

DUTCH COLONIALISM, MIGRATION AND
CULTURAL HERITAGE

Cover: Tile picture of the 'Oost en West' Association, which in the first half of the twentieth century popularized knowledge about the Dutch colonies in the East and West Indies. Design Jan Toorop.

KONINKLIJK INSTITUUT
VOOR TAAL-, LAND- EN VOLKENKUNDE

DUTCH COLONIALISM, MIGRATION
AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Edited by

GERT OOSTINDIE



KITLV Press
Leiden
2008

Published by:

KITLV Press

Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde

(Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies)

P.O. Box 9515

2300 RA Leiden

The Netherlands

website: www.kitlv.nl

e-mail: kitlvpress@kitlv.nl

KITLV is an institute of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences
(KNAW)

Cover: Creja ontwerpen, Leiderdorp.

ISBN 90 6718 317 8

© 2008 Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission from the copyright owner.

Printed in the Netherlands

Contents

Gert Oostindie	
Preface	vii
Gert Oostindie	
Migration and its legacies in the Dutch colonial world	1
Anouk Fienieg, Robert Parthesius, Brittany Groot, Rivke Jaffe, Sjoerd van der Linde and Pauline van Roosmalen	
Heritage trails	
International cultural heritage policies in a European perspective	23
Gert Oostindie	
Historical memory and national canons	63
Gijs Kruijtzter	
European migration in the Dutch sphere	97
Rik van Welie	
Patterns of slave trading and slavery in the Dutch colonial world, 1596-1863	155
Thio Termorshuizen	
Indentured labour in the Dutch colonial empire, 1800-1940	261
Hanneke Lommerse	
Population figures	315
Index of geographical names	343
Index of personal names	351
General index	353
About the authors	359

GERT OOSTINDIE

Preface

This is an unusual book. A few words of explanation may serve to explain its origins and the logic behind it, without doing away with the obvious fact that there are two very distinct parts to this volume. The main intent of this preface is simply to clarify the ideas and work leading to the present, two-tier book.

Cultural heritage is one of the many legacies left by colonialism worldwide. Over the past few years, we have witnessed an increasing interest in this heritage, often in highly contesting terms. It is now widely accepted that the concept of cultural heritage includes both tangible and intangible heritage. The former, more conventional dimension refers to material 'things', legacies ranging from colonial landscaping and built environment through artefacts to archives – tangibles presenting themselves *prima facie* and often screaming for concerted efforts to be made in order to rescue and/or preserve them. Tangible heritage has long been the near-exclusive forte of archaeologists, art historians and archivists. Intangible heritage refers to the realm of the immaterial and includes languages, oral and musical traditions on and from the colonial period, mental legacies and the like. The uncovering, recording and interpretation of this intangible heritage requires the expertise and effort of another community of specialists, particularly anthropologists, historians and musicologists.

Experts working in the field of cultural heritage have increasingly come to appreciate the need and the opportunities to combine the practices and insights of these once rather discrete traditions. Today it is conventional wisdom – expressed by UNESCO and many other prestigious institutions – to emphasize that the two can and should benefit from one another. No colonial fortress without its contemporary stories and interpretations, no collective remembrance which does not invite research in old archives or art collections.

The contested nature of cultural heritage from the colonial period is obvious. The recourse policy makers take to adjectives such as 'common', 'mutual' or 'shared' only underlines the awareness that this past and its legacies arouse divergent and at times strongly confrontational memories and

interpretations. The sensible approach to cultural heritage policies departs from this understanding while attempting to provide a forum where divergent approaches to the past and its legacies may engage in a constructive and fruitful manner.

The Netherlands has a long colonial history; the days when this past was unconditionally celebrated are gone. In recent years quite some effort and means have been invested in developing a policy for cultural heritage cooperation with the various nations affected by Dutch colonialism. A succinct comparative analysis of Dutch policies may be found in the second chapter of this book. Suffice it to say at this point that cooperation in this field has been predominantly of a bilateral nature; occasionally, attempts have been made to forge supranational networks limited to the orbit of either the former Dutch East Indies Company or its West Indies counterpart. No programmes exist involving the 'entire' former Dutch 'colonial orbit'.

There are evident explanations for this, beyond contemporary politics and orientations – colonialism, by nature, had widely divergent characteristics and consequences, and the same can be said for contemporary legacies. Moreover, the various academic disciplines involved tend to work mainly in their own secluded realms. Started in 2007 with funding by the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the KITLV research programme 'Migration and culture in the Dutch colonial world' aims to broaden our perspective and to help reflect on a comprehensive and comparative approach to the field of shared cultural heritage. This is both timely and feasible. Timely, as an awareness of today's global interconnectivity should compel us to think about the early modern roots of globalization; and timely also as there is a growing interest in comparative approaches in the field of common cultural heritage based on an awareness of the rich historical knowledge rooted in these migration experiences. Feasible, as our present understanding of local and regional histories enables us to move on to more ambitious comparisons.

Migration has been a primary focus of this programme and is central to the present book. Since large-scale movements of labour forces are a pivotal dimension in Dutch colonial history, we propose to make this a central concern in cultural heritage policies. As will become clear from this book, colonialism sparked migrations with crucial but uneven demographic, social and cultural consequences in the various Dutch colonial settlements and colonies as well as 'back home'. Colonial migrations and the ensuing tangible and intangible heritage and specific categorizations defined what we came to regard as cultural heritage today, and why. For this reason experts from *all* countries involved in this programme share a common interest in migration.

Early on, migration flows created an intricate web connecting the Netherlands to Africa, Asia and the Americas; Africa to the Americas and to Asia; in the nineteenth century also Asia to the Americas, with ultimately, in the post-World War Two period, the direction of migrations shifting to the Netherlands. In colonial times, this migration was usually 'free' when coming from the Netherlands and forced when directed from Africa to the Americas. Between Asia and Africa, and at a later stage between Asia and the Americas, migration flows covered the entire spectrum from free to coerced. The 'free' postcolonial migrations to the Netherlands are a separate matter altogether, with uneven combinations of push and pull factors.

These various migration flows helped to create colonial societies that were never typically Dutch, but that did demonstrate specific Dutch characteristics as compared to the cultural impact of other European powers on their colonial settlements. Power imbalance, ethnic differences and creolization characterized the cultural configuration of these colonial societies. Today this history is distinctly visible in cities such as Paramaribo or Willemstad – in other cities once part of the Dutch colonial realm, such as Colombo, Recife, Jakarta, Cape Town, Elmina, Georgetown and even New York, one has to dig much deeper. In some places history reveals itself in the built environment and even in oral traditions and language usage; in other places images of days long gone are evoked mainly through archival records.

Comparative research into this colonial history and its legacies is relevant for the countries involved but no less for the Netherlands, where public history is widely debated. In this process the erstwhile metropolis – partly in response to large-scale postcolonial migrations – increasingly accepts that those roots also stem from colonial history. The contours of a comparative programme are very broad: the relevant period spans centuries, the geographical scope is enormous, the nature of the research may vary from (maritime) archeology and art history via the management of archives and actual archival research to historical-anthropological investigations focusing on retrieving intangible cultural heritage. Hence our focus on migration as a pivotal dimension in colonial history.

As for the contents of this book, its second, and largest part offers extensive surveys of the extant literature and quantitative data available on the movements of people under colonialism. The three chapters discuss European migration to the colonies (Gijs Kruijtzter); slave trades and slavery (Rik van Welie); and indentured labour migrations (Thio Termorshuizen), respectively. As such, this second part represents a unique attempt to synthesize and compare the work of specialists usually only focusing on one country or region. It is concluded with a quantitative appendix compiled by Hanneke Lommerse.

The first part provides a broader perspective. My opening chapter summarizes the crucial importance of migration in Dutch colonial and post-colonial history as well as the uneven effects of the various migrations in the Dutch orbit. In the second chapter, Anouk Fienieg, Robert Parthesius, Brittany Groot, Rivke Jaffe, Sjoerd van der Linde and Pauline van Roosmalen discuss Dutch policies for cultural heritage and past and present cooperation with partner countries, as well as offering a comparison of the Dutch tenets, objectives and practices with policies enacted by other former European colonial powers. In the third chapter, I offer some reflections on the highly divergent ways colonial history is remembered (or not) in the various countries involved, with some suggestions for possible future projects linking research and cultural heritage policies.

It should be pointed out that *Dutch colonialism, migration and cultural heritage* does not even attempt to present a serious analysis of the cultural impact of the various migrations in the various societies involved. While most chapters deal in one way or another with the very uneven cultural impact of the movements of people, we have refrained from a systematic and comparative analysis to this end. The obvious is stated – lesser demographic significance tends to translate into lesser cultural importance and present-day legacies, and vice versa – but this does not answer important questions of cultural genesis, including the significance of colonial hierarchies and distribution of power. It is here that we simply make the case for the crucial significance of migration to colonial history and the resulting cultural heritage, as an invitation for further work.

This volume provides a modest prelude to a wider debate between scholars and cultural heritage specialists from all countries touched by Dutch colonization – including, of course, the Netherlands itself. Draft versions of these chapters were discussed in a highly stimulating workshop held at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, from 25 to 27 March 2008. This workshop was in itself a rare occasion. Expertise on ‘Dutch’ Asian, African and Atlantic history and cultural heritage may be widely available, but serious mutual comparisons are scarce and a truly international debate is in its infancy at best.

The Stellenbosch workshop, the research for this book and its publication were financed by the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. I acknowledge with sincere appreciation this financial support and in particular the unwavering commitment of Vladimir Bina, Sabine Gimbrère and Kees Somer to this project. It has been a pleasure to work with this Ministry and its representatives – their contributions reflect an open mind and a genuine awareness that Dutch funding alone is not enough to make things work and that ‘sharing’ cultural heritage demands an open, non-chauvinistic attitude.

Valuable advice was also provided by professors Femme Gaastra (Leiden University) and Susan Legêne (VU Free University Amsterdam).

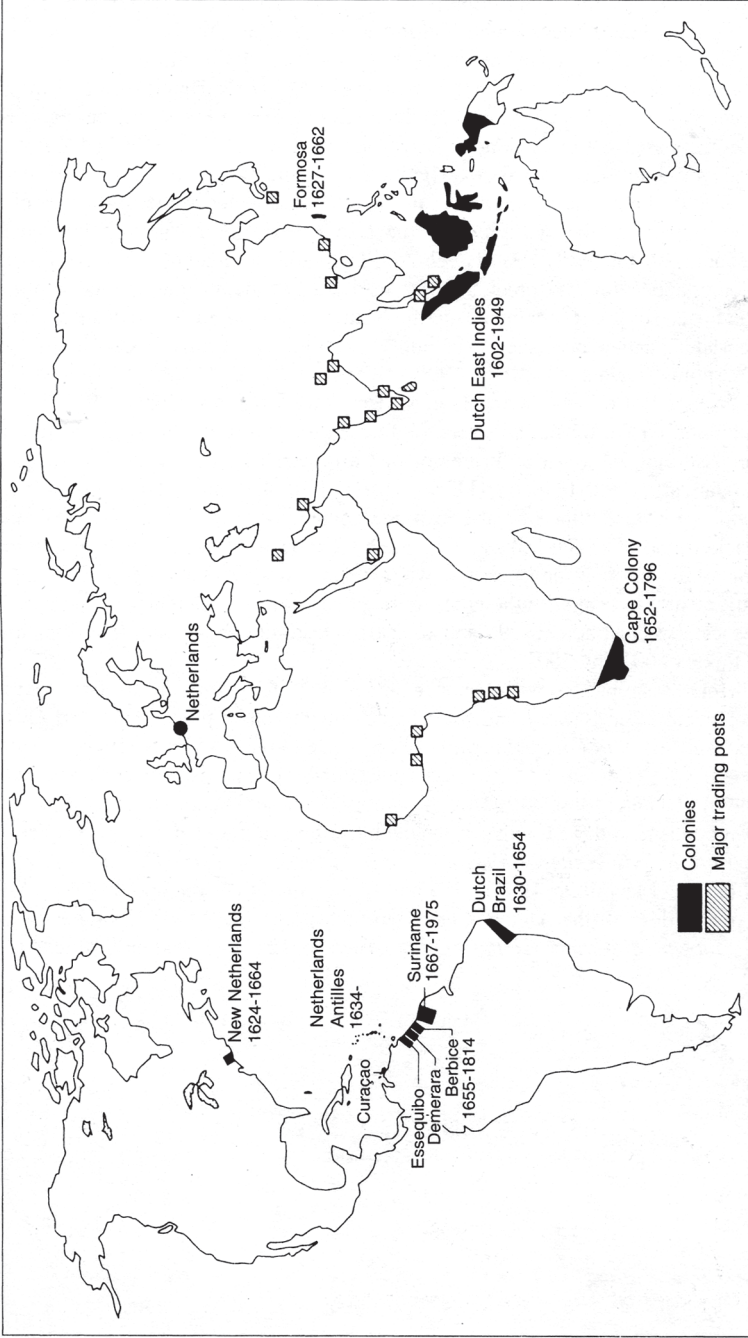
Many thanks to the participants of the workshop at Stellenbosch University, superbly co-organized by Siegfried Huygen: Rose Mary Allen (the Netherlands Antilles); Aspha Bijnaar (National Slavery Institute NiNsee, the Netherlands); Fernando Rosa Ribeiro (Unicamp, Brazil); Maurits Hassankhan (Minister of Internal Affairs, Suriname); H.D.S. Hettipathirana (Sri-Lanka-Netherlands Heritage programme, Sri Lanka); Hui Kian Kwee (University of Toronto, Canada); Susan Legêne (VU Free University Amsterdam, the Netherlands); Wim Manuhutu (Museum Maluku, Utrecht, the Netherlands); Badri Narayan Tiwari (University of Allahabad, India); Robert Parthesius (Centre for International Heritage Activities, the Netherlands); Akosua Perbi (University of Accra, Ghana); Bambang Purwanto (Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia); Arminda Ruiz (Museum of Archeology of Aruba); Henk Schulte Nordholt (KITLV and VU Free University Amsterdam, the Netherlands); Nick Southey (University of South Africa in Pretoria, South Africa); Alex van Stipriaan Luiscius (KIT and Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands); Astrid Weij (Erfgoed Nederland, the Netherlands); and Leslie Witz (University of the Western Cape, South Africa).

Apart from those participating in the workshop, a large group of historians commented on draft versions of various chapters. Their contributions are acknowledged in the relevant chapters. It must suffice here to thank them collectively for their time and the generous sharing of their expertise.

In the final phase of text editing, I received much-appreciated help from Kirsten van Immersum and particularly Inge Klinkers. I gratefully acknowledge Hanneke Lommerse's dedicated and cheerful assistance to the entire project from its very beginning.

The illustrations in this book document in very diverse ways the Dutch presence in the eastern and western hemisphere. As they are all of KITLV provenance they also attest to the richness of the Institute's collections.

Finally, an accolade to the research team at my institute, KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies in Leiden: Gijs Kruijtzter, Hanneke Lommerse, Niels and Erik Sitton, Thio Termorshuizen, Rik van Welie and Esther Zwinkels. At the time of this project, this small team consisted of BA, MA and PhD students. You all contributed more than I could and perhaps should have asked for. *Chapeau*.



Main areas of the 'Dutch empire'

GERT OOSTINDIE

Migration and its legacies in the Dutch colonial world

The fragmentation of memory is one of the many legacies of Dutch colonialism in Asia, Africa, the Americas and ultimately in the Netherlands itself. The historiography of Dutch colonialism can be neatly divided into geographic branches, with each of these subdivided into smaller entities. This book aims to broaden the perspective by presenting a comparative approach to colonial migrations in the Dutch orbit. This introductory chapter provides a bird's eye view of relevant colonial history as well as a succinct discussion of the major types of migration sparked by Dutch colonial rule and some preliminary observations on the resultant cultural legacies.¹

An exceedingly brief history of Dutch colonialism

To provide some context, a few words on the general outlines of Dutch colonial history are requisite. While Dutch ships were engaged in incidental explorations and commercial pursuits all over the tropics by the late sixteenth century, the scale and organization of overseas expansion was greatly enhanced with the establishment of the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC, 1602-1799) and the Dutch West Indies Company (WIC, 1621-1792). This would lead to the establishment of a series of trading posts along with a number of genuine colonies mainly administrated by these companies.

A glance at the superbly rendered digital *Atlas of mutual heritage*² illustrates the enormous expanse of area once covered by the VOC and the vast number of former settlements, fortifications, trading posts and the like, reflecting this history. From the Cape Colony in South Africa, this string of

¹ I thank those participating in the workshop held at the University of Stellenbosch, 25-27 March 2008, as well as Peter Boomgaard, Pieter Emmer, Henk den Heijer and Gijs Kruijtzter for their critical comments on an earlier version of this paper.

² www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl

historical settlements ran through eastern Africa, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia to China and Japan. These settlements tended to be short-term and comprised very few Europeans. In a few other places, such as Cochin in present-day India, the Dutch presence lasted longer. Nonetheless, few traces remain. Of more significance were the brief Dutch colonization of Formosa/Taiwan (1624-1662) and the unique opportunity offered by the Japanese rulers to Dutch officials and traders to settle the small island of Dejima in the harbour of Nagasaki (1641-1859).

The VOC only achieved genuine long-term colonization and permanent settlement in the Cape Colony in South Africa, Sri Lanka and contemporary Indonesia. Most issues pertaining to common cultural heritage therefore centre on these states. The direct impact of the Dutch in the other territories was of modest significance outside the realm of commerce. Only a few of the present-day Asian states that are heirs to the latter category of territories have a distinct interest in early encounters with the Dutch.

For much of the period during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars the Dutch colonies were occupied by the British. After the Peace of Vienna (1815), the colonial empire in Asia was reduced to its prize possession, the Indonesian archipelago ('Nederlandsch-Indië'). The Dutch state – by now a Kingdom – assumed full imperial powers itself. The 'pacification' of the entire archipelago was only completed by the early twentieth century. By then, Indonesia had become of crucial importance to the Netherlands. The country would remain a Dutch colony until the declaration of independence in 1945, even if effective control ended in 1942 with the Japanese occupation and the official transfer of sovereignty was only finalized in 1949, or even as late as 1962 with the cession of New Guinea (Papua).

Despite auspicious beginnings, the Dutch empire was eventually less successful in the Atlantic. In West Africa settlements tended to survive for only short periods, with just a few, in present-day Ghana, becoming long-standing Dutch trading posts. Elmina (1637-1872) was the most notable and endured the longest. The first two Dutch colonies in the Americas, New Netherland (1609-1664) and Dutch Brazil (1630-1654), were lost fairly quickly to the British or reconquered by the Portuguese, respectively. The focus then moved to the Caribbean and the adjacent Guyanas on the northern coast of South America. Eventually the Dutch held on to six Antillean islands as well as four plantation colonies in the Guyanas.

The Napoleonic wars again ushered in a wave of British occupations. Afterwards, Berbice, Essequibo and Demerara – present-day Guyana – were ceded to Britain. Suriname and the islands returned to the Dutch realm. Suriname became an independent republic in 1975, while the Antillean islands still form part of the Kingdom and have no interest in changing this post-colonial status.

A paradox underlies Dutch colonial history. For the Netherlands, colonial expansion in Asia, particularly in the Indonesian archipelago, was of great importance, economically, geopolitically and culturally. The lasting Dutch legacy in Asia, however, is very limited beyond the fact that colonialism created the geographic contours of what is now the Republic of Indonesia. The reverse applies to transatlantic expansion, which ultimately proved to be of lesser importance and interest to the Dutch but would nevertheless leave a lasting impact in their former colonies. In Africa, the former Cape Colony defies this paradox. Relations between the Netherlands and Cape Town would remain significant in many areas, even long after the British takeover.

The key to understanding this paradox – and the unique model of the Cape Colony – lies in demography and in the migration histories that are central to this book. Dutch colonialism implied large-scale human migrations for all continents involved: mainly on a voluntary basis for Europeans, overwhelmingly forced for Africans, and in a variety of arrangements for Asians. In all cases, climate and pre-colonial demography were crucial in the triggering of these migrations. Only colonies with a moderate climate attracted large numbers of Europeans – hence only the short-lived New Netherland colony and particularly the Cape became genuine settlers' colonies. Migration to tropical areas typically involved bonded and semi-bonded labour organized under colonial auspices.

The crucial importance of the African slave trade and Asian indentured labour migration to the Dutch Atlantic is well-known. While the two chapters in this book on slavery and indentured labour confirm this, they also indicate that the trade in and use of enslaved and subsequently indentured human beings ran at a similar level in Asia. The contrast lies in the ethnic characteristics and relative numerical importance of these migrations. In the Indonesian archipelago, the majority of the bonded and semi-bonded migrants were ethnically akin to the local population and, with the partial exception of Chinese migrants, integrated with the local population fairly quickly or, to a lesser extent, with the European colonists. Of even more significance, in most areas and episodes the numbers of these 'colonial' slaves and indentured labourers were dwarfed by the native population.

The contrast with the Dutch colonies in the Americas is enormous. Pre-Columbian native populations were of importance in New Netherland and in Dutch Brazil, but in the Caribbean the number of Amerindians was low and declining. Hence, next to peripheral Amerindians and modest numbers of European colonists, enslaved Africans, and subsequently in Suriname Asian indentured labourers, came to constitute the massive majorities of the local populations. In other words, and in stark contrast to the Dutch East Indies, colonial migrations reshaped the Dutch Caribbean. It is evident that these demographic contrasts resulted in strongly diverging contemporary legacies,

not in the least pertaining to common cultural heritage.

Post-colonialism is not just a matter of periodization and academic paradigms. The concept also applies to the last migratory movement connected to colonialism, or rather the ending of it. As in so many other cases, decolonization in the Dutch orbit resulted in new migrations. The volume of post-colonial migrations to the metropolis from the East and from the West is roughly comparable in absolute numbers. The number of Dutch citizens with roots in Indonesia is now estimated at just over half a million, while the metropolitan Dutch Caribbean community falls just below that figure.

Here again, the contrast lies in the proportional significance. In relation to an Indonesian population now at 235 million, the number of Dutch with Indonesian antecedents is insignificant and, moreover, ethnically not at all representative. The Dutch Caribbean communities, in contrast, are representative of the sending communities, are not much smaller than the populations in the Dutch Caribbean and maintain strong transnational ties. As we will see, this has all sorts of contrasting implications for the way colonial history is remembered – and thus probably also for future cultural heritage policies.

Colonization and colonists

In most places where the Dutch founded colonies, other powers had preceded them. Dutch colonialism therefore also implied both learning and deviating from previous European practices, in administration, the military, landscaping and architecture, social and cultural life. This simple observation raises a series of questions of obvious relevance to debates on cultural heritage which, for practical reasons, cannot be dealt with here.

Next, there is the issue of the ‘national’ character of Dutch colonialism. To a greater extent than any other colonial power – with the possible exception of Denmark, a minor player – the Netherlands encouraged Europeans of other nationalities and even religions to establish themselves in its colonies. One may safely assume that this had consequences for the development of a Dutch variant of colonialism. Another key question is how the ‘Dutch’ colonists, very much in the minority in most of their new habitats, related to the wider society.

The chapter by Gijs Kruijtzter on ‘free’ European migration in the Dutch orbit does not attempt to address, much less fully answer the last two questions, but it does present indispensable ground work from which to depart, particularly for the earlier colonial period.³ For more detail, it must suffice

³ Obviously free Chinese migration was extremely important within the Dutch Asian sphere, but this topic is not discussed in this book.

here to refer to his contribution and to the quantitative appendix at the end of this book. But what is the general picture?

A first conclusion evident from Kruijtzter's data, but perhaps forgotten in living memory, is that a considerable number of the 'Dutch' forming the backbone of Dutch colonialism were born outside the Netherlands; they would adopt the Dutch ways – in language, religion and so on – only along the way, if at all. Whether on the company fleets, in Africa, the Americas or Asia, 'Dutch' sailors and colonists were often of other European stock (and, increasingly, non-European too). There were Germans, but also Southern Netherlanders, French, Scandinavians, Swiss, even some British. In the Dutch Americas, Portuguese Jews (Sephardim) and later Ashkenazim formed a considerable part of the European population.

The great majority of these Europeans arrived at Dutch colonies of their own volition. There was no enslavement of Europeans and only a fraction of all Europeans crossed the oceans as indentured labourers. Yet there are obvious qualifications to the issue of European volition. Specific European groups, in particular Jews, opted to settle in the Dutch colonies in order to escape religious repression. The great majority of European migrants chose to leave due to economic forces, probably with the elusive goal of returning better-off within a few years. In practice, up until the nineteenth century, return rates were as modest as spectacular economic successes were sporadic and premature death was ubiquitous.

As even the European segment of Dutch colonial societies was heterogeneous, it comes as no surprise that in most Dutch colonial settlements, 'European' culture was by no means only a tropical variant of the Dutch ways. Perhaps something like a genuine Dutch colonial variant developed in government. After all, metropolitan instructions were sent by the ruling Dutch elites and were followed – to an extent – by a colonial officialdom dominated at the top levels by Dutchmen. Social life was an altogether different matter.

During the times of the VOC and WIC, the size of the European communities was small in all Dutch colonies, with the exception of the Cape Colony, with some 20,000 Europeans at the time of the British takeover during the Napoleonic wars. This figure provides a massive contrast with all other colonial cities of the Dutch empire prior to 1800. Whether in Batavia, Kota Ambon or Ceylon in the East or in Recife, Paramaribo or Willemstad in the West, the total European population in these places ranged between a mere couple of hundred to a few thousand. Only in Batavia and a handful of other Indonesian cities did the European population rapidly accelerate after the mid-nineteenth century, adding up to a total of some 210,000 by 1930.

The European segment was therefore tiny in most Dutch colonial settlements throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Intermediate

groups of Eurasians or Eurafricans did emerge in most places, in spite of early Dutch regulations issued to counter racial mixing. Initially the greater number of births in these communities derived from relations between European men and Asian or African female slaves. Manumission was an established practice in Asia, more so than in the Americas. But even in the Dutch Caribbean a non-slave status would ultimately come to characterize the majority of Eurafricans. Fairly soon these mixed segments were of considerable numerical importance both in Asia and in the Caribbean. In Elmina, Paramaribo and Willemstad, Eurafricans outnumbered the European segment by the late eighteenth century. In Batavia and Galle (Sri Lanka), Europeans officially slightly outnumbered Eurasian mestizos – but then again, contemporaries wondered about the ‘purity’ of these Europeans.

The ethnic, colour and class segmentation of Dutch colonial cities was further complicated by the emergence of a group of free men and women of local origin in Asia, and of African origin in the Caribbean. Like the majority of Eurasians and Eurafricans mentioned above, these groups were legally free during the times when slavery still functioned and they were more or less assimilated into European colonial culture – always bearing in mind that ‘European’ increasingly implied a thoroughly creolized variety of Dutch culture.

In all of this, and bearing in mind the unique character of the Cape Colony, one finds strong parallels in the various parts of the Dutch empire up until 1800. But there are important contrasts as well. In the Americas, the Dutch, like all other European powers, virtually created new societies – taking advantage, that is, of the genes and labour of enslaved Africans. Apart from a small number of marginalized Native Americans, the populations of these Dutch American colonies were made up of Old World immigrants. With the short-lived exception of New Netherland, Europeans formed tiny minorities in these societies.⁴ The starkest example of this is Suriname, where the population of African origins made up over 95 per cent of the population until the abolition of slavery in 1863. On the Antillean islands the imbalance was less stark, but again the ‘African’ population vastly outnumbered the European.

In Asia, of course, the great majority of the populations in and around the ‘Dutch’ settlements predated European colonization. Beyond the new colonial centres, European immigration had no major demographic consequences. The one caveat that comes with this observation relates not to European migrants, but to the considerable number of Chinese living in and around Batavia, the result of a steady stream of immigration tolerated if not actively encouraged by the Dutch. Their numbers quickly increased, to the

⁴ Of course, the Dutch demographic and cultural impact on former New Netherland would outlive the formal Dutch colonial period by many decades, arguably even centuries.

point that eighteenth-century Batavia has been described as a Chinese town. But of course, once one draws a wider circle around Batavia or once one focuses on all of Java, let alone on the entire Indonesian archipelago, one cannot escape the conclusion that demographically, the mass of 'locals' dwarfed the immigrant communities, whether of European, Eurasian or *peranakan* (native) Chinese stock.

The picture of proportional insignificance of the European and Eurasian segments of the Indonesian population does not fundamentally alter after 1800. Many more Europeans emigrated to the booming colony from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, whether for business, government or as enlisted soldiers in the colonial army. In the early 1890s, the size of the European and Eurasian population taken together stood at 60,000 and by 1934 at 240,000. Europeans and Eurasians nonetheless remained a fraction of the overall Indonesian population, which increased from less than 15 million in the mid-nineteenth century to 35 million around 1900 and nearly 60 million by 1930.

In Africa, Elmina would remain a Dutch colonial enclave until 1872, but both the absolute and the proportional number of Europeans living there remained small. Serious Dutch migration to Africa focused on South Africa well into the twentieth century, over time bequeathing the British colony and next sovereign republic with a strong white Afrikaner community – but as much as this is Dutch history, it does not formally pertain to Dutch *colonial* history anymore.

In the post-Napoleonic Caribbean, only Suriname and the six Antillean islands remained within the Dutch orbit. Dutch immigration to Suriname was transient and insignificant with respect to numbers. By the mid-twentieth century the colony's local 'European' population had all but disappeared through creolization and (re)emigration to the Netherlands. A firmly rooted, creolized European segment did perpetuate its centuries-old existence in the Antilles, particularly on Curaçao. Over the past century, successive immigration waves have even strengthened the European proportion of the population – but descendants of enslaved Africans remain the vast majority on all islands except for Aruba and Saba.

What are the implications of these data on migrations and settlements for the theme of 'common' cultural heritage between the Netherlands and its former spheres of influence? What reasons do we have to think of commonality in the first place? Three general observations are in order here. First, more than any of its European counterparts, Dutch colonialism depended on Europeans from other nationalities. There were simply insufficient Dutch men willing to leave their native country, much less Dutch women. While by definition *all* overseas European communities creolized both demographically and culturally, this creolization had an extraordinary dimension in the Dutch orbit. Thus, well into the nineteenth century, the Dutch language

was not even dominant among the European segment of the Dutch colonial populations. Neither was the Dutch Reformed Church in religious matters. The parameters of colonial rule were set in the Netherlands and to an extent executed by Dutch officials – but only in the highest ranks were these officials generally Dutch themselves.

What does this imply for our understanding of the commonality of cultural heritage? To start with, the simple observation that we cannot narrow down our understanding of the *colonial* input to *Dutch* culture. While tourist brochures may highlight the ‘typical Amsterdam canal houses’ on Willemstad’s Handelskade, we should be aware that the typical ‘European’ musical genres of the island that developed over time speak of Iberian rather than Dutch legacies (not to mention the new creole dimension). Likewise, the Afro-European creole languages of the Dutch Caribbean derive their vocabularies primarily from Portuguese (Papiamentu, Saramaccan) or English (Sranantongo) rather than Dutch. In the Asian settlements, Dutch was only one among many languages spoken within the European communities; colonial architecture adhered to a generalized European style. In other words, even the commonality between Dutch culture at home and ‘Dutch’ colonial culture cannot be taken for granted.

Second and possibly of more interest, the numerical insignificance of the ‘Dutch’ European segment had profound consequences. It has often been observed that the Dutch colonial legacy pales in comparison to legacies left by other European colonies. Language is the most striking case in point. Dutch was only spoken by tiny minorities in Asia and left only a few traces, even in Indonesia, although a great number of Dutch words made their way as loanwords into Indonesian. In the Caribbean colonies, Dutch likewise was a minority language all through the colonial period. It only became widely spoken in Suriname during the twentieth century, in a specific context of educational reform, ethnic competition and growing orientation and migration towards the Netherlands. Ironically, in the Antilles Dutch is an unpopular second language only, in spite of the islanders’ choice to remain within the Kingdom.

Finally, a similar observation may be made regarding the religious legacy left by Dutch colonialism. Christianity remained marginal in the Dutch Asian colonies. Christianization was limited to scattered regions in the Dutch Asian colonies (though the roughly ten per cent Christians among the contemporary Indonesian population still amount to some twenty millions). In a broader Asian perspective, there is nothing particularly remarkable here: of all European colonial powers only Spain, in the Philippines, left a lasting religious heritage. But in the Caribbean too, there was little Dutch religious zeal. In the Antilles, the European elites clung to their own Protestant or Jewish convictions, leaving the christening of the African majorities to Spanish

and Spanish American Catholic missionaries. In Suriname, the hesitant late eighteenth-century decision to allow for christianization of the free non-Europeans and, only from the 1820s onwards, of the slave populations, led to the invitation of German Moravians and later also Dutch Catholic missionaries. Asian immigration implied the reconfiguration of the colony's religious landscape; little concerted effort was made to convert Hindus and Muslims to Christianity and the results were predictably limited.

The most significant linguistic legacy of Dutch colonialism is therefore found in South Africa; the major religious legacies are located in South Africa and to a lesser extent in the Caribbean. Thus, even if the Cape Colony was Dutch only up until the late eighteenth century, it arguably remained the most European of all Dutch colonial settlements long after. And of course, even if subsequent European migration to South Africa was no less heterogeneous under British rule than before, the early Dutch legacy survived into the present, for better or for worse.

Slave trades and slavery

In common with European colonial practice and with pre-colonial customs in most colonized areas, the Netherlands engaged in slave trade and slavery. Although for the Atlantic region much research has been undertaken on this subject, this is not the case for the operational sphere of the VOC. Slave trades and slavery in 'East' and 'West' were two circuits that, as far as we know, were virtually independent of one another; they do, however, lend themselves very well to mutual comparison. This includes the scale and organization of the slave trade, the number and origin of the slaves, their economic importance to the colonies, contrasts between indigenous and foreign slavery, slavery regimes, inter-ethnic relations, creolization and local cultural formation and, finally, the abolition of the slave trade and ultimately of slavery itself ('Emancipation'). As colonial slavery is at the core of the matter, this theme spans the period from circa 1600 until 1863.

Several conclusions may be drawn from the chapter on Dutch slave trades and colonial slavery presented by Rik van Welie and the supporting data in the Appendix. First, the numbers game. The Dutch role in the Atlantic slave trade has long been established. Over the centuries, Dutch slavers were minor players, embarking some 555,000 or five per cent of the 12.5 million enslaved Africans destined for the 'middle passage' across the Atlantic. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, however, the Dutch share was more prominent and the Dutch were also instrumental in exporting the sugar-and-slavery model from Brazil to the Caribbean.

Whereas the Dutch slave trade is mostly thought of as an Atlantic phe-



St. George d'Elmina Castle

nomenon, historians have long known that the VOC also engaged in slave trading. In a pioneering article, Marcus Vink (2003) has suggested that the Dutch Indian Ocean slave trade was actually more voluminous than it was in the Atlantic. Van Welie's discussion of the literature and evidence makes it clear that the methodological and conceptual issues are far more complicated for the Asian slave trades than for the Atlantic area. Even short of satisfactory quantitative series, we may confidently say that the Dutch were active slavers in Asia themselves and equally unscrupulous buyers of Asian and to a lesser degree African slaves supplied by other traders, most of these Africans and Asians, particularly Chinese.

Up until the abolition of slavery, slave labour formed the backbone of the colonies in the Americas – slave-produced tropical crops were actually the *raison d'être* of these colonies. Dutch Brazil and the Guyanas were typical plantation economies, with enslaved Africans making up the vast majority of the population. Conversely, in most of the Asian settlements and colonies, slave labour was mainly urban and incidental to other forms of locally procured labour, whether bonded or not. Slaves formed a tiny minority of the overall population in the Asian colonies. Only in places such as Batavia, Banda and Ambon did they make up half of the population by the late seventeenth century and would hence have a more significant cultural impact.

Much has been written on the absence of a serious abolitionist movement in the Netherlands regarding the Atlantic slave trade and slavery. Clearly the lack of abolitionist fervour contrasts with ideas about Dutch progressiveness and humanitarianism. Studies on slave owners' attitudes in the Dutch Caribbean only confirm this sobering observation. Again, the study of Dutch attitudes to enslavement in Asia is only in its infancy. There is no indication, however, that Dutch colonialism has a more commendable record here. Perhaps it was even easier to conceive of slavery as self-evident in Asia than in the Americas. In Asia, the Dutch, like other Europeans, simply participated in pre-colonial networks of slave trading and were not alone in their deployment of slaves.⁵

Historians tend to be weary of generalizations regarding 'mild' versus 'harsh' variants of slavery, even more so when such variations are explained by referring to factors such as the national or cultural backgrounds of slave owners. Wherever there is slavery, abuse is endemic; and so is slave resistance. Nonetheless, we may possibly discern some contrasts between the practice of slavery in the Dutch Atlantic and in Dutch Asia. For all we know, for most enslaved, slavery in Asia would imply urban and domestic rather than agro-industrial labour; it was more gender-balanced and implied lesser racial and ethnic distinctions. As a consequence, manumission was far more com-

⁵ See Oostindie 1995 for a comparative perspective on Dutch abolition and emancipation.

mon, as was the likeliness that the descendants of manumitted slaves would be fully integrated into the wider society, not always in the lower classes. For most Asian slaves, there was no such thing as the dreaded middle passage, probably lesser racial stigmatization and, perhaps, lesser alienation.

While this hypothesis awaits scholarly scrutiny, for present purposes it is useful to highlight another dimension of the history of slavery. Throughout the Americas as well as in the Afro-Caribbean diaspora in Europe, the Atlantic slave trade and New World slavery are crucial to the way descendants of these enslaved Africans think of themselves, how they view colonial history and how they deal with present-day issues ranging from racism to social achievement. Their visible African ancestry moreover makes them victims of this history identifiable to all. Slavery, in a sense, has remained, or has become, a central feature in Afro-American identity.

Nothing of this sort applies to the former Dutch colonies in Asia. Remember that slavery was not nearly as dominant in the Asian territories as it was in the Americas. Moreover, it is difficult to point at legacies of slavery or at descendants of slaves – and where this *is* possible, in Indonesia, one will more likely be dealing with traces of the indigenous slavery both preceding and outlasting colonial slavery. In other words, while colonial history itself does not have the contemporary weight in Asia that it has in the Caribbean, slavery evokes even less living memories.

The implications for debates about common cultural heritage are evident. Slavery is a central concern in any debate on heritage legacies between Dutch and Caribbean specialists, politicians or the general public (Van Stipriaan et al. 2007; Oostindie 2008). So far, it has no place whatsoever in discussions between Indonesian and Dutch participants, and while scholars will certainly pick up this issue, it is unlikely that this will spark much of a change in general awareness. An open question is what place specialists in the field of cultural heritage will allot to colonial slavery.

This observation leads to the wider issue of the cultural legacies of the Atlantic slave trade in the Americas. Centuries and perhaps even decades ago, the 'Eurafrican' cultures of the Americas were easily denigrated as corrupted forms of European civilization. Afro-American emancipation as well as scholarly debates have forwarded more nuanced interpretations. 'Creolization' today has become the leading paradigm on cultural formation in the history and anthropology of 'plantation America', emphasizing mutual cultural affects in conditions of systemic power asymmetry (Price 2001). The result of centuries of creolization has been a series of new syncretic cultural forms, each presenting a cultural continuum between ideal-typical 'European' and 'African' poles. Yet most scholars would add that this continuum actually functions as a hierarchy, with most of the prestige and certainly the best chances for upward social mobility at the European end. This then suggests

that these mixed cultures have developed a strong affinity with a generalized 'Western' culture. It is hard to seriously discuss 'common' cultural heritage in the Americas without touching on this debate.

And then, of course, we have the delicate question of slave trading and slavery in Africa. While Elmina was merely one out of many European fortresses dotting the West African coast, it was Dutch for over two centuries and as such served as a hub for Dutch slave trading. Most African slaves were brought from other places though; the great majority of enslaved Africans embarking at Elmina came from far afield and were supplied by Africans from various ethnic groups now sharing citizenship with those once traded as slaves. There is no clear-cut story of European or Dutch villains and African or Ghanaian victims, as also the Ghanaian government is making abundantly clear.

We do see a concerted effort though, to incorporate this painful history into the bilateral relations of Ghana and the Netherlands. Some criticize the commoditization of the slave trade, others argue that projects such as the restoration and conversion into an open-air museum of Elmina are laudable healing and reconciliatory initiatives while at the same time generating much-needed revenue through tourism. Either way, Elmina is a key location for the definition of what commonality means for people living on each side of the dreaded triangular trade – even if we take into account that the great majority of enslaved Africans taken to the Dutch Caribbean were embarked elsewhere.

Overseas slave trade, finally, has a long history in South Africa, and there is no doubt that Dutch colonialism left its mark in this respect as well. Estimated at 63,000, the total number of slaves disembarked at the Cape during the VOC period is not only relatively low but also remarkable for the wide spread of provenance areas, from Southeast Asia through South Asia and Madagascar to Southeast Africa. Slave labour was indispensable to the colonial economy and by the late eighteenth century, the Cape Colony deployed some 20,000 slaves, roughly the same number as the European segment of the population. But then again, suppression and bonded labour were also meted out to the local population, the Khoikhoi, who worked in serf-like conditions, and to other Asian immigrants.

As Nigel Worden (2001) has remarked, slave trade and slavery in the Cape Colony – after all, only a faraway regional episode in a large country with more recent and more widely shared drama's to remember – is only now becoming incorporated into the debates about South African history and cultural heritage. This issue will be addressed again in Chapter III, on historical memories and national canons.

Indentured labour migrations

Somewhere between the extremes of free labour and chattel slavery, we find various forms of indentured labour. Unlike the slave trades, this form of labour recruitment did eventually link Asia with the Americas, that is, between the mid-nineteenth century until the eve of World War Two. The major areas of recruitment for indentured labour were China, British India and Java. Both Chinese and British Indian labour migrations were primarily Asian affairs, although Chinese contract labourers also found their way all over the Americas, and British Indians to the Caribbean. Post-slavery Suriname was among the Caribbean plantation colonies at the receiving end. Initially, modest numbers of Chinese disembarked at this Dutch colony, followed by larger contingents of British Indians. In addition, Suriname was the only New World colony receiving Javanese indentured labourers.⁶

Asian indentured labour in the Caribbean has been dubbed 'a new system of slavery' (Tinker 1974). The rationale behind this indictment is clear. The need to make up for the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade and the diminishing supply of African-American labour was at the root of this new form of cross-oceanic labour recruitment. Volition of those recruited is a disputed dimension of the entire process from the recruitment in Asia to the rigid control enforced in their areas of employment. Thio Termorshuizen's review of indentured labour in the Dutch orbit confirms these rough beginnings, but also suggests a gradual amelioration of the system.

Bonded labour – not slavery exactly, but neither 'free' in the modern, capitalist sense – was nothing new to Asia. Pre-colonial systems of labour recruitment, often through warfare, had covered a broad range of bonded and semi-bonded arrangements, and the Indonesian archipelago was no exception to this rule. Migration had been one element in some of these systems, although most recruitment had been local. Initially, not that much changed with the advent of colonialism. Even the economically highly successful Dutch Cultivation System – semi-bonded labour recruitment organized and overseen by the Dutch colonial authorities in Java between 1830 and 1870 – did not involve migrations of any great distance.

Just as some lessons learned from Caribbean slavery found their way into the Cultivation System, so did experiences with the latter contribute to the systems of indentured labour recruitment subsequently deployed by the

⁶ For comparative reasons it would be useful to look at some minor indentured labour migrations. One such case is Malay and British Indian indentured labour in South Africa before, but particularly following the British takeover. Another form of indentured labour migration involves African contract labour to serve in the colonial army in the Dutch East Indies. However, quantitatively speaking these are only minor threads in the historical narrative.

Dutch colonial government. The new dimension was long-distance migration organized and/or supported by the colonial authorities. In Termorshuizen's review one easily detects the formal parallels between indentured labour migrations within the Indonesian archipelago and to Suriname. Perhaps more interesting, and certainly of more lasting consequence, are the contrasts.

What of the demographic and hence cultural impact of these various labour migrations sparked under the aegis of Dutch colonialism? Let us first consider the supply side, that is, mainland British India, China and Java. Over thirty million British Indians emigrated between 1840 and 1940, with as many as half of these repatriating later on. The overwhelming majority migrated within Asia, with only relatively small numbers moving to Africa or the Caribbean (Manning 2005:145-6). Even within the Caribbean, Suriname's share, some 35,000, pales in comparison to the number of Indian indentured labourers disembarking in Guyana and Trinidad. In other words, Suriname was a negligible destination in the overall history of British Indian migration – and yet, recent research has demonstrated that 'Suriname' does figure in Indian oral traditions. In present-day India there is a growing interest in the history of its diasporic communities. At the end of the day, however, even the tens of millions of former emigrants and their contemporary descendants are of modest significance to a one-billion-plus nation.

This similarly applies to the migration of Chinese. 'Chinese' – an anachronistic adjective in itself – migrants were all over Asia well before the advent of European colonialism and continued to migrate during the following centuries, both under regimes of indentured labour and as free labourers. Patrick Manning (2005:145-6) suggests that just over 50 million Chinese emigrated between 1840 and 1940, again with a return rate of just over half. The great majority migrated within Asia, particularly South and Southeast Asia. Some one million Chinese migrated to the Americas – the few thousand disembarking in the Dutch Caribbean are a mere footnote to this history. As in the case of British India, the demographic impact of these various migrations was of modest significance to China itself; the impact on Indonesia was more pronounced. It should be borne in mind however, that the indentured Chinese, somewhere around 200,000, moving to Sumatra, plus the 150-200,000 moving to the other Outer Islands between the 1880s and the 1920s, formed but two of a long series of Chinese migrations to the archipelago continuing to the present day.

Migrations within the archipelago of course antedated colonialism. One may conclude though that the organized recruitment of Javanese indentured labour for Sumatra did signal a new chapter. Again, the volume of indentured labour migrations within the archipelago dwarfs the Dutch Caribbean experience. The number of Javanese contract labourers and their families moving to northern Sumatra between the 1880s and 1920s probably came

near to 700,000. If we add Javanese migration to the other Outer Islands and several lesser destinations, we come close to the one million mark. With some 33,000 arrivals, the figure of Javanese indentured labourers disembarking in Suriname again pales. Although the immediate demographic significance of these various migrations was scant for Java, one may say that these colonial beginnings did prefigure the more voluminous *transmigrasi* schemes of the post-independence era.

What of the impact of the colonial migrations at the receiving end, in the Dutch colonies? Both on Sumatra and the Outer Islands, Javanese and to a lesser extent Chinese indentured labourers had a lasting impact on the demographic make-up of the populations. Population figures soared once the indentured migration started, and a good proportion of the migrants chose to stay after the expiration of their contracts. Their descendants now form a significant part of the population of Sumatra, alongside post-war Javanese transmigrants.

But again, by far the most significant consequences of Asian migrant labour were felt in Suriname – not because the numbers involved were that high, but because their relative weight was enormous. At the time of the abolition of slavery, in 1863, inhabitants of predominantly African descent made up some 95 per cent of the Surinamese population. One full century later, this proportion was down to 47 per cent. This fall was entirely accounted for by the growth of the Asian communities, which stood at 35 per cent for the Hindustani and 14 per cent for the Javanese. The relative growth of this ‘Asian’ population has continued ever since.

As will be discussed later, these ethnic reconfigurations had lasting consequences for the way colonial history and its legacies are constituted in contemporary Suriname. Suffice it here to say that Asian migrations had immediate cultural implications for Suriname. ‘Eurafrican’ or Afro-Caribbean cultures are often characterized as creolized, new cultures but still fairly akin to European cultures. Massive immigration of Asians added an entirely new dimension to the creolized culture developing in Suriname. With the British Indians and Javanese came Hinduism and Islam, new conceptions of religion and kinship, aesthetic norms, musical styles, cuisine, et cetera. Certainly, Asian cultures too creolized in a New World setting – although ethnic distinction was strongly maintained.

This layering of African and Asian migration movements had all sorts of implications for ethnicity, identity politics and nation building. For present purposes, it is crucial that the Asian dimension in Surinamese culture has arguably had less exposure to Dutch culture and has demonstrated more resilience to overall westernization. And that, in comparison to Afro-Surinamese and Antilleans, Surinamese of Asian backgrounds seem less concerned with ‘the West’ and colonialism as tenets – or antagonisms – of their own cultures.

Post-colonial migrations

'Free' migrations of colonial subjects within the Dutch empire were to become more prominent in the twentieth century. Moluccan soldiers in the colonial army moved to Java, Surinamese professionals moved to the East Indies, where labour opportunities were better, Surinamese lower and middle class migrants found work in Aruba and Curaçao and so on. The one really significant and even dramatic new chapter in colonial migrations, however, was not connected to the further development of Dutch colonialism, but rather to its demise. For the first time in the history of Dutch colonialism, the metropolis became the recipient of large numbers of (post)-colonial migrants.

In the history of all European colonial empires one of the impulses to the emergence of anti-colonial struggles originated from the metropolitan sojourn of colonial subjects. Students of the various academic disciplines necessary to run a country became acquainted with like-minded people of their own and other colonies and developed a better grasp of the stark contrasts between colonial pretensions and practice. On returning home, demobilized soldiers experienced little of the appreciation they felt they were rightly owed by their metropolitan fellowmen. Working class colonial immigrants, while also exposed to overt racism, did have opportunities to join trade unions. In short, and in particular during the first half of the twentieth century, the metropolitan sojourn was a crucial *rite de passage* for many a later nationalist leader.

The Dutch colonial orbit is no exception to this rule. While there had been continuous but numerically insignificant and mainly temporary migration from the colonies all through the colonial period, this migration accelerated in the Interbellum. Of course, the immense Indonesian archipelago provided the greater number of colonial migrants. Most of these originated from the colony's traditional elites who were among the tiny minority passing through Dutch-language education and hence qualifying for metropolitan universities. In the Netherlands they became lawyers, medical doctors, engineers and so forth. They also developed ideas about an Indonesian nation that could do without the Dutch. In addition, there were scattered working class immigrants and, more importantly, revolutionary activists were welcomed into the political ranks of the Dutch left.

Migration from the Caribbean presents a similar picture, even if the numbers involved are scant. Pre-World War Two Caribbean students in the Netherlands, virtually all from the creolized elites, did form their own organizations and the like, but did not engage in political issues. From Suriname however, also came a small contingent of working class migrants, one of whom (Anton de Kom) would provide critical inspiration to his country's post-war nationalist movement.

World War Two marked the beginning of the dismantlement of the Dutch colonial empire.⁷ The Japanese takeover of the Dutch East Indies in 1942 turned out to be the prelude to the full independence claimed by Indonesia on 17 August 1945, only to be accepted by the Dutch on 27 December 1949, after four years of strenuous negotiations and bitter warfare. The transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia sparked successive waves of 'repatriation', a dubious designation if we take into account that a great number of immigrants from Indonesia had never set foot in the Netherlands before and stemmed from families that had made the colony their home for generations, if not from time immemorial. In the aftermath of the 'loss' of Indonesia, some 300,000 Europeans, Eurasians and Moluccans 'repatriated' to the metropolis. This figure may be negligible in relation to an Indonesian population of roughly one hundred million in the late 1940s and 235 million today, but it involved the overwhelming majority from the Dutch colonial and Eurasian societies.

Whereas this first chapter of decolonization thus caused unrepresentative and proportionally modest migration, the 25 November 1975 transfer of sovereignty to Suriname sparked an exodus involving colonial citizens of all classes, ethnicities and generations, a cross-section of the entire population with some overrepresentation of the better educated. On the eve of the internally highly contested independence, 100,000 Surinamese out of a total population of less than 400,000 voted with their feet. Over the following decades, the demographic growth of the Surinamese community would mainly be a Dutch affair. Currently estimated at 350,000, the Surinamese community in the Netherlands is not that much smaller than the total population of Suriname.

Large-scale Antillean migration to the Netherlands, mainly from Curaçao, dates from the late 1980s, producing an 'expat' community of some 125,000. Again, the numerical significance of the migration relates primarily to the islands itself, whose total population is some 280,000. This Antillean migration is not representative by origins, as the overwhelming majority hail from Curaçao; the island's population decreased to 130,000 in the past decades. But again, with respect to social and economic characteristics the migrants form a cross section of the island's population.

Remigration figures for these three migrant communities have been insignificant for Indonesia and very low for Suriname, but substantial for the Antilles. For the latter, we may indeed speak of circular migration, even if the demographic growth of the Curaçaoan population has been heavily concentrated in the Netherlands.

⁷ See Oostindie and Klinkers 2003 for an overview of decolonization and post-colonial migrations.

Once more the question of cultural implications should be discussed. For Indonesia these were limited to the extent that the number of emigrants was proportionally insignificant. Bearing in mind the atypical composition of the emigrant population, we may assume that their departure hastened the marginalization of Dutch and also of the Eurasian culture in Indonesia.

Migration from Suriname and the Antilles did not fundamentally alter the ethnic, class or gender base of the sending communities. However, due to its large-scale character and the ensuing reconfiguration of the Surinamese and Antillean communities as truly transnational, the exodus has had a profound impact on these Caribbean cultures. It has become very difficult to think about these without taking the Dutch component into account.

Finally, there is the impact of this round of migrations on Dutch metropolitan culture. With the post-colonial migrations, colonialism has literally come home to the metropolis. The demographic consequences are obvious: today, out of a population of some 16.5 million, the number of Dutch citizens with colonial roots is estimated at roughly one million. In the Netherlands, as in other former metropolitan countries, the argument 'we are here because you were there!' therefore rings a familiar bell. The emergence of this post-colonial community has had a direct impact on the Dutch debates on national identity. And indeed, the colonial antecedents of Dutch history have been more strongly and critically incorporated into the national narrative than ever before.

Historical memory and national canons

There is a fundamental distinction in the demographic impact of Dutch colonialism around the globe. In contrast to the Cape Colony, with its moderate climate and significant European population, white communities in the Dutch tropical settlements constituted only a small segment of the total populations. But whereas the vast majority of the population in Asia were of native origin, the overwhelming non-European majorities in the Americas were brought there under the flag of Dutch colonialism.

This is crucial, also for an understanding of contemporary views on colonialism and its legacies. In Asia, the Dutch colonial period can be thought of as transitory, leaving only minor demographic or cultural traces.⁸ This even applies to Indonesia, the Dutch prize 'possession' for 350 years. Perhaps only the memory of the episode of decolonization arouses strong feelings

⁸ Taiwan is an exception here, not in the sense that Dutch rule lasted long, but because the Dutch period initiated massive Chinese migration to the island, that would eventually lead to its takeover in 1949 by Chiang Kai-shek's Republic of China.



Dwellings in a Khoikhoi village

in Indonesia – the rest seems forgotten by all but a few specialists. Dutch Caribbean societies by contrast are literally creations of Dutch colonialism, and as a consequence much of national history and culture is defined in one way or another in relation to colonialism. Hence, in Caribbean communities, cultural heritage policies are by definition debated and enacted in an ideologically charged atmosphere. This is only accentuated by the fact that contemporary relations remain intense and asymmetric, and by the transnational nature of today's Dutch Caribbean communities.

Again, South Africa must be considered separately, as a third model. Although Dutch colonialism ended two centuries ago, the Dutch demographic and cultural legacy would persist. It was the Dutch who in their time introduced not only their language and religion, but equally slavery and indentured labour – and it was primarily the white Afrikaners who were to embody and formulate the concept of apartheid in recent history. Talking about 'common' cultural legacies therefore is not devoid of political sensitivities.

Having said all of this, we still have a number of major comparative questions to address, ranging from Dutch attitudes towards the non-white populations and cultures, ideologies and practices surrounding interethnic relations, the organization of urban and plantation life, the emergence of creolized colonial populations and identities and so on. Much research has been undertaken into these issues, yet a truly comparative synthesis is left wanting. It does not require a great stretch of the imagination to envisage that a more rigid comparative approach to these issues would not only enable us to locate Dutch colonialism more firmly within a wider comparative framework, but would also stimulate the debate about the 'commonality' of cultural heritage *within* the former Dutch empire.

Colonialism, in short, impacted on the former colonies and metropolis in uneven degrees. There is tangible cultural heritage, partly visible to all, for example in colonial architecture, and partly hidden away in archives, museums, libraries and other collections. There is a wide spectrum of intangible cultural heritage, preserved in collective, conscious and unconscious memories and customs, which is increasingly recorded and interpreted by experts.

Between the former colonies and colonial settlements significant differences exist in the interest in cultural heritage from the colonial era. Not only does this reflect financial challenges to be met, but also variations in the appreciation of this past. Such contrasts have repercussions on both the formal and the informal canonization of colonial history. The broad comparison of the way various former colonies as well as the former metropolis now deal with this colonial past is still in its infancy. In the third chapter of this book, these issues will be taken up again. But first we will turn to a comparative discussion of cultural heritage and pertinent policies.

Bibliography

- Manning, Patrick
2005 *Migration in world history*. New York: Routledge.
- Oostindie, Gert
1995 (ed.) *Fifty years later; Antislavery, capitalism and modernity in the Dutch orbit*. Leiden: KITLV Press. [Caribbean Series 15.]
2008 'Slavernij, canon en trauma; Debatten en dilemma's', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 121:4-21.
- Oostindie, Gert and Inge Klinkers
2003 *Decolonising the Caribbean; Dutch policies in a comparative framework*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Price, Richard
2001 'The miracle of creolization; A retrospective', *New West Indian Guide* 75:35-64.
- Stipriaan, Alex van, Waldo Heilbron, Aspha Bijnaar and Valika Smeulders
2007 *Op zoek naar de stilte; Sporen van het slavernijverleden in Nederland*. Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, Amsterdam: NiNsee.
- Tinker, Hugh
1974 *A new system of slavery; The export of Indian labour overseas 1830-1920*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Vink, Markus
2003 "'The world's oldest trade"; Dutch slavery and slave trade in the Indian Ocean in the seventeenth century', *Journal of World History* 14:131-77.
- Worden, Nigel
2001 'The forgotten region; Commemorations of slavery in Mauritius and South Africa', in: Gert Oostindie (ed.), *Facing up to the past; Perspectives on the commemoration of slavery from Africa, the Americas and Europe*, pp. 48-54. Kingston: Ian Randle/The Hague: Prince Claus Fund.