Sharing history and heritage with Indonesia and Suriname

A postcolonial discourse in Dutch heritage diplomacy?

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Introduction

Debates about ownership of colonial heritage kept in Dutch museums has been ongoing for some years now, with postcolonial discourse gaining foothold in museum practices and issues of restitution.[1] Surprisingly, the discourse on Dutch colonial heritage in the former Dutch colonies is much less self-reflective about the colonial history. One of the reasons that postcolonial discourse has not gotten a prominent place in overseas heritage discourse yet, might be the political gains that are connected to heritage abroad. The existence of Dutch tangible heritage in former Dutch colonies offers the government of the Netherlands the opportunity to promote its international cultural policy and forge better relations. Because the tangible heritage proves the past Dutch presence in the former colonies, the Dutch government considers this heritage as "shared heritage" between the Dutch and the former colonised states.[2]

In 2015, Tim Winter coined this political strategy as "heritage diplomacy," by which he means

> a set of processes whereby cultural and natural pasts shared between and across nations become subject to exchanges, collaborations and forms of cooperative governance. Crucially, recognition of heritage as a form of spatial and social governance also means it incorporates forms of hard power too.[3]

Winter points out that the material and spatial existence of Dutch heritage abroad adds hard power to the soft politics of cultural diplomacy, because the heritage sites provide the former colonisers access to former colonies under the guise of heritage protection practices. While the Dutch government thus uses tangible heritage to forge better relations, they neglect the

[1] For the status quo of the debate on restitution of museum objects in the Netherlands see *Museum Volkenkunde,* "NMVW publiceert principes voor claims koloniale collecties", March 7, 2019, https://www.volkenkunde.nl/nl/over-museum-volkenkunde/pers/nmvw-publiceert-principes-voor-claims-koloniale-collecties.

[2] William Logan, Ullrich Kockel and Máiréad Nic Craith, 'The New Heritage Studies: Origins and Evolution, Problems and Prospects', in *A Companion to Heritage Studies* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2015), 5-6.

[3] Tim Winter, "Heritage diplomacy", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 21 (2015), 1007.

colonial narratives that are often connected to shared heritage. This neglect may impede the positive workings of heritage diplomacy, as the Dutch heritage in the former colonies might be perceived as "conflict heritage" or "difficult heritage" by the former colonised states.[4] Insistence on the preservation of such heritage may instead lead to more conflict and worsening relations.[5]

Postcolonial discourse deconstructs traditional narratives and currently allows Dutch museums to engage with difficult heritage in their collections and with histories of colonialism and slavery that were not told before. Postcolonial theory focuses on changing narratives of the other vs us to an all-inclusive narrative with multiple perspectives of oppressed peoples included.[6] In order for heritage diplomacy to be successfully address difficult heritage, a postcolonial approach might be required too. This thesis is about the use of postcolonial discourse in heritage diplomacy of the Netherlands. More specifically, heritage diplomacy of the Netherlands is mostly managed via the Shared Cultural Heritage (SCH) programme of the Dutch government. From the late 1980s, the Dutch government increased its focus on international cultural policy and started to develop long-term programmes aiming to promote Dutch culture abroad and use this promotion as an invitation to renew political and economic involvement with the former colonies and forge better diplomatic relations. The programme in progress right now is the SCH programme of 2017-2020. A new programme for the period 2021-2024 is already in development.

The SCH programme is one of the three main goals of the Dutch international cultural policy. It focuses on ten target countries specifically and is accompanied by funds for projects in these countries. The selection of the ten target countries (Australia, Brazil, India, Indonesia, Japan, Russia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, and the United States of America) is not arbitrary. Some of these countries are former colonies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, while other share a close historical relationship with the Dutch ethnic people connected to

[4] William Logan and Keir Reeves (eds.), 'Introduction: Remembering Places of Pain and Shame', in *Places of Pain and Shame: Dealing with 'difficult heritage'* (London: Routledge, 2009), 1; Shu-Mei Huang and Hyun-Kyung Lee, "Difficult heritage diplomacy? Re-articulating places of pain and shame as world heritage in northeast Asia", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 25 (2019), 143.

[5] Huang and Lee, "Difficult heritage diplomacy?", 143.

[6] For more background information on postcolonial theory and its use in international relations, see Shimpa Biswas, 'Postcolonialism', in *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, eds. Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki and Steve Smith, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 221-223. Postcolonial theory is the framework for thinking about postcolonialism, while postcolonial discourse is the implementation of the concepts of postcolonial theory in practice.

trade and explorations. While the programme in this way acknowledges colonial history, it does so in a specific way: as the reason for present and future cooperation.[7]

The Republic of Indonesia and the Republic of Suriname both gained independence in the twentieth century, but were ruled by Dutch imperialist colonial administrations in the nineteenth century. Although these cases are similar in their experience of Dutch imperialist colonialism, the outcomes of the Dutch heritage diplomacy in these countries differ. The extent to which the narratives of Dutch colonialism in these countries are deconstructed differs too. An analysis within the framework of postcolonial theory may explain these differences. Therefore, the research question of this thesis is: How does Dutch heritage diplomacy in its former colonies Indonesia and Suriname engage with postcolonial discourse?

In order to answer this question, and to let the answer shed light on postcolonial debates about heritage all over Europe, a framework of concepts and theories is presented first. In the analysis that follows, primary documents on Dutch international cultural policy from 2017 to 2020 are put under investigation. These documents reflect the status quo of the Dutch government's view on heritage diplomacy and its aims and workings. The practices of this policy in two case countries, Indonesia and Suriname, highlight whether Dutch heritage diplomacy can be successful in light of postcolonial theory. The main results are elaborated on in the discussion, after which a short conclusion follows.

Literature review

Culture, memory, and heritage

In order to analyse the deconstruction of the narrative on heritage, it is important to know how the meaning of heritage is constructed. The collective memory of a group of people or a nation state creates meaning of the heritage, for present self-identification of nation states is shaped by the past and the memory of that past. When the collective memory of a group is presented as an undeniable truth, it becomes the nation's history and part of the history curriculum of schools. History in this context is understood as cultural memory, the memories that exceed generations and institutions, and which is presented as a never-ending reality.[8] This cultural memory is always mediating and reconstructing the past to fit the image of a

[7] *Cultural Heritage Agency*, "Shared Cultural Heritage Programme", access October 4, 2019, https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/topics/shared-cultural-heritage/shared-cultural-heritage-programme.
[8] Jan Assmann, "Collective memory and cultural identity", *New German Critique* (1995), 128-130.

group of people. Even though individual memories can be part of cultural memory, cultural memory of a group is mainly static and not quickly changeable.[9]

In the Netherlands, for example, the Dutch government is involved with the production of history school books and the examination on history constructed of several distinctive narratives, the historical canon. The Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is the direct initiator and sponsor of the historical canon, that, according to the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Ingrid van Engelshoven, aims to reflect a common image of Dutch history and the events in history that are deemed important for the development of the Netherlands. Because the collective memory that the Dutch government would like to preserve is static and fixed, and difficult to revise, the social memory of subaltern groups is easily ignored or negated. Protests against the canon were voiced when it was established by the Dutch government in 2006, for example by the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands that were not or barely included.[10] A more informal call for revision of the canon was voiced on national television only last December 15, 2019 by a rapper and a comedian.[11]

Cultural memory is related to normative power, because the self-image of a group of people creates a set of rules about what is normal and what is not. It also dictates what memories are important for the self-identification of the group, which determines what is being remembered and what memories are forgotten.[12] Political memory is normative as well, but usually does not transcend the borders of a legal territorial unity: the nation state. The purpose of political memory is to keep a group of people within a certain territory unified and let the people within this group experience political unity. Political memory creates homogeneity, which means that the meaning of symbols is carefully selected to fit the purpose of unification. Both political memory and cultural memory in this way give the individual meaning to his life and his function in society. The heritage constructed on political memory often represents the endurance of the group over time.[13]

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[9] Aleida Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', in *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis,* eds. Robert E. Goodin and Charles Tilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 211; Assmann, "Collective memory and cultural identity", 130-132.

[10] Alon Confino, "Collective memory and cultural history: problems of method", *The American Historical Review* (1997), 1394; Ingrid van Engelshoven, "Bijlage Adviesaanvraag stelsel 2021-2024 bij brief adviesaanvraag stelsel 2021-2024", *Ministry of Education, Culture and Science* (December 20, 2018), 7; Ingrid van Engelshoven, "Opdrachtbrief herrijking Canon van Nederland", *Ministry of Education, Culture and Science* (May 31, 2019), 1-2.

[11] *VPRO zondag met lubach*, "Canon van Nederland – Zondag met Lubach (S10)", December 15, 2019, https://youtu.be/ATdOC3tdlcc.

[12] Assmann, "Collective memory and cultural identity", 132-133.

[13] Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', 215-217 and 220-221.

A national traumatic event can belong to the political memory as well, for such an event can create self-awareness in the nation state as being or deserving to be legally recognised by other nation states.[14] In the past few decades, minorities and formerly oppressed nations have increasingly taken the role of the historical victim, like the members of the Royal Dutch Indonesian Army (KNIL) that supported the Dutch in the war against Indonesian independence fighters, but were left to their fate when the Dutch retreated from Indonesia. This process of victimisation creates a new interaction between nation states that share in the history of the oppression and the historical victims. It may lead to a new framework for acknowledgement of past crimes as the start for future cooperation. Before a process of convergence and peace is started, however, the past has to be relived. Moreover, reconciliation is not the inevitable outcome of an interaction between historical oppressor and victim, even more if political guilt is only shown in the interest of future cooperation and the impact of remorse not fully understood.[15]

There is another issue as well with regard to political memory and reconciliation, as the past is no longer accessible in the present. In order to preserve the past, therefore, symbols are created that represent the past and remember the past in a particular way. These symbols are lieux de mémoire: places of memory. Lieux de mémoire as physical sites mediate the process of remembering. This means that the political memory shapes what is preserved and remembered about the past and in this way, creates a version of the past that fits the political memory. What is remembered in one political memory, is forgotten in the other. Constructions about the past, then, can conflict. In the case of interstate reconciliation about the past, a precondition is that the interpretation of the past is homogenised or at least confronted by the conflicting historical narrative. Heritage as a lieu de mémoire is also subject to the present interpretation of the past. It is mediated history, which makes the memory of the past always collective and never personal. History and heritage as the mediated past depend on materiality, functionality and symbolism. Therefore, heritage as a lieu de mémoire does not represent a past reality, but a present construction of that past with a specific

[14] Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', 217-219.

[15] Elazar Barkan, *The Guilt of Nations: Restitution and Negotiating Historical Injustices* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), xvi-xviii; Avishai Margalit, *The ethics of memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 5-6.

function. It serves to create metaculture, in order for the individual to understand how he relates to the collective.[16]

According to the main global organisation concerned with heritage practices and preservation, the United Nations' Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), one of the criteria for the preservation of heritage is that it has "outstanding universal significance."[17] Defined as such, the aim of heritage is to create a global community that can share in one culture. Heritage is thus the metaculture that connects all individuals. This is an optimistic view on the function of heritage, but over time UNESCO has had to acknowledge the multiculturality of reality. Since heritage is a mediation of culture, it is inevitable that the presentation of heritage as universal results in conflict over the meaning of cultural memory.[18] Before explaining how the mediation of memory into heritage can result in conflict, it is important to understand what the current status quo in heritage discourse is, and how it relates to postcolonial theory and discourse.

Postcolonialism and heritage discourse

UNESCO is the major political player in the field of heritage discourse. This international organisation not only funds cultural projects and advocates the protection and preservation of tangible and intangible heritage all over the globe, it also creates a space in which multiple actors can connect to come to a transnational cooperation on the protection of heritage. Since the 1970s, the norms and values of UNESCO have increasingly dominated heritage discourse globally. The organisation was founded in 1945 and from the start focussed not only on the promotion of international cooperation on heritage issues, but promoted culture as a vehicle for diplomacy and establishing peace, humanism and globalism. UNESCO's main aim in 1945 was to unite all peoples, all civilisations into one major global community that would respect every culture, live peacefully and stimulate cultural progress through transnational cooperation. All civilisations and cultures were considered to be equal, which banished Eurocentric worldviews to the past. UNESCO also advocated peaceful decolonisation and

[16] Marlite Halbertsma, 'Introduction', in *The Heritage Theatre: Globalisation and Cultural Heritage*, eds. Patricia van Ulzen, Alex van Stripriaan and Marlite Halbertsma (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 4 and 7; Pierre Nora, "Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire", *Representations* (1989), 7-12, 17, 19 and 22-23.
[17] Halbertsma, 'Introduction', 8.
[18] Halbertsma, 'Introduction', 10 and 12-16.

established a new framework that emphasised European narratives less, and histories of marginalised cultural groups more.[19]

Eventually, UNESCO was criticised by realists for its disregard of a political reality of conflict that culture proved too weak to counter. Moreover, the universal human rights that UNESCO promoted were criticised by postcolonials because these rights proved not to be that universally shared by all nations and peoples. In UNESCO's Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Culture and Natural Heritage of 1972, heritage was viewed as one of such universal rights. The reasoning behind this was that cultural property is at the core of every human being's identity, and therefore, access to culture and heritage is essential to understand one's self.[20] Heritage, however, is a construction of identity that attributes significance to some events, places and stories, and not to others. 'Shared heritage', functioning as the cultural property of two or more groups of people or nations, can cause conflict when the construction of its meaning excludes one party. This exclusion happens mainly when other interests play into heritage conservation.[21]

Indeed, in Europe of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, heritage was mostly used for the purpose of generating national consciousness. Therefore, it is no surprise that as a symbol of national or ethnic pride, heritage is often destructed during wars and other conflicts.[22] After transition of a nation from conflict to a new regime, sometimes an attempt is made to punish former perpetrators of violence and destructors of heritage sites. In order for a new regime to do so, the historical narrative about the old regime has to be revised. This is called transitional justice. Only if the truth about the past and its heritage is told, the new nation can experience real justice and peace. The trials carried out by assigned truth and reconciliation committees also serve to establish a good image of the new regime, and regain the trust of

[19] Paul Betts, "Humanity's New Heritage: UNESCO and the Rewriting of World History", *Past and Present* 228 (2015), 249-250, 252, 262-263, 274-275 and 277.
[20] *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, "Editor's Introduction: Is There a Universal Basis for Human Rights?", *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 74 (2015), 7; Barbara J. Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 3 and 5.
[21] Logan, Kockel and Craith, 'The New Heritage Studies', 1-4 and 8-9; Winter, "Heritage diplomacy", 1010.
[22] Gabi Dolff-Bonekämper, "Cultural Heritage and Conflict: the view from Europe", *Museum International* 62 (2010), 15; Nao Hayashi, "Heritage and Conflict Situations: The Role of the International Heritage Community and National Agents", *Museum International* 265-268 (2016), 56; Logan, Kockel and Craith, 'The New Heritage Studies', 9-10.

citizens in national leaders. In this way, transitional justice serves the new nation very well in legitimising the new political order.[23]

Since nationalist tendencies are abusive of using history and heritage for one's own purposes, it is hard to avoid bias within heritage discourse. As not every stakeholder in heritage practices has the agency to construct the meaning of the heritage or the financial means to manage it, there is often negotiation about shared heritage.[24] If individual, political interests of multiple stakeholders cannot be converged, mutual cooperation is impeded. This "atomisation" of heritage politics goes beyond "authorised heritage discourses."[25] For example, heritage tourism has become a large drive for many local political leaders to engage with heritage. This heritage tourist business benefits only certain individuals, and not society as a whole. What is considered heritage and worthy of preservation is based on economic motives.[26]

Heritage in former colonies is often invested with multiple, conflicting meanings. Debates about the multiple meanings of heritage often highlight the function of the heritage site in political rhetoric. The political identity in which the heritage is given meaning determines for who the heritage was created. When new political identities are created after decolonisation, the fixed idea of one imagined community in which there is an 'us' and 'the other' is challenged.[27] However, in every practice of heritage, there is a "permitted otherness," that cannot be eradicated.[28] The power relations between international, national and local

[23] Paige Arthur, "How "Transitions" Reshaped Human Rights: A Conceptual History of Transitional Justice", *Human Rights Quarterly* 31 (2009), 322, 325, 333, 355-356 and 358; Ruti G. Teitel, "Transitional Justice Genealogy", *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 16 (2003), 76 and 78-79.

[24] Logan, Kockel and Craith, 'The New Heritage Studies', 9 and 13-17.

[25] Adèle Esposito and Gabriel Fauveaud, "The atomization of heritage politics in post-colonial cities: The case of Phnom Penh, Cambodia", *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space* (2018), 2 and 15.

[26] Esposito and Fauveaud, "The atomization of heritage politics in post-colonial cities", 3-4 and 9; Michael S. Falser, "From a colonial reinvention to postcolonial heritage and a global commodity: performing and re-enacting Angkor Wat and the Royal Khmer Ballet", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20 (2014), 703; Darrin Lee Long, "Cultural Heritage Management in Post-colonial Polities: not the heritage of the other", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 6 (2000), 318; Karen Thompson, "Post-colonial Politics and Resurgent Heritage: The Development of Kyrgyzstan's Heritage Tourism Product", *Current Issues in Tourism* 7 (2004), 371 and 377-378; Tim Winter, 'Conclusion: In (the) place of modernity appears the illusion of history', in *Post-conflict Heritage, Postcolonial Tourism: Culture, Politics and Development at Angkor* (London: Routledge, 2007), 139.

[27] Yuk Wah Chan and Vivian P.Y. Lee, "Postcolonial cultural governance: a study of heritage management in post-1997 Hong Kong", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 23 (2017), 276-278 and 280; Stuart Hall, "Un-settling 'the heritage', re-imagining the post-nation: Whose heritage?", *Third Text* 13 (1999), 4, 6-7, 9-10 and 12; Long, "Cultural Heritage Management in Post-colonial Polities", 322.

[28] Olaf Kaltmeier and Mario Rufer, 'Introduction: The uses of heritage and the postcolonial condition in Latin America', in *Entangled Heritages: Postcolonial Perspectives on the Uses of the Past in Latin America* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 11.

stakeholders are never equal, and the heritage practice always leans towards one dominant narrative. After all, heritage serves homogenisation of culture. Current heritage discourse, then, acknowledges that heritage always has a specific aim and fits in constructions. It is therefore not surprising that heritage diplomacy nowadays is a widespread phenomenon. Although the aim of heritage diplomacy may be idealistic, it is also invested with political and economic interests.[29]

Conflict heritage and forgiveness

The meaning of conflict heritage is almost always disputed, because the meaning of the conflict that the heritage refers to is. Examples of conflict heritage are war memorials, colonial prisons or genocide sites. These places remind the visitor directly of the conflict of the past and the shame and pain connected to it. Often, not the victims of the past are remembered, but the oppressors. The history of the victim is forgotten or neglected instead. In this way, the choice to remember is a contested one in itself. There is also conflict heritage of which the meaning for the victim is not forgotten, but that is nevertheless used for one specific remembrance of the past that serves present political purposes. In cases of shared heritage, there are always multiple narratives on the meaning of the heritage. But most of the time, the memory of the dominant community is put before the healing of the individual. In case of conflict heritage about colonial history, the memory of one community (the coloniser) is deemed more important than the identity of the other community (the colonised).[30]

This process of valorisation of heritage is not always visible. Sometimes, the narrative on the heritage seems to represent the memories of all stakeholders. But without dialogue and discussion, this cannot be taken for granted. A process of negotiation has to deal actively with the historical and current power relations of the parties involved. This is especially hard when the memory of the remembered past is still alive. Mediation between embodied individual and social memory and political and cultural memory should be well managed, in order for later generations to remember the conflict in a most inclusive way. Cultural and political memory are often corrective as it establishes what is important to be remembered for all

[29] Huang and Lee, "Difficult heritage diplomacy?", 143; Kaltmeier and Rufer, 'Introduction', 11 and 14; Winter, "Heritage diplomacy", 1002, 1005-1007, 1010 and 1012.
[30] Dolff-Bonekämper, "Cultural Heritage and Conflict", 15; Huang and Lee, "Difficult heritage diplomacy?", 143-144; Logan and Reeves, 'Introduction', 1-2, 5-6 and 9-12.

individuals and minority groups. Especially around contested pasts, corrective remembering is a top-down process. When the conflict is still present, it is even harder to reconcile different memories of the heritage. Ongoing contestation can even make the heritage site centre stage of future conflict.[31]

In order to come to terms with former conflict, like colonial violence, acknowledgement of the impact of that conflict by the oppressor is necessary. This requires the recognition of multiplicity of stories and memories about that past, some positive and some negative. After acknowledgement has been established of the wrongdoings of the oppressor as ethically wrong, the guilty party can ask the victim for forgiveness. Currently, many nations are actually willing to come to acknowledgement of the dark parts of their pasts. Rival interpretations of the past can simply no longer be ignored when a nation wants to start a positive future relationship with a nation that it once oppressed. In this way, "guilt" has become "a powerful political tool because of its vagueness."[32]

There are, however, many past conflicts which have not been reconciled yet. The history of slavery, as part of European imperialist colonialism, is one of them.[33] Colonial oppression and inequality is another one, which is still very imbedded in the European institutions and uses European ethnological and anthropological museums as its archives.[34] Nor does the plea for forgiveness and the recognition of historical truth automatically entail restitution for the past. Restitution is often the end result of negotiations about a difficult past. Since most discussions about slavery are held between the descendants of the perpetrators (plantation holders, slave traders) and victims (enslaved peoples), the legal claims on restitution or reparation are very difficult to ratify. An apology is not enough in this case, because the extent of the atrocities is huge and the monetary value of restitution unimaginably high. To ask for forgiveness and admit guilt, then, is only the start of a process of healing and forgiveness.[35]

For full recognition of the past, remembering and reliving the past are required. In order to do so, the past has to be mediated into the present. This means that there is agency in remembering and in forgetting. When the past is deliberately forgotten, negated, or ignored,

[31] Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', 211; Huang and Lee, "Difficult heritage diplomacy?", 146-147, 152-153 and 155.
[32] Barkan, *The Guilt of Nations*, 316-320 and 323.
[33] Ibid. 324-325.
[34] Felwine Sarr and Bénédicte Savoy, *The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage: Toward a New Relational Ethics* (2018), 2.
[35] Barkan, *The Guilt of Nations*, 286, 288-289, 294 and 343; Margalit, *The ethics of memory*, 6.

there is no moral encounter with the self and past behaviour of the self. In order for the victim to be able to fully forgive the oppressor, the past cannot be left undiscussed, but has to be remembered actively. Forgiveness follows when the victim chooses to no longer take the past wrongdoing of the oppressor into account. This process puts the responsibility for reconciliation and restoration of the relationship in the court of the historical oppressor.[36]

Forgiveness as a process of healing can be applied to heritage diplomacy with conflict heritage as well. This process needs dialogue and new debates about the colonial past and the past practices that hurt the former colonised. The conflict past is not forgotten or the crimes conducted ignored, but actively discussed. In this way, past wrongdoings are acknowledged and conflict heritage no longer points to a source of conflict, but to the healing process of two nations instead.[37]

Healing the relationship of two nations through heritage diplomacy requires that both national stories on the heritage are told and heard. In the best scenario, heritage diplomacy should create a space for negotiation, debate and discussion of differences. A new system of symbols mediating the meaning of the heritage can be created after these discussions that is inclusive and stimulates mutual understanding. This process cannot be dictated by heritage experts or international heritage discourse like the UNESCO's framework, but benefits from an individual approach.[38]

Primary analysis: Policy, practices, and actors

Dutch heritage diplomacy in historical perspective

Dutch awareness of heritage started in the seventeenth century, when Dutch merchants started collecting cultural artefacts from all over the world and displayed and preserved them in so-called curiosity cabinets. In the eighteenth century, the wealth of the Dutch Republic declined, which resulted in a less fanatic antiquarian urge. In the nineteenth century, however, with the start of national constructions of political identity, the interest in the past rose again. An active, conscious awareness of the importance of the preservation of the past was

[36] Margalit, *The ethics of memory*, 16-17, 189, 193, 196-197, 199, 201 and 204-205.
[37] Muchativugwa Hove, "Dialogues of Memory, Heritage and Transformation: Re-membering Contested Identities and Spaces in Postcolonial South African and Zimbabwean White Writings", *Journal of Literary Studies* 32 (2016), 60-63; Sarr and Savoy, *The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage*, 87.
[38] John Daniel Giblin, "Post-conflict heritage: symbolic healing and cultural renewal", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20 (2014), 502, 505, 513 and 515.

established. Since Suriname had been a colony of the Netherlands from 1667 onwards and the Dutch East Indies from 1800 onwards, artefacts from the colonies were included in the collections that were founded in this period.[39] The artefacts were used as evidence to support the existence of European racial superiority over African, Asian, and American peoples. Mainly anthropologists and ethnologists were involved in bringing back cultural heritage from the colonies to Dutch museums for this aim.[40] In this way, the artefacts collected from abroad supported inclusion and exclusion on who and what the Dutch nation state was. The Dutch political identity thus was based on heritage with a 'permitted otherness' that benefitted the homogeneity and unification of the people in the Dutch nation.[41]

As the means for preserving artefacts were still limited, the Dutch collections depended heavily on gifts and donations, from which the exact collecting practices were not clear. In the case of the colonies, Dutch archaeological experts chose what was important to be preserved and maintained.[42] After the Second World War, however, the peoples from the Dutch East Indies rose against the Dutch colonial regime successfully. The call for independence resulted in a war between the Dutch army and Indonesian independence fighters. In 1949, under international pressure, the Indonesians were grudgingly granted independence by the Dutch. Only then, Indonesians were trained as archaeologists and heritage and history experts themselves. From the 1950s onwards, the Indonesians started to construct a new, Indonesian, cultural identity, different from Dutch identity.[43] Five years later, the Caribbean and Suriname in the West Indies gained a more autonomous position in the Kingdom of the Netherlands too. Eventually, Suriname gained independence in 1975, but it continued to rely on the Netherlands for financing of its economy and cultural projects.[44]

In the 1980s, the Netherlands was an established welfare state willing to invest in culture and heritage as the promotion of one shared political 'Dutch' culture. At the same time, a

[39] Monique van den Dries, Corijanne Slappendel and Sjoerd van der Linde, 'Dutch Archaeology Abroad: From Treasure Hunting to Local Community Engagement', in *European Archaeology Abroad: Global Settings, Comparative Perspectives*, eds. Sjoerd van der Linde et al. (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2012), 129-133.
[40] Sarr and Savoy, *The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage*, 11 and 13-14.
[41] Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', 223; Kaltmeier and Rufer, 'Introduction', 11; Logan and Reeves, 'Introduction', 9; Winter, "Heritage diplomacy", 998.
[42] Sarr and Savoy, *The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage,* 50-59.
[43] Dries, Slappendel and Linde, 'Dutch Archaeology Abroad', 137-138; Jennifer Lindsay, 'Heirs to world culture 1950-1965: An introduction', in *Heirs to World Culture: Being Indonesian 1950-1965*, eds. Jennifer Lindsay and Maya H.T. Liem (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2012), 2-7.
[44] Gert Oostindie, 'De teloorgang van een bijzondere relatie', in *De toekomst van de relatie Nederland-Suriname*, ed. Pitou van Dijk (Amsterdam: Rozenberg, 2004), 18-20.

prominent international cultural policy emerged. This new strategy of the Dutch government allowed for state financing of cultural projects and heritage preservation abroad. The Dutch government also became more concerned with complying to international policies of cultural exchange and heritage preservation, for example the guidelines of UNESCO.[45]

Towards the turn of the millennium, the interest of the Dutch increasingly turned to 'shared' and 'mutual heritage.' Only projects that could be beneficial culturally and profitable for the Netherlands were subsidised. For example, projects had to give insight into the history of marginal groups in the Netherlands. In this framework, Dutch colonial heritage has received a lot of attention of the government and researchers.[46] In the meanwhile, the United States of America, Turkey, and Japan had started to use their overseas heritage as bargaining chips in diplomatic interactions. Western heritage expertise was used as an argument for heritage preservation programmes conducted by these countries in the territory of others. In order not to be blamed for neocolonialist or imperialist motives, mostly non-state actors are involved with carrying out these policies. Sometimes, extra-territorial heritage preservation is justified as being an apology for the colonial past. In line with these new policies, Dutch heritage diplomacy was established.[47]

Over the past two decades, the Dutch government has established four-year programmes that focus specifically on international cultural policy through shared heritage. They were named 'Shared cultural heritage,' (SCH), 'Mutual cultural heritage,' or the 'Common cultural heritage policy.'[48] The programmes' aims are creating "mutual understanding, [reinforcing] ties and [intensifying] a fruitful cooperation between the participating countries" and are set in an authorised international heritage discourse.[49] Cooperation with the partner countries of the SCH programmes, however, has not always been easy, since former Dutch colonies have asked the Netherlands to acknowledge the dark sides of Dutch shared history and the conflict heritage that is proof of this dark history. For example, photographs taken from Indonesia and

[45] Dries, Slappendel and Linde, 'Dutch Archaeology Abroad', 139 and 143-145.
[46] Ibid. 146-147 and 150.
[47] Amy Clarke, 'Heritage Diplomacy', in *Handbook of cultural security*, ed. Yasushi Watanabe (Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2018), 418-419; 422, 424, 426, 428, 431-432.
[48] *DutchCulture*, "Mutual Cultural Heritage Programme 2013-2016", access November 21, 2019, https://dutchculture.nl/nl/mutual-cultural-heritage-programme-2013-2016; Cees Jan van Golen (ed.), *Footsteps and Fingerprints: The Legacy of a Shared History* (Zwolle: Uitgeverij Waanders, 2010), 8; 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 (2014), 182.
[49] Golen, *Footsteps and Fingerprints*, 4.

Indonesians from the first decades of the colony's existence are almost always framed in a European narrative, meaning that they depict Indonesia as an exotic place. On the other hand, pictures showing physical punishments of labourers on the plantations were hidden away from the Dutch public and only in 1987 discovered and published by a Dutch historian.[50] Also, the extreme violence of the Dutch colonial officials and army against the Indonesian peoples over the course of the colonial period in Indonesia was negated and publicly ignored for decades in the Netherlands.[51] The collection practices of the Dutch anthropologists and ethnologists in the former colonies was not evaluated morally either, since this would entail renewed insights on the ownership of cultural artefacts in Dutch museums and the dark parts of Dutch colonialism.[52]

Dutch heritage diplomacy in theory

In order to investigate the ideas behind the Shared Cultural Heritage programmes, it is important to analyse the documents written on the policy by the Dutch government itself, mainly published by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education, Culture and Science. The definition of heritage and heritage sites the Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Van Engelshoven, uses in these documents, is the places that

> tell stories about where we come from, who we are and how we develop ourselves. With big changes in our living environment, heritage offers us recognition, stability, and identity. First and foremost, monuments, historic city centres and cultural landscapes have a value in themselves: they are the carriers of the past that we cherish because of their meaning and beauty. We would like to give them to future generations too.[53]

This definition immediately makes clear that, in the view of its government, the past is an integrative part of the present identity of the Netherlands. On the other hand, this definition points to a remembrance of the past as a collective one, in which as many as possible Dutch people should be able to share. The Minister thus clearly refers to a political and cultural

[50] *Wereldmuseum*, "Fotografie", access December 23, 2019, https://www.wereldmuseum.nl/nl/fotografie; *Wereldmuseum*, "Indonesië als wingewest", access December 23, 2019, https://www.wereldmuseum.nl/nl/indonesie-als-wingewest.

[51] *Wereldmuseum*, "Van 'politionele acties' naar koloniale oorlog", access December 23, 2019, https://www.wereldmuseum.nl/nl/van-politionele-acties-naar-koloniale-oorlog.

[52] Scott, "Sharing the divisions of the colonial past", 183-190.

[53] Ingrid van Engelshoven, "Bijlage Erfgoed Telt bij kamerbrief over Erfgoed Telt", *Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science* (June 22, 2018), 3 (transl. H.G).

memory of the past that is connected to heritage as symbols of that past. On the other hand, in other letters, it is stressed that this collective past may be in conflict with individual and minority experiences of the past. The Minister stresses both the positive connections created by heritage and the negative disconnections that are growing as Dutch society is becoming more multicultural, while the narratives on heritage are not. Writing new Dutch history is a challenge and a search for new identity that engages with debates about past identity and its contemporary use. Therefore, the Dutch government wants to actively use the story behind heritage, in a revised form, to connect all Dutch citizens in the history of the country. To this aim, Minister Van Engelshoven promised to implement better online and physical access, a revision, re-evaluation, innovation and adaptation of the history programmes at high schools, that are connected to heritage sites in the country.[54]

In the historical canon referred to before, the Dutch government promotes a clear political memory. In order for conflicting individual and social memories to be implemented in this canon too, the revision of the canon will stress dark pages of Dutch history in order to engage into dialogue about histories of slavery and colonialism. Minister Van Engelshoven would like to provide better access to heritage sites that tell these histories.[55] For example, the National Archives of the Netherlands has developed a database for archival documents on the names of slaves in Suriname in the nineteenth century and another database on the slavery system in the Dutch East Indies, which is a much lesser known history.[56]

This new approach of the Dutch government complies with the authorised heritage discourse of UNESCO. As society and its cultural consumers are diversifying and changing, culture, which is "for everyone," should change too, the Minister has claimed.[57] In another

[54] Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', 211 and 216; Engelshoven, "Bijlage Erfgoed Telt bij kamerbrief over Erfgoed Telt", 6, 20 and 22; Ingrid van Engelshoven, "Kamerbrief over Erfgoed Telt", *Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science* (June 22, 2018), 1.

[55] Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', 211; Ingrid van Engelshoven, "Bijlage Voortgang Cultuur in een open samenleving bij aanbiedingsbrief voortgang Cultuur in een open samenleving", *Ministry of Education, Culture and Science* (October 19, 2018), 4.

[56] *DutchCulture*, "Suriname: Surinamese slave registers accessible online", September 10, 2018, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/news/suriname-surinamese-slave-registers-accessible-online; *National Archives of the Netherlands*, "Slavernij en slavenhandel in Nederlands-Indië (1820-1900)", access November 1, 2019, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/zoekhulpen/slavernij-en-slavenhandel-in-nederlands-indie-1820-1900#collapse-1338; *National Archives of the Netherlands*, "Zoekhulp Slavernij en slavenhandel in Nederlands-Indië (1820-1900) online", May 23, 2019, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/beleven/nieuws/zoekhulp-slavernij-en-slavenhandel-in-nederlands-indie-1820-1900-online.

[57] Engelshoven, "Bijlage Voortgang Cultuur in een open samenleving bij aanbiedingsbrief voortgang Cultuur in een open samenleving", 7.

letter, she refers to "all groups of Dutch society" that have to share in the revised culture.[58] Both these expressions are in line with the UNESCO approach and discourse on heritage.[59] For the Dutch government, the importance of shared heritage that supports the narrative of Dutch identity relies on this 'universal significance' of heritage. As culture and art are seen as are "significant to people's cultural identity and historical awareness," it is important that cultural artefacts are kept safe and protected internationally, for example through the implementation of punishments on illicit trade and traffic in stolen heritage.[60] This gives the Dutch government justification to start interacting in heritage preservation and protection abroad. Access to heritage is framed as being a human right, and it would be inhumane to negate Dutch citizens who are proud of their political identity as overseas travellers, discoverers, and rulers, the heritage that remembers this past. Emphasizing this universality of heritage will lead to mutual understanding, the Dutch government mentions, as is in line with UNESCO's aim.[61]

The Dutch governments fails to incorporate the critique on UNESCO's notion of universalism. Nor does the Minister acknowledge the impact of slavery and colonialism in the past and the traumatic experiences that were caused by this history. The Minister uses only the general terms 'slavery' and 'colonialism' to refer to dark pages of Dutch history. This is different from taking responsibility for this past, on which legal consequences might follow and the Dutch government itself might be put on trial for historical atrocities like physical and mental abuse of large groups of people. The colonial officials in Indonesia committed numerous crimes against the Indonesian population, like shootings of Indonesian independence fighters without a trial. With changing the history and allowing for opening up narratives about heritage, guilt of that past is not expressed explicitly.[62]

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[58] Engelshoven, "Opdrachtbrief herijking Canon van Nederland", 2.
[59] Engelshoven, "Bijlage Voortgang Cultuur in een open samenleving bij aanbiedingsbrief voortgang Cultuur in een open samenleving", 7 and 12.
[60] *Government of the Netherlands*, "Information exchange meeting on the export and import of cultural goods", November 29, 2018, https://www.government.nl/topics/international-cultural-cooperation/documents/diplomatic-statements/2018/11/29/information-exchange-meeting-on-the-export-and-import-of-cultural-goods.
[61] Hayashi, "Heritage and Conflict Situations" 61; Logan, Kockel and Craith, 'The New Heritage Studies', 4; *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, "Beleidskader internationaal cultuurbeleid 2017-2020" (May 4, 2016), 7-8.
[62] Arthur, "How "Transitions" Reshaped Human Rights", 342; Barkan, *The Guilt of Nations*, xvi, xxviii-xxvix and xl; Sarr and Savoy, *The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage*, 40-41 and 49-57; *Wereldmuseum*. "Van 'politionele acties' naar koloniale oorlog".

An example is mentioned of Surinamese people living in the Netherlands that are challenging the tradition of Sinterklaas and Zwarte Piet, traditionally celebrated in the Netherlands from November up to 5 December. The narrative of this celebration includes Dutch roots in slavery trade and slavery, and some Surinamese-Dutch citizens want the tradition to be changed, as they feel that Dutch culture excludes them. Their viewpoint challenges the majority of Dutch society, and some ethnic Dutch people protest the demand for change. The collective memory of the Dutch celebrating Sinterklaas seems to be more important than the exclusion that this collective memory promotes.[63]

Evaluation about the dominant image of Dutch culture, history, and heritage is not only necessary within the Netherlands, but in the Dutch international cultural policy too. More openness and debate about what positive and negative impact the shared past created is necessary to broaden and deepen the knowledge about the shared heritage, and thus lead to inclusion of more people of different countries and backgrounds or social contexts in the Dutch historical narrative. In order to initiate dialogue about the shared past of the Netherlands and former Dutch colonies, the Dutch government would like to create a space for debates on the shared history and heritage. This space has to be open to all perspectives on history and all meanings of heritage. In discussions on the history and heritage of Dutch slavery practices, this space is particularly important, Minister Van Engelshoven has argued. She has vowed to engage actively with questions of colonial heritage that was stolen in colonial times and is now requested back by the former colonised state.[64]

At the same time, a space for dialogue and discussion on the past with the partner countries of the SCH programme is one that allows the Dutch government to preserve the Dutch heritage abroad, even if it is connected to dark histories and is considered conflict heritage. For example, archives of the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) abroad might be digitised and be opened up for research through the SCH programme. The VOC was sometimes very violent in the Dutch East Indies, and with preserving the archives, the memory

[63] Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', 216; Ernst Noorman, "Meerjarig Interdepartementaal Beleidskader Suriname 2017-2020: Onlosmakelijk verbonden", *Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Paramaribo* (July 5, 2017), 6.

[64] Engelshoven, "Bijlage Adviesaanvraag stelsel 2021-2024 bij brief adviesaanvraag stelsel 2021-2024", 6-7; Ingrid van Engelshoven, "Kamerbrief voortgang programma historisch democratisch bewustzijn", *Ministry of Education, Culture and Science* (May 31, 2019), 1-4; Sarr and Savoy, *The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage*, 87.

of this violence is preserved as well.[65] Also, the Dutch policy on shared heritage suggests that a new metaculture will be created in which Dutch, Indonesian, and Surinamese people can share their identities. The ultimate aim, therefore, is creating new homogeneity, not heterogenous culture.[66]

The Dutch government does take some precarity, however, in forcing their own ideas on others. They only engage with shared cultural heritage if local stakeholders in the partner countries take the initiative and make their willingness to cooperate with the Dutch known.[67] This is known as the "Dutch approach," meaning that in the cooperation or vision for cooperation, local stakeholders are very much involved in decision-making, from an early stage onwards.[68] For example, a SCH project on oral histories evaluated the use of this different technique to get to know more about heritage that has been lost or hidden. Oral history is a methodology that is considered a democratic tool of research, as it is the collection of stories from people that are either illiterate or underrepresented in official stakeholder organisations. When researching the history behind heritage, these people can sometimes provide information that is lost in all other sources. Since most of the stories of the people participating in oral history are not represented in the national historical narratives, they shed new light on the heritage and its meaning. Moreover, it involves these people, non-experts and illiterates, directly in the preservation of the heritage, which makes the process more inclusive.[69]

Most of the SCH projects are workshops and trainings that are offered to the target countries. These workshops and trainings aim to promote knowledge exchange and enhance research skills.[70] In 2017, 22% of the projects of SCH were situated in Indonesia and 16% in Suriname. These were mostly knowledge transfer events.[71] This form of offering trainings and knowledge to the target countries Indonesia and Suriname may appear to be subject to a

[65] Jet Bussemaker, Bert Koenders and Lilianne Ploumen, "Kamerbrief over uitwerking internationaal cultuurbeleid", *Ministry of Education, Culture and Science* (November 17, 2016), 3.
[66] Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', 216; Halbertsma, 'Introduction', 5 and 12-13.
[67] *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, "Beleidskader internationaal cultuurbeleid 2017-2020", 8.
[68] *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, "Beleidskader internationaal cultuurbeleid 2017-2020", 10.
[69] Sofia Lovegrove, "The use of oral histories for the understanding of shared maritime heritage", *Sharing Heritage Expertise* 9 (2019).
[70] Stef Blok, Sigrid Kaag and Ingrid van Engelshoven, "Bijlage Voortgang internationaal cultuurbeleid (ICB) 2017 bij aanbiedingsbrief Voortgangsrapportage internationaal cultuurbeleid (ICB) 2017", *Ministry of Education, Culture and Science* (October 19, 2018), 8.
[71] Blok, Kaag and Engelshoven, "Bijlage Voortgang internationaal cultuurbeleid (ICB) 2017 bij aanbiedingsbrief Voortgangsrapportage internationaal cultuurbeleid (ICB) 2017", 19.

"master-disciple discourse" in which the Netherlands is always the expert on heritage conservation and never the former colony.[72] Although in most cases, the Dutch are indeed the experts on the conservation practices, the discourse is different as the Dutch only offer their services on invitation. The Dutch intention is to transfer their own knowledge to Indonesia and Suriname, hoping that experts will stand up in the target countries to take over the task of heritage protection and preservation.

The practice of invitations being key to the start of international cooperation is proof of the soft power that cultural diplomacy has, which aims to attract interaction, not force it. On the other hand, this suggests that Dutch culture and heritage are merely export products. Even though the Dutch government states that the international cultural policy is more than economic transactions, the economic effects of cultural diplomacy are not lost out of sight, as international cultural policy might open up new markets for the Dutch cultural sector.[73] Even though it was mentioned in an evaluation of the SCH programme 2010-2014, that more attention should be put on the cultural importance of the international cultural policy, the economic motives for international cultural policy were still deemed important.[74]

From these statements, it still becomes clear that the Dutch government does use heritage as a means to make the SCH programme beneficial for itself. An example of this is a visit of the former Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Jet Bussemaker, who continued an initiative of Prime Minister Mark Rutte, who visited Indonesia in 2016 mainly to forge better economic relations. The initiative entailed the investigation of three battle ships that went down in the Second World War in the Battle of the Java Sea. Bussemaker was presented with the first results of this investigation, and she agreed with the Indonesian authorities that the cooperation on maritime heritage was important and should remain in the future.[75] This

[72] Winter, 'Conclusion', 141.

[73] Bussemaker, Koenders and Ploumen, "Kamerbrief over uitwerking internationaal cultuurbeleid", 2; David Clarke, Anna Cento Bull and Marianna Deganutti, "Soft power and dark heritage: multiple potentialities", *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 23 (2017), 662; *Government of the Netherlands*, "Dutch International Cultural Policy Framework", access October 4, 2019, https://www.government.nl/topics/international-cultural-cooperation/international-cultural-policy-framework; *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, "Terms-of-Reference: Beleidsdoorlichting publieksdiplomatie" (February 17, 2015), 2.

[74] *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, "Beleidskader internationaal cultuurbeleid 2017-2020", 5.

[75] *Government of the Netherlands*, "First results of Dutch-Indonesian investigation in the Java Sea released", February 13, 2017, https://www.government.nl/topics/international-cultural-cooperation/news/2017/02/13/first-results-of-dutch-indonesian-investigation-in-the-java-sea-released; *Government of the Netherlands*, "Government delegation to visit Indonesia and Singapore", November 8, 2016, https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2016/11/08/government-delegation-to-visit-indonesia-and-singapore.

statement shows that classical diplomacy (the visit of the Minister) was made easier through the connection of shared heritage (the preservation of the battle ships).

Arousing interest in shared heritage is one of the most important tasks in the SCH programme. Only when the first connections on culture are made, dialogue about other difficult issues might open up too.[76] The Dutch, however, decide what events and projects are given importance and selected for financing. The Dutch government has chosen ten target countries (Australia, Brazil, India, Indonesia, Japan, Russia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, and the United States of America) that are most likely to yield good results for diplomacy and are most important to the cultural identity of the Dutch themselves. Also, attention was given to the opportunities in the countries that would secure future economic and cultural relations, like the prominence of cultural podia in Indonesia and how these podia could promote Dutch culture internationally.[77] At the same time, the Dutch government seems to genuinely want to transfer its knowledge on heritage to its partners. This is more clearly mentioned in documents by the other organisations responsible for the SCH programme, the Nationaal Archief (NAN; National Archives of the Netherlands), DutchCulture and the Rijksdienst voor Cultureel Erfgoed (RCE; Cultural Heritage Agency).

Dutch heritage diplomacy in practice: The Shared Cultural Heritage programme

The National Archives of the Netherlands is mainly concerned with providing better access to a shared heritage, that is, digitising Dutch archives in the SCH partner countries. Its professionals offer trainings abroad on how digitisation of paper archives works and what efficient ways of digitisation there are. They also develop collections and search tools that shed light on the shared history of the Dutch with the partner countries.[78] Unfortunately, the NAN does not provide any information on its selecting procedure on what kind of documents they consider important to be preserved.[79]

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[76] *Government of the Netherlands*, "Prioriteiten internationaal cultuurbeleid", access October 4, 2019, https://www.government.nl/topics/international-cultural-cooperation/international-cultural-policy/priorities-international-cultural-policy.

[77] *Ministry of Education, Culture and Science*, "Culture at a first Glance, 2016" (April 21, 2017), 19 and 35; *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, "Beleidskader internationaal cultuurbeleid 2017-2020", 5-7.

[78] For an example see *National Archives of the Netherlands,* "Zoekhulp Slavernij en slavenhandel in Nederlands-Indië (1820-1900) online".

[79] *National Archives of the Netherlands,* "Met een open blik: Meerjarenvisie 2017-2020 Nationaal Archief" (April 2017).

DutchCulture is responsible for organising the SCH programme in such a way that it is coherent. One of its main tasks is informing on all organised projects and events on social media. Also, DutchCulture is assigned the task of dividing the budget among all the parties of the SCH programme. In total, the Dutch government makes available €200,000 every year for the programme. Only Dutch organisations may apply for funding, although at least one of their partner organisations has to be from one of the partner countries. Funding never covers 100% of the project's costs, but up to 50% can be requested. If visitors from the partner countries need to travel to the Netherlands or vice versa, a travel allowance may be provided. In case of the first, the visitors are required to visit multiple Dutch institutions while they are in the Netherlands. This system of travel cost allowances helps increase the locality of the SCH projects and stimulates local support.[80]

The division of finances is done according to a long list of selection criteria that have to be sufficiently proven before application for funding. The criteria are mainly focussed on the "cultural-historical significance, uniqueness, representativeness and the technical urgency of the projects."[81] Specific criteria include affinity to one of the three topics within the 2017-2020 SCH programme, either historical city centres, water management, and mutual imaging, meaning the positive promotion of the partner country and the Netherlands in the partner countries. The latter topic is deemed the most important one. Also, the partner country has to invest in the project, which secures endurance of the impact of the project.[82]

The Cultural Heritage Agency is one of the most engaged organisations in the SCH programme, since its work is most practical. RCE is a semi-governmental institution that actively takes care of tangible heritage in the Netherlands, and via the SCH programme, abroad. Over the course of their existence since 1918, its members have acquired expert knowledge on heritage protection methodologies that are specific to the Dutch context.[83] For example, over the course of the past years, RCE researched climate control in museums.[84]

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[80] *DutchCulture*, "Gedeeld Cultureel Erfgoed en de rol van DutchCulture 2017-2020"; *DutchCulture*, "Shared Cultural Heritage", access October 4, 2019, https://dutchculture.nl/en/introduction-shared-cultural-heritage; *DutchCulture*, "Visitors", access November 21, 2019, https://dutchculture.nl/en/visitors.

[81] *DutchCulture*, "Shared Cultural Heritage: Matching Fund 2017-2020", access November 21, 2019, https://dutchculture.nl/en/shared-cultural-heritage-matching-fund-english.

[82] *DutchCulture*, "Gedeeld Cultureel Erfgoed en de rol van DutchCulture 2017-2020".

[83] *Cultural Heritage Agency*, "Wat doet de Rijksdienst?", access November 14, 2019, https://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/over-ons/wat-doet-de-rijksdienst.

[84] *Cultural Heritage Agency*, "Binnenklimaat", access November 14, 2019, https://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/onderwerpen/veilig-erfgoed/preventieve-conservering/binnenklimaat.

Often, experts working at the RCE are giving the trainings and workshops of the SCH projects in the partner countries. In these trainings and advisory meetings, the RCE stresses the importance of long-term policy in the target country, to ensure that the conservation projects endure. Also, the RCE produces and publishes many researches that fill in specific knowledge gaps.[85]

The RCE benefits from the SCH programme, since it gains a lot of experience in cooperating with partner countries on preserving shared heritage, which is quite a new thing internationally. In order to profile itself and spread its knowledge, RCE publishes the newsletters on the SCH programme, titled *Sharing Heritage Expertise*. In the first newsletter of the series, one of the two programme managers of the SCH programme at RCE, Jinna Smit, explained the use of the newsletter for its readers: "It focuses on the exchange of knowledge and the unique expertise offered by our SCH programme."[86] One long article is published in every issue that deals with a specific heritage conservation and preservation practice. After a fire in a Dutch colonial building in Jakarta that destroyed many VOC ship models, for example, an issue was made on risk management in museum collections. Both authors of the article, experts from the RCE, were Dutch.[87] Many key articles of the other issues (1-9 are published at this moment) were written by Dutch experts too.

Through all the projects in the SCH programme, the Dutch government tries to be inclusive and present the history and heritage as shared rather than as separate stories of two countries that vaguely fit together. An attempt is made to break the division between 'us' and 'them,' and instead write an all-inclusive history. Through the new story of shared heritage, the SCH programme aims to include all citizens and people connected to the heritage in specific places and from far away in the Netherlands. However, it does so to promote its own cultural profile internationally and gain political and economic gains from the cultural cooperation.

Dutch heritage diplomacy in Indonesia

Young Indonesians are increasingly interested in what the Dutch have to offer culturally. Although the relationship between the two countries was very troubled after the

[85] *Cultural Heritage Agency*, "Shared Cultural Heritage Programme".
[86] Cultural Heritage Agency, *Sharing Heritage Expertise* 1 (2018).
[87] Sofia Lovegrove, "To do or not to do? Risk management in the context of collection management", *Sharing Heritage Expertise* 1 (2018).

independence war of 1947 to 1949, since the 2000s, the relationship is slowly recovering from the past violence. Most Indonesians are especially interested in Dutch knowledge about heritage practices and preservation, and the promotion of culture abroad. For example, many Indonesian heritage workers came to the workshop organised by the RCE named 'Historical Data for Inner City Development' offered in Jakarta in 2014. Indonesian artists use the Dutch network to establish themselves on the tourist market. Although the Indonesian government is interested in taking care of culture and heritage too, financial means are often not sufficient to do this on a large scale. Nor are many private companies engaged with heritage activities in Indonesia, nor are CSR projects vey well established.[88]

The embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands participate in the SCH programme as partners, organisers, or facilitators. The Dutch embassy in Jakarta even has a separate place reserved for cultural activities, named the Erasmus House. It is called the centre in which debate and presentations can take place. The team working at the Erasmus House focuses specifically in designing a culturally interesting programme on Dutch-Indonesian relations in art. It is a good place to meet people from the other country and learn about each other's cultures. Via the Erasmus House, individuals are easily engaged in the SCH programme.[89]

The Erasmus House provides the knowledge that Indonesians ask for, and also aims to sustainably improve the Dutch-Indonesian relationship through their offers of cultural events. It also actively promotes the Dutch culture and image to their visitors. Since the Erasmus Huis is located next to the Dutch embassy, it is easy to invite Indonesian officials. Also, in promoting the Dutch culture to Indonesians, the Dutch hope to become more visible culturally in the whole of southeast Asia. To that aim, the Erasmus House continues offering knowledge on the promotion of culture, and upgrades the quality of the cultural offer continuously. The main goal is to create more awareness of the importance of the preservation of shared heritage in cities and maritime heritage. Eventually, the Dutch government hopes that in the future, the Dutch cultural sector will gain prominence in Indonesia, Indonesians will make most use of

[88] Huib Akihary et al., "Collecting and Connecting: Historical Data for Inner City Development in Indonesia", *Cultural Heritage Agency* (October 2014), 7-8; *Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Indonesia* et al., "Strategisch meerjarenplan Cultuur 2017-2020 Indonesië" (February 1, 2017); Melody Kemp, "Corporate Social Responsibility in Indonesia: Quixotic Dream or Confident Expectation?", *United Nations Research Institute for Social Development* (2001), vi.

[89] *Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Indonesia*, "Melsert nieuwe directeur Erasmus Huis Jakarta", February 18, 2019, https://www.netherlandsworldwide.nl/latest/news/2019/02/18/melsert-nieuwe-directeur-erasmus-huis-jakarta.

Dutch expertise and have more knowledge and expertise on heritage preservation themselves, as well as that financing for cultural projects will be provided by Indonesians in more diverse cooperations between private and public institutions.[90] The economic incentives behind this aim are clear.

In an overview of the projects conducted in the 2009-2012 Common Cultural Heritage programme, many projects in Indonesia were about maritime and underwater heritage preservation and revitalisation of Indonesian inner cities. No specific projects were conducted on the history of colonialism and the debate on this history.[91] Within the 2017-2020 programme, more attention was given to histories of slavery and indentured labour in Indonesia and colonial legacies, but there was also a focus on practical heritage protection like revitalisation of Indonesian city centres and management of maritime shared heritage.

An example of the first topic was a research conducted by the Dutch government to uncover the history of decolonisation in Indonesia, including the perspectives of Indonesian historians. This project was set up after a call for more attention on Indonesian history from the Dutch-Indonesian community living in the Netherlands.[92] In 2013, a project about Dutch forts in Indonesia was conducted, which resulted in an inventory of the historical forts in Indonesia and an archival research in the National Archives of the Netherlands. The results were published in an online database and a book.[93] No mention was made on the historical function of the Dutch forts, which clearly had a military function that supported the colonial power of the Dutch. Also, DutchCulture informed about a project to preserve Dutch cemeteries in Indonesia and maintain them. But no Indonesian partners were found willing to do so. The six cemeteries mentioned were war cemeteries, on which Dutch victims of the Second World War were buried. In the view of the Dutch, this is shared heritage.[94] This

[90] *Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Indonesia* et al., "Strategisch meerjarenplan Cultuur 2017-2020 Indonesië", 1-9.
[91] *Cultural Heritage Agency*, "Shared Heritage Joint Future: SCH-projects overview 2009-2013" (January 1, 2014).
[92] *DutchCulture*, "Research on the decolonisation of Indonesia: From Dutch East Indies to Indonesia", access November 21, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/research-decolonisation-indonesia-dutch-east-indies-indonesia.
[93] *DutchCulture*, "Forts in Indonesia", access November 21, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/forts-indonesia; *DutchCulture*, "Inventory and Identification of Forts in Indonesia (dbase, website, book, film)", access November 21, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/inventory-and-identification-forts-indonesia-dbase-website-book-film.
[94] *DutchCulture*, "Dutch war cemeteries in Indonesia", access November 21, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/dutch-war-cemeteries-indonesia.

heritage, however, might not be perceived as 'shared' by the Indonesians, or important to preserve for their history.

In an announced exhibition of 2015, two stories were told in the context of the history of decolonisation in Indonesia. They were the stories of Rama (eastern mythological figure) and Orpheus (western mythological figure), about an impossible reunion with their loved ones. In the same way, the exhibition's main argument was, the story of decolonisation is told very differently in Indonesia than it is in the Netherlands, but the time has come to reconcile these stories and create a shared story.[95] In 2018, a project followed which highlighted the colonial history of botanical gardens in the Netherlands. The Dutch exploited the Indonesian climate, soil and resources to make a profit, but led to violence in the region. On the event, the story about the botanical interest of the Dutch, the violence that followed and the botanical exploitation of Indonesia was discussed.[96] All these stories were attempts to discuss the dark parts of Dutch colonial history in Indonesia.

A more general project conducted in this period with the aid of the RCE, was the publication of the book *Footsteps and Fingerprints: The Legacy of a Shared History*. In the foreword of this book, it is argued that archives are key to preserving tangible heritage. Here, information can be found on the construction of and original intentions behind the building of historical buildings. Only with connecting the tangible heritage to their intangible stories, the heritage gains meaning and importance. It is through archival research, then, that lieux de mémoires are created. The search for shared heritage and awareness about the origins of lieux de mémoires that are important to both the Dutch and the partner countries, reshape the cultural identity of the participating peoples. According to the RCE, heritage conservation is only made possible when meaning is attached to the heritage, for if the meaning of a cultural artefact is lost, there is no sense in preserving it for the future. Therefore, every heritage site considered for preservation should have a clear added value. This is why the book *Footsteps and Fingerprints* focussed on the stories of specific cultural objects.[97]

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[95] *DutchCulture*, "Decolonization in Indonesia – Orpheus and Sinta", access November 21, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/decolonization-indonesia-orpheus-and-sinta.

[96] *DutchCulture*, "Indonesia: Post-colonial perspectives on botanical heritage", October 18, 2018, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/news/indonesia-post-colonial-perspectives-botanical-heritage.

[97] *Cultural Heritage Agency*, "Built environment", access November 14, 2019, https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/topics/shared-cultural-heritage/built-environment; Golen, *Footsteps and Fingerprints*, 5.

In *Footsteps and Fingerprints*, a short introduction and explanation of the shared history is given in each chapter on a specific partner country. In the introduction on Indonesia, it is mentioned that the rule of the VOC in Batavia was harsh, until the Ethical Policy of 1900-1942 was implemented. This policy was less focussed on developing the country economically, and more on the welfare of the Indonesians. However, this Ethical Policy was determined by The Hague, not by the Indonesians themselves. After the end of Second World War in 1945, the Indonesians claimed independence. The Dutch were less than pleased, as, the author of the book explains, the Dutch had expected a slower process of granting autonomy and independence. Although the violence that followed the Indonesian protests were called police actions, suggesting they were an internal affair, the Indonesians and the international community regarded the Dutch actions as war. When independence was finally granted to Indonesia at the end of 1949, the Dutch history and language started fading from the Indonesian minds. This is what the Dutch want to prevent by installing the SCH programme, for it means that there is no attention or care for Dutch heritage in Indonesia either.[98] In this way, the Dutch try to preserve parts of the violent history of Indonesia for their own benefit and historical consciousness without reflecting on their own moral behaviour during colonialism.

The RCE does not, however, decide what heritage should be preserved, but encourages local municipalities and stakeholders to consider that for themselves.[99] However, most of the time, value is assessed by professionals only. Instead, in the future, the RCE wants to take into account multiple perspectives on the valuation of and a cultural-historical evaluation of heritage. In this way, the stories of the people connected most closely to the history of the heritage are taken into account in valuation processes.[100]

For example, in a project on the Indonesian train network that was built in colonial times, fifty Indonesian stakeholders were invited to discuss if restoration was necessary and how this process could be carried out. Although this train network was used by the Dutch for economic and military purposes, the Indonesians still deemed the trains important to preserve. The restored rolling stock might attract more tourists and visitors too.[101] In another case, Dutch

[98] Golen, *Footsteps and Fingerprints*, 58 and 68.
[99] *Cultural Heritage Agency*, "Assessing Museum Collections: Collection valuation in six steps" (January 1, 2014).
[100] Ibid. 4-5.
[101] Ben de Vries, "Identification mission historical rolling stock Indonesia", *Cultural Heritage Agency* (October 1, 2015), 4-6.

colonial forts in Indonesia were evaluated on their use in current Indonesia, and how they might be restored by getting a new function as a historical building. In this evaluation, there was attention for the different values assigned to the forts by different groups of people and stakeholders, like the citizens living nearby, the owners of the fort, and the local government. Perspectives on the value of Dutch colonial forts in Indonesia are multiple, as well as the past meanings and purposes of the heritage site were. Therefore, the reuse of the fort has to be multiple too.[102] The Dutch benefit from this approach, since it keeps the Dutch interest in maintaining this heritage and the memory connected to it alive.

A more ambitious project on discussing the dark pages of Dutch history in Indonesia was undertaken in 2018. A Dutch researcher and author, Maarten Hidskes, travelled to Indonesia to discuss the story of his grandfather with the population in South Sulawesi. Hidskes' grandfather was involved in the violent campaigns that were ordered by the Dutch government in South Sulawesi during the independence war in Indonesia. By presenting the Indonesian translation of his book on his grandfather's story, he hoped to open up dialogue about the colonial violence in this particular part of Indonesia. Most Indonesian participants reacted positively, and the author stimulated the people he met to write down their own stories and experiences about this painful past.[103]

These projects show that opening up about the difficult past and shared heritage that is left of that past might initiate a new start in the relationship of Indonesia and the Netherlands. The history should not be forgotten, neglected, and ignored, but rather be discussed and rediscovered. Only by remembering the past and understanding the past from the perspective of the other, forgiveness for the violence and exploitation might follow.[104]

This emphasis on dialogue on shared history as a start of a new future, is exactly the aim of the project Indonesia Now, a project that started in September 2019. In order to commemorate the 400-year anniversary of the Dutch presence in Indonesia, three events

[102] Sofia Lovegrove, "Reuse, develop and design: how the Dutch deal with heritage in the Netherlands and abroad", *Sharing Heritage Expertise* 5 (2018), 3; Job Pardoel, "Forts with a museum function: An exploration of experiences in the repurposing of fortification sites in Indonesia and the Netherlands", *Cultural Heritage Agency* (January 1, 2016), 10-11.

[103] *DutchCulture*, "Indonesia: Comparing the personal perspectives of young and old generations", October 18, 2018, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/news/indonesia-comparing-personal-perspectives-young-and-old-generations; *DutchCulture*, "Indonesia: Mutual reflection on painful personal and shared history", June 4, 2018, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/news/indonesia-mutual-reflection-painful-personal-and-shared-history.

[104] Margalit, *The ethics of memory*, 205.

were organised: an exhibition, a project named My story, shared history, and a conference. The conference was about future cooperation between the Netherlands and Indonesia, while the exhibition was the conservation of the city Jakarta over the course of 400 years. The project My story, shared history entailed the meeting of Indonesian and Dutch artists and providing space for conversations about their own personal histories and how these might relate to the large historical narratives of both countries.[105]

Almost all artists from this project remarked the strange relationship between personal histories and historical narratives taught in schools. Although national histories are built from personal historical experiences, they do not include all personal stories in that narrative. When the personal stories are shared and understood, they can emotionally connect one to the grander narrative that makes sense of the personal memories. Seen in this perspective, stories from Indonesians and Dutch people are often very similar and comparing them in dialogue creates personal connections and mutual understanding for the situation the other is coming from. The history is no longer about Indonesians vs. Dutch or vice versa, but about all kinds of Indonesians and Dutch people that are connected in mixed ways. The larger historical narrative should therefore include all the personal experiences, for new perspectives or untold stories could alter the larger narratives to the extent that they become commonly shared by more people.[106]

This refers to the theory of Aleida Assmann, that there are different levels of remembering and the political and cultural memory include and exclude individual and social memories. By becoming more inclusive, then, the political memory might become more effective in growing cohesion and prevent cultural conflict based on differing perspectives on history. This, in turn,

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[105] *DutchCulture*, "Introducing Indonesia Now: Jakarta edition", September 9, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/news/introducing-indonesia-now-jakarta-edition-2019.

[106] Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', 216; Ardjuna Candotti, "Indonesia Now: Jakarta edition. Meet the artists of My story, shared history #1", *DutchCulture*, access November 21, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/meet-artists-my-story-shared-history-armando-and-felix; Ardjuna Candotti, "Indonesia Now: Jakarta edition. Meet the artists of My story, shared history #3", *DutchCulture*, access November 21, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/meet-artists-my-story-shared-history-lala-bohang-lara-nuberg; Ardjuna Candotti, "Indonesia Now: Jakarta edition. Meet the artists of My story, shared history #4", *DutchCulture*, access November 21, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/meet-artists-my-story-shared-history-angelina-enny-robin-block; Ardjuna Candotti, "Indonesia Now: Jakarta edition. Meet the artists of My story, shared history #5", *DutchCulture*, access November 21, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/meet-artists-my-story-shared-history-maria-lamslag-adrian-mulya; Ardjuna Candotti, "Indonesia Now: Jakarta edition. Meet the artists of My story, shared history #6", *DutchCulture*, access November 21, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/meet-artists-my-story-shared-history-Francesca-Pichel-Rizal-Iwan-Dionne-Verwey.

could change the whole narrative of the collective memory of the Dutch. In this way, the Dutch episodes in Indonesia might no longer be perceived as exotic experiences and stories that are distant from the present identity of the Dutch, but as an integrated part of the Dutch people as European explorers and exploiters.[107]

The genuine concern of the Dutch SCH organisations for creating a space for dialogue and discussion on the history of colonialism in Indonesia becomes clear from another project that started in the same year. It was named Sharing stories on contested histories and was coordinated by the RCE and the Reinwardt Academy in the Netherlands. In *Sharing Heritage Expertise*, the project was described to "enable a space for dialogue and the integration of multiple perspectives" in museum exhibitions on contested heritage.[108] At the end of 2018, the first training was given, and because of its success, it was offered again in 2019. In the workshop, colonialism and the violence connected to this history and the period of decolonisation was discussed with heritage professionals from all partner countries. Specifically, the trainers used the Emotion Networking theory to open up dialogue. This theory aims to bridge controversies and build mutual understanding.[109] It does so by putting diverging emotions about the meaning of heritage in the centre of the attention, instead of different interests on the heritage preservation. According to the trainers, the focus on diverging emotions creates a shift from communities and collective remembering to an individual approach to heritage. With this focus on networks and emotions instead of communities and interests, this methodology of discussing shared contested heritage differs from UNESCO's approach. It focuses less on specific stakeholder groups around heritage, and more about individual discussion of the meaning of heritage. Through open debate, emotion shifts may take place among participants, and this creates mutual understanding.[110]

Dutch heritage diplomacy in Suriname

Surinamese decolonisation was very different from Indonesian decolonisation. In 1954, Suriname obtained the position of an autonomous state within the Kingdom of the

[107] Assmann, 'Memory, Individual and Collective', 215 and 223; Confino, "Collective memory and cultural history", 1392; Long, "Cultural Heritage Management in Post-colonial Polities", 322; Nora, "Between memory and history", 9.
[108] Cultural Heritage Agency, *Sharing Heritage Expertise* 2 (2018).
[109] Cultural Heritage Agency, *Sharing Heritage Expertise* 6 (2019).
[110] Jasmijn Rana, M. Willemsen and H.C. Dibbits, "Moved by the tears of others: emotion networking in the heritage sphere", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* (2017), 2-5.

Netherlands. Quite suddenly, this autonomous position was expanded to full sovereignty in 1975. No war preceded or followed decolonisation, but many Surinamese people emigrated to the Netherlands around this period. Diplomatic relations between the Netherlands and Suriname, however, deteriorated after decolonisation. After a Surinamese military coup in 1980, the Dutch government stopped the financial aid that they had promised in 1975. When the military regime was replaced in 1987, it took four months for the Dutch to send an ambassador to Paramaribo, and ten months for the Surinamese to send an ambassador to The Hague. The Dutch government restarted sending financial aid to Suriname, which continued up to 2011. In the eyes of the Surinamese, the Dutch government is too involved with Surinamese affairs, for which they have no rights. Therefore, despite the countless family ties that run between the two nations, diplomatic relations are still not very good.[111]

An initiative like the Erasmus House in Jakarta is not present in Paramaribo. This means that there is no permanent space in which debate and dialogue about the past can be exchanged between the Surinamese people and the Dutch. There are fewer activities in Suriname within the SCH programme annually and there is a less clear focus on aims and desired results. Since most SCH projects in Suriname are located in Paramaribo, the capital city of Suriname, this makes it somewhat easier for the Dutch embassy in Paramaribo to be involved and play an intermediary role.[112]

In the 2009-2012 Common Cultural Heritage programme overview, a remarkable difference between Suriname and Indonesia is the focus in Suriname on preserving and presenting museum collections, which was absent from the projects in Indonesia. Fewer projects were conducted in this period in Suriname than in Indonesia. Still, there was an exhibition about children slaves in the past and the present in Suriname, whereas in Indonesia, there was no project involved with the histories of slavery or colonialism in Indonesia.[113]

In the DutchCulture database on current SCH projects in Suriname, there is generally more attention for the history of slavery specifically connected to the Dutch colonial period in Suriname. Since Suriname was a plantation economy, the Dutch traded in slaves up to 1814

[111] Roger Janssen, *In search of a path: An analysis of the foreign policy of Suriname from 1975 to 1991* (Leiden: KITLV press, 2011), xv, 90-96 and 211; Oostindie, 'De teloorgang van een bijzondere relatie', 18, 23-24, 28 and 35; Gert Oostindie and Inge Klinkers, *Decolonising the Caribbean: Dutch Policies in a Comparative Perspective* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), 131-132.

[112] *Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Suriname*, "Cultuur en gedeeld erfgoed in Suriname", access November 5, 2019, https://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/landen/suriname/cultuur.

[113] *Cultural Heritage Agency*, "Shared Heritage Joint Future".

and used slave labour up to the abolishment of slavery in 1863. The slavery system was very cruel and set up in a way in which African enslaved people were not given any opportunity to protest or rebel.[114] Surinamese slave registers were made accessible online recently in 2018. This project resulted in a database with lists of names of enslaved people in Suriname between 1830 and 1863. It was initiated by a Dutch and a Surinamese student and financed through crowd funding. The database was published both on the websites of the NAN and the National Archives of Suriname.[115]

There was also a SCH project on the reuse of the Dutch colonial fort Zeelandia. In this fort, currently, the Suriname Museum resides. The museum displays objects from colonial times. The fort was the first place in which the Dutch resided when they came to Suriname at the end of the sixteenth century. It is mentioned that from this first settlement "the further development of the country started."[116] This is rather a contested perspective on the shared history of Suriname and the Netherlands, suggesting that the Dutch brought civilisation to Suriname, instead of slavery and slave trade. This is clearly a Dutch, very positive interpretation of history, since the crimes committed by the Dutch slave owners were not mentioned. However, when the slave trade was abolished in 1814, the system of slavery in Suriname changed. No longer were slaves punished on the plantations itself, but all slaves that deserved punishment according to their plantation owners were sent to fort Zeelandia in order to receive punishment in the fort.[117] This dark history of the fort was not mentioned in the project.

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[114] *DutchCulture*, "Colonial Suriname", access November 22, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/colonial-suriname; *DutchCulture*, "Domination or Collaboration: The Development of Power Relations between Ethnic Groups in the Seventeenth-Century Plantation Colony Suriname", access November 22, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/domination-or-collaborationthe-development-power-relations-between-ethnic-groups-seventeenth-century; *DutchCulture*, "Social bonds of the enslaved population in Suriname during the second half of the nineteenth century", access November 22, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/social-bonds-enslaved-population-suriname-during-second-half-nineteenth-century; *DutchCulture*, "Turning the Tides: Slavery, Freedom, and Sea-Island Cotton in Georgia and Surinam", access November 22, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/turning-tides-slavery-freedom-and-sea-island-cotton-georgia-and-surinam; *EO*, "Confrontatie met het slavernijverleden", December 11, 2019, https://www.npostart.nl/geboeid-terug-naar-de-plantage/11-12-2019/VPWON_1306507.

[115] *DutchCulture*, "Suriname: Surinamese slave registers accessible online".

[116] *DutchCulture*, "Collaboration between the Suriname Museum and Tropenmuseum", access November 22, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/collaboration-between-suriname-museum-and-tropenmuseum; *DutchCulture*, "Suriname: Renovation of Fort Zeelandia", September 13, 2017, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/news/suriname-renovation-fort-zeelandia.

[117] *EO*, "Op bezoek bij de Marons", December 18, 2019, https://www.npostart.nl/geboeid-terug-naar-de-plantage/18-12-2019/VPWON_1306508.

In 2018, Surinamese tour guides were invited to the Netherlands to learn about stories of Suriname from a Dutch perspective, so they could enrich their own stories, and stories about Suriname in the Netherlands could be enriched by stories of the Surinamese tour guides.[118] For another project, the paper archive of the colonial administration in Suriname that was kept by the NAN returned to Suriname after more than a century absence. In 2009, Suriname had requested the transfer of the archives to the country in and about which the documents were produced from the Dutch government. In 2010, negotiations between the Netherlands and Suriname ended and the transfer started. Before the transfer was made, the NAN had digitised all the documents of the archives, to make access to the documents easier for Surinamese and Dutch researchers. When the full transfer was made in 2017, the director of the National Archives in Suriname said that it was "about time that we write history from our own perspective."[119] This includes the colonial history and the history of slavery.[120]

In Suriname, the SCH programme is much more focussed on creating touristic heritage. Two events were organised in order to interest Surinamese businesses in contributing to the development of this field financially.[121] Heritage tourism might attract new visitors and investors to Suriname, which the Surinamese economy needs, as the economy was mainly reliant on natural resources for the last century. The Dutch government wants to help Suriname to set up a sustainable touristic sector that relies on the heritage in the country, but no longer wants to aid Suriname financially directly. Moreover, the Dutch government hopes that attention on heritage might connect the very diverse groups of people within Suriname. For example, with the use of oral history as a traditional way of communication, young people could feel connected to their own history. As there is an active diaspora of Surinamese people living in the Netherlands, the Dutch are very interested in these kinds of projects that benefit the country.[122]

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[118] *DutchCulture*, "Culture Talk on sharing stories in Suriname", access November 22, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/events/culture-talk-surinamese-tour-guides.

[119] *DutchCulture*, "Suriname: Paper memory of Suriname returns home", April 24, 2017, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/news/suriname-paper-memory-suriname-returns-home.

[120] *NOS*, "Suriname heeft zijn papieren geheugen weer terug", January 19, 2017, https://nos.nl/artikel/2153803-suriname-heeft-zijn-papieren-geheugen-weer-terug.html.

[121] *DutchCulture*, "Suriname Tourism Festival", access November 22, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/suriname-tourism-festival; *DutchCulture*, "Suriname Tourism Network", access November 22, 2019, https://sharedheritage.dutchculture.nl/en/suriname-tourism-network.

[122] *DutchCulture*, "Strategisch meerjarenplan 2017-2020 Suriname: Onlosmakelijk Verbonden" (March 1, 2017).

The biggest SCH project in Suriname was the revitalisation of the cemetery Nieuwe Oranjetuin in Paramaribo, at which many Dutch and Northwestern Europeans were buried in times of colonialism. While the place itself is connected to violence and colonial history, the cemetery might now become a "site for knowledge exchange" between the former coloniser and former colonised, in the eyes of the Dutch.[123] The RCE made a plan for reusing the cemetery within the context of the changing city. The project actively involved the local neighbours of the cemetery as they were asked for their ideas on the area's reuse. This made the project successful.[124] In the eyes of the RCE, the knowledge exchange empowers the former colonised peoples of Suriname. Still, the expertise was mainly held by Dutch organisations and experts.

In the book *Footsteps and Fingerprints*, the introduction on Surinamese-Dutch relations is very positive too. The authors boldly suggest that the Dutch intentions for Surinamese independence were to continue as two sovereign states in the future. Historians on Surinamese independence, however, have suggested that the Dutch government no longer saw the economic advantage of keeping Suriname included in the Kingdom of the Netherlands and was keen on Surinamese decolonisation.[125] The chapter on Suriname also discusses the slavery system brought to Suriname by the Dutch. After slavery was abolished in 1863, the plantation owners got their labour force from Indonesia and China, causing Suriname to become a very multicultural society. After independence in 1975, the relationship between the two countries and within the borders of Suriname was troubled as a consequence of failed Dutch assimilation policies of colonial times. Further on in the chapter, the treatment of slaves is discussed again, but ethical questions are only asked about individual Dutch plantation owners, not about the system.[126]

A television series named Geboeid (transl. chained or interested) on the Dutch national channel in 2019 broadcasted a very different perspective on the history of slavery in Suriname. This series were not created within the SCH programme or financed by the Dutch government, but by the Dutch Evangelical Broadcaster (EO). In this television series, four Dutch Surinamese people go in search of their family roots in Suriname, and find that they all descend from

[123] Sofia Lovegrove, "Sharing expertise on Dutch funerary heritage", *Sharing Heritage Expertise* 8 (2019), 1.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Oostindie and Klinkers, *Decolonising the Caribbean*, 119.
[126] Golen, *Footsteps and Fingerprints*, 114, 116-117 and 125.

Surinamese slaves. As they discover more about the history of their ancestors and their lives in Suriname, questions rise among the participants what the Dutch government did to stop slavery and abolish its practices. Even now, no political amendments for the cruelty of the Surinamese slave system are made by the Dutch government.[127]

Discussion

The Dutch heritage diplomacy has different results in Indonesia and Suriname, the heritage diplomacy in Indonesia being much more effective. The main cause of the differences is the different decolonisation process that both countries went through. For Indonesia, independence involved violence and rebellion against the colonial authorities. The government that was installed after independence in 1949 wanted to become independent from Dutch resources and cultural identity as quickly as possible. Suriname, on the other hand, separated from the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1975 in a much less controversial way. This meant that the country continued to rely on Dutch financing and cultural production.

At this moment, when the relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia is slowly recovering, young Indonesians are very willing to engage with the Dutch and share their stories on the mutual history. The Erasmus House is a good space to share stories and create mutual understanding between individuals. With Suriname, diplomatic relations and cultural cooperation are much more difficult, because the Surinamese have not experienced a clear decolonised identity different from their identity as a colony of the Netherlands. In general, Suriname has struggled to build an autonomous economy and engage with the world economically and culturally.

The notion of shared heritage is therefore less controversial in the context of Dutch heritage diplomacy in Indonesia. The SCH programme allows for two distinct narratives and memories about the past to come together and be discussed. In the case of Indonesia, too, individual and social memory plays into building new political and cultural memory. In Suriname, the SCH programme is mainly focussed on the capital city, Paramaribo, and not gaining foothold among the rest of Suriname. Also, an initiative like the Erasmus House in Jakarta is missing, which makes individual interaction between the Dutch and the Surinamese

[127] *EO*, "Geboeid – terug naar de plantage", September-December 2019, access December 27, 2019. https://www.npostart.nl/geboeid-terug-naar-de-plantage/VPWON_1304930.

on the shared difficult past harder. Although the colonial archives of the Dutch administration returned to Suriname after a relatively quick transfer process, the ethical implications of the colonial narrative on slavery in Suriname are not discussed.

It has become clear in this thesis that the Dutch government hopes to gain as much as possible from the SCH programme for itself. Through heritage diplomacy, the Netherlands uses its physical presence abroad as the gateway for renewed diplomatic relations, even if the past relations have been troubled. The Dutch do this by seemingly deconstructing the division between 'us' and 'the other' in an effort to make history and heritage more inclusive.

However, even though the notion of 'shared heritage' seems to be coherent with postcolonial theory and discourse, it is not. In the documents on the SCH programme, it is rarely explained how viewing the heritage as shared leads to mutual understanding. This is because the Netherlands has taken over UNESCO's approach to culture and heritage too easily. Peace is not the inevitable outcome of sharing culture and heritage. Even more, the 'shared heritage' promoted by the SCH programme can be considered only as shared from a Dutch perspective. Since the SCH programme is heritage *diplomacy*, it excludes heterogeneity and multiperspectivity in history and heritage narratives. Diplomacy as the representation of a nation state is the expression of one community with a political memory which includes a permitted otherness. Because diplomats represent the whole nation, there cannot be a diplomatic approach of individuality and heterogeneity. Heritage diplomacy therefore negates the implementation of postcolonial notions of diversity.

With the narrative of shared heritage, the Netherlands merely reconstructs a new, homogenous, Dutch political identity in light of its colonial legacy abroad. The reconstruction of a new narrative does not allow for a multiplicity of identity in that narrative. Even though on an individual level, the notion of 'shared heritage' is possible through dialogue, as the project Indonesia Now shows, this notion does not work in heritage diplomacy.

Shared heritage as the expression of a new political memory also suggests that the Dutch use political guilt as a diplomatic tool, and not as the first step to reconciliation and forgiveness for the colonial past. From all the documents on SCH projects it becomes clear that the Dutch are barely engaging in debates on ethical implications of their colonial past. In none of the documents studied above, an ethical judgment is given on the Dutch practices from the past. Although there is recognition that slavery and colonialism happened, a moral encounter with and responsibility for that dark past is missing. No political consequences for the Dutch like

restitution are connected to colonial history and heritage either. Through the SCH programme, heritage diplomacy and political guilt about the dark past of the Netherlands are both used as diplomatic tools, without any display of political remorse. It is a policy that deepens the political and cultural understanding of being Dutch and preserves heritage that is proof of this Dutch identity.

Conclusion

Dutch heritage diplomacy as expressed in the Shared Cultural Heritage programme is not postcolonial. Political and economic gains are the incentives behind the SCH programme. The Dutch government capitalises on the notion of seemingly 'inclusive' shared heritage, while its view on history and heritage is not inclusive. Therefore, the Dutch heritage diplomacy is far from implementing a postcolonial discourse, but used rather only as a tool in diplomacy. This questions whether heritage diplomacy of other former colonisers can really be considered postcolonial. Also, this thesis questions whether expressions of guilt over dark pasts of colonialism and slavery by European nations are genuine and not simply used as political tools. Since this thesis has not offered any perspective on the Indonesian and Surinamese perception of the SCH programme in their countries, further research could analyse these countries' responses to the SCH programme and its deceptive use of postcolonial discourse.

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