevant to discuss in this thesis. Mrs X tells the reader how terrible this made her feel, but that it was their only option. By stating that this was their only option, she automatically also states that sending her son to a local school was not in any way an option. Could this be because of the same argument of precocity as her colonial predecessors? Two years later, in 1957, the son was allowed to come over to Indonesia for a holiday. Mrs X tells us how as a young boy he disliked eating *rijsttafel*, but that he now loved it. She also tells us how she filled the days with her family during this holiday:

‘When [our son] was here I would take the children swimming every day, and we once also went to Prapamoeli, and we did a boat tour over the Moesi river.

We did a lot of sports in Pladju. I would also go play golf with [our son], but I wasn't very fond of the golf "club". After golfing, a lot of the golf players would go drinking and hang around the bar and that was not something I liked. I thought the game itself was alright. A funny side issue was that the monkeys in the trees would observe us and if they got the chance, they would steal our balls and disappear into the trees with them.

¹¹⁰⁷ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 84.

We joined the rowing club. [My husband] used to row back in Holland and I started in Holland too. Now that I was taking rowing lessons and I had taken my rowing test, I started giving rowing lessons myself. First dry rowing in the tank and later in the Moesi river.’¹⁰⁸

Mrs X's emphasis on sports is interesting when comparing it to Stoler's statement that ‘Guides to colonial living in the 1920’s and 1930’s reveal [a] marked shift in outlook; Dutch, French, and British doctors now denounced the unhealthy, indolent lifestyles of “old colonials,” extolling the energetic and engaged activities of the new breed of colonial husband and wife.’¹⁰⁹ Although Mrs X's story takes place some thirty years later than the period Stoler is discussing, she agrees with these guides of her ‘new breed’ colonial predecessors that a healthy lifestyle was important, even condemning her fellow expatriates who preferred to go out drinking after their physical activities. Moreover, we see that sports gave Mrs X a kind of freedom and even agency: she could become a rowing teacher, and even though this was a volunteering job, this could have most definitely given her sense of independence even though she unfortunately does not discuss this position any further. This allows for Mrs X to negotiate her position within the Shell community through the responsibilities that being a rowing instructor gives her, because this offers her an alternative identity to solely being a housewife and mother, moving away from the flat identity given to her by the company. In terms of daily activities, she successively writes:

‘When [our son] had returned to Holland, I had to do something to distract myself with. I volunteered in the library, became a member of the housewives association and helped in the gift shop. This shop was set up by the housewives association. Because there was so little you could buy in Pladju, you could give trinkets that you did not like anymore to the gift shop, where they could be sold once a week. We also sold homemade crafts and so on. That went very well and was really appreciated.’¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ ‘Toen [onze zoon] er was ging ik elke dag met de kinderen naar het zwembad, ook een keer naar Prapamoeli, en we maakten met de kinderen een boottocht over de Moesi. We deden veel aan sport in Pladju. Met [onze zoon] ging ik ook golfspelen, maar de golf“club” trok me niet zo. Na afloop van het golf-en, gingen de meeste golfspelers drinken en bleven aan de bar hangen en dat was niets voor mij. Het spel op zich vond ik wel leuk. Een grappige bijkomstigheid was, dat de apen die in de bomen zaten ons gade sloegen en als ze de kans kregen, pikten ze de ballen weg en verdwenen ermee in de boom. We werden lid van de roeiclub. [Mijn man] had in Holland al geroeid en ik was er in Holland mee begonnen. Nu kreeg ik weer les en toen ik mijn roeiproef had afgelegd, ging ik zelf roeiles geven. Eerst droogroeien in de bak en daarna in de rivier de Moesi.’

¹⁰⁹ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 77.

¹¹⁰ ‘Toen [onze zoon] weer naar Holland was, moest ik wat doen om mijn gedachten af te leiden. Ik hielp als vrijwilligster in de bibliotheek, werd lid van de huisvrouwenvereniging en hielp in de giftshop. Deze laatste was opgericht door de huisvrouwen vereniging. Omdat er in Pladju zo weinig te koop was, kon je snuisterijen waar je zelf op uitgekeken was, aanbieden die dan I keer per week in de giftshop werden verkocht ook eigengemaakte handwerken enz. Dat liep heel leuk en werd erg gewaardeerd.’

We see that Mrs X also creates a significant position for herself within the Shell community in other ways than sports even though she cannot have an official job. By filling up her time with volunteering work, she cannot only 'distract herself' but also have an impact on her community. By contributing to the Shell community through volunteering she uses her subordinate position to the Shell men to add to the community cohesion and thereby causes a shift in her agency. We can see that Mrs Z tells us a similar story:

‘Just like on Curacao there was a lot of appreciation from the Company for people and groups that put their talents in service of the community. There was: a drama club, a bridge club, a women’s club that created a fashion show. The challenge was to sew pieces of *batik* fabric, which was abundantly available there of course. That became a huge success!’¹¹¹

This position is much like that of the European women in colonial communities, whose supportive and subordinate posture to community cohesion and colonial security were essential to the colonial enterprise, as Stoler argues.¹¹²

Another way of supporting the cohesion of the expatriate community could be through religious activities, as Mrs Z shows us:

‘[My husband] and I generally did more within the religious spheres. With employees from various Protestant churches we would do Sunday services. First we were allowed to come together in the Catholic church and later we gained access to a gymnasium. Everyday, our organ (that we had brought with us from Holland) would be picked up and brought to the room with a ‘*tool car*’. [My husband] played. We would also receive pastors that would come on ‘dispersed-visits’. Sometimes there would be a church service in Palembang where we would go to via the Moesi river, upstream, with a little boat. Employees from the Esso refinery would also attend those services with their wives. That factory was nearby, next to a tributary. We also had some close acquaintances amongst those Esso people.’¹¹³

Mrs Z makes a strong distinction between her 'own' Shell community, and the Esso community. This could signify that these different companies created very pillared communities of Dutch expatriates that did not consider themselves as the same or even a similar part of society: Mrs Z clearly considers it to be quite special that she had some close

¹¹¹ ‘Zoals op Curaçao was ook hier grote waardering van de kant van de Maatschappij voor mensen en groepen die hun talenten in dienst stelden van de gemeenschap. Er waren: een toneelvereniging, een bridgeclub, er was een vrouwenclub die een modeshow creëerde. De uitdaging was een kledingstuk naaien van batikstof, dat daar natuurlijk volop te krijgen was. Dat werd een groot succes!’

¹¹² Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 72.

¹¹³ ‘[Mijn man] en ik waren meer bezig op kerkelijk terrein. Met employees uit diverse protestantse kerken hielden we ’s zondags dienst. Eerst mochten we in de katholieke kerk samenkomen, later kregen we de beschikking over een gymzaal. Iedere dag werd ons orgel (dat we uit Holland meegenomen hadden) opgehaald en met een ‘toolcar’ naar ’t lokaal gebracht. [Mijn man] speelde. Wij ontvingen ook dominees die op ‘verstrooiden-bezoek’ kwamen. Soms was er een kerkdienst in Palembang waar we, via de Musi, stroomopwaarts, met een bootje heen voeren. Daar kwamen ook employeë’s van de Esso-raffinaderij, met hun vrouwen. Die fabriek lag dichtbij, aan een zijrivier. Onder die Esso-mensen hadden we ook goede kennissen.’

acquaintances amongst 'those' Esso people. It is however her religion that does still connect the communities. It would be interesting to research how the Esso community felt about this, and how Dutch expatriates working for different, non-oil companies experienced this divide: is it a Shell-specific occurrence, or something that we could see all over Indonesia? Based on this quote, can we actually speak of a unified Dutch expatriate community in Indonesia at the time? The role that religion played amongst the Dutch expatriates clearly differs per family, as these memoirs show. Whilst Mrs X does not mention any religion even once, Mrs Z and Mr Y consider it an important part of their identity and daily activities.

4.5 Analysis

What this chapter shows us is that women played a crucial role in the Dutch expatriate lifestyle in Indonesia in this period of decolonization. There was an emphasized distinction between men and women and the roles they were to take on, as we see for example in the fact that they did not even travel together to Indonesia sometimes. This created a significant border between the 'working men' versus the 'family women', giving them flat identities as they set out to live in the expatriate space. We see in this chapter that particularly the women struggled with this flat identity and were constantly looking for ways to negate this. They found purpose for themselves within their community that not only offered them day-to-day leisure but also made them of indispensable value to Shell and the expatriate communities. Together with the company they took care of not only their families, but also the community as a whole through their volunteering work. We see that they also experienced ambiguity in their identity in terms of presenting Dutchness: to what extent were they supposed to hold on to their Dutch identity, and what parts were they expected to let go of? The narrators show us that they certainly had their ideas about what a 'proper' Dutch expatriate wife was supposed to behave like and see them use different aspects of their Dutchness for different goals. For example, if a woman could not handle the heat in the tropics, she was considered too Dutch, but if she would bike to the market for groceries, this was fine because it was a tool for being a free woman who could make her own decisions about what to eat. As a result, presenting Dutchness could only be used as a tool for achieving other goals such as independence. This shows us that the women experienced a constant struggle in defining their identity not only as women but also as Dutch expatriate. They were subordinate in their roles as housewives but strived not to be.

Besides running their households, the expatriate women generally filled their days with voluntary work and sports, which could give them a sense of freedom and authority. This work justified their position in the community and made them a crucial component of the expatriate project, just like the colonial project. This also made them of great importance to Shell: they created the ever so important 'proper' expatriate living. As a result, this voluntary work became a tool that increased their agency within the community and could be a key way of negotiating their position. The type of voluntary work one did, whether it was coaching in sports or religious activities, could define the importance of the respective woman within their expatriate community.

We see that the expatriate women, who entered Indonesia with the flat identity of a Shell employee's wife, are constantly struggling with their ambiguous position and agency within their communities. The female narrators strive to be of more importance than just being a mother and wish to fill their days with more significant activities than taking care of a household and servants. By focusing on the daily struggles they present in this chapter, we see how they negotiate their dominant discourse (and in doing so, claiming agency) and ambivalent position in their Dutch expatriate community in Indonesia. They appear to constantly be in a balancing act between being a proper Dutch expatriate wife and presenting excessive Dutchness; not being too European but also not going local; being a good wife but also contributing to society. All this subsequently shows us how layered their identities truly were.

5. The Private Domain

The private domain of the Dutch families in Indonesia differed to their private domains back in the Netherlands in that in Indonesia they had to share it with their servants. Needing servants into your house, and thereby into your most personal spaces such as the bedroom and bathroom, meant a decrease of privacy for these men and women. I have divided this chapter into four different topics: daily life, personal hygiene, the Dutch expatriate women and their servants, the Dutch expatriate women and each other and the Dutch expatriate women and the Indonesians. I have done so because all three of the narrators discuss these topics at large. By analyzing the way the narrators review these four different topics, I aim to answer the questions: How do the expatriate women negotiate their gendered dominant discourse within the private domain? And how do they negotiate their ambivalent positions within their household and act upon boundary maintenance?

5.1 Hygiene and cleanliness

In this paragraph I aim to analyze how the lives of the expatriates compare to Stoler's statement about 'good colonial living' in the 1920's, which, she states, 'now meant hard work, no sloth, and physical exercise rather than sexual release, which had been one rationale for condoning concubinage and prostitution in an earlier period. The debilitating influences of climate could be surmounted by regular diet and meticulous personal hygiene over which European women were to take full charge. British, French, and Dutch manuals on how to run a European household in the tropics provided detailed instructions in domestic science, moral upbringing, and employer-servant relations.'¹¹⁴ As Stoler states, a substantial amount of time was put into adhering to strict conventions of cleanliness and cooking by the European women, and cleanliness itself was used as a prop in portraying Europeanness.¹¹⁵ Doing so entailed a constant surveillance of the *baboes* and other servants whilst also 'demanding a heightened domesticity for European women themselves.'¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Ann Laura Stoler, 'Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia', in Micaela Di Leonardo (ed), *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1991) 81.

¹¹⁵ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 82.

¹¹⁶ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 82.

‘We did not have a bath tub nor a shower, but a *mandi-bak*. Next to it was a little bucket. The *mandi-bak* was filled with ice-cold water. You would fill up the bucket and pour the cold water over yourself and that was wonderfully refreshing.’¹¹⁷

By explaining how the family bathed themselves, Mrs X emphasizes that this way is different to what they were used to back in the Netherlands. We see her use a half Dutch, half Indonesian term: the *mandi-bak*. ‘*Mandi*’ is Indonesian and translates to showering or bathing oneself, and ‘*bak*’ is Dutch and translates to basin in this context. The combination of these two words signify that this was something that was distinctly Indonesian to them and that simply describing the *mandi-bak* as a basin filled with water would not suffice to properly describe the experience. Mrs X turns this cleansing experience into something exotic and foreign, showing the reader that the impact of moving to Indonesia was felt even at one of the most personal levels, namely cleaning ones' body, and thereby internalizing this external change of surroundings. Bathing and being clean was important at the time because for these expatriates, heat was still a constant struggle:

‘When we finally got one [an airconditioner], we said: “How did we survive all these years without airconditioning!” But then again, when you are young you can endure a lot. That’s why it was good to go to the tropics at a young age.’¹¹⁸

Mrs X indirectly emphasizes again that life in Indonesia was tough for them. She also seems to argue that a good Dutch expatriate wife should be young of age and accordingly standardizes herself as a ‘proper’ Dutch expatriate. This means that a direct link is created between one's physical state and one's capabilities of functioning as a ‘proper expatriate wife’: one had to be physically capable of enduring the hardship of the tropics. We also see a clear overlap between the emphasis on personal hygiene by the expatriates and that by the colonials. Both the colonials and the expatriates continuously make specific connections between hygiene, ‘proper’ living, hard work and no sloth. Nevertheless, the introduction of air-conditioning after the Dutch had left signified something very different for Mrs Z:

‘When the English took over the business after us they got a salary that was three times as high, and they demanded air-conditioning in all the houses! For me it wasn’t fun anymore, I did not want to live like this: we did not want another contract in this country.’¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ “We hadden geen badkuip en geen douche, maar een mandi-bak. Er was een emmertje bij. In de mandi-bak was ijskoud water. Je schepte dan een emmertje vol en gooide emmertjes koud water over je heen en dat was heerlijk verfrissend.”

¹¹⁸ “Toen we er een één [een airconditioner] hadden, zeiden we: “Hoe hebben we het al die jaren uitgehouden zonder airco!” Maar ja, als je jong bent kan je veel verdragen. Daarom was het ook goed op jonge leeftijd naar de tropen te gaan.”

¹¹⁹ “Toen de Engelsen na ons de zaken overnamen kregen ze een salaris dat 3x zo hoog was, en ze eisten air-conditioning in alle huizen! Mijn lol was eraf, zo wilde ik niet meer leven: wij wilden niet nóg een contract in dit land.”

We see here that for Mrs Z, the air-conditioning perhaps was a luxury item that signified something bigger, namely that the English were taken better care of by Shell than the Dutch. The two narrators create an interesting juxtaposition between the two of them, with Mrs X using the lack of air-conditioning as a way of proving her strength as a Dutch expatriate wife, and Mrs Z using it as an explanation of why they wanted to leave. Mrs Z disguises a complaint (we did not have air-conditioning but the British did) as a non-complaint (we did not need air-conditioning because we are strong). This is one of the few times when we see one of the narrators use her national identity: the Dutch versus the English.

5.2 The Dutch Expatriate Women and Their Servants

According to Stoler, women in the colonial period were considered to be more fragile, both psychologically and physically. This demanded servants to do the chores in their households, which shifted the positions of these women from being housewives who took care of their households, to housewives who ran a group of servants.¹²⁰ The Dutch expatriate families were identical to their colonial predecessors in this sense, as their households were typically supported by one or two *baboes* - female nursemaids - and a *djongos* - a male cook. The Dutch expatriate women were inferior to their husbands and the companies their husband was working for, but superior to their servants. Their husbands were simultaneously also highly dependent on them, making their position all the more ambivalent. How did this influence them within the private spheres?

‘We hadn’t had a *djongos* [a male servant] for a while anymore. [Mr X] had helped him get another job at the *soos*, because when you have a daughter in Indonesia, it is better to have female servants. You never know.’¹²¹

‘You never know?’ Mrs X implies several things with these three words. Namely, her way of phrasing seem to expect that her readers indeed know very well what a male servant might do to your daughter. Perhaps one of the most striking similarities between the Dutch expatriate women and their colonial predecessors is their fear for the ‘primitive’ sexual urges and uncontrollable lust of the indigenous, and related their incessant need for both the expatriate men and women to protect themselves and their children from these ‘sexualized creatures’ that were their servants. She apparently believes that the audience will agree with her and therefore knows about the discourse, and that this sentence requires no extra explanation as she goes on to talk about a different topic. This could very well be because almost every

¹²⁰ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 65.

¹²¹ ‘Wij hadden al een tijd geen djongos meer. [Meneer X] had hem weer aan een baantje geholpen in de soos, want als je in Ind. een dochter hebt, is het toch beter om vrouwelijke bedienden te hebben. Je kan nooit weten.’

medical and household handbook in the Dutch East Indies warned against leaving small children in the unsupervised care of local servants, making it the duty of the modern white mother to raise her children away from the *baboe*.¹²² Moreover, what is it that we never will know according to Mrs X? Does she mean that you never know if this male servant, this faceless, nameless, indigenous male, is never to be trusted within the space of your home if you have a daughter because he might not be able to control his primitive, sexual urges? By making the *djongos* a faceless, nameless being, she creates a stereotypical image that fits the constructed danger that these men are suggested to pose. Stoler states that the colonials generally believed that the colonized men were seductive figures who had “‘primitive’ sexual urges and uncontrollable lust, aroused by the sight of white women’”.¹²³ This constructed danger subsequently is part of the bigger issue of othering and yet another concern for boundary maintenance by the colonials against the locals. Most important to note is that Mrs X does not mention any occasion at which this fear became reality: it is solely based on a constructed fear of imagined sexual primitive urges. Constructed, because she does not provide any proof of any incidences ever happening. Interestingly, the *djongos* is considered safe to work in the public area of the *soos*, the local Dutch club for the employees and their families. Apparently, to Mrs X, this fear of his primitive sexual urges are limited to the private spheres, and to having to be alone with him. This is likely because she felt that whenever she was alone, these males challenged her dominant discourse the most. At home there would be no one who could protect her. In this example we see that Mr and Mrs X resemble their colonial predecessors in two significant ways. Firstly, we see the fear of the imagined primitive sexual urges of the male servant in the private sphere. Secondly, we see how this fear in turn causes them to use their dominance over the *djongos* to remove him from their private sphere into the public sphere where he no longer seems to be a threat. All it takes is for Mr X to make arrangements at the *soos*, and the X’s have repositioned themselves as more powerful over this person whom they feared for reasons that are only imagined, not real. However, whether this truly makes them more powerful can be questioned too, since they are in fact at the mercy of their servants whom they did not trust, making this relationship all the more ambiguous.

‘We had two *baboes*: [A] and [B]. [A] was the *kokkie* and kept the living room and the kitchen clean and took care of the food. [B] did the laundry and the bedrooms and the bathroom. She could iron beautifully. I could not copy her. [A] cooked very well, really to our liking. She

¹²² Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 84.

¹²³ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 67.

lived with us in *belakkang* (the back of our house). She was very fond of [our youngest son], right from the beginning. She was very sweet to the other children too, but [our youngest son] was her everything. She rarely left the house, so we always had a babysitter. Now we did not mind it at all if she just slept in her own bed when she was babysitting, but she became very upset when we told her this. Whenever we left the house, which would never be more than five minutes away, [A] would sleep on a mat in front of the door of the children's room. However, I never wanted her to bathe or dress the children. I had heard stories about *baboes* who, when the children cried, would massage their genitals to keep them quiet and I did not like that at all.¹²⁴

Mrs X tells us many different things here, both explicitly and implicitly. Significant is again her fear that anything sexual would happen to her children, which is also again a fear that is based on hearsay from other Dutch women. One important difference between how she talks about the *baboes* and the *djongos* is that she mentions the *baboes* by name, and that she expands more upon their chores and even certain characteristics and attributes, namely that they were very loving and caring towards her youngest son. However, this fear of a different, primitive sexuality remains. The *baboes* were of great help, loved her children and did their work as they should – to the extent that they were even praised by Mrs X – but they were not allowed near the children when they were naked. What we see is that Mrs X believes that the *baboes* had a different perception of sexuality. This exemplifies the different norms about sexuality that the colonials believed the local population had: despite being good servants, they are still believed to have ‘lose’ sexual morals. Again, she provides no proof of the massaging of genitals ever happening, and she thus seems to imply that the audience would agree with her that this is simply how things were done by these *baboes*. She also again reinforces the idea that her children should be raised away from the *baboe*, as was the common belief amongst many colonials. Despite receiving praise from Mrs X for how well they did their work, the *baboes* are still stripped of their identity and are known as nothing more than one-dimensional women who worked as servants and should not be trusted around naked European children. We therefore see that again, Mrs X is othering these women and through this performing boundary maintenance.

¹²⁴ ‘We hadden toen 2 baboes: A en B. A was de kokkie en hield de kamer en de keuken schoon en zorgde voor het eten. B deed de was en de slaapkamers en de badkamer. Ze kon prachtig strijken. Ik kon het haar niet nadoen. A kookte goed, echt naar onze smaak. Zij woonde bij ons op de belakkang (achterkant van ons huis). Vanaf het begin was ze dol op [onze jongste zoon]. Ze was ook lief voor de andere kinderen, maar [onze jongste zoon] was alles voor haar. Ze ging zelden uit, dus we hadden altijd een oppas. Nu vonden wij het helemaal niet erg, als A dan in haar eigen bed ging, maar zelf was ze heel verontwaardigd als we dat tegen haar zeiden. Als wij weggingen, wat nooit verder dan 5 min. van huis was, ging A op ‘t matje slapen voor de deur van de kinderkamer. Ik heb echter nooit gewild dat zij de kinderen in bad deed of aankleedde. Ik had verhalen gehoord dat er baboes waren die, als de kinderen huilden, hun geslachtsdelen gingen masseren om ze zoet te houden en daar moest ik niets van hebben.’

Mrs X treats both the male and female servants in this manner and stories told in her community are leading in the way she thinks about these people. Fear of sexuality and the sexual unknown ('you never know what could happen') highlights the ambiguous power relationships between the servants and the expatriates: by removing the *djongos* from the private sphere and giving him a job at the *soos*, the X family has shown that they have enough power to ensure that the *djongos* cannot do anything to their daughter, whether this is a realistic threat or not, but that they are also subject to their fears of the *djongos*. We see that Mrs X negotiates her dominant discourse within this community of Dutch dominate expatriates and Indonesian submissive servants by emphasizing their power, showing that nothing actually needs to happen in order for her to still be able to have the *djongos* fired from her house and hired at the *soos*.

Furthermore, her use of the Indonesian names for the functions these people fulfill (*djongos*, *baboe*, etc.) - something which we also see Mr Y and Mrs Z do - can be seen as what Mills describes as linguistic and textual decisions made by narrators about racial grouping. These decisions, Mills states, 'had far-reaching material consequences which affected the rights and lives of indigenous peoples, resulting in certain groups of people being denied human status'.¹²⁵ This was done because it would emphasize the otherness of the local population. This denying of human status – and therefore othering of the local people – is something we see quite strongly in this narrator's text, as can be seen in the example of the *djongos* whom she never mentions by name and sees only as a person who can work for her family members, but cannot be trusted amongst them. The (formerly) colonized people, despite technically speaking not being part of a colonial structure anymore but an expatriate post-colonial structure, are still dehumanized in a colonial fashion. Their relationship is still ambiguous and full of dilemmas. As Mills explains: 'The fact that sweeping generalizations were made about particular cultures made them less communities of individuals than an indistinguishable mass, about whom one could amass 'knowledge' on which they could be stereotyped'.¹²⁶ The narrator holds on to the stories constructed by her Dutch predecessors who presented certain qualities about *baboes* and *djongos* as 'facts'. At the same time however, these 'facts' meant that each group had some power over the other because as we have seen they often translated into Dutch fear of the Indonesians. In this sense, Mr Y's view on Indonesia is not any different to that of a Dutch colonial in the years before Indonesian independence.

¹²⁵ Mills, *Discourse*, 96.

¹²⁶ Mills, *Discourse*, 97.

‘We hired two servants. A *kokkie*, taken over from someone who was leaving for another destination and who – righteously so – recommended her, and a *djongos*. Together they took care of the house, managed by mum [note: this is Mr Y referring to his wife as ‘mum’], which was quite a task. ... The girls were taken care of very well at home and sometimes they would come along, especially on Sunday mornings for the church service at the *soos*, where dad [note: this is Mr Y referring to himself as ‘dad’] read the sermon many times. After that we played on the beach, which they loved. We usually came home around 1 o’clock, and then there was always a lovely *rijsttafel* waiting for us, which the *kokkie* had worked on all morning. Strange that even though you are raised as decent reformed people, you start to find this [having a servant cook for you] normal. But it was delicious.’¹²⁷

We see that Mr Y also mentions his servants only by the function they fulfil, and not by name, because he did not reside over them. He, too, mirrors the colonial discourse of the Dutch in Indonesia at the time as his textual decisions deny these individuals any human status in her narrative. Mr Y clearly has certain ideas about what 'proper' life is and what is not, similarly to the colonials. At the same time, this citation also shows us that working with local servants enforced these Dutch expatriates to change part of their own identity as well, in the sense that having servants did not correspond well with their protestant upbringing. Although it evidently did not worry the narrator too much, it is clear that he did feel it was a necessary point to mention to his presumed audience, who in this case consist of his children and grandchildren.

Mrs X also makes the following statements about the relationship between her children and their servants:

‘When [our oldest daughter] was about three years old she was allowed to join the *baboe* to the *Passar* on Sunday mornings. The children would be dressed nicely and the *baboe* was so proud of them, as if they were her own children. She would always buy something for the children: a balloon, or some *dodol* (an Indonesian delicacy made of sticky rice, coconut and brown Javanese sugar).’¹²⁸

¹²⁷ ‘Twee huisbedienden namen we in dienst. Een kokkie, overgenomen van iemand die naar elders vertrok en haar – terecht – aanbevalde, en een djongos. Samen verzorgden ze huis en maaltijden, aangestuurd door ma, die daar een taak aan had. Het betekende wel dat ze tijd kreeg om wat te tennissen en zelfs heeft ze nog een tijdje godsdienstles gegeven op de school. Samen gingen we ook weer tafeltennis spelen op de sportclub. De jongedames waren goed verzorgd thuis en gingen soms mee, vooral op zondagmorgen naar de kerkdienst in de soos, waar pa vele malen preek heeft gelezen. Daarna werd aan het strandje gespeeld, waar ze gek op waren. Kwamen we zo tegen één uur weer thuis, dan stond een keurige rijsttafel te wachten, waar de kokkie de hele morgen aan gewerkt had. Vreemd dat je als degelijk Gereformeerde mensen opgevoed, dit gewoon gaat vinden. Maar het was wel heerlijk.’

¹²⁸ ‘Toen [onze oudste dochter] ongeveer drie jaar was mocht ze Zondagochten [sic] met de baboe meer naar de Passar. [Onze zoon] ging ook mee. De kinderen waren dan netjes aangekleed en de baboe was dan zo trots als een pauw alsof het haar eigen kinderen waren. Ze kocht dan altijd iets voor de kinderen: of een ballon, of wat dodol (een Ind. lekkernij gemaakt van kleefrijst, cocos en bruine Javaanse suiker).’

‘Our *baboes* were good at doing laundry and ironing. [Our oldest daughter] always wore a perfectly starched dress and looked charming.’¹²⁹

Both Mr Y and Mrs X present us with value-laden statements presented as a fact: the Indonesians were proud to be working with the Dutch and used them to reflect their own superior status.¹³⁰ Mills explains that ‘Value-laden statements about the inhabitants of colonized countries were presented as ‘facts’ against which there was little possibility of argument’.¹³¹ This caused colonizers to be able to stereotype the colonized, as we clearly see in these examples filled with sweeping generalizations. Notably, both the narrators are remarkably positive about their *baboes*, emphasizing their capabilities of love, and particularly of loving their children. This is something Hulme would explain to be a positive representation within the colonial discourse, because Indonesia was considered to be ‘civilized’: as Mills explains, ‘those cultures which accepted colonial rule, and perhaps collaborated with the colonial authorities in establishing settlements, were generally characterized as civilized and peace-loving’.¹³² Considering the Indonesians to be civilized was also in parts compulsory because they were a necessity to the colonial, and later the expatriate project, particularly in the private spheres as servants. Despite the ruling of the Dutch expatriates over their Indonesian servants not being colonial anymore, it is certainly a type of ruling that holds a significantly close resemblance to the ruling shaped by their colonial predecessors.

“[My husband] did not allow the children to walk around barefoot, but as soon as they entered [our home] they would kick off their shoes. I have to admit that I gave them a bad example, because I did that too. It annoyed [my husband] that he would almost trip over all our shoes when he came in. We all had tile floors, that was cool and hygienic. Just like in Curacao, there were many ants, so we put the table legs in cans filled with petroleum, otherwise the ants would get on the table as soon as there was something edible on it. In the beginning I tried to teach the *baboe* that she had to do the dishes in a basin with soapy water, but as soon as I turned around they would do it their own way, so in the end I gave up and let them mess around. They would wipe the plates clean with some coir dipped in soap, rinse them under the tap and put everything in a drying rack in the sun.

It was still normal back then for the men to wear white trousers and white jackets to work. Those would be washed daily by hand. The *baboes* were scared of the electronic washing

¹²⁹ ‘Wassen en strijken waren de baboes goed in. [Onze oudste dochter] had iedere dag een schoon jurkje keurig gesteven en ze zag eruit als een plaatje.’

¹³⁰ Mills, *Discourse*, 97

¹³¹ *ibid.*

¹³² Mills, *Discourse*, 105.

machine and did not want to use it. This was also the case for vacuum cleaners. They preferred a broom or a mop.¹³³

In this passage, Mrs X ambivalent position within her society becomes particularly clear. We see her struggle with her discourse in regard to her husband and her servants. On the one hand, we see her disobey her husband's orders, which also results in her children disobeying his orders. On the other hand, she tells us that she attempted to teach her servant a certain way of cleaning the dishes, but that they disobeyed her orders. One could argue that both these cases are forms of resistance against the discourse of the other. We also see her making reference to hygiene again: their house had pristine white tiles and measures were taken to keep the tables clean off ants. Her husband and his colleagues still wore white clothes, symbolic of the *cordon sanitaire*. It is also interesting to read what she says about how the *baboes* did the dishes: they resisted against her orders to clean the dishes the way she pleases, but apparently this is not something she felt she should argue about with them too much. She lets them do the dishes the way they wish, but clearly feels this method is inferior to hers. Accordingly, what we see is a power struggle between the two.

5.3 The Dutch Expatriate Women and Each Other

'We did not mix much with the [Family A]. She was much older than me and it was her first time in the tropics. Since she was a proper Dutch housewife, she wanted to do all the cleaning herself, and because of that she did not get along well with her servants. That was difficult to keep up in this heat.'¹³⁴

What does Mrs X's attitude towards Mrs Z tell us? We see that Mrs X had two standard ideas of types of Dutch women in Indonesia: there was the proper Dutch housewife, and the proper Dutch expatriate wife in the tropics, and a dichotomy is created between the two. Her negative comments the 'proper Dutch housewife' is striking because this is the same narrator who earlier told us how she would bike to the *pasar* with her two kids and two grocery bags

¹³³ 'De kinderen mochten van Carel buiten niet op blote voeten lopen, maar zodra ze binnen kwamen, schopten ze hun schoenen uit. Ik moet eerlijk bekennen dat ik het slechte voorbeeld gaf, want ik deed dat ook. Carel ergerde zich eraan, dat, als hij binnenkwam, hij bijna struikelde over die schoenenparade. We hadden allemaal tegelvloeren, dat was lekker koel en hygiënisch. Evenals in Curacao waren er veel mieren en we hadden de tafelpoten in blikjes petroleum gezet, anders zouden de mieren ook op tafel komen, zodra er iets eetbaars op stond. In 't begin heb ik nog geprobeerd de baboe te leren hoe ze de vaat moest wassen in een teiltje met zeepsop; maar als ik me omdraaide deden ze het toch op hun eigen manier, zodat ik het maar opgaf en ze maar raak liet knoeien. Met wat cocosvezel gedoopt in een blikje zeep veegden ze de borden schoon, spoelde het af onder de kraan en zette alles op 't droogrek in de zon te drogen.

Het was toen nog de gewoonte dat de mannen op hun werk witte broeken en witte jasjes droegen. Die werden elke dag met de hand gewassen. De baboes vonden een elektrische wasmachine maar eng en wilden die niet gebruiken. Dit gold ook voor stofzuigers. Ze namen liever een bezem of een dweil.'

¹³⁴ 'Met de [familie A] gingen we niet veel om. Zij was veel ouder dan ik en voor het eerst in de tropen. Daar ze een echte Hollandse huisvrouw was, nogal poetserig, kon ze niet met de bedienden opschieten en wilde alles zelf doen. Dat was moeilijk vol te houden in die hitte.'

hanging from the handlebars, as a ‘typically’ Dutch woman would do. It is implied in this text that a proper Dutch expatriate wife in the tropics had to have several qualifications, namely that she should be young, know how to run a household with servants and know not to do too much herself. We see that the justification Mrs X offers for this is not much different from her colonial predecessors, with agreeing with the Dutch colonials living in the East Indies many decades before her that servants were a necessity in the heat of the tropics. She emphasizes the physical burden of living in the tropics, much like her colonial predecessors did: if one was to maintain one’s physical and psychological wellbeing, one should not desire to work very hard. It was also not desirable for the woman to be of too old an age. Moreover, Mrs X calls Mrs Y a ‘proper Dutch housewife’, which is most certainly not meant as a compliment, as is even more prevalent in the original Dutch text (with made-up terms such as ‘*poetsurig*’). She portrays a proper Dutch housewife as a woman who wants to do all the cleaning herself and who is therefore independent from any servants, but she does not consider this to be a positive quality to have: it causes for the woman to not get along well with her servants, which resonates with the passage we saw before where she tells us about her ‘disobedient’ servants. This in turn is apparently of great importance to Mrs X, who states that doing all the cleaning yourself is too difficult to keep up in this heat, but who perhaps also sees getting along with your servants as part of your position as a proper Dutch expatriate wife. Whilst her colonial male predecessors blamed their wives for being overly friendly with their servants, Mrs X argues that a Dutch woman in Indonesia should refrain from presenting excessive ‘Dutchness’ and should rather adapt to the discourses of the proper expatriate, postcolonial Dutch. What we can conclude from this text is that Mrs X has positioned herself away from the Dutch women in the Netherlands, and closer to the Dutch colonials in Indonesia. She, together with her fellow Dutch expatriate wives (as we can assume from how many of her opinions are based on hearsay and stories), has adopted customs and ways of thinking that were buried deep into the colonial discourses. However, at the same time Mrs X also emphasizes that she is not like ‘many’ other Dutch expatriate wives either, as we see in the following text:

Some Dutch mothers left their children completely under the care of the *baboe*, but I never did that. The children knew that too, because when [our oldest son] had to go to the hospital for a couple of days . . . , an Indonesian nurse wanted to wash him. He screamed for the entire hospital to hear: ‘I don’t want to be washed by a *baboe*-nurse, I want a Dutch nurse.’ The

Indonesian nurse was very insulted, but [our oldest son] got his way. The doctor's assistant was also Indonesian. She was very good and was very good at giving injections.¹³⁵

This passage reveals several striking points in terms of Mrs X negotiating her agency. Firstly, as stated, she separates herself from other Dutch mothers who left her children completely under the care of the *baboe*, which she similarly stated in the earlier passage about not letting the *baboes* see her children naked. She also talks about the incident of her son very matter-of-factly: nowhere in the text does she appear to find it embarrassing or humorous. She sees the incident as an example of how she successfully managed to raise her children herself and that her family was superior to those who did leave 'too much' of the care to the *baboes*. She ingrained the same notion of proper sexual behaviour and fear of the other onto her children, a sign of successful mothering. More peculiar is the fact that whilst the 'baboe-nurse' was not allowed to clean her son, she was allowed to perform medical actions and was even considered 'good' at her job. This again exemplifies the ambiguity in how the Dutch saw the Indonesians: good at their jobs, but unreliable in their apparent sexual urges.

5.4 The Dutch Expatriate Women and the Indonesians

Taking a closer look at the interactions with local people described by the narrators reveals a lot about the fragility of their relationships, and how these were constantly changing in reflection to how the different parties treated each other. It can also show us a lot about how the Dutch expatriates placed themselves in regard to the local population. One narrator shows us that on the one hand, she sees herself as someone who is most certainly not a 'typical Dutch housewife' anymore, yet at the same time she tends to make sweeping generalizations about Indonesians. Let us go back to his passage written by Mrs X:

'We did not mix much with the [A family]. She was much older than me and it was her first time in the tropics. Since she was a proper Dutch housewife, she wanted to do all the cleaning herself, and because of that she did not get along well with her servants. That was difficult to keep up in this heat.'¹³⁶

Here the narrator clearly emphasizes the difference between herself and the 'Dutch housewife'. She is no longer like the 'typical Dutch woman' she describes, but has adjusted

¹³⁵ 'Sommige Hollandse moeders lieten de kinderen helemaal aan de baboe over, maar dat heb ik nooit gedaan. De kinderen wisten dat ook, want toen Bob een paar dagen naar het ziekenhuis moest ..., wilde een Ind. zuster hem wassen. Hij heeft toen het hele ziekenhuis bij elkaar gebruld en geroepen: 'Ik wil niet door een baboe-zuster gewassen worden, ik wil een Hollandse zuster.' De Ind. zuster was zwaar beledigd, maar Bob kreeg zijn zin. De dokters assistente [sic] was ook Indonesisch. Ze was heel goed en kon uitstekend injecties geven.'

¹³⁶ 'Met de [familie A] gingen we niet veel om. Zij was veel ouder dan ik en voor het eerst in de tropen. Daar ze een echte Hollandse huisvrouw was, nogal poetsrig, kon ze niet met de bedienden opschieten en wilde alles zelf doen. Dat was moeilijk vol te houden in die hitte.'

herself to her postcolonial surroundings. Yet, at the same time we see that she still generalizes the Indonesians to be a group with the same character traits and without individual identities:

‘Palembang was a dirty city. We rarely went there. Once in a while we went to the big market. People said that as a European woman you should not go there alone, but I did go with a girlfriend and we never had any difficulties. Generally, the Indonesian population was very friendly. They loved children and would never do a child any harm.’¹³⁷

By generalizing the Indonesian population as a whole, she shows us how distanced she still is from them. Her positive comments after telling numerous negative anecdotes about her interactions with Indonesians also underline the ambivalence in her behavior. This is also emphasized when she talks about her son:

‘[Our oldest son] was very good at climbing trees. He could climb up into a coconut tree with his feet against the tree trunk, like the indigenous.’¹³⁸

The fact that Mrs X chooses to share this anecdote with her audience shows us that behaving in ways that are not normative in the Netherlands was not customary for the family. By opting for what is nowadays considered a somewhat loaded term, namely ‘indigenous’, the narrator again shows us that she sees the local Indonesian population as people who are significantly different from herself and her family. Her son can climb the tree, not as well as an Indonesian, but *like* an indigenous; he is not indigenous himself, but only resembles one with the way he acts. Again, we see the ambivalence in her behaviour: her son is going native and by doing so crosses a boundary between the Europeans and the locals, which the colonials explicitly did not want to happen.

5.5 Analysis

The private domain distinguished itself in that the women of the families largely dominated it and the men were submissive to their wives’ decisions. We can see this when looking at the topics the three different authors write about: the man writes mostly about the topics that belong to the public domain such as politics and work life and if he discusses the private it is only in general and generalizing terms, and in this chapter we have seen that the women mostly talk about topics that dominate the private domain, such as managing servants, interacting with the local population and each other. The expatriate women were responsible for taking care of their households, which included their children and servants. They were

¹³⁷ ‘Palembang was een vuile stad. We gingen er zelden naartoe. Een enkele keer naar de grote markt. Men zei dat je daar als Europese vrouw niet alleen naar toe moest gaan, maar ik ging wel met een vriendin en we hebben nooit moeilijkheden gehad. Over het algemeen was de Indonesische bevolking erg vriendelijk. Ze waren dol op kinderen en zouden geen kind kwaad doen.’

¹³⁸ ‘We hadden een goed leven in Pladju. De kinderen ook. Altijd maar buiten spelen. Bob was heel goed in bomen klimmen. Hij kon net als een inlander in een hoge klapperboom klimmen met zijn voeten tegen de stam.’

therefore also responsible for boundary maintenance between the servants and their children and themselves. Something we see highlighted throughout all three memoirs is a strong sense of what 'proper' expatriate living was, much like how the colonials had their sense of 'proper' colonial living. We see all three authors pay attention to how they performed their properness in different levels of their lives, be it at the *soos* or within their own households.

Running their households was an important task for the women, a large part of which meant managing and interacting with a number of servants. As I have shown in this chapter, the colonials living in Indonesia in the latter period of the 19th century and the early period of the 20th century generally considered women to be fragile, inferior and incapable of running a household on their own in the tropics like they would in Europe. These colonial families would generally hire one or two *baboes* and/or a *djongos*, which we also see the expatriates doing. These servants entered their most private spheres, which made their relationships with each other unequal and a constant power struggle. A constructed fear of the servants' sexuality meant that the expatriate women were responsible for keeping up a *cordon sanitaire* in order to protect their families from the 'uncontrollable lust' of the locals.

The *baboes* often played an important role in the raising of the expatriate children, who would live with their parents in Indonesia up until the age of 12, when they would be sent to boarding schools in the Netherlands. Their - often close - relationships with these children were one way in which the expatriates could feel intimidated by their servants and we see them wanting to keep their children from becoming 'overly Indonesian': the son who could climb a tree 'like an indigenous' also raised to dislike Indonesians enough to not want an Indonesian nurse to wash him, although she was allowed to provide medical care. This is another part of the boundary maintenance that the women were to take care of: ensuring that their children could act like a local, but not think like one. Finding proof that of this ensured them that they were successful expatriate mothers. We also see one narrator emphasize her European inferiority in household activities that she herself did not undertake anymore as an expatriate wife, namely doing the dishes. All these examples show how the expatriates took care of their boundary maintenance: there were strict rules, both spoken and unspoken, about what one could and could not trust the locals with. These boundaries were largely decided upon through the fear of the imagined uncontrollable sexual urges of the local population. The incessant need to control these boundaries made the expatriates ambiguous in their behaviour, allowing their servants very close into their home but only under strict conditions. Furthermore, the use of Indonesian terms for these servants gives them flat, faceless identities. These narrators also presented servants as being proud to be able to work with the Dutch. By

depersonalizing these individuals, and therefore othering them, could be a way for the expatriates to keep their distance from them and a way to negotiate their position, despite them possibly knowing a lot of private details about the families they worked for. It also shows us how ambiguous their relationship was and how dependent they were on each other. Moreover, this chapter has shown us that the expatriates had adopted customs and ways of thinking that were buried deep into the colonial discourses.

6. Conclusion

In this thesis, I have aimed to answer the following research question: Can gendered and colonial constructions be found in the dominant discourse and identity of Dutch expatriates in Indonesia during the Indonesian decolonization period between 1945 and 1949? I have done so by doing a discourse analysis of three different autobiographies written by three different narrators about their (family) life as expatriates in Indonesia from 1945 onwards. I have focused on expatriate life in Indonesia at three different levels, namely on entering decolonizing Indonesia in general, family life in the public domain and family life in the private domain. I did this through analyses of what the three different narrators say about life at these different levels. Naturally, this research has also led to more questions, which I have aimed to state in this thesis but do not answer because that would not be possible within the scope of this thesis.

6.1 Summary

I shall first conclude what I have found in chapter three about an expatriate discourse amongst these narrators when discussing the colonized world at a global level. How did the expatriates shape their lives after World War II? The impact of World War II on the lives of the expatriates is tremendous, as the narrators show us. All three enter an Indonesia that is physically, politically and socially largely in ruins. The men are sent out to rebuild the refineries that had been destroyed or stopped working – interestingly, one of the female narrators is not sure anymore if the factory her husband worked in had been destroyed or just stopped working during the war, showing her distance to her husband's working life. We also see the narrators describe their living conditions, which were very simple and temporary. They speak of 'remnants' of buildings, temporary nissen huts and a housing scarcity. As a result they have become physically separated from the colonized world, which has partially been destroyed during the war. This arguably validates the war as a 'break' in time that separates the colonial from the postcolonial era, confirming that these expatriates were indeed the first to live in a postcolonial Indonesia, despite the Netherlands' attempts at recolonizing the country. Living in Indonesia after World War II also meant that expatriates lived rather limited lives with little freedom of choice, as in the earliest years they could not even buy their own food but rather had to rely on supplies brought to their houses in crates by 'The Company', as we see all three narrators generally call Shell. To this extent, we could argue

that the lives of the expatriates were indeed rather different than that of the colonials residing in Indonesia before World War II, when scarcity was much less of a problem.

When taking a closer look at some of the comments made by the narrators, we see that racism was an issue that went both ways for the expatriates; they had certain prejudices against the local population, but they also mention that, for example, Chinese shopkeepers would throw mud at them. The male narrator also tells us that they were scared for social repercussions after ‘the old Dutch East Indies became the new Indonesia’ but we also almost immediately see him downplay this fear as he says that ‘The local Indonesians took the whole transition for granted, it seemed.’ What is interesting about these comments is how the narrators appear to have certain expectations about what their readers will understand about what they have to say: they assume that their readers will understand why the local population would spit in front of their feet or why the Chinese shopkeepers would throw mud at their children. This shows us that there is a silent understanding of a kind of discrimination that they felt towards their position as colonizers. As for more upfront signs of discrimination against the Dutch, one narrator states that ‘The Indonesian government was very anti-Dutch at the time’ and that ‘even’ Dutch newspapers and the Donald Duck children’s magazine were banned. I argue that by giving these examples, the narrator attempts to show her readers how ‘unreasonable’ the Indonesian government was being by even banning such ‘innocent’ Dutch items such as a newspaper and a children’s magazine. We see that the expatriates do pay a lot of attention to anti-Dutch sentiments they came across during their time there, which again emphasizes the fact that they were no longer living in the colonial era, but had entered a new postcolonial era, physically and temporally separating them from the colonials.

In chapter four, I focus on expatriate life in the public domain. How did expatriate life play out within the smaller communities that the narrators were residing in? What this chapter shows us is that women played a crucial role in the Dutch expatriate lifestyle in Indonesia in this period after decolonization. In addition to running their households, they generally filled their days with voluntary work and sports, which could give them a sense of freedom and authority. This work justified their position in the community and made them a crucial component of the expatriate project, just like the colonial project. This also made them of great importance to Shell: they created the ever so important ‘proper’ expatriate living. As a result, this voluntary work became a tool that increased their agency within the community and could be a key way of negotiating their position. The type of voluntary work one did, whether it was coaching in sports or religious activities, could define the importance of the respective woman within their expatriate community.

In chapter five, I focus on expatriate life in the private domain: how it played out within the private spheres of their houses. The private domain distinguishes itself in that the women of the families largely dominated it and the men were submissive to their wives' decisions. We can see this when looking at the topics the three different authors write about: the man writes mostly about the earlier topics that belong to the public domain such as politics and work life, and in this chapter we have seen that the women mostly talk about topics that dominate the private domain, such as managing servants, interacting with the local population and each other. The expatriate women were responsible for taking care of their households, which included their children and servants. Something we see highlighted throughout all three memoirs is a strong sense of what 'proper' expatriate living was, much like how the colonials had their sense of 'proper' colonial living. We see all three authors pay attention to how they performed their properness in different levels of their lives, be it at the *soos* or within their own households. Running their households was an important task for the women, a large part of which meant running a number of servants. As I have shown in this chapter, the colonials living in Indonesia in the latter period of the 19th century and the early period of the 20th century generally considered women to be fragile and not capable of running a household on their own in the tropics like they would in Europe. These colonial families would therefore generally hire one or two *baboes* and/or a *djongos*, which we also see the expatriates doing. These servants entered their most private spheres, which made their relationships with each other unequal and a constant power struggle. The expatriate women also had to constantly maintain a sexual boundary with the servants.

The *baboes* often played an important role in the raising of the expatriate children, who would live with their parents in Indonesia up until the age of 12, when they would be sent to boarding schools in the Netherlands. Their - often close - relationships with these children were one way in which the expatriates could feel intimidated by their servants and we see them wanting to keep their children from becoming 'overly Indonesian': the son who could climb a tree 'like an indigenous' also raised to dislike Indonesians enough to not want an Indonesian nurse to take care of him. We also see one narrator emphasize her European superiority in household activities that she herself did not undertake anymore as an expatriate wife, namely doing the dishes. *Djongos* were not to be trusted with daughters: the expatriates had inherited a colonial imagined fear of sexuality and rape. Furthermore, the use of Indonesian terms for these servants gives them a flat, faceless identities. This depersonalization of these individuals could be a way for the expatriates to keep their distance from them and therefore a way to emphasize their superior position, despite them possibly

knowing a lot of private details about the families they worked for. Servants were also presented as being proud to be able to work with the Dutch by these narrators, again emphasizing their superior position.

6.2 Analysis

Throughout this thesis we can see that the discourses and identities of the expatriates were continuously shifting during their time in Indonesia. The local population challenged the ideas about boundary maintenance and the *cordón sanitaire* that the expatriates had inherited from their colonial predecessors. The narrators had strong feelings about how a *baboe* or *djongos* was and was not allowed to interact with them and used their power to reinforce their European dominance over them. Examples we saw of this were mostly given by Mrs X: the *baboe* who was not allowed to wash her children, the *djongos* who was not allowed to work for her family anymore as her daughter became older and the *baboe*-nurse who was not allowed to wash her son. All these examples clearly show us how strongly she believed in the sexualized *cordón sanitaire* as well as the power she and her husband had in deciding upon the working lives of these servants. At the same time, Mrs X experienced local people spitting in front of her feet as she walked through the area that was outside of the safe, gated Shell community. This shows us that the boundary maintenance of the expatriates was clearly under pressure and subject to change at the communal level. In this ambivalent period, the Dutch no longer had complete ruling power over Indonesia and its citizens but many of their ideas and beliefs about social boundaries were still intact. This caused for friction not only at the communal level, but also in economic and political terms as the narrators have shown us with their examples about having to cut their money in half and no longer being allowed to show a Dutch flag. This shows us that in the period of decolonisation, there was a clash between the Dutch colonial tendency of ‘othering’ the Indonesians and the increasing political and social power of these same Indonesians. As a result, the expatriates were living in Indonesia in a time where their own identities and discourses were under increasing pressure and therefore continuously shifting. They were to show Dutchness, but not excessive Dutchness, and maintain power over their servants without the social and political situation being in their favour as it was for their colonial predecessors.

As for the fine line between showing Dutchness and excessive Dutchness, the women felt particularly impacted by this. We see that Mrs X, for example, feels that a woman who was a ‘typically Dutch housewife’ was of lesser value than her to the community because she did not ‘understand’ how an expatriate wife was supposed to live. At the same time, however,

she felt that it was good for her to bike to the *pasar* on her (presumably Dutch made) bicycle with her grocery bags hanging from the handlebars and her children on the back: a typically Dutch image and way of transportation. She validates the latter by showing that it gave her freedom and independence, which in turn made her a ‘better’ housewife. This shows us that she was continuously shifting between the identities of being a ‘proper Dutch wife’ and being a ‘proper expatriate wife’. In general, we see a strong emphasis on what ‘proper expatriate living’ was and we see that this was largely influenced by colonial ideas of ‘proper living’. This clashed with the fact that the expatriates were living in a period that we can now consider to be temporally and physically different to that of the colonials, as I have explained in this thesis. These differences in time and space again caused for ambivalences in the discourses and identities of the expatriates as they attempted to live life the same way they predecessors had before World War II. All of the aforementioned shows us that gendered constructions could be found in the discourse and identity of Dutch expatriates in Indonesia during the Indonesian decolonization period between 1945 and 1949 in many different ways at all levels of life.

6.3 Further research

Seventy years have passed since Indonesia declared its independence, and at a political level the Netherlands and Indonesia are still shifting in their relationship with each other. Around the seventy-year commemoration of the capitulation of Japan in Indonesia on 15 August 2015, debate sparked again in the Netherlands on whether the Dutch were responsible for structural and excessive force during the period 1945-1950 and a numerous new books on the topic were published (such as Gert Oostindie’s *‘Soldaat in Indonesië: Getuigenissen van een oorlog aan de verkeerde kant van de geschiedenis’* and Kester Freriks’ *‘Echo’s van Indië: De onafhankelijkheid van Indonesië in verhalen en herinneringen’*). This shows us that answering the questions regarding the responsibilities of the Dutch in Indonesia during this period of decolonization are still sensitive and that opinions vary strongly, both politically and academically. I expect that we will continue to see more publishing on this topic in the coming years.

As for the specific topic of discourse analysis on expatriate communities, I believe that a lot more research ought to still be done. Discourse is not static and is represented differently by each individual, which means that this thesis only analyses a very small fragment of expatriate discourse. If one were to answer if there is such a thing as an expatriate discourse and identity, much more research would have to be done. As I have stated throughout this

thesis, being expatriate is a culturally well-known phenomenon in the Netherlands – and many other parts of the world – yet it is still largely undiscovered in this field of academia. More sociological, cultural and historical research on expatriates, and expatriate discourse and identity in particular, could therefore be very welcome in the world of academia.

7. Glossary

<i>Baboe</i>	A female nursemaid
Belakan (alternative spellings: belakkang, blakan)	The servants' quarter at the back of the house. Literally means 'behind' or 'the back'.
Djongos	A male servant
Dodol	Sweet toffee-like candy popular throughout Asia
Kampung (alternative spelling: kampong)	Village
Soos/sociëteit	The Dutch society club for Shell employees

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