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## "Always In-Between" Post-colonial Identity Formation and the Legacy of Colonialism among Dutch Indo-Europeans

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# “Always in Between”

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## Post-colonial Identity Formation and the Legacy of Colonialism among Dutch Indo-Europeans

**MASTER'S THESIS**

for the

Master's Southeast Asian Studies

at the Humanities Faculty,

Leiden University

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis was composed by myself, that the work contained herein is my own, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification.



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Jorrit Blonk

July 1, 2021

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## Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the understanding of the legacy of colonialism in the Dutch East Indies in the present-day Netherlands. Often, studies on the memorialization of the colonial period focus on binary categories of colonizer and the colonized, in this case, the Dutch and the Indonesians. Historically there has been a group that posed a challenge to the rigid frames of both Dutch and Indonesian identity politics: the Indo-Europeans.

This thesis focuses on the post-colonial identity formation of first-generation Dutch Indo-Europeans and the role the past plays in this process. The research question that this thesis tries to answer is the following: How did the colonial racist policies in the Dutch East Indies influence the identity formation of first-generation Dutch Indo-Europeans? In order to answer this question, this thesis relies on oral history. Forty hours of interviews with twelve Dutch Indo-Europeans have been analysed using grounded theory.

The analysis of the dominant memory discourse shows that the memories of the late colonial and early post-colonial society of the first-generation Dutch Indo-Europeans are highly structured, plotted narratives. This dominant plot sequence shapes most of their memories, including the memories of segregation in society. An intersectional analysis of their recollections further indicates that not only race but especially class and gender were also important factors for explaining difference in the late colonial and early post-colonial society.

This work suggests that post-colonial identity formation of first-generation Dutch Indo-Europeans is highly influenced by the colonial past, and by colonial racist policies in the Dutch East Indies more specifically. The narratives of the interviewees echo certain colonial discourses, of which two are identified and discussed in this thesis extensively: a discourse of 'in-betweenness' and an oriental discourse. Dutch Indo-Europeans identify themselves in relation to Dutch and Indonesians, positioning themselves in between these two categories, a legacy of the legal categories based on race in the colonial society. The oriental discourse that was used to legitimize these racist colonial policies shaped the self-identification of first-generation Dutch Indo-Europeans as well.

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Lastly, I would like to thank my girlfriend, Tessa. Because of you this strange last year felt light and luminous.

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## Preface

In March 2020, the Dutch king offered an apology for the ‘excessive violence’ during the period of the Indonesian independence war, from 1945 until 1949 in Indonesia. It took the Netherlands more than 70 years to let its king apologize for the colonial violence in Indonesia. The apologies, although late and limited, reflect the present Dutch political climate, one of slowly starting to come to terms with the colonial past. In the last decade, we can see that colonial history is gaining more attention in the Dutch public sphere. The ‘Rawagede case’, for example, received a lot of attention in 2011. In this case, reparations were asked of the Dutch state for mass executions committed during the independence war in Rawagede. The The Hague Court of First Instance declared the Dutch massacre wrongful and held that reparations should be awarded to victims. The popularity of books such as Gloria Wekker’s *White Innocence* (2016) about the Dutch legacy of colonialism and *De brandende kampongs van Generaal Spoor* by Rémy Limpach (2016) also illustrates the growing attention for colonial history in the Dutch public sphere. The publication of Limpach’s book even led the Dutch government to the decision to support a large research project on the Indonesian decolonization war, which is currently in progress. Recently two Dutch books about the Dutch colonial past in Indonesia were published by David Van Reybrouck (2020) and Martin Bossenbroek (2020) and gained much attention. Van Reybrouck’s *Revolusi* even ended up in the top 10 best-selling books at the end of 2020.<sup>1</sup>

Although most academics writing on the memorialization of Dutch colonialism have argued that the colonial past is mostly forgotten in the Netherlands (Bijl 2012; Wekker 2016), it thus seems that colonial history is gaining more attention in the Dutch public sphere more recently. However, most of this attention – as well as the studies on the memorialization of the colonial period – is focused on the binary categories of colonizer and the colonized, the Dutch and the Indonesians. Historically there has been a group that posed a challenge to the rigid frames of both Dutch and Indonesian identity politics: the Indo-Europeans. In this research, I am looking at Dutch Indo-Europeans and how they have related to the colonial past.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘De Bestseller’, Top 60, week 53, 2020. <https://www.debestseller60.nl/index.asp?navdir=prev> (visited on 25/01/2021).

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To do this I make use of an interview collection that is now already twenty years old. In the last chapter of this thesis, I will analyse the interviews in their historical context, meaning the years in which they were conducted: from 1997 to 2001. This research, however, is also written in the context of current debates about colonialism. Throughout my thesis, I will contextualize this study in the latest academic debates. In an epilogue, I will reflect on the current public debate in the Netherlands.

## Note on orthography, translation, and anonymity

In the spelling of Indonesian words, I mostly use the old orthographic system instead of the new orthographic system officially adopted in 1972. I do so because of the dominant use of language among the Dutch Indo-Europeans in the interviews I use. The language they use or refer to is often the Malay of the late colonial period or the Indonesian, *bahasa Indonesia*, of the early post-colonial period.

Unless stated otherwise, all translated quotes from the interviews or other Dutch sources are my translation. In translated quotes, words in italics are Dutch or Malay/Indonesian terms that I left untranslated. Quotes from interviews are taken from the interviews conducted by the KITLV in the context of the oral history project of the SMGI, which were conducted in Dutch.

For reasons of confidentiality, I decided to anonymize the interviewed people. Dealing with colonial history can be a sensitive enterprise, especially when writing about the relationship between colonialism and present-day discourse among a specific group of people. To protect the people that were kind enough to share their life stories with academics I did not mention their names or the code number of the interview, even though their names are stated in the interview collection I am using.

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## **PART I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

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## Chapter 1: Race in the colonial society

Colonial societies were characterized by their segregation on the basis of race. Often the old adage *divide et impera* or 'divide and rule' comes up when we think about the organisation of these racially segregated societies. Scholars such as Benedict Anderson and James Scott have illustrated how the organisation of social categories is necessary for colonial states, and states in general, to exert power. In his book *Seeing Like a State* James Scott shows how states use censuses to make a population controllable: "The categories used by state agents are not merely means to make their environment legible; they are an authoritative tune to which most of the population must dance," he writes (Scott 1998: 83). In the famous *Imagined Communities*, the late Benedict Anderson also shows how colonial administrations manipulate colonial societies by categorization on the basis of race (Anderson 2006[1983]). Post-colonial scholars have shown that this 'colonial administrative violence' has a lasting impact on former colonialized societies and the colonizing societies alike (Said 1993; Wekker 2016). But if we look through the lens of this colonial labelling and segregation, we overlook the fact that these colonial societies were also often highly 'creolized' (Raben 2019). In this research, I will look at the legacy of racist colonial policy of the Dutch East Indies by taking this creolization as a starting point. I will do this by analysing the life stories of Indo-Europeans. Listening to their stories and taking their experiences seriously can shed new light on the effects of the racist policies of the Dutch colonial administration, in the past as well as in the present.

### **The legacy of colonial racist policy**

In the late colonial society of the Dutch East Indies, the population was divided into three legal categories. The first colonial category was that of the Europeans, the second category consisted of *vreemde oosterlingen*, non-Indonesian Asians, and the *inlanders*, the local population, made up the third category. These racial categories were applied to guarantee the position of power of the European colonizers in this racially divided colonial society.

Legally, Indo-Europeans were classified as 'Europeans', giving them similar rights as white Dutch citizens of the Dutch East Indies. But this classification did not fall out of thin air. Throughout the late colonial period, the position of mixed-blood Indo-Europeans was a focal point of political, legal, and social debate. Historian and Anthropologist Ann

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Laura Stoler explains that the question of Indo-Europeans was so prominent because their “cultural sensibilities, physical being, and political sentiments called into question the distinctions of difference that maintained the neat boundaries of colonial rule” (Stoler 1992: 198). The debates about Indo-Europeans intensified in the early twentieth century around the question of whether to create a separate legal class of Indo-Europeans. Eventually, this separation was rejected on political grounds. The Dutch ruling elite feared that if the Indo-Europeans would be treated as a separate class of citizens, that they would form a class of enemies to the colonial government (ibid.: 212). This legal rejection of difference, however, intensified racial discourses to differentiate between ‘full-blood’ Dutch and Indo-European citizens. Ann Laura Stoler argues that these colonial racist policies changed the workings of racist thinking in the colony from more overt racial discrimination to a form of ‘cultural racism’: “As race dropped out of certain legal discriminations, it reemerged, marked out by specific cultural criteria in other domains” (ibid.: 214). This discourse of racial differentiation was not only present among white Dutch citizens of the colony to distance themselves from the Indo-Europeans, it was also deployed by the Indo-Europeans to distance themselves from the Indonesians or *inlanders* with no European descent.

At the end of the colonial period, Indo-Europeans, the cliché goes, found themselves ‘in between’ the Dutch citizens fighting to regain control of their former colony and the Indonesian citizens that fought for independence. Many of these Indo-Europeans eventually moved to the Netherlands. An Indo-European man who left Indonesia to move to the Netherlands in 1950 explains in an interview conducted by the Foundation for the Oral History of Indonesia (SMGI, Stichting Mondelinge Geschiedenis Indonesië) that, fifty years later, he still feels “always in between (*tussenin*)” these two groups. This feeling of ‘in-betweenness’, I will show later, is at the core of the construction of Indo-European identity.

In this thesis, I will examine this complex identity formation in relation to the racist colonial policies in the Dutch East Indies. Recent scholars doing research on racism emphasize the legacy of these colonial racist policies in the present day, not only in the former colonies but also in the societies that were colonializing other countries (see Wekker 2016). In this research, I seek to investigate this legacy in the memories of Indo-Europeans who moved to the Netherlands in the 1940-1950s. Several studies have indicated the lasting impact of racial policies in the colony on Dutch Indo-Europeans, but

mainly by analysing literature or by looking at younger generations (Captein 2014; Pattynama 2012).

In this research, I have put the people with living memories about the colonial past centre stage. I've looked at the legacy of the colonial racist policies in the Dutch East Indies among Indo-Europeans that moved to the Netherlands by analysing life story interviews conducted between 1997-2001. These interviews allowed me to analyse how ordinary people remember and narrate these policies from a bottom-up perspective. This first generation of Indo-European repatriates has been called the 'silent generation' because most of them tried to assimilate as well as they could, trying to avoid politics (Captein 2014). With this research, I seek to let this 'silent generation' speak about their memories of Dutch colonial history. I have tried to look not only at cultural representations of racial consciousness among Dutch Indo-Europeans, but I also analyse how post-colonial identity formation has been influenced by these policies. The research question is:

*How did the colonial racist policies in the Dutch East Indies influence the identity formation of first-generation Dutch Indo-Europeans?*

To answer this question, I have relied on scholarship on two big themes within the humanities and social sciences: racism and oral history. In the remainder of this chapter, I will contextualize my research within the academic debate about racism. In the next chapter, I will discuss my methodology and how my research relates to oral history.

## **Racism**

In his book *Culture and Imperialism*, the late and famous post-colonial scholar Edward Said presented the concept of 'cultural archive' (Said 1993). The 'cultural archive' refers to a repository of knowledge, based on "narratives, histories, travel tales, and explorations" (ibid.: xxi). Said argued that it was this cultural archive "where the intellectual and aesthetic investments in overseas dominion are made," (ibid.) meaning that these archives played a big role in facilitating and legitimizing imperial projects. In the context of the Netherlands, Gloria Wekker pursued research on the legacy of colonialism in the 'cultural archive' of the Dutch population (Wekker 2016). Based on Edward Said's ideas about the 'cultural archive', Wekker has tried to show that the

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cultural archive of colonial history in the Netherlands still influences representations of non-whites in the Dutch collective imagination. She argues that

a deep structure of inequality in thought and affect based on race, was installed in nineteenth-century European imperial populations [...]. [I]t is from this deep reservoir, the cultural archive, that, among other things, a sense of self has been formed and fabricated (Wekker 2016: 2).

It is in this vein that I will analyse the legacy of racial colonial politics among Indo-Europeans that emigrated to the Netherlands.

In doing so I have relied upon scholarship about racism in both the social sciences as well as the humanities. We have known for a while that ‘race’ itself does not exist as an objective reality, but recent scholarship has focused rather on historical specific and relational workings of racism as social structure and system. Modern scholarship on racism increasingly emphasizes the fluid, dynamic, imaginative, and relational character of race and racism, focussing on its relation to identity and power (see Fujitani 2007; Morris-Suzuki 1998).

As noted above, Ann Laura Stoler (1992), has done research on racist policies in the Dutch East Indies and the position of the métis, or mixed-bloods, in French Indochina in the Dutch East Indies. Métissage, Stoler argues, was a focal point of political, social, and legal debate in these colonies because it was seen as a threat to white prestige. At a certain point, the colonial administrations were forced to legally include the mixed-race population within the elite class of European whites. “The legal rejection of difference,” writes Stoler, however “in no way diminished the concern about [the métis]. On the contrary, it produced an intensified discourse in which racial thinking remained the bedrock on which cultural markers of difference were honed and more carefully defined” (ibid.: 202). As race thus legally made racial discrimination towards the mixed-blood population more difficult, more cultural forms of racism emerged on the stage, Stoler argues. Based on physical appearance, the boundaries could never be definite or precise, so cultural elements were brought into the equation to ensure a privileged position for the European population in the colonies.

We can see similar patterns of the historical specificity of racist discourses and their relationality in other contexts. Takashi Fujitani’s (2007) research on American and

Japanese race-thinking in the Second World War shows that racist discourse in the respective countries changed from a 'vulgar' to a more 'polite' form when circumstances demanded it. When both countries experienced a shortage in manpower for labor or the army, they looked at their minority populations to fill the gap. But to make sure previously disadvantaged communities would be willing to work for the countries in war, both governments had to change their political rationality towards these communities in a way that Fujitani describes as from a 'right to kill' towards the productive logic of the 'right to make live'.<sup>2</sup> These minorities were thus, in a certain sense, moved up the 'class ladder' to serve the warring governments, which resulted in the reinforcement of social hierarchy in the form of 'polite' racism. This transformation of more overt or vulgar racism towards polite racism is similar to the transformation towards 'cultural racism' that Stoler identifies.

In an unpublished paper, Ethan Mark (2020) also reveals a similar pattern in racial thought in wartime Japan. He elaborates that during the Second World War the Japanese in fact treated Koreans as more racially alien than Indonesians, despite Koreans being physically, geographically, and culturally 'closer' to the Japanese. He thereby argues that the shape of racism corresponds more to situational opportunism than to an inherent logic.

The most recent literature on racism emphasizes the interrelation of race, class, gender, and other identity markers. This 'intersectional' approach was initially developed by black feminist thought before making a profound influence on thinking about racism both inside and outside academia. Its main premise is that it is not enough to analyse social phenomena only through the lens of gender, class, sexuality, religion, or race alone. All these 'axes of difference' are simultaneously operative and thus should be analysed accordingly (Wekker 2016: 21-22). It is through this lens that I will look at the life stories of Indo-Europeans that live in the Netherlands.

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<sup>2</sup> The shift that Fujitani identifies here is inspired by Foucault's notion of 'biopower'. According to Foucault the way power was exercised over populations fundamentally transformed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Previously, sovereigns exercised power by either letting people live or killing them. This changed into a form of how power is exercised based on heavily regulating the population by controlling birth and mortality rates, for example (See Foucault 1978 in Fujitani 2007: 14-15).

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## Chapter 2: Oral history

For a long time, most sources used for research on the Dutch East Indies were the archival material of the colonial government and the writings of European travellers. Because of this, the historiography of the Dutch East Indies was long dominated by the perspective of the colonial authorities and European visitors (Bosma, Raben, and Willems 2008[2006]: 152). In the 1970s and 1980s, such Eurocentric scholarship became increasingly contested by historians and social scientists who paid attention to the perspectives of non-Europeans and ‘common people’ (see Wolf 1982). One of the methodologies that serve this purpose well is oral history.

Oral history can make it possible to understand historical events or periods from the viewpoint of ordinary people and to give voice to people that are often overlooked by official historiography. In the case of the Dutch East Indies, these ‘overlooked people’ are, among others, women, children, people that remained outside the Japanese internment camps, and also Indo-Europeans.<sup>3</sup> The experiences of these ‘ordinary people’ can offer valuable insights in the everyday that can supplement historical knowledge extracted from other sources in order to reconstruct a more complete narrative of the late colonial and early post-colonial period in Indonesia (Yow 2005).

In this chapter, I will give a short overview of the history of oral history in academia. I will relate these developments to the academic sub-discipline of memory studies as well as to theories on narrative, performance, and identity in the social sciences. The research design for this study is built around these theories and the methodology of oral history. I will also introduce the database of interviews I have used for this research, discuss the data selection, and the data analysis method I used.

### **Oral history: narrative, performance, identity**

Oral history is a research method that started to gain attention in the second half of the twentieth century. It formed a critique of positivist historical practice that was mostly concerned with texts. Instead of trying to know our past by looking at archival material,

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<sup>3</sup> When Japan occupied the Dutch East Indies in the Second World War, many Europeans and Indo-Europeans were interned in camps. The horror of these experiences dominates the dominant memory narrative in the Netherlands today, often overlooking the trauma of people that remained outside the camps.

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oral history projects aimed to gain knowledge about the past by interviewing people. With this approach, oral history projects contested the social and intellectual status quo by creating a ‘history of everyday lives’ (Ritchie 2010: 3). Those previously oppressed or overlooked were now taken seriously as sources for historical research.

However, the oral history approach initially received substantial criticism from positivist scholars. They argued that memories of ordinary people were too ‘unreliable’ as historical sources. In the early 1970s, traditional documentary historians criticized oral history because personal memories would be distorted by nostalgia, old age, the relationship between interviewer and interviewee, and collective narratives about history in society (Thomson 2010: 3).

Later in the 1970s and the 1980s, such positivist ideas about history and memory were contested by feminist theorists, postmodern anthropologists, and qualitative sociologists. In the wake of the cultural turn, the analytical shift in academia that placed culture and meaning centre stage, oral historians argued against the positivist criticisms by showing the strength of this so-called ‘unreliability’ of memory. The subjectivity of memory, they showed, “provided clues not only about the meanings of historical experience, but also about the relationships between past and present, between memory and personal identity, and between individual and collective memory” (Thomson 2010: 4).

Research on memory and the usage of memories as historical sources became clustered in the sub-discipline of what has been called ‘memory studies’. This academic sub-discipline is concerned with collective memory, a term coined by Maurice Halbwachs (1992). Halbwachs was one of the first to argue that individual memory is socially determined, and that “the past is not preserved but is reconstructed on the basis of the present” (Halbwachs 1992: 40 in French 2012: 359). Memories of the past, he showed, are thus always shaped by the present political reality.

Further research in the field of memory studies enriched our understanding of the processes of memory. The ‘narrative turn’ in the social sciences and humanities revealed how we tend to mould our memories into narratives. As scholars argued, we need narrative to make sense of the world around us and to create meaning in our life (Linde 1993; Ochs and Capps 2001). According to Ruthellen Josselson and Amia Lieblich “[n]arratives are not records of facts, of how things actually were, but [...] a meaning-

making system that makes sense out of the chaotic mass of perceptions and experiences of life” (Josselson and Lieblich 1995: 33 in Thomson 2010: 13).

Memory scholars also began to see memorializing as an active process that consists of both remembering and forgetting. For this reason, Johannes Fabian speaks of ‘memory work’ (Fabian 2007: 78). His conceptualization makes it possible to speak of memory as a process and emphasizes the active character of memory, without framing remembering and forgetting as a binary opposition.

This makes remembering, or ‘memory work’ also very much a performative act. This performance of memories is also highly dependent on the context: “We perform our memories in ways that will communicate and appeal to a particular audience, and the expectations of the occasion and the audience will, in turn, influence the storytelling. Indeed, we seek recognition for our stories, and affirmation of ourselves, through performative remembering” (Thomson 2010: 12). For this reason, it is also very important to be reflective on the context and the role of the researcher in an oral history research project.

Lastly, narrative theory also highlighted the dialectical relationship between memory and identity, meaning that “[m]emory stories create identity and, in turn, our identities shape remembering” (ibid.: 14). What we have experienced influences the way we think about ourselves. And by trying to produce and perform coherent narratives about our pasts, we identify ourselves (Linde 1993). This perceived identity again also influences the way we remember our pasts. Memories, according to Alistair Thomson, are thus “significant pasts that we compose to make a relatively coherent – though not necessarily comfortable or painless – sense of our life over time” (ibid.: 14).

### **The oral history of Indonesia project**

For my research I relied on interviews gathered by the Foundation for the Oral History of Indonesia (SMGI, Stichting Mondelinge Geschiedenis Indonesië). The database I will use consists of interviews with former inhabitants of the Dutch East Indies, Dutch New Guinea, and Indonesia in the period of 1930 until 1962 conducted by the Foundation for the Oral History of Indonesia. Between 1997 and 2001 this foundation recorded 1.189 interviews with 724 people. In 2001 this database was made available by the KITLV, the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, in Leiden. The project aimed to record the experiences of those who had lived through the late colonial

period, the Indonesian struggle for independence, and the early post-colonial period in Indonesia.

Despite the term ‘Indonesia’ in its title, Indonesians are barely represented in the collection. The interviews were mostly recorded in the Netherlands and Belgium and conducted in Dutch, thus representing mainly Dutch people, Indo-Europeans, Chinese, Moluccans, and Javanese who have moved to the Netherlands in the 1940s, 1950s, or 1960s (Steijlen 2002). I made a selection of interviews from the SMGI collection by looking for people of ‘mixed descent’, that have both European and Indonesian parents or grandparents. Since the interviews are not transcribed and exist only in recorded form, I relied on a publication by Fridus Steijlen in which all participants were categorized and summarized (Steijlen 2002). I first selected all summaries with an explicit mentioning of Indo-European identity, leaving 141 out of the total of 724 people. Hereafter I selected those people that seemed most relevant to my research question, looking for references to race, segregation, exclusion, and discrimination in the summaries of their interviews. This selection leaves out those who may not have raised these issues or who miss references to these issues in the summaries. After this selection I ended up with 66 people.

The total duration of all the interviews of these 66 people was more than 280 hours. Due to time constraints, I was not able to analyse all these interviews, so I made a random selection of 17 interviews with 12 people with a total duration of 41 hours of recorded interviews. The shortest interview was a bit shorter than 2 hours, the longest a bit more than 9 hours. All interviews were conducted between August 1997 and December 2000.

For this interpretative research, I did not aim to select a representative group for the whole Indo-European community in the Netherlands. However, I tried to balance age and gender whilst also looking for variety in generation, variety in social position, and variety in biography. All twelve people I included in my research identify as Indo-European and have both European and Indonesian ‘ancestors’. Only one of them identifies as Indonesian whilst having a Dutch grandfather. All interviewees were born between 1911 and 1944 and six of them were male and six female. Most of them had lived on Java, some also on Sulawesi, Sumatra, or Borneo. Some people left Indonesia just after the war, others remained until the 1950s or 1960s, either as Dutch citizens or as *warga negara*, Indonesian citizens. Some also went to Dutch New Guinea. The people I selected are from different segments of society: some had ancestry in the archipelago for centuries, some

had a father born in the Netherlands; some were from the ‘upper Indo layer’, some were very poor; some were very much oriented towards ‘European culture’, others more towards ‘Indonesian culture’.<sup>4</sup>

### **Analysing narratives**

One strategy to analyse oral history, or qualitative data more generally, is to look for patterns within the stories. By looking at the similarities, but also the contradictions between and within stories a pattern may reveal itself. Often it is especially the dissonances that reflect and reveal social tensions (Mark 1999: 75).

To analyse and find patterns in all the life stories I made use of grounded theory (Glaser and Holton 2004). Grounded theory is an open methodology in which the collection, coding, and analysis of the data happen simultaneously. By constantly comparing already coded interviews and the interpretation of these codes with new interviews, slowly a pattern emerges out of the data (ibid.). I organised all the transcripts of the interviews in ATLAS.ti, a software developed for qualitative data analysis. After listening to an interview, I coded the interview with concepts that suited the data. With all the interviews that followed, I could compare my codes and categories with the previous interview and edit previous codes or make new ones. Eventually, a pattern emerged of the ‘dominant narrative’: the story that most people tell or relate their own story to. After having identified this dominant narrative, I could interpret the dissonant voices and contradictions within people’s stories. To contextualize these stories and oral histories in my study I will rely on both historical and anthropological secondary literature on Dutch Indo-Europeans (Bosma 2009; Bosma 2012; Bosma, Raben, Willems 2008; Captein 2014; Oostindie 2012; Pattynama 2012).

In the next chapter, I will illustrate how the dominant memory discourse among the Dutch Indo-Europeans is shaped, plotted, and narrativized. I will point out the main arcs in the narrative and highlight the role of the Second World War in this context. In the following chapter, I will point out how the memories of the late colonial and early post-colonial society are shaped by the racist colonial policy in the Dutch East Indies and how the segregation in society is remembered. Thereafter I will show the influence of an

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<sup>4</sup> A detailed schematic overview of the interviews used in my study can be found in the appendix. The table included some biographical details as well as some information about the interviews themselves.

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orientalist discourse on these memories and show how ‘in-betweenness’ lies at the heart of Dutch Indo-European identity formation. In the subsequent section, I will contextualize the memory narratives in the period in which the interviews were conducted, 1997-2001. I will argue that the ‘then-present’ heavily shaped the memories of the past. Finally, in the conclusion, I will argue that the post-colonial identity formation of Dutch Indo-Europeans is highly influenced by the colonial past and discuss the limitations of my research.

**PART II**

**NARRATIVES OF THE PAST**

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### Chapter 3: The dominant narrative structure

There is a great variety in the experiences of the Indo-European population that lived through the events that changed the late colonial society of the Dutch East Indies into the new Indonesian state. It mattered a great deal if you were ‘Dutch-oriented’ or ‘Indonesian-oriented’; man or woman; dark or light-skinned; poor or rich. Listening to hours of interviews with different Indo-European people made me realize that this ‘group of people’ is as diverse as every other imagined group of people. This also made the memories they had of their lives in Indonesia extremely varied.

But there are also similarities to be found in the recollections of the people interviewed, of which I will highlight two important aspects in this chapter. Firstly, what they all share is that they lived through a very turbulent period of history in the same corner of the world. The interviewees vary in age, but almost all remember the period before the war, the war itself, and the period after the war. Wars are often so intense that they forever shape the way we remember our lives: the ‘period before’ and the ‘period after’.

The second element that is also shared by the interviewees is that they all lived in a society that emphasized difference. All interviewees were narrating about the segregation in society, the differences between the different groups in society, and the position of Indo-Europeans in relation to the Dutch, often referred to as *totok* (European without Indonesian ancestors), and the Indonesians.

These two elements are intertwined and interrelated in a similar pattern within the narratives of the interviewees. The narratives tend to have a structure that starts with a peaceful youth in which segregation in society is downplayed. This is followed by the advent of war, which prompts a bigger role for segregation and enmity in the narrative of the interviewees. Within this dominant narrative contradictions can be found. In the next chapter, I will discuss these contradictions and how race, class, and social position affected the experience of living in a segregated society. But in this chapter, I will first illustrate the dominant pattern in the narratives and argue that this dominant plot sequence shapes most of the memories of the interviewees, and thus also the memories of segregation in society.

**“Before everything was peaceful”: the harmonious world before the war**

There is a pattern periodization in most of the narratives of the interviewees, structured by the radical historical changes of the period remembered. Fridus Steijlen, the coordinator of the interview project, characterizes a typical sequence of the individual accounts as follows: relative stability until 1940; the growing tension of the impending war between 1940-1942; the Japanese occupation ('42-'45); the war that followed until the transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia in 1949; the continued presence of Dutch businesses in Indonesia and the nationalization of these businesses in 1957/1958; and finally the transfer of sovereignty of New Guinea in 1962 (Steijlen 2002: 2). Naturally, the eventual move to the Netherlands and the experiences there also play a big role in the interviews.

Before the 1940s the Dutch society in the Indies was, according to Steijlen “largely unaware of the emerging nationalist aspirations of the colonized” (Steijlen 2002: 2). It is therefore unsurprising that most interviews about the memories of the Dutch East Indies start off with a recollection of a relatively peaceful youth. The tranquility of most of these childhood recollections is remarkable. People recount how they played outside with other kids in the sun, they remember the flavors of the fruits, and they think back to the time when the family was still complete. A woman born in 1919 says:

I remember very little [from the 1920s and 1930s]. The only thing I know is, what I do remember, is that I was extremely happy. A very strange kind of happiness: being joyous, you know... If I was walking back in the garden, the fruit trees, the flowers, the coconuts, then I thought... Happy! Then I was skipping with joy, you know. I always knew a feeling of extreme happiness then (#9.1, track 14).

Later in the interview, when asked about the children she played with outside, she remembers that she had friends with all different kinds of backgrounds:

My friends were all *Indische* girls. Oh, and a lot of Indonesian girls too. In my class at the MULO were five Indonesian girls. [...] So to say that Indonesian kids were absolutely forbidden is completely untrue. [...] The same with the Chinese. [...] Oh yes, I also regularly went to their houses, of the Indonesian girls. And my best friend, she was a Japanese girl! (#9.1, track 15).

This nostalgic ‘good old days’ narrative is often referred to as *tempo doeloe* (‘the time of the past’) discourse. In *De geschiedenis van Indische Nederlanders* Ulbe Bosma, Remco Raben, and Wim Willems point out that the term *tempo doeloe* was already used in the 1920s and 1930s to refer to the old *Indische* world: the ‘harmonious world’ before political mass movements, modern technology, and politics (Bosma, Raben, Willems 2008: 162).

This imagined harmony between the different groups in society is sometimes even explicitly emphasized. The next fragment comes from an interview with a woman born in 1934. She was eight years old when the Japanese army invaded the Indies. Her white Dutch father disappeared at this time, leaving her and her siblings with her Javanese mother. In the first minutes of the interview she talks about her childhood, “the time before the war”, and how she grew up without any sense of colonial racist policies:

Later I heard how much my mother’s family loved my father. He was a very pleasant, good man. He might have been a *Belanda*, but he was very kind to us. I was thus not familiar with all those stories about how the Dutch treated the Indonesian community. I only heard about those stories after the war by reading books. That’s how I came to know (#3.1, track 1).

This nostalgic discourse could also be interpreted as a form of romanticizing childhood. Most people interviewed were children before the war. In more privileged families, childhood means a life full of possibility, the joy of youth, the harmony of the family perhaps. This personal ‘apolitical’ biography often colours memories about the ‘political context’ of the historic period (Boym 2007). History professor Orlando Figes showed how this even applied to some of the survivors of the Gulag in Russia. These former prisoners could have nostalgic memories about their period in the Gulag because it was also the period that they were young. Memories about their youth, their friends, and their first experiences with love became intertwined with their traumatic memories (Figes 2008).

In the next fragment, an Indo-European man born in 1933 is looking back at this period before the war and indeed remembers it as a pleasant time despite hardships, in his case the poverty in his family. He is conscious of the glorification of this pre-war period

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within the Indo-European community in the Netherlands. He points out that not all Indo-European families had such a ‘good old time’ back then. But he still remembers this pre-war period as a pleasant time:

The most pleasant period, if I may call it that, was the last years before the invasion, because to be honest, I can... I can remember a lot about kindergarten until the Japanese occupation. That was the so-called period before the war. What most people refer to as ‘the good old times’. But it was not always a good old time. There was poverty. There was hardship. And our father almost had no income, as I have illustrated before. Because with that income of my father you could do almost nothing. Some people earned ten times as much, and off which they lived abundantly. But I mean, the short time that the family was still complete, was, despite everything, a very pleasant time indeed (#10.1, track 3).

This nostalgia is also prominent because of the contrast with the war, which was traumatic for almost all interviewees. Whether you grow up poor or underprivileged, war often only makes things worse.

### **“Then the war came, and everything was over”: the reality of a segregated society**

For most Indo-Europeans, there came an abrupt ending to this perceived harmony when the Netherlands was occupied by Nazi Germany in 1940. Soon *kabar angin* (rumors) spread through the archipelago about a Japanese invasion. The invasion at the beginning of 1942 is the real tipping point in most memory narratives. Not only did this war disrupt the tranquility of childhood, it also made visible the reality of the segregated society among those who had previously enjoyed a high status.

One woman remembered how “the small Indonesians, children, were not stepping aside for me on the sidewalk anymore, that was very annoying” (#1.1, track 2). Another woman remembered how her blonde-haired children “were being spat on by Indonesians” (#2.3, track 7).

The relationship with Indonesian servants is another example in some people’s stories of the changed relationship between the Indo-European and the Indonesian population. After the Japanese capitulation, Indonesian servants (known then as *baboes*), cooks (*kokkies*), and other household employees often felt uncomfortable working for

Europeans. One woman remembers how “the *merdeka* movement, the ‘extremists’ as my parents called them, tried to incite the servants to leave our family because [by working for us] they [were] working for the enemy [from their perspective]” (#6.1, track 3). This same woman’s aunt was even almost poisoned by one of her Indonesian servants at the time of the *bersiap* (#6.2, track 22).

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have shown how the memories of the interviewees were molded into a narrative with a clear start, tipping point, and continuation. For most Indo-Europeans, it was the war and the Japanese occupation that served as a tipping point in their stories. This narrativity in the memory stories of the interviewees is in line with the narrative theory within memory studies, which shows that both our individual, as well as our collective memories are highly structured, plotted narratives. Memories follow a highly plotted narrative to create structure and meaning in people’s memories, and indeed in their lives in general (Linde 1993; Ochs and Capps 2001). We can see that the ‘period before the war’ is often glorified and perceived as peaceful. This causes people to downplay the segregation in their memories, although the late colonial society of the Dutch East Indies was very segregated. Partially, this reflects the relatively privileged social status of this group before the war. But, as illustrated by the man that grew up in a poor family, even the memories of the less privileged Indo-Europeans follow this particular narrative structure, shaped by the chronology of the war.

Having illustrated the dominant narrative structure in this chapter, in the next chapter I will pay more attention to contradictions within this narrative and the memorialization of racial segregation in the Dutch East Indies.

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## Chapter 4: Remembering segregation

In the previous chapter, I have shown how memories about segregation in society were more prevalent from the start of the war onwards. This of course does not mean that the late colonial society was less segregated. It were often less privileged people that remembered what it meant to be different in the Dutch East Indies. This already hints towards the interconnectedness of various ‘axes of difference’ and the corresponding need for an intersectional analysis.

In this chapter, I will discuss how segregation in society is remembered by the Indo-Europeans that moved to the Netherlands. In line with theories on intersectionality, I will show how not only race, but also gender, class, and religion, were ‘axes of difference’ in both the late colonial and the early post-colonial society. But before that, I will give a short overview of scholarship on segregation in the Dutch East Indies and Indonesia.

### **Explaining difference in the Dutch East Indies**

The Dutch East Indies was, as I have discussed above, a racially segregated society. However, race was not the only explanation of difference in colonial society. Through time various historians have tried to comprehend the way in which the Dutch East Indies constructed and organised difference.

Many historians have conventionally seen religion as the most prominent factor of difference in the era of the VOC, the Dutch East India Company (Bosma, Raben, Willems 2006: 150). At that time, religion was a prominent factor legally indeed, but that did not mean that Asian Christians had similar rights to European Christians for example. Since the early colonial period categories of race, religion, and class were already intertwined (ibid.).

Later, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Dutch state took over the area previously ruled over by the bankrupt VOC. After that, race became a more prominent factor of segregation in the Dutch East Indies. A governmental decree in 1854 divided the population into several racial categories that corresponded with different legal systems. In 1892 a new law stipulated that every child of a Dutch citizen had Dutch nationality. As Ann Laura Stoler has shown, for Indo-Europeans this legal equality to white Dutch citizens

meant that skin colour and culture were playing more prominent roles now in social differentiation (Stoler 1992).

According to historians Ulbe Bosma, Remco Raben, and Wim Willems, the late colonial society was characterized by strong competition between groups over education, work, and income (Bosma, Raben, Willems 2008: 160). We can see how income was divided in the Dutch East Indies in 1939 in a study by Anne Booth (1988). Her study shows that Indonesians made up 97% of the labor force, whilst only receiving 69% of the national income; Europeans on the other hand, made up only 0,4% of the population whilst receiving 13% of the total income (Booth 1988: 334). This indicates that race and class were also interrelated in the late colonial society. Booth’s study does not show the differences in income between the Indo-Europeans and other Europeans, but, according to Bosma, Raben, and Willems education, employment, and income had a big influence on the position of Indo-Europeans and other Europeans in the colonial and postcolonial society (Bosma, Raben, and Willems 2008[2006]: 147).

Because of this, racial mobility increased in the late colonial society (ibid.: 164). Following the mechanism as identified by Ann Laura Stoler, this increase in racial mobility indeed caused racial discourse to intensify in this period, in the form of cultural racism (ibid.). So although the late colonial society was not divided along the borders of race alone, it increasingly became the way in which difference was articulated (ibid.: 161). The Indo European Alliance (IEV)<sup>5</sup> was very influential in this discourse of racial particularism: “The IEV vocabulary emphasized the unbridgeable distance to the inlanders, whilst defending the distinctiveness of the Indo-European community towards the *totoks*” (ibid.).

All these varying elements that segregated the late colonial society did not suddenly vanish all of a sudden at the start of the Second World War. At first, the Japanese turned many of the categories in society on their head by imprisoning Europeans and positioning themselves as the liberators of the Indonesian population (Mark 2020). Some Indo-Europeans stayed out of the camps but were often also repressed by the Japanese. In the violent *bersiap* period, having a lighter skin was very dangerous, and many Indo-Europeans were killed (Frederick 2012). But after the Japanese occupation and the

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<sup>5</sup> The Indo European Alliance was an organisation that fought for the interests of all Indo-Europeans within the Dutch East Indies, and the emancipation of the lower class Indo-Europeans in particular. They strived for an independent Indonesia as a place to live for Indo-Europeans.

decolonization war, the old colonial policies still influenced the position of Indo-Europeans in society. Their old ideas about their role in society clashed with the new political reality. This eventually made most Indo-Europeans move out of Indonesia.

### **Remembering segregation**

In the late colonial society, education was segregated. We can see a similar pattern as elsewhere: not only race, but a mixture of race, class, gender, and religion was at play. Most Indo-European children, therefore, were in class with children from other layers of society.

In the next fragment, an Indo-European woman remembers her kindergarten in Bandung. She felt different than the other kids there because of her Indonesian mother. The other kids presumed her mother must be a maid, directly linking her skin colour to class:

I was an incredibly shy child. [...] At school I was very shy as well, I never said anything. [...] That was also because at school there were white kids and *Indische* kids. And somehow these white kids were always so bossy. [...] My mother always wore *kain kebaja*. When she picked me up at school the white kids would ask me: 'that woman that picked you up, was she your *baboe*?' I felt really bad about that (#8.1, track 6).

A lot of interviewees refer to skin colour as a prominent sign of social status. In the following fragment a woman explains how whiteness was something to be very proud of in the eyes of her mother:

My mother was very proud our youngest brother was so white. He was very light-skinned, his eyes were gray-green, and he had the cutest blonde curls. Try that with Indonesian grandparents, with their slick and straight black hair! (#6.1, track 7).

During the Japanese occupation, a white skin suddenly became a sign of being illegally out of the camps. Almost all interviewees remember how white family members had a hard time going outside, whereas more dark-skinned family members could move around freely. One man, who was a child during the occupation remembers how he

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learned from this mother to be afraid of the Japanese: “We were never allowed to enter the streets because we were white, me and my sister. My mother said: “That is life-threatening (*levensgevaarlijk*)!” (#5.1, track 5).

Another man who always felt more sympathy for the ‘Indonesian side’, remembered the humiliations of the Japanese because of his white skin: “These fucking Japanese humiliated me by ordering me to pull down my pants to show them whether I was circumcised or not” (#11.1, track 4). Here we can see that racial categories are turned upside down all of a sudden. And religion, in this case Islam, becomes a marker for ‘Indonesianness’.

Still, in the period after Indonesian independence, Indo-European children also learned from their parents to differentiate between themselves and the Indonesian children too. In the next fragment a man remembers how his parents explained to him why he was not allowed to play with Indonesian children:

It was explained like this: you are not allowed to befriend a *katjong*, because they are lower, from a lower level. [...] It was not allowed. You were not allowed to sing Javanese songs; your parents would be ashamed. It was like that (#4.1, track 5).<sup>6</sup>

‘Javaneseness’ thus was literally perceived as ‘lower’ by his parents. He later reminds how he was playing with Indonesian kids secretly, without telling his parents. In this next fragment he explains that also the children were already ‘othering’ between themselves and Indonesian children, clearly linking race to class:

It is often denied, but it is true. I remember well... We were going to school; we were dressed nicely and then we saw those Indonesian children: they were not going to school and they were dressed in rags. You would just see them like that on the streets. It gives you a feeling like... ‘they are nothing and I don’t want to become one of them’. So you were not playing with them, you know. [...] It really was like that. If you think back, you feel bad about it, but if you live there you think ‘that’s just the way it is’ (#4.1, track 5).

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<sup>6</sup> *Katjong*, sometimes also spelled *katjoeng* or *katjang* means ‘peanut’, but is also a skin-colour based racist term used by Dutch and Indo-Europeans to refer to a mischievous Javanese or Indo-European boy.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have illustrated how Indo-Europeans were discriminated against in all manner of ways, but also how they differentiated themselves from other groups in society. To note is that not only race, but also class, gender, and other categories of distinction influenced the chances one had in both the colonial and the post-colonial society in Indonesia. Especially class was another prominent explanation of difference in the Dutch East Indies. It thus also plays a big role in the way segregation is remembered by the interviewees. Regardless of their social status, however, all Dutch Indo-Europeans in the interviews identify themselves in relation to Dutch and Indonesians, often positioning themselves in between these two categories. The feeling of sitting right in between different groups in society will be the subject of the next chapter.

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## Chapter 5: In-betweenness and oriental discourse

The Dutch East Indies was, as discussed above, a society divided into legal categories based on race. Although race was not the only factor that determined social status, it played an important role in colonial society. For long historians and sociologists used the image of a pyramid to explain racial hierarchy in the Dutch East Indies: the Europeans made up the top and the Indonesians the base of the pyramid. The ‘middle group’ consisted of Indo-Europeans and Chinese (see Fasseur 1995, Furnivall 1939, and Wertheim 1948 in Bosma, Raben, and Willems 2008: 163-164). This idea of a ‘middle group’ had a lasting influence on the way Indo-Europeans identified themselves.

Indeed, one of the most common ways in which Indo-Europeans identify themselves is by highlighting the duality in their background with words such as ‘mixed-blood’ or its more modern variant ‘double blood’. Some speak about uniting ‘both worlds’ in them. Others simply explain themselves as children from a Dutch father and a Javanese mother, for example, perceiving the Netherlands as the ‘Fatherland’ and Indonesia as the ‘Motherland’. But in all stories, there is a sense of ‘in-betweenness’. In this chapter, I will analyse this discourse of in-betweenness. I will show how this self-perception is also related to orientalist notions of both the ‘Dutch Other’ and the ‘Indonesian Other’. I will argue that this discourse is a legacy of the colonial racist policies in the Dutch East Indies.

### **“Trapped between two fires”: The discourse of in-betweenness**

One remarkable example of this feeling of ‘in-betweenness’ in the interviews I surveyed was articulated by this man who participated in the frontlines of the fighting on the side of the Dutch:

We had to shoot, but I myself never fired a bullet because I found it an extremely unsympathetic war. I had Indonesian family members, I saw them regularly, and they were very kind people. And I knew that they were just sitting on the other side [of the frontline]. And I always thought: imagine Kan [one of his family members] sitting there on the other side. In that case, I had to shoot at him. But I never retreated from a fight, I always stayed in the frontline. But my mates, they did shoot (#12.1, track 12).

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Having Indonesian family members himself, this man could understand the Indonesian nationalists. He literary found himself in between the Dutch and Indonesian fighters: “I didn’t want to fight against the Indonesians, but also not against the Dutch” (#12.1, track 12). His ambivalent position was frowned upon by the other Indo-Europeans of his battalion when he expressed his understanding of the Indonesian nationalists.

This example of feeling in between the Dutch and the Indonesians is, although quite literally, exemplary of a common way in which Indo-Europeans position themselves socially and culturally. “The Netherlands is our father, Indonesia our mother,” said one of the interviewees (#2.3, track 9). The next fragment shows that when tensions in society rose, this feeling began to gain more prominence. The Japanese occupation and the violent years that followed it put extra pressure on the Indo-Europeans in Indonesia. In the following fragment, a man who grew up with a Dutch father and a Javanese mother explains how he increasingly felt “trapped between two fires” after the Japanese capitulated. He always used to play with his Javanese friends in the *kampong*, with which he identified as well. But the growing tensions affected how he was treated by other Javanese children:

It is very strange indeed... I really felt like... Back then I was your average Javanese boy. A bit more white, alright, but... But then children who didn’t know me started to treat me with hostility. Try to imagine the situation I was in! You really were trapped between two fires. You eventually didn’t know what was right and what was wrong anymore (#10.1, track 12).

In the years after the violent late 1940s, the Indo-European community in the new Republic of Indonesia started to shrink. Many of them moved to the Netherlands or other countries. Those who stayed behind had to decide before the end of 1951: opting to become a *warga negara*, an Indonesian citizen, or to maintain the Dutch nationality. Around 31.000 people with a Dutch nationality choose the Indonesian nationality. Another 100.000 choose to stay in Indonesia as a Dutch national (Bosma, Raben, Willems 2006: 189). The pressure to choose between Indonesian and Dutch citizenship instigated this in-between discourse even more: “We loved both the Netherlands and Indonesia, since the blood of both runs through our veins. So we faced a difficult dilemma,” explains

one of the interviewed Indo-Europeans (#2.1). Another woman that eventually moved to the Netherlands when Dutch companies became nationalized by the Indonesian government in 1958, also uses the parents metaphor:

The Netherlands is our father, Indonesia is our mother. Their marriage is broken. Now we have to choose to go along with our father or with our mother. We choose to go with the father, for the future of our kids (#2.3, track 9).

This discourse of in-betweenness keeps on being used to explain Indo-European identity, also when interviewees talk about the present. In the next fragment we hear a man who never managed to find where he felt most at home:

I have always longed for Indonesia, but when I'm there I am afraid. But, on the other hand, when I'm here, I cry because I want to go to Indonesia. With me many others. I am always in between (*tussenin*). I don't feel at home here, but when I'm in Indonesia I also don't feel at home because my skin colour is different than theirs. That longing and yearning have always been there (#5.1, track 18).

### **Orientalist discourse**

This idea of 'in-betweenness' is thus constructed in relation to a Dutch and an Indonesian Other. Depending on the context, elements that refer to one of these cultural categories are sometimes playfully, sometimes seriously identified with, or dissociated with. Put simply, everything 'Dutch' is regularly perceived as more modern as well as more 'soulless', whilst everything 'Indonesian' is perceived as more traditional as well as more refined, spiritual, or closer to nature. This categorization resembles an orientalist discourse.

In the famous book *Orientalism*, the late literary scholar Edward Said showed how, over the centuries, historians writing about Asia have produced a discourse in which 'the Orient' has been continuously depicted as mystical, seductive, exotic, and profoundly irrational (Said 2003[1978]). This image of the orient was constructed in contrast with Western self-perceptions as scientific, developed, and rational. This discourse of orientalism legitimized Western imperialism and European dominance in the nineteenth and twentieth century but also affects the way in which we perceive 'others' today. In a

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subsequent work Said elaborated upon this by introducing the concept of the ‘cultural archive’ (Said 1993). Dutch anthropologist Gloria Wekker, who used the concept to write about race in the Netherlands sees the ‘cultural archive’ as “a racial grammar, a deep structure of inequality in thought and affect based on race, [that] was installed in nineteenth-century European imperial populations, and that [...] among other things, [formed and fabricated] a sense of self” (Wekker 2016: 2). The orientalist discourse thus influences both historical and present cultural configurations.

Edmund Burke III and David Prochaska have written about orientalism and the developments in post-colonial scholarship. They argue that orientalist discourse is still very much present today (Burke and Prochaska 2008). But one of their critiques on Said’s *Orientalism* is that he is not sufficiently emphasizing the agency of non-Western peoples. “[B]y conceiving of orientalism as the manifestation of imperialism at the discursive level, Said made it difficult to explain where nationalism came from, and undermined thereby the agency of colonized peoples,” they write (Burke and Prochaska 2007: 145-146). In this way, Said inscribed into his theory of *Orientalism* the very dichotomies between active colonizers and passive colonized that he was trying to counter. In this light, it is especially interesting to examine signs of an orientalist discourse in the narratives of Indo-Europeans that claim to feel uncomfortable with both of these two binary categories.

Often interviewees classify things as *Westers* (‘Western’) or *Oosters* (‘Eastern’). One woman remembers the first time that she went back to Indonesia in 1986 after moving to the Netherlands. Due to all the changes, she couldn’t imagine herself living there anymore:

My country of birth became an *Oosters land* (‘Eastern country’). That all I have to say about it. It’s for the better since the population is *oosters* too and their main religion is Islam. [...] I can’t imagine myself living there anymore, really (#1.1, track 13).

The categories of ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’ are also often deployed when talking about gender equality. In the next fragment, a woman talks about the differences between her Moluccan stepfather and her Dutch father in terms of treating girls. She only knew her father for a short time. But, she remembers “he always remained a real Dutchman” (#3.1, track 4). She never saw him eating *Indisch* food. She links the Dutch background to certain

cultural features such as freedom for women. She contrasts this with the Moluccan background of her stepfather, who was very strict:

Indonesian people more have their own culture: a bigger sense of community, you know. *Indische Nederlanders*, we do spread more easily. The *eilandbewoners* ('people of the islands'), the Indonesian people, they cluster, they stick together. And their habits are as follows: a girl should stay at home, she goes to school, and yes, she may even study, [...] but if you are not married, you won't leave your parents. (#3.1, track 4).

In the next fragment, we hear the son of a sugar planter. His whole youth he grew up at a Dutch sugar factory establishment with his family. He explains how, after the sugar factories were nationalized by President Sukarno, the quality and the efficiency of the companies decreased. He still often visits Indonesia. In the next fragment, he narrates about his visit to a sugar factory in Indonesia somewhere in the 1990s. He clearly mirrors a Dutch work ethos and thriftiness against Indonesian laziness and ignorance:

Jezus Christ, what a mess. It's only then when you realize how good we were. It sounds strange what I say, but how serious were the Dutch. The policy of maintenance, development. But if you go back and see what a mess it is! They [Indonesians] do not know maintenance! Nothing is done about it! They do not [save money for] maintenance. [They do not have] technicians. This difference is visible indeed. The Dutch are very thrifty. So if you maintain well, it lasts long. Well, they don't think about that. I think that's a shame (#4.1, track 9)

A bit later in the interview, this same man constantly emphasizes the hospitality and the humorous character of the Indo-Europeans in the Netherlands. This makes him feel more at home when he is among other Indo's, than when he is among white Dutch people.

Another woman tries to explain what it is to be *Indisch*. She explains how Indo-Europeans are a 'cultural mix' of Dutch culture and Indonesian culture:

We have no culture. Our culture is made up of cooking, [...] knowledge of medicinal herbs, and music. [...] Our *Indisch-zijn*, the ability to sense a lot of things,

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superstition, the way we do things, our own *adat* – you should do this and you shouldn’t do that: right in between the Dutch and the Indonesian perception of politeness. [...] [We] have a certain kind of *beschavingcultuur* [civilizational culture] that rests more on Indonesian politeness: *Indische* people are extremely polite. That is why we are still not being seen [in Dutch society]. (#9.2, track 18)

Again, we can see how Indo-European identity is constructed in relation to an idea of Indonesianness and Dutchness. Superstition and mysticality are perceived as Indonesian and mirrored against rationality. Politeness and respect are understood as important Indonesian cultural features and compared to Dutch directness or rudeness. The following scheme consists of the binary categories that I came across in the interviews. The left column represents perceived features of Dutch culture, the right of Indonesian culture.

<i>‘Dutch’</i>	<i>‘Indonesian’</i>
Individualistic	Collective
Modern	Traditional
Economical	Hedonistic
Rational	Mystical
Serious	Comical
Hard-working	Lazy
Rude	Respectful
Secluded	Hospitable

## Conclusion

Scholars such as Edward Said and Gloria Wekker have tried to show how the discourse of orientalism was used to legitimize Western colonialism. This discourse, this way of thinking, or this ‘racial grammar’ ended up in our ‘cultural archive’ and still influences the way we think and talk about ourselves and ‘the Other’ in the present. I have tried to show how this is also the case among the Indo-Europeans that moved to the Netherlands. Their sense of self is partly constructed in relation to, and in contrast with both the ‘Dutch Other’ and the ‘Indonesian Other’. I argue that the racist colonial policies of the Dutch East Indies,

and the oriental discourse that was deployed to legitimize them, directly influenced the construction of Indo-European identity as a 'middle group'. This discourse of in-betweenness, as well as the orientalist categorization on which it rests still influences the self-perception of Dutch Indo-Europeans at the time of the interviews.

In the next chapter, I will also look at this relational aspect in the creation of an Indo-European identity. But instead of looking at how the past influenced the present, I will try to show that the present also very much affects the way in which the past is remembered.

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**PART III**

**THE PAST AND THE PRESENT**

“Always in Between”

## Chapter 6: Identity in the post-war Netherlands

In the previous chapter, I showed how an Indo-European identity is constructed in relation to other identities. This process of identity construction is ongoing and is thus not only formed by looking back in time, but also by relating to the present. The woman cited at the end of the previous chapter indeed referred to the position of Indo-Europeans in the present Dutch society. This post-colonial identity formation, in other words, is as much about the present as it is about the past. In memory studies, the common perception of what memory does is, indeed, that it interprets the past in the context of the present. Maurice Halbwachs was one of the first to emphasize this actuality of collective memory: “the past is not preserved but is reconstructed on the basis of the present,” he wrote in the early 1990s (Halbwachs 1992: 40 in French 2012: 359). Memories of the Dutch East Indies or Indonesia are of course also mirrored against the experiences in the Netherlands, after leaving Indonesia.

In *Memories of the East*, the coordinator of the SMGI project Fridus Steijlen reflects on the influence of the context on the memories of the interviewees. He discusses several news events in particular. Many interviews were conducted at the time of the conflicts in the Moluccas in 1999.<sup>7</sup> For some of the people interviewed these images on the news “revived memories of the ‘Bersiap’ period,” he explains (Steijlen 2002: 5). In the same year, there was much debate about an investigation into the ungenerous reception of those ‘repatriated’ from the Indies to the Netherlands (ibid.).

In this chapter I will give a short overview of the prominence of debates about nationalism, citizenship, and discrimination in the Netherlands, paying close attention to the years 1997-2001 in which the interviews were conducted. After that, I will show how the ‘then-present’ partly shaped the way in which the experiences in the Dutch East Indies and Indonesia were remembered.

### **Debates about identity in the post-war Netherlands**

Most of the people that I included in my analysis moved from Indonesia to the Netherlands in the 1950s. The earliest arrived in the Netherlands in 1947, the latest in 1965. They were

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<sup>7</sup> In 1999, a violent conflict in the Maluku archipelago, in the northeast of Indonesia, broke out. The conflict claimed thousands of lives and displaced hundreds of thousands of people between 1999-2002.

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part of around 330.000 Europeans that moved from Indonesia to the Netherlands between 1945 and 1965 (Bosma, Raben, and Willems 2006: 190).

In the late 1940s and the 1950s, Dutch society was not very welcoming to the immigrants. The government pursued a restrictive immigration policy towards people for an ‘Eastern culture’ and Dutch society itself was xenophobic too (ibid.). One Indo-European woman recalled the racist remarks she encountered when she’d just arrived in the Netherlands in 1954:

The first thing they told you [in the Netherlands] was: ‘Go back to your own country! Go back to your ape country!’ [...] We were not allowed to say a thing, we had no voice (#9.1 track 13).

According to the historians Ulbe Bosma, Remco Raben, and Wim Willems, the lines that divided the post-colonial Indonesian society affected the social positions in the Netherlands as well:

An immeasurable but unmistakable element in the mindset of many immigrants was the mixture of pride and feelings of inferiority towards white Dutch people. This was a legacy of the colonial situation, where the prejudices of white newcomers against Indies-Dutch were experienced as very offensive (2006: 200, [my translation]).

We can also see this in the following fragment of an Indo-European man who was eleven when he left Indonesia for the Netherlands in 1950:

I found it very difficult [to leave Indonesia and to move to the Netherlands]. I cried a lot when we arrived in the Netherlands. My mother also cried every day, so I thought it wasn’t so strange to cry every day. I felt a huge nostalgia (*heimwee*) for that country. [...] At that time, everything related to Indonesia was absolutely forbidden. We were not allowed to speak Indonesian at home, we were not allowed to talk about it, but... That ambience (*sfeer*) didn’t change, you know: we were eating rice, my dad listened to *krontjong* music. So, on the one hand, we were extremely focused on Indonesia, but on the other hand... [...] That is how we were

brought up: ‘Watch it! No single word of Indonesian! You’re Dutch now!’ [...] But my father also always reminded me: ‘You are, and you will always remain Indonesian’ in a negative way to let me appear as Dutch as possible. My father felt very inferior (*minderwaardigheidscomplex*). He used to point to his skin and say ‘This is the biggest factor of doom (*noodlot*) in my life: my brown skin’ (#5.1, track 21).

By the mid-1960s, Indo-European immigrants had managed to integrate into Dutch society quickly and were, at least for the Dutch state, no longer perceived as a ‘social problem’ (ibid.: 202). Ever since, Indo-Europeans are often mentioned as prime examples of successful integration, embodying a ‘harmless identity’ (Captein 2014: 60).

According to Rob van Ginkel, who did extensive research on the history of debates about identity and culture in the Netherlands, the 1960s and 1970s were relatively calm periods in which nationalist discourse was less prominent in Dutch society. In the 1980s, discussions about ethnic minorities stirred up nationalist discourse again (Van Ginkel 1999). In this period, it was mostly Moluccan and Afro-Surinamese Dutch people that were seen as the ‘unassimilable Other’ in Dutch society (Wekker 2016: ix). From the 1990s onwards into the first decade of the twentieth century we can observe what has been called a ‘neorealist discourse’ in Dutch society, characterized directly calling ‘unpleasant truths’ about the multicultural society by their name (Prins 2002). This neorealist discourse challenged prevailing ideas about the role of minorities, and especially Muslims, in Dutch society. Beginning in the 1990s, Frits Bolkestein, the political leader of the VVD party, started to talk about ‘defending European civilization against Islam’ (ibid.).

The interviews I analysed were conducted between 1997 and 2001. Half a year after the KITLV had the last interview for their SMGI oral history project the 9/11 terrorist attacks happened in the United States. After that, the murders of LPF politician Pim Fortuyn in 2002 and Islam critic Theo van Gogh in 2004 had a huge impact on the ‘multiculturalism debate’ and “gave rise to an exceptional bluntness in the interracial domain” in the Netherlands (Wekker 2016: ix). It should thus be taken into account that the political climate in the Netherlands during the SMGI interviews was increasingly occupied with the ‘national minorities debate’ but was much less radicalized than in the years right after the last interview was conducted.

### **The present in the past**

But how then is this political reality reflected in the accounts of the Indo-European interviewees? How did the then-present affect the way in which the interviewees perceived the past?

It is remarkable how this ‘national minorities debate’ indeed plays a role in some of the accounts. Some of the interviewed people clearly refer to other groups of people to position themselves in a particular way. Some use ethnic minorities in the Netherlands, mainly Turkish and Moroccan Dutch people, that are perceived as less assimilated, to emphasize their ‘Dutchness’. Others highlight the poverty of black people on the African continent as a ‘distant other’ to relativize their social position. One of the interviewees explained how Dutch she feels by contrasting Indo-European identity with the Dutch term *allochtoon* (endogenous, immigrant): “We are absolutely not *allochtonen*. If you say that to *Indische mensen* they become furious! We are just Dutch,” she said. (#2.2, track 23).

The Dutch term *allochtoon* was at that time commonly used to refer to a non-white person, irrespective of having the Dutch nationality or not. According to Dutch anthropologists Sinan Çankaya and Paul Mepschen “[a]llochtonen are associated with a range of social problems from neighborhood decline to homophobia and crime” in public Dutch discourse (Çankaya and Mepschen 2019). The term *allochtoon* is used in contrast to its antonym: *autochtoon*. *Autochtoon* means native or ‘born from the soil’ and is used to refer to white Dutch citizens only (Geschiere 2009).

Some interviewees also explicitly compared Indo-Europeans to other minority groups in the Netherlands. In the next fragment, an Indo-European woman compares the position of Indo-Europeans with the position of Surinamese Dutch in the Netherlands. Here she argues that it is harder for Indo-Europeans to get accepted into Dutch society because they would be seen as part of the colonial project. In contrast, Surinamese people find acceptance more easily because of their perceived victimhood:

If you would ask: ‘Have *Indische* people made progress in the Netherlands? Have they established themselves?’ Then I say: ‘no’. Do you know why? Because it is said so easily: ‘we are Dutch’. [...] The Surinamese can say: ‘you have treated us like slaves’, but we are being seen as damned colonials. That’s the difference. And if we would say ‘see, we have been discriminated as well because we have not received a similar salary and we could not always obtain membership for the local private

club (*soos*) [...] then they would say ‘God, please shut up, you have no right to say so’. If you said this to a Surinamese, they would react with bewilderment! ‘You bastard colonials!’ We have always been the damned colonials. (#9.2, track 21).

We can clearly see how both past and present are being deployed to make sense of what it means to be both Indo-European and Dutch. The same goes for the next fragment in which an Indo-European man narrates supposed differences between Dutch Indo-Europeans and Turkish and Moroccan Dutch people. He and his family belonged to the stayers: the Indo’s that only came to the Netherlands in the 1960s. After most other Indo-Europeans moved to the Netherlands, he was often the only Indo-European boy among the Indonesian pupils at school. There he experienced discrimination because of his Dutch background and his skin colour. He always had to switch between the Dutch environment at home and Indonesian culture in public. Indo-Europeans have adapted well in the Netherlands because of these experiences and their background, he argues. He contrasts this with the present-day social position of Turkish and Moroccan Dutch people in the Netherlands:

Despite everything being Indonesian – school, everything – if you came back home you felt... Let me put it like this: If you are at school then you try to behave as much as an Indonesian as possible. You don’t talk Dutch, because that was not allowed anymore, it became forbidden. But if you come back home, then you think ‘ah, nice’. Then you talk Dutch with your mother, with your grandmother... But as soon as you leave the house, everything is Indonesian again. And I think that is typical *Indisch*. Look, the reverse you can see now, here in the Netherlands. I always say when I’m at work, I am supervising those lads. I try to act as Dutch as possible. I provide them with work, I... I make sure everything runs smoothly. I have to switch. I have to think like them. I have to think like our company’s policy. But when I come back home, I am myself again. Then I make little jokes again... Then I feel *Indisch* again. I think that is our strength: we are flexible. We do not need to make much effort. I think for one of those Moroccans, or Turks... I think that for them it is harder. They are Turkish, they are Moroccan. But if they are at work, they are also Moroccan, you get it? So for them it will remain hard. Or they really should

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take Dutch language courses. But for us, we already had this background in Indonesia. Even more so, we have white parents or grandparents (#4.1, track 11).

### **Conclusion**

As I have discussed above, memory is perceived as a social construction of past events within the field of memory studies. In contrast with history, which is a “representation of the past,” “[m]emory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present” according to Pierre Nora, an influential academic within the field (1989: 8). The present, in other words, shapes how we remember our past.

In her analysis of Dutch Indo-European writings, Esther Captain explains how the first generation of Indo-Europeans to move to the Netherlands was very much affected by the strong Dutch assimilation policies of the 1950s and 1960s (Captain 2014). This made them suppress the non-Dutch parts of their identity or history. They are sometimes called the ‘silent generation’ because most of them tried to assimilate as well as they could, trying to avoid politics. “[R]acial consciousness has determined their way of being,” she writes, but, on the other hand, “the first generation was trying to ignore race, at least projecting themselves as such to the outside world” (Captain 2014: 66).

The oral history project shows that this ‘silent generation’ has much to say when in a safe environment. The strong assimilation policies indeed had a lasting influence on Indo-European identity formation. Constantly emphasizing one’s ‘Dutchness’ is an example of this. We can also see that although race is tried to be ignored in public, it indeed still plays an important role in self-identification. Where Indonesians were the other that Indo-Europeans differentiated themselves from in the East Indies or Indonesia, ethnic minorities in the Netherlands, such as Turkish or Moroccan Dutch, act as the contrasting other in the present day.

**PART IV**

**CONCLUSION**

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## Chapter 7: Conclusion

Research of post-colonial scholars shows that the effects of colonialism are still present in both former colonized societies, as well as former colonizing societies. As they demonstrate, our 'cultural archives', they show, are inscribed with a tenacious 'racial grammar'. Modern-day racism, in other words, is a direct effect of centuries of colonialism. The Netherlands, as a former colonial power, is also affected by this colonial legacy, just as the countries it colonized, such as Indonesia.

Since stories of colonialism are so often shaped by the binary categories of colonizer and colonized, I became interested in people of both Dutch and Indonesian descent who thereby complicate such categories: the Indo-Europeans. Indo-Europeans were somehow positioned in-between the Dutch colonizers and the Indonesian colonized. Between 1997 and 2001, the KITLV interviewed 724 people that had lived in the Dutch East Indies, of which roughly a fifth were Indo-Europeans. I have listened to their life stories to find out how they were affected by the 'racial grammar' of colonial society, and how their 'cultural archives' were formed in this context. I wanted to find out how Dutch colonial culture manifested in representations of the self and the other among Indo-European repatriates and migrants that have moved to the Netherlands.

I found that their life stories were as diverse as every group's life stories would be; every individual memory was different from the other; and it was hard to grasp a singular 'Indo-European identity'. Eventually, I did find a dominant narrative to which most of the interviewees related their stories. This collective memory discourse was, I found out, structured and thematized in certain ways, and shaped by both the historical as well as the present context.

### **The legacy of racist colonial policy in Dutch Indo-European identity formation**

The most recent research in the field of memory studies shows that both our individual, as well as our collective memories are highly structured, plotted narratives. This is an unconscious process to make sense of our experiences. The dominant narrative arc in the memories of the Indo-Europeans starts with relatively harmonious and calm memories of the pre-war period, followed by the often quite traumatic period of the Japanese occupation, and the violent years at the end of the 1940s. This dominant plot sequence

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shapes most of the memories of the interviewees, and thus also the memories of segregation in society.

Although most people know very well how racially divided the Dutch East Indies were, racial segregation only has a prominent role in the memories after the start of the war. The pre-war period is often glorified or depicted as harmonious; racial segregation is downplayed. It is only after the start of the war and the Japanese occupation that racism starts to play a big role in most memories. Because the Japanese positioned themselves as the ‘liberators of Asia’ and imprisoned or discriminate against many Indo-Europeans it is quite evident that the memories of this period are more coloured by discrimination. Youth nostalgia may play a role in this as well.

I have analysed the memories about discrimination, segregation, and racist policies by taking into account a wide range of ‘axes of difference’. This intersectional approach makes evident that both the colonial and the post-colonial society were not divided along the borders of race alone. An interplay between various axes of signification, various ‘identity markers’ defined your social status. This becomes clear when we listen to the memories of the Indo-Europeans that participated in the oral history project. Especially class and gender played major roles in this process of discrimination, besides and together with race.

Taking into account this intersection of race, class, gender, sexuality, and religion Indo-Europeans always identify themselves in relation to Dutch and Indonesians, positioning themselves in between the different groups in society. I have tried to show how this discourse of in-betweenness forms is a bit part of Indo-European self-perception. This discourse is also related to orientalist notions of both the Dutch and the Indonesian Other. This shows how the ‘racial grammar’ that was used to justify the Dutch imperial project, the orientalist discourse, still lives on in the present day. In this way, colonial racial policies of the past have influenced, and do still influence, the identity of Dutch Indo-Europeans. The prominence of race in the colonial society has made Indo-Europeans extremely aware of their ethnicity, skin colour, and culture, and how this relates to the ‘others’ in society.

In the last chapter I’ve tried to show that not only the past influences the present; but that the present also shapes the way the past is remembered. The ‘national minorities debate’ at the time of the oral history project clearly echoes in the stories of some of the interviewees. Where Indonesians were the other that Indo-Europeans differentiated

themselves from in the East Indies or Indonesia; ethnic minorities in the Netherlands, such as Turkish or Moroccan Dutch, act as the contrasting other in the present day.

I found, to conclude, that the way people talk about both the past and the present echoes certain colonial discourses. I wanted to analyse these ways of thinking and speaking not to prove that Indo-Europeans make use of racialized discourses, but what I wanted to show is how the racist policies of the Dutch colonial government influenced the lives of everyone living there; not only back then, but also still now; and not only those of Indonesian and white Dutch people but also those of Dutch Indo-Europeans.

## **Limitations**

### *Representativeness*

For my research, I relied on data from the interview collection of the SMGI. The limitations of that project thus also influence the representativeness of my research. Firstly, the interviews were conducted in Dutch, mostly within the Netherlands and Belgium. Because of this, a large group of people who lived in the Dutch East Indies and Indonesia in the late colonial and the early post-colonial period is not included in my research. Besides, the people that were included in the interview project also did not form a statistically representative population. One of the most obvious reasons for this is that the interviews were conducted between 1997 and 2001 and did thus not include people who were middle-aged or older between 1930 and 1962, since they of course already passed away by the time of the oral history project. Another factor is that the project gave priority to informants in categories that were relatively poorly documented at the time: people that had remained outside the camps during Japanese occupation; soldiers, police, and members of the security services; and those who could narrate about the 'business world' and labour relations (Steijlen 2002: 4).

### *Generalization, validity, and reliability*

Since the interview collection is not representative of the whole Dutch Indo-European community, generalization of my research is problematic. Therefore, my goal was not to make a generalized claim about this group of people, but to show the patterns in the life trajectories of the interviewed people and to interpret these against the background of the changing political reality. My hope is that this research can broaden our

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understanding of these processes on a theoretical level, which makes comparisons of similar studies relevant.

I thus took a constructionist approach in my research. I did not try to grasp a reality existing independently of social constructions. Accordingly, the aim of my research was not to represent reality correctly but to ground my own interpretations in the interpretations of those I have studied. To do this, I also had to take into account the relation between a (for me) unknown interviewer and the interviewee. The narrative theory in memory studies emphasizes the performativity of memories. Remembering is not passively reminiscing, but rather actively memory-making in the present. Memories are narrativized and partly performed stories, especially in an interview setting. Because of this, it is important to reflect on the role of the interviewers in this project. Most interviewers, for example, were younger and most of them were white Dutch scholars. This influenced the way in which the memories of the interviewees were performed. This is not to say that this ‘troubles’ the stories of the interviewees, it is just one of many factors that shape memories.

I have tried to produce a valid and reliable study, by being transparent about my way of data selection, data analysis, and the interpretation of data, so that my research can be valued on the production of data and the clarity of my interpretations (Flick 2009[1998]: 388).

## Epilogue: The Netherlands after the interviews, 2001-2021

In many ways, the world has changed since the interviews I've analysed were conducted. I believe the patterns I have identified in the life stories of Dutch Indo-Europeans would still apply today, bearing in mind that some of the interviewees would probably be passed away by now and that this 'new present' would also influence the memorialization of the past in the same way as did the 'then-present' of 1997-2001.

One of the things that would have affected the interviews would probably be the attention of anti-racist activism in the media. After 9/11 and the murders on Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh, there first came a period of increased blunt racial discourse in the Netherlands (Wekker 2016: ix-x). In the last ten years, however, a second wave of anti-racist activists stood up. The way they have influenced academia partly shaped this research. And the way they have influenced the public debate so far would likely have had an impact on the memories of the interviewees. The way colonialism, discrimination, and difference are discussed in public is very different from twenty years ago.

On top of this, the colonial history of the Netherlands in Indonesia receives more attention now than ever before in the Dutch public debate. The apologies of the Dutch king are exemplary of this, as well as a wide range of books and movies, of which *De Oost* (2021) is the latest example. This movie, directed by Jim Taihuttu, the great-grandson of a Moluccan KNIL-soldier, tells the story of the war for independence in Indonesia. The Federatie Indische Nederlanders (FIN), an Indo-European organisation, started a lawsuit against the filmmakers because they perceive the movie as historically inaccurate. They wanted the filmmakers to emphasize the fictional character of the movie more (Keyser 2021). The judge rejected their claim.

According to historian Esther Captain, this movie is exemplary of the changing role of Indo-Europeans in the public debate about the colonial history of the Netherlands (Captain 2021). The first generation of Indo-Europeans that moved to the Netherlands, the generation that appears in this study, has always been seen as the 'silent generation' (Captain 2014: 66). The second generation became more active in the public debate in the 1970s and 1980s and have problematized racial discourses in Dutch society (ibid.). Now, the next generation is starting to join the public debate as well, taking in an even more critical stance towards colonial history (Captain 2021).

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I agree with Captain when she states that by critically discussing colonial history, the youngest generation of Indo-Europeans is holding up a mirror to Dutch society (ibid.). In my introduction, I wrote that historically, Indo-Europeans posed a challenge to the rigid frames of both Dutch and Indonesian identity politics. One could argue that by letting their voice be heard about colonial history, the new generation still poses a challenge to the frames of Dutch identity politics.

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## Appendix: Biographical details of the interviewees

The following table shows some biographical details of the interviewees as well as some information about the interviews themselves. The numbering corresponds to how I refer to the interviews throughout my thesis. The table includes the gender (G), year of birth, the year of emigration from Indonesia, the occupation, and the places of residence of the interviewees. The last columns state the month and year in which the interview was conducted and how long the interview lasted in minutes. The total duration of all interviews was 2.455 minutes.

	G	Birth	Emigration	Occupation	Residence	Interview	Duration
#1	F	1924	1950	teacher	Wlingi, Batavia	08/1997	109
#2	F	1921	1958	teacher	Celebes, Java, Borneo	09/1997	549
#3	F	1934	1958	administrative staff	Malang, Surabaya, Sumatra	10/1997	115
#4	M	1944	1964	schoolboy	Kediri, Surabaya, Malang	02/1998	140
#5	M	1939	1950	schoolboy	Cirebon, Batavia, Bandung (Biak 1960-1961)	09/1998	130
#6	F	1936	1947	schoolgirl	Sabang, Makassar, Bujulu	03/1999	248
#7	M	1911	1964	mechanic	Jember, Semarang, Surabaya, Plaju	06/1999	144
#8	F	1935	1949	schoolgirl	Bandung, West Java, Makassar	10/1999	153
#9	F	1919	1954	journalist	Malang, Surabaya, Batavia, Kediri, Sampit, Jakarta	01/2000	280
#10	M	1933	1960	clerk, manager	Ambarawa, Semarang, Surabaya	06/2000	313
#11	M	1932	1965	sales promotor	Surabaya, Pontianak, Bandung, Pengalengan, Garut, Taksikmalaya, Ciamis, Jakarta, Purwakarta	10/2000	135
#12	M	1922	1960	teacher	Kroë, Batavia, Bandung, Belitung, New Guinea	12/2000	149