

History is written by the victor... or the loudest voice?

*A comparative study of the different narratives on the history of the
Moluccans in The Netherlands*



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Introduction

Next year, seventy years have passed since the arrival of the first Moluccans in The Netherlands. Since their arrival their history has been represented in different contexts such as in academic writing or in museum exhibitions. Recently, the Streekmuseum in Krimpenerwaard in The Netherlands has expressed the wish to include the story of the Moluccans in Krimpen aan den IJssel and their history in the region in their collection. For my internship at this institution, I was asked to set up a draft for the exhibition on the Moluccans in the Krimpenerwaard in the Streekmuseum. It turned out that the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands has been discussed quite often in academic literature. Besides this, there was a museum in Utrecht dedicated to this history, and a historic presentation in the so-called Moluccan Barack in the Dutch Open Air Museum.

It struck me that in the academic works on the Moluccans, the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands was told and retold as a story of slow and rocky integration into Dutch society. Reading about the *Moluks Historisch Museum* in Utrecht, I found that it was intended as ‘a site of the past’¹, which ‘provide[d] not only Moluccans, but also the Dutch, with the history of the Moluccans in Dutch society’². It occurred to me that the integration of the Moluccans in The Netherlands was an important – if not the most important topic, both in the academic literature as in the museum context. This made me wonder: what would individual Moluccans, especially those in the Krimpenerwaard, think of these histories? What would their historical narratives look like? When looking at the way Moluccans themselves talk about and reflect upon their history in The Netherlands, will the same narrative or story of the Moluccan history in The Netherlands to the fore or will we discover a different narrative?

The Moluccans are not an inert entity, they are a group of people which consists of individuals with contrasting views and stories. I wonder if these individual stories and views come to the fore when the Moluccan history is told in academic literature or a museum exhibition. Also, by constantly considering the narrative of the history of the Moluccans in the Netherland from merely one perspective, it locks down the understanding of the cultural dynamics and nuances surrounding the

¹ Myengko Seo, “Museum in transnationalism,” *Indonesia and the Malay World* 42, no. 123: 381.

² Seo, “Museum in transnationalism,” 384.

history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands. If the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands would be considered from multiple different perspectives, a different narrative of this history might come to the fore. If we look at the different contexts in which the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands is told, we can identify on the one hand the academic context and on the other hand the museum context. These contexts provide us with different perspectives on the story of the Moluccans in The Netherlands.

In the past, scholars like A. Cohen³ have argued for a more dynamic perspective when it comes to studying the (cultural) identity of certain communities. As the history of a certain community can be considered as part of their cultural identity, or as part of their cultural heritage, we could also argue for taking a more dynamic perspective when it comes to studying the history of a certain community. In the studies done on the Moluccans in The Netherlands, however, there is still little attention for interaction and the representation of multiple voices of the past as pointed out by Verkuyten et al., who has done research on the Moluccans in The Netherlands.⁴ In order to gain a better understanding of the multiple voices of the Moluccan past in The Netherlands and the possible interactivity between the multiple voices of the past, it is useful to draw and expand upon the concepts presented by Cohen on 'social groups as a collection of complex selves'⁵ and study the Moluccans from a dynamic perspective and thereby giving attention to individual stories and narratives in the micro-level context as well as different voices within other contexts, such as the academic or the museum context.

The research for this thesis will give more inclusive historical insights into the different narratives that come to the fore when looking at the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands in these different contexts. This could be a nice addition to the existing literature on this history as most of it is writing from only the academic perspective. The abovementioned push for the more inclusive view and for more attention for the multiple voices of the past, in the process of heritage-making is something which I plan to pursue in my research. In the academic context, it has actually often been Dutch historians or anthropologists discussing and commenting upon the Moluccan community and their history in The Netherlands drawing from

³ Anthony P. Cohen, *Self Consciousness: An Alternative Anthropology of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1994): 7.

⁴ Maykel Verkuyten, Sofie van de Calseijde and Wieger de Leur, "Third-generation South Moluccans in the Netherlands: The nature of ethnic identity," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 25, no. 1: 77-78.

⁵ Cohen, *Self Consciousness*, 7.

other Dutch researchers for their own research. Even with the efforts coming from the Moluccans themselves, such as in the *Moluks Historisch Museum*, the main focus was on how the Moluccans had integrated into Dutch society. Efforts have been made to represent more voices on for example the website of the museum. This effort needs to be continued.

Drawing on the theory presented in the articles by Cohen and Verkuyten et al.'s on the construction of ethnic cultural identity, with their shared history as a part of this, and identifying the boundaries and debates in order to understand how ethnic cultural identity is constructed, I will consider the Moluccan community and their history in The Netherlands not as one entity with one identity and history, but as a collective of individuals with contrasting opinions and perspectives on their history. The innovation is in the departure from the current tendency in academia to see the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands from one dominant perspective. I desire to push towards a more nuanced and dynamic view of the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands with attention for different perspectives.

Research question and sub-themes

The problem at hand in this thesis is the representation of the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands from one dominant perspective, both in daily life and academic work. In this thesis, I will study different visions on the past and the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands. While doing so, I will map out the conflicting or common visions, feelings and interests that arise in different contexts. I would like to do this through the practical method of emotion-networking. Taking into consideration Schorch's argument on feelings as interpretations in the process of heritage-making and Dibbits' and Willemsen's notion of emotion-networking, I am going to place several stories of the Moluccans in The Netherlands as told by the academics, the museums and the Moluccans themselves side by side and identify the tensions and communalities in these stories by confronting them with each other. These tensions can only be brought to light once more voices are heard instead of just one story of the Moluccan community as a whole from one perspective. Over the last decades, Dutch academics have told the story of the Moluccans in The Netherlands as a story of tragedy, with the train hijackings, and slow integration into Dutch society following this tragedy. This image of the Moluccans has been dwelled upon in the

past and it is time to update it as well as make it more dynamic. What will happen when we look at it with a completely different approach; when we see Dutch society as a network of voices interacting with each other. The main goal here is to go from a static to a dynamic view of history by consciously diving into what narratives come to the fore in different contexts and identify the commonalities as well as differences. Therefore, the research question which will be dealt with in this thesis is:

What conflicting or common visions, feelings and interests with regard to the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands come to the fore when studying this history in different contexts?

In order to be able to answer this question, the current visions and stories of and on the Moluccans will be laid out first. The three contexts which will be laid out side by side are the academic context, the museum context and a micro-level context. The micro-level narrative is where the Moluccans from Krimpenerwaard tell their visions, feelings and interest on the Moluccan history in The Netherlands themselves.

The notion of cultural identity

In order to be able to explore the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands and answer the research question posed in the above, I need a theoretical framework, which can frame my research. The important concepts in this research are notions on ethnic and cultural identity, how this identity is constructed and how this relates to the position of a social group in a society; this will be the first topic discussed. The second theoretical concept is ‘Emotion-Networking’, which will be used to get a better insight into the complex cultural dynamics surrounding the history and heritage of the Moluccans in The Netherlands.

It is repeatedly stressed that in current academic discourse and literature that identities of individuals and groups are constructed in interaction with other individuals and groups. Cohen argues that we must acknowledge the self consciousness of individuals in social groups instead of merely concerning ourselves with the social relations between groups.⁶

⁶ Cohen, *Self consciousness*, 6-7.

Verkuyten et al. draw from this idea and explain how the Moluccan community with a minority identity in The Netherlands constructs its identity by comparing as well as distinguishing themselves to and of other social groups⁷.

Verkuyten et al. identify two aspects involved in the abovementioned process. The first aspect is 'the familiar idea that ethnic identity is relational'⁸. They explain this aspect as the idea that identity needs a context in order to identify who shares the same ethnic identity and who does not.⁹ In his study on categorization in the social world, sociologist Jenkins also highlights the importance of similarities and differences in relation to the construction of identity; he argues:

Depending on the emphasis, there are thus two ideal-typical modes of identification: self- or group identification (internally-oriented) and the categorization of others (externally-oriented).¹⁰

In order to construct one's identity, there must be an 'other', which defines what one's identity is not. Both modes must be present in order to construct an ethnic identity. This is what is meant by 'relational', as it explains how one's ethnic identity is always formulated in relation to other ethnic identities. The second aspect revolves around 'the idea that category relations may take many different forms'¹¹. Verkuyten et al., explain this as the idea that the differences as described above, between 'us and them', can also come from inside the group. This makes the 'other' a more vague concept, whereas within the group there is 'a common imagined history, origin and culture [which] is used for self-definition'¹². Once again drawing from Jenkins, 'social identity is never unilateral'¹³, which means that there is always interaction between social groups and social groups are always influencing each other. This is what Jenkins coins as 'the *interaction order*'¹⁴, where 'self-image meets public image'¹⁵. In the *interaction order*, the way a group perceives themselves meets the way others view this group; both of these perceptions are part of the construction of identity. It

⁷ Verkuyten, Van de Calseijde and De Leur, "Third-generation South Moluccans in the Netherlands," 65.

⁸ Ibid., 65.

⁹ Ibid., 65.

¹⁰ Richard Jenkins, "Categorization: Identity, Social Process and Epistemology," *Current Sociology* 48, no. 3 (July 2000): 8.

¹¹ Verkuyten, Van de Calseijde and De Leur, "Third-generation South Moluccans in the Netherlands," 65.

¹² Ibid., 66.

¹³ Jenkins, "Categorization," 8.

¹⁴ Ibid., 11.

¹⁵ Ibid., 11.

must be noted that this phenomenon can be brought down one level more; to an individual level. The *interaction order* also happens within a group amongst individuals. Verkuyten et al. argue that it is the multiplicity of the processes of construction that forms an identity and that it would be useful to look into and analyse what people say and what they contest in order to understand the construction of ethnic identity¹⁶. Verkuyten et al., wrote about this theoretical concept of identity formation with the Moluccans as a case study. According to Verkuyten et al., three types of comparisons prevailed within the Moluccan community when defining and giving boundaries to their identity. The three comparisons were: 'comparisons within the group of Moluccans, with the Dutch and with foreigners'¹⁷.

Identity as heritage

In this thesis the construction of the identity and the historical narratives of the Moluccans in The Netherlands are at stake. As identity is lived and experienced every day, it could be considered as part of one's cultural heritage. The construction of identity is, as we have established in the above, part of a social process; it is relational.¹⁸ It is an inherently social process in which members of a community define themselves by giving boundaries to their own identity and others. Expanding on what we have already discussed concerning cultural identity, identity should be seen as part of the heritage of a community. This argument is best described by Schorch's below :

*Heritage, I argue, is not an inherited essence but an experienced process; a process in which our emotions and feelings are enmeshed with our thoughts. In fact, the dimensions of thinking and feeling heritage are tightly interwoven and could never be dichotomised into separate stages.*¹⁹

Heritage is something experienced and thus an activity; it is how we make meaning of things²⁰. Identity, as heritage, is constructed through debates and disputes, shared history and common values.

¹⁶ Verkuyten, Van de Calseijde and De Leur, "Third-generation South Moluccans in the Netherlands," 77-78.

¹⁷ Ibid., 67-68.

¹⁸ Ibid., 65.

¹⁹ Philipp Schorch, "Cultural feelings and the making of meaning," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20, no. 1: 22.

²⁰ Ibid., 24.

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Therefore, identity obviously belongs to one's heritage, as it is something experienced and something which gives meaning and common ground to a community as a whole.

If we look at identity construction, and thereby heritage construction, as a social process as described above, it is important to note that this process belongs to the members of the community and most importantly is not a singular process. Special attention must be given to how individuals experience this process. The narrative of a community, its identity and its history arises in the interaction between different members of a group in their social interaction and experiences as well as interaction with those who do not share the same cultural identity and heritage; the 'outsiders'. This is also stressed by Witz et al. in the book *Unsettled History*. They argue that history that is produced within the academic spheres does not grasp the full narrative of a past that is produced in the public.²¹ It is explained that the process of interaction and contestation over a historical narrative of a community as described results into 'public history'²². In order to analyse this process 'one must not see them [the contestations over a historical narrative] as prior to history, nor as after history, but rather as historical practices within different genres'²³. To this end, the academic, museum and micro-level context will not only be considered and discussed separately, but also in relation to each other.

Emotion-networking

As Verkuyten et al. argue for the inclusion of dispute and debate in the construction of identity, it is important to have a practical method, which can be used to serve to this end. The question which pops up as well when arguing for this inclusion is, who do you include? Who is not included? This is where emotion-networking comes in. Dibbitts and Willemsen discuss this concept in their essay "Stills of our liquid times".

²¹ Leslie Witz, Gary Minkley and Ciraj Rassool, *Unsettled History. Making South African Public Pasts* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 15.

²² *Ibid.*, 15.

²³ *Ibid.*, 15.

In this essay they argue for the creation of ‘a series of public meetings with and on emotion networks around concrete intangible heritage cases’²⁴ in order to get better insights into these heritage cases.

Rana et al. have expanded on the idea of emotion-networking as a reaction on the current studies of heritage which prove to be too narrow with a focus on only similar feelings. They explain that collective identity, or thus community identity, is indeed relevant, but that it is not always the same as personal experience or identity. These two might not always match.²⁵ This means that when looking into the history of a community, in this case the Moluccan community, not everyone might agree on the exact course of this history. There will of course be some sense of a shared history, but there are nuances and personal experiences as well as interactions between people from a network perspective, which are very relevant to us as scholars to take into consideration in order to get a more inclusive version of a community’s history. In the case of the Moluccan history in The Netherlands, this means that I will look at this history in different contexts in order to get a more nuanced idea of what the different narratives are and if these narratives are similar or diverse. From the network perspective as described in the above, one is wary of the possible differences between the narratives presented in the different contexts, but also of the possible differences within one context. Rana et al. rightfully point out that heritage-making is not a neutral process; it is influenced by different stakeholders who have different interests in the project at hand. Therefore, they argue for ‘an active quest for alternative voices (to be confronted with each other in conversation) and the exploration and visualisation of these different voices.’²⁶ The method used for this is emotion-networking, which is explained as ‘addressing the different views, interests and emotions existing and arising around a heritage item,’²⁷ or in this case around the history and identity of the Moluccans in Krimpen aan den IJssel.

By combining Verkuyten et al.’s concepts for the inclusion of the debate in the construction of the ethnic identity of a community and Jana et al.’s concept of emotion-networking, I hope to move away from the current view of the history of the

²⁴ Hester Dibbits and Marlous Willemsen, “Stills of Our Liquid Times an Essay Towards Collecting Today’s Intangible Cultural Heritage”, (2014): 196.

²⁵ Jasmijn Rana, Marlous Willemsen and Hester Dibbits, “Moved by the tears of others: emotion networking in the heritage sphere,” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 23, no. 10: 977-978.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 978.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 978.

Moluccans in The Netherlands from one dominant perspective, by letting different voices in different contexts come to the fore and contrasting these different narratives by different the voices with each other. For this thesis, I will look into where the tension can be identified in these narratives and how these tensions can be explained.

Nature of the sources

As laid out in the above, in my research I will actively look for the different voices of the history of Moluccans in The Netherlands within the three different contexts. First, a careful consideration and study of the currently available and relevant secondary literature is conducted in order to see which narrative comes to the fore in an academic context. As already shown in the above, the current existing views of academics on the Moluccans in The Netherlands will be laid out side by side in order to identify where there is agreement or disagreement in the field. The challenge to be expected here is that I will consider these articles as part of my historical research and therefore these articles are actually not secondary sources in my research. It will be challenging to treat these articles as primary source material as I will need to pay attention to different aspects of the articles; it is not necessarily about what is written in one particular article, but the focus is on how the different available articles relate to each other in different aspects. It is interesting to note that most of the literature on the Moluccans in the Netherlands is mostly published in the 1990s. This seems to suggest that since then not much has changed with regard to the Moluccans in The Netherlands. After this, I will look into the narrative that comes to the fore within a museum context. To this end, I will be looking at two museums in The Netherlands that have done exhibitions explicitly dedicated to the Moluccans and their history. As we are amidst the COVID-19 crisis, I am unfortunately unable to visit these exhibitions. Therefore I am dependent on the information available online as well as descriptions of the exhibitions made by others. Furthermore, I will look at photographs and the online database to get a grasp on what narrative comes to the fore in the museum context.

In order to get the narrative from the Moluccans themselves as well, I planned to conduct interviews. These interviews have been conducted within the area of the Krimpen aan den IJssel as this is the location of the Streekmuseum for whom this history will be recorded. Amongst those who have been interviewed are both second

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as well as third generation Moluccans living close to or in the Moluccan neighbourhood in Krimpen aan den IJssel. The challenge here was two-fold. Firstly, I had to find people willing to be interviewed for this purpose. Once again, COVID-19 made this process more challenging as I was unable to meet and connect with possible candidates for the interviews. Furthermore, the candidates I had already spoken to were reluctant to do it over digital channel such as Skype or videocall. Despite these circumstances, I was able to conduct four valuable interviews which gave me a lot of insight into the Krimpenerwaard narrative of the Moluccan history. Secondly, and maybe more important, is my own position in conducting these interviews with the Moluccans. The interviewees often referred to my own descent and posed several questions about it. I am of Dutch-Indonesian as well as Moluccan descent and this was mentioned several times by the interviewees as something they experienced as pleasant. The interviewees indicated that they felt that due to my descent, I would be in a good position to understand them better and correctly. Even though this might have made for a comfortable atmosphere for the interviewees, but it should still be noted that because of this my own position in this debate might be less neutral.

Method

The method used for my research will be a combination of literature study, archival research, interviewing and emotion-networking in an adjusted form²⁸. Through qualitative research, namely by both conducting interviews and drawing upon literary research, the research question of where the tensions and similarities can be found when we lay out the narratives of Moluccan history that come to the fore in three different contexts will be examined and hopefully answered. The qualitative interviews which were held were semi-structured.²⁹ The interviews are intended to be flexible in order to get detailed answers.³⁰ The participants who consented to being interviewed are my 'sample' for my fieldwork. I have selected the participants

²⁸ The original form in which an emotion-networking session takes place is unfortunately not possible at this moment due to COVID-19, but I will still use this method to identify the stakeholders in the process of heritage-making in the Moluccan case as well as their history.

²⁹ Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 469-471.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 470.

through ‘stratified random sampling’³¹, which means ‘stratifying the population by a criterion’³². The criteria in this case are: being an inhabitant of the Krimpenerwaard, being associated with the Moluccans living in the Krimpenerwaard (by living close to the neighbourhood) and by having a stake in the inclusion of the history of the Moluccans in the Krimpenerwaard into the Streekmuseum.

Emotion-networking enables us to map different interests surrounding heritage and ‘ensures that heritage making offers more than a feel good exercise between people who already share the same interests.’³³ Therefore, at least one emotion network session was supposed to be organised in order to be able to study the interaction between all the different stakeholders involved in the process of including the history of the Moluccans in de Krimpenerwaard into the museum. Unfortunately, this did not happen due to the aforementioned challenges. Emotion networks stimulate us to move away from heritage as being bound to a certain community and move towards an ‘approach that can be sensitive to the dynamic, relational character of culture’³⁴. It is a very reflective and inclusive method for dealing with heritage, both tangible and intangible, but at the same time it could prove to be a challenging method. I still used this method in order to map out the different narratives presented by different people or institutions within the three different contexts.

By mapping out all these different voices and claims on the Moluccan history, it might be difficult to keep a good overview of what claim belongs to who. It is also a challenge to identify all the different stakeholders in the process of heritage-making of and by the Moluccans and if some stakeholders are skipped over the network might not be as complete as it could be. Nevertheless, it is a very future-oriented method and it binds together different groups and people with perhaps conflicting ideas and feelings on certain heritage items or processes.³⁵ In the below, I have visualized the initial overview of the voices in the different contexts. Throughout the chapters this figure will be expanded upon until in the end we have a full overview of the network of stakeholders and their interactions with regard to the narratives on the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands. The arrows indicate the direction of

³¹ Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 192.

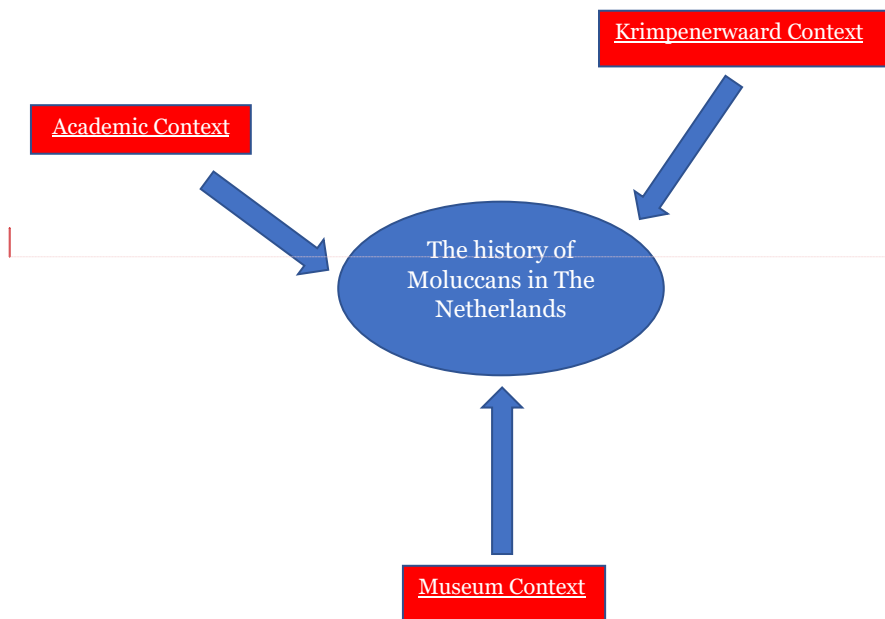
³² *Ibid.*, 192.

³³ Rana, Willemsen and Dibbits, “Moved by the tears of others,” 979.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 980.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 985.

the information or interaction flow; it can either be one- or two-way interaction. For now I have only indicated the different contexts in which the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands has been discussed. In the following chapters, I will add on to this figure as we will uncover more voices.



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Figure 1. Visualisation of the different narrators of the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands.

Chapter 1 Dominant Narratives and Claims on History in Academic Literature

This chapter will look into the dominant narratives within the academic literature on the Moluccans and their history in The Netherlands. As noted by G. Oostindie, a professor at the Royal Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, in his book on the postcolonial era in The Netherlands, ‘almost all studies of Moluccan culture and identity have been written by ‘outsiders’³⁶. The section below will explore and thereby bring to the fore the dominant or conflicting views on the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands which come into existence when studying and exploring the existing academic literature on this. The literature that was available for my research on this specific topic was limited due to restricted access to the several libraries during COVID-19. I have used multiple academic online databases and selected the work that was related, or closely related, to my research based on the authors, date of publication, journal or publisher and citations. Besides this, I have followed online lectures and contacted several institutions with hopes for gaining access to more literature, but to no avail.³⁷ While researching the academic literature that was available to me, a few scholars were cited regularly with regards to the subject Moluccans in The Netherlands. In this chapter I will map out the claims on Moluccan history in The Netherlands by the different academia and describe the way in which they might relate or differ from each other. First, I will provide a short historical background for context after which I will dive into the different authors and claims on the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands.

1.1 A Short History

The Moluccan islands are located in Southeast Asia and are nowadays considered as part of Indonesia. During the Second World War and the Japanese occupation of Indonesia, the KNIL (Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger), which consisted of

³⁶ Gert Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands. Sixty-five years of forgetting, commemorating, silencing* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press: 2011), 116.

³⁷ I have followed an online lecture by Wim Manuhutu (to whom I will return at a later point in this chapter), but it was on the colonial period, which is not the period I am concerned with in this thesis. Besides this, I have contacted Museum Sophiahof, but their library was closed down due to COVID-19. Lastly, I contacted the Open Air Museum for additional literature, but unfortunately I did not hear back.

mostly Moluccan men, fought against the Japanese.³⁸ After Indonesia declared independence, ‘the independent Republic of the South Moluccans (RMS: *Republik Maluku Selatan*) was proclaimed’³⁹ in 1950. Indonesia, however, did not agree with this and a guerrilla war broke out. The first generation of Moluccans came to the Netherlands in the 1950s and consisted of these KNIL soldiers. A group of KNIL soldiers came as ‘the Dutch government decided to ship the Moluccan soldiers and their families to the Netherlands for a limited period of time.’⁴⁰ Because these KNIL soldiers were formally employed by the Dutch government, the Dutch government was responsible for them which resulted into the abovementioned decision for them to be brought to The Netherlands.⁴¹ The KNIL soldiers were actually hoping to receive aid from the Dutch in their ongoing struggle for RMS.⁴² A few thousand KNIL soldiers and their family members were stationed in camps awaiting the outcome of the situation in Indonesia at that time. The idea still lived that the issue with Indonesia in providing the Moluccans with their own state or recognize their independence would either be resolved or calmed down⁴³. The intention of the Dutch government was never to make their stay permanent, because the end goal was always for the KNIL soldiers and their families to return to the Moluccas; this ultimately did not happen. Many of the Moluccans who were stationed in The Netherlands held on to the idea of RMS.⁴⁴ Minimal efforts were made to integrate the Moluccans into the Dutch society, as the idea existed that they would not be staying for an extensive period of time. As a result, the Moluccans lived separately from Dutch society. Interestingly, most Moluccans still live in secluded neighbourhoods in The Netherlands.⁴⁵

³⁸ Randi Marselis, “Digitising migration heritage: A case study off a minority museum,” *MedieKultur* 50 (2011): 86.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁴¹ Fridus Steijlen, “Molukkers in Nederland, een sociale geschiedenis van uitersten,” *Historisch Tijdschrift Groniek* 208-209 (2015): 222.

⁴² Dieter Bartels, “Can the Train Ever Be Stopped Again? Developments in the Moluccan Community in the Netherlands before and after the Hijackings”, *Indonesia* 41 (April, 1986): 25-27.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁴⁴ Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands*, 115.

⁴⁵ An example of this would be the Moluccan neighbourhood in Krimpen aan den IJssel, which will be the subject of the future inclusion of the history of the Moluccans into the collection of the Streekmuseum Krimpenwaard.

The Moluccans who arrived in The Netherlands, as aforementioned, were former members of the KNIL army and their families. Because of the tensions with regard to RMS, the identity of the Moluccans in The Netherlands was considered to be mostly political. Because of them clinging to the ideal situation where they would one day return to their own independent republic, the integration process was severely slowed down 'by at least a generation'⁴⁶. It must be noted that it could be possible that this ideal was not only kept alive by the Moluccans themselves, but also by the Dutch government. Quoting a Dutch newspaper from 1978:

*De Nederlandse regering heeft zich tot het uiterste ingespannen voor het zelfbeschikkingsrecht van de Molukkers. Juist deze houding van de regering heeft echter het streven van de Zuidmolukkers naar onafhankelijkheid in ons land versterkt. Moreel is de regering daardoor mede verantwoordelijk voor het ideaal dat binnen de Molukse gemeenschap leeft.*⁴⁷

This newspaper quote from the 70s is an example of how the Dutch newspapers reported on the situation with regard to RMS. The ongoing struggle for the recognition of RMS seemed to be one of the pillars to the identity of the Moluccans in The Netherlands, but in the 1970s the situation shifted. In 1975 a group of Moluccan extremists hijacked a train and the Indonesian consulate was seized by the same group. In 1977 another train was hijacked for a period of almost three weeks. Furthermore, an elementary school was occupied and in both places a significant amount of people were being held hostage.⁴⁸ After these events, the attitude towards RMS within the Moluccan community shifted; I will return to this shift in the section below. In the next section the literature on the train hijackings and their impact will be discussed and reflected upon.

⁴⁶ Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands*, 115.

⁴⁷ "Nederland is moreel ook verantwoordelijk voor Moluks ideaal," *De Telegraaf*, March 1, 1978, accessed June 22, 2020, <https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=treinkapingen+molukkers&coll=ddd&identificer=ddd:011199286:mpeg21:a0395&resultsidentificer=ddd:011199286:mpeg21:a0395>. Translation: The Dutch government has made every effort to ensure the self-determination of the Moluccans. This very attitude has strengthened the pursuit of independence by the South-Moluccans in our country. Because of this, the government morally is partly responsible for the ideal that lives among the Moluccan community. Translation by the author.

⁴⁸ Bartels, "Can the Train Ever Be Stopped Again?," 34.

1.2 Negotiating cultural identity

As aforementioned, there are several academics that have written about the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands. One of those academics is Dieter Bartels. Bartels published several articles and books on the Moluccans concerned with history, identity and ethnicity, both in the Moluccas as well as in The Netherlands, between the 1980s up until the start of the 2000s. Ten years after the infamous train hijackings that happened in the years between 1975-1977, Bartels published an article named 'Can the train ever be stopped again? Developments in the Moluccan community before and after the hijackings' in which he discusses the social impact on the Moluccan community in The Netherlands in the decade after the actual hijackings. It is interesting to look into what Bartels wrote on this subject as these hijackings are often one of the first things that come to mind for many people when thinking about the Moluccans in The Netherlands.

First Bartels considers the period leading up to these train hijackings. Bartels points to the relocation of the Moluccan families from the camps to a new housing situation; namely, amongst the Dutch people. This meant that their lives forcefully became more intertwined with the Dutch people, broken away from the former relatively sheltered life in the camps.⁴⁹ Reflecting on this, one could see how this development could either strengthen their identity as it could be formulated against that of the Dutch or weaken it as it is knocked out of balance due to the sudden new interactions and situations in which the Moluccans found themselves. Bartels argues for the latter, emphasizing the impact on the youth as they 'watched the older generation suffer, increasingly more disillusioned and ever more disappointed over what seemed to them the treason committed by the Dutch.'⁵⁰ Bartels implies a split amongst the Moluccans themselves; namely between the older and younger generation. The Moluccan youth started to develop their identity within a new situation, whereas the older generation tried to hang on to their old ideals still with regard to RMS. This uncertainty, in combination with the anger towards the Dutch government, was the main sentiment leading up to the train hijackings. In the period following these traumatic events for both the Dutch as well as the Moluccans involved in this tragedy, Bartels identifies two significant developments amongst the Moluccans.

⁴⁹ Bartels, "Can the Train Ever Be Stopped Again?," 33.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 34.

These two developments were ‘a strong resurgence of Moluccan identity, including a re-evaluation and reinterpretation of traditional values and customs’⁵¹ and the acceptance that they would not be returning to The Moluccas.⁵² In re-evaluating and accepting their position, Bartels argues, the Moluccans in the Netherlands were in search for their identity in The Netherlands.⁵³ Bartels emphasis is on the social consequences of the train hijackings and the aftermath for the Moluccans. Emerging from Bartels’ article is a narrative of a migrant community searching and struggling to define their own identity in a foreign country.

1.3 Negotiating political identity

A few years after Bartels’ article was published an article by Fridus Steijlen appeared in 1992. The article is titled ‘Nationalism in exile: nationalism among Moluccans in The Netherlands 1951-1990’ and was published two years after an escalated demonstration after the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of Republik Maluku Selatan, the proclamation of the independent nation of the Moluccans.⁵⁴ Fridus Steijlen is a professor in Moluccan Migration and Culture in a comparative perspective and is repeatedly cited by others in the field when it comes to Moluccans in The Netherlands.⁵⁵ In this particular article, Steijlen discusses the articulation of Moluccan nationalism in The Netherlands from the moment of arrival up until almost fifteen years after the train hijackings. Unlike Bartels, Steijlen opted for a more political lens when it comes to the discussion of the aftermath of the train hijackings. As this article was published after the article by Bartels, it has taken a longer period of time into consideration. Besides this, it is not unimaginable that Bartels and Steijlen were aware of each others’ work on the subject as they conducted research on the same subject in the same time period. These two academics are cited the most often in later work on the Moluccans in The Netherlands. Steijlen argues that the hijackings caused a new way of thinking within the Moluccan community when it comes to RMS. This new way of thinking was influenced by two factors according to Steijlen. The first factor was the fact that after a long period of isolation, the Moluccans moved

⁵¹ Bartels, “Can the Train ever Be Stopped again?,” 34.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 44.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

⁵⁴ Fridus Steijlen, “Nationalism in exile: nationalism among Moluccans in The Netherlands 1951-1990,” *History of European Ideas* 15, no. 4-6: 779.

⁵⁵ Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, “Personal Profile”, accessed on June 2, 2020, <https://research.vu.nl/en/persons/fridus-steijlen>.

out of the camps into the neighbourhoods where they started to really take part in Dutch society, in line with what Bartels also argued. The second factor was that due to policy changes, Moluccans were able to visit the Moluccas and see what they were fighting for in the RMS struggle.⁵⁶ The new way of thinking was the idea that Moluccans still felt that the Moluccas should be independent, the nationalistic feelings remained, but it was not as much of a pressing issue for the Moluccans in The Netherlands anymore as they felt that their stay in The Netherlands would not be as temporary as firstly anticipated.⁵⁷ Both Bartels and Steijlen actually seem to argue the same thing, even though their angle might be different as aforementioned. They argue that the tension between the Moluccans and the Dutch government seemed to decrease as the Moluccans were more concerned with negotiating their own cultural identity in this new situation in which it became clear that their return to the Moluccas had become a distant dream. This did not necessarily mean that the Moluccan nationalist feelings in The Netherlands decreased; this was still a large part of their cultural identity in The Netherlands. It meant that they had to renegotiate their position in Dutch society amongst themselves and eventually toward Dutch society.

1.4 Negotiating the ideal: RMS

The next article I found during my research that was connected to this subject was published in 2002 and written by Hans van Amersfoort. This scholar refers to both authors, Bartels and Steijlen, in his article 'The Waxing and Waning of a Diaspora: Moluccans in The Netherlands, 1950-2002'. Van Amersfoort is concerned with the same timeframe as Steijlen with the addition of a decade. Van Amersfoort is a professor of cultural and population geography and is thus mainly concerned with how the Moluccan diaspora integrated into Dutch society after the turbulent period during the 1970s.⁵⁸ Van Amersfoort largely argues along the same lines as Steijlen, with a focus on the political dimension of the Moluccan community in The Netherlands. Van Amersfoort builds upon the statements made by Steijlen and identifies two other developments amongst the Moluccans following the hijackings.

⁵⁶ Steijlen, "Nationalism in exile", 783.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 789.

⁵⁸ Van Amersfoort, "The Waxing and Waning of a Diaspora: Moluccans in the Netherlands, 1950-2002", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30, no. 1: 151.

The first development was the decrease in the support for the terrorist acts amongst the Moluccans, where they first supported the means to an end.⁵⁹ 'The end', in this case, was the political recognition of the Dutch government of RMS. RMS was, according to Van Amersfoort, an ideal of the community and their desire which was held onto as it was still hoped that one day they would return to the Moluccan islands, in line with what Steijlen argued as well.⁶⁰ The second development is connected to this as the diaspora, or community in The Netherlands, started to question the validity of the actions as the goals were becoming too abstract or symbolic.⁶¹ Van Amersfoort argues that after the train hijackings, RMS became a distant dream for the Moluccans in the Netherlands and that the pursuit of this ideal was losing its intensity.⁶² Bartels, Steijlen and Van Amersfoort mostly argue along the same lines even though there is almost a decade between these publications. It seems they were all aware of each other's work in the field as they refer to each other's publication chronologically and that may have caused for a quite similar narrative.

There are some nuances that differ amongst these publications. Left unmentioned by Bartels, yet emphasized by Van Amersfoort, is the idea that initially the Dutch public supported the Moluccans in The Netherlands in their struggle for RMS. The Moluccans received both moral as well as financial support from the Dutch.⁶³ This possibly strengthened the sentiment that Moluccans experienced of their ideal being supported. Furthermore, this underlines why the Moluccan youth would feel betrayed by the Dutch if they really experienced a decline in this support as time went on. This can also be explained through the initial Dutch policy towards the Moluccans and their stay in The Netherlands. As the Dutch government was first under the impression that the Moluccans would return to the Moluccas shortly, no form of integration policy was adapted towards the Moluccans.⁶⁴ Therefore, it was in the best interests of the Dutch government to support the RMS struggle as they were now 'temporarily' hosting these people and it was best to keep them 'happy' and on your side. The best way to do this is to support an ideal that was deemed very important by the Moluccans. Van Amersfoort also identifies some gaps in the

⁵⁹ Van Amersfoort, "The Waxing and Waning of a Diaspora," 159.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 158.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 159.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 166.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 156.

narrative presented by Steijlen in his academic work. Van Amersfoort stresses the importance of considering the role of the Moluccan leaders in guiding the, then, radicalising Moluccan youth. Van Amersfoort argues that the leaders were threatened by the radicalising youth, but at the same time their conviction and radicalisation offered an opportunity to strengthen their own cultural identity as a Moluccan in The Netherlands as this radicalization was used to ‘other’ the Dutch for example.⁶⁵ Van Amersfoort has written this article some years after Steijlen, so there would have been some additional time to reflect on this specific matter. Especially because this is a subject that is always ‘in motion’, as we are concerned with processes and not static situations.

1.5 Negotiating historical markers

In 2006, a book was published by aforementioned academic F. Steijlen in collaboration with H. Smeets. H. Smeets is a historian with an extensive career background with regard to the Moluccans in The Netherlands; as advisor Moluccans for the minister of Education, Culture and Science as well as a board member for the *Moluks Historisch Museum*. The book *In Nederland Gebleven. De geschiedenis van Molukkers 1951-2006* describes the complete history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands in the indicated timeframe. In the introduction it is stated that the focus of their research for this particular book was on the process of integration and they defined it as ‘the participation of Moluccans in Dutch society’⁶⁶. As aforementioned, this is not an unknown lens as it is often used in the publications by Steijlen and also Van Amersfoort. Integration has been one of the major themes when it comes to publications on the Moluccans in The Netherlands. Besides this, this book focuses on identity; Smeets and Steijlen define the way this book will consider it as ‘how Moluccans, as a group, developed their identity’⁶⁷. The way it is defined here, our understanding of the Moluccan identity might be locked down as the departure point is community-based due to their consideration of the Moluccans as a group.

⁶⁵ Van Amersfoort, “The Waxing and Waning of a Diaspora,” 162.

⁶⁶ Henk Smeets and Fridus Steijlen, *In Nederland gebleven. De geschiedenis van Molukkers 1951-2006* (Amsterdam/Utrecht: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker/Moluks Historisch Museum, 2006), 13.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

By defining it in this manner, it immediately excludes individual stories and views from the narrative, which they will present in this book.

Smeets and Steijlen identify eight important markers in the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands when it comes to their integration process as well as their identity formation. The first four markers take up the years up until the 1960s and all have to do with the arrival of the KNIL soldiers and their housing situation, from camp to quarter or neighbourhood.⁶⁸ These four markers were all controlled or brought about by the Dutch government, according to Smeets and Steijlen.⁶⁹ The next marker was the ‘radicalising of the second generation’⁷⁰ and the way everything settled down afterwards in line with what both Bartels and Van Amersfoort also argued as the next marker. Those markers were brought about by Moluccan initiative and not the Dutch government. The seventh marker was the *Gezamenlijke Verklaring* in 1986; a joint effort by both the Dutch government and the Moluccans, which would provide the former KNIL soldiers with compensation for their efforts during their service, allow measures to be taken to fight the unemployment amongst the Moluccan youth as one of the social consequences of the hijackings as well as provide funding for the foundation of a museum dedicated to Moluccan history.⁷¹ I will return to the discussion of this museum in the next chapter. The last marker, according to Smeets and Steijlen, is the war on the Moluccas which broke out in 1999 and is referred to as the *Kerusuhan*.⁷² This conflict really shocked the Moluccans in The Netherlands and led to important conversations between the Islamic and Christian groups in The Netherlands, as the *Kerusuhan* is often described as a war of religion, as well as initiatives to send help from The Netherlands to the Moluccas.⁷³ This could be seen as a new way in which the Moluccans in The Netherlands organized themselves and a new way in which they related to the Moluccas. The creation of these organizations could have caused for reinforced bonds to the motherland and thus to the ideal of RMS. In this book a very similar narrative to what I have discussed in the above comes to the fore; a community that arrived here for a temporary stay, which then turned out to be permanent.

⁶⁸ Smeets and Steijlen, *In Nederland gebleven*, 361.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 361.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 361. Original text: “de radicalisering van de tweede generatie”.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 305.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 361.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 343-344.

Due to the misconception of the longevity of the stay of the Moluccans their integration process did not start until the 1970s with as an important turning point the train hijackings and the aftermath. This book does add to some later developments and states that in the present the Moluccans have become more integrated, but still kept their own cultural identity. The difference is that they no longer formulated their identity against that of the Dutch, but more in line with Dutch society.⁷⁴ It is interesting that the narrative that the authors set out in the introduction is also the eventual outcome of their research. The narrative in this book seems very similar to what is described in the above as the same themes are guiding the narrative presented.

As mentioned in the above, this book is written in collaboration with the *Moluks Historisch Museum* (MHM). The former director of the *MHM*: Wim Manuhutu, however, should be mentioned in this section. Wim Manuhutu is a person who has a role in both the academic and the museum context, because besides being the director of the museum he has also published several articles as a historian.⁷⁵ In 2011, Wim Manuhutu and a fellow historian Victor Joseph published the book *Molukkers in Beeld* on the history of Moluccans in The Netherlands. Unfortunately, as the libraries were closed I was not able to borrow the book and it was no longer for sale on several websites. Because of this, I was not able to include this study in this thesis.⁷⁶ It is interesting to see how these two different contexts seem to collide or maybe even intertwine.

1.6 Negotiating across generations

One of the most recent publications on the Moluccans in The Netherlands is a part of a chapter in the book *Postcolonial Netherlands. Sixty-five years of forgetting, commemorating, silencing* by G.J. Oostindie. Oostindie refers to both Bartels and Steijlen in his notes, but not Van Amersfoort. The paragraph dedicated to the Moluccans in The Netherlands is titled ‘Moluccan identity around and after the RMS’

⁷⁴ Smeets and Steijlen, *In Nederland gebleven*, 375-376.

⁷⁵ Also see <https://manu2u.com/over-manu2u/>.

⁷⁶ Wim Manuhutu also gave an online seminar on the Moluccans and their role in Dutch history during the COVID-19 pandemic, which I attended. As this lecture was concerned with the colonial period, it was not relevant to my current research.

and is concerned with the ‘route of integration’ undertaken by the Moluccans.⁷⁷ As this is published much later than the other publications discussed, it is interesting to see the difference in the way Oostindie addresses RMS. Even in the title of the paragraph; to use ‘After RMS’ is a very interesting choice as it implies that RMS is no longer existing or of relevance to the Moluccan community. This would mean that post 2000, the Moluccans in The Netherlands completely abandoned the political ideal of RMS whereas Bartels, Steijlen as well as van Amersfoort argue that before and around 2000 this was not the case. They all argue that there was a shift in the way the political ideal of RMS was experienced and articulated by the Moluccans, but they also note that it did not disappear. Oostindie argues that in the period between 1990 up until 2010, ‘the Moluccan community has nonetheless become more Dutch’⁷⁸ and cites a third generation Moluccan who said that most are no longer aware of the KNIL history of their grandparents.⁷⁹ This is completely at variance with what Bartels and Steijlen push for as they emphasize the way in which Moluccans value their history and especially their connection to their grandparents who first came here. It is of course important to note that Bartels and Steijlen are concerned with a different generation than Oostindie. This means that two different generations are being compared here. Considering the work by Steijlen and Bartels; they are probably referring to the second generation Moluccans, based on the year of publication whereas Oostindie could be referring to the third generation. It could be the case that there is a significant shift in the way Moluccans negotiate and articulate their identity in The Netherlands, but in order to be able to really state such a claim, more research should be done into these possible generational tensions. I will return to this in the third chapter.

Oostindie ends this paragraph with the sentence ‘almost all studies of Moluccan culture and identity have been written by ‘outsiders’ – certainly in this sense, Moluccan integration has not been successfully completed.’⁸⁰ Here we touch upon a very interesting note in two ways. Firstly, Oostindie calls out the fact that much of the available studies, and thus literature, on the Moluccans, have not been conducted or written by Moluccans themselves. It has always been a study by an outsider, which of course can give an idea and sketch an outline of the Moluccan

⁷⁷ Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands*, 115.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 116.

culture and identity, but might never fully grasp all the nuances and motivations these people experience in their daily lives and have experienced in the past. In order to fully grasp these processes, a combination of both insider and outsider perspectives would make for a more complete narrative. In the second part of this sentence, Oostindie states that in this sense the integration of the Moluccans into Dutch society seems to be unsuccessful. Moluccan integration into Dutch society is an often touched upon subject by all the scholars I have mentioned and discussed in the above. The interesting point here, however is the fact that it is often mentioned, but not dived into. All seem to argue that it was a slow process and Oostindie even argues it to be unsuccessful, but the reason for this remains unclear.

Reviewing the above literature, a few important points come to the fore. Firstly, the same narrative, which touches upon the same themes is often presented within the same timeframe in all the academic work I have discussed in the above. A narrative arises of a 'community' that arrived here in The Netherlands with the intention of being here temporarily, but eventually had to come to terms with a more permanent stay. As a turning point in their history, the train hijackings during the turbulent second half of the 1970s are identified. After this, the Moluccans adjusted the way they articulated their cultural identity here in The Netherlands and they adjusted their political ideals as well as nationalist feelings with regard to RMS. Furthermore, the narrative points to a change in Dutch government policy towards the Moluccans in the sense that there was a push for an efficient integration policy. Moving further along in time, the next generation of Moluccans has become more Dutch, but integration is yet to be completed.

All in all, a narrative of a migrant community with a slow and rocky integration process comes to the fore when laying all these claims out next to each other. Little attention is given to generational tensions or differentiations and much attention has been given to the turning point in their history in The Netherlands as well as the sentiment of trauma and its consequences. The generational tensions have been referred to in the context of the train hijackings by Bartels and Van Amersfoort as these events impacted the youth in a different way than the first generation Moluccans and the circumstances caused for some of the younger generation to radicalize. There is no or little room for multiple voices in the narrative presented by the authors; could it really be that all members of the Moluccan community were in favour of RMS at the time of the hijackings? Was it really the case that all Moluccans

in The Netherlands were mournful about the fact that they would not be returning to The Moluccas? Because the Moluccan community is approached from one particular angle; the angle of slow integration and past trauma due to the tensions surrounding the train hijackings, it becomes a very static entity acting with one intention and having one shared sentiment towards their stay in The Netherlands. This particular vision on the past dominates a large part of academic discourse on the Moluccans in The Netherlands.

1.7 What is not discussed?

The narrative arising from the academic literature on the Moluccans in The Netherlands is one of a 'community', which was first united and strengthened by the ideal of RMS. Once this ideal seemed to get out of reach, it was this very ideal which caused friction amongst the Moluccans themselves. At the same time, it was the trauma resulting from the aftermath of the train hijackings, which brought the Moluccans closer together. It was this shared trauma, which resulted into the acceptance of a 'collective guilt'⁸¹ as well as 'a deep appreciation for the sacrifice the youngsters had made for their people'⁸², that brought the Moluccans together and maybe even more connected than before. What struck me when reflecting upon the literature available to me on the Moluccans in The Netherlands and their history was that indeed most of it is written by Dutch scholars, who are not part of this narrative causing the narrative presented in the academic literature to be essentially one-sided. One could say that because of this the narrative presented is incomplete, because the Dutch scholars only write about the events which also concerned the Dutch public such as the train hijackings. There are, however, many cultural events that take place yearly amongst the Moluccans, which could provide a lot more depth to our current understanding of the cultural identity of the Moluccans in The Netherlands.

An example of this could be the celebration of Independence Day on the 25th of April by the Moluccans; there is not much literature available on what is actually celebrated on this day and what rituals take place even though this celebration has been taking place annually since the arrival of the Moluccans.

⁸¹ Bartels, "Can the Train Ever Be Stopped Again?," 35-36.

⁸² Ibid., 35-36. The youngsters mentioned here refer to the victims on the side of the hijackers who passed away in the dismantling of the hostage situation by the Dutch forces.

Another example would be the meaning of *adat* for the older as well as the younger Moluccan generations. *Adat* are the rites and customs that have travelled from The Moluccas to The Netherlands and that are still lived up to today. Examples of this are the way Moluccans do their communion or their *sidi*, which is their religious confirmation. These are essential parts of the cultural identity of the Moluccans in The Netherlands, yet the understanding of this identity is limited to shared trauma and lost ideals. These other cultural events need to be reflected upon also within academic literature in order to get a broader understanding of the cultural dynamics amongst the Moluccans in The Netherlands. I will return to this in the third chapter. This chapter has looked into what narrative comes to the fore on the Moluccans and their history in The Netherlands within an academic context. What I found is that Bartels is one of the scholars often cited by others who have conducted research and the Moluccans and their history in The Netherlands and seems to be the first to publish on the Moluccans in The Netherlands with a special focus on the Moluccan ethnicity and struggle.⁸³ The focus is often on the second generation Moluccans as they were the generation involved in the hijackings. As Steijlen states, ‘in 1966 second generation Moluccans started to take the initiative in political action.’⁸⁴ Bartels states the same, but with the focus on an emotional level; ‘the young people felt it was their responsibility to restore their parents’ honor,’⁸⁵ As visible from the quotes, the first generation Moluccans are discussed marginally with regard to their reaction to the train hijackings. Most of the publications have been published before the year 2000. I think that over time the situation has changed with regard to their social standing and the way they experience their history as both Dutch and Moluccan. Therefore, it is very plausible that if more research would be conducted on the Moluccans in The Netherlands today, a different narrative might come to the fore.

In the book by Smeets and Steijlen, however, a very similar narrative comes to the fore even though it is published more recently. Smeets and Steijlen are still concerned with the same period as the other publications in their book, so it could also be the case that within the academic context the narrative just remained the same because of all the academics using the same perspective. Furthermore, it is interesting to see that in the book the references made are often to their own work or

⁸³ “List of Publications: Dieter Bartels,” August 24, 2005, accessed on June 2, 2020, <http://www.nunusaku.com/pdfs/publicationlist.pdf>.

⁸⁴ Steijlen, “Nationalism in Exile,” 782.

⁸⁵ Bartels, “Can the train ever be stopped again?,” 34.

Commented [r5]: Kan dit hier wel op deze manier?

that of Bartels; this does explain the similarities in the narrative as the same research is drawn upon time and time again. Besides this, it should be noted that this particular book was written for the Dutch government as an evaluation of the Moluccan history over the past half-decade and in collaboration with the *Moluks Historisch Museum*.⁸⁶ The preface of this book is even written by the chairman of the board of the *Moluks Historisch Museum*. Lastly, the introduction states that the authors' research was guided by Prof. dr. G.J. Oostindie, who also wrote the book I have discussed in the last paragraph of this chapter. Reflecting on this, it seems that there is a small circle of scholars who have some kind of monopoly on this narrative as they keep referring to each other as well as guiding each other's work. If we look at it in this way, the similarities in the narrative that comes to the fore within an academic context could be explained through this monopoly. I made a visualization of the network within the academic context through the figure I have introduced in the method section of the introduction. Now that the academic context narrative has been laid out, this figure will map out the different people involved and their claims as well as the possible interaction between the different stakeholders.

⁸⁶ Smeets and Steijlen, *In Nederland gebleven*, 9-10.

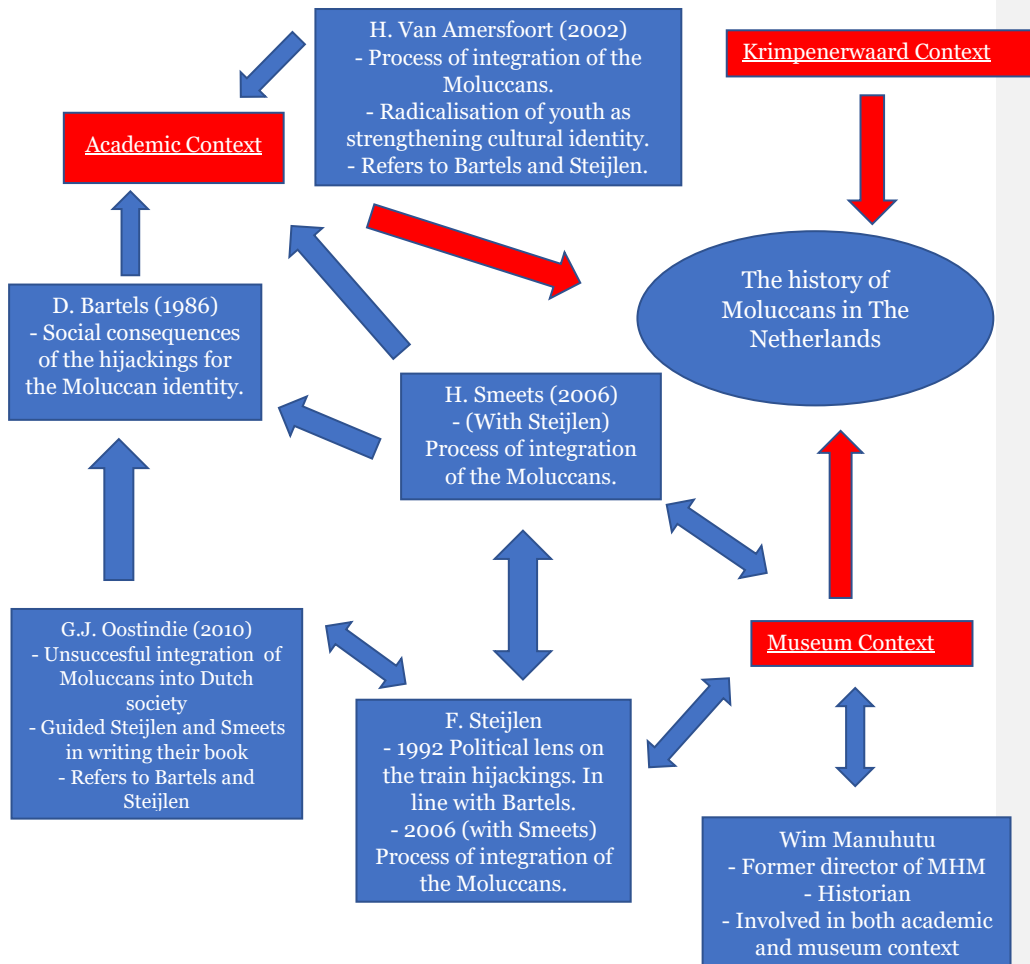


Figure 2. Visualisation of the different narrators in the academic context of the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands.

As visible from the figure, there is a lot of interaction between all the different voices within the academic context. There is even an interaction between different contexts as H. Smeets and F. Steijlen were both involved in the *Moluks Historisch Museum*. Furthermore, F. Steijlen still holds the professorship at the museum.⁸⁷ The next chapter will discuss the Moluccans and their history within a museum context. It will lay out what narrative has been presented within a museum context physically but also what is available online when it comes to Moluccan heritage.

⁸⁷ "Organisatie," *Museum Maluku*, accessed on June 5, 2020, <https://www.museum-maluku.nl/organisatie-2/organisatie/>.

Chapter 2 Moluccan History in a Museum Context

There have been two major exhibitions in the past on the Moluccans in The Netherlands. These are the ones in the *Moluks Historisch Museum* (which now falls under Museum Sophiahof) and the Open Air museum in Arnhem. Due to COVID-19, I was unable to visit these museums myself. Therefore, I had to resort to other options in order to be able to look into and analyse the way Moluccan history is narrated within a museum context. To this end, I have used an older description of the former permanent exhibition of the *Moluks Historisch Museum* and the database that is available online. Through an analysis of the description of the permanent exhibition, I will see what narrative comes to the fore in the *MHM* exhibition with a special focus on the attention that has been given to *RMS* in a separate case study. I have chosen this focus, because this was also a recurring theme in the academic context. By having this focus in a separate case study, I will still be able to consider the museum context separately from the academic context while also maintaining common ground on which a comparison between the two contexts can be drawn.

For the Open Air Museum, I used the museum's website in order to get a grasp on what is being narrated by this museum. Besides this, I consulted a Master thesis in which the full Moluccan barrack is described.⁸⁸ In the Moluccan barrack the lives of the lives of the Moluccans is narrated shortly after their arrival in The Netherlands. I wonder how Moluccan heritage in The Netherlands is narrated within a museum context and what narrative comes to the fore. When we take the concept of 'The Moluccans in The Netherlands' out of the *academic world* and place it into a museum context, does the same narrative of their history come to the fore or is it a different narrative all together? This is a central question within this chapter. The idea of heritage-making is very significant in this chapter. The museums are not the only sites on which heritage-making takes place and because of this I will also consider what happens on the websites the museums. This chapter will consider, as aforementioned, different sites of heritage-making and will start off at the *Moluks Historisch Museum*. After a general discussion and reflection on museums and heritage-making, an analysis of the *Moluks Historisch Museum* and its narrative will

⁸⁸ This Master Thesis is written by a Cultural Heritage Studies Master's student at the university of Utrecht back in 2011. This student's thesis contains an extensive discussion of the Moluccan barrack in the Open Air Museum.

follow. Thereafter, I will move onto the narrative presented by the Open Air Museum with regard to the Moluccan barracks.

2.1 Museums and Heritage-making

A museum, in general, has a role in the process of heritage-making and in this particular case this is the Moluccan cultural identity. As argued by Schorch in his article on meaning making and cultural feelings, heritage is not a static thing; it is a process. Furthermore, by including 'interpretive actions, movements and performances made by cultural actors'⁸⁹, heritage becomes a 'process of engagement and act of making meaning'.⁹⁰

In a museum context, the presented narrative is going to be interpreted by the audience. Schorch argues for 'feelings as interpretations'⁹¹ and states that 'senses, feelings, imagination, thought and understanding are not separate or diametrically opposed entities, but mutually dependent'⁹², and are all included in the process of giving meaning. This means that the process of heritage-making is part of a human experience which can only be grasped by taking into consideration feelings as part of how cultural identity is constructed. The way visitors of a museum react to and discuss amongst each other what they see and how they perceive the museum's collection is also part of the construction of a cultural identity. I will return to the reactions of the visitors in the last section of this chapter. As previously mentioned, it is also the idea of 'us and them', when it comes to constructing an identity. To 'carry the phenomenon of heritage from the world of abstract reasoning into the realm of lived experience'⁹³ is considered to be highly important within heritage studies. It needs more than a theory on the construction of cultural identity; it needs a way of looking at how this happens in practice through analysing how people within, and outside of, a community interact with each other. Verkuyten et al. illustrate how Moluccans from the third generation construct their cultural identity by making three comparisons with what they consider as other identities in order to define the boundaries of their own cultural identities. The three comparisons are within the

⁸⁹ Schorch, "Cultural Feelings and the Making of Meaning", 23-24.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 23.

⁹¹ Ibid., 25.

⁹² Ibid., 31.

⁹³ Ibid., 33-34.

Moluccan community, with the Dutch and ‘foreigners’⁹⁴. Verkuyten et al. identified the stakeholders in this process through interviews with the third-generation Moluccans and explain how the Moluccans position themselves against others in order to formulate who they are as a group. Heritage-making can thus be considered as an inherently interactive process. When including the Moluccan history in The Netherlands in a museum, their history is *musealised*. S. Macdonald in her book *Memorylands. Heritage and Identity in Europe Today* describes this term as a process. In line with Schorch, she states that musealisation ‘can be seen as a form of temporal anchoring in the face of loss of tradition and unsettlement brought about by the tempo of technological and related change’⁹⁵.

Including a migrant community in a museum is part of a larger movement where this community’s heritage is preserved through being exhibited.⁹⁶ As we will see in all the cases, the idea that heritage is being made while simultaneously experienced, will come to the fore. Furthermore, in all case studies the museums or online platforms musealise the Moluccan community in The Netherlands and their history which in turn draws boundaries when it comes to their cultural identity. Now I will turn to a closer consideration of the *Moluks Historisch Museum*.

2.2 Moluks Historisch Museum

In order to make the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands accessible to a broader public, a museum was founded shortly after the train hijackings in the 1970s, as aforementioned in chapter one, with funding by the Dutch government⁹⁷. The first museum opened back in November 1990 under the name *Moluks Historisch Museum* in Utrecht. In 2008 the name of the museum was changed to *Museum Maluku*, but in 2012 it was closed down due to financial problems.⁹⁸ In June of 2019, the museum was reopened as part of Museum Sophiahof in The Hague, which focuses on the cultural and historical heritage of the Dutch East Indies in The Netherlands today.⁹⁹ This museum was established after the hijackings as a means to give some attention

⁹⁴ Verkuyten, Van de Calseijde and De Leur, “Third-generation South Moluccans in The Netherlands,” 67.

⁹⁵ Sharon Macdonald, *Memorylands. Heritage and Identity in Europe Today* (Londen/New York: Routledge, 2013): 139.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 145.

⁹⁷ Seo, “Museum in Transnationalism,” 381.

⁹⁸ “Verdwenen musea: Moluks Historisch Museum aan de Kruisstraat,” DUIC, accessed on June 19, 2020, <https://www.duic.nl/cultuur/verdwenen-musea-moluks-historisch-museum-aan-de-kruisstraat/>.

⁹⁹ “Museum Sophiahof,” accessed on June 19, 2020, <https://www.museumsophiahof.nl/>.

to the Moluccans and their history, as this had not happened before. Another reason was to re-introduce the Moluccans to Dutch society and put them in a better daylight; trying to steer away from the constant association with the train hijackings.¹⁰⁰ The Dutch government aided the museum initiative financially in order to get the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands to the fore.¹⁰¹ At that time the Moluccans had been in The Netherlands for thirty-five years.¹⁰² The relationship between the Moluccans and the Dutch was still close to non-existing as they had lived in the camps for such a long time and then again in the secluded neighbourhoods. Apparently, one could say that a need was felt to change the then-current narrative of the Moluccans in The Netherlands. There was a certain tension between the Dutch and the Moluccans, because of the events preceding the founding of this museum. The museum's goal was thus to introduce the Moluccan story to the public, which was yet to discover their history and story.¹⁰³ The *Moluks Historisch Museum*, as 'a site of the past'¹⁰⁴, had as a goal to 'provide not only Moluccans, but also the Dutch, with the history of Moluccan in Dutch society'¹⁰⁵. The museum was very important in educating Dutch and Moluccans on the past while also framing and re-framing the past in order to accommodate the changes and concerns amongst the Moluccans throughout time.¹⁰⁶

Not a lot has been written on the museum, but one of the authors that has written about it is Seo in the article "Museum in Transnationalism". Seo is an assistant professor at the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies located in Seoul. He is a Korean scholar who has done a lot of research with a religious theme in Asia, but especially in Indonesia.¹⁰⁷ This article was published in November of 2014, which is two years after the museum in its original setting closed down. Besides this article, an

¹⁰⁰ Seo, "Museum in Transnationalism," 381.

¹⁰¹ "Museum Maluku," accessed on June 19, 2020,

[https://geheugen.delpher.nl/nl/geheugen/pages/instelling/Museum+Maluku#:~:text=Het%20Museum%20Maluku%20\(MuMa\)%20is,Molukse%20geschiedenis%2C%20kunst%20en%20cultuur.&text=Het%20museum%20op+ende%20in%20november.Historisch%20Museum%20naar%20Museum%20Maluku.](https://geheugen.delpher.nl/nl/geheugen/pages/instelling/Museum+Maluku#:~:text=Het%20Museum%20Maluku%20(MuMa)%20is,Molukse%20geschiedenis%2C%20kunst%20en%20cultuur.&text=Het%20museum%20op+ende%20in%20november.Historisch%20Museum%20naar%20Museum%20Maluku.)

¹⁰² "Verdwenen musea: Moluks Historisch Museum aan de Kruisstraat," DUiC, accessed on June 19, 2020,

[https://www.duic.nl/cultuur/verdwenen-musea-moluks-historisch-museum-aan-de-kruisstraat/.](https://www.duic.nl/cultuur/verdwenen-musea-moluks-historisch-museum-aan-de-kruisstraat/)

¹⁰³ "Missie," Missie & Visie, Museum Maluku, accessed on June 19, 2020,

[http://85.158.251.41/wps/portal/muma/!ut/p/c1/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gTL09fCxNDMwMDN2cjAyNjY28Ty0Ajl_cAU6B8JG5S1MCuv088nNT9Qtyl8oBTvd96A!!/d12/d1/L2dJQSEvUUt3QS9ZQnB3LzZfNEpJTTg0MTYwTzhSNTAyM0pLMThLTDHFHODA!.](http://85.158.251.41/wps/portal/muma/!ut/p/c1/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gTL09fCxNDMwMDN2cjAyNjY28Ty0Ajl_cAU6B8JG5S1MCuv088nNT9Qtyl8oBTvd96A!!/d12/d1/L2dJQSEvUUt3QS9ZQnB3LzZfNEpJTTg0MTYwTzhSNTAyM0pLMThLTDHFHODA!/)

¹⁰⁴ Seo, "Museum in Transnationalism," 381.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 384.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 397-398.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 399.

online article was published in 2019 on the website of the local newspaper of Utrecht written by Den Boer, who is a publicist on history and has written several articles on several monuments and ‘forgotten buildings’ in Utrecht.¹⁰⁸ Both describe the permanent exhibition of the museum in their respective articles. The descriptions of the two writers are roughly the same, so I will use both descriptions alongside each other while using the description by Seo as leading.

Seo explains that the permanent exhibition of the museum consisted of several sections focussing on several parts of the history of the Moluccans and their life in The Netherlands.¹⁰⁹ The first section showed the map of the Moluccas and the specific flora and fauna it is home to. The first section, as shown in the image below, thus provided its visitors with the context, it showed where the Moluccas were located and what it looked like. Den Boer expands a bit on this and states that this section provided its viewer with ‘a representation of the nature and traditional culture on the Moluccas’¹¹⁰.



Figure 3. The first section in the MHM. Source: <https://geheugen.delpher.nl/geheugen/view?coll=ngvn&identifier=MHM01%3AD0648><https://geheugen.delpher.nl/geheugen/view?coll=ngvn&identifier=MHM01%3AD0648>

¹⁰⁸ “Verdwenen musea: Moluks Historisch Museum aan de Kruisstraat,” DUIC, accessed on June 19, 2020, <https://www.duic.nl/cultuur/verdwenen-musea-moluks-historisch-museum-aan-de-kruisstraat/>.

¹⁰⁹ Seo, “Museum in Transnationalism,” 384.

¹¹⁰ “Verdwenen musea: Moluks Historisch Museum aan de Kruisstraat,” DUIC, accessed on June 19, 2020, <https://www.duic.nl/cultuur/verdwenen-musea-moluks-historisch-museum-aan-de-kruisstraat/>. Translation: een beeld van de natuur en traditionele cultuur op de Molukken.

The second section focuses on the conflicts during the second World War and ‘the formation of the Republic of the South Moluccas (RMS)’¹¹¹. RMS is a recurrent theme in both the academic and museum context and, it is a very sensitive subject. There seems to be a lot of tension surrounding the issue of RMS. I will return to this below after a further description of the permanent exhibition that was present in the museum in its original setting. Den Boer describes this section as representing the struggle for recognition by the Moluccans both in the KNIL army as well as against Indonesia later after the proclamation of independence.¹¹² This is exhibited through news articles combined with video images of that time. Den Boer states that one showcase was dedicated to the RMS.¹¹³ As visible in the image, the newspaper snippets are displayed throughout this section alternated with military items.

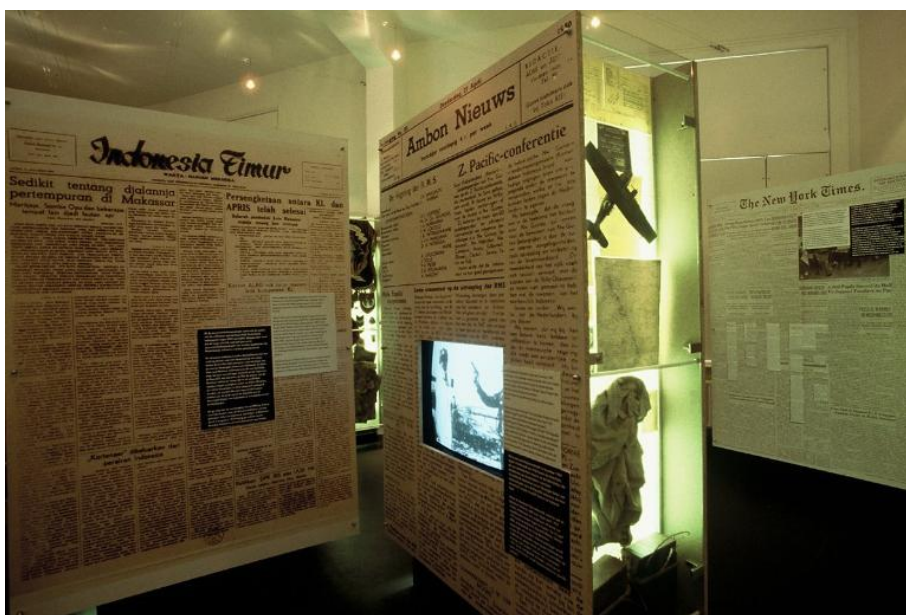


Figure 4. Second section in the permanent exhibition in the MHM. Source: <https://geheugen.delpher.nl/geheugen/view?coll=ngvn&identifier=MHM01%3AD0659>

¹¹¹ Seo, “Museum in Transnationalism,” 384.

¹¹² “Verdwenen musea: Moluks Historisch Museum aan de Kruisstraat,” DUIC, accessed on June 19, 2020, <https://www.duic.nl/cultuur/verdwenen-musea-moluks-historisch-museum-aan-de-kruisstraat/>.

¹¹³ “Verdwenen musea: Moluks Historisch Museum aan de Kruisstraat,” DUIC, accessed on June 19, 2020, <https://www.duic.nl/cultuur/verdwenen-musea-moluks-historisch-museum-aan-de-kruisstraat/>.

The third and fourth section show the journey to the Netherlands by the KNIL soldiers as well as their early lives here in former concentration camps. Den Boer identifies the suitcases as symbolizing the ‘journey of the first generation Moluccan, who arrived with the SS Fairsea in 1951.’¹¹⁴ Both Seo and Den Boer emphasize the importance of the presence of these suitcases. They symbolized more than just the journey, but also the idea that these first generations were for a long time under the impression that they would return to The Moluccas soon. As for the first period after their arrival the KNIL soldiers and their family were mostly stationed in former concentration camps, these suitcases were often part of the interior of the barrack.¹¹⁵ When walking to the next section, the visitor walked through a hallway filled with these suitcases, as a way to really experience the journey the KNIL soldiers and their families undertook back in the 1950s. The last section¹¹⁶ focused on ‘how the Moluccans have integrated into Dutch society’¹¹⁷. I would argue that this section revealed the true intention of the museum narrative, which is to show how the Moluccans here are actually part of Dutch



Figure 5. An example of the interior of the barrack in the MHM. Source: <https://geheugen.delpher.nl/geheugen/view/nagebouw-woonoordkamertje-moluks-hist-museum-klaas-sterenborg?coll=ngvn&maxperpage=36&page=2&query=museum+maluku+interieur&identifier=MHM01%3AF977195>



Figure 6. Part of the last section. Representation of the Moluccans in sports. Source: <https://geheugen.delpher.nl/geheugen/view/zaal-mhm-keurige-zaal--klaas-sterenborg?query=&facets%5Bsubject%5D%5B%5D=MHM-collectie&page=2&maxperpage=36&coll=ngvn&identifier=MHM01%3AD0789>

¹¹⁴ “Verdwenen musea: Moluks Historisch Museum aan de Kruisstraat,” DUIC, accessed on June 19, 2020, <https://www.duic.nl/cultuur/verdwenen-musea-moluks-historisch-museum-aan-de-kruisstraat/>. Translation: de overtocht van de eerste generatie Molukkers, die in 1951 met de SS Fairsea arriveerden.

¹¹⁵ “Verdwenen musea: Moluks Historisch Museum aan de Kruisstraat,” DUIC, accessed on June 19, 2020, <https://www.duic.nl/cultuur/verdwenen-musea-moluks-historisch-museum-aan-de-kruisstraat/>. Also see, Seo, “Museum in Transnationalism,” 384.

¹¹⁶ It must be noted here that in the article by Den Boer this section is not mentioned and on the Geheugen Delpher website (source of the pictures) it is specified as the fourth section instead of the fifth.

¹¹⁷ Seo, “Museum in Transnationalism,” 384-385.

society and history and that they have been for a long time contrary to common beliefs at the time. The Moluccans were quite secluded as aforementioned and therefore might have been considered to be 'outside' of Dutch society and history; this section really focused on how they were actually integrated into Dutch society.

If one would walk through these sections in the order as described above, one would be following the footsteps of a Moluccan who had to leave the Moluccas in the 1960s and then arrived in The Netherlands. For the older generation, this would maybe trigger some nostalgia and for the Dutch visitors and the younger generation it would be educational. We can however challenge the latter as the younger generation would have probably heard this particular history from their parents or grandparents at home. Therefore, discovering or visiting a museum where this same narrative is then repeated, would not necessarily be educational for most of the second as well as third generation Moluccans. Seo stresses that the board of the museum really took it upon themselves to take on 'the role of the museum as a mediator between Moluccans and the Dutch'¹¹⁸. Apparently, it was felt as a necessity to reconcile the Dutch and Moluccans after the tragedy of the hijackings discussed in the previous chapter. Because of this, there is a very clear narrative presented by the museum in the permanent exhibition; namely that of the Moluccans as part of Dutch society. By highlighting certain parts of history, and downplaying other parts, this specific narrative is pushed forward by the museum resulting into a fairly one-sided representation of the Moluccans. Now we will look closely at the issue brought up in the second section, namely RMS, and I will look into how the museum has represented and incorporated different visions on history when it comes to this particular part of the Moluccan identity in The Netherlands and thus part of their heritage.

¹¹⁸ Seo, "Museum in Transnationalism," 386.

2.2.1 A Case Study: RMS

I would have to agree with Seo when he states that ‘the RMS is a divisive issue to both the museum and the visitors’¹¹⁹. By addressing this issue, the museum automatically places itself amidst the debate and the issues surrounding RMS. As aforementioned, RMS is also a recurring theme within the academic context. To recap, in the academic context RMS was narrated as a political ideal of the Moluccan community. It was not only explained as a political ideal, but also as a large part of how the Moluccan cultural identity in The Netherlands. I wondered if the way the museum narrates RMS would differ from how it was discussed in the academic context. In this section, I will look at what narrative comes to the fore in the museum context with regard to RMS after a general discussion of the online database of the *MHM*.

First, I will make some general remarks on the online database of the museum after which I will dive back into the information available on the RMS. In the article ‘Digitising migration heritage: A case study of a minority museum’ by Marselis, who is a scholar focussing on the role of online resources such as websites in the making of heritage especially with regards to migration communities, describes the way in which the ‘source communities’¹²⁰ were involved in the digitisation of the museum collection. In this case the museum was working together with the Moluccans in The Netherlands in the process of collecting memory materials in order ‘to build digital heritage’.¹²¹ Quoting Marselis,:

*Multiple voices have increasingly been incorporated in both off- and on-line museum exhibitions [...]*¹²²

which seems to indicate an intent by the museum to not only present the visitors of the website with historical information and heritage of the Moluccans in The Netherlands, but also to represent voices from the Moluccans themselves marking an attempt at a network approach. A museum has the meticulous task to navigate through these different interpretations of memory and satisfy all the voices and groups involved without picking a side. If it is not executed well by a museum, this could jeopardize the credibility of the museum.¹²³ The museum has played a role in trying to convey the Dutch-Moluccan history to a broader audience and as a result of

¹¹⁹ Seo, “Museum in Transnationalism,” 394.

¹²⁰ Marselis, “Digitising migration heritage,” 85.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 95.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 95.

this process certain parts of the history have been focused on. Marselis emphasizes that, instead of educating its visitors, the museum ‘aims at creating dialogue between Dutch-Moluccan minority and other groups in Dutch society’¹²⁴. While the incorporation of multiple voices of the past makes for a more inclusive, and maybe even more complete, narrative, this does not mean there are no risks to this approach. Marselis also points out the risk that comes with the ability to incorporate all these different voices of memory on the website. As Marselis notes:

*Discussions about the right interpretation of memory materials and cultural traditions could undermine the museum’s intention of providing sober historical information without taking sides with any of the memory political subgroups within the community.*¹²⁵

When we are discussing if the inclusion of different visions on history, and thereby different interpretations of history, compromises the museum’s presentation of the so-called ‘sober history’, we are assuming that this history does not evoke any emotions amongst the members of this particular history. Historical materials and heritage are always in some way ‘emotional’ as they evoke cultural feelings in the process of giving meaning to heritage.¹²⁶ Reflecting on this, I would argue that giving a platform to all these different interpretations of memory material and cultural traditions only makes for a more inclusive view of the Moluccans in The Netherlands. Such a website platform provides the means for both the museum staff, or professional heritage workers, and individuals to raise their voice and share their interpretation of history.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Marselis, “Digitising migration heritage,” 86.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 95.

¹²⁶ P. Schorch, “Cultural Feelings,” 31.

¹²⁷ Marselis, “Digitising migration heritage,” 97.

With this in mind, I will revert back to the representation of the RMS on the website of the museum. When we look at the online database of the museum, the information on RMS is quite limited. During my search for information on the RMS on the website, I eventually found this page¹²⁸:



As visible from the screenshot, the information available is minimal. The hyperlinks below lead you to three articles of which two are written by the same scholar; Prof. dr. F. Steijlen. The first article, without the name of the author, describes the events leading up to the proclamation of the RMS, whereas the other two are actually columns concerned with the, according to Prof. dr. Steijlen, the untrue notions surrounding the RMS. An example of this would be the conception of the promise of RMS made by the Dutch government, which Prof. dr. Steijlen argues to be aside the truth. Prof. dr. Steijlen is a scholar whom I have already mentioned in the first chapter and he has conducted extensive research on the Moluccans in The

¹²⁸ "RMS", Museum Maluku, accessed on May 19, 2020, http://85.158.251.41/wps/portal/muma/!ut/p/c1/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gTL09fCxNDMwN3Q38DA08D_N6ewEHdLQ29LM6B8JK8gZuzkYGRsbG3iWWgkZG7pSkB3X4e-bmp-gW5EeUAofrMUw!!/d12/d1/LOIDUmITUSEhL3dHa0FKRnNBL1ICUlp3QSEhL2Vu/.

Netherlands as well as written several publications on this particular matter.¹²⁹ What we see here is an overlap between the academic and museum narratives. In both contexts, the same person provides the reader or visitor (in the case of the museum) with the narrative of the Moluccans in The Netherlands. It seems that the academic and the museum context are actually not that far apart from each other and might even be flowing into each other as we have the same scholar presenting us with information on the Moluccans in The Netherlands and their history. Returning back to the matter of RMS and how it is represented by the museum in their online database, it must be noted that Steijlen was mentioned as someone who a Moluccan interviewee from Krimpen aan den IJssel considered not to be part of the Moluccan narrative on this matter, let alone be the one conveying this matter to other people.¹³⁰ Why would the *MHM* give an ‘outsider’, like Steijlen, full authority over the narrative of RMS on the museum’s website? This brings us back to the notion that this history is often, if not always, narrated by ‘outsiders’. RMS is a political ideal with a large impact on the discourse around the community and its history. Therefore, it is not completely unimaginable that the museum would dance around this subject in order to be able to maintain their neutral stance in conveying this particular part of Moluccan heritage. As we can see from the description in the above and the consideration of the online resources on the RMS, this is exactly what happens. In the permanent exhibition only one showcase showed some of the history of the RMS, but nothing other than the cold facts. On the website, their mention of the RMS was also minimal. By including the voices of ‘insiders’ of this particular part of Moluccan heritage, the museum would compromise its neutral stance amidst the debate surrounding RMS.

Although in general, the museum has undertaken several initiatives in including the voices or visions of history of both ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ in their online heritage database, when it comes to the RMS, there still seems to be a one-dimensional view. We see a similar phenomenon come to the fore in both the museum context as well as the academic context when looking at the case study of RMS and how the museum’s vision on history is narrated. There is a push to let in ‘insiders’, and thus Moluccans themselves, share their visions on this history on the

¹²⁹ “Prof. Dr. Fridus Steijlen”, KITLV, <https://www.ind45-50.org/fridus-steijlen>, consulted on 19-05-2020.

¹³⁰ Interview conducted by author on 15-05-2020 in Krimpen aan den IJssel. The interviewee wishes to remain anonymous.

Commented [r6]: Hier een vraag opwerpen als overgangszin, maar wat ?

website of the museum, but at the same time the visions of the ‘outsiders’, from the scholars and academics, are once again pushed to the fore.

2.3 Open Air Museum

The Open Air Museum is located in Arnhem in The Netherlands. It was founded over a century ago in 1912 as a museum that preserved local ‘pasts’ and heritage such as local traditions and variations.¹³¹ In the 1990s, the museum repositioned itself within the Dutch museum landscape as a museum concerned with representing the Dutch society, which also meant the inclusion of migrant communities into the museum.¹³² Sometime later in 2009, the then-current director retired and was replaced by a new one, which also influenced the objective of the museum. Migration became a huge theme within the context of the Open Air Museum; ‘the objective was to come to a better understanding of the cultural history of everyday life in The Netherlands by addressing the theme of migration in all sorts of activities’.¹³³ Their mission was to steer away from migration as separate from Dutch society, but to present it as part of Dutch society.¹³⁴ Later on, they considered migration as ‘part of daily life’¹³⁵ and thus presented it as such. The museum has several temporary exhibitions as well as a permanent park in which there are many historical buildings which you can visit.¹³⁶

In this park, one can also find the Moluccan barrack that was placed in the Open Air Museum in 2003.¹³⁷ The barrack is an original one taken from the camp at Lage Mierde.¹³⁸ As explained in the first chapter, the Moluccan KNIL soldiers and their families that came to The Netherlands back in the 1950s did not expect to stay here for a long period of time. The Dutch government also expected the Moluccans to stay here temporarily and as a result they were stationed in former concentration camps. The barracks were their temporary homes, but as it turned out they stayed

¹³¹ Hester Dibbits and Norah Karrouche, "Ticking the Box? Material Cultures of Migration in Museum Rotterdam and the Netherlands Open Air Museum," *Jahrbuch Für Europäische Ethnologie 2017. Die Niederlande*: 151.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 153.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 159.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 159.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 162.

¹³⁶ "Historische gebouwen uit heel Nederland," Netherlands Open Air Museum, accessed on June 21, 2020, <https://www.openluchtmuseum.nl/page/471/park-en-gebouwen>.

¹³⁷ Also see <https://nos.nl/artikel/2094302-in-3d-meekijken-in-molukse-barak-uit-de-jaren-50.html>.

¹³⁸ "In het koude Nederland ruikt alleen de keuken nog naar thuis." Netherlands Open Air Museum, accessed on June 21, 2020, <https://www.openluchtmuseum.nl/page/494/molukse-barak?taal=nl>.

there for an extensive period of time. One of these barracks was thus moved from Lage Mierde and placed in the park of the Open Air Museum for its visitors to see it. In the process of including the Moluccan barrack and its narrative into the Open Air Museum, ‘representatives of the Moluccan community in The Netherlands were involved’¹³⁹. This shows that the museum made an effort to include not only ‘outsider’ narratives, but also insider vision on the history of the Moluccans. The thought process behind the presentation of the Moluccan barrack to the public and thereby the representation of the Moluccans in The Netherlands and their culture, was the focus on not only the culture but also on the similarities between the Dutch and the Moluccans.¹⁴⁰ ‘The Open Air Museum wanted to, with the appointment and inclusion of the Moluccan barracks as heritage, make the barrack function as a magnifying glass on the history of the Moluccans in Dutch society.’¹⁴¹ What we see here is that there was a clear narrative that was planned to be pushed forward through presenting the barrack as part of Moluccan heritage and history in The Netherlands. The narrative was thus not far from what the *MHM* tried to push to the fore, which was a narrative of how the Moluccans in The Netherlands integrated and became part of Dutch society after their military past for the Dutch colonial army in the Dutch East Indies. Now I will turn to a consideration for the actual presentation of the Moluccan barrack in and by the Open Air museum through a description given in the aforementioned Master Thesis.



Figure 8. “De Molukse barak”, Openluchtmuseum, Source: <https://collectie.openluchtmuseum.nl/collectie/objekt/198218>

¹³⁹ Dibbitts and Karrouche, “Ticking the Box?,” 158.

¹⁴⁰ Karlijn Olijslager, “Meerstemmigheid in beladen verleden. Gender en etniciteit bij de constructie van dynamisch erfgoed,” (Augustus 2011): 37. https://www.eur.nl/sites/corporate/files/Master_Thesis_Karlijn_Olijslager.pdf.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 41. Original text: Het Openluchtmuseum wilde met de benoeming en opname van de Molukse Barak als erfgoed, de barak als vergrootglas laten functioneren op de geschiedenis van de Molukkers in de Nederlandse samenleving.

2.4 The Moluccan barrack

When entering the Moluccan barrack, there is a sign which disclaims what the visitor is about to see; it states that the way the barrack is represented and reconstructed is based on interviews with former inhabitants of the camps, but that it still may differ from the way other former inhabitants or visitors might remember it.¹⁴² The way the presentation of the Moluccan barrack is being described is very focused on the symbolism in the barrack. The contrast between the Dutch and the Moluccan is symbolized through ‘the spatial layout of the barrack: the spacious orderly living space of the Dutch camp manager Van Meel and his family strongly contrasted with the small, packed space in which a big Moluccan family lived’¹⁴³. This contrast was underlined through audio-visual stories of both the Dutch and the Moluccans living in the camps.¹⁴⁴ So far, there is not a clear sign of how the Dutch and the Moluccans are actually similar as the goal set out by the Open Air Museum implied. The focus in the way the barrack was presented was really on the interaction and the encounters between the Dutch and Moluccans within Dutch society in a chronological order as the visitors walked through the barrack.¹⁴⁵ One of the black pages of history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands, the aforementioned train hijackings, are once again a sore point also in the museum context. Apparently, for the Dutch visitors this was in their experience their most significant and lively encounter with the Moluccans and it was only shortly touched upon in the barrack.¹⁴⁶ As with the MHM and RMS, including the train hijackings in the Open Air museum narrative is a sensitive subject and it would be difficult to take a neutral stance in representing this part of Moluccan heritage in The Netherlands. Even more important, representing the train hijackings does not support the narrative of how the Moluccan integrated in Dutch society in a positive way.

Recently, the Open Air Museum decided to adjust the Moluccan barrack and included the train hijackings quite prominently. The desire to see this represented came from both the Dutch as well as the Moluccan visitors of the museum and

¹⁴² Olijslager, “Meerstemmigheid in beladen verleden,” 37.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 38. Original text: de ruimtelijke indeling van de barak: de grote ordelijke woonruimte van de Nederlandse kampbeheerder Van Meel en zijn gezin staat in sterk contrast met de kleine, propvolle ruimte waarin een groot Moluks gezin woonde.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 37-40.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 42.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 42.

showed how heritage is always dynamic and subject to change.¹⁴⁷ Through videos, the train hijackings and the events surrounding them are told from two perspectives; a hostage on the train and one of the train hijackers. The narrative that comes to the fore in the description of the video interviews is one of how the Moluccan identity is formulated against the Dutch identity in the experience of the hostage and how the hijacker experienced a feeling of powerlessness that turned into rage eventually leading up to the actual hijackings. Important to note is that the stories are told without judgement on the actual events that unfolded during the hijackings.¹⁴⁸ The description ends with a note on how the hijacker argues that ‘the rough actions have been replaced by other strategies, such as dance and cooking culture. By referring to that, he points to one of the most important cultural encounters between Moluccan and Dutch culture that have been an important element from the start in the presentation: food in the central kitchen.’¹⁴⁹ The absence of judgement with regard to the hijackings and the end note reinforces the original goal of the Open Air Museum of focusing on encounters between the Dutch and the Moluccans in their history here in The Netherlands. This once again brings a narrative to the fore of the Moluccan community as a whole in interaction with Dutch society.

2.5 Visitor’s reactions

Visitors talking and commenting on the museum is also part of heritage-making and should be included in our consideration. The reaction of visitors to the museum narrative is thus also part of the narrative that comes to the fore in the museum context. Arising from Seo’s fieldwork, multiple reactions by the visitors of the *MHM* are presented especially with regard to the way RMS was represented within the museum’s narrative. P. Schorch, in his article on the process of meaning-making as well as how heritage is experienced, sets out a theoretical framework for how to consider a museum experience. Drawing upon the argument made by Schorch in his work on how visitors of a museum *experience* the museum, we need to include all aspects of such an experience into our approach as scholar.

¹⁴⁷ Olijslager, “Meerstemmigheid in beladen verleden,” 44-45.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 46-48.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 48. Original text: de harde acties plaats gemaakt voor andere strategieën, zoals dans en kookcultuur. Daarmee wijst hij op één van de belangrijkste culturele ontmoetingen tussen de Molukse cultuur en de Nederlandse cultuur die vanaf de eerste opening een belangrijk element waren in de presentatie: eten in de centrale keuken.

Some of the Moluccan visitors felt that the activities of the RMS were not adequately addressed by the museum.¹⁵⁰ The visiting of a museum is a process which involves interaction and cultural feelings for the visitor.¹⁵¹ In this particular case, the way the museum chose to narrate the RMS triggered some specific type of cultural feeling, namely that of trauma, amongst some of the Moluccan visitors of the museum. RMS triggers nationalistic feelings amongst the Moluccans, but also traumatic feelings as it is often seen in connection to the train hijackings and therefore the turbulent years between 1975-1980. Seo points out that there is some tension amongst the visitors on the issue of integration into Dutch society. This tension occurs in two ways. The first way is that there is a difference between the younger and older Moluccan generations on this issue, where the older generation thinks of the younger generation as having lost their 'Moluccan-ness', whereas the younger generation still find themselves in 'the process of integration into Dutch society'¹⁵². The second way is the perception that existed amongst some Dutch visitors that Moluccans were actually Indonesians. Therefore, 'the issue of integration exists not between Moluccans and Dutch, but between Indonesians and Dutch.'¹⁵³ Here, the 'integration' of the Moluccans is once again mentioned, but this time with a different focus. Nevertheless, when the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands is being discussed in both the academic and the museum context, integration seems to be one of the main themes.

Seo includes all different voices and opinions from the visitors in the MHM and in this way creates a very complete view on how the museum functioned for both its Moluccan and Dutch visitors. A museum has a very difficult task in deciding what to represent and show; multiple parties are involved in creating the museum's narrative and this is a very sensitive process. In the museum context the presented narrative will always be interpreted and re-interpreted by different stakeholders in the process of heritage-making. The *Moluks Historisch Museum* has as a goal to educate its visitors on the Moluccans in The Netherlands in the present by showing parts of their history. Still, some of its visitors were not content with the way the museum was doing this, because of the lack of attention for RMS or the emphasis on the integration of the community into Dutch society. A museum, and its staff, which acts as the link between the past and the present, will always be faced with the

¹⁵⁰ Seo, "Museum in Transnationalism," 394.

¹⁵¹ Schorch, "Cultural feelings and the making of meaning," 33.

¹⁵² Seo, "Museum in Transnationalism," 389.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 391.

problem of what to represent. In the Open Air Museum, the reactions of the visitors were actually so influential that the narrative was adjusted to become more fitting with the wishes of the visitors. As a result of the visitor's reactions, the way the train hijackings were featured within the narrative of the Open Air Museum was changed. The museum is narrating history as well as interpreting history with an audience watching. As also pointed out by Dibbits and Karrouche, 'museums are a prime site for the construction and dissemination of heritage and the performance of identities'¹⁵⁴, where history and heritage are constantly appropriated.

2.6 Interacting museums

This chapter has focused on what narratives come to the fore on the Moluccans and their history in The Netherlands within a museum and heritage context in both the *Moluks Historisch Museum* and the *Open Air Museum*. In both museums a very similar narrative actually came to the fore. In the *MHM* the focus was on how Moluccans are and have been part of Dutch society and in the Open Air Museum the focus was on where Dutch society and Moluccan culture met throughout the history of the Moluccan in The Netherlands. The form in which the narrative is presented might have differed, but the content is quite similar. It might not be very surprising, however, as the Open Air Museum worked together with the *MHM* in the development of their plans for the Moluccan barrack. Furthermore, the two museums organised activities together which implies that there was some form of interaction between them.¹⁵⁵ Both museums received some form of criticism on the way they choose to narrate certain parts of Moluccan history in The Netherlands. For *MHM* this was the issue of *RMS*, whereas for the Open Air Museum it was the lack of representation of the train hijackings.

What struck me in analysing both exhibitions was the involvement of the academic world in the museums. The narrative that comes to the fore in the *MHM* is very similar to that in the academic context namely because of the focus in both contexts on the integration process. Strengthening this narrative, the same voices come to the fore in both contexts as we see these two contexts overlapping and

¹⁵⁴ Dibbits and Karrouche, "Ticking the Box?," 149.

¹⁵⁵ "Historie21," Museum Maluku, accessed on June 24, 2020, http://85.158.251.41/wps/portal/muma/!ut/p/c0/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gTL09fCxNDMwN3Pz8DA0cDEz9j0wAvo2AXI_3gzDz9gmXHRQD04KLH/.

crossing over in each other.¹⁵⁶ The same goes for the Open Air Museum. The Open Air Museum brought a narrative of Dutch and Moluccans encounters to the fore; once again focusing on how the Moluccans are part of, or have integrated into, Dutch society. It seems that these two worlds are colliding, which could explain the similarities in the narrative of integration of the Moluccans that is very prominent in both contexts. This is all part of the process of interaction and contestation over the historical narrative of the Moluccans in The Netherlands, which then results into these similar narratives.¹⁵⁷ In the below, I have added the museums in the figure and indicated where the interaction took place.

¹⁵⁶ It must be noted here, that at a later point in time throughout the process of writing this thesis I was able to make an appointment to visit the Museum Sophiahof in its new setting. As it is now a combined exhibition, there was not much space to represent all voices. The information on the Moluccans and their history was quite limited.

¹⁵⁷ Witz, Minkley and Rassool, *Unsettled History*, 15.

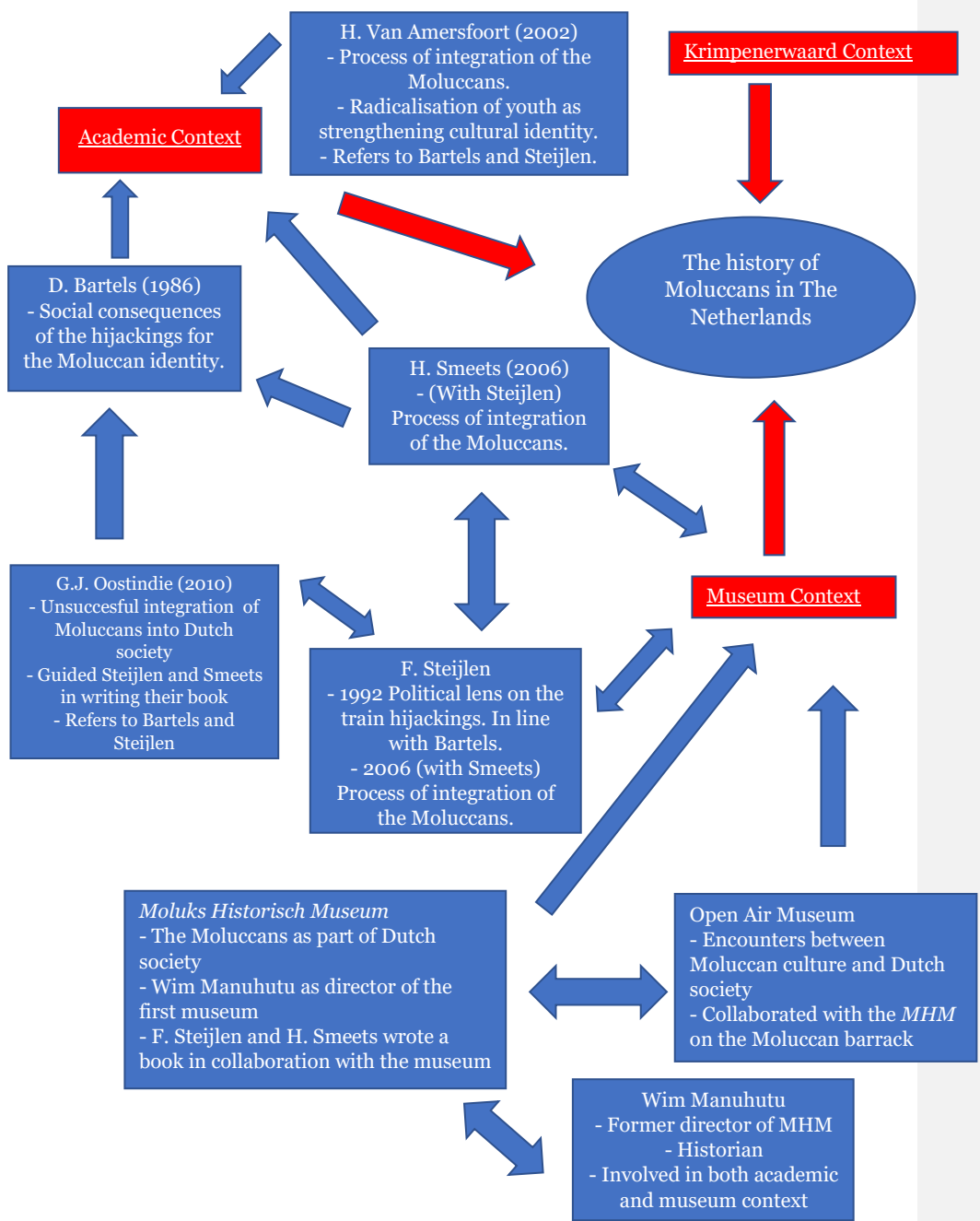


Figure 9. Visualisation of the different narrators in the academic and museum context of the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands.

The two-way arrows show the multiple interactions that take place between the different contexts. Initially I expected that these contexts existed individually from each other and that thereby these contexts would bring different narratives to the fore. The boundaries between the academic and museum context seem to be fluid and thereby overlapping each other, which could result in the two contexts echoing each other as we have seen in both exhibitions. This means that the stakeholders in both contexts are either the same or interacting with each other and as a result the narrative of the Moluccan history in The Netherlands with as a main theme integration, is repeated in both. The overlap was already established in the first chapter as F. Steijlen en H. Smeets were also involved in the *Moluks Historisch Museum* and wrote the book discussed in the first chapter in collaboration with the museum. In the next chapter I will look into the narrative that comes to the fore when we look at Moluccan history on a micro-level in Krimpenerwaard as told by Moluccans themselves.

Chapter 3 Moluccans in Krimpenerwaard

This chapter will look into the history and cultural identity of the Moluccans on a micro-level in Krimpenerwaard. For this chapter several interviews have been conducted with Moluccan inhabitants of Krimpenerwaard. Amongst the interviewees were two members of the second generation; one male and one female, and two members of the third generation; one male and one female. I am aware that this is a limited group of interviewees, but due to COVID-19 my access to these people was restricted. I was faced with a two-sided dilemma. On the one hand, many of the possible candidates were amongst the people for whom the virus is the most hazardous. On the other hand, many of the possible candidates were reluctant to conduct the interviews via platforms such as Skype or Zoom as they felt like the topics were too emotional or sensitive to discuss from a distance. In addition to this, several primary source materials written by the Moluccans themselves will be used as for example a picture book of the life at camp Schattenberg, where most of the Moluccans lived for the first few years after arriving in The Netherlands as well as the story of the train hijackings written by one of the hijackers himself. By combining the interviews as well as these primary sources, this chapter will look into what narrative comes to the fore when the Moluccans in Krimpenerwaard tell it themselves. Firstly, I will shortly reflect on the process of the interviews and then the results and contents of the interviews will be discussed and reflected upon. This discussion will start off with a short reflection on the camps and their lives there as many of the interviewees touched upon the lives of themselves or their parents in the camps as Krimpen was one of the first places where the Moluccan families moved after camp Schattenberg, after which we will go back to the narrative in Krimpen.

3.1 The process

As mentioned, I had to find different candidates for the interviews. As the Streekmuseum Krimpenerwaard has been planning to do an exhibition on the Moluccans in Krimpenerwaard, the director already had several connections within the community. I made an appointment with the person leading this project and through this contact person I was able to connect several other candidates. What struck me in this process is the fact that everybody knew each other; everyone

referred to each other in the interviews. This actually reinforced the idea I aimed to dismantle, namely the idea of one community. The interviewees all knew each other and the younger generation referred to the older generation as their source of knowledge and the ones who told them the stories of the KNIL soldiers, thus their grandparents. All were aware of the different Moluccan neighbourhoods throughout the entire Netherlands and were in contact with them as well. One of the second generation interviewees brought several books to the interview; the picture book mentioned in the above, but also books written by D. Bartels. This struck me as the Moluccans themselves thus also consulted the academic world when it comes to their history in The Netherlands. The picture book is also an interesting phenomenon as this is a Moluccan initiative to reflect on their own history. Apparently a need was felt to record the history and reflect on it at a later period in time. There are more of these initiatives such as an anniversary book of Moluccans in Capelle aan den IJssel and their history¹⁵⁸ or an anniversary book of Moluccans in Moordrecht¹⁵⁹. This could be seen as an urgent drive to record and master the narrative of their own history. In Krimpen aan den IJssel, however, there is no anniversary book as the one's indicated in the above yet.

Some interviewees did express a very specific wish; namely the wish to be included into Dutch history, but on their terms. One of the second generation interviewees, Mr. N., reflected on the integration policy by the Dutch government and that he felt that the process of integration was planned and already started from the moment the KNIL soldiers were discharged from the army on the boat.¹⁶⁰ He stated that the positive side of this is the fact that, according to him, the Dutch had to discuss the Moluccan history in literature even though some of the events are regarded as an infamous part of Dutch history, such as the train hijackings. The problem with this is the fact that:

At some point, it [Moluccan history] is completely decided by people who claim to know what it is like as they have made some studies about it, but have not actually lived it like us and that is the big difference.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Also see <https://www.pzc.nl/rotterdam/dit-jubileumboek-is-feest-der-herkenning-voor-capelse-molukkers~a10b6a30/>, accessed on July 7, 2020.

¹⁵⁹ Also see <https://www.boekwinkeltjes.nl/b/181291237/EEN-MOLUKSE-THUISHAVEN-AAN-DE/>, accessed on July 7, 2020.

¹⁶⁰ Interview conducted and translated by the author on May 15, 2020.

¹⁶¹ Interview conducted and translated by the author on May 15, 2020.

Another third-generation echoed this feeling and even went a step further as she stated that even though the Moluccans are discussed in literature, it is not part of the history curriculum in schools in her experience. She pressed for an inclusion of the Moluccan history in The Netherlands in the Dutch history curriculum in high schools and lower schools.¹⁶² In this chapter, the narrative brought to the fore by the Moluccans themselves will be laid out. Everything described in the below is part of the narrative that the Moluccans in the interviews brought up. This does not mean that there are no references to the academic or museum context, as these contexts were also brought up by the interviewees. In the below I will discuss and reflect upon the interviews further theme by theme.

3.2 Living in the neighbourhood

When the first KNIL soldiers arrived in The Netherlands in 1951 they were stationed in camp Schattenberg, which was formerly camp Westerbork. In the book “Kamp Schattenberg; Een Moluks Verhaal in Foto’s”, which is translated as a Moluccan Story in Pictures, a short introduction is given by the reverend S. Metiary. Quoting S. Metiary, who describes the lessons to remember for the coming generations:

[...] This means that we

- 1. are a people with their own identity and they must be treated like so;*
- 2. must not forget that we will continue fighting for a free country in our upbringing;*
- 3. must respect the laws of this country even though our stay here is temporarily;*
- 4. must stay up to date of the developments in the world*
- 5. must see the ties to the motherland as the most important¹⁶³*

¹⁶² Interview conducted and translated by author on May 20, 2020.

¹⁶³ Metiary, S., “Kamp Schattenberg: Een Moluks verhaal in Foto’s,” Assen: Bicultureel Onderwijs regio Assen Drents Museum (1996): 8. Translated by the author. Original text: Dat betekent dat wij

1. Een volk zijn met een eigen identiteit dat ook zodanig behandeld moet worden;
2. In onze opvoeding niet mogen vergeten hoe ij voor een vrij land zullen blijven strijden;
3. Hoewel wij hier tijdelijk verblijven de wetten behoren te respecteren van dit land;
4. Op de hoogte moeten blijven de ontwikkelingen in de wereld
5. De band met het moederland als belangrijkste moeten zien.

This quote clearly shows that the sentiment always was that their stay in The Netherlands would be temporarily. As we know, in 2020, the Moluccans are still here in The Netherlands and The Moluccas are yet to be recognized as an independent country. Around 1959 it became clear that their stay might become long-term rather than short-term, but the camps were not suitable for a permanent stay in The Netherlands¹⁶⁴. One of the interviewees, a second generation Moluccan, born in camp Schattenberg whereafter he and his family moved to Krimpen aan den IJssel, stated:

Those camps were pure isolation. [...] We were without a state, we had no passport even though I was born here. We had a so-called "Pink passport". [...] When we moved out of the camps, we were a "Schattenberger", but when we arrived here in Krimpen at city hall we received an address. First it was "Come over at Barak 42".¹⁶⁵

As stated in the above, the interviewees were all from Krimpen aan den IJssel, which is one of the first places where some of the Moluccan families moved after leaving camp Schattenberg. This interviewee explained that when the Moluccan families arrived in Krimpen, for the second generation children it was actually their first encounter with Dutch society. Of course, they were allowed to leave the camps, but they never mingled with the Dutch. It was in Krimpen that they first experienced this intermingling in for example school. They were immediately confronted with the fact that they had lived very different lives in comparison to that of the Dutch children. Below is a picture of the plans for the location of the Moluccan neighbourhood back in the 1950s. The red arrow indicates the location of where the Moluccan neighbourhood would be built and where it still is located today.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ "Kamp Schattenberg: Een Moluks verhaal in Foto's," Assen: Bicultureel Onderwijs regio Assen Drents Museum (1996): 29.

¹⁶⁵ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 15, 2020.

¹⁶⁶ Canon van Nederland, "Molukkers in Krimpen aan den IJssel," accessed on May 26, 2020, <https://www.entoen.nu/nl/zuid-holland/molukkers-in-krimpen-aan-den-ijssel/het-ambonezenwijkje->.



Figure 10. Krimpenewaard, Molukse wijk. Source: <https://www.entoen.nu/nl/zuid-holland/molukkers-in-krimpen-aan-den-ijssel/het-ambonezenwijkje>

When I spoke to someone about why people chose to live in a once again secluded neighbourhood when leaving the camps, Mrs E. (second generation) said:

I lived in New Guinea. When people ask “Why do you all have to live together” et cetera, I say “I lived on Merauke, you have Dutch quarters there and we cannot live there as well”. People just want to live close to each other; we are strangers here. We want to support each other.¹⁶⁷

In the interviews the mutual bond between the Moluccans within the neighbourhoods, but also outside these neighbourhoods, came to the fore repeatedly. This shows the connectedness these people feel with each other. The connectedness comes from a mutual trauma, such as the move to The Netherlands as well as the lives on the camps. So even though I would still argue that the narrative of one community that moved to the Netherlands and struggled to integrate as presented in both the academic and the museum context, is too one-dimensional for the Moluccans in The Netherlands, the Moluccans themselves really consider themselves as a close group who share the same cultural identity as well as norms and values. Thereby they thus also consider their past as shared and the same for the whole community. This is also the case for Krimpen. In an interview with Mrs. E., she told

¹⁶⁷ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 8, 2020.

me about the structure and events that are now taking place in the neighbourhood. She said:

There are 53 houses in the neighbourhood and there is an urge among the young people to return to the neighbourhood. They are all on a list to come back. In Krimpen we have a Moluccan Welfare committee chaired by an alderman and there are meetings between the Moluccan community and the municipality. One of the subjects of those meetings is the state of the Moluccan neighbourhood, that it stays Moluccan. The alderman said that as long as the Moluccans still want it the Moluccan neighbourhood stays as it is. [...] in total there are 230 to 240 families, that is around 700-800 Moluccan people here in Krimpen. More live outside of the neighbourhood. Luckily, there are some young new families that come to live here. They indicate that they want to. They can enlist themselves and once a house becomes vacant, they can come live here; there is a waiting list. That is something that has started happening recently.

So there is still an influx of young Moluccan people that want to move back into the neighbourhood in which most of them grew up. A possible explanation is given by a 3rd generation inhabitant of the Moluccan neighbourhood in Krimpen. She says:

The first generation is almost gone now. The second generation is ageing and often leave the neighbourhood to go and live in single storey houses [...] it is like coming home. It's the connection, because we are all Moluccans, we just understand each other. [...] Maybe it's just because you know you are Moluccan and we have the Moluccan neighbourhood, we are just as one together.¹⁶⁸

It seems that the Moluccans are always trying to find and stay connected to each other. The sentiment of a group or community sense is actually very strong and often repeated and articulated by the interviewees. It is and has been this way since their arrival in The Netherlands. They stuck together in the camps and when they were forced to leave these camps, they once again choose to stay together in the neighbourhoods. The fact that these neighbourhoods are fully inhabited by Moluccans is something they see as their right due to the heritage of the first

¹⁶⁸ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 20, 2020.

generation of Moluccans that came to The Netherlands and under what circumstances. If it is up to them, these neighbourhoods will remain in The Netherlands in this way and thereby remain “Moluccan”.

3.3 Train hijackings and the RMS

As visible in the preceding chapter on the Moluccans and their history in the Netherlands as told in the academic literature, an often recurring theme was the event of the train hijackings. The academic literature presented a narrative of the consequences, both political as well as social, following the hijackings, but the events leading up to the train hijackings are underexposed within this narrative. The “why”, if there even is a ‘reason’ for these events, is not really discussed. The train hijackings and the aftermath were traumatic events, which resonated throughout the entire country. When discussing these events with the interviewees sentiments of sadness, but also frustration came to the fore. It is still an emotionally charged subject. First, I have looked into what the Moluccans in Krimpen felt was the ‘why’ for these traumatic events. Then we discussed the consequences for them in Krimpen and how it resonated there. The second generation Moluccans were often more open to discussing what happened in the 1970s in comparison to the third generation. I think the reason for this can be two-fold. On the one hand, the third generation Moluccans were often too young to fully grasp what was going on at the time and besides this they do not like to talk about something without being well informed on the subject. On the other hand, it is something which is always mentioned when their Moluccanness is discussed; as if that is inherent to their identity. This creates for a sense of frustration and therefore it would not be unimaginable that they would rather avoid this subject. A second generation interviewee tried to sketch out the circumstances and events leading up to the hijackings from her point of view for me.

She described it like this:

In 66, the first action was held against the Indonesian embassy, many young people who were living in the Moluccan neighbourhood started to move to the big cities. Around the same time, the 'Baas in Eigen Buik' movement also started. My life is dedicated to the fight, we had examples like Cuba and Vietnam. In 1975 I came here [Krimpen aan den IJssel]; those were turbulent times. It was also the year of train hijackings. There was a group in the residency in Amsterdam and another group in a train in the north. On the day that they surrendered, I got married to my husband. [...] Here in the Moluccan neighbourhood we had many upcoming young Moluccans and the sentiment resonated here as well. There was animosity from Dutch society, at one point we were really surrounded by Dutch society and they said "put them on a boat and let them sink in the North Sea". I understand now... I can say that now, but back then we really had to just look out for each other, also for the children who had to go to school. Ultimately, when the men on the train made an ultimatum we pulled all the kids from school, because we did not know what was about to happen next. Surrounded by Dutch society, backed up by the military, they were barricading the road at the roundabout as a reaction on what was going on in the train. People just looked at the facts, we tried [...] this was a sequence of events. The KNIL soldiers were fired before they even got to land, you carry that with you and it was never talked about. Dutch society was not even aware of this, there was no possibility for mutual understanding as there was a lack of willingness as well.¹⁶⁹

This interviewee describes the situation with a sentiment of pure powerlessness in the situation. There was also an idea of reflection in retrospect; the interviewee literally states that she understands it now, but back then the sense of frustration took the upper hand. The narrative that comes to the fore is on the one hand one of understanding. There is understanding for why the train hijackers did what they did. It came from a place of wanting to be heard. On the other hand there is narrative of frustration; it feels like leading a double life.

¹⁶⁹ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 8, 2020.

They understand why it happened, but still condemn the actions in a way. One of the interviewees said this:

I felt all kinds of feelings, for me the impact was huge because I knew those guys; we went to school together [...] how do you experience that as a Moluccan? Because it is about the Moluccan affair, but also as Krimpenaar you are like: they are terrorist. We always live double life. That story is still two-sided.¹⁷⁰

Once again with this explanation by the interviewee, you can see the ‘sympathy’ for the actions, because they knew what was on the line. Judging from the interviews, the interviewees felt that the train hijackings and the issue of RMS are directly connected to each other. In the second chapter on the heritage contexts and Moluccan history, I have extensively described the issues surrounding RMS and they return here. The promise of RMS is described as a broken and bruised one and the train hijackings are one of those wounds that left an immense scar on the community as it was never really closed up and had the chance to heal. Some said RMS was even covered up due to political interests.¹⁷¹

One of the interviewees also told me that the frustration also came from the fact that these stories were never told by themselves, but always by someone else. This is something that has been recurring in this thesis, G. Oostindie already mentioned it, but now this feeling is echoed by a Moluccan himself. He gave me a book written by the hijackers in which this person exactly describes what happened and why. The fact that this book actually exists, shows the wish to be heard. It shows a push from the Moluccans themselves to take charge of their narrative as the frustration has been growing over the years with regard to the fact that ‘outsiders’ are always pushing their narrative on the Moluccan history to the fore.

¹⁷⁰ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 15, 2020.

¹⁷¹ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 15, 2020.

To quote a small section from this book on what the motivations for the hijackings were:

We resorted to an armed battle, because in our opinion a game was being played between The Netherlands and Indonesia to bury the Moluccan struggle for freedom. [...] After 25 years of getting the runaround, we were done. We have learned a lot from the cat and mouse game, that the Moluccan struggle was getting played around with. A people struggling for their independence are not to be suppressed forever.¹⁷²

Regardless of the social or political consequences that may have followed from the train hijackings' impact, the sentiments before it was pure frustration. A frustration that can only be explained by those who actually experienced it. It is a call for understanding and recognition. If we zoom out, it is part of a larger narrative, that of the feeling of being overlooked and ignored systematically for a longer period. It seems that they did not regard it as merely their struggle, but as a continuation of the struggle that started from the moment the KNIL soldiers were fired on their way to The Netherlands. The actions were committed by a few, but it resonated with all. An interviewee said the following about the aftermath in Krimpen:

You get on with your life, on the one hand you feel the fear of the Dutch people. [...] I worked in Rotterdam and at the bus stop I could really feel the hate. It was really hate [...] they saw those images on the television in 77 of them in the school and if you ask me if I condone those actions, that they held those children? I always answer "of course not, but ask WHY?" We have a cousin who was with the 6 others that were shot in the train [...] he was an artist [...] an artist does not take up weapons right? So why did he do it then? Especially if you live here already? As a human you want to be comfortable, so why would you choose that? These are the conversations that took place back then. [...] in those days we were like an island, we were no inhabitants of Krimpen. Imagine that, we are right in the centre. It was difficult. In 75-78 it was really bad, [...] we did not feel at home. [...].¹⁷³

¹⁷² Sahetapy, A., *Minne Strijd voor de R.M.S. Veenhuizen* (1980): 13-14.

¹⁷³ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 8, 2020.

People were feeling threatened on both sides. This interviewee describes the situation as one of despair and incomprehension. The Moluccans were not concerned with the social or political consequences at first, it seems. The narrative of the train hijackings described by the Moluccans in Krimpenerwaard is one of the grief. They were grieving; grieving those Moluccans, grieving their struggle for independence and grieving what they felt like a broken promise. The way the interviewees described it really brought to the fore a sense of frustration, wanting to get away from the narrative, as well as a wish to be understood. Even now, this sentiment of despair was evoked by the second generation interviewees while they also had time to reflect back on it in the sense that some understanding for the Dutch is also expressed by them.

3.4 Being Moluccan in Krimpenerwaard

In this chapter, I am diving into what narrative Moluccans themselves bring to the fore with regard to their history and what they choose to say and tell when given the opportunity. Something that came up a lot was the idea of being 'Moluccan'. Using the term in this way implies all sorts of things. As explained by Verkuyten et al. they way an identity is constructed is often through what people say and what they contest; how people define themselves as they are and also importantly as what they are not.¹⁷⁴ Keeping this in mind, I will now discuss some themes that the Moluccans in Krimpenerwaard themselves brought up. These themes did not come to the fore prominently in the academic or museum context. The themes that were brought up the most by the interviewees when it came to their identity as a Moluccan were language, *pelaschap*¹⁷⁵ and traditions or customs. I will discuss these three themes separately by using the interviews as well as reflecting on the answers given by the interviewees.

3.4.1 Language

Language was indicated by all the interviewees as something that is part of the Moluccan identity. When they talked about language they meant the *Bahasa Melayu*. All thought of language as an intricate part of their identity. There was a difference,

¹⁷⁴ Verkuyten et al., "Third-generation South Moluccans in the Netherlands," 65.

however, between the second and third generation in their view on the language. The second generation really pressed for the importance of being able to speak Malay fluently, whereas the third generation valued the language but did not feel that it was as important to speak it fluently. Most second generation Moluccans were raised bilingually whereas the third generation Moluccans were raised with the Dutch language. To illustrate, a second generation Moluccan said:

Look, I'm Dutch I can speak Dutch fluently, but I am also a Moluccan, but if I could not speak the Bahasa, I would be half Moluccan. You must know the language if you want to depict something or talk about the Moluccan issues, otherwise it becomes a difficult matter.¹⁷⁶

This respondent valued the Malay language immensely and saw being able to speak this language as something which was significantly beneficial to expressing one's Moluccan identity. Another second generation Moluccan shared this sentiment and said:

We also pass on our history orally, with the intention of 'getting to know the basics'. You apply it to the place and time in which you live, but you keep the basis. [...] we have been here 70 years next year [...] we are accustomed to speaking Malay in the house [...] in the neighbourhood council we also speak Malay.¹⁷⁷

They really shared the idea that the Malay language helps in articulating one's Moluccan identity. There is a hierarchy amongst the Moluccans and their generations. The second generation also implied that the command of the Malay language also gives some kind of authority to what someone is trying to convey or what message they are attempting to get across. When asking these questions to the third generation the answers were somewhat different.

¹⁷⁶ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 15, 2020.

¹⁷⁷ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 8, 2020.

When I asked if the language was still passed on by them, one interviewee answered:

I don't think so, I don't hear it very often that Malay is used when talking to the kids. It happens, but it has started to diminish from the second to the third generation. It is also dependent on the location, in Assen for example, Malay is actually used quite often, but in Krimpen this is far less. In my opinion this should be increasing, I think it is a large part of the culture.¹⁷⁸

So there is a clear sentiment that language is important, but it is not necessarily passed on anymore. This interviewee also pointed out that there are local differences, so this is specifically the case for Krimpen. Another interviewee said:

I was raised with the Dutch language mainly. My parents said that in our upbringing they were going to use the Dutch language: here is your future and in that case the Dutch language is very important. [...] I raise my kids with the Dutch language. I absolutely pass on the culture, because I also do not want to lose myself as I have been raised with it so I also do this with my kids.¹⁷⁹

The third generation might not feel the same about the importance of the usage of the Malay language, but language is still important in Moluccan culture. The second quote illustrates how even though the language used was not Malay, but Dutch it still shows how they value language as an essential part of a bright future and better chances. Whether the language is Malay or Dutch, to command a language well is a very important part of Moluccan identity and culture here in The Netherlands. In the academic as well as the museum context, the importance of language as a skill and part of the Moluccan identity is not really focused or elaborated upon. This means that in these two contexts, the importance language is not featured in the narrative that comes to the fore.

¹⁷⁸ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 27, 2020.

¹⁷⁹ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 20, 2020.

3.4.2 Pelaschap

The last theme I want to shed some light on is one that was seldom mentioned in the literature or in the heritage contexts of the museums on- and offline. This phenomenon, however, is often brought up by the Moluccans themselves. It is *pelaschap*. This is a word consisting of *pela* (which could be translated as the act of working together) and *-schap* which is actually a Dutch word to turn it into a noun.¹⁸⁰ The interviewees explained it to me as an alliance formed by the ancestral tribes even before the Portuguese came to the former Dutch East Indies. It is an alliance stronger than blood which ensures that when one is in need, you can always count on your *pela* to help and support you. It is thus a transnational phenomenon as these ties were forged in the past on the Moluccan islands and they travelled all the way to The Netherlands where these ties and alliances are still honoured and reinforced. The interviewees considered it as an intricate part of their cultural identity here in The Netherlands. They indicated that it was part of their upbringing and also part of that of their children's upbringing. The *pelaschap* comes with a set of rules that the Moluccans are expected to comply with. One of those rules, for example, is that you are not allowed to be in a relationship with someone who is your *pela*. It happens from time to time, however, but these relationships are believed to be cursed. One interviewee said:

My daughter now tells me: Mum, I don't like Moluccan boys. Then I ask: Why not? And then she answers: then I first have to ask where his grandparents are from. So, that only causes me only headaches and stress. [...] it is something our ancestors thought of with some kind of a blood bond. Not here, but we still honour it.¹⁸¹

This phenomenon is something that has travelled through space and time and can even be considered as something that brings the Moluccans closer together in The Netherlands. As these *pela*-bonds are not necessarily restricted to one family or one neighbourhood, it is something that connects all Moluccans throughout the entire country as well as throughout the entire world. It reinforces this idea of community. It is actually an articulation of what Anderson coined as 'imagined community'¹⁸²; it

¹⁸⁰ "Wat is pela," accessed on July 8, 2020, <https://kamarianamalohy.wordpress.com/familienamen/8-pelas/wat-is-pela/>.

¹⁸¹ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 20, 2020.

¹⁸² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 2006), 5-6.

is a group of people who feel connected to each other, consider each other as belonging to the same community without ever having to meet or see each other.¹⁸³ It is a feeling rather than an actual or literal bond.

A part of daily life that is regulated by *pelaschap* is religion. These bonds also regulate the alliances between villages and groups of different faiths. Religion is a large part of the Moluccan cultural identity as explained by the interviewees. All spoke about being brought up with religion, being baptized and passing it on to their children. *Pelaschap* regulates the bonds between Moluccans that adhere to different religions. One interviewee told me about the civil war that raged through the Moluccas back in 1999. The interviewee said:

*In 1999 there was a war, which they called a war between religions... but it wasn't. [...] they [Jakarta] said that it was a religious war between Christians and Muslims. We have the pelaschap between Christians and Muslims, there is no other place where it is regulated as well as with us. [...] it is from zaman pura, ancient times that this is arranged by and between us.*¹⁸⁴

They regard it as an unbreakable bond between the Moluccans, one that is encompasses everything else. Another interviewee said this on the matter:

*At the end of '99, the civil war, they tried to get the religious leaders to talk to each other. This went well for some time, but it didn't last. Then they resorted to the political leaders, this didn't last as well. They resorted to the army, but without success. When they went back to the adat¹⁸⁵ rules, it worked. It was that moment that they realized, we have religion, we have our political affiliations, but apparently there is something stronger; our ancient customs and rules and that is how they restored peace.*¹⁸⁶

This interviewee also concurs what the other said. It is the tradition, the *adat*, under which *pelaschap* belongs, that keeps the Moluccans together; that keeps them connected. Apparently, it is a bond so strong, that differences are put aside and alliances are put first. This is something that I did not come across in my literary

¹⁸³ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.

¹⁸⁴ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 8, 2020.

¹⁸⁵ Adat means the traditions and rules that have been around since the ancient times. It can be translated as customs.

¹⁸⁶ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 27, 2020.

research on the Moluccans in The Netherlands. It is something that could explain the always static representation of the history of the Moluccan community as in fact they are often presenting themselves to others as one united group. This representation could be connected to this *pelaschap* as it literally dictates this unity of the Moluccans across the entire world and thus also in The Netherlands. My research is concerned with what different visions and narratives of the Moluccan history come to the fore when we lay out different claims to this history side by side and as I have shown in the preceding chapters, the first two narratives can show a static representation of the history of the Moluccan community in The Netherlands. In the academic and museum context the same narrative of the Moluccans in The Netherlands is often repetitive and is focused on integration and the Moluccan participation in Dutch society. *Pelaschap* could be a possible explanation as to why the Moluccans in The Netherlands are often represented as having one shared historical narrative as they themselves also see their history as a shared one; as a history of their community. A large part of their cultural identity is this *pelaschap*, which in principal dictates these ties and bounds in between all Moluccans.

The Moluccans partaking in my research in Krimpen all described their identity as a dual one. In the first place they were Moluccan, but they were a Moluccan in The Netherlands, with baggage, with past trauma, with an ongoing struggle for independence that resonates here as well as in the motherland. For a lack of a better description:

*I live my life as a Moluccan in my house and outside I try to do everything the Moluccan way, but also as Krimpenaar. [...] let me put it in simple words; at some point you need to claim your own space [...] but with my command of the Moluccan language and customs and everything, the dominant sentiment remains that I am walking around here as a Moluccan, but also as Krimpenaar.*¹⁸⁷

This interviewee described the Moluccan cultural identity in The Netherlands as a dual one. Both sides are important as circumstance shaped their existence and stay here in The Netherlands. Another interviewee also referred to the rough times during the years 1977-1978 as the years that shaped the cultural identity of being a Krimpenaar. The interviewee explained to me how again trauma connects people,

¹⁸⁷ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 15, 2020.

how facing a mutual struggle forms a bond between people that gets stronger and stronger.¹⁸⁸

3.5 The micro-narratives and the overlap

The Krimpen narrative is one of the many micro-narratives of the Moluccans and their history in The Netherlands. The narrative of course differs for every neighbourhood throughout the entire country, but through the interviews and research conducted in this specific area we might be able to see larger patterns and see what narrative comes to the fore when Moluccans themselves narrate their history in The Netherlands. The narrative that comes to the fore in Krimpen partly overlaps the national academic literature narrative as well as the heritage context narrative. Where the national narrative focuses on the train hijackings, the local narrative matches this by also focusing on the impact it had on the Moluccans in Krimpen. The interviewees in Krimpen, however, focused more on the reasoning behind the hijackings and the constant struggle between understanding and disapproving the actions. In Krimpen, RMS was brought up regularly and often in connection to the aforementioned hijackings, whereas in the museum context this was not the case. It is very clear that the interviewees have reflected on their history in Krimpen and that some of the sentiments felt over time have changed and altered due to this reflection. Furthermore, it is important to note that these interviewees valued knowledge as an important asset to their Moluccan identity. They inquired into their history through contacting the second generation or consulting academic sources. It is interesting to see how even though the sentiment of frustration towards the fact that the Moluccan history is written by 'outsiders', some of the interviewees still looked into these sources. Still, a large wish of the interviewees in Krimpen aan den IJssel is to just be part of the Dutch history curriculum on their own terms; this comes down to wanting to be heard and seen by others. Now that all three contexts have been discussed, the visualisation of the interactions between the different contexts is complete.

¹⁸⁸ Interview conducted and translated by author on May 8, 2020.



This network of some of the stakeholders discussed in this thesis with regard to the history of Moluccans in The Netherlands shows how much interaction and overlap exists between the three contexts. It actually creates an almost cyclical narrative in which every context refers or consults the other contexts in order to get a complete narrative. The Moluccan interviewees from Krimpen value accurate historical knowledge and do consult Dutch scholars in the academic context in order to either confirm or disprove their own narrative as shown by the arrows. The narrative of the Moluccan history in The Netherlands that come to the fore in Krimpen is one of a tight and culturally rich group of people that value the past in order to move forward while still latching on to old traditions, values and customs.

Conclusion

Through the research for this thesis, I have looked into what different narratives come to the fore when looking at the representation of a migrant community within three different contexts; namely the academic, museum and micro-level or local context. The departure point for this thesis was the wish expressed by the Streekmuseum Krimpenerwaard to include the history of the Moluccans in their museum exhibition. In my research for the museum and this thesis, I was struck by the dominant academic narrative of the Moluccans in The Netherlands as it seemed to be quite one-dimensional and told by those considered to be ‘outsiders’ to this history. Furthermore, even though multiple voices were bringing this narrative to the fore, because of the few academics in this field that work together closely, it is still one narrative; the narrative of a slow and rocky integration of the Moluccans in The Netherlands with the train hijackings as a turning point in this history with no or little light shed on individual stories, generational tensions and, due to the publication dates, recent developments. What struck me is that this narrative was actually echoed within the museum context. Where I had expected clear boundaries between these two contexts, it actually turned out to be more of a fluid boundary due to the involvement of multiple academia, like F. Steijlen and H. Smeets, in the museums. On top of this, the *Moluks Historisch Museum* and the Open Air Museum were also exchanging information and knowledge on the Moluccan history in The Netherlands which once again reinforced this same narrative. There was Moluccan involvement in both these contexts, but this was limited.

At the beginning of this thesis, I opted to move away from the idea of a one dimensional narrative of the Moluccan community and their history in The Netherlands and move towards an open network consideration of the different individuals within a community. By keeping in mind Verkuyten et al.’s argument for including dispute and debate in the construction of identity, and thereby heritage, I uncovered an interesting notion amongst the Moluccans.¹⁸⁹ During the interviews with the Moluccans in Krimpenerwaard, I found that the interviewees actually do consider themselves as a tight community and often use this term themselves as well. This surprised me as I had expected a desire to be considered individually rather than as one group. The Moluccans are a very tight community, with the same values and

¹⁸⁹ Verkuyten, Van de Calseijde and De Leur, “Third-generation South Moluccans in the Netherlands,” 66.

customs, they stay involved and connected here in The Netherlands as well as with the Moluccas. What I discovered was actually more of a spectrum when it comes to the term ‘community’ as used by the Moluccans in the Krimpenerwaard. They considered themselves not as a one-dimensional community, because of the generational hierarchy and occasional tensions. The concepts of togetherness and a shared history, however, are often pointed to and the importance of these concepts are much bigger than expected. I would like to reflect back on this and suggest to opt for middle ground; not considering the Moluccans in The Netherlands as an open network, but rather as a community of different voices or individuals. This places the idea of community at a different place in the spectrum; not as one-dimensional, but still as tightly intertwined and interconnected.

When turning to the micro-level context, or the local context, I had expected a different narrative to come to the fore. This was actually not the case as the interviewees were also referring to the academics and museums as sources of knowledge. In the academic and museum context the integration of the Moluccans into Dutch society is the dominant theme in the narrative that comes to the fore, whereas for the micro-level context, or the Moluccans themselves, this is not a dominant theme at all. A major source of tension was the sense of frustration of the Moluccans towards ‘outsiders’ repeating the same narrative over and over again. The interesting part of this is that when the interviewees themselves got the chance to bring their own narrative to the fore, some of the same themes, such as the KNIL or the hijackings, were also brought up. The local context narrative shed more light on generational tensions, *pelaschap* or the recent resurgence of interest for the ancestral past, but it also brought to the fore many commonalities with the narrative that came to the fore in the academic and museum context. This could be explained by the network model I have presented and completed throughout the three chapters of this thesis. In this network model, the overlap and interaction between these three contexts is clearly visualized. It shows how the narrative of the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands is brought to the fore in three different contexts, but also how it is echoed within the three different contexts. If the narrators within these three contexts repeatedly refer to each other back and forth, a narrative comes to the fore in which an echo comes into existence. If we look at it this way, this narrative is not constructed in one context separately from the others; it is an ongoing process of interaction between different contexts in which a narrative comes to the fore. The

Moluccans in Krimpenewaard value accurate historical knowledge and therefore they try to stay educated on their own history. To this end they also consult the academic and museum context. This does not mean that they agree with the narrative that is presented within those contexts, but it does create an opportunity for interaction and contestation. In line with the argument made by Witz et al., as explained in the introduction of this thesis, the construction of a historical narrative takes place in the interaction and contestation over this history. It is also this process that should be considered as part of this history, rather than separately from this process.¹⁹⁰ Reflecting on this, if one zooms out from the Moluccan case and thinks about narratives of certain parts of history in these different contexts, a network model overview of the interaction between different stakeholders of this history can help us to understand how such a narrative comes into existence. Therefore, I would like to propose the following model for researching the construction of historical narratives of migrant communities in different contexts.

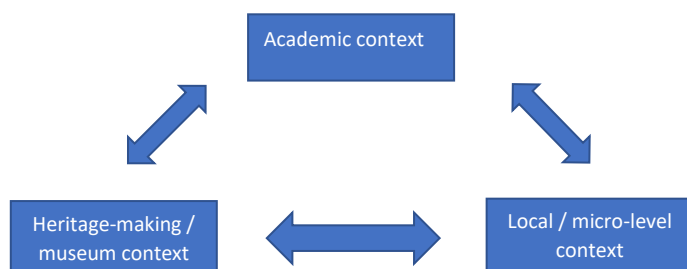


Figure 12. Visualisation of the different contexts and the possible interaction between the contexts.

The three contexts remain the same; the academic context, the museum or heritage-making context and the local or micro-level context. For the last, I should be more specific; by local context I mean the context in which the members of a migrant community themselves bring a narrative to the fore or in the least have the opportunity to do so. At first I had expected that one context was more dominant over the other when it comes to bringing narratives to the fore. This assumption turned out to be untrue as it is not a question of dominance, but of overlap. Rather than looking for what ‘voice’ was louder, it became a quest of looking for where and

¹⁹⁰ Witz Minkley and Rassool, *Unsettled History*, 15.

between whom interaction took place. The above model offers a new way for considering the history of a migrant community in several ways. The first is that it prevents the risk of a monopoly on a certain history narrative, as we have seen in the academic context with regard to the Moluccan history in The Netherlands, as it pushes for a consideration of all contexts. Furthermore, it prevents the minority voices or narratives to be pushed to the background. It is no longer inquiring into top-bottom or bottom-up narratives, but it is an active quest for identifying the interaction and overlap between the different contexts. In the model in the above the academic context is placed at the top, but this triangle can be turned sideways which would place any other context at the top. I have opted for a triangle as it does imply a focus on a certain context and how it relates to the other contexts. It is not a cyclical model, because that would imply that the narratives within these contexts are simply echoing each other and such a view would be simplistic. I believe that looking at what different narratives come to the fore when it comes to the history of a migrant community in a certain place can be given a new dimension through this model as it makes for an equal playing field between the three different contexts. Therefore, this model might be very useful for future research into the history of migrant communities.

In this thesis, I have researched the different historical narratives of a migrant community in public discourse, in this case the Moluccans, that come to the fore in different contexts. Furthermore, I have attempted to identify the interactions, contestations and agreements in the construction of the different narratives on the Moluccan history in The Netherlands. Through studying the historical narratives in three different context as well as mapping the voices of these narratives out, I have found that because of the many interactions and overlaps, the history of the Moluccan community could be perceived as being one-dimensional. The opposite is true, however. The title of this thesis articulated the question if history was written by the loudest voice, but throughout this thesis I found that this is not what I should have been looking for in my research. It is more fruitful to look at how many different voices are present within different contexts and where they agree or disagree with each other. This leads us to consider where these different narratives that come to the fore differ or share commonalities and, most importantly, how they interact and overlap. Therefore, I would like to conclude that history is not written by the victor...

but by a network of overlapping voices that interact, accord and contest with each other during the construction of historical narratives.

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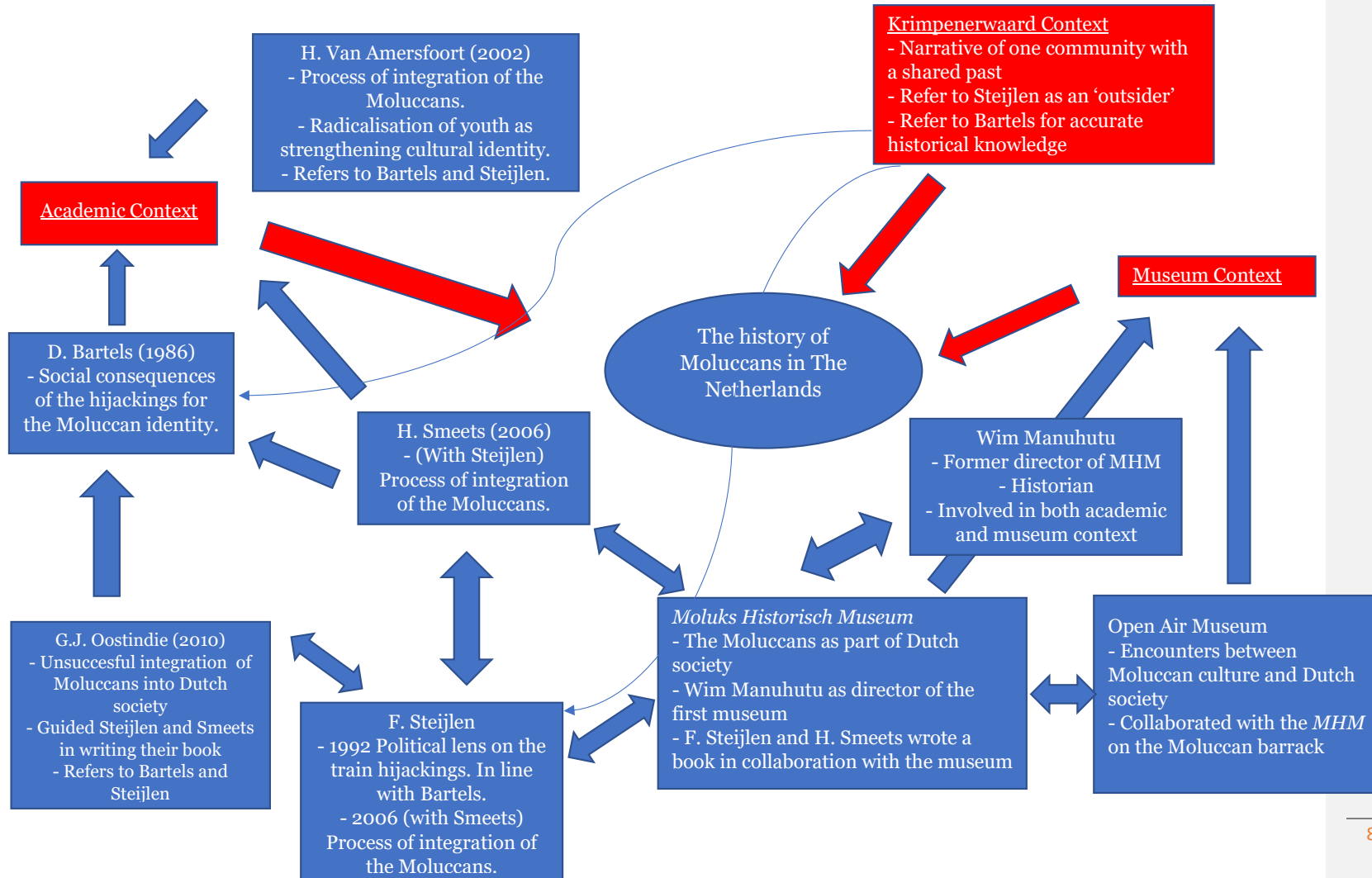
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Abstract and keywords

This thesis lays out the different narratives that come to the fore when studying the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands in three different contexts. These contexts are the academic, museum or heritage-making and the local or micro-narrative context. Within these three contexts, the different narrators that lay claim on this history are identified and the narratives that they have presented are mapped out through a careful consideration of the available literature, the exhibitions in museums and interviews with Moluccans in Krimpenerwaard. This thesis opts for a network perspective when it comes to studying this migrant history in order to move away from a one-dimensional representation of the history of the Moluccan community. The narratives on the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands will be explored through the frameworks of the construction of both cultural identity and heritage. Furthermore, the practical method of emotion-networking plays a pivotal role in mapping out the different narrators in the three contexts. The focus is on the way these narratives are constructed and by whom. This thesis seeks to answer the question: what conflicting or common visions and interests with regard to the history of the Moluccans in The Netherlands come to the fore when studying this history in different contexts? This research showed that there is actually a lot of interaction and overlap between the different contexts, whereas it was first expected that there would be three completely different contexts with clear-cut boundaries. An extensive network of different narrators was uncovered and thereafter explored, which shows new insights into how historical narratives of the Moluccans in The Netherlands take form and where the tensions or similarities in these narratives can be identified. It is hoped that this thesis will offer new insights into how the different narratives are constructed and where one can identify overlap or interaction between the different narrators within the three different contexts visualised through a network model.

Keywords: Moluccans, historical narratives, networks, emotion-networking, cultural identity, museum exhibitions, community, stakeholders, heritage-making.

Appendix I Network Perspective



Appendix II Transcriptions interviews

Interview transcript of an interview conducted on 08-05-2020

1963 2e president gevangen genomen op Ceram '66 1^e actie tegen indo ambassade, vele jongeren die in de molukse wijk woonden begonnen naar de grote steden te gaan. Begon rondom zelfde tijd als Baas in eigen Buik. Mijn leven staat in het teken van gaan voor de strijd; we kregen voorbeelden als Cuba, als Vietnam. Ik ontmoette in die tijd veel Molukse vrouwen die wegtrokken uit de wijken naar de grote steden.

In 1975 ben ik hier [krimpen] gekomen, het waren roerige jaren. Dat was ook het jaar van de gijzeling. Er zat een groep in de residentie van Amsterdam en de andere in een trein in het Noorden. Op de dag dat ze zich overgaven, waren wij [man] getrouwd. Wij wisten niet hoe snel we naar beneden moeten komen [van de trappen van het gemeentehuis]. Een oom zei nog: zorg er maar voor dat jullie huwelijk goed verloopt want ze hebben zich overgegeven. Hier in de Molukse wijk hadden we veel opkomende Molukse jongeren en het leefde ook heel erg. Je krijgt dan ook tegenstand vanuit de Nederlandse samenleving; op een gegeven moment werden we echt omsingeld door de Nederlandse samenleving, van ja stop ze maar in een boot laat ze maar zinken op de Noordzee. Ik begrijp het wel ... nu zeg ik dat maar op dat moment was het gewoon op elkaar letten. Ook de kinderen die naar school moeten. Op een gegeven moment hadden de jongens uit de trein een ultimatum gesteld en toen hebben we alle kinderen van school gehaald, want we weten niet wat er gebeurt. Omsingeld worden door Nederlandse samenleving versterkt door de militairen want ze stonden op de weg bij de rotonde, is gewoon een reactie op wat er gebeurt. Men keek naar feiten, we hebben geprobeerd [...] de Nederlandse kerken wilden wel met ons praten maar daar bleef het bij. De kerk notabene komt binnen en die praat erover terwijl dit is een opeenvolging van problemen. De KNIL soldaten, onderweg niet eens aan wal werden ze ontslagen, dat neem je allemaal mee er is nooit gesproken. Nederlandse samenleving wist dit niet, geen mogelijkheid tot begrip en ook niet willen.

Vanaf toen hebben mijn man en ik en een vriend die in Assen woont hebben we elk 25 april gingen we niet naar vieringen. Maar vroegen wij aan lagere scholen waar Molukse kinderen zitten, wij willen iets komen vertellen dus spreken wij met die kinderen af, wij willen iets doen en vragen jullie medewerking. Hier gaat het over en wat je niet weet moet je nu echt voorbereiden. Zo hebben we het 10 jaar gedaan. Middelbare scholen wilden niet. We hebben het luchtig gedaan we hebben ook gesproken over kruidnagelen, nootmuskaat en de visserij en hebben we op die manier ons kenbaar gemaakt. Maar ook een rondgang in de wijk en dat wisten ze niet eens.

Hoe ziet de wijk eruit en wat gebeurt er nu?

Het zijn 53 woningen in de wijk er is een drang van terugkomen van jongeren naar de wijk. Ze staan op de lijst om terug te komen. In krimpen hebben we een commissie Moluks welzijn voorgezeten door een wethouder en het is overleg tussen Molukse gemeenschap en de gemeente. Een van de onderwerpen van zo'n gesprek is spreken over de status van de Molukse wijk, dat het Moluks blijft. de wethouder had erbij gezegd, zolang de Molukkers dat willen dan blijft de Molukse wijk. [...] in totaal hebben we hier 230 240 gezinnen dat is om en nabij 700-800 Molukse mensen hier in krimpen. Meer wonen erbuiten. Er komen ook gelukkig wel nieuwe jonge gezinnen wonen. Ze geven dat aan. Ze kunnen zich opnieuw inschrijven als er een woning vrijkomt in de wijk dat ze erheen willen; er is een wachtlijst. Dat is iets van de laatste jaren.

Er is ook een generatiekloof. [...] dat het negatief wordt dat mensen ook niet meer naar elkaar luisteren dat de generaties niet meer naar elkaar luisteren. De jongeren luisteren niet meer naar de ouderen [...] als het niet doorgegeven wordt. Wanneer kan je iets doorgeven? [...] ik heb de laatste 25 april, wel gemerkt dat er 3 jongeren 1 van de 4^e generatie en 2 van de derde. Er gaan documenten rond om te tekenen [...] ze stellen vragen over dat wat ze belangrijk vinden. Maar waar het bij om gaat is dat een van de jongens van de 3^e generatie, heeft twee zonen, hij is teruggegaan naar het dorp waar zijn vader vandaan komt [...] ik ben ook kerkraadslid dus ik heb tijdens het overlijden en ook bij de 40^e dag was ik bij dat gezin. Op de 40^e dag heb ik gesproken over de betekenis van jullie naam. Ik heb een Bijbeltekst erbij genomen en de betekenis van jullie naam is 1^e boom en je vader is nu overleden dat heeft gevolgen voor het gezin. Wat betekent het hoe gaan jullie later met elkaar hiermee om [...] we hebben besproken dat als er een boom wegvalt wat komt dan daarna [...] dan breng ik toch dat stukje cultuur van ons; elke naam heeft een betekenis. Bij dit gezin is dat er wel, en bij andere niet.

Als je 25 april als voorbeeld neemt, dat iedereen met symbolen loopt die RMS vlag daar loop je mee. soms word dat een dreigement voor anderen. Ze hebben van jongs af meegemaakt wat het betekent om in de RMS beweging te zitten. [...] Voor de strijd werken is ook vaak afwezig zijn op belangrijke momenten van het gezin. Er is ook een man uit Breda, hij heeft leidinggevende functie en is lid van de wijkraad en hij heeft vragen 4^e generatie. Dat vind ik heel goed. Maar je ziet wel dat mijn leeftijdsgroep hem toch bepaalde dingen gaan verwijten 'je weet het niet' etc. dus hij zoekt het op buiten Breda. [...] als je fouten maakt, is het omdat je het niet weet. [...] ik zie vooral op 25 april veel mensen meedoen, er waren veel demonstraties maar die yell die ze gebruiken; daarmee moet je uitkijken en de liederen die worden gezongen op die dag. [...] je zingt toch iets wat niet goed is voor ons en de omgang met de Nederlanders. [...] Bij ons is de geschiedenis ook mondeling doorgegeven met de bedoeling van je krijgt de basisdingen mee. Je past het toe op de plek waar je woont en de tijd

waarin je leeft, die basis moet je houden. [...] We zitten hier volgend jaar toch weer 70 [...] we hebben ons aangeleerd om thuis Maleis te spreken [...] in de wijkraad spreken we ook in het Maleis.

Vroeg leven

Na de HBS heb ik mij opgegeven voor de Molukse strijd. Ik heb ook in NY gezeten, daar heb ik onder leiding van een leider op dat moment heb ik diplomaten gesproken over de RMS strijd en avonden georganiseerd om te vertellen wat er is gebeurd, wie we zijn; ik heb 2 jaar daar gezeten.

Ik heb in Nieuw Guinea gewoond Als ze zeggen waarom moeten jullie bij elkaar wonen enzovoorts, ik heb Merauke gewoon daar heb je Nederlandse wijken daar komen wij niet tussen. Mensen willen gewoon bij elkaar wonen, je bent hier een vreemde. Je wil elkaar steunen.

Treinkapingen

We leven verder, je voelt aan de ene kant de angst van de Nederlandse bevolking. Er waren 2 of 3 mensen alleen die naar ons toe kwamen om te praten, maar ook wij maakten geen aanstalten behalve voor die kinderen. Bij ons is het belangrijk dat kinderen onderling met elkaar kunnen omgaan. [...] ik werkte in Rotterdam en stond bij de bushalte en je voelde de haat. Het was echt haat [...] ze hebben die beelden gezien in 77 dat ze in die school zaten en als je aan mij vraagt vindt je dat goed dat kinderen vast werden gehouden? Dan zeg ik tuurlijk is dat niet goed, maar vraag naar WAAROM? We hebben ook een neef die samen met de 6 anderen die doodgeschoten waren in die trein die is met zijn ingewanden buit de trein gestapt en de rode kruis heeft hem gelijk op brancard gelegd en [...] hij is wel een kunstenaar, [...] hij is van de Rietveld academie een kunstenaar pakt toch geen wapens? Waarom doet hij dat dan? Vooral als je al hier woont? Als mens wil je toch altijd fijn hebben, waarom kies je daarvoor? Dit soort gesprekken hebben plaatsgevonden. In die tijd hebben we stichtingsgebouw gekregen, een zoethoudertje dat weten we, dat was in 78 toen hebben we ook de CMW gekregen. [...] er was geen gesprek mogelijk met de burgemeester destijds. [...] in die tijd waren we echt een eilandje, we waren geen burgers van Krimpen. Kan je nagaan, we zitten in het centrum. Dat was moeilijk. [...] in 75 – 77 was het heel erg [...] we voelden ons niet thuis wij zijn gewoon anderen die op een eiland woonden, en dat was heel jammer. [...] onze jongeren zijn ook veel verslaafd geweest aan drugs als gevolg van die gijzeling van 78-80 veel verslaafden. We hebben eigen opvang gehad hier, om mensen die uit de verslaving

kwamen oom te praten met jongeren wat er gebeurd als je gebruikt. [...] in de tijd van de gijzelingen werden onze Molukse leerlingen bedreigd, ook dat de leraren alleen toezien. Geschiedenis lessen spreken ze er over, 1 of 2 Molukse leerlingen zitten daar dan en de gijzelingen worden er altijd bijgehaald.

In zo'n situatie kun je kiezen voor samenleven, of je maakt eerst alles in orde binnen huis en dan ga je pas naar buiten daar hadden wij voor gekozen. En langzamerhand, [...] hebben we meer ruimte gekregen om aan iedereen te vertellen wie we zijn. Mijn basishouding is als er iets moet veranderen ben ik zelf verantwoordelijk dan moet ik zelf die stap zetten . ik heb wat te vertellen ook die positieve dingen. [...] het is toch moeilijk dat jullie nu steun krijgen want die beelden van die kapingen zitten nog steeds op ons netvlies. [...] ik laat het zo.

In 1999 werd er een godsdienst oorlog genoemd... het was geen godsdienstoorlog. Het was vanuit Jakarta gedirigeerd. Ze zeggen het is een godsdienst oorlog tussen christenen en moslims. We hebben *pelaschap* tussen christenen en moslims, nergens is het zo goed geregeld als bij ons; die *pelaschap* tussen moslim dorpen en christenen dorpen nu word er op Youtube geschreven over een voorbeeld nemen aan vredesonderhandelingen als op de Molukken. Dat zeggen ze nu. Het wordt gedirigeerd vanuit Indonesische regering om die vijandigheid te injecteren bij ons [...] het is vanuit *zaman pura*, de oudheid al anders geregeld tussen ons. De moslims, dat zijn de dorpen die nog steeds onze taal spreken.[...] het s een haat die vanuit Jakarta geïnjecteerd wordt.

Verenigingen in NL om Molukse dorpen te steunen

Als iemand komt te overlijden die ook lid is van de verenigingen dan betaal je klein bedrag bij om te geven aan die familie om ze toch te steunen [...] dit is nog steeds. Er zijn 3 grote vereniging vanuit de jaren 50 die er nog steeds zijn

Molukker in Krimpen

Vooral door de problemen die er waren in de jaren 75 – 78 hebben mij gevormd als Krimpenaar. [...] wanneer ga je je echt verbonden voelen? Als je problemen hebt. Als je gezamenlijk die problemen hebt aangepakt, zo ben ik erin gegroeid eigenlijk. Dus ik heb toch de gelegenheid gehad om veel te werken binnen de samenleving vooral voor jongeren. [...] Ik voel me echt Krimpenaar.

Interview conducted on 15-05-2020

Ik was elf jaar toen ik naar Krimpen kwam [...] hoe komt het dat mijn vader krimpen uit koos? Op een gegeven moment werden er wijken gebouwd. Het Nederlands beleid was er toen al toen ze al ontslagen werden op die schepen en toen Nederland besloot om terug te gaan naar Indonesië om het terug te pakken toen hadden ze al besloten dat wij natuurlijk niet meer terug kunnen. Dat wisten ze al tuurlijk, dat is gewoon politiek. En dan komen wij en het eerste wat ze deden dan was het integratiebeleid, het integratiebeleid is gelijk op dat moment ingegaan. Staat niet op papier natuurlijk, van hier het integratiebeleid van de Molukkers, [...]

In literatuur staat vaak dat het integratiebeleid pas vanaf de jaren 60 is begonnen ?

Ik heb als voorbeeld ik heb ontzettend veel kennissen en vrienden, ben nu bijna 68 heb goede functies gehad m.b.t. werk [...] ik verplaats m'n eigen in het Nederlandse gebeuren het kabinet destijds, je zit met een probleem daar moet over nagedacht worden. Je hebt die mensen hierheen gehaald wat ga je ermee doen? [...] ten eerste hoe vangen we die mensen op? [...] in grotere lijnen ze hebben dat gewoon vastgezet integratiebeleid klaar dat gaan we doen integreren. Op een gegeven moment moeten ze die kampen uit die kampen moeten ook weg [...] er zijn ook onder de Molukkers mensen die het altijd voor het zeggen hebben, ze zijn niks anders gewend dan op beval [...] vanwege de KNIL ook ze weten niet beter tis niet anders. Van de 500 jaren dat de Nederlanders daar gezeten hebben de Molukkers denk ik 300 jaar voor het Nederlands Indisch leger gediend want ze zaten op de Molukken natuurlijk met al die fouten. Integratiebeleid is ingegaan daar is gewoon goed over nagedacht [...] we weten hoe Molukkers denken we weten hoe ze handelen door het KNIL gebeuren dus daar hebben ze op ingespeeld tenminste dat zou ik doen als ik het beleid zou moeten vormen dat is gebeurd in mijn optiek, anderen denken er ook anders over. [...] dat gebeurt nog steeds tot op heden [integratiebeleid]. Het is niet afgelopen tot het hele RMS gedoe is afgelopen

Denkt u dat dat een doel is van de Nederlandse overheid?

Nou dat is geen doel het is een kwestie van politiek. Nu is koning Willem Alexander in Indonesië geweest met koningin Maxima. Er is geen woord gerept over de Molukken terwijl toen Nederlanders daar zaten ze meer op de Molukken dan op Java. Maar waarom mag daar dan niet over gesproken worden? Op een gegeven moment heeft Nederland gezegd of de indruk gewekt dat Indonesië de vijand is. In mijn optiek is niemand de vijand. Er is pas een vijand als er oorlog is en nu is het nog ergerwant in het int beleid is op een gegeven moment [...]alles was tegen Indonesië tot op een gegeven moment dat ze zeiden van hey dit klopt niet [...] het ligt niet bij Indonesië [...] het is gecreëerd door Nederland en toen kreeg je die kapingen [...] basisschool sta ik niet achter geen een kaping natuurlijk maar dat is echt erg. Dat is in mijn optiek is dat geen Molukse dat die jongens dat gedaan hebben wat er ook

gebeurt van kinderen moet je afblijven [...] aar dat merk ik ook hoor je zit nog steeds natuurlijk, ze zeggen wat is fanatiek als je over de politiek begint

Denkt u dat de gijzelingen gevolg waren van het besef onder Molukkers van de Nederlandse overheid dit was het plan dit was het beleid al die tijd al maar er is ons iets anders verteld

Ja, frustratie wil ik niet zeggen [...] dit is gewoon de nl game die gespeeld moest worden m.b.t. economische belangen. [...] je hebt nog stzeds natuurlijk nu de fanatisme net als vandaag. Vandaag is herdenkingsdag van Pattimura dat is onafhankelijkheidsstrijder van indo, maar hij is een Molukker uitgeroepen tot held van Indonesië. [...] dan zeg ik wat is er dan eerst, m.b.t. RMS dan. Je had eerst het Moluks zijn, je had Pattimura, het was nog geen Indonesië maar dan kwam de Nederlanders [...] in feite herhaald geschiedenis zich iedere keer, maar wie is de big boss wie trekt er aan de touwtjes? Zoals je nu ziet [...] neem bijvoorbeeld het bezoek van de koning, bestaan wij niet? Wij waren die Spice Islands voor 500 jaar voor de VOC. [...]

Uw vader heeft voor krimp gekozen, andere opties? Waarom allemaal bij elkaar in de wijken?

Dat was een eis van de Molukkers zelf. Om te beginnen, moesten de kampen uit/ weg. Zoveel mogelijk moeten integreren m.b.t. het omgaan met Nederlandse maatschappij. Politiek was het probleem namelijk je had met toezeggingen te maken en de toezegging was tot 3 maanden en dat ging voorbij niks geregeld en toen kreeg je de tijden van beloftes van de Nederlandse overheid. Buiten die beloftes om krijg je met andere dingen te maken in de kampen. Je bent overgebracht en dan moest je zelf de huur gaan betalen in de kampen. [...] vluchtelingen moesten toch ook niks betalen? Wij wel. [...] was onder beleid van CAZ, dus als je nu naar dat kijkt onder de regelementen dan kan je precies zien wat voor stel regels dat erin staan en dan kon je ook zien al je leest tussen de regels door dat op een gegeven moment dat ze bezig waren met net als toen in NI m.b.t. Molukkers in kazernes zelfde beleid. Ging gewoon door in de wijken. Nederlandse meneer die had het hier voor t zeggen in de wijk terwijl wij zelf huur betaalden. [...] ik heb ook mijn rechten maar daar werd niet over gesproken toen. Achteraf dacht ik bij mezelf, is gewoon zelfde beleid gebleven.

Een doorgetrokken beleid?

Want ze hoeven niks nieuws te verzinnen toch? We houden gewoon o tot de 100 procent geïntegreerd zijn. [...] en dan krijg je tot 60 toen mijn vader zei toen we hier kwamen we moeten Nederlander worden. Nou dan zijn we weer een stap verder.#

Uit de kampen, je moest weg. Er waren wijken opgebouwd uit Molukker een eis van wij willen wijken

Wij willen gewoon bij elkaar blijven en Nederland moest gewoon buiten het hele juridische gebeuren eromheen wij willen bij elkaar blijven zoals het beloofd is en er met voor gezorgd worden dat we weer teruggaan.

Toen was het in jaren 60 nog steeds dat iedereen terug wilde ook de kinderen?

Ja. [...] hier maakte ik toch kleine dingetjes mee, bijv. toen we pas in krimpen waren dat er bijvoorbeeld iemand aan de deur kwam, huis-aan-huis verkoop en dat m'n moeder dan aan de deur stond dat die groenteman ging schreeuwen van ja mot je nog wat hebben of niet? Zulke verhalen hoor je. [...] bijv. op scholen toen we hier op school zaten als er wat gebeurde, wat dan ook, het eerste wat ze deden is die jongen opwachten ik word meegenomen waar was jij om die tijd? Het werd wel steeds minder, maar in het begin wel ja. Die mensen wisten ook niet beter ineens waren ineens die gasten hier. [...]

Keuze richting krimpen toen we nog in de kampen woonden op een gegeven moment moest m'n vader gaan werken mijn vader werkte in Deventer [...] hij was al een hele tijd uit die isolatie hij werkte daar toen beven ze daar een week en 1 keer in de week kwamen ze terug. Hij wist al he het buiten was in de maatschappij. En mijn vader kennende hij dacht we zitten nu in deze maatschappij het gaat niet over 10 jaar maar over morgen wat gaat gebeuren ik heb 6 kinderen. wat moet er van hun terecht komen? Dat moet goed geregeld worden. vanuit die optiek zijn we naar het westen gekomen omdat je meer werk hebt, meer dan rond Deventer en omstreken. Dat heeft hij allemaal uitgezocht. [...] en andersom de Nederlanders toen wij hier kwamen ze wisten niet dat waren die inlanders maar meer weten ze niet. [...] toen waren we in krimpen best naar m'n zin, geen problemen kleine dingetjes in het begin [...] als je dan hier in krimpen een supermarkt in kwam dan word je al in de gaten gehouden van komen ze wat kopen of uh.. maar zo gaat dat dan ik neem het ze niet kwalijk hoor die mensen zijn gewoon niet geïnformeerd, dat is ze niet bekend gemaakt. [...]

[...]

Wees wijs doe mee aan het economisch belang want als je ergens aan mee doet kan je er ook over meepraten. Kan je de regels uitzetten. Dan heb je intern dat mensen zeggen van ja waarom moeten we meedoen met hen dat is de boel verkopen en dan krijg je die twee kampen tegen over elkaar, dat zit ook in het integratiebeleid. [...] binnen de Molukkers zelf

Is dat nog steeds zo?

Nee, het is minder geworden. Waarom? Dat merk je aan mijn dochter die is hier geboren. [...] Hollands meisje bij wijze van spreken maar toch is die Molukse kant niet weg en als ik er nu met haar over heb zegt ze ik ben Molukse in Nederland geboren [...] je bent 2 talig opgevoed en je leeft in twee culturen als je spreekt van een bepaalde cultuur die we hier hebben en als

je dat goed kan combineren ben je een streepje voor met iemand die dat niet wilt want je hebt ook genoeg Molukkers die hier geboren zijn die willen niet terug. Maar ze lopen wel met de vlag te zwaaien [...] maar hebben totaal geen eigen mening.

Weet iedereen die met die symbolen loopt wat het inhoudt?

Jawel... nu wel. [...] ik praat veel met de jeugd en dan vraag ik vertel het hele verhaal [...] het besef is er, het integratiebeleid heeft zo erg gewerkt, dat het ook zo'n voordelen heeft [...] bijv. dat we nu gaan spreken over van alles en nog wat m.b.t. het Moluks zijn dat we dat naar buiten toe brengen in literatuur want het is natuurlijk een zwarte bladzijde in het Nederlandse gebeuren. [...] op een gegeven ogenblik is het al helemaal bepaald door mensen die zeggen dat ze denken te weten wat het is dat ze er een studie over gemaakt hebben maar niet aan den lijve ondervonden hebben zoals wij en dat is het verschil. [...]

Is er bij u het idee dat de jongere generatie steeds meer bewust is van wat het betekent om Moluks te zijn?

Ja, er is pas een incident geweest met de vlag hijsen 25 april. [...] kreten werden verkeerd uitgesproken en toen kwam er discussie onderling van als je het niet weet doe dan niet mee. [...]

Kijk ik ben een Nederlander, ik spreek ABN maar ik ben ook een Molukker maar als ik de bahasa niet goed spreek ben ik ook niet half Molukse. Je moet de taal kennen wil je iets uit beelden of gaan vertellen over het Molukse gebeuren anders wordt het moeilijk. [...] kijk naar de symboliek Molukkers

Wat houdt dat voor u in?

Je denkt dat je erbij hoort als je een t-shirt aandoet met ik ben Molukker met al die symbolen maar als je vraagt wat houdt dat in? Ja is Moluks, that's it. [...] zo zijn er meer dingen. [...] mensen die ook nog nooit zijn geweest. Er is een gezegde onder de Molukkers *Ambon Kaart* [...] je bent nog nooit op Ambon geweest je kent het alleen van de kaarten.

Is dat negatief?

Nee hoor, want je hebt mensen die in Jakarta wonen die ook nog nooit op Ambon zijn geweest. [...]

[...]

Je weet alles over Krimpen want je bent een Krimpenaar.

U zei dat Nederlanders niet geïnformeerd waren over de komst van de Molukkers treinkapingen leefde dat?

Of je nu in Krimpen of ergens anders woonde, wat er gebeurd heeft een impact dat hebben we meegemaakt hier. Toestanden in Krimpen dat we geïsoleerd waren dat we de wijk niet meer uit konden. Maar t.o.v. andere krimpenaren, althans ik heb het niet meegemaakt dat mijnvrienden ineens niet mijn vrienden meer waren. [...]

Gingen mensen het gesprek aan?

Jawel. Men wilde weten van hoe komt dat? Waarom komt dat dat het gebeurd is? En er zit als Molukse Krimpenaar zijnde moet ik dat goed uit kunnen leggen dat iemand anders dat kan begrijpen. [...] wat ik wel gemerkt hebt, maar daar ontkom je niet aan, toen het gebeurde met de kapingen woonde ik buiten de wijk en toen het gebeurde de volgende dag had ik mijn auto geparkeerd staan en waren mijn ruiten ingegoooid. [...] toen is er besloten om iedereen die buiten de wijk woonde, dat iedereen de wijk in gaat. Toen heb ik een tijd bij mijn ouders gezet tot het een beetje minder was geworden [...] om toch bij elkaar te zijn. [...] ik voelde van alles, bij mij had het helemaal een impact want ik kende die jongens, ze hadden bij mij in de klas gezeten. [...] hoe maak je dat mee als Molukker zijnde omdat het gaat om de kwestie van de Molukken en als Krimpenaar van dat zijn terroristen. We leven altijd dubbel. Dat verhaal zit nog steeds dubbel.

Over het RMS gebeuren, je moet he gewoon helemaal anders aanpakken. Je moet met de wereldpolitiek meegaan. [...]

Wat is haalbaar , met RMS?

Wij zijn een heel gelovig volk. Maar op een gegeven ogenblik zeg ik op mijn beurt wie heeft het geloof naar de eilanden gebracht? Toen het er nog niet was hadden we toch ons eigen geloof? [...] maar je moet die dingen niet door elkaar halen. Waarom hebben ze dat gedaan? Om mensen te onderdrukken uit de naam van god. Maar wij gaan ook blindelings mee, de kinderen ook.

Al die gewoontes, na 70 jaar, hebben we wel vastgehouden. Loopt parallel ook met Azië.

Kunt u een voorbeeld geven van een Molukse gewoonte?

Bij Molukkers wordt de nageboorte meegenomen. Deze wordt dan begraven op eigen grond in de eigen tuin. Want ze zeggen dat de nageboorte, jouw *saudarah* is. Dat gebeurt bij de Molukkers, nog steeds ook. De nageboorte wordt meegenomen en de navelstreng wordt bewaard. Dat zijn twee aparte verhalen, dat heeft met de cultuur te maken.

[...]

Hoe voelt u zich als Molukker Krimpenaar?

Ik ga als Molukker m'n leven door binnenshuis en buitenom probeer ik alles op z'n Moluks te doen en ook als Krimpenaar op z'n Krimpens. In omgang met mensen, je kan op 2 manieren omgaan met Molukkers ga je op die manier op met Nederlanders op die manier [...] het is een combinatie van. Nederland is nu toch een melting pot van alles en nog wat. Laat ik het simpeler zeggen op een gegeven moment moet je je eigen plek creëren [...] maar met mijn taal, de beheersing van de Molukse taal en de gewoontes en alles blijft de boventoon als gevoel dat ik hier als Molukker hier rondloop. Maar ook als Krimpenaar. [...]

Wat vond u van het MHM?

In een museum breng je allemaal artikelen bijelkaar en dan zeg je het is de geschiedenis van dat. [...] dat was voor mij een bekend verhaal, het was voor mij niet nieuws. [...] toen die tijd had ik in mijn hoofd Molukkers zijn gedwongen Nederlanders. [...] m.b.t. het museum ik was er bekend mee je gaat daarheen met ouders zijn allemaal herkenbare dingen, zoals de KNIL KIST, ja die hadden we ook thuis [...] alles wat daar werd tentoongesteld herken ik herkenbare dingen, daar hoefden ze mij niks over te vertellen want ik wist het al.

Was het voor Molukkers of Nederlanders om te leren over de Molukkers

Beide. [...] RMS werd toen verzwegen uit politiek oogpunt. Nu zijn het nieuwe gebeuren wordt over ons gepraat, was een heel ander tijdsvak. [...] als je ernaartoe gaat verwacht je dat er gepraat wordt over het Molukse gebeuren maar niet in de zin van wat er na gebeurde [...] er stond wel iets over de RMS, wanneer het ontstaan is of uitgeroep maar that's it. [...] maar nu in het huidige gebeuren zoals het nu in Den Haag is samengevoegd. [...] het is allemaal politiek geworden [...] uiteindelijk is het bestuur allemaal Nederlanders.

Wat voor mij van belang is dat de Molukkers van de 1^e generatie die artsen professoren zijn, verhaal van de militairen ken ik van mijn pa, maar die verhalen wil ik horen.

[...]

Ik was er ook bij van Pelita was het 70jarig bestaan in den Haag. Was meer voor de Indische Nederlanders, maar ze openden met het Moluks volkslied. Indisch was gemengd, en wij waren puur dus zij hadden die liederen niet. [...] zou er dan toch nu een tijd komen dat de Molukken in kaart worden gebracht?

[...]

In de basis is het gewoon Moluks, [...] dat we misschien toch in de toekomst een ander beeld ervan kunnen geven. Als je de geschiedenis niet weet, dan kan je niks vertellen. Laat hem dan vertellen over de kapingen.

[...]

Interview conducted on 20-05-2020

Op school kom je in aanraking met allerlei verschillende culturen, hoe was dat voor de Molukse kinderen?

De Molukse kinderen trekken naar elkaar toe. Nu de 5^e generatie trekken echt met elkaar op, mijn dochter is dan 4^e generatie en zij trekt ook echt met de Molukse jongeren vanuit buiten de wijk maar ook hier in de wijk van haar leeftijd en jongeren.

Is dat vanuit de ouders die elkaar kennen?

Ik weet het niet dat gaat vanzelf denk ik. Is denk ik toch een stukje veiligheid je voelt elkaar aan. Ik denk dat dat automatisch gaat.

En qua taal? Tweektalig opgevoed

Hoofdzakelijk Nederlands. Mijn ouders hadden zoiets van we gaan jullie met op de opvoeding Nederlandse taal meegeven want jullie studeren hier. Hier is jullie toekomst en dan is de Nederlandse taal heel belangrijk. [...] het was op het moment als we iets hadden uitgevreten kattenkwaad dan ging het over op Maleis dan wisten we hoe laat het was en ik moet zeggen dat dat ook wel tweektalig ging. Mijn ouders in het Maleis en wij spraken dan Nederlandse terug. [...]

En uzelf?

Ik voed mijn kinderen Nederlandstalig op. Ik geef absoluut de cultuur mee, daarin wil ik mezelf ook niet verliezen want ik heb het met de paplepel ingegoten gekregen dus dat doe ik ook naar mijn kinderen toe ook het *pelaschap*, 25 april, belangrijke feestdagen van ons. Naarmate ze ouder worden vragen ze natuurlijk wat er aan de hand is. Media doet natuurlijk ook heel veel.

Maar ook als je dan kijkt van afgelopen viering, wat vond u van wat er werd weergegeven in de media?

Dat vind ik in principe wel goed, dat moet blijven ik moet wel zeggen dat ik wel heel erg verwesterd ben. Ik ben hier geboren, Nederlandse school Nederlands vriendinnen ook wel Molukse vriendinnen absoluut maar ik ben wel heel erg verwesterd.

Waar merkt u dat aan?

Ik ben nog nooit terug geweest. De bedoeling was dit jaar maar dat gaat het helaas niet worden, ontzettend jammer. [...] we zouden okt/nov gaan, maar ik denk het niet. [...] het is wel de laatste jaren naarmate ik ouder word en je maakt van alles mee je rugzakje wordt steeds voller en voller data ik zeker wel de laatste 7 jaar echt wel drang heb om terug te gaan,

echt drang. [...] echt naar het dorp van mijn vader, op Ceram. Dat is gewoon een hele tocht en wil je verder gaan naar boven [...] dat is echt de gunung in dan ga je echt back to basic. Daar kijk ik echt naar uit. Om het te zien om het te ruiken.

[...]

Is er veel contact met uw familie daar?

Ja. Ik moet wel zeggen dat mijn zussen meer contact hebben, want die zijn vaker geweest dus die hebben echt wel regelmatig contact. [...]

De Molukse cultuur ook al verwesterd, maar probeert wel mee te geven? Wat verstaat u hieronder? Wat geeft u mee in de opvoeding

Het is vooral het stukje identiteit vind ik. Stukje identiteit Moluks zijn dan gaan we eigenlijk weer terug naar het stukje geschiedenis van opa's en oma's toen we hier zijn gekomen. Ik vind dat dat absoluut nooit verloren moet gaan. Dat is zeker wel een hele belangrijke geschiedenisverhaal die je je kinderen echt wel moet meegeven, dat is gewon generatie op generatie. Dat vooral. Dat vind ik wel heel belangrijk [...] weten waar je vandaan komt. [...] hopen dat het ooit in de geschiedenis boeken terug komt op de basisscholen.

Word er hier aandacht aan besteed omdat er veel Molukse kinderen op de basisscholen zitten?

Gewoon eerlijk, straight to the point, nee. [...] mensen weten toch niet wat Molukkers zijn, ja wij Molukkers zijn van de treinkaping. [...] of verleden jaar de Nijmeegse, de hele week heb ik met de Molukse vlag, 4-kleuren, gelopen en dan ben ik heel vaak aangesproken door zowel buitenlandse als Nederlandse mensen. Van "sorry mevrouw, mag ik wat vragen? Van wat voor land is die vlag eigenlijk?" [...] is echt bizar, mensen kennen gewoon niet de 4 kleuren. [...] en dan "o dat wisten we helemaal niet" echt verbazing. Wat ik verleden jaar heb gedaan de buitenlandse vierdaagse gasten dat ik ze heb verwezen naar Google, tik "Maluku" in. Zoek het op. Wij zijn een land.

Waar komt dit door denkt u? Wordt het niet verteld in de media?

Ik denk dat dat destijds is doodgezwegen, het is in een doofpotje beland. [...]

Waar gaat het mis?

Ik denk dat het een landelijk iets is. Mensen weten wel over, de een noemt het Ambonezenwijken, Ambonezenkamp, mondjesmaat werd het toen de Molukkers. Maar toen ik klein was het echt wel de Ambonezen. [...]

Maken initiatieven als museum verschil iig voor krimpen?

Wij hebben hier op krimpen diverse activiteiten gehad, waaronder ook [...] bij de stichting iets met bandjes enzo ook. Zoveel jaar waren we hier in krimpen, daar kwamen best veel mensen op. We betrekken ook best de omliggende buurtjes met flyers, dat hebben we ook gedaan. De lokale kranten natuurlijk ook, die horen het ook. Zo hebben wij natuurlijk ook het Moluks uurtje. Dat wordt door A. en F. een radio-programma op lokale radio, heb ik ook nog even aan meegedaan. Molukse liederen of bekende Molukse BN'ers werden geïnterviewd. [...]

Toen u jong was, was er veel muziek in het huis?

Er was altijd muziek, ik ben a-muzikaal, maar muziek is wel echt iets typisch Moluks. Je ging niet naar een muziek school, daar was geen geld voor. Gitaar kwam ergens uit een keukenkastje gepakt vooral de tifa's die heb ik zelf ook en dan werd er muziek gemaakt. [...] ik vind dat heel erg jammer dat ik dat talent van mijn ouders heb meegekregen. [...]

U bent hier geboren, maar bent u ooit verhuisd hiervandaan of bent u altijd in Krimpen gebleven?

Ik ben wel met mijn gezin buiten krimpen gaan wonen, dat vond ik vreselijk. Toen was het een keus, ik ging met mijn ex naar Leerdam ook wel in een wijk, maar daar merk je echt wel dat je 'inteelt' bent. Dat klinkt heel raar maar zo voelde het echt. Het was in een Molukse wijk maar het voelde echt niet... nee. Omdat ik ook niet, misschien was dat mijn gevoel, maar er werd ook geen hallo of dag tegen me gezegd. Ik ben echt opgegroeid tegen je eigen *bangsa* die groet je gewoon. Al ken je ze niet bij de naam zeg je hallo oom of dag tante of usi of bung, eigenlijk toch dat stukje respect wat je hebt meegekregen. Niet hallo of dag, dat moet met twee woorden. [...] maar dat gebeurde daar gewoon helemaal niet. [...]

Toen bent u teruggekomen?

Door omstandigheden ging ik terug naar Krimpen. Dat voelde echt als thuiskomen, alsof ik nooit ben weggeweest. Ik ben toch wel, 20001 uit Krimpen tot 2007, dus toch wel 6 jaar. Toen kwam ik weer terug.

Nu is er een idee dat jongere stellen toch ook weer terug willen keren naar de Molukse wijk? Waar komt dat vandaan?

Ja, klopt. We krijgen natuurlijk vergrijzing, eerste generatie is er al bijna niet meer. De tweede generatie die worden ouder en we gaan natuurlijk steeds vaker de tweede generatie dat ze gelijkvloers wonen [...] en dan blijft het huis hier in de wijk. [...] het is als thuiskomen. Het is de binding, het is omdat je allemaal gewoon Moluks bent, het is omdat je elkaar gewoon begrijpt. Het is ook makkelijk met feestjes. Ik heb natuurlijk jongere kinderen dus dat is gewoon wel prettig. [...] Het is gewoon wel, ik woon in een blok van vier vrouwen allen wij hier en het is saamhorigheid wat je hebt met elkaar. Als er iets aan de hand is weet je toch

dat je op elkaar kan bouwen. Je loopt niet de deuren bij elkaar plat, dat is natuurlijk veel anders geworden dan vroeger. Vroeger stond alles open, dan kon je zo naar binnen lopen, er waren nog geen schuttingen, het was gewoon een soort doorloopsysteem. Dat was vroeger. [...] eigenlijk in alle wijken dat je gewoon een doorloopsysteem had, dat kon. [...] de saamhorigheid gewoon. [...] ik moet zeggen dat ik een keertje buitend e wijk hier in krimpen heb gewoond, was ook wel fijn, maar ik vind het toch wel heel anders voelen want je hebt wel andere nationaliteiten [...] ik vind het toch anders, ik weet het niet. Ik vind dit echt thuiskomen. [...] het is misschien weet je je bent Moluks en je hebt een Molukse wijk, je bent toch wel één met elkaar. [...]

Heeft u het idee dat het voor alle wijken zo is? Bijv. Capelle, Berkel of Moordrecht

Capelle en Moordrecht zijn ook heel hecht met elkaar dat is echt een eenheid. Daar kunnen wij echt van leren. Krimpen aan den IJssel kan echt leren van de eenheid die ze vooral in Moordrecht hebben. [...] er zijn heel veel activiteiten met elkaar voor zowel de jongeren als de ouderen. Dat is echt al jaren zo, daar wordt zoveel gedaan. Echt heel veel. Ongelooflijk. Maar goed daar is de wijk ook wel wat groter, maar ik vind dat dat niks uit moet maken. [...] tuurlijk heb je overal wel cliquejes, maar ja ik vind dat hier te weinig wordt gedaan. Bijna niks. We hebben een stichting. [...] dat is nu ik woon hier vanaf 2007 we hebben even op de woensdagmiddag de kindermiddag gehad, nou door omstandigheden is die gestopt. Heel jammer. Ik ben niet helemaal op de hoogte van het wel en wee wat erachter zit, maar het is gewoon gestopt. Vroeger werd er gewoon een dagje uit georganiseerd en dan ging je naar een pretpark of iets met z'n allen, een bos vol. Dat waren hele leuke tijden. [...] maar voor de generatie van mijn dochter en alle andere kleintjes hier, nou.. nee. [...]

Gebrek aan initiatief?

Gebrek aan initiatief en gebrek aan bestuur. [...] het wordt afgewimpeld. Ja. Je hebt natuurlijk met een bestuur te maken met bijv. de stichting iemand beheert de sleutel. Je kan met een plan komen van vind je het goed als ik dat of dat doe en als dat dan wordt afgewezen dan denk ik van ja ... [...] en dat dus die cliquejes en diverse mensen met diverse mensen met diverse petjes rondlopen en als je niet met elkaar door één deur kan dan krijg je dit dat her voor de jongere generatie stilstaat. [...] er moet natuurlijk wel een tijd komen dat je het stokje gaat overgeven. Dat willen ze natuurlijk niet, het is best wel een dingetje als je een bepaald soort macht krijgt toebedeeld en dat je die een x aantal jaren heb je dat stokje, het machtsstokje zeg maar, en je moet dat dan gaan overgeven naar een jongere generatie dat houdt in dus dat jij misschien, weet ik niet, niet meer zo belangrijk bent.. [...] en dat vin dik jammer hier in krimpen. Ik vind het prettig wonen hier in krimpen, ik kom hier echt thuis als ik de sleutel al in de deur doe, kom ik echt thuis. Maar gewoon de saamhorigheid is hier ver

te zoeken.. ik ben misschien ontzettend aan het roddelen nu, maar je vraagt eerlijk van wat ik ervan om hier in de wijk te wonen. [...] ik vind de solidariteit en het samenwerken vooral, dat is heel moeilijk.

Is er interesse onder de 4^e 5^e generatie?

Een grote ja. Want er zijn zoveel jongeren. Heel veel. Mijn dochter is daar echt voor in. Ik ben er ook absoluut voor in ik heb ook eventjes de kindermiddag meegedraaid. [...]

[...]

Wat betekent het voor u om Molukker in krimpen te zijn?

Het *pelaschap* bijvoorbeeld, heb ik absoluut meegekregen maar ik was 17 en ik was jong en rebels ook wel. Dat mijn eerste vriendje was een *pela* van mij, ik raakte zwanger en toen kwam er natuurlijk een hoop gedonder.

Uitleg *pelaschap*

Anderen zouden hebben van waar heb je het over? Ja maar het is toch niet in bloedverband, uh hoezo? Mijn dochter zegt nu mam ik val niet op Molukse jongens? Waarom dn niet? Ja jeetje, dan moet ik eerst gaan vragen waar z'n opa of oma vandaan komt? Dus ja ik krijg er alleen hoofdpijn en stress van. [...] dat hebben onze voorouderen verzonnen met een bloedverbond. Niet hier, maar toch houden ze zich daar wel aan. Wat ik heb meegemaakt doordat ik niet wilde luisteren ben ik een relatie aangegaan met een *pela* heel veel problemen heb ik daar van gehad [...] je gaat achteraf toch denken van heeft dat niet toch met de vloek die toen is uitgeroepen op het *pelaschap* te maken? [...] ik zeg nu wel dat het absoluut wel een vloek was van dat ik met een *pela*.. [...] is voor de jongeren nu is dat echt heel moeilijk. [...] dat is echt wel zo'n duister verhaal *pelaschap* [...] ik vertel het door aan mijn dochter, absoluut.

In de Molukse opvoeding?

Pelaschap, vooral wat heel belangrijk is in Moluks zijn is het geloof, dat vooral. Dat geef ik ook mee, ik ben gedoopt heb mijn *sidhi* gedaan. [...] misschien dat mijn dochter het later wel oppakt, van ik ga toch mijn *sidhi* doen en dopen tegelijkertijd. Maar ik geef het wel mee.

[...]

Vroeger, ik moest. Nu mogen kinderen een mening hebben dat had je vroeger niet in de jaren 70. wat papa of mama zeiden dat was het en geen kronkel eromheen. [...] je gaat het gewoon doen. Nou ja dat hebben we dus allemaal gedaan, al onze broers en zussen. [...]

Net al wat ik zeg ik ben verwesterd, maar wat ik wil mijn kinderen heb willen meegeven is niks moet. Je hebt een eigen keus. Ik ben toch redelijk streng opgevoed, best wel. En met vooral normen en waarden. Heel belangrijk. Jij en jou die kennen we niet. [...] ja eigen keus en verantwoording vooral. En niet van ik moet mijn kinderen laten dopen [...] want zo hoort het. Nee. Eigen keus. Eigen verantwoording. Ik heb ook pas later mijn *Sidhi* gedaan. [...]

Er worden avonden georganiseerd dat mensen de route gaan lopen vanuit de haven?

The walk is dat, die zou in mei plaatsvinden. Maar ja corona. [...] dat is in de haven, dat is de aankomsthaven van waar onze opa's en oma's zijn aangekomen om dat niet te vergeten. [...] of het is vanaf de stichting, zo'n 20 /18 km naar de haven toe. We lopen allemaal met de vlag. [...] het wordt daarna in de krant gezet en ik moet wel zeggen dat de Krimpense Nederlanders nu wel weten wat er gaande is.

Is er interactie?

Nieuwsgierig zijn mensen wel. Maar mensen omwonenden aan de Molukse wijk die zijn op de hoogte van maar echt buiten de wijk en nieuwbouw. Molukkers... oh ja de kaping? Ja weer het verhaal van de kaping. Echt mensen die totaal niet op de hoogte zijn. Misschien totaal ongeïnteresseerd ofzo. Molukken? Ja bestaat dat dan? [...] oh das van *Satudarah* toch? [...] ja dan hoor je best wel aan mijn stemverheffing ja maar Molukkers zijn geen *satudarah* [...] dus je moet de Molukkers niet gaan linken met *satudarah* want dat zijn we niet. Dat vin dik wel jammer dat oor de negatieve media verhalen is dat de Molukkers ook over die kam worden gescheurd. Dat Molukkers een volk zijn die alleen maar negatief gedrag vertonen, maar dat gebeurt heel vaak ook bij [...] andere volken. [...] dat hou je toch wel dat zal je nooit uit de wereld krijgen. Een x aantal mensen die er dan zo over nadenken.

Denkt u dat dat iets van alle tijden is?

Nee want niemand weet wie Molukkers eigenlijk zijn. Wie wat, wat zijn Molukkers? Waar komen ze vandaan? Jullie zijn allochtonen. Nee we zijn geen allochtonen. [...] dat vind ik wel heel verontrustend. We zitten hier nu 70 jaar dat na 70 jaar dat er nog op geen enkele basisschool al is het maar één bladzijde 'hoe de Molukkers hier in Nederland zijn gekomen en waarom onder welke status' dat alleen maar. Dat zou verschil maken. [...] we zijn geen allochtonen, we zijn hier al zo lang. Ja maar waarom wonen jullie in de wijken? Nou dan zeg ik heel vaak nou mijn opa en oma werden in een concentratiekamp gedouwd waar ze niet om hebben gevraagd en omdat er eigenlijk toen had je nog geen 'bruine mensen' in Nederland wonen dus dat werd allemaal bij elkaar gehouden in een kamp net als de joden. En dan horen ze aan mijn frustratie: o krijg je dan maar dat wist ik niet. Nee dan moet je ook niet onzin uitkramen. Vraag eerst, hoe zit het precies? En dat is vooral wat ik hopelijk nog mag mee maken dat er een bladzijde in een geschiedenisboekje ooit komt en dat dat wordt vrijgegeven.

Dat een uitgeverij of geschiedenisleraar of professor zegt van nou dan gaan we het nu eens even onder de loep nemen en inderdaad dat is een stukje geschiedenis van alle Molukkers in Nederland. [...] Men weet het niet, niemand weet het, van de Nederlandse bevolking [...] “Waarom zijn er überhaupt Molukse wijken? Hoezo? Jullie wonen toch in Nederland? Er kunnen toch ook gewoon Nederlanders wonen?” Nee, er kunnen geen Nederlanders wonen, want het is een stukje recht wat we hadden. Stukje recht van mijn opa en oma en dat zullen we hopelijk behouden.

[...]

Hoe komt het dat het verhaal van de Molukkers dan door iemand anders of anders wordt verteld?

Er is een leerkracht die op basisscholen geschiedenis geeft en dan wordt de Molukse geschiedenis uitgelegd. Dat hebben ze zover gekregen. Dat zouden ze hier ook moeten doen. Gewoon landelijk. [...] het is allemaal zo van korte duur. Waar ligt het dan aan? Ligt het aan de school zelf of aan degene die de workshops geeft? Is het de samenwerking waarin het misschien tekort komt? Ik weet het niet. Je hebt een heel goed plan, je werkt het uit en dan is de workshop één keer misschien twee keer en dan verwatert het weer. Het moet van daar blijven groeien. [...] het komt niet van de grond, maar dat is dus met alles. [...] er zijn zoveel ideeën zowel de jongeren als de ouderen, allerlei leeftijdscategorieën. Zoveel ideeën, maar die blijven bij wijze van binnen deze vier muren. [...] dan moet ik met meneer met de hoge pet gaan praten, die zegt toch al bij voorbaat nee. Ze willen toch niet samenwerken. [...] dat is dus ook hier gebeurd. Tijdje is de stichting open geweest voor de 4^e generatie. Op een gegeven moment is dat gewoon voorbij, ze hadden het harstikke naar hun zin.

Staat het stil in Krimpen denkt u?

Al een hele lange tijd, absoluut. [...] ja het is jammer, want ik mis het echt. De saamhorigheid. En die is er wel op het moment als er iets is bij een overlijden. Maar het moet ook bij leuke happenings zijn. Dat je weer teruggaat naar vroeger dat je echt gewoon één was. Gewoon echt een binding met elkaar. Dat zal je nu niet meer kunnen creëren, ik weet het niet [...] dat zou alleen fantastisch. Maar er is door de jaren heen zoveel gebeurd onderling in de wijk, oud zeer blijft toch altijd hangen. Dat is ook wel echt een dingetje vaak hier wat binnen een Molukse gemeenschap hangt, dat oud zeer blijft hangen. [...] om vooruit te komen, moet je wel samen kunnen werken. Dat is hier niet, dat vind ik echt jammer.

[...]

Het stukje Moluks, zeg maar, wij zijn er al 70 jaar mee bezig met het verhaal. Ik zeg eerlijk, dat is mijn mening, hoe kan je nou vooruit komen met z'n allen terwijl een helft in hokje A zit

een ander deel in hokje B, allemaal hokjes. We willen allemaal vooruit, maar alle hokjes willen zich niet bij elkaar als één verstrengelen. Hoe ga je dan vooruit met z'n allen? Zo gaat het nooit werken als we allemaal zo verdeeld zijn. [...] soms zeg ik ook de Nederlanders lachen ons uit als er weer in de media is Molukkers onenigheid dit dat... [...] er is altijd wel wat. Anders was er toch al eenheid? Zonder eenheid kom je nergens, maar dat is mijn mening. Er moet eerst eenheid gecreëerd worden door openheid en eerlijkheid. Laat de 3^e en 4^e generatie het overnemen, die hebben een hele andere kijk erop. Die willen wel vooruitgaan. Die streven toch ook naar die gerechtigheid voor onze opa's en oma's, laat hen meedenken. [...] dat vind ik vaak zo moeilijk in het Molukse want ja respect heb je natuurlijk ten allen tijden maar wij zijn nu veel mondiger [...] het is 2020 je mag nu je mening geven je mag discussie aangaan [...] als je maar je respect behoudt naar elkaar toe, maakt niet uit of je dezelfde leeftijd hebt of niet. [...] in mijn opvoeding was het A was het en ging ook A [...] maar nu is het anders en ik merk wel is dat ik me daarin het stukje Moluks zijn dat ik daar wel veel moeite mee heb is dat sommige generaties zich daar zo op vast pinnen, wij zijn 2^e wij zijn oom of tante dus jullie moeten het zo doen zoals wij dat willen. Nee, jullie vragen. De 3^e 4^e 5^e zijn de toekomst, dan moeten jullie de toekomst wel durven over te geven. Het is dat stukje wat niet van de grond komt. Dat is het stukje Moluks hoe ik het ervaar met Moluks zijn in de wijk, daar loop ik tegen aan. Je wordt niet gehoord, waardoor het zo stagneert. [...]

Interview conducted on 27-05-2020

In het museum in Krimpen en waard willen zij een deel toevoegen over Molukkers. Het museum is op zoek naar welke symboliek?. Het museum wil weg van het trauma, de kaping en de verhalen die vaak in musea word verteld. Maar willen zich juist mee focussen op het heden, wat er nu afspeelt in bijvoorbeeld krimpen. Wat de jongeren bezighoud maar ook plaats te maken om de oudere generatie in het zonnetje te zetten. Voor mijn scriptie ben ik specifiek opzoek naar Molukse symboliek, wat mensen hier nog mee doen en of het leeft onder de jongeren.

Woont u uw hele leven al in Krimpen?

- Ja geboren en getogen maar altijd buiten de wijk gewoond

Op welke datum bent u geboren

- 04-06-1970

U gaf aan buiten de wijk te wonen, heeft u daar wel veel contacten in de wijk

- Ja mijn zontjes, wat familieleden en veel vrienden en ik houd mij bezig met het organiseren van activiteiten in de wijk. Ik ben nu bezig met de Tifa groep hiermee repeteren we met ongeveer 16 mensen 1 per week in het wijkgebouw. Wij geven ook regelmatig optreden; pasar malams en vorige jaar hebben we bijvoorbeeld op de dam gestaan. Dus dat brengt regelmatig naar de wijk

Op het moment is er best een soort movement ontstaan van Molukse jongeren die opzoek naar hun roots en zich verdiepen in de Molukse cultuur en het Moluks zijn. Heeft u het gevoel van de Molukse cultuur en tradities speelt?

- Zeker maar ik zit natuurlijk zelf ook in die hoek. Ik tatoeër en krijg regelmatig verzoeken om symbolen uit die tijd te gebruiken terwijl daar 20 jaar geleden zelden voorkwam. Er lag niet echt een taboe op maar het was gewoon een stuk onbekender. Er word door jongeren steeds meer verkent wat deze symbolen vertegenwoordigen

Heeft u het idee dat de mensen die een tatoeage van een Moluks symbool laten zetten hiervoor veel onderzoek hebben gedaan?

- Ik praat nu even over mijn eigen vakgebied maar ik weet zelf voor ongeveer 95% waar alle tekens voor staan. Ik verwacht dan ook wel van degene die de tattoo laat zetten dat zij zich hebben verdiept waar het voor staat en wat het betekend. Als er een teken onduidelijk is wil ik dit altijd uitleggen of toelichten maar in essentie moet je wel weten waarom, hoe en wat. Elke ring elk teken heeft een betekenis en zit een verhaal achter. Wij vinden zelf enkel 'het is leuk of mooi' niet voldoende. Dit verhaal moet wel bij jou passen en dat je niet 100% weet wat het betekend dat geeft niet het zijn oude tekens dus dat weet niemand precies maar de tekens die wij zetten daarover weten we waar het voor staat. Wij kunnen je helpen maar je hebt zelf ook voldoende huiswerk. Maar niet alleen in tatoeages zie je deze symboliek terugkomen ook in bijvoorbeeld kleding zie je steeds meer Molukse symboliek terug komen.

- Door de komst van religie waren de oude tekens een beetje taboe geworden, het werd een beetje als heidens gezien en is in de vergetelheid geraakt. Maar sinds de jaren 90 is dit weer langzaam teruggekomen in een nieuw jasje. Nieuwe symbolen, oude techniek, Nieuwe techniek oude symbolen.

Zijn deze tekens in de Molukken nu ook minder taboe?

- Ja ik heb zelf een tatoeage laten zeggen op Ambon in 2009. En degene die deze tattoo had gezet gaf dat als je daar een tatoeage hebt je geen werk kon krijgen. Hij vertelde dat je bij een sollicitatie er soms werd gevraagd om lieten je shirt uit te doen om te checken of je geen tatoeage had. Maar dat is nu wel veel minder en dit word nu veel meer geaccepteerd

Je ziet steeds vaker dat mensen terug zoeken naar de tijd voor de Portugezen voor de koloniale tijd. Heeft u enig idee waar dat vandaan komt?

- je hebt de *kerusuhan* eind 99 en toen was daar een 'burger oorlog' ze hebben toen getracht om de religieuze leiders met elkaar te praten. Dit ging even goed maar duurde niet lang. Vervolgens gingen de politieke leiders zich ermee bemoeien, ook dit ging even goed maar hield niet lang stand. Toen hebben zich nog wat partijen zoals bijvoorbeeld het leger het geprobeerd maar zonder succes. Toen hebben ze terug gegrepen naar adat regels en dat heeft wel gewerkt. En vanaf toen kwam het besef, ja we hebben religie, ja we hebben politieke opvangen maar hebben blijkbaar iets wat sterker is; onze oer oude gebruiken en regel zo

hebben zij de vrede hersteld. En vandaar dat ik denk dat het daar vandaan komt en mensen begonnen te denken dat we daar wat mee moeten doen

Heeft u het idee dat opkomst van ongeveer 2000 tegelijk hier afspeelde of enkel op de Molukken?

- Hier speelde het eigenlijk altijd al. Dat heeft te maken met een minderheid, zij nemen altijd een stukje van hun cultuur mee van het thuisland en dat zie je steeds meer terugkomen.

Hier in Krimpen organiseert u activiteiten, zijn deze puur voor en door Molukkers of is dit open?

- Dit is altijd open, wij organiseren dit in het stichting gebouw en hier is iedereen welkom

U gaf aan dat u terug bent geweest naar Ambon

- al best snel eigenlijk ik ben in 77 voor het eerst terug gegaan. Tuurlijk ontmoet je wel familie die je nog nooit hebt gezien. maar ik was toen nog een kind en meer bezig met spelen dan dat je terug bent in je thuisland. Ik ben in totaal 4x geweest waarvan 3x als volwassene. Ik heb zelf ook Maleis vanuit huis meekregen dus ik spreek de taal ook.

Denkt u de taal dat nu nog steeds vanuit huis word meegegeven?

- nee dat denk ik niet, ik hoor het niet vaak meer dat er om mij heen met jonge kinderen Maleis word gesproken. Het gebeurd wel maar vanaf de 2^e, 3^e generatie is dit wel gaan af gaan nemen. Het is ook afhankelijk van de locatie, in Assen word bijvoorbeeld wel veel Maleis gesproken maar in Krimpen zie je dit een stuk minder. Ik vind zelf dat het wel meer mag, ik vind dit zelf wel een groot gedeelte van de cultuur.

Waar denkt u dat de switch vandaan komt dat de taal niet meer actief doorgegeven word

- dat gaat vanzelf ik vind de taal zelf ook belangrijk maar ik spreek niet enkel Maleis met mijn eigen kinderen. Ik doe het wel en ze verstaan mij ook maar 80% is gewoon Nederlands

Wat ziet u voor verschillen in de Molukse gemeenschappen in verschillende wijken.

- Als je kijkt naar de verschillen qua wijk van Molukse gemeenschappen, zie je dat de gemeenschap in kringen gewend is om vlakbij een grote stad te wonen. Uit andere wijken trekken de gemeenschappen sneller naar elkaar toe, zij zoeken elkaar sneller op terwijl de gemeenschap van kringen meer integreert in de grote stad. Over het algemeen vind ik overigens dat de Molukse gemeenschap goed geïntegreerd is in de Nederlandse samenleving