

# PAPER OPINIONS ON OBJECTS THAT MATTER

AN ANALYSIS OF THE DUTCH PRINTED MEDIA COVERAGE REGARDING THE RESTITUTION  
OF COLONIAL OBJECTS BETWEEN 1950-1995 AND 2015

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Brood, bier, suiker, eieren, kippe- en varkensvlees

#### Leven in heel Europa veel duurder

Pagina 7

Van Agt: 'Tegen blaaspijpe geen kruid gewassen'

Pagina 8

### Door Nederlandse ambtenaren meegenomen

# Indonesië wil kunstschaten terug

door JAAP METZ

LEIDEN, dinsdag

Indonesië wil van de Nederlandse regering ongeveer 400 kunstschaten terughebben, die Nederlandse ambtenaren in 1963 tijdens de overdracht van Nieuw-Guinea op eigen houtje vanuit Hollandia naar Nederland hebben laten overbrengen.

### Mr. Luns voor tv: „Actie tegen mij”



### Coerver op de korrel telesport



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Evonord

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### Used abbreviations

ANP – het Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau

KITLV – Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (Royal Institute for Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies)

RCE – Rijksdienst voor Cultureel Erfgoed (Dutch Cultural Heritage Agency)

VOC – Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (United East India Company)

VU – VU University Amsterdam

UL – Leiden University

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UBL – Leiden University Library

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When I started out writing this thesis, it quickly became clear to me that this was a part of studying that I would really have to get back into, after spending ten months away from the archives and history books. Firstly, I would like to thank professor Marieke Bloembergen for first, helping me get acquainted with the subject of restitution and colonial heritage, then helping me find an alternative way of doing this research because the archives and museums closed down and for all the very helpful comments and tips that I received. Professor Bloembergen also brought me into contact with dr Jos van Beurden, an absolute expert in the field that pointed out interesting angles and periods for my media study. Thirdly, dr Fenneke Sijssling for thinking with me at the early start of the process and for acting as my second reviewer.

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## Introduction

In March of 2020, during a Dutch state visit to Indonesia, King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima fulfilled a decades old promise by handing over a *kris*, an Indonesian dagger, that originally belonged to the Javanese prince Diponegoro. Whom in Indonesia is seen as a national hero for his leadership of the anti-colonial Java War, 1825-1830. Somewhat more than forty years ago, other belongings of the prince had been returned already.<sup>1</sup> This relatively small act during the 2020 state visit symbolises the process surrounding the restitution of colonial objects that has been taking place in the Netherlands since the start of the Round Table Conference in 1949.

In this debate the Dutch government and its society in general struggle with a colonial past that goes beyond the general notion being a former colonial state. This struggle expresses itself within museums that are institutions built on colonial heritage, within descendants from former colonizers, that now privately own objects or collections from Indonesian origin, within the perception of their monarchy, of which the ruling Orange dynasty was involved in the acquirement of paintings and other cultural objects. This struggle can be uncomfortable and oddly specific, yet it can grow and stretch beyond Dutch society, as a Western struggle. This Western struggle was explained the Dutch historian Niels Matthijssen in *De Groene Amsterdammer*. In this article the author analysed efforts by Dutch museum directors to play a part in the restitution of certain objects. However, he noted that actual restitution of objects has hardly taken place.<sup>2</sup> The process of decolonisation appears to be lengthy and the obvious question seems to be: why did it take the government 45 years to complete this promise, does this have to do with a possible change in the public opinion and how can this development be seen within this general struggle of coming to term with our national, and sometimes deeply personal, colonial past? An example of this struggle between private ownership, national identities and the Dutch colonial past was put into words by cultural anthropologist Lizzy van Leeuwen. In 2016 She wrote an opinion piece for *NRC Handelsblad* in which she addressed the silent auction of a Raden Saleh painting to

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Brassemer, 'Nederland geeft 'verloren' kris terug aan Indonesië', *Trouw* 04-03-2020,

<https://www.trouw.nl/cultuur-media/nederland-geeft-verloren-kris-terug-aan-indonesie~b8824dcc/>

<sup>2</sup> Niels Matthijssen, 'Een Westerse worsteling met goede bedoelingen', *De Groene Amsterdammer* 13 (2020), <https://www.groene.nl/artikel/een-westerse-worsteling-met-goede-bedoelingen> and

Singapore by the Dutch royal family. She pointed out the difference between the way Rembrandt paintings are being bought and brought back to the Netherlands, and how the royal family 'offends' Indonesia by quietly selling it to Indonesia's opponent Singapore. In this piece she emphasized the fact that the painting is deemed a masterpiece and warns for possible belittling of the value of the painting in the Dutch political arena.<sup>3</sup>

When looking at recent actions taken by the Dutch government and museums in particular, it could be said that the restitution debate appears to be shifting, yet it would be of importance to see how this debate is perceived by the general public in the Netherlands and if this possible not is as much a novelty as it is perceived. Are the efforts of former colonial states and institutions received by a broad audience and is it possible that this a changing narrative for the general public too? Historian Carolien Drieënhuizen argues that the media coverage in newspapers, magazines and other media regarding certain restitution processes, 'influenced public self-awareness' and lead to rethinking of national identities and past.<sup>4</sup> Drieënhuizen's argument leaves some things to the imagination, for the least how this influence and its effects are supposed to be measured. Because it seems rather hard to actually put this into hard words or numbers, it is the aim of this study to uncover and explain the continuity and discontinuity in the media coverage about the restitution debate. The research question of this thesis therefore is: 'how did the media coverage about the restitution of disputed colonial heritage in the Netherlands evolve after the independence of Indonesia?'

In 2018 the Dutch Cultural Heritage Agency (RCE) started a study of its own collection, to find out how objects and pieces of the collection are linked to the slavery and the colonial past of the Netherlands. The collection contains more than 100.000 objects and is spread out over a great number of museums and government buildings such as embassies and ministries. At the end of 2019 the RCE published an edited journal that was aimed at the popular reader. It included short essays about a selection of the objects that have been studied until now.<sup>5</sup> The journal attempts to describe how the researchers set off their

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<sup>3</sup> Lizzy van Leeuwen, "'Boschbrand' is niet gewoon erfgoed, het is koloniaal erfgoed", *NRC Handelsblad* 12-10-2016, geraadpleegd op NRC.nl op 27-05-2020 <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2016/10/12/boschbrand-is-niet-gewoon-erfgoed-het-is-koloniaal-erfgoed-4791587-a1526204>.

<sup>4</sup> Caroline Drieënhuizen, 'Mirrors of Time and Agents of Action: Indonesia's Claimed Cultural Objects and Decolonisation, 1947-1978', *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 133:2 (2018) 103.

<sup>5</sup> Hanna Pennock, Simone Vermaat en Miriam Windhausen, *Traces of Slavery and Colonial History in the Art Collection* (2019).

exploration of the Dutch collection of arts and artefacts and provides a glance at the views of the individual scholars and experts that have been conducting this research. This government ordered study is an example of a contemporary effort to come to terms with the colonial history of the Netherlands by publicly trying to uncover the traces of colonialism that can be found in their collection. Further action, following on this study has yet to be announced.

### Historical developments

Before the Netherlands would officially transfer sovereignty to Indonesia, elaborate negotiation took place between the parties involved. These negotiations were called the Round Table Conference. During these talks, a committee focused on the cultural affairs that were involved in the transfer of power. However, the draft of the cultural agreement was entirely scratched except for article 19. The proposed agreement, was summarized by historians Susan Legêne and Els Postel-Coster by citing this sentence ‘the two parties declared themselves willing to ‘promote knowledge in their own countries of the fundamental elements of the other’s culture.’’ When the sovereignty was transferred Article 19 merely stated the question of the return of ‘cultural property’.<sup>6</sup> The idea, suggested by a Dutch railway employee, of returning specific objects, was met with consent from the Dutch, yet only the objects that were deemed suitable by the ministry of Culture self.<sup>7</sup>

The 1950’s were marked by the Sukarno’s resistance against Dutch cultural imperialism, and the Dutch anxiety over the loss of their cultural sphere of influence. For Indonesia this meant building their own national identity, in which the return of specific cultural objects was deemed essential.<sup>8</sup> However, the relation between the Netherlands and Indonesia worsened, with its low point being the New Guinea crisis. After the coup d’état against president Sukarno, which made Suharto president, the relationship between the Netherlands took a more cooperative turn. In the 1960’s this led to further talks and the first cultural agreement between the Netherlands and Indonesia in 1968. In this agreement the ‘transfer of collections to Indonesia’ was mentioned, followed by restitutions from 1970

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<sup>6</sup> Susan Legêne and Els Postel-Coster, ‘Isn’t it all culture: Culture and Dutch development in the post-colonial period’ in; Jan Nekkers, P.A.M. Malcontent and F.A.J. Baneke (eds). Fifty years of Dutch development cooperation 1949-1999 (1999) 272-274.

<sup>7</sup> Cynthia Scott, ‘Renewing the ‘Special Relationship’ and Rethinking the Return of Cultural Property: The Netherlands and Indonesia, 1949–79’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, 3 (2017) 651.

<sup>8</sup> Drieënhuizen, ‘Mirrors of Time and Agents of Action’ 95.

through 1978. During the 1970's the involvement of international organisations such as UNESCO and the intensifying of the international debate on restitution matters. The role of the Netherlands and other Westerns countries was reluctant and showed unease in the handling of international agreements on cultural property and heritage. It took until the 1990's to acknowledge the role of cultural objects in strengthening 'the national cultures and identities of developing countries'.<sup>9</sup> In addition to this, historian Els Locher-Scholten described the changing Dutch attitude towards the memorial of Indonesian memories of the Second World War and the unpopular period of decolonization that followed. This will be discussed more elaborate in the following chapters.<sup>10</sup>

### Scholarly debate

The decolonisation of Indonesia was not finished after 1949 when the Republic of Indonesia became independent, nor in 1962 when the Netherlands handed over their authority over West New Guinea. This is because decolonisation is also a process of decolonizing the mind-set of the former colonizers and former colonized.<sup>11</sup> Partly this process is led by museum experts, academics and the Dutch government. Therefore, the Dutch people are also a stakeholder in the restitution debate, and they influence the actions of the government through elections or through different forms of expressions of the (public) opinion. In the past years a change be seen in the attitude of Dutch museums towards the recognition of their colonial pasts and the provenance of their collections. Back in 2001 the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam signed the Universal Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums, which basically stated that museums were universal. This meant that for them there was no need to look at the controversial past of their collections, let alone talk about restitution. Fast forward 20 years and the Rijksmuseum is doing an official study into the provenance of specific objects in their collection and the National Museum of World Cultures has drafted a restitution policy. These are examples of how these Dutch institutions are attempting to deal with their colonial past and it shows that, as

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<sup>9</sup> Legêne and Postel-Coster, 'Isn't it all culture' 273-277.

<sup>10</sup> Els Locher-Scholten, 'Van Indonesische urn tot Indisch monument: vijftig jaar Nederlandse herinnering aan de Tweede Wereldoorlog in Azië', *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 114:2 (1999) 192-222.

<sup>11</sup> Jos van Beurden, 'Decolonisation and colonial collections: An unresolved conflict', *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 133:2 (2018) 67.

historian and journalist Jos van Beurden stated 'the debate about decolonisation of colonial collections is now permanently embedded in the discussion about European colonialism'.<sup>12</sup>

In order to provide a new model for restitution, Van Beurden identified different forms of acquiring and collecting that he came across: gifts to colonial administrators or institutions, acquisitions through private expeditions, acquisition during military expeditions, missionary collecting and through archives.<sup>13</sup> Through these different ways of acquiring, the question of stakeholders in the process of restitution also arises. Most of the objects in the Netherlands are formally owned by the Dutch State, while it is the museums that preserve, curate and exhibit them. Even within the government, interests can differ. The ministry of Foreign Affairs might want to push the bilateral relations, while the ministry of Culture aims to preserve and protect the Dutch collection.<sup>14</sup> Important Dutch institutes, such as the Rijksmuseum and Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam and the Museum of Ethnology in Leiden were (partly) built on the exhibition of colonial collections, sometimes even showing collections that do neither belong to the State nor to the museum.<sup>15</sup> Recently, efforts have been made by Rijksmuseum curator William Southworth to examine the provenance and history of twelve sculptures that are owned by the Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst or the Society of Friends of Asiatic Art.<sup>16</sup> In addition to the government and (private) institutions, colonial objects in the Netherlands are often in the possession of individuals or families that descend from colonial administrators, entrepreneurs or military officials. Van Beurden argues that only if this last group is willing to participate in a constructive debate, the question of restitution could really be settled.<sup>17</sup>

In 2018 the historical journal *BMGN* published an issue dedicated to our colonial past and reflecting on objects or collections in Dutch, Indonesian and Belgium museums with a colonial past. The general conclusion of the contributing academics was that the decolonisation of colonial collections is about more than just restitution of certain objects. Van Beurden ended his contribution by stating that the colonial historians have new, two folded, task. Firstly, they should link their research regarding colonialism to the study of

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<sup>12</sup> Van Beurden, 'Decolonisation and colonial collections' 77.

<sup>13</sup> Jos van Beurden, *Treasures in trusted hands: negotiating the future of colonial cultural objects* (Dissertation VU, Amsterdam, 2017) 188.

<sup>14</sup> Legêne and Postel-Coster, 'Isn't it all culture' 274.

<sup>15</sup> Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer (ed.), *Asiatic Art in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam* (1985).

<sup>16</sup> William A. Southworth, 'Twelve stone sculptures from Java', *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* (2018) 245 – 272.

<sup>17</sup> Van Beurden, *Treasures in trusted hands* 136.



provenance of colonial objects. Secondly, he encourages historians to be more visible in the public debate in order 'to expose and explore this aspect of decolonisation'.<sup>18</sup> Carolien Drieënhuizen reflects on three claims done by the Indonesian government in the first decades after the Indonesian independence. In this study the role of nationalist politics and the need to validate the new nation state in restitution claims is explored and explained. In these processes the Dutch government has shown a reluctant attitude towards the restitution of certain artefacts.<sup>19</sup> Historian Cynthia Scott provided an overview of the 'return of cultural property' and the development of Dutch policies on this issue from 1947 till 1979.<sup>20</sup>

As noted, Drieënhuizen argues that the media coverage about these cases influenced the self-awareness of both the Dutch and the Indonesian people. It is a hard task prove any influence on self-awareness or the public opinion at all. Newspapers and other forms of media coverage do not necessarily reflect the public opinion. However, the media can have an influence on policies and the political debate. Migration and social historian Marlou Schrover and Tycho Walaardt, researcher for the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security, wrote a study about the influence of Dutch media on policies, with regards to refugee and immigration policies.<sup>21</sup> In the light of this research a few questions come to mind, namely whether the media generated support for government actions towards restitution cases and if the media reward themselves agency in influencing these government decisions?

### Shared or colonial heritage

Heritage expert Cynthia Scott wrote an article about a shared heritage project, a joint venture between Dutch and Indonesian museum experts. Scott argues that this project strengthened unequal relations between Dutch and Indonesian scholars and legitimized the colonial heritage of the Dutch museum.<sup>22</sup> The conclusion that the idea of shared heritage and the projects that are based upon this notion are problematic is supported by historians and heritage specialists Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff. They argue that colonial

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<sup>18</sup> Van Beurden, 'Decolonisation and colonial collections' 77.

<sup>19</sup> Drieënhuizen, 'Mirrors of Time and Agents of Action' 91 – 95, 103.

<sup>20</sup> Cynthia Scott, 'Renewing the 'Special Relationship' 646-668.

<sup>21</sup> Marlou Schrover and Tycho Walaardt, 'The Influence of the Media on Policies in Practice: Hungarian Refugee Resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956', *Journal of Migration History* 3 (2017) 22 and 51-53.

<sup>22</sup> Cynthia Scott, 'Sharing the divisions of the colonial past: an assessment of the Netherlands–Indonesia shared cultural heritage project, 2003–2006', *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20:2 (2014) 185 – 186.

objects were not just used for legitimatisation by nation states but were also ‘regalia and tools of legitimisation of the colonial state’ and such have a relation to Benedict Anderson’s imagined communities.<sup>23</sup> With regard to shared heritage they conclude that its approaches have been presented as methods to overcome the difficult relations between former colonizers and colonised. While, Bloembergen and Eickhoff argue that in these kinds of approaches there is little to no regard for conflicts of interest and postcolonial unequal power relations or other local/ transnational perspectives that go beyond the interests of states. In order to analyse post-colonial heritage Bloembergen and Eickhoff propose a connection of these heritage sites to violence and religion.<sup>24</sup> In the case of shared heritage, Belgian museum experts Boris Wastiau assigns great responsibility towards museum with colonial collections of heritage. Firstly, all museums have to make history accessible for the public. Secondly, in his case of ‘Belgian-Congolese heritage’, he argues it is up to the museum to turn to a more critical perspective, in which they address sensitive (post)colonial issues while properly presenting their collection and its context, which changes the purpose of the museum.<sup>25</sup>

In their reflection on the Borobudur heritage site in Indonesia the historians Bloembergen and Eickhoff argue that certain types of anxiety over loss can be drawn from countries involvement, firstly anxiety over the loss of visibility, secondly over the loss of memory, thirdly anxiety over the loss of a cherished object of the past. And finally, that of loss in the context of decolonization. The last form of anxiety is motivated by different reasons, for the Netherlands for example the Dutch Empire, the colonial state and the Dutch national identity. In the fourth notion, Bloembergen and Eickhoff describe the loss with regard to decolonization as the elimination of a supreme privilege. Concluding that in essence, this sense of connection was based on paternalistic ideas, which (partially) persisted within Dutch society, even after losing control over the Borobudur site. Adding to this, that anxiety over loss can work as a boost to motivate the once involved.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff, *The politics of heritage in Indonesia: a cultural history* (2020) 10.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, 7.

<sup>25</sup> Boris Wastiau, ‘The Legacy of Collecting: Colonial Collecting in the Belgian Congo and the Duty of Unveiling Provenance’, in: Paula Hamilton and James B. Gardner (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Public History* (2017) 460-461 and 474-475.

<sup>26</sup> Bloembergen and Eickhoff, *The politics of heritage in Indonesia* 234, 265.

Art historian Saloni Mathur analysed the Indian perspective on the restitution of colonial objects while placing it in within the framework of how India was and still is presented by the Western world. In the case of restitution Mathur argues that at the core of this debate is the question of attribution of value. Most importantly, these 'notions of value' can differ per group that makes a claim on the object. These different types of values can for example be based on aesthetics, religion, rituals and spirituality and historical or nationalistic ideas. These claims of value do not necessarily have to be made logical against each other, in practice they are used simultaneously, by different groups, while contradicting themselves. According to the author the attribution of value to objects is created through a social process, which consists of formal and informal social exchanges between museum officials and target audience, or 'constituency'.<sup>27</sup>

In a matter of sense Mathur's analysis shows similarities to the way Bloembergen and Eickhoff dissect the different forms of anxiety over loss that the different involved parties express towards heritage sites in Indonesia. The anxiety over loss, in context of decolonization is also the attribution of sentimental value to an object or heritage site and the anxiety over loss of visibility the expression of aesthetic value. Mathur is also not the only one to take note of a social aspect related to colonial objects or collections. Drieënhuizen concluded that objects can be connected to transnational dynamics. With this she refers to memories and nostalgia that are being invoked by these colonial objects for the former colonizers. This nostalgia, according to Drieënhuizen, was used as a way to shape a post-colonial identity, by experiencing some sort of continuity. This also worked for 'collective identities', for example the way objects were on display in the Dutch national museums. This eventually led to the changing of their colonial memories which would become part of 'a Dutch national identity'.<sup>28</sup> Colonial heritage, cultural property and internal political debates in the Netherlands and Indonesia in essence form the perspective through which this debate was covered by the media. Theories about these heritage formations can aid an analysis of the coverage on this multi-layered issue.

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<sup>27</sup> Saloni Mathur, *India by design: colonial history and cultural display* (2007) 134-135.

<sup>28</sup> Caroline Drieënhuizen, 'Objects, Nostalgia and the Dutch Colonial Elite in Times of Transition, ca. 1900–1970', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 170 (2014) 505-506 and 525.

## Newspapers and analysis

This media study is based on a qualitative analysis of Dutch national newspapers which all have different socio-political characteristics. *De Telegraaf* is a conservative newspaper, while *NRC Handelsblad* is of liberal origin. On the opposite of the *NRC* is *de Volkskrant*, that has catholic and centre-left roots. *Trouw* started out as a resistance paper during the World War II.<sup>29</sup> *Nederlands Dagblad* has a Christian background, it is rooted in the Dutch orthodox-protestant community and even though it has relatively few readers continues to exist today. *Het Parool* is an Amsterdam paper with a social democratic background with its roots in World War II. The following three newspapers no longer exist or have been part of (multiple) mergers with other newspapers or magazines. *De Tijd* was a catholic newspaper, later to be merged with the *Haagse Post* to become *HP/De Tijd*. *Het Vrije Volk* was a socialist newspaper closely associated with the Dutch labour party but ceased to be a national newspaper in 1971. Very little used, but mentioned a few times is communist newspaper *De Waarheid*.

Between 1950 and 1957 there were still a few Dutch written newspapers left in Indonesia, digitally accessible, that wrote about the restitution debate, such as *Het Nieuwsblad voor Sumatra* and *De nieuwsgier*, which were both regionally focused, respectively on the islands of Sumatra and Java. *Het Nieuwsblad voor Sumatra* is qualified as a space for public debate and it can be found that *De Nieuwsgier* was a Batavia-based newspaper, originally published as *Tanah Abang Bode*, that originated from a newspaper that was published in a concentration camp for people of European descent during the Second World War. Both ceased to exist after the remainders of the Dutch population had to leave the country indefinitely.<sup>30</sup>

In a qualitative media analysis, discourse analysis expert Teun Van Dijk states that there should be two levels of analysis. First, the level of the word, which gives meaning to specific sentences, words or group of words that provide insights into 'social presuppositions and other implications of news discourse which may be important elements of underlying ideologies.' Secondly, there is the analysis of the 'global dimension' that regards the themes

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<sup>29</sup> Teun van Dijk, 'Semantics of a Press Panic: the Tamil 'Invasion'', *European Journal of Communication* 3 (1988) 171-172.

<sup>30</sup> 'Koloniale kranten Indonesië', KB, Nationale Bibliotheek <https://www.kb.nl/organisatie/onderzoek-expertise/digitaliseringsprojecten-in-de-kb/project-databank-digitale-dagbladen/geselecteerde-titels-en-selectieprocedure/selectie-van-titels/koloniale-kranten-indonesie> Laatst bezocht op 20-05-2020.

or topics that can be extracted from the headline and the article, or the macro-structure.<sup>31</sup> Van Dijk argued that the media 'appear to reproduce a dominant consensus' coming from different political or academic elite background, while writing in stereotypes.<sup>32</sup> A question that arises from this conclusion, is whether a certain dividing line can be found between the reporting newspaper on the restitution debate and whether arguments about the specific case are built on prejudice and hierarchical rhetoric.

Because this study looks into the way the Dutch newspapers covered the restitution debate, often words and terms will be used or referred to that nowadays are deemed problematic. Van Beurden addresses the use of terminology when discussing the restitution debate, for example whether to use restitution or other terms that are closely linked to this word. Return implies that there was no violation of any legal matters when the object was obtained, and repatriations points out that an object should have a fatherland.<sup>33</sup> Van Beurden is not alone in this; Mathur also concluded that the use of repatriation is problematic, because it focuses on the wrong aspects of the aimed decolonisation process.<sup>34</sup> In this research when addressing citations or discourse analysis terms may be used in variation to the words used in the newspapers articles, however when addressing these issues as in an contemporary scholarly matter, the terms as restitution and colonial objects are used to prevent from attributing value or identity towards the specific cases in the debate.<sup>35</sup>

In order to provide insight into the development of media coverage on the restitution debate this study's analysis is based on three chapters. The first chapter gives an analysis of the media coverage about the debate on restitution of colonial objects between 1950 and 1981, the second chapter covers period between 1981 and 1995. The third chapter explores Dutch and Indonesian media coverage of two cases of restitutions of (disputed) artefacts. Namely the restitution of a variety objects in 1976 and 1978 by the Dutch government and Diponegoro's pilgrim's staff in 2015. Delpher is the online newspaper archive that was used for this study. While this archive offers an enormous number of newspapers and more, it also has its limitations, because the archives only go as far as 1995. Also, it should be noted

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<sup>31</sup> Van. Dijk, 'Semantics of a Press Panic' 170.

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem, 169.

<sup>33</sup> Van Beurden, *Treasures in trusted hand* 24-25.

<sup>34</sup> Mathur, *India by design* 137.

<sup>35</sup> Van Beurden, *Treasures in trusted hands* 25-26.

that the amount of newspapers that have been archived in Delpher widely varies per year. For example, for the year 1950 there are 11.655 newspapers accessible, while for 1980 only 4.109 papers and for 1995 only 1.543. Key words that were mostly used in Delpher were in Dutch such as *restitutie*, *Indonesië*, *museum*, *object*, *objecten*, *object*, *musea*, *artefact*, *voorwerpen* and *teruggave*. Translations of (parts of) the articles are mine. The newspapers and the articles that were used for this analysis are not exhaustive, due to the search words used not all relevant articles might have surfaced or smaller newspaper might not be digitally accessible yet. For this study, only Dutch and English written sources have been used because of my limited knowledge of *Bahasa Indonesia*. While writing this study most public institutions such as the National Archives were closed due to COVID-19 measures.

The aim of this study is to provide an insight into development the media attention for colonial heritage and restitution, without actively trying to measure how much the has influenced the public opinion in the Netherlands. Because in the past decade the question of restitution gained increasing attention, together with several attempts to change the policy on this matter. It is interesting to see, whether this increasing attention is truly new and how these policy changes fit into the developments of the past seventy years. It is the goal of the study to place these articles within a specific and general analysis of the debate throughout the years. Through this insight into the role of the media can placed in the continuingly developing debate on colonial heritage, restitution and the place of colonial history within our society.

## Chapter I: Independent newspapers (1950 - 1974)

In 1949 the Netherlands recognised the independence of the Indonesian Republic and started the process of withdrawing their military and governmental presence from Indonesia. This formal transfer of power was only the beginning of a process of decolonisation, firstly of the structures that were used to govern the colonial state and secondly, in the decades to follow the decolonising of both institutions in the Netherlands and in Indonesia and more widely of what could be called the mindsets of the former colonisers and colonised, which is still an ongoing process.<sup>36</sup> Examples of Dutch institutions that are exploring how to decolonize their collections and the presentation or are questioning their colonial roots are the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the Museums of World Cultures, which includes the Museum of Ethnology in Leiden and the Africa museum in Berg en Dal. Yet it seems that it is these attempts of decolonising that spark a wider debate in society about the Dutch attitude towards its colonial past. This chapter provides an analysis of the media coverage about the restitution debate between 1950 and 1974.

To negotiate the transfer of power, representatives from the Netherlands and the to be formed Republic of Indonesia came together at the Round Table Conference in 1949. As mentioned before, a committee on cultural affairs came together as part of these negotiations. Part of the Dutch strategy at the time was to preserve their Dutch cultural sphere of influence. A draft was made of a cultural agreement, that aimed at cultural exchange between the two states through education and exchange programmes. Another article of the draft concerned the return of 'cultural property'. When the final agreement was signed between the Netherlands and Indonesia, the cultural component was however not included. Except for article 19, foreseeing the restitution of historical objects. According to Legêne and Postel-Coster, this article was retained because of different interests. The Netherlands was thus able to continue talks about cultural exchange, while Indonesia had put into writing their desire for the return of their cultural heritage.<sup>37</sup>

After the Indonesian negotiated independence, the relationship between the two countries worsened. President Sukarno was opposed to Dutch cultural influence, calling it

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<sup>36</sup> Van Beurden, *Decolonisation and colonial collections* 67.

<sup>37</sup> Legêne and Postel-Coster, 'Isn't it all culture' 272-273.

cultural imperialism. Part of this resistance against Dutch influence was the Indonesian focus on building their own, independent nation state. This idea of a united nation was partly built on anti-colonialism and the memories of the national heroes that took part in the struggle against the colonizers. However, to ensure this national narrative, Indonesia sought the restitution that symbolised a pre-colonial Indonesia and a post-colonial national identity.<sup>38</sup> In this the restitution debate was used by both countries to achieve opposite goals. Requests for the return were made in the early 1950's by the important politician and national figure, Mohammed Yamin, who would later become minister of Education and Culture. These claims included the five pre-historical skulls, that were one of the oldest that had been found at the time, the famous manuscript *Negarakrtagama* and the *Prajñaparamita*, a famous 13<sup>th</sup> century sculpture.<sup>39</sup> This request was published by Dutch Indonesian newspaper *Het Nieuwsblad voor Sumatra*. In 1956 secretary-general of the Indonesian department on culture filed complains about the lack of information that the Netherlands provided on the objects that were in Dutch possession. Tensions rose higher as the New Guinea conflict became more prominent. During this diplomatic crisis, Article 19 was used to apply further international pressure to the Dutch government.<sup>40</sup> From a broader view, the Dutch holding on to New Guinea is perceived as some sort of national trauma, motivated from a 'misplace emotional attachment'.<sup>41</sup> After Indonesia took over power and incorporated the region into the republic, the name was changed to Irian Jaya.

Internally, the Dutch government was also divided. Ministers of culture tended to be keener on keeping the objects in the Netherlands, while minister of Foreign Affairs were more focused on working towards a deal, for which the objects served as a tool. In the meantime, President Sukarno was forced to hand over his power as president to Suharto and abdicated. In 1968 the two countries reached a cultural agreement, after which President Suharto made a controversial visit to the Netherlands in 1970. During this visit the

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<sup>38</sup> Drieënhuizen, 'Mirrors of Time and Agents of Action' 95.

<sup>39</sup> "OUDSTE EILAND". "Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra". Medan, 1951/04/03 00:00:00, p. 2. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 15-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010476017:mpeg21:p002> and Van Beurden, *Treasures in trusted hands* 118-119.

<sup>40</sup> Legêne and Postel-Coster, 'Isn't it all culture' 275.

<sup>41</sup> Scott, 'Renewing the 'Special Relationship'' 653-655.



Dutch royal family gave two paintings by the Javanese painter Raden Saleh to the president.<sup>42</sup>

### Remainder of an old world

After the independence of Indonesia, a certain group of Dutch citizens remained in Indonesia, which resulted in the survival of Dutch written newspapers in Indonesia till around 1957. After that year the last 50.000 *spijtoptanten* were brought to the Netherlands. These Indo Europeans that had at first decided to stay in Indonesia but now had to go to the Netherlands after all. Most of them were born in Indonesia and had never been to the Netherlands, but had to leave amidst intensifying tensions, among others the New Guinea conflict.<sup>43</sup> Between 1950 and 1957 newspapers such as *Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra* and *De nieuwsgier* wrote about the Indonesian politician mr. Mohamed Yamin who personally requested the return of (pre)historical objects to Indonesia. The first paper also published an article about a conflict between Denmark and its former colony Iceland regarding the restitution of historical manuscripts:

‘Met open ogen voor het merkwaardige precedent dat door teruggave van de handschriften geschapen zou worden, kan men zich toch niet aan de indruk onttrekken dat dit kleine land dat zo’n grote bijdrage heeft geleverd tot de geschiedenis en letterkunde van Europa, moreel gezien recht heeft op deze handschriften. Wie de armzalige voorwerpen uit vroegere tijden bekijkt in het museum te Reykjavik beseft eens te meer dat het enige dat IJsland heeft de letterkunde is, [...]’<sup>44</sup>

In this specific passage the author shows an ambiguous sympathy for the Icelandic request. At first, he states that the possible restitution of these manuscripts would create a ‘curious’ precedent, secondly he argues that Iceland has a moral right to these manuscripts because of their contribution to European history and literature, after which he belittles the remainders of Icelandic heritage, which is the reason he thinks Iceland deserves the manuscripts, because ‘it is all they have’. This example of media coverage about specific

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<sup>42</sup> Legêne and Postel-Coster, ‘Isn’t it all culture’ 274-275 and Van Beurden, *Treasures in trusted hands* 138-139.

<sup>43</sup> Herman Obdeijn and Marlou Schrover, *Komen en gaan: immigratie en emigratie in Nederland vanaf 1550* (2008) 234.

<sup>44</sup> "DE HANDSCHRIFTEN-STRIJD". "Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra". Medan, 1955/01/12 00:00:00, p. 2. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010477744:mpeg21:p002>.

restitution case shows the diversity of perspectives in which these issues were and can be seen. The authors' perspective is that of a former coloniser writing for the same audience, yet still residing in the former colony. In this perspective the author does not only attribute a sense of value based on aesthetics or historical value, but also one based colonial ideas and hierarchy.<sup>45</sup> It seems that this attribution of value can translated into an anxiety over loss linked to decolonisation and not to loss of visibility or an cherished object, that was proposed by Bloembergen and Eickhoff.<sup>46</sup> It is the privilege of the right to own the object that has shifted to the former colony, while this specific group is still upholding the idea of European superiority. This ambiguity in addressing heritage 'of themselves' and inner struggle over loss of privilege and the need for recalibration can be found in a still present need to not only decolonise museum in the Netherlands, but also in Indonesia self. Museums in Indonesia are yet to be decolonised of their (anti-)colonial mindset, which according to Indonesian historians Ajeng Ayu Arainikasih and Hafnidar will lead to a more inclusive history in which provenance and local story will be more prominently visible.<sup>47</sup>

### Quiet years

When looking at the newspapers in the Netherlands, it appears they did not report about Yamin's plea for returning the historical objects that had come to the Netherlands and other Western countries during the Dutch colonial rule. Only in 1954 *De Telegraaf* covers this request in a very short article with the title 'Indonesië eist teruggave van cultuurschatten', which means that ndonesia demands the return of cultural treasures. While the title is rather suggestive, the content of the article is formulated more nuanced. In two small paragraphs the author writes that the Indonesian government is working on a plan to ask the Dutch government for the return of all the cultural objects that have been brought to the Netherlands during the past centuries.<sup>48</sup> In the following years the reporting on this specific matter does not seem to be widespread or common, as only *De Telegraaf* and *de Volkskrant* dedicate small articles to it again in 1956. Both articles are short in length

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<sup>45</sup> Mathur, *India by design* (2007) 134.

<sup>46</sup> Bloembergen and Eickhoff, *The politics of heritage in Indonesia* (2020) 234.

<sup>47</sup> Ajeng Ayu Arainikasih and Hafnidar, 'Decolonising the Aceh Museum: objects, histories and their narratives', *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 133:2 (2018) 105 – 120.

<sup>48</sup> "INDONESIË EIST TERUGGAVE VAN CULTUURSCHATTEN". "De Telegraaf". Amsterdam, 1954/03/16 00:00:00, p. 4. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:110585863:mpeg21:p004>.

and informing in essence, announcing the imminent request of the Indonesian government for the return of historical objects 'that can be found in Dutch museums.' The titles of both pieces are very similar, as the one is *De Volkskrant* is titled 'Djakarta wants historical art treasures back' and *De Telegraaf* one 'Indonesia desires the return of art treasures from the Netherlands'.<sup>49</sup>

In the 1960's the nature of the articles remains the same. Short informing paragraphs that inform the reader about Indonesian requests for the return of cultural and historical objects, such as certain manuscripts like the *Negarakrtagama*. In *Trouw* additional comments were made about the possible diplomatic benefits for the Netherlands, when they would 'return' these manuscripts, or as the author called them 'books', to Indonesia.<sup>50</sup> Also *De Telegraaf* noted that the Dutch government did not respond to the specific request that had been made on cabinet level.<sup>51</sup> With these kinds of small articles, the author is hardly ever mentioned. Sometimes it is clear that message was written by the ANP.

In 1969 the *Algemeen Handelsblad* published a striking article about a request from a Dutch widow, Anna Resink-Wilkens. She demands the return of a collection of sculptures, one sculpture of the Goddess Tara and a clock from the 8<sup>th</sup> century, from the Indonesian government. Her late husband had given these on loan to the Sono Budoyo museum, in the colonial period it was founded as the *Java Instituut*. The newspaper marked the museum as one of the cultural centres of Indonesia. Anna Resink-Wilkens and her husband were known as having a vast network among the Dutch and Indonesian elite on Java through which they collected sculptures, Javanese daggers and other antiquities.<sup>52</sup> Her request was denied by the museum and the municipality, after which the widow proposed that the Indonesian government should buy the sculptures from her. In a response, the municipality remarked that the Indonesian government had made multiple request for the return of historical

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<sup>49</sup> "Djakarta wil historische kutschatten terug". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1956/05/29 00:00:00, p. 1. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010842826:mpeg21:p001> and "Indonesië wenst kunstschaten uit Nederland terug". "De Telegraaf". Amsterdam, 1956/05/29 00:00:00, p. 2. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:110586509:mpeg21:p002>.

<sup>50</sup> "Krijgt Indonesië boeken terug?". "Trouw". Meppel, 1963/07/22 00:00:00, p. 6. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010818710:mpeg21:p006>.

<sup>51</sup> "Indonesië wil kunstschaten terug hebben". "De Telegraaf". Amsterdam, 1963/09/06 00:00:00, p. 7. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011204699:mpeg21:p007>.

<sup>52</sup> Caroline Drieënhuizen, *Koloniale collecties, Nederlands aanzien: de Europese elite van Nederlands-Indië belicht door haar verzamelingen, 1811-1957* (2012) 237-242.

objects from the Dutch government, on which the Dutch state never responded.<sup>53</sup> So while in the Netherlands the ownership of private property was seen as a separate matter from the state owned objects, this was perceived differently in Indonesia.

Why were the articles that appeared in the Dutch media all very short and informative? Perhaps, because they were reluctant to publish about the specific restitution cases. During this time in Indonesia there was a radical rejection of Dutch connections and of Dutch cultural involvement in Indonesia. While Scott argues that Dutch policy in the postcolonial era was to establish a Dutch cultural presence in the former colony. As mentioned earlier, this political reluctance against restitution is to be an example of the 'trauma' of having forced to give up Indonesia. Scott refers to historian Maarten Kuitenbrouwer's statement that the Netherlands held onto New Guinea out of 'misplaced 'emotional attachment''. Holding on to the last Dutch territory in Southeast Asia or to the remainders of the cultural heritage that symbolised this colonial era and the restitution of both the territory and the objects perhaps sparked anxiety over loss of privilege and hierarchy. Adding to that, Leiden historian H.L. Wesseling concluded that the loss of New Guinea 'caused a sullen silence among the Dutch public'.<sup>54</sup> These parallels can offer an explanation for the stoical attitude the Dutch newspapers showed in reporting on the restitution matters in the 1960's.

Only in the next decade, the 1970's, after the cultural agreement between the Netherlands and Indonesia and the royal gift of two Raden Saleh paintings, the media attention for the Indonesian started to really intensify. This could have something to do with growing awareness in the Netherlands, but mainly seems to be motivated by the continuing Indonesian requests for restitution. *Het Vrije Volk*, a socialist newspaper published an opinion piece written by J.W. Jansen-Mulder. In this piece she states that Dutch museums have a vast collection of African and Asiatic art, of which a large part is stored in depots instead of being exhibited. So, she argues, that these objects should be restored, as they 'have museum there too nowadays'. Furthermore, she mentioned the 'disputable

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<sup>53</sup> "Nederlandse wil beelden in Djokja terug". "Algemeen Handelsblad". Amsterdam, 1969/12/09 00:00:00, p.7. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000033698:mpeg21:p007>.

<sup>54</sup> Scott, 'Renewing the 'Special Relationship'' 653-655.

circumstances' under which the objects found their way to the Netherlands.<sup>55</sup> When letting go of the focus on the restitution debate, a more general development within Dutch journalism can be found. As a response to societal shifts that took place in the sixties and the Watergate scandal in particular, this move can be seen on an international level, where new ethical codes were being written in West-Germany for example. In the Netherlands there are attempts to put an ethical code into writing, but this failed.<sup>56</sup>

In 1974 media attention was triggered by multiples incidents regarding the restitution of colonial objects. The event that attracted most of the attention was the visit of an Indonesian delegation to the Netherland, during which they saw a variety of Dutch museums and institutions with a colonial past. Yet before this official visit the debate in the media had already started. In March 1974 the *NRC Handelsblad* published about the Nagarakertagama, an ancient Javanese manuscript, that was in the possession of the Leiden University Library, which Queen Juliana of the Netherlands handed over to the Indonesian president, Suharto, in 1972. The piece was written by an unknown editor, who claimed that both Dutch and Indonesian scholars were worried about the state of the manuscript. There were rumours that the manuscript was personally kept and used as a relic by the first lady of Indonesia, Mrs Suharto. The author describes the restitution as both a gift and as a return, that was supposed to serve as a symbol for the Dutch goodwill in the returning of colonial objects. Further he emphasises that when certain gifts were 'exchanged between heads of states' it is expected that those gifts end up in museums, universities or libraries. 'De bedoeling van dergelijke schenkingen tussen staatshoofden is uiteraard dat de cadeaus; al naar aard in musea, universiteiten, bibliotheken e.d. terecht komen. Het bedoelde handschrift echter, zo is in Djakarta publiek geheim, bevindt zich in het huis van het echtpaar Soeharto,'<sup>57</sup> The author justifies his or her doubts by emphasizing that not just Dutch scholars, but also Indonesian scholars are worried about this specific manuscript. In another example, he states that Mrs Suharto had angered the 'sultan of Djokja' as she would have bought holy or historical objects from there. The journalist further stated that he or she was

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<sup>55</sup> "DIEFSTAL!". "Het vrije volk: democratisch-socialistisch dagblad". Rotterdam, 1971/01/07 00:00:00, p. 23. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010957459:mpeg21:p023>.

<sup>56</sup> Richard van der Wurff and Klaus Schönbach, 'De effectiviteit van journalistieke gedragscodes: een literatuurstudie', *Tijdschrift voor communicatiewetenschap* 41:3 (2013) 236.

<sup>57</sup> "Visioenen bedreigen oud handschrift". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1974/03/08 00:00:00, p. 1. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000032736:mpeg21:p001>.

'in principal' a proponent of the restitution of historical colonial objects, but that he is critical of the current Indonesian regime and calls this specific restitution and the way the manuscript is being preserved a 'cultural crime'.<sup>58</sup> The critique of the journalist seems to be aimed at the authoritarian role Suharto had taken. These kinds of stories sparked resistance among Dutch museum experts, who were already opposed to restitution of colonial objects.<sup>59</sup>

### A new way of writing

That same month the *NRC* publishes a diptych about art restitution by the journalist and experts Eric Boogerman, Hans Redeker, mr. F. Kuitenbrouwer and W. Woltz. The first article focuses on objects that have been 'acquired' during times of colonial rule and the second article provides an outline about present day art looting from Asia and Africa to the Western world. Both articles specifically look beyond Dutch examples of restitution cases, for example it includes an interview with the British minister of Art, Norman St John-Stevas. In this interview the minister was portrayed as rather cynical towards the idea of restitution, he was quoted saying that it would not be very practical to dive into the provenance of the millions of disputable objects that can be found in European museums. Further, the author looks to Dutch and British museum directors for comments on the origin of their collections and their view on the possible restitution. Following statements from British curators that included 'everything the Museums owns has been lawfully acquired' and 'Including war booty? Of course, that's lawful right?'<sup>60</sup> The author reflects on specific cases such as the way the Benin sculptures were taken by British colonial forces, but also on a Dutch matter. The title head of this specific piece is 'Hoe een kunstcollectie aan het Nieuw-Guinea accord werd onttrokken'. It was written by journalist Ben van der Velden. This regarded a few hundred objects or so called 'etnografica' that were secretly transported from New Guinea to the Netherlands during the last days of Dutch colonial rule. Just before transferring power to the United Nation mission that would take over before New Guinea became a part of the

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<sup>58</sup>"Visioenen bedreigen oud handschrift". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1974/03/08 00:00:00, p. 1. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000032736:mpeg21:p001>.

<sup>59</sup> Drieënhuizen, *Mirrors of Time and Agents of Action* 102.

<sup>60</sup> "WAT DOET EEN SFINX IN LONDEN? De derde wereld wil zijn kunst terug". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1974/03/22 00:00:00, p. CS1. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000032748:mpeg21:p015>.

Indonesian Republic. This article and the diptych as a whole, questioned the Western entitlement to its extensive collections and the lawfulness of the various ways that they were brought together. Another case he describes is the way Thomas Raffles, British lieutenant-governor of Java in the Napoleonic era, puts his arm in the 'Javanese antiquity box'. He qualified these practices as not just rough looting, because Raffles was a 'fine zoologist' and was unanimously elected president of the *Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*. Which could make one wonder if a scholarly career is exculpate any one of any unjust or questionable actions.

The diptych must have sparked reactions and perhaps even some controversy with the readers of the newspaper, as in the beginning of April 1974 an opinion piece was published that agitated against the idea that these millions of objects were stolen or looted by colonising governments or representatives or citizens of these governments. The author, dr. C.H.J. Geus, an archaeologist affiliated with the *Rijksuniversiteit Groningen*, argued through an example that the British and other colonial empires saved much of the ancient and cultural objects, as the local population treated these objects with great irresponsibility. Further, he makes a more theoretical argument as he disputes the descendance or successor claims of present-day countries to ancient societies or empires. He argues this because he questions the nationalist politics of so-called 'third world countries', as they do not serve the objects best interests. At last he states that there is no scientific argument for keeping an object as close as possible to the place where it was found, which, according to the author, is just an idea that is being pushed by the tourist industries in the specific countries.<sup>61</sup>

By arguing that in this debate the focus should be kept on the objects instead of the owner, he leaves out the entire question of provenance and the colonial circumstances in which these objects were taken to Europe or other places in the Western world. All together the argument the author made was a colonial one, built on a paternalistic structure by implicating that the colonisers came as civilisers, that acted out of some 'white men's burden' by 'saving' these historical and cultural objects. Thus, being a clear example of Dutch 'reluctant' imperialist mindset, that according to cultural and social anthropologist, specialised in ethnicity and gender studies, Gloria Wekker was based on the idea that the

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<sup>61</sup> "Het gaat om de voorwerpen, niet om de eigenaar". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1974/04/12 00:00:00, p. CS3. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000032766:mpeg21:p017>.

Dutch almost involuntarily were forced to become colonisers, because of their strong morals and civilization.<sup>62</sup>

### Other papers weigh in

These kinds of rhetoric can be found more often, among the museum experts and scholars, especially in the second half of 1974, when the debate about restitution intensified, because at that time actual objects were in the process of being returned or given to the Indonesian government.<sup>63</sup> After the Indonesian delegation had left the Netherlands, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October *de Volkskrant*, the *NRC*, *Het Vrije Volk* and *De Telegraaf* all published articles writing about the Dutch intentions to return certain cultural and historical objects to Indonesia. According to the *NRC* these intentions were expressed by the Dutch minister of Foreign Affairs, Max van der Stoep. However, the two other newspapers state these impressions were shared by the leader of the Indonesian delegation, former mayor of Jakarta Raden Sudiro and that the Dutch government was now negotiating the possible 'return of objects that were taken by Dutch citizens or representatives of the Dutch government'.<sup>64</sup> These articles are all very to-the-point and informing of nature, while *De Telegraaf* provided a more in-depth view of the objects the request was regarding, written by Jaap Metz, who would later become a Dutch member of parliament for the liberal party.<sup>65</sup> The request specifically focused on almost 400 objects that were secretly brought from New Guinea to the Netherlands in 1963 before the handover of power. The author quoted the director of the Museum of Ethnology in Leiden, Pieter Pott, saying that 'they always took in account the possibility of the return of these art treasures, which is why they were only brought in on loan' to the museum. In addition to that, the paper announces that a Dutch delegation of museum experts will be going to Indonesia, as they will look into the

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<sup>62</sup> As summarized by. Drieënhuizen, 'Mirrors of Time and Agents of Action' 101.

<sup>63</sup> Van Beurden, *Treasures in trusted hands* 138.

<sup>64</sup> "Indonesië krijgt kunstschaten terug". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1974/10/22 00:00:00, p. 3.

Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 17-04-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000031397:mpeg21:p003> and "Indonesië wil spullen terug". "Het

vrije volk: democratisch-socialistisch dagblad". Rotterdam, 1974/10/22 00:00:00, p. 3. Geraadpleegd op

Delpher op 17-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010958596:mpeg21:p003> and "PLANNEN VOOR

TERUGGAVE Indonesiërs bekijken hier hun bezittingen". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1974/10/22

00:00:00, p. 1. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 17-04-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010881409:mpeg21:p001>.

<sup>65</sup> 'J.J. (Jaap) Metz', *Parlementair Documentatie Centrum* Geraadpleegd op Parlement.com op 26-06-2020,

[https://www.parlement.com/id/vg09llnplzmm/i\\_jaap\\_metz](https://www.parlement.com/id/vg09llnplzmm/i_jaap_metz).



preservation and storage facilities for the objects. 'Because, especially in tropical countries this requires extra attention.' This would be followed by Dutch training of Indonesian museum experts.<sup>66</sup>

Again, the idea of Dutch responsibility that was expressed in the media mirrors that of Dutch policy. Recommendations were made by experts to the minister to ensuring better condition for conservation in Indonesia instead of returning certain manuscripts immediately. While also recognising that the restitution of these manuscripts would do no harm to Dutch scholarship as multiple copies had been made and the objects had been extensively studied.<sup>67</sup> Links can be seen to the Dutch attempt to establish a cultural presence in Indonesia while being involved in preservation as Bloembergen and Eickhoff concluded with the Borobudur site. Motivated not by the anxiety over the loss of visibility, but of that of a cherished object and in the context of decolonisation.<sup>68</sup> This idea of shared heritage and ensuring the future of the object together was built on a presumption of inequality, where the Indonesian had to follow the Netherlands.

The following days multiple national newspapers published more extensive articles on the matter. The *Nederlands dagblad*, a reformed newspaper, paraphrased the minister of Foreign Affairs, Van der Stoel, in a more modest way 'he had taken notion of the Indonesian desire of the return of some archaeological and other historical objects that in the past had found their way to the Netherlands.'<sup>69</sup> According to the paper, from the Indonesian perspective, for which the Indonesian embassy was consulted, the mission was thought of as a success, which was of great importance to the Indonesian leadership, because it was part of their second five year plan. After the *Nederlands dagblad* article, the tone of the article seemed to have made a shift, *Trouw*, *de Volkskrant* and the *NRC* started to propose possible legal obstacles and belittle the importance of the objects that are up for restitution. For example, *de Volkskrant* published an article that was originally written by the *Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau (ANP)*, a Dutch news agency, stated that the Indonesian mission did not have contact with the Dutch ministry of Culture nor that of Foreign Affairs, but that

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<sup>66</sup> "Indonesië wil kunstschaten terug". "De Telegraaf". Amsterdam, 1974/10/22 00:00:00, p. 1. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 17-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011198625:mpeg21:p001>.

<sup>67</sup> Scott, *Renewing the 'Special Relationship'* 660.

<sup>68</sup> Bloembergen and Eickhoff, *The politics of heritage in Indonesia* 234.

<sup>69</sup> "Missie bekijkt Nederlandse musea Cultuurvoorwerpen Indonesië terug?". "Nederlands dagblad: gereformeerd gezinsblad/ hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et al.]". Amersfoort, 1974/10/23 00:00:00, p. 6. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 17-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010633424:mpeg21:p006>.

these talks had taken place a municipal level. This supposedly 'caused astonishment in The Hague'.<sup>70</sup>

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of October 1974 *Trouw* printed an article by journalist Willem Schrama. that included an interview with professor Pott, director of the Museum of Ethnology in Leiden. Its title was 'Storm in een glas water om kunstschaten Indonesië', which means as much as tempest in a teapot over art treasures from Indonesia. The director was portrayed as indifferent and a bit cynical, when he talked about the Indonesian request for the return of a certain number of objects. He expressed that the objects were not worthy of label 'treasures' and were merely kept by the museum to ensure their good state. Furthermore, he explains that when the delegations came to visit, they did not even bother to have a look at objects. The author added that Indonesia also want the return of archival material concerning the roundtable conference of 1947. The director commented that he understood that Indonesia 'is emotionally attached to these kinds of affairs.' Yet, when he was confronted with certain remarks from the Indonesian embassy, stating that they would want the restitution of much more objects, going back to the VOC era, the director concluded that such requests would have far-reaching consequence and that perhaps one should have a look the museums in London.<sup>71</sup>

During the 1974 media storm about possible restitution it seems that the *NRC* was really taking the lead with the story. Days later they publish another article about professor Pott, in which he changes his story and claims to have the right to return the objects without permission of the ministry. While the director of the museum made these claims, the author of the article points out that the whole idea of these objects being 'on loan' is not very credible, because there was never any other party that offered these objects for any loan. Adding to the that the author stated Pott claimed that he had agreed to a ten-year term loan, which they transgressed by multiple years.

Nearly a week later, the *NRC* followed with a headline that said, 'art and archives, Indonesia wants everything back'. The article was written by Ben van der Velden, who

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<sup>70</sup> "VAN INDONESIË Veel problemen rond teruggave kunstschaten". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1974/10/23 00:00:00, p. 11. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 17-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010881410:mpeg21:p011>.

<sup>71</sup> "Storm in glas water om kunstschaten Indonesië". "Trouw". Meppel, 1974/10/26 00:00:00, p. 5. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 17-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010823048:mpeg21:p005>.

previously addressed the New Guinea collection-affair. In the first paragraph the reader is immediately eased by the author, as he cites the Indonesian minister of Foreign Affairs, that Indonesia does want everything back; 'however, we must not think about everything coming back now.' Adding to this a comment from its Dutch counterpart that at that moment there were no official talks about restitution going on. The article follows with an outlining of the nationalistic policy Indonesia was engaging in, by focusing on creating a national narrative of heroes in which museums were supposed to serve as 'centres for national education'. This, and other articles, show a continuing doubt in the Indonesian expertise and integrity, when it comes to the preservation of historical objects. The author suggests that there is only one 'real museum man' in the country and recalls 'horror stories' such as the rumours about Mrs Soeharto, who would have created a cult around certain manuscripts. Director Pott stated that he could not possibly imagine that the famed collection of Hindu-Javanese sculptures would leave Leiden. Especially because they were 'saved' by Dutch government officials, because the 'inlandse bevolking' or indigenous people did not look after it. Terminology as 'inlandse bevolking' is an example of colonial structures that were being used in the Dutch language. The Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam commented that they did not have problem with restitution. The spokesman of the institute, J.J.P. 't Hart, stated that 'of everything that can be found here, nothing is stolen. But we have enough, so Indonesia can have some back' and 'what do we care'. Only add later that this attitude toward restitution did not include unique objects in the possession the institute.<sup>72</sup>

An archival expert from the KITLV, the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asia and Caribbean Studies, named Frits Jacquet was a dissenting voice in the article. When talking about the restitution of archival materials, Jacquet agreed with Indonesia that these materials are supposed to be in the archives for which they were made. He proposed to return the files, but to keep copies of the files in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, he warned that the information in the files should be treated careful. For example, labels as 'communist' that had been given to Indonesians between 1945-1949 could have far-reaching consequences, would these files end up in Indonesia at that time. This could still have an effect would they be released now. Further he complimented the archivist that was in

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<sup>72</sup> "Kunstvoorwerpen en archiefstukken INDONESIA WIL ALLES TERUG". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1974/11/08 00:00:00, p. CS3. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000032887:mpeg21:p017> Geschreven door Ben van der Velden.

charge of the National Archives in Jakarta.<sup>73</sup> In the article a photo frame was left open, from the caption it can be concluded that there was some sort of conflict between the ministry, the museum of Ethnology and the newspaper, which prevented the photographer from taking pictures of a certain sculptures in the museum.

### Conclusion

Between 1950 and the end of 1974 a multitude of newspapers have published about the possibility that the Netherlands would 'return' objects, mostly originally from Indonesia, to the countries from which they were taken during the colonial time. But what positions does it seem they took within the debate? When looking at the discussed articles there is not an obvious dividing line between leftist or right-wing papers, none of the papers had a consequent radical different view from the other papers that published about the debate. While the *NRC Handelsblad* took the obvious lead in deepening the reporting, other papers followed suit by dedicating articles to the subject. Headlines often pointed out the Indonesian request as an eminent threat to not just the existence of the objects, who might suffer from conservation in Indonesia, but also that of a coming force that would demand things back and perhaps even put the Netherlands in its place. Similarities can be found in very different media storm, such as those surrounding the Tamil Tigers, that Teun van Dijk wrote about, in which refugees were portrayed as a threat to the nation, were negatively characterized and catered to the needs of prejudice.<sup>74</sup>

Indonesian claims were met with a few forms of resistance by the media. Firstly, the media responded by simply awarding very little attention to the case and somewhat ignore the presence of these requests. Secondly, when requests for the restitution of an object were made, authors and interviewees suddenly started belittling the value of those specific objects. For example, professor Pott, director of the Museum of Ethnology, was often cited stating that the Papuan collection was nothing more than a set of utensils. Even after the director had kept them for more than ten years in the depot of the museum. Another way the media responded was by doubting the Indonesian ability to take care of the objects

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<sup>73</sup> "Kunstvoorwerpen en archiefstukken INDONESIA WIL ALLES TERUG". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1974/11/08 00:00:00, p. CS3. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000032887:mpeg21:p017> Geschreven door Ben van der Velden.

<sup>74</sup> Van Dijk, 'Semantics of a Press Panic' 185.

properly, resorting to old fashioned colonial rhetoric in which the metropole had to protect and take care of the former colony. Sometimes these articles were met with opinion pieces by museum experts or concerned citizen. Nevertheless, these pieces rarely agreed on the matter of restitution. One author defended the idea of retention, while the other proposed to dive into the museum depots which were filled with disputed colonial objects. The way those objects were taken to the Netherlands did not take a central place in the debate, with the Papuan collection being the exception as these clearly violated an international treaty. Furthermore, little attention was paid to unequal power relations and the way the objects were acquired was often referred to through euphemism or not at all.

In essence it can be concluded that between 1950 and 1974 the Dutch media followed the general line that the Dutch government pursued in their handling of the restitution debate, which was often influenced by the Dutch museum officials. In this narrative more often the Indonesians were questioned for their capability than the Netherlands was questioned for the legality of their claimed ownership. However, the 1970's introduced new, more in depth, articles about the matter. This change should also be seen within a general ethical and attitude change in journalism that followed after the big societal changes in the 1960's. In this newspaper could be seen letting go of the explicit ideological base that they were founded on and presenting them in a more professional way towards their readers. Would this change the way the printed media reported on restitution of colonial objects in the following decades or would they keep following the narrative set out by the Dutch government and museums experts?

## Chapter II: There are as many opinions as there are experts (1975 – 1995)

In the first twenty-six years after the independence of Indonesia the media coverage about the restitution of colonial objects had primarily focused on the Indonesian requests and the Dutch response. However, during the 1970's the restitution debate started to gain a more international audience. Former colonized countries that now had independent seats in the assembly of the United Nations used this institution and UNESCO in particular to voice their unhappiness about how their cultural heritage had been taken from them and where they were now on display. The Netherlands had started formal talks with the Indonesian government that would result in the restitution of several objects that had been obtained during the Dutch colonial rule. The restitutions took place between 1975 and 1978 and included the Irian Jaya or New Guinea collection in 1975 from the Museum of Ethnology, the famous painting of the capture of Diponegoro by Raden Saleh donated by the Dutch royal family and several objects that had belonged to Diponegoro from the Bronbeek museum, part of the Lombok treasure, that had been taken by colonial forces during the Lombok war all in 1977 and the Prajñaparamita sculpture, considered one of the masterpieces of the Museum of Ethnology in 1978. In addition to that, the Netherlands and Indonesia participated in a still continuing archival exchange of copies and originals. Almost all the requests, for the Lombok treasures and the sculpture had been made decades ago. While the Raden Saleh paintings were a gift, for which it seemed no request was ever made.

Van Beurden argues that the Netherlands does not deserve a generous returner label. Because of underlying interests, such as the idea to portray the Netherlands as liberal nation was good for its reputation as a former colonizer. The negotiations took a long time, some collections were only partially returned, characterizing a hard-negotiating process. New initiatives after 1978, such as the transfer of Nusantara collection failed, and other requests were never filed.<sup>75</sup> These developments inevitably provided more newsworthy items for the Dutch newspapers to publish. By printing the diptych, the *NRC* had also shifted

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<sup>75</sup> Van Beurden, *Treasures in trusted hands* (2017) 135-139.

the way Dutch papers would write about these issues had also made a shift that would continue in the second half of the decade.

### Years of restitution

The *NRC* had in the beginning of the 1970's taken the lead by dedicating some articles in their cultural supplement to the restitution question. In 1975 *Trouw* seemed to follow, but the attention of the articles had moved to that of African art and cultural or spiritual objects. The title was 'Wie berooft de derde wereld van haar kunstschaten' or 'Who robs the third world from her art treasures?' At first the article paid attention to the African objects in Europe and North America, their provenance and what they regarded as the motor behind illegal art trade from the so called 'development countries' to the Western world, namely the alluring and rising amounts of money that were being paid in the art world. However, the tone of article seems to change halfway through, as the author presents European colonial art collectors being essential in the survival of African culture. The author, Henk van Halm, argued that while the African natives mostly threw the objects away after single use, the number of performed rituals started to decline because of the introduction of the Western lifestyle, essentially blaming and praising them for saving and destroying African culture.<sup>76</sup> The ambiguity of this article is a good example of the way that the Dutch press would write about the restitution debate in the following twenty years.

1975 was also the year in which the Dutch and Indonesian government agreed on the eventual return of what was called the 'Djokja-papers', a set of archival materials on the Indonesian Republic from between 1945 and 1949, which the Dutch took with them after they had taken and subsequently abandoned Yogyakarta during the decolonisation war. The return of these papers would only take place after the Dutch archival service had made an inventory, which was presumed to cost at least a few years. Nevertheless, the two countries came to an agreement on this and the Irian Jaya or New Guinea collection that has been discussed in the previous chapter. The *NRC* and the *Algemeen Dagblad* both made small announcements about these specific restitution cases, on which the *NRC* remarked the

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<sup>76</sup> "Wie berooft de derde wereld van haar kunstschaten?". "Trouw". Meppel, 1975/01/15 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010821841:mpeg21:p009>.

strange role that both the Dutch ministry and the director of the Museum of Ethnology had played in this affair.<sup>77</sup>

In March 1975 the Dutch minister of Culture, Harry van Doorn, announced his intention of returning all the artefacts that had been taken from Indonesia after 1942. Ben van der Velden interviewed the surprised directors of a number of museums for the *NRC*. This included the *Tropeninstituut* in Amsterdam, the Museum of Ethnology in Leiden and *Het Volkenkundig museum Gerardus van der Leeuw*, an ethnological museum located in Groningen that ceased to exist in 2003 when it became part of the *Universiteitsmuseum* in the same city. The museum was composed by several different collections, that focused on Indonesia, other countries in Southeast Asia and Africa. Some of the comments included the director of the Amsterdam museum, ir. J. Leering, saying that 'he could hardly believe the minister would say such things', the director from the Groningen museum, prof. dr. T. van Baaren, added 'het is een slag in de lucht', which means 'it is an empty gesture', and that would 'harm the Dutch cultural heritage'. The museum from Groningen was a private collection that was donated to Dutch state, which in the eyes of the professor complicated the possible restitution. The reporter commented on the consequences that this would have on the museum in Leiden, by stating that 'return of the Irian Jaya or New Guinea collection would diminish the museum status from prestigious to little relevant.'<sup>78</sup> In addition to this article *De Volkskrant* and *Trouw* published the same press agency report in which the proposed objects were listed, first the *Negara Kertagama* manuscript, second a painting from artist Raden Saleh and a collection of objects originally from West-Irian and stated that most of these objects were not in the possession of museums, but of private individuals.<sup>79</sup> Both articles are exemplary of the way the Dutch press wrote about possible restitution of colonial by the Netherlands, in all the articles the intention of the Dutch is posed

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<sup>77</sup> "Indonesië krijgt documenten terug". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1975/01/29 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000032648:mpeg21:p001> and "Nederland wil documenten aan Indonesië geven". "Nederlands dagblad: gereformeerd gezinsblad / hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et al.]". Amersfoort, 1975/01/30 00:00:00, p. 6. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 25-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010572298:mpeg21:p006>.

<sup>78</sup> "Minister wil kunst Indonesië teruggeven". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1975/04/14 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000032711:mpeg21:p006>.

<sup>79</sup> "Gesprek over teruggave van Indonesische kunstvoorwerpen". "Trouw". Meppel, 1975/11/26 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010822408:mpeg21:p011> and "In Djakarta". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1975/11/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010881184:mpeg21:p019>.



problematic. To these proposed policies the museum directors are usually presented as surprised or protective of their collections. In comparison to the cultural supplements about art restitution in the *NRC* in 1974, these narratives seem almost paradoxical. In the light of Mathur's idea about attribution of value, the claims of the museum directors were mostly based on aesthetic value while there seems to be no notion of the unequal power relations through which most of the objects have been acquired nor of a need to mediate this history between the former coloniser and colonised.<sup>80</sup>

After many years of negotiating between the former coloniser and colonised, the 'Lombok-treasures' partly return to Indonesia in 1977. In the days after the handover the Amsterdam based paper *Het Parool, Trouw, De Volkskrant* and the *NRC* all publish a slightly different version of the same article that was originally written by press agency ANP. The article talks about the Dutch 'conquest' or 'submission' of Lombok, after which the 'treasures' were taken to the Netherlands. Further, in the articles the objects are often referred to as 'valuables' or 'cultural treasures' or 'a total of objects that were deemed of great importance to Indonesian history'. Again, this kind of reporting seems at odds with the way that the papers had previously written about the restitution debate. They are all short articles, that draw relatively little attention to the fact that the Netherlands was now acting upon the international debate taking place. Why did all these papers copy paste the same piece, while their journalists working for the newspaper were obviously dedicated to the subject? Is it possible that this news was less 'newsworthy' because the government had already given in or did it not fit the narrative? For example, earlier in 1977 the *NRC* dedicated another cultural supplement to art that had found their way to the Netherlands through colonial networks. Specifically, through the missionaries of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit and their 'Africa museum' located in the east of the Netherlands. The paper was especially critical of the long-continued trade by the brothers of the congregation, that was now to be sanctioned by the government.

In the second half of the 1970's the printed media seem to start to move away from the government line of handling the restitution debate. In addition to that, journalism and media expert, Marcel Broersma argues that during the sixties there was a shift within the way newspaper took position within a debate. Instead of politically or socially positioning

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<sup>80</sup> Mathur, *India by design* 134-135 and 137.

themselves on matters, the newspapers started doing this, in what he calls a professional way. For example, by emphasizing the subjects that are put in the spotlight and the use of certain language and structures.<sup>81</sup>

International relations and trade were often deemed more important than culture. However, in Suharto's Indonesia the Netherlands saw an opportunity to establish itself once again. This already started in the beginning of the 1970's after Suharto's coup d'état, with a state visit in 1973, when Queen Juliana of the Netherlands presented the Nagarakrtagama manuscript to the president of Indonesia. Another incentive for the changing government policy was the appointment of a new cabinet, that had a radically different view on restitution and retention than the cabinet it succeeded.<sup>82</sup> For example, the way the newspapers rallied around the museum directors that opposed the Minister of Culture in his intentions to start restitution of some objects in Dutch possession. In this policy shift the newspapers took it upon themselves to not just facilitate the voices of the proponents, but also that of the opponents of restitution. Furthermore, objects are often described in a positive matter such as 'treasure' and 'valuables'.

### Taking it to the international stage

In many ways 1978 was a key year for the reporting on the restitution debate. It was the year that sparked a big international debate on the Western art collections at a monthlong UNESCO-conference. At this conference it seems that the former colonised and looted countries found each other and combined their voice against their former colonisers during the assemblies of the United Nations. *Het Vrije Volk* on the one hand seemed to be promoting this call for action, but on the other hand defends Western art lovers, 'they do not only act out egocentric motives but also to ensure the preservation of the objects.'<sup>83</sup> Jacqueline Wesselius, a reporter for *De Volkskrant* wrote two articles about the conference taking place in Paris, titled 'Unesco op de bres voor de dekolonisatie van het kunstbezit', translated UNESCO advocates for the decolonisation of art ownership, and 'Compromis bij

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<sup>81</sup> Marcel Broersma, 'De transformatie van het journalistieke veld: discursieve strategieën en journalistieke vormen', *Tijdschrift voor communicatiewetenschappen* 38:3 (2010) 264-265.

<sup>82</sup> Scott, Renewing the 'Special Relationship' 661.

<sup>83</sup> "Kunst hoort thuis in land van herkomst... "Het vrije volk: democratisch-socialistisch dagblad". Rotterdam, 1978/10/30 00:00:00, p. 9. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010960016:mpeg21:p009>.

slot Unesco conferentie', comprises at the end of UNESCO conference. In the first article she made a case of the psychological problem that the restitution requests encounter, because by 'returning' an object for free, the returning party implicitly admits that they had not acquired the object in a lawful or proper manner. She argues that this would not only be problematic for museums or governments, but also for the private individuals or families that own vast colonial collections. Wesselius and *De Volkskrant* published one of the few articles that really reflect on the use of terminology. In the same time, the journalist kept bringing up the 'technical argument', in which the Western countries and museums are deemed better capable of preservations and curating. Following the statement that this technological gap has to be closed, before 'the return of art object – maybe can be put to practice.'<sup>84</sup>

'Reopening of a colonial monument' was one of the headlines of the paper on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June in 1979, the article was written by Roelof van Gelder. The Tropical Museum, previously a part of the Colonial Institute for the Tropics, had underwent remodelling and restauration and had left 'the colonial spirit behind' by focusing on the development aid and a more modern frame.<sup>85</sup> In the interview the director of the museum, N.C.R. Bogaart stated that he was not afraid to lose valuable pieces of his collection, should they have to return certain colonial objects. When asked if the director knew of any possible objects eligible for restitution, he came up with the Buddhahead of Borobudur. While it was never requested, the idea of this possible restitution case presents us with the same Janus-faced narrative as that in *De Volkskrant* and other newspaper in the 1970's. In principal the museum is not opposed to the restitution of certain objects, however this should be executed under the exact terms of the Western institutions. The director said '*Bij teruggave moet een openbaar doel gemoeid zijn*', 'In the case of restitution, this has to serve a public goal' and '*ik wil er wel bij zijn als die kop wordt vast gemetseld*' 'I want to be there when they head is put back on', both are examples of the conditions that the Western audience seemed to have to set.

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<sup>84</sup> "Unesco op de bres voor dekolonisatie van het kunstbezit door t Wesselius Van onze corrspodente". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1978/11/11 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010882140:mpeg21:p037> and "NA OVERHEERSEND DEBAT OVER MEDIA Compromis bij slot Unesco-conferentie Van onze correspondentente JACQUELINE WESSELIUS". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1978/11/29 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010882149:mpeg21:p006>.

<sup>85</sup> "Het gewone leven in de tropen Heropening van een koloniaal monument". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1979/06/08 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000027297:mpeg21:p019>.

These arguments all appear to be rooted in a deep distrust for the capabilities and intentions of the receiving parties and the self-conscious idea to be in charge.

In the new decade the restitution debate seemed to continue its development in the same way as it had in the last ten years. In 1980 *De Volkskrant* and *NRC* printed elaborate articles about, mostly African, art that was being bought back by their countries of origin, while the value of those art pieces was increasing rapidly. *De Volkskrant* report Harry Lockfeer pressed the issue of cultural identity, which he deemed 'a vital part of live in the Third World.' For example, he thought it 'repugnant' that an African country such as Benin is only capable of showing its heritage through pictures and replicas. Because of this, he argued that the in addition to the museum sector, the private art industry, collectors and traders, should embrace a new set of ethics. Because, 'the inequality gap between rich and poor countries is not only expressed through their economics, but also in their culture' and 'the battle to recover expressions of cultural identity is intensifying.'<sup>86</sup> A month later, *NRC* brought the headline 'Third world buys pays high price to buy its art back'. Followed by the statements 'it's a matter of national honour', which is aimed at Nigerian government buying premium priced Nigerian sculptures at Wester auction houses. The author praised the 'Third World countries strongly developing their self-consciousness' and scolded the Western countries for being 'adamant' for their requests. In which the restitution of the 'Lombok treasures should be deemed the exception that proves the rule.'<sup>87</sup>

After the turn that the Dutch cabinet showed on this matter, by the words of the earlier mentioned minister of Culture, Van Doorn, now the Dutch newspaper also seemed to diversify the opinions that they showcased. The. articles show a growing sensitivity towards the justification of the retention of colonial objects. Even though, the opinions of some museum experts were slowly shifting, there was a remaining distrust towards Indonesia wherefore they wanted to be involved when for example a sculpture would be returned. Possibly as a reaction towards the fear of losing access and control over the way objects would be used.<sup>88</sup> This growing sensitivity towards the justice behind restitution case can be

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<sup>86</sup> "Een miljoen voor'n stoel uit Zaïre". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1980/06/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010880031:mpeg21:p055>.

<sup>87</sup> "Derde wereld koopt zijn kunst duur terug". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1980/07/21 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000027440:mpeg21:p006>.

<sup>88</sup> Bloembergen and Eickhoff, *The politics of heritage in Indonesia* 234 and Drieënhuizen 'Mirrors of time' 102.

linked to the way how the papers praised the UNESCO, for taking a stand and the general acknowledgement of the uneasiness in recognizing that an object might have acquired illegally, the use of language seems to change.

### A Greek tragedy

Yet, one year into the new decade not only the focus of the debate changed, but it also seemed that the *NRC* passed the torch to *De Volkskrant* to become the most vocal paper in the restitution debate. The 1980's could best be qualified as the Greek decade, because for ten years, Melina Mercouri, the Greek minister of Culture, would absorb almost all oxygen in the restitution debate. In March 1982 Greece and Egypt rapidly started gaining media attention after they demanded the return of parts of the Sphinx and the 'Elgin-marbles' or 'Parthenon-marbles' from the British government and the British museum in London. Followed by an interview with the Greek minister in *De Volkskrant* in which she requested the return of objects that had been 'removed violently' from the Acropolis in Athens. Furthermore, she emphasized that there was 'no conflict, merely a logical yet urgent request.' In this interview the minister would strictly use the 'Parthenon-marbles' instead of the 'Elgin-marbles' that was used more frequently by the printed media. She strongly opposed arguments that include remarks on the air quality in Athens, which would make it irresponsible for the marbles to return by the following statement:

*'Dat de diverse volken die in het verleden een duizelingwekkende beschaving hebben voortgebracht, niet meer in staat zouden zijn hun cultureel erfgoed op hun schouders te dragen is één van de fundamentele ideeën, waarop imperialistisch ingrijpen van de zestiende tot de twintigste eeuw gebaseerd was.'*

'The idea that multiple nations, who fathered dazzling types of civilization in the past, would not be capable of carrying their cultural heritage on their shoulders, is one fundamental ideas, on which imperialistic interference between the sixteenth and twentieth century was based.' It seems that this article was one the first to point out what you could call an imperialistic argument, which is based on the idea that former coloniser or imperial state still has a superior status, and addressing the use of certain words that implicate

hierarchy of a colonial mindset as an important part of the way the restitution debate was being played out.<sup>89</sup>

In an elaborate weekend article written by Wim Janssen for *Trouw*, the newspaper showed the same ambiguities as they had in the 1970's. Starting out by interviewing museum expert from the Tropenmuseum Harrie Leyten, the tone of the article tilts towards pro-restitution. For example, by stating that museums have to move on from their 'to have, to hold on and to not talk about' mentality and the clarification that 'developing countries' 'want to some returns of their unique valuables that the colonial power looted or bought'. This changes nevertheless, when the author starts citing a Ghanaian government official who stated that 'them, developing countries were glad that when they were not capable of it themselves, their historical objects were taken away to be preserved. However, now it is time to return these objects.' The author used this citation to disqualify the voices in the debate that speak about the past practices in terms of 'cultural looting', by saying that the British government 'saved' the Greek marbles and Egyptian 'treasures'. Here, the Greek minister takes over the narrative, by arguing that all this talk about 'saving' should not be allowed to play a role in this 'principal debate', which the author in his turn calls a 'political crusade'.<sup>90</sup>

Two published opinion pieces in the *NRC* in 1986 show that the matter of the Elgin-marble not just remained a foreign debate. First, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January archaeologist Riemer Knoop wrote the headline 'Rather sent casts to Athens than the Elgin-marbles', after which he attacked the 'dilapidated' state of the Acropolis, arguing that items should be returned if their absence disproportionately harms the totality of the object or complex, this argument he calls "alienation' as the rotten fruit of a shameful imperialistic past' and that in the case of the Acropolis, they cannot even be placed within the original structures. Concluding that the marbles can stay in the British museum.<sup>91</sup> This piece drew a response from classicist and tour operator drs. P. Schiethart on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January. In this piece, the author addresses the use of certain terminology by Knoop. Schiethart opposes the use of 'authorised Turkish

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<sup>89</sup> "Musea: 'Elgin marbles terug naar Athene'". "Het Parool". Amsterdam, 1983/08/04 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010846488:mpeg21:p006>.

<sup>90</sup> "Derde Wereld eist haar cultuur terug". "Trouw". Meppel, 1983/08/25 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010818791:mpeg21:p017>.

<sup>91</sup> "Liever afgietsels naar Athene dan Elgin Marbles". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1986/01/09 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028780:mpeg21:p009>.

authorities', as he proposes 'Ottoman occupiers', and so questioning the legitimacy of the permission that had been granted. Knoop also had challenged the idea of 'art looting', because as he argued the objects were not really treated as art by the local population. Which prompted Schiethart to argue that in fact, that the occupying forces were responsible for the poor treatment of its heritage. Furthermore, he calls the British attitude 'rude' and 'shameless', before addressing Knoop's last argument about the marbles not having to be returned, because they cannot be put in their original place. Schiethart emphasized that the 'direct link' to the marbles and the Parthenon would be more visible to the visitors if the marbles were on show in a nearby museums instead of in London.<sup>92</sup> These opinion pieces and the terminology issue the Greek minister brought forward shows that also in media coverage a new sort of awareness about framing was on the rise. Nevertheless, most of the arguments in the article still seem to be based on colonial and paternalistic prejudice.

Even though Greece took the central place on the restitution debate stage, this was not only the only change that can be seen when analysing the media coverage in the 1980's. Focus of the news reports seemed to have shifted to a more international stage or outward, instead of reporting on Dutch restitution cases. It is within this change that the United Nations and related institutions were appointed as the fighting arena for the clash between the former colonised countries and the Western world. *De Volkskrant* and *Het Parool* reported about the returning ritual of African and Asian countries filing UN-motions urging Western countries to return historical objects. The motions always passed with a majority backing, but more striking was that most of the European and North American countries did not bother to vote.

In 1985 *NRC* reported on the tenth UN-motion, within twelve years resulting in 123 proponents, zero opponents and 15 abstentions. Showcasing the frustration requesting countries citing the Greek minister referring to the looting as 'barbaric acts', while the British government is cited saying that all objects have been acquired lawfully.<sup>93</sup> On the other hand,

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<sup>92</sup> "Londen moet Elgin Marbles teruggeven". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1986/01/21 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028790:mpeg21:p009>.

<sup>93</sup> "VN-resolutie bepleit teruggave kunst aan land van herkomst". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1983/11/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879531:mpeg21:p003>, "VN: kunst moet terug naar land van herkomst". "Het Parool". Amsterdam, 1983/11/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010846407:mpeg21:p004>, "VN dringen bij alle lidstaten aan op teruggave van kunst". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1985/11/26 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-

the UN was also used to prompt up arguments for the opponents of restitution. In the same year, the former chair of the special UN committee on art restitution was cited saying that 'the restitution of art is not always better'. While most Dutch newspapers used the same ANP-article, the framing still seemed to be different in the papers. *Het Algemeen Dagblad*, *NRC*, *de Volkskrant*, *Nederlands Dagblad*, *het Parool* and communist newspaper *De Waarheid* all printed the same article yet changed the headlines. The *AD*'s headline was 'Return of art is not always better' while *de Volkskrant* went with 'Art should be returned to the country of origin' and in the *NRC* one would find 'Lebanese ambassador advocates for the return of artworks.' *Nederlands Dagblad* headed 'Not all art has to return to its 'cradle'', *Het Parool* 'Return of art is cultural justified' and *De Waarheid* merely 'exciled art'.<sup>94</sup> In this particular case, it appears that the newspapers with a liberal or leftwing background used the headlines in favour of restitution, while more conservative newspapers were hinting at a more conditioned restitution policy.

The Greek restitution case positioned two opposing European countries as opposing parties within the restitution debate itself, two members of the European community debated the restitution of the marbles, pulled other countries such as the Netherlands in the debate but also put the paradox that exist within the Western treatment of looted art into broad daylight. Namely, the way the Western world has treated looted Nazi-art and the way former colonial empires refuse to take part in these specific restitutions.<sup>95</sup> Another change was a growing focus on the use of the use terms that imply hierarchy or a based on former colonial structures, which also points out a new sense of justice, because was one really the

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05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030053:mpeg21:p007> and Kunst En alles blijft bij het oude...". "Trouw". Meppel, 1987/10/24 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010825959:mpeg21:p017>.

<sup>94</sup> "Teruggave van kunst niet altijd beter". "Algemeen Dagblad". Rotterdam, 1985/02/18 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBPERS01:003026015:mpeg21:p00006>, "Libanese ambassadeur pleit voor teruggave kunstwerken". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1985/02/18 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028027:mpeg21:p007>, "„Kunst moet worden terugggegeven aan land van herkomst"". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1985/02/18 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879113:mpeg21:p006>, "„Niet alle kunst hoeft naar 'bakermat' terug"". "Nederlands dagblad: gereformeerd gezinsblad / hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et al.]". Amersfoort, 1985/02/19 00:00:00, p. 10. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010569875:mpeg21:p010> and "Verbannen kunst". "De waarheid". Amsterdam, 1985/02/19 00:00:00, p. 3. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010378469:mpeg21:p003>.

<sup>95</sup> Van Beurden, 'Decolonisation and colonial collections' 68.



‘authorized authority’ or does society perceive that differently now? Mathur argues that part of the restitution process is reinscription and reconfiguration, which is up to the museums and institutions that are part of this process. Changing the use of terminology can be part of decolonising the mindset of the institution, when this is aimed at letting go of using problematic terms and implicating hierarchy and this aims to change the power relations between the former oppressors and oppressed.<sup>96</sup>

### Increasingly explicit

In the second half of the 80's *de Volkskrant* published two articles by colonial historian and author Ewald Vanvugt, first in 1987 and second in 1989, for the anniversary of the Museum of Ethnology Nusantara in Delft.<sup>97</sup> Vanvugt would later publish multiple books about the former Dutch colonies, for example *Roofstaat*. A book about the historical crimes and cruelties committed by the Dutch states and its predecessors.<sup>98</sup> The first article, titled ‘Quietly keeping what was brutally robbed’ served as teaser for the publication of *Culturen*, a journal on the restitution debate. Vanvugt’s article really has an unprecedented tone towards the restitution debate and more specific the Dutch role in the looting and collecting of the objects. The author started by pointing out the vast ethnological collections that are in the possession of Dutch museums i.e. the Dutch State. When looking closer at this, one sees the museum being modernised, or ‘made ready for the technical age’, while one also realises that ethnology is inescapable rooted in colonialism. ‘As it was the perfect tool for the colonial ruler and confirmation of racial theories’ or ‘Nineteenth century ethnology [...] was composed of posh racism, pure propaganda to soothe the conscience of the colonials and the intellectual confirmation of their material superiority.’<sup>99</sup> After pointing out the nature of the way the objects were collected, the author gives an example of its practice:

*‘Nederlandse volkenkundigen verzamelden hun exotische cultuurgoed – nu te bezichtigen in smetteloze vitrines – soms ter plaatse uit het puin van gebombardeerde*

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<sup>96</sup> Mathur, *India by design* 137 and Van Beurden, ‘Decolonisation and colonial collections’ 67.

<sup>97</sup> De buit heeft nóg een boodschap". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1989/10/14 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010857314:mpeg21:p069>.

<sup>98</sup> Ewald Vanvugt, *Roofstaat: wat iedere Nederlander moet weten* (2016).

<sup>99</sup> "Stil bewaren wat brutaal geroofd is". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1987/05/16 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010856779:mpeg21:p067>.

*inheemse paleizen, soms afgenomen van de nog warme lichamen van de gesneuvelde bevolking.'*

'Dutch ethnographers collected exotic cultural objects – now on show in squeaky clean showcases – sometimes from the ruins of bombed indigenous palaces, sometimes from the still warm corpses of the killed local population.' With these remarks, the author refers to Lombok treasures and the way they were violently taken, during the Lombok war. However, striking both of these arguments are, at the core of the article there is the attack on the Dutch museum establishment based the accusation that they are 'silently keeping' or hiding the colonial disputable objects that they have in their possession. He recalled a conversation with a curator that did not want take a certain object out of the depot, because then 'the Indonesian government would certainly come asking for its return', as curator I am the guardian and keeper of the collection.' But author also already noted that the focus of the debate had shift since the 1970's, as he describes that 'the new trend in the ethnology museums is the old one, popularly summarized: 'we can enjoy again!''.<sup>100</sup>

For the years 1990-1995 there are three articles to be discusses in this chapter. All three propose a very different view on the restitution of colonial objects. Firstly, that of a positive view on a completed restitution case between the Netherlands and Indonesia. Secondly, a proposition to use the restitution of objects for the countries benefit and thirdly, of what kind of stories disputed collections tell when exhibited. In the nineties the spotlight of media attention was on the 'looting of Africa', papers repeatedly asked attention for illegal art trade and the draining of African cultural heritage.<sup>101</sup> The first article was printed in the cultural section of *Trouw*. In 1992 there was exhibition in the *Nieuwe Kerk* in

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<sup>100</sup> "Stil bewaren wat brutaal geroofd is". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1987/05/16 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010856779:mpeg21:p067>.

<sup>101</sup> "Kunst uit Afrika te gewild". "Algemeen Dagblad". Rotterdam, 1994/02/26 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBERS01:003279023:mpeg21:p00059>, "Verzamelaar berooft cultuur". "Nederlands dagblad: gereformeerd gezinsblad/ hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et al.]". Amersfoort, 1994/12/19 00:00:00, p. 8. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010629112:mpeg21:p008>, "Vooral veel vervalsen, dan stort de illegale handel in". "Trouw". Meppel, 1995/04/05 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010822034:mpeg21:p018>, "Handige rovers richten zich vooral op kunst uit Afrika Van onze verslaggever Rob Gollin". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1995/04/05 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010870806:mpeg21:p006> and "De ondoorgrondelijke routes van het culturele erfgoed KUNST & CULTUUR Een verzamelaar, dat is een viezerik". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1995/06/16 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010870865:mpeg21:p019>.

Amsterdam, one the sculptures that was one show was the *Prajnaparamita*. The Netherlands returned this to Indonesia in 1978, but 14 years later the Indonesian government offered it on loan for the exhibition. *Trouw* dedicated a review of the exhibition, in which the author praised the gentlemanlike behaviour of Indonesia and recalled 'some commotion' surrounding the restitution back in 1978. Yet, compared to the attention created by the Greek-British dispute, 'was of incomparable order'. But the author must conclude that in the many years since the Indonesian independence there is 'little Dutch interest in Indonesian culture.'<sup>102</sup>

Cees Fasseur, a renowned (colonial) historian from Leiden University, contributed a large piece on the Lombok treasures. The treasure had been partially returned to Indonesian 15 years before. The piece largely focuses on the origin of the objects and how they were taken to the Netherlands. However, he concludes with interesting analysis. He refers to the 'reverend' and the 'merchant', who both have been regularly used as personifications of the Netherlands. Fasseur was talking about the restitution of part of the 'treasures' that soothed the conscience of the 'reverend' and bumped the relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia for the 'merchant'. 'His generosity, which in fact was as much as offering someone his own cigars, served the diplomatic and economic relations with the former colony', after which he concludes that since that moment these relationships have gone downhill again. In the end, Fasseur suggested to 'scourge the Dutch treasuries for sloppy acquired Indonesian heritage' to give as a 'fitting birthday present' for 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Indonesian Republic.

Just within the scope of this study and the archive available, *Trouw* published another review of an exhibition. This time it was written Remco Raben, a scholar specialised in colonial and postcolonial literature and cultural history. Yet again it was about the Lombok collection, but this the remaining part was exhibited at the *Kunsthal* in Rotterdam. In contradiction to the article of Vanvugt in 1989, Raben wondered what story the exhibition was trying to tell? He criticised it for telling the story of the Dutch conquest instead of the story of the pieces in the collection. He gave food for thought to the readers, by wondering

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<sup>102</sup> "Kunst Opperste Wijsheid even terug uit Indonesië". "Trouw". Meppel, 1992/02/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCD:010826331:mpeg21:p021>.

about 'the return of looted art treasures and about the possible riches that can still be found in the depots of the Dutch museums.'<sup>103</sup>

Ewald Vanvugt, Cees Fasseur (1938-2016) and Remco Raben, all historians, wrote background and opinion pieces for Dutch newspapers about disputed colonial objects, their provenance and the way the objects were then presented to the Dutch society. While they all strongly focus on the so called 'Lombok treasures', the articles express a new depth in the reflection on the disputed collection. Vanvugt is unprecedented in his description of how the objects were robbed and looted of the victims of a colonial war, while Fasseur showed himself more favourable to have these objects serve international relations. While Raben asked a more theoretical question; what story does the Netherlands want to tell in its own museums? Which is relatable to the questions that Arainikasih and Hafnidar asked themselves more than 15 years later about the Aceh museum, when aiming at decolonising the mindset and creating a more inclusive history.<sup>104</sup>

### Conclusion

At first, between 1950 and 1974, the Dutch newspapers quietly followed the government in their handling of the restitution debate. Yet with the coming of a new government and a shift in government policy this changed. This policy change was in that sense, not standing on its own. Newspapers were consciously developing the way they portray their issues and moving towards becoming a more independent, self-conscious newspaper. Most of the newspapers at first amplified the voice of those who were opposed to the restitution of certain objects. However, the introduction of the international debate through UNESCO and the Greek-British conflict changed the discussion and seemed to have influenced the use of terminology and a broader idea of justice, that was previously less prominent. During this period the Indonesian-Dutch relationship changed, and a few objects were part of a cultural agreement between the two nations.

In this process the newspapers seem to have become more self-aware in their own position and what kind of articles they published. In the years before the newspapers did not really show radical differences in the way they reported on this specific matter. A good

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<sup>103</sup> "Roof werd soms redding door Remco Raben". "Trouw". Meppel, 1995/10/16 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCD:010821378:mpeg21:p008>.

<sup>104</sup> Arainikasih and Hafnidar, 'Decolonising the Aceh museum' 119.

example of this diversion that took place between reporting were the six newspapers that all published the same ANP article, while using very different and insinuating headlines. The nature of the articles changed as expert were given a more central place in the reporting on these matters, which made the papers more critical of the government and museums, while positioning themselves within the debate.

## Chapter III: Pale in comparison (1978 and 2015)

In the beginning of the nineteenth century Jean-Chrétien baron Baud was governor-general of the Dutch East Indies and after the end of the Java War (1825-1830) he was handed the pilgrim's staff that belonged to Diponegoro. This Javanese prince was the leader of revolt against the Dutch colonial forces on Java and had just lost the war. According to a Dutch newspaper, one of Diponegoro's 'former fellow warriors' or 'servant' handed over the staff to the governor-general after the prince had been imprisoned. Curator Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer elaborated on the form, function and provenance of the staff. At the time, according to prince Natapraja, a relative of Diponegoro, the staff was made two hundred years before in order of the Sultan of Demak, although Lunsingh Scheurleer proposes considerable doubts to this claim.<sup>105</sup> *The Jakarta Post* referred to this man as nobleman Adipati Notoprojo and to the staff as 'Diponegoro's walking stick'.<sup>106</sup> Historian Peter Carey, who has written multiple works on Diponegoro and the Java War, mentioned the walking staff in his elaborate work on the anti-colonial, Indonesian national hero. Carey referred to the special powers that were attributed to both Diponegoro and his staff in, 'According to stories still current about Dipanagara in Sulawesi, when he was in the market in Manado and felt that he was not being shown due respect, he flung his walking staff on the ground and the whole market 'rocked' as though in an earthquake, interview with Pak Abdurrachim, Makassar, 8-9-1972.'<sup>107</sup> Furthermore, the staff was mentioned in the work of colonial government official and businessman Egbert Kielstra and by the *Javaasche Courant*. Which shows that the staff still was part of some collective memory. After Baud took the staff to the Netherlands, it somewhat disappeared into the background. Between 1959 and 1964 there was some contact between the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the museum of Ethnology in Leiden and a descendent from Baud, about the possibility to gift the staff to one of the museums. However, this plan never came through.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'Prince Dipanagara's Pilgrim's Staff', *Archipel* 97:1 (2019) 87-112.

<sup>106</sup> 'Indonesian heritage: at Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum', *The Jakarta Post* 02-12-2015, geraadpleegd op thejakartapost.com op 27-05-2020, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/12/02/indonesian-heritage-amsterdam-s-rijksmuseum.html>.

<sup>107</sup> Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy: Prince Dipanagara and the End of an Old Order in Java, 1785-1855* (2008) 116.

<sup>108</sup> Van Beurden, *Treasures in trusted hands* 129.

## The return of a relic

In 2015, 181 year after the staff was handed over to Baud, *De Volkskrant* published a reconstruction of the restitution process. In contrary to previous restitution cases, the staff was in the hands of the Baud family, instead of the Dutch state. Michiel and his sister Erica Baud, decedents of Jean Chrétien, self-initiated the return of the staff after the origin and spiritual meaning of the staff had become known to them. Michiel Baud is an emeritus professor at the University of Amsterdam, specialised in Latin America. While *de Volkskrant* article repeatedly mentioned the media storm the restitution had caused in Indonesia, Dutch media seem to have barely covered it. Except of this specific article, only the *NRC* mentioned the staff in a broader article on colonial objects in 2017, that will be discussed later.

The title of the article was ‘Opwinding rond de Staf van Diponegoro’, meaning ‘Excitement about the Staff of Diponegoro’. The excitement seems to hint at the media attention that the return had sparked, but can also be read in a sarcastic tone, as the author hints at the so called widespread believe in magic in Indonesia. The journalists mention this, as to their surprise it seems this is acknowledged by ‘serious newspaper *Kompas*’. The author hints that the staff was perhaps given to the governor-general Baud to magically take away the power from the Dutch. Just as in 1970’s when newspapers would often refer to Mrs Soeharto and the way she treated the *Nagarakrtagama*. that was being kept in the presidential residency, the author now refers to ‘Ibu Ani’, former first lady and the wife of Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and how she almost destroyed a famous painting by Javanese painter Raden Saleh, because she was afraid of the ghosts that she thought were haunting it.<sup>109</sup>

In the second part of the article Michiel en Erica Baud tell their story of how they found the staff and returned it. The interviewee refers to the staff as ‘that thing’ and tells that ‘nobody payed attention to it’, ‘I took it from my parent’s house because I liked it’. When discussing the return itself she described it as ‘it was a big event, very emotional’. The author calls the objects ‘a gift not looted art’, because of the way it was handed over to the governor-general after the anti-colonial forces had been defeated. Harm Stevens, a curator

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<sup>109</sup> ‘Opwinding rond de staf van prins Diponegoro’, *De Volkskrant* 25-05-2015, geraadpleegd op Volkskrant.nl op 27-05-2020, <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/opwinding-rond-de-staf-van-prins-diponegoro~b82b40ed/>.

at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam contacted the Baud family because he had found clues that suggested the staff could be in the hands of one of the family members. In the article Erica Baud discusses a painting of Jean-Chrétien made by the earlier mentioned painter Raden Saleh.

*“Een niet onaantrekkelijke man’ zegt ze. ‘Je wilt natuurlijk ook dat hij een niet al te onaardige man was. Uit wat erover hem is geschreven, blijkt dat hij, hoewel een koloniaal heerser, veel aandacht had voor de Javaanse cultuur en gebruiken. In Nederland werd hij minister van Koloniën en toen heeft hij het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde opgericht. Een familieportret geschilderd door Raden Saleh hangt daar nu.’<sup>110</sup>*

The way the article reflects on the colonial heritage of the Baud family, and coherently Dutch society, shows expresses the emotional difficulties arising from the restitution debate. Even though, one could question the power relations during which the pilgrim’s staff was handed over to the Dutch the governor-general, who had just successfully suppressed an anti-colonial uprising, the staff is considered ‘a gift’ instead of war booty. Maybe it possible that (direct) descendants from colonial heritage or society apparently feel an emotional connection to this past and appear to be tempted to cover their actions with the cloak of charity. However, the relative easiness with which the staff was returned by the Baud family shows a certain distance that this Dutch family felt in identification with this object. In their speech at the handover the Baud family namely said ‘given to our forefather in 1834 and has been in the possession of our family ever since. Nevertheless, over time and between the different generations the real significance of the staff was lost... [...] The decision was taken and this exhibition dedicated to the life and memory of Prince Diponegoro seemed a most appropriate moment to hand the heirloom over.’<sup>111</sup>

Drieënhuizen described this as the colonial memories mixed with nostalgia, becoming part of former colonizers identity, resulting in becoming part of this national, Dutch identity, in which there was less need for objects such as these.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Opwinding rond de staf van prins Diponegoro’, *De Volkskrant* 25-05-2015, geraadpleegd op Volkskrant.nl op 27-05-2020, <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/opwinding-rond-de-staf-van-prins-diponegoro~b82b40ed/>.

<sup>111</sup> Van Beurden, *Treasures in trusted hands* 129.

<sup>112</sup> Drieënhuizen, ‘Objects, Nostalgia and the Dutch Colonial Elite’ 505-506 and 525.



While *De Volkskrant* dedicated a background article to the restitution of the staff, there seems to have been little further Dutch media attention for this event. Following the 2015 return of the staff, the staff was mentioned by the *NRC*

in a 2017 piece on colonial art and objects in Western museums, as a result of Jos van Beurden's Phd research. Beurden wonders why the Dutch government has never encouraged private owners of disputed objects to reconsider their possessions.<sup>113</sup>

### In comparison

1978 was by no means a quiet year in the restitution debate. As mentioned before a big UNESCO conference took place, during which the question of return was discussed elaborately. UN motions that proposed the return were supported by a majority of African and Asian countries but rejected or ignored by the former colonizers in Europa and North America. However, little was written about the objects that were actually returned in 1978 during the year itself. On March 25<sup>th</sup> *NRC* wrote an article with the headline 'Nederland geeft kunstschaten aan Indonesië terug'. It was written by an Indonesian, Gadis Rasid, he was correspondent for the *NRC* in Jakarta. The article remarks on the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the national museum, during the colonial rule it was the *Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschap*. In honour of this anniversary, President Suharto would receive the Prajñaparamita from the Dutch ambassador. This statue dates back to 14<sup>th</sup> century and symbolizes the pre-colonial history of Indonesia. It is not a long article, but it has a positive tone. In addition to describing the museum and the statue, the author sums up the 'many historical, cultural and scientific materials' that had been returned in the previous year.<sup>114</sup> Other newspaper appear to not have published about the restitution at the time.

Historian Carolien Drieënhuizen links the return of the ancient manuscript Nāgarakṛtāgama in 1970 to the returns of 1978. The return of this specific manuscript was surrounded by rumors that the Indonesian first lady was treating the relic badly and so endangering its existence. This made Dutch museum experts even more reluctant to return

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<sup>113</sup> 'Een Azteken-hoofddekseel in Wenen? Leg dat maar eens uit!', *NRC Handelsblad* 17-02-2017, geraadpleegd op NRC.nl op 27-05-2020, <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/02/17/een-azteken-hoofddekseel-in-wenen-leg-dat-maar-eens-uit-6743753-a1546538>.

<sup>114</sup> "Nederland geeft kunstschaten aan Indonesië terug". *NRC Handelsblad*. Rotterdam, 1978/04/25 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 27-05-2020, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000026941:mpeg21:p006>.

more objects. She argued that these returns often symbolically done by 'important figure' at 'ceremonial events' served as identity politics by both the Dutch and the Indonesian governments. In this, Indonesia celebrates and emphasizes the return of the objects, in which the Netherlands acknowledges the past Indonesian civilizations and a part of colonial guilt. While the Netherlands poses itself as kind-hearted and working towards creating good will.<sup>115</sup> This Dutch form of identity politics is still visible in the media coverage on the return of Diponegoro's staff in 2015, even though the Dutch state was no official party in this case. For example, it is emphasized multiple times that the pilgrim's staff was not a war trophy but a gift, after which the owners have now decided to give it back to Indonesia.

### Conclusion

The return of the walking stick or pilgrim's staff of Diponegoro, an icon for anti-colonial resistance did not spark many reactions in the Dutch newspapers. A private exchange, between the descendants of colonial official and the Indonesian government, a curious story perhaps, that sparks the imagination of the reader. Imagine that something in your own attic or attic turns out to be a century old relic of a prince from far away, that attracts the interests of Rijksmuseum curators, the Indonesian governments and dozens of foreign journalists. That is the way the narrative of this specific restitution case was formed, which shows similarities to a phenomenon called orientalism. This is a concept first introduced by renowned scholar Edward Said, aiming at the way the Eastern world is perceived by the West which is constructed on a patronizing, mystic idea of what these cultures and societies look like.<sup>116</sup> Much or less the same remarks were made about certain stories that illustrate the fact that in Indonesia historical objects were and are treated differently, was it then Mrs Suharto and more recently Mrs Yudhoyono. Another reason for the complains about Mrs Suharto and Mrs Yudhoyono could be that they kept the objects for themselves, instead of making it publicly accessible. So, there are multiple views to look at the way the Dutch papers reported on these matters.

The restitution of a variety of objects between 1975 and 1980 sparked various different reactions in the media yet was perceived as serving a higher goal such as

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<sup>115</sup> Drieënhuizen, 'Mirrors of Time and Agents of Action' (2018) 102.

<sup>116</sup> Valérie Orlando, 'Knowledge, Power and Fear: Reflections on Exile, Edward Said and the "Mainstreaming" of Postcolonial Literary Thought' in Basamat 02 Dossier: Edouard Said L'intellectuel et le critique (2007) 16.

international relations. Which Drieënhuizen linked to identity politics, this idea of identity is more evident for the Indonesian state, while that of the Dutch is perhaps more attending to the collective identity, in which the Dutch are portrayed as 'the good guy'. The idea of decolonization as a higher goal seems to be absent from the 2015 narrative, while this could be found in the aftermath of the 1978 restitutions. This does not mean that this debate is not lively anno 2015, because the other articles such as the opinion piece and the article on Van Beurden show that according to the newspapers this matter is far from solved. One could perhaps even conclude that the core of the issues and how to handle it did change very much when compared to piece on Vanvugt in earlier chapters. However, it does seem that in this specific case and the other two articles, the debate about whether we should not return is not voiced in the newspapers anymore. The focus has shifted to the how, ethics and the when. However, not a full conclusion can be drawn from this comparison as a key article from the *NRC* is not accessible.

While times have changed and the (scholarly) opinion on the restitution debate has reached some sort of consensus, the way the newspapers reported about these cases has not evidently changed. One could wonder about the lack of attention or the absence of debate, perhaps because the staff was not declared government property or was not preceded by years of unanswered request or have the printed media moved to a general acceptance of restitution case and has it thus lost newsworthiness.

## Conclusion

Between 1950 and 1995 a whole lot of articles were written about restitution, colonial collections in Dutch museum, art looting in Africa, Asia, stolen Nazi art, UN motions for the return of stolen heritage and opinion pieces on whether or not it is upon a people or nation to claim heritage and what purpose such claims are supposed to serve. The research question of this study was 'how did the media coverage about the restitution of disputed colonial heritage in the Netherlands and in Indonesia evolve after the independence of Indonesia?'

### Theories on restitution, heritage and postcolonial identity

Many different arguments were proposed by the variety of journalist that wrote about restitution of colonial objects, some of them can be placed within different processes surrounding heritage formation and the restitution of colonial objects. Bloembergen and Eickhoff concluded that politics of heritage and involvement in this by former colonisers is often based on anxiety over loss of visibility, cherished objects and within a context of decolonization, a loss of privilege and hierarchy. Mathur dissected the attribution of value and the incoherently used arguments for these different notion's values, furthermore, she concluded that in order to achieve restitution it is important to focus on reinscription and reconfiguration. Because when this take place, these dynamics become turning points in making post-colonial history. Scott argued that part of the Dutch attempt to establish a cultural presence in Indonesia, was the trauma of forcibly having to give up the colony, which is in line with the anxiety over loss. And last Drieënhuizen, concluded that nostalgia was used by former colonisers that had returned to the Netherlands, to establish their post-colonial identity. The curating of their colonial collections was a part of that identity establishing process.

Anxiety over loss and the attribution of value of historical-national ideas are thus at the core of the Dutch restitution debate. Anxiety over loss of identity in a post-colonial nation, loss of function in a decolonised museum, and loss of purpose without the old set of ideas, the colonial mindset. Anxiety over loss and attribution of value are inevitably connected as the attributed value influences the amount of anxiety, while the fear of losing an object deemed vital to a society's identity only increases its notion of its value. Both

notions have played a central role in how the newspapers reported on possible restitution, for one the way Dutch Indonesian newspapers attributed value to other objects, was an example of anxiety over loss. When in the 1960's New Guinea became part of Indonesia this trauma and the fear of losing other symbols of the Dutch colonial empire attributed to the value of those collections in the Netherlands. In 2015, the anxiety over loss seemed to have diminished, leading to a different attribution of value, not as much aesthetic value, but being able empathize the spiritual and historic-national value that the staff embodies for Indonesia. In the light of both concepts disputed objects are social in their nature of attributed value, this can change over time, and together with anxiety over loss heavily influence the media perspective.

### Agency and narrative

Instead of trying to measure if and how the Dutch printed media influenced the public opinion and the self-awareness of the public, Schrover asked whether the printed media influenced policy making. In the case of the restitution debate, at least between 1950 and 1974 this influence must have been very small, articles were hardly opinionative and were mostly aligned with existing policy of cabinet decisions. In the second half of the 1970's, while the general message of the papers was voicing experts against immediate restitution, the government still went through with the deal they made with Indonesia. Over the following fifteen years support for restitution seemed to be growing, led by opinion pieces written by authorities in the field. However, no State mandated restitution seemed to have sprung out of this support. Altogether, the general influence of the media on this specific seemed to have been marginal, a position that the papers itself do not have seemed to overestimate.

Van Dijk made summarized three conclusions out of his analyses of the media storm about the Tamil Tigers, for one he argued that the media reproduced a dominant consensus, as well as that the media produced a stereotype of people involved in the topic and last a division between leftist and right-wing papers, the leftist narrative was based on the idea that the others 'were in need of help' and the right-wing papers projected the others as 'a problem' or 'causing a problem'. Especially in the first decades after Indonesian independence the media reproduced the dominant consensus, while they themselves added little to the debate. This changed over time, diversifying the point of views and contributors. However, as mentioned before, many of the characterizations about Indonesian museums,

the spiritual theme's surrounding certain objects and the idea of Dutch colonialist saving objects were largely built upon stereotypes and colonial prejudice. This production of stereotypes went on as far as 2015, concerning the return of the pilgrim's staff of Diponegoro. However, as stated before these arguments can also be built on the idea the objects should be accessible to public and not just to the political upper class. While both the arguments, as in restitution request are a problem because they damage the value of Dutch museums and their collections and that Indonesia needs help in developing their knowledge of curating and museums to ensure the future existence of the objects were often employed by all sorts of newspapers, over time their opinions changed and views shifted which makes it impossible to draw a dividing between left and right wing papers.

### Altogether

Between 1950 and 1995 the world rapidly changed and so did journalism. Within this context it can be said that the media coverage of the restitution debate evolved with it, from short, informative messages that were posed as threat to the Dutch museums and culture, aligned with government policies towards a critical voice on the government, international relations, the Netherlands own colonial history and role in the dubious collecting of historical objects and arts. Nevertheless, colonial prejudices and the narratives that follow from it can still be seen when certain cases are written about. Since the beginning of 2000, society and academics have turned towards a developing and in-depth discussion about the trace's that colonialism has left in our society, for example the study into the Dutch art collection. If it is the goal to decolonize our mindset, it is also up to the Dutch printed media to reflect on their past and current reporting and dissect the use of terminology and implications of hierarchy when writing about restitution of colonial objects or colonialism in general.

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#### Appendix 1 Studied newspaper articles (chronological)

1. Algemeen Handelsblad      08/04/1950, "Een museum is niet enkel een verzamelplaats HET VOOR EN TEGEN VAN TENTOONSTELLINGEN Raakt men tentoonstellingsmoe ?". "Algemeen Handelsblad". Amsterdam, 1950/04/08 00:00:00, p. 3. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 15-04-2020,  
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2. Het. nieuwsblad voor Sumatra      14/10/1950      "De Boekenplank KUNST-ENCYCLOPEDIA". "Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra". Medan, 1950/10/14 00:00:00, p. 2. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 15-04-2020,  
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3. Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra      03/04/1951      "OUDSTE EILAND". "Het nieuwsblad voor Sumatra". Medan, 1951/04/03 00:00:00, p. 2. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 15-04-2020,  
<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010476017:mpeg21:p002>

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4. De nieuwsgier (Java) 03/04/1951 "Indon. cultuurbezit". "De nieuwsgier". Batavia, 1951/04/03 00:00:00, p. 3. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010474991:mpeg21:p003>

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5. De Telegraaf 26/06/1951 "En wij?". "De Telegraaf". Amsterdam, 1951/06/26 00:00:00, p. 3. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:110585387:mpeg21:p0033>

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6. De Tijd: dagblad voor Nederland 27/05/1953 "India wil Koh-I-Noordiamant niet terug vragen". "De tijd : dagblad voor Nederland". Amsterdam, 1953/05/07 00:00:00, p. 4. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011202214:mpeg21:p004>

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7. De Telegraaf 16/03/1954 "INDONESIË EIST TERUGGAVE VAN CULTUURSCHATTEN". "De Telegraaf". Amsterdam, 1954/03/16 00:00:00, p. 4. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 16-04-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:110585863:mpeg21:p004>

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31. NRC 14/04/1975 "Minister wil kunst Indonesië teruggeven". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1975/04/14 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000032711:mpeg21:p006>
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32. Trouw 26/11/1975 "Gesprek over teruggave van Indonesische kunstvoorwerpen". "Trouw". Meppel, 1975/11/26 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010822408:mpeg21:p011>
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33. De Volkskrant 28/11/1975 "MINI-MUZE". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1975/11/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010881184:mpeg21:p019>
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34. De Volkskrant 28/09/1976 "dag in Schat dag uit". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1976/09/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010881132:mpeg21:p009>
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35. NRC 18/03/1977 "Kunst verzamelen met hulp van de missie De handel en wandel van de Heilige Geest in Afrika". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1977/03/18 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000025567:mpeg21:p019>
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36. Het Parool 02/07/1977 "'Lombok-schat' voor deel terug naar Indonesië". "Het Parool". Amsterdam, 1977/07/02 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010839705:mpeg21:p002>
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37. Trouw 04/07/1977 "Deel Lomboksche overgedragen as Indonesië". "Trouw". Meppel, 1977/07/04 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010823468:mpeg21:p006>
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38. De Volkskrant 04/07/1977 "Indonesië krijgt Lombokschat deels terug Van onze correspondent". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1977/07/04 00:00:00,

Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010881679:mpeg21:p006>

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39. NRC 04/07/1977 "Schatten van Lombok terug naar Indonesië". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1977/07/04 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000026024:mpeg21:p003>

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40. De Volkskrant 06/06/1977 "MINI-MUZE". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1977/07/06 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010881681:mpeg21:p011>

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41. NRC 04/11/1977 "Al het schoons naar Parijs! kunstroven n Napoleon". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1977/11/04 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000026557:mpeg21:p023>

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42. Het vrije volk 30/10/1978 "Veel puzzels". "Het vrije volk : democratisch-socialistisch dagblad". Rotterdam, 1978/10/30 00:00:00, p. 9. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010960016:mpeg21:p009>

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43. De Volkskrant 11/11/1978 "Unesco op de bres voor dekolonisatie van het kunstbezit door t Wesselius Van onze corrspodente". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1978/11/11 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010882140:mpeg21:p037>

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44. De Volkskrant 29/11/1978 "NA OVERHEERSEND DEBAT OVER MEDIA Compromis bij slot Unesco-conferentie Van onze correspondent JACQUELINE WESSELIUS". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1978/11/29 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010882149:mpeg21:p006>

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45. NRC 08/07/1979 "Het gewone leven in de tropen Heropening van een koloniaal monument". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1979/06/08 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000027297:mpeg21:p019>

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46. De Volkskrant 28/06/1980 "Een miljoen voor'n stoel uit Zaïre". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1980/06/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010880031:mpeg21:p055>

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47. NRC 04/08/1982 "Egypte wil teruggave van kunstschaten". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1982/08/04 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028037:mpeg21:p006>

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48. De Volkskrant 04/09/1982 "AZTEEKSE CODEX GESTOLEN UIT FRANSE BIBLIOTHEEK Kunstroof wordt in Mexico nationale held". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1982/09/04 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010857460:mpeg21:p004>

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49. De Volkskrant 01/10/1982 "MELINA MERCOURI „Onze geroofde kunst hoort in Griekenland". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1982/10/01 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010857380:mpeg21:p020>

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50. NRC 18/02/1983 "EEN REIZENDE TENTOONSTELLING VAN NIGERIAANSE KUNST De pracht van onderscha culturen". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1983/02/18 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000027939:mpeg21:p020>

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51. Het Parool 04/08/1983 "Musea: 'Elgin marbles terug naar Athene'". "Het Parool". Amsterdam, 1983/08/04 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 23-05-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010846488:mpeg21:p006>

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52. AD 07/09/1983 "De spaghetti-totem". "Algemeen Dagblad". Rotterdam, 1983/09/07 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBPERS01:003487016:mpeg21:p00003>

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53. De Volkskrant 17/09/1983 "WETENSCHAP & SAMENLEVING Roofbuit van Parthenon inzet Grieks-Engelse cultuurstrijd". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1983/09/17 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010878704:mpeg21:p023>

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54. Het Vrije Volk 04/10/1983 "Melina Mercouri boos op Nederland". "Het vrije volk : democratisch-socialistisch dagblad". Rotterdam, 1983/10/04 00:00:00, p. 7. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010961528:mpeg21:p007>

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55. Het Parool 04/10/1983 "Grieken boos over teruggave van kunst". "Het Parool". Amsterdam, 1983/10/04 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010846334:mpeg21:p006>

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56. De Volkskrant 28/11/1983 "VN-resolutie bepleit teruggave kunst aan land van herkomst". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1983/11/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879531:mpeg21:p003>

57. Het Parool 28/11/1983 "VN: kunst moet terug naar land van herkomst". "Het Parool". Amsterdam, 1983/11/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010846407:mpeg21:p004>

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58. Trouw 15/05/1984 "Baard van de Sfinx terug naar Egypte". "Trouw". Meppel, 1984/05/15 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010819800:mpeg21:p001>

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59. Het Vrije Volk 18/06/1984 "Door GERT VAN ENGELEN 'Onsterfelijke adem' keert terug in Parthenon". "Het vrije volk : democratisch-socialistisch dagblad". Rotterdam, 1984/06/18 00:00:00, p. 11. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010961744:mpeg21:p011>

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60. AD 18/02/1985 "Teruggave van kunst niet altijd beter". "Algemeen Dagblad". Rotterdam, 1985/02/18 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBPERS01:003026015:mpeg21:p00006>

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61. NRC 18/02/1985 "Libanese ambassadeur pleit voor teruggave kunstwerken". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1985/02/18 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028027:mpeg21:p007>

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62. De Volkskrant 18/02/1985 "„Kunst moet worden teruggegeven aan land van herkomst”". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1985/02/18 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879113:mpeg21:p006>

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63. Nederlands Dagblad 19/02/1985 "„Niet alle kunst hoeft naar 'bakermat' terug”". "Nederlands dagblad : gereformeerd gezinsblad / hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et al.]". Amersfoort, 1985/02/19 00:00:00, p. 10. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010569875:mpeg21:p010>

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64. De Waarheid 19/02/1985 "Verbannen kunst". "De waarheid". Amsterdam, 1985/02/19 00:00:00, p. 3. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010378469:mpeg21:p003>

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65. De Volkskrant 23/02/1985 "Onze Kongo rust zacht in Tervuren". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1985/02/23 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879118:mpeg21:p057>

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66. De Volkskrant 26/11/1985 "VN dringen bij alle lidstaten aan op teruggave van kunst". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1985/11/26 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030053:mpeg21:p007>

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67. NRC 09/01/1986 "Liever afgietsels naar Athene dan Elgin Marbles". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1986/01/09 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028780:mpeg21:p009>

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68. NRC Handelsblad 21/01/1986 "Londen moet Elgin Marbles teruggeven". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1986/01/21 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028790:mpeg21:p009>

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69. Nederlands dagblad 05/05/1985 "China wil kostbare manuscripten terug". "Nederlands dagblad : gereformeerd gezinsblad / hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et al.]". Amersfoort, 1986/05/05 00:00:00, p. 3. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010569972:mpeg21:p003>

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70. Trouw 07/08/1986 "Aboriginals willen 'slinks' verkregen kunst terug". "Trouw". Meppel, 1986/08/07 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010828030:mpeg21:p002>

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71. Nederlands dagblad 08/08/1986 "Aboriginals willen hun kunst uit Rome terug". "Nederlands dagblad : gereformeerd gezinsblad / hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et al.]". Amersfoort, 1986/08/08 00:00:00, p. 2. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010569591:mpeg21:p002>

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72. NRC 24/10/1986 "De Mo Gaoku-rotstempels BEWEGENDE SCHATTEN". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1986/10/24 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030134:mpeg21:p02>

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73. De Volkskrant 16/05/1987 "Stil bewaren wat brutaal geroofd is". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1987/05/16 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010856779:mpeg21:p06>

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74. Trouw 24/10/1987 "Kunst En alles blijft bij het oude...". "Trouw". Meppel, 1987/10/24 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010825959:mpeg21:p01>

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75. Nederlands dagblad 09/03/1988 "Egypte vraagt mogelijk van Britten faraoschat terug". "Nederlands dagblad : gereformeerd gezinsblad / hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et al.]". Amersfoort, 1988/03/09 00:00:00, p. 5. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010562708:mpeg21:p005>

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76. De Volkskrant 10/03/1988 "Egypte wil schat hebben". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1988/03/10 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010856668:mpeg21:p02>

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77. De Volkskrant 23/08/1988 "TIJDSCHRIFTEN Culturen over teruggave van ontvreemde kunst". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1988/08/23 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010856552:mpeg21:p011>

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78. De Volkskrant 21/01/1989 "KNOOPPUNT". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1989/01/21 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010856420:mpeg21:p065>

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79. Algemeen dagblad 25/05/1989 "Kunst en sport". "Algemeen Dagblad". Rotterdam, 1989/05/24 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBPERSON:003068019:mpeg21:p00006>

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80. Trouw 02/06/1989 "Kunst Cyprus eist kunstschat op Proces in Amerika internationale test-case voor teruggave". "Trouw". Meppel, 1989/06/02 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010827847:mpeg21:p021>
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81. De Volkskrant 29/08/1989 "Museale industrie bedreigt het Westen". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1989/08/29 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010857222:mpeg21:p015>
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82. De Volkskrant 08/12/1989 "Over Venus en andere schatten ITALIË". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1989/12/08 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010857154:mpeg21:p031>
83. De Volkskrant 21/08/1990 "Amerikaanse Zuni-indianen willen hun oorlogsgoden terug". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1990/08/21 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010867335:mpeg21:p013>
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84. NRC 11/12/1990 "Er ligt een roofstaat aan de Noordzee". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1990/12/11 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000029764:mpeg21:p008>
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85. De Volkskrant 02/02/1991 "Akropolis houdt een oogje op de droom van Melina". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1991/02/02 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010867384:mpeg21:p083>
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86. Trouw 28/02/1992 "Kunst Opperste Wijsheid even terug uit Indonesië". "Trouw". Meppel, 1992/02/28 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010826331:mpeg21:p021>
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87. Algemeen Dagblad 24/09/1993 "Museum staat geroofde schatten af". "Algemeen Dagblad". Rotterdam, 1993/09/24 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op

24-05-2020,

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBPERS01:003113021:mpeg21:p00015>

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88. NRC 24/09/1993 "Turkije krijgt Lydische schat terug". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1993/09/24 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030973:mpeg21:p009>

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89. NRC 25/09/1993 "De schat van Lombok". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1993/09/25 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030974:mpeg21:p033>

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90. NRC 15/11/1993 "De strijd om de Maashagedis". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1993/11/15 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000031057:mpeg21:p016>

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91. Trouw 23/11/1993 "Amerikaanse Indianen eisen kunst uit de musea op". "Trouw". Meppel, 1993/11/23 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010826275:mpeg21:p002>

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92. NRC 31/12/1993 "Turkse trots over teruggave VS van 'Lydische goudschat'". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1993/12/31 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030966:mpeg21:p011>

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93. Algemeen Dagblad 26/02/1994 "Kunst uit Afrika te gewild". "Algemeen Dagblad". Rotterdam, 1994/02/26 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBPERS01:003279023:mpeg21:p00059>

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94. NRC 13/05/1994 "De geest vloeit weer in de aarde". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1994/05/13 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000031244:mpeg21:p021>

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95. Nederlands dagblad 19/05/1994 "Museum bereid tot teruggave voorwerpen indianen". "Nederlands dagblad : gereformeerd gezinsblad / hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et al.]". Amersfoort, 1994/05/19 00:00:00, p. 4. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010628948:mpeg21:p004>

96. AD 19/05/1994 "Museum bereid tot teruggave voorwerpen indianen". "Algemeen Dagblad". Rotterdam, 1994/05/19 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBPERS01:003278015:mpeg21:p00023>

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97. NRC 19/05/1994 "Museum bereid indiaanse voorwerpen terug te geven". "NRC Handelsblad". Rotterdam, 1994/05/19 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000031249:mpeg21:p010>

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98. Nederlands dagblad 19/12/1994 "Verzamelaar berooft cultuur". "Nederlands dagblad : gereformeerd gezinsblad / hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et al.]". Amersfoort, 1994/12/19 00:00:00, p. 8. Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010629112:mpeg21:p008>

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99. Trouw 05/04/1995 "Vooral veel vervalsen, dan stort de illegale handel in". "Trouw". Meppel, 1995/04/05 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010822034:mpeg21:p018>

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100. De Volkskrant 05/04/1995 "Handige rovers richten zich vooral op kunst uit Afrika Van onze verslaggever Rob Gollin". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1995/04/05 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010870806:mpeg21:p006>

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101. De Volkskrant 16/06/1995 "De ondoorgrondelijke routes van het culturele erfgoed KUNST & CULTUUR Een verzamelaar, dat is een viezerik". "De Volkskrant". 's-Hertogenbosch, 1995/06/16 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010870865:mpeg21:p019>

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102. Trouw 16/10/1995 "Roof werd soms redding door Remco Raben". "Trouw".  
Meppel, 1995/10/16 00:00:00, Geraadpleegd op Delpher op 24-05-2020,  
<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010821378:mpeg21:p008>

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103. The. Jakarta Post 02/12/2015 "Indonesian heritage in Amsterdam's  
Rijksmuseum" Geraadpleegd op thejakartapost.com op 27-05-2020  
<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/12/02/indonesian-heritage-amsterdam-s-rijksmuseum.html>

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104. De Volkskrant 25/03/2015 "Opwinding rond de staf van prins Diponegoro"  
Geraadpleegd op volkskrant.nl op 27-05-2020,  
<https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/opwinding-rond-de-staf-van-prins-diponegoro~b82b40ed/>

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105. NRC Handelsblad 12/10/2016 "Boschbrand is niet gewoon erfgoed, het is  
koloniaal erfgoed" Geraadpleegd op NRC.nl op 27-05-2020  
<https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2016/10/12/boschbrand-is-niet-gewoon-erfgoed-het-is-koloniaal-erfgoed-4791587-a1526204>

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106. NRC Handelsblad 17/02/2017 "Een Azteken hoofddekseel in Wenen leg dat  
maar eens uit". Geraadpleegd op NRC.nl op 27-05-2020  
<https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/02/17/een-azteken-hoofddekseel-in-wenen-leg-dat-maar-eens-uit-6743753-a1546538>.

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