

INDO (EURASIAN) COMMUNITIES IN POSTCOLONIAL INDONESIA

Rosalind Louise Hewett

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DECLARATION

I, Rosalind Louise Hewett, hereby declare that this thesis is entirely my own work.

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Rosalind Louise Hewett  
23 March 2016

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## ABSTRACT

During the 1940s and 1950s, around 200,000 Eurasians (Indos) of mixed European and Indonesian descent left Indonesia. In time, they formed distinct communities in The Netherlands, the United States, Australia and elsewhere. A smaller number of Indos who had chosen Indonesian citizenship or had been unable to leave remained in Indonesia. Until now, the fate of Indo communities who remained in Indonesia was largely unstudied. This thesis presents a transnational history of Indos in postcolonial Indonesia, framing their history as part of both Indonesian history and broader Indisch (Indies) Dutch history. It compares their circumstances with those of Indonesia's largest 'foreign minority', Chinese Indonesians. The thesis draws on Dutch archives, newspaper accounts and oral history interviews carried out in Java and North Sulawesi, Queensland and the Netherlands.

Indos comprised a significant component of the European community in late colonial society, and many also held 'native' status. Young Indonesian independence fighters killed and tortured Indo and other families across Java in a loosely coordinated genocide during the Bersiap period in 1945-47. At least ten thousand Indos stayed in Indonesia after the transfer of sovereignty in 1949. During the New Order period (1966-1998), they faced significant pressures to assimilate, but were occasionally held up as a 'model minority' compared with Chinese Indonesians. Some took up work as actors and models, paving the way for the predominance of an 'Indo look' on Indonesian television in the 1990s. Younger Indos, usually the children of expatriates, capitalised on the tradition established by older generations, so that the term 'Indo' became synonymous with fame and stardom. From the mid-2000s, in response to popular historical understandings about ethnicity and race, Indos were more likely to be cast only as wealthy characters in *Sinetron*. After the fall of Suharto, in tandem with a rise in identity politics in the Netherlands, older Indos in Java began to meet regularly with other Dutch speakers. In the Minahasa region of North Sulawesi, these social gatherings were regular even during the Suharto period. Indos there married members of the local mestizo Borgo (formerly burger) community, so that the term 'Indo' became a synonym for 'Borgo'.

This research reveals ways in which national contexts frame how the colonial and postcolonial past are remembered and represented in popular historical consciousness in a former colony and a former metropole among members of a group considered to transcend national boundaries. It also reveals how different Indo communities in Indonesia have interacted with shifting concepts of 'indigeneity' across historical periods, including 'native' (*inlander*) status, *boemipoetera*, *pribumi* and adat. The memories of Indonesian Indos diverge considerably from the memories of Dutch Indos, who often recall the colonial Indies as a paradise and postcolonial Indonesia as a violent and poverty stricken nation. The absence of historical frameworks in Indonesia for events like the Bersiap, along with the 'historical capital' that comes with recalling involvement in certain key events in the history of the nation, determine which memories are recalled and which memories are not voiced in both postcolonial contexts.

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## INTRODUCTION

In late 2015, seventy years after the end of the Second World War, the Dutch government announced that it intended to pay the salaries of former colonial civil servants and soldiers that had remained unpaid since the three years of the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia (1942-45). These salaries were not paid after Japanese surrender, and payment was postponed during the four years of the Indonesian National Revolution (1945-49). The Dutch government transferred responsibility for the salaries to the Indonesian government under the official transfer of sovereignty in 1949. However, the Indonesian government never provided any form of compensation or payment of these salaries. From the 1980s, former colonial civil servants living in the Netherlands began to campaign for the Dutch government to take responsibility for their unpaid salaries, as well as for providing compensation for losses incurred during the Japanese Occupation. The decision of the Dutch government to finally address the back-pay issue in 2015 was the culmination of three decades of campaigning. Maarten van Rijn, the Dutch Secretary for Health, Welfare and Sport, made the announcement on 10 December 2015. He subsequently declared that the government would not compensate Dutch citizens who were otherwise victims of the Japanese Occupation of the Indies. Nonetheless, it would provide funding for them to access mental health, and it planned to revise Dutch school history books to ensure that they covered the history of the Dutch East Indies to a greater extent than previously.

The government's final decision to pay the unpaid salaries that Indisch (Indies) organisations had been lobbying for since the 1980s met with mixed reactions among Dutch Indos (Indo-Europeans, or Eurasians), living predominantly in the Netherlands but also in the United States, Australia and elsewhere. A representative from the Indische Platform, a coalition of over thirty Indische organisations lobbying for back-pay and compensation, announced that they were "content" with the decision, the details of which they had negotiated with Van Rijn. However, a representative from the Indo Project, an English language organisation based in the United States, wrote that,

The Secretary may not be aware of the Indo Dutch diaspora and that Indo Dutch people abroad and their families will not be able to benefit from what the Secretary has promised in terms of education and preservation of our history. We therefore hope and ask that the Secretary will earmark some funds for the building of an Indo Dutch Cultural Center in the US... so that the Indo and Indies community

abroad finally has a place to call home, which this community was essentially deprived of when returning to the Netherlands after the war.<sup>1</sup>

Although Indo organisations are visible and vocal in contemporary Dutch society, and the role of Indos in postcolonial Netherlands is now well-recognised through government-commissioned history books and events like the annual Tong Tong Fair, relatively little academic or popular attention has been given to what the Indo Project refers to as the ‘Indo diaspora’ outside the Netherlands. The Indo community in the Netherlands is mostly the result of migration from Indonesia after the Second World War. Migration from decolonisation also resulted in smaller Indo communities in other countries like Australia and the United States, often via the Netherlands.<sup>2</sup> These communities remain in contact with each other via social gatherings, magazines and the internet, and they are generally classed as ethnic minorities in the countries in which they settled. Almost no attention in Indonesia, the Netherlands and elsewhere has been given to the smaller number of Indos who remained in Indonesia instead of ‘repatriating’ or migrating to the Netherlands. Today, Indos in Indonesia comprise a relatively distinct group, but most have little contact with Indos in other countries. Their historical circumstances have resulted in very different trajectories from those of the Indos who left Indonesia.<sup>3</sup>

### **Indos in Indonesia today**

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<sup>1</sup> Inez Hollander Lake, ‘General Meeting Today’, 10 December 2015, *The Indo Project*, available from <http://www.theindoproject.org/featured/general-meeting-backpay>, accessed 15 December 2015.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Mark Taylor Brinsfield, ‘A Dutch Eurasian Revival?’, in Teresa Williams-Leon and Cynthia L. Nakashima (eds), *The Sum of Our Parts: Mixed-Heritage Asian Americans*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 2001, pp. 197-206; Carol Annink, *Learning Minority Status: A Qualitative Study of the Educational Experiences of Indonesian-Dutch People*, unpublished PhD thesis, Ohio State University, 1993; Joost Cote and Loes Westerbeek (eds), *Recalling the Indies: Colonial Culture and Postcolonial Identities*, Amsterdam, Aksant, 2005; Ana Dragojlovic, ‘Haunted by “Miscegenation”: Gender, the White Australia Policy and the Construction of Indisch Family Narratives’, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2015, pp. 54-70; Azlan Tajuddin and Jamie Stern, ‘From Brown Dutchmen to Indo-Americans: Changing Identity of the Dutch-Indonesian (Indo) Diaspora in America’, *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, vol. 28, no. 4, 2015, pp. 349-76.

<sup>3</sup> Small-scale studies of this group include Pamela Pattynama, ‘Ik Woon Hier and ik Hoor Hier. Indo’s in Indonesië. Hoe is Het hun Vergaan?’, *Pasarkrant*, November 1996, pp. 8-9; Leslie Boon, “‘We zijn als Kemeleons’: Indo’s in Indonesië”, *De Sobat: Nieuwsbrief voor Donateurs van de Stichting Tong Tong*, April 2004, p. 20; Carol Annink, ‘Orang Indo en Indonesian-Dutch: Indische Nederlanders in Indonesië en de Verenigde Staten van Amerika’, in Wim Willems and Leo Lucassen (eds), *Het Onbekende Vaderland: De Repatriëring van Indische Nederlanders (1946–1964)*, The Hague, Sdu Uitgeverij Koninginnegracht, 1994, pp. 147-71; Sylvia Huisman-Carels, ‘Indische Mensen in Indonesië’, *Jambatan: Tijdschrift voor de Geschiedenis van Indonesia*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1990, pp. 49-60.

Members of the colonial Indo community on Java, numbering around 200,000 at the end of the Pacific War<sup>4</sup>, departed for the Netherlands after 1945 in increasing numbers, particularly after the transfer of sovereignty in 1949. Those who remained were given the option to take Indonesian citizenship between 1949 and 1951. Few were willing to give up their Dutch citizenship, and they struggled to find employment and maintain the standard of living many had been used to before the war. After the Sukarno government expelled all Dutch citizens in 1957, the exodus of Indos from Indonesia seemed almost complete. Yet not all Indos decided to leave. The total number remaining in Indonesia after 1957, including around 6000 former Dutch citizens, could have numbered at least ten thousand, though it is very difficult to estimate their number with precision.

Among those remaining were the children of Indonesian men and European women, illegitimate children without European status and Borgos in Minahasa. In colonial Minahasa, members of the mestizo Borgo community who once held special status as *inlandsche burgers* (native citizens) intermarried with Indos. Their descendants are now referred to interchangeably as 'Borgo' and 'Indo'. Also included in this figure are the children of a small number of *totok* Dutch who were born in the Indies and chose to stay in Indonesia with their Indonesian spouses. Some Indos in Indonesia are also the children of Indonesian soldiers based in Australia during the 1940s and their Australian wives. Then there are the children of Dutch soldiers who took Indonesian partners during the Indonesian Revolution (1945-49), who also identify as Indo. These uncomfortable stories of relationships that transgressed boundaries between fellow citizen and foreign enemy now portrayed as clear-cut have an uneasy place not only in Indonesian history but also in histories of the Indo-Dutch community, which tend only to discuss the children of colonial relationships and their descendants. Finally, there are younger generations of Indos, the children of expatriates who had no direct or indirect connection to the Indies and lived in Indonesia during the Sukarno and Suharto years. I do not include these Indos in this figure.

Relatively few Indos remaining in Indonesia speak fluent Dutch, and few define themselves as 'Indisch', a term used in the Netherlands to refer to European culture and

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<sup>4</sup> Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld*, p. 302; Van der Veur, 'Eurasian Dilemma in Indonesia', pp. 58-59; Pamela Pattynama, 'Assimilation and Masquerade: Self-Constructions of Indo-Dutch Women', *European Journal of Women's Studies*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2000, p. 281; Thomas Janoski, *The Ironies of Citizenship: Naturalization and Integration in Industrialized Countries*, Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 163.

society in the Dutch East Indies, including persons of European status.<sup>5</sup> Most state that they have few ties with the Netherlands besides family members who migrated there, and few are aware of events concerning the Dutch Indo community in the Netherlands or other countries. Until the end of Suharto's New Order regime (1966-1998), most Indos were identified as Indonesians of European (not necessarily Dutch) descent. This broader definition has continued to today, in spite of the burgeoning in the last ten years or so of regular *kumpulan* (social gatherings) in Indonesia for Dutch speakers, which are attended largely by Indos. Dutch and American Indos visiting or retiring in Indonesia also attend these *kumpulan*, and some have introduced Indonesian Indos to Dutch-Indonesian culture. In response to these interactions, an Indonesian Indo identity, distinct from Dutch Indo identity, has emerged since the mid-2000s. This Indo identity is based on different historical events and memories, and emphasises that Indos in Indonesia are Indonesian first and foremost.

Unlike Indos who left, the histories of Indos who remained in Indonesia do not centre on personal and collective experiences of migration. Their own histories were not interrupted by departure – rather, they watched their family members and friends depart while they stayed behind; and they do not consider that the Indonesian government specifically expelled Indos as a group, a relatively common misconception among Indos outside Indonesia about the 1957 expulsion of Dutch citizens from Indonesia. The metaphorical and literal search for a homeland that is so central to Dutch Indo identity also is not relevant for the group who remained. Their understandings of the colonial past, recalled from the positioning of citizens living in a former colony, are very different from the understandings of those who departed for a former metropole. Indos outside Indonesia often take part in memory communities that typically recall a violent, poverty-stricken postcolonial Indonesia that the Dutch abandoned, in comparison with a utopic, nostalgically remembered Indies that formed the jewel of the Dutch empire. Such characterisations were largely unmentioned by Indonesian Indos in this research, who did not frame colonial Indonesia an entity separate from postcolonial Indonesia and expressed very little sentimental attachment to the Netherlands.

In 2011 senior Indonesianist Benedict Anderson called for research as a counterpart to research about the Indisch Dutch to look at “Indos who remained in Indonesia and

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<sup>5</sup> For a more complete definition of the Dutch term ‘Indisch’, see Robert Cribb, “‘Indisch’ Identity and Decolonization”, *IAS Newsletter*, vol. 31, July 2003, p. 52, available from [http://www.ias.nl/sites/default/files/IAS\\_NL31\\_52.pdf](http://www.ias.nl/sites/default/files/IAS_NL31_52.pdf), accessed 27 November 2015.

improved their status from ‘inlander’ [native] to ‘WNI’ (Indonesian National Citizen)”.<sup>6</sup> The ageing of this generation makes the writing of this history an imperative. Complicating the history of this group is that the definition of Indo in Indonesia currently means people of mixed Indonesian and *bule* (‘Caucasian’, originally meaning albino) descent, and does not exclusively apply to those born or descended from someone born in the Indies. These Indos include members of younger generations who are most known for their roles as models, actors and entertainers. Many younger Indos have few links to the colonial period. At first glance, the younger generation of Indonesian Indos seem to have little in common with the colonial generation besides the shared designation of ‘Indo’. However, their entry into modelling and acting was facilitated by a number of prolific members of the older generation who remained in Indonesia and became actors and models. Some of the stereotypes about the younger generation also have colonial roots. By contrast, Indo communities in the Netherlands, the United States and Australia emphasise that the term ‘Indo’ refers to Dutch speakers born, or descended from someone born, in the Netherlands Indies, who is of Indonesian and European, usually Dutch, descent. Indos living outside Indonesia are today known not so much for being ‘mixed-race’, but rather for their colonial roots and for the displacement they experienced as a result of decolonisation.

### **Previous research on Indos in Indonesia**

In the decades immediately following Indonesian independence, the best known academic studies of Indos in Indonesia were by Paul W. van der Veur.<sup>7</sup> A comparative study of Indos in Bogor and in North Sulawesi in the 1950s, published in two articles, concluded that those in North Sulawesi were largely indistinguishable from local Borgo communities. It found that Indos in North Sulawesi had mostly assimilated, thanks to relatively fluid social and class structures there and the relative predominance of the Dutch language, Christianity and other identity markers that Indos in Bogor clung to as members of a minority. The author concluded that intermarriage with local Minahasans had contributed in large part to assimilation, while Indos in Bogor remained largely

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<sup>6</sup> Ben Anderson, ‘Review: Becoming Dutch, Staying Indo’, *Inside Indonesia*, vol. 103, 2011, available from <http://www.insideindonesia.org/review-becoming-dutch-staying-indo>, accessed 18 December 2015.

<sup>7</sup> See Paul W. van der Veur, ‘Eurasian Dilemma in Indonesia’, *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 20, no. 1, 1960, pp. 45-60; ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, PhD thesis, Cornell University, 1955; ‘The Eurasians of Indonesia: Castaways of Colonialism’, *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 27, no. 2, 1954pp. 124-37. See also Justus van der Kroef, ‘The Eurasian Minority in Indonesia’, *American Sociological Review*, vol. 18, no. 5, 1953, pp. 484-93.

endogamous. She also noted that Indos from North Sulawesi had little to do with Indos in Java when there, preferring instead to mingle with other Manadonese.<sup>8</sup>

Three small Dutch-language studies have also examined Indos in Indonesia since 1990, using a comparative lens with Indos in the Netherlands. The first of these was a small study of six Indo families in Jakarta in 1990. The author noted that they tended to socialise more with Chinese Indonesians, other Indonesians labelled ‘foreign descent’ and Christian Ambonese rather than other Indonesians. The families interviewed all maintained a standard of living above the poverty line, in contrast to popular ideas in the Netherlands, probably originating from Dutch charities supporting Indos in Indonesia which suggested Indos remaining in Indonesia lived in poverty thanks to widespread discrimination.<sup>9</sup> Another small study by Pamela Pattynama using interviews critiqued popular ideas about Indos in Indonesia circulating in the Netherlands, such as that they were discriminated against and experienced financial difficulties. She concluded that in immediate postcolonial Indonesia, “No doubt that was true, but not only for Indos [during that period].”<sup>10</sup> A third study, by a Dutch Indo woman who interviewed Indos supported by a number of charities in Jakarta, Depok and Bandung, found that the term ‘Indisch’ was no longer relevant for Indos in Indonesia, unlike in the Netherlands.<sup>11</sup>

Carol Annink’s PhD thesis, about educational experiences of Indos in the United States, the Netherlands and Indonesia in the mid-1990s, included transcripts of the oral history interviews that she carried out for the project in an appendix. A number of these interviews reported a perceived ban on the Dutch language and pressures to assimilate, themes which emerged in the interviews I carried out in this thesis.<sup>12</sup> Like the small studies mentioned above, Annink’s accompanying article based on her PhD thesis also challenged popular ideas circulating in the Netherlands and made “[t]he tentative

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<sup>8</sup> See Elisabeth Elisabeth, ‘Laporan Sementara tentang Bagian Kedua Penjelidikan Dilapangan atas Susunan Kemasjarakatan Orang-Orang Indo-Eropah di Indonesia (Sambungan)’, *Bahasa dan Budaya*, vol. 3, no. 5, 1955, pp. 27-40; E. Allard, ‘Laporan Sementara tentang Penjelidikan Kemasjarakatan dari Golongan Indo-Eropah yang Dilakukan di Bogor Tahun 1953’, *Bahasa dan Budaya*, vol. 3, no. 5, 1955, pp. 3-22.

<sup>9</sup> Sylvia Huisman-Carels, ‘Indische Mensen in Indonesie’, *Jambatan: Tijdschrift voor de Geschiedenis van Indonesia*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1990, pp. 49-60.

<sup>10</sup> Pamela Pattynama, ‘Ik Woon Hier and Ik Hoor Hier. Indo’s in Indonesië. Hoe is Het hun Vergaan?’, *Pasarkrant*, November 1996, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup> Leslie Boon, “‘We zijn als Kemeleons’: Indo’s in Indonesië”, *De Sobat: Nieuwsbrief voor Donateurs van de Stichting Tong Tong*, April 2004, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> Carol Annink, ‘Learning Minority Status: A Qualitative Study of the Educational Experiences of Indonesian-Dutch People’, unpublished PhD thesis, Ohio State University, 1993.

conclusion... that not *all* Indisch Indonesians were treated as enemies by the Indonesians....”<sup>13</sup>

To my knowledge, no other comprehensive studies have been published on Indos in Indonesia in Indonesian, Dutch or English. Complicating research on this group is the lack of written records from the 1960s after the Netherlands embassy in Indonesia was closed. Postcolonial Indonesia, like the Netherlands Indies, never recognised an Indo group in legal or census categories. Under the Suharto government they were expected and strongly encouraged to assimilate as a ‘foreign minority’. Many of those who remained in Indonesia began to get together regularly with other Indos only after the fall of Suharto. Identifying a common history of those who remained in Indonesia was hindered by the lack of contact between Indos in different regions, cities, and even different parts of major cities, until the mid-2000s, on account of these pressures to assimilate to Indonesian identity.

Historiography in the Netherlands treats the Indies as part of the broader Dutch empire and Indos as members of the Indies European community. In contrast, nationalist historiography in Indonesia traditionally has tended to consider the colonial period as a temporary break in a chain of Indonesian history, stretching back long before the arrival of the VOC (*Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, Dutch East India Company). In general, nationalist histories treated Europeans – including Indos – as a group separate from indigenous Indonesians and peripheral to the development Indonesian nationalism. These histories dismissed their influence in postcolonial Indonesia with the departure of the Dutch. One could be forgiven for drawing the conclusion that these two historiographical traditions describe different places: one colonial and European-oriented, and the other nationalist and indigenous-Indonesian oriented. Partly this division is because of the divisions along class and ethnic line that took place in late colonial society. After the term ‘Indo’ came into popular usage in the late nineteenth century, Indos who held European status began to define themselves along ethnic, racial and legal lines compared to other groups like *totok* (‘pure’) Dutch, Chinese, Arabs and others. Members of the Indo community on Java who acquired European status from European fathers, along with the privileges inherent in this status like access to a European education and employment in the colonial civil service, sought to distance

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<sup>13</sup> Carol Annink, ‘*Orang Indo en Indonesian-Dutch: Indische Nederlanders in Indonesië en de Verenigde Staten van Amerika*’, in Wim Willems and Leo Lucassen (eds), *Het Onbekende Vaderland: de Repatriëring van Indische Nederlanders (1946–1964)*, The Hague, Sdu Uitgeverij Koninkinnegracht, 1994, p. 149, emphasis in original.

themselves in particular from ‘*inlanders*’, who could be from a variety of backgrounds. A much larger, unknown proportion of those classed as native were of European descent, but no colonial history to my knowledge has covered this particular group in any detail, simply because tracing them in archives is almost impossible. Many, though not all, of those termed ‘Indo’ in Indonesia today are descended from these ‘natives’. They transcend the boundaries between colonial and nationalist history writing, but in doing so have remained largely invisible.

A further point of difference that stands out between the definitions of Indos outside and within Indonesia is the general tendency in Dutch and English language literature to categorise Indos as only those who held European status in the Indies and their descendants. The sources that make use of this definition appear to rely heavily on information provided by postcolonial Indo communities living outside Indonesia.<sup>14</sup> The majority of Indo repatriates and migrants from Indonesia did hold European status. This status, and its subsequent loss of standing in postcolonial Indonesia, was a major factor in their decision to repatriate. Of necessity, many were forced to emphasise their former European status, if not Dutch citizenship, in their applications to the Dutch government to repatriate in the 1940s and 1950s. However, the accounts of Indos who remained in Indonesia show that many never held European status or Dutch citizenship. The definition of Indo, then, has meant different things in different periods and different contexts. Definitions of indigeneity, a central theme of this thesis because it is often presented in opposition to identities based on descent from a group outside colonial or national boundaries, have also changed across periods. Different Indo communities in Indonesia have engaged with different concepts of indigeneity, from native status to *boemipoetra* to *pribumi* to adat. Some, like the Borgo community in Minahasa, have redefined a particular concept of indigeneity (adat) to include them. Others, like the colonial Indo community on Java who held European status, distanced themselves from indigeneity because the system that created the category of indigenous did not privilege indigenous groups. Still others, like Indos on Java during the New Order years, assimilated to indigenous (*pribumi*) groups, and did not re-emerge until the revival of identity politics in the twenty-first century.

### **Mixed-race populations**

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<sup>14</sup> For one example of these writers, see Jeroen Dewulf, ‘Tjalie Robinson and *The American Tong Tong*: Framing a Eurasian Identity in the American Sixties’, in Jeroen Dewulf, Olf Praamstra and Michiel van Kempen (eds), *Shifting the Compass: Pluricontinental Connections in Dutch colonial and postcolonial literature*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013, p. 70.

Discussions of Indos in colonial Indonesia have, in some circumstances, been framed in terms of broader scholarship on race and mixed-race in European colonies. This research has the tendency to treat Indos in the Indies in line with other groups termed ‘Eurasian’ in other colonial contexts. It tends to celebrate them as an ‘in-between’ group that challenged essentialist racial categories. Because of its comparative nature across different colonial contexts, it also risks overlooking the lived complexities of legal and social categories in the Indies.<sup>15</sup>

Even so, outside Indonesia, common themes can be observed in the history of groups in the Asia Pacific region tracing their European ancestry to colonial encounters. In British Asia, people classed as ‘mixed race’ by paternal descent tended to be given privileged positions, whether as Eurasians, Anglo-Indians or Burghers.<sup>16</sup> In French Indochina and French New Caledonia, children acknowledged by French fathers took French nationality. Unlike in British colonies, there was never any special legal or ethnic category for those termed ‘Métis’ in French colonies; neither was there a ‘half-caste’ category in German Samoa.<sup>17</sup> In Indonesia, although there also was no legal category for Indos, those acknowledged by European fathers took European status. By the twentieth century, the Indo community on Java comprised a distinct sub-group in the European class, which itself was marked by a bewildering plurality of different groups often granted European status for political reasons, such as the Japanese and Armenians. Similarly, identity among the Indo community and Eurasian groups in other European colonies in the Asia Pacific began to crystallise and solidify in the first and second decade of the century, after these groups established organisations to promote collective identity politics and to improve their status above indigenous groups.<sup>18</sup> Many left after

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<sup>15</sup> Starting with Ann Laura Stoler, ‘Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia’, in Avtar Brah and Annie E. Coombes (eds.), *Hybridity and its Discontents: Politics, Science, Culture*, Hoboken, Routledge, 2000, pp. 19-55.

<sup>16</sup> The government-defined definition for Burghers in Ceylon allowed those who could trace their European descent through the female line, provided they could speak, read and write English, to be included as Burghers. However, the Dutch Burgher Union emphasised patrilineal descent. Rosita Joan Henry, ‘“A Tulip in Lotus Land”: the Rise and Decline of Dutch Burgher Ethnicity in Sri Lanka’, unpublished MA thesis, Australian National University, 1986, p. 93; Alison Blunt, ‘Land of Our Mothers’: Home, Identity and Nationality for Anglo-Indians in British India, 1919-1947’, *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 54, no. 1, 2002, pp. 52-53; Alexis Pereira, ‘The Revitalization of Eurasian Identity in Singapore’, *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science*, vol. 25, no. 2, 1997, p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> Srilata Ravi, ‘Métisse Stories and the Ambivalent Desire for Cultural Belonging’, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 28, no. 1, 2007, pp. 17-18; Adrian Muckle, ‘The Presumption of Indigeneity: Colonial Administration, the “Community of Race” and the Category of Indigène in New Caledonia, 1887–1946’, *Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 47, no. 3, 2012, p. 324; Christine Winter, ‘Changing Frames: Identity and Citizenship of New Guineans of German Heritage during the Interwar Years’, *Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 47, no. 3, 2012, p. 356.

<sup>18</sup> In the Indies, the most prominent organisation promoting Indo identity politics was the Indo Europeesch Verbond. Another example, in Ceylon, is the Dutch Burgher Union. See Rosita Joan Henry,

independence because of their loss of status and accompanying poverty. They settled not just in former metropolises but also in immigration nations like the US and Australia.<sup>19</sup> The fate of those who settled in western nations is relatively well-researched, as is that of groups who retained their legal status as a separate ethnic group in former colonies. But in postcolonial Indonesia, unlike in Malaysia, Singapore and Sri Lanka, Indos were never granted separate ethnic status, which meant that as a group they rarely entered public consciousness. Few public discussions addressed their role in the nation, despite the prominent role of a number of Indonesians of European descent in the Suharto government, most notably Joop Ave and Benny Moerdani.

### **Oral History and Transnational History**

With a few small exceptions that have examined the younger generation of Indos involved in modelling and popular culture,<sup>20</sup> the topic of Indos in postcolonial Indonesia has been largely restricted to occasional mentions of them as a ‘foreign minority’. Scholarship in Indonesian Studies on those termed ‘foreign minorities’ has focused almost exclusively on Chinese Indonesians, with the implication that this group was discriminated against solely because of strong anti-foreign sentiment. It has been assumed that other foreign minorities must have experienced similar circumstances because they were also termed ‘foreign’. Dutch research on Indos in the Netherlands Indies and in postcolonial Netherlands, by contrast, has tended to frame them as part of the broader Dutch empire and as remnants of colonialism that the Dutch nation still has not come to terms with in spite of its multicultural policies (see Chapter 3). I considered that these two ways of framing research on Indos in Indonesia – first, as a ‘foreign minority’ in Indonesia, and second, as remnants of the Dutch empire – carry the risk of separating out the Netherlands Indies from postcolonial Indonesia, and framing conversations dichotomously either in terms of the Dutch empire or the Indonesian nation. It also became obvious that while the experiences of Indos in Indonesia are

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“‘A Tulip in Lotus Land’: the Rise and Decline of Dutch Burgher Ethnicity in Sri Lanka’, unpublished MA thesis, Australian National University, 1986, p. 114

<sup>19</sup> See Henry, “‘A Tulip in Lotus Land’” and Alexius Pereira, ‘The Revitalization of Eurasian Identity in Singapore’, *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science*, vol. 25, no. 2, 1997, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> Asriana Kebon, ‘Stars and Stereotypes’, *Inside Indonesia*, vol. 103 (January-March), 2011, <http://www.insideindonesia.org/stars-and-stereotypes?highlight=WyJpbmRvIiwiaW5kbyciLCInaW5kbyIsIidpbmRvJyJd>, accessed 24 September 2015; Eduard Depari, ‘Eurasian Faces in Indonesian Films’, *Indonesian Film Festival*, Jakarta, Indonesian Film Festival Committee, 1990, pp. 77-79; Luh Ayu S. Prasetyaningsih, *The Maze of Gaze: The Color of Beauty in Transnational Indonesia*, PhD thesis, University of Maryland, 2007; Suzie Handajani, ‘Female Sexuality in Indonesian Girls’ Magazines: Modern Appearance, Traditional Attitude’, *Antropologi Indonesia*, vol. 30, no. 1, 2006, pp. 49-63; Aquarini Priyatna Prabasmoro, *Becoming White: Representasi Ras, Kelas, Feminitas dan Globalitas dalam Iklan Sabun*, Yogyakarta, Jalasutra, 2003.

inseparable from both their position as ‘foreign minorities’ in Suharto’s Indonesia and from their position as members of a global group dispersed by the end of colonialism, their experiences differ significantly from Chinese Indonesians, and their experiences and memories differ significantly from other postcolonial Indo communities in other parts of the world because of their treatment as a ‘foreign minority’ during the New Order and in subsequent years.

Further, during the course of this research, it became apparent that I would need to rely heavily on oral sources to construct a history of Indos in Indonesia. Archival records about this group are largely confined to Dutch government documents that ended in the late 1950s with the formal cessation of Indonesian-Dutch relations. The Indonesian state carried on the Netherlands Indies’ practice of not creating a separate census category for Indos. They were largely subsumed under the much larger category of ‘foreign minorities’ and overshadowed by Chinese Indonesians in the minds of policy makers. As a result, the history of this community would need to be constructed through the memories of its members. Oral history provided the opportunity to examine alternative narratives to those imposed by the Indonesian government. For example, the few mentions of Indos in public discourse after the fall of Sukarno in 1966 imply that Indos easily assimilated compared with Chinese Indonesians and were a ‘model minority’, just as Dutch Indos were considered a ‘model minority’ in the Netherlands.<sup>21</sup> Yet the memories of those who remained in Indonesia suggest that the overall story was not quite so simple.

However, like any historical source, oral history presented a set of particular problems. These include the question of to what extent stories are expressed and framed according to audience (the interviewer and others present)<sup>22</sup>; how reliable interlocutors’ memories of dates and events might be<sup>23</sup>; the influence of subsequent experiences and present circumstances on the narrator and the story that they present<sup>24</sup>; and the ethics of representing the stories of participants in a way that that does not dishonour their experiences or memories. Beyond my awareness of how participants might choose to respond to me as a young, female, white Australian researcher, I had little control over

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<sup>21</sup> Gloria Wekker, “‘After the Last Sky: Where Do the Birds Fly?’ What Can European Women Learn from Anti-Racist Struggles in the United States?”, in Helma Lutz, Ann Phoenix and Nira Yuwan-Davis (eds), *Crossfires: Nationalism, Racism and Gender in Europe*, London, Pluto Press, 1995, p. 80.

<sup>22</sup> Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, p. 318; Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 117.

<sup>23</sup> John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Harlow, England, Longman, 2006, p. 315.

<sup>24</sup> Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, p 110.

the first point, particularly because many of the participants in this research chose to be interviewed with their family members or friends present in their homes. It was apparent that no matter my position, whether as an ‘outsider’ or ‘insider’, oral narratives would be framed according to what participants thought was appropriate for me to hear. I have addressed this issue in a number of places throughout this thesis.

I chose to address the second point by a system of ‘triangulation’ – that is, referring when possible to archives, newspaper articles and secondary literature on Dutch Indos and Chinese Indonesians, and by carrying out interviews among multiple Indo communities: in the Netherlands and Australia, and in two very different areas in Indonesia: Java and Minahasa. This approach meant applying a transnational lens to oral narratives and – because these formed the primary evidence base of the research – this thesis. I also avoided where pertinent mentions of particular events or periods like the Bersiap in Indonesian interviews, assuming – correctly in this instance – that these had not entered popular historical consciousness in the same way as they had in the Netherlands.

I considered that the third issue arising in oral history research, the question of how to identify the influence of the present and events leading up to it on narratives, would be illuminated through the transnational approach I took. I was particularly influenced in my approach to this issue by Alessandro Portelli’s argument that oral history “tells us less about *events* than their *meaning*”,<sup>25</sup> as well as my understanding that in oral history, “the ‘voice of the past’ is inescapably the voice of the present too.”<sup>26</sup> For example, in some instances, I directly asked Indonesian participants whether they felt that they had experienced discrimination and poverty in the 1950s and 1960s because of their appearance, when it became clear that this particular characterisation of the past was not evident in interviews with most Indos in Indonesia. The approach I took enabled me to identify where context, as in this instance, had framed particular interpretations – that is, the meanings assigned to events. As a result, a central theme of this thesis is how national contexts have framed and influenced the ways in which members of Indo communities across transnational and sub-national contexts remember the past and identify today.

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<sup>25</sup> Alessandro Portelli, ‘What Makes Oral History Different’, in Alistair Thomson and Robert Perks (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, London, Routledge, 1998, p 67.

<sup>26</sup> Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, p 318.

A number of the participants in this research living outside Indonesia struggled with the long-term effects of trauma because of their experiences of violence and poverty in Indonesia during the 1940s, as well as their later forced departures when Dutch citizens were expelled from Indonesia. As I note above, others, particularly many in the Netherlands, have an established narrative about life in Indonesia in the 1950s and 1960s. I have attempted where possible to explain how subsequent events have influenced perceptions of poverty during this period in different contexts, and why many Indonesian Indos did not characterise the decades immediately following independence in the same way as those in the Netherlands did. But my overall purpose is not to downplay or contradict the very difficult experiences of many who experienced violence, trauma and poverty in postcolonial Indonesia and subsequently left. Rather, I present the different versions and the contexts that framed these memories, focusing on the meaning attached to specific events rather than ‘facts’.

As these narratives show, the history of Indos in Indonesia does not precisely fit into histories of the Indisch Dutch (Dutch citizens born in the Indies). These histories emphasise that colonial Indonesia was part of the Dutch empire, that Indos were and are Dutch and that the colonial past should be commemorated. Nor do Indonesian Indos typically fit histories of Indonesia. Research about other groups like Arabs<sup>27</sup>, Indians<sup>28</sup> and Indos has been limited to date, partly because of the Suharto government’s official line that these groups had successfully assimilated compared with Chinese Indonesians, and partly because of their small numbers and limited visibility since the 1950s. The mass killings of Indos, Europeans, Ambonese, Manadonese, Chinese Indonesians and other groups linked to the colonial regime from 1945-47 are rarely mentioned in Indonesian language historiography. The Indonesian term ‘Bersiap’, used to describe the period, emerged only in Dutch and English language historiography of Indonesia, and the events it refers to are relatively under-researched compared with other outbreaks of violence in Indonesian history, such as the 1965 anti-communist massacres and the 1998 violence against Chinese Indonesians.<sup>29</sup> Until recently, with the rise of

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<sup>27</sup> For a study of Arabs in colonial Indonesia, see Sumit Kamar Mandal, *Finding Their Place: a History of Arabs in Java under Dutch Rule, 1800-1924*, PhD thesis, New York, Colombia University, 1996.

<sup>28</sup> See Maria Myutel, *Indians in Indonesia: Behind the Seen*, PhD thesis, Canberra, the Australian National University, in progress.

<sup>29</sup> English and Dutch language accounts of the Bersiap can be found in William H. Frederick, ‘The Killing of Dutch and Eurasians in Indonesia’s National Revolution (1945-1949): A “Brief Genocide” Reconsidered’, *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol. 14, nos. 3-4, 2012, pp. 359-80; William H. Frederick, *Visions and Heat: The Making of the Indonesian Revolution*, Athens, Ohio University Press, 1989; Robert Cribb, ‘The Brief Genocide of the Eurasians in Indonesia, 1945/46’ in A.D. Moses (ed.), *Empire, Colony, Genocide, Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, New York,

transnational history writing, nationalist history writing provided little scope for a discussion of a marginalised group tracing its descent to colonial encounters, particularly a group that mostly aligned itself with the Dutch in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>30</sup>

Because the sources I use originate in different national contexts, I have deliberately chosen in this thesis to frame the history of Indonesian Indos as a component of a transnational Indonesian history that is not constricted by national boundaries. Changes within the discipline of history over the past few decades now allow the space for such research to be carried out, beginning with an article by Ian Tyrrell in 1991 which called for “a way to transcend the nation-state framework”.<sup>31</sup> This approach looks specifically at connections, relationships and formations that cut through and across the boundaries created by the nation-state.<sup>32</sup> It requires moving “beyond a national framework of analysis to explore connections between peoples, societies and events usually thought of as distinct and separate.”<sup>33</sup> In this sense transnational history is distinct from world history, which tries to understand how peoples, events and societies reflect world history as a whole.<sup>34</sup> Thus, I am particularly concerned in this thesis with “the interplay of global connections and local variations,”<sup>35</sup> both outside Indonesia and in two areas of Indonesia that have very different experiences of global connections: Java and North Sulawesi.

But the transnational links of these communities themselves are not limited just to connections across nation states – they are also a group tracing their descent to colonial encounters.<sup>36</sup> Transnational history not only offers the conceptual framework to

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Berghahn Books, 2008, pp. 424-39; Robert Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: The Jakarta People's Militia and the Indonesian Revolution 1945-49*, Sydney, Asian Studies Association of Australia in Association with Allen & Unwin, 1991; Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People: Revolution and the End of Traditional Rule in Northern Sumatra*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Singapore, NUS Press; Reid, Anthony, *The Indonesian National Revolution, 1945-1950*, Hawthorn, Longman, 1974; Herman Bussemaker, *Bersiap! Opstand in het Paradijs: de Bersiap-periode op Java en Sumatra 1945-1946*, Zutphen, Walburg Pers, c2005; Herman Bussemaker, *Geïllustreerde Atlas van de Bersiapkampen in Nederlands-Indië 1945-1947*, Bedum, Profiel, 2009; Hans Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld: De Twintigste Eeuw*, Amsterdam, B. Bakker, 2004.

<sup>30</sup> One notable popular work has outlined what happened to other groups tracing their descent to colonial encounters in Ceylon, Jamaica, Haiti, Namibia and Guadeloupe. See Riccardo Orizio, *Lost White Tribes: Journeys among the Forgotten*, London, Seeker & Warburg, 2000.

<sup>31</sup> Ian Tyrrell, ‘American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History’, *The American Historical Review*, vol. 96, no. 4, 1991, p 1042.

<sup>32</sup> Pierre-Yves Saunier, *Transnational History*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, p 2.

<sup>33</sup> Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake, ‘Introduction’, in Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake (eds), *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective*, Canberra, ANU E-Press, 2006, pp 6-7.

<sup>34</sup> Curthoys and Lake, ‘Introduction’, p 6.

<sup>35</sup> Tyrrell, ‘American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History’, p 1055.

<sup>36</sup> Robert Cribb and Li Narangoa, ‘Orphans of Empire: Divided Peoples, Dilemmas of Identity, and Old Imperial Borders in East and Southeast Asia’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2004, pp. 164-187; Rosalind Hewett, ‘Children of Decolonisation: Postcolonial Indo (Eurasian)

examine peoples, societies and events transcending national borders, but also a framework in which particular aspects of history cross colonial and postcolonial historiographical traditions.<sup>37</sup> Those that existed pre-nation state and alongside but separate to nationalist movements<sup>38</sup> can be discussed not merely in terms of their contribution to colonial regimes or the nation, but also in terms of how these different structural forces shaped their circumstances across different periods. Hence, my starting point in this thesis is not the beginning of the Indonesian nation-state, but rather several hundred years before it came into legal existence.

Oral history fills the gaps that the documentary record cannot, but it also reflects the frameworks and narratives of national contexts. Historical consciousness in Indonesia does not recall the mass killings of Indos and other groups on Java and Sumatra in 1945-47, and the memories of transnational Indo communities outside Indonesia provide much-needed alternative perspectives on the 1940s and 1950s. Even so, my reliance on oral history to reconstruct experiences reveals that despite the possibilities that the history of a mixed-race group raises for transcending national boundaries, still the nation-state predominates in how people frame their memories and how they identify across different cultural contexts. The life histories presented in this thesis, taken from Indonesia, the Netherlands and Australia, in many ways tell us more about these contexts, and how national contexts frame and flavour memories, than they do about what happened to Indos in Indonesia.

### **This thesis**

The very limited documentation and studies of Indos in Indonesia today mean that any preliminary attempt to begin to put their history to paper must be first and foremost empirical in nature. My main focus in this thesis, then, is to outline a history of Indos in postcolonial Indonesia, beginning with their colonial roots in the late nineteenth century when an Indo community began to emerge, and ending with a historical survey of Indo involvement in Indonesian popular culture to the present. I am deliberately broad in my scope to provide a necessary overview of a group that has been under-researched. The thesis draws on Dutch archives, Dutch newspapers, magazines and websites produced by members of transnational Indo communities, and life history interviews that I

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Communities in Indonesia and the Netherlands', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol. 43, no. 126, pp. 191-206.

<sup>37</sup> Curthoys and Lake, 'Introduction', p 8.

<sup>38</sup> Tony Ballantyne, 'Putting the Nation in Its Place?: World History and C.A. Bayly's *The Birth of the Modern World*, in Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake (eds), *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective*, Canberra, ANU E-Press, 2006, p 32.

conducted in the Netherlands (2012), Queensland, Australia (2014), Java (2013) and Minahasa (2013 and 2015). These interviews were carried out with ethics approval from the Australian National University. The languages used in interviews were English, Indonesian, Manado Malay and Dutch. Of the ninety-four people I interviewed, seventy-seven identified as Indo. The remainder were *totok* Dutch who took Indonesian citizenship, activists working in Dutch charitable organisations in Indonesia, the Indonesian spouses or parents of Indos, and one Chinese Indonesian man who regularly took part in Indo social gatherings in Surabaya as a Dutch speaker. Of necessity I rely very much upon oral history interviews to outline the events of the 1960s to the present. As a result, I also discuss how national context, identity and memory intersect to frame their memories of the past, which differ considerably between Indonesia and the Netherlands according to how each nation commemorates the colonial past.

The majority of Indos remaining in Indonesia today live on Java, as in the colonial period, which is why most of my focus in this thesis is on events in Java. However, since the fall of the Suharto government, the Eurasian Borgo community of Minahasa has established itself as a distinct group in local identity politics and in a national organisation for indigenous rights, drawing on both indigenous and mestizo (including Dutch) roots. For this reason I also discuss Minahasa as a distinct case. I have chosen to employ terms like ‘race’, ‘indigenous’, ‘Indo’, ‘Indisch’, ‘Caucasian/*bule*’, ‘mixed race/blood’ and ‘Borgo’ as they were used by the sources and the people who I interviewed in the historical and cultural contexts in which they were originally produced, and by no means subscribe to the essentialist meanings that sometimes accompany such terms. Indeed, a central theme of this thesis is that the meanings and identities attached to terms like ‘Indo’, and synonyms for indigeneity in Indonesian like *pribumi*, *bumipoetera*, *asli* and *adat*, have changed across periods and varied according to place.

Just as the Indo community on colonial Java was different from Indos in other areas, so Indo communities in postcolonial Indonesia vary from region to region. Indos in contemporary Indonesia comprise at least three different communities: the colonial and Revolutionary generation on Java; the Borgo community in Minahasa, which also traces its descent to Spanish and Portuguese soldiers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and a younger generation mostly living in Jakarta, almost all of whom are the children of expatriates, though a small number are also the grandchildren of the colonial generation. I begin the thesis with an outline of the Indo community in late colonial

society in Chapter One, followed by their experiences during the Japanese Occupation, the Bersiap killings and the 1950s, culminating in the eventual expulsion of Dutch citizens in 1957 in Chapter Two. In Chapter Three I look at Dutch Indo views of what happened to Indos in Indonesia, most notably expressed in the material produced by Dutch and American charities supporting Indonesian Indos. In Chapter Four I examine the policies of the New Order government (1966-98) and the subsequent rise of Indo *kumpulan* on Java after the fall of Suharto. Chapter Five discusses colonial and postcolonial Minahasa, and how the history of Indos there differs from Java. Finally, in Chapter Six, I provide an overview of the role of Indos in Indonesian popular culture. The chapter also examine the ruptures and continuities in how young Indos identify and are viewed in contemporary Indonesia, where they stereotypically become models, actors and entertainers.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INDIGENEITY, NATIONALISM AND THE INDO COMMUNITY IN COLONIAL JAVA

For almost as long as Europeans visited and settled in the Indonesian archipelago in search of spices and wealth, Eurasian communities bolstered their presence by serving as intermediaries in language, administration and law enforcement. These communities went by various names, notably as ‘burgers’ in Minahasa and Ambon and, after the Dutch increased their presence and established the Dutch East Indies, as Indo-Europeans (Indos) from the nineteenth century. These groups became a fixture of colonial society and often received special privileges in exchange for their services and status. As a result, they also began to define themselves as different from indigenous groups, particularly after colonial legal system distinguished more clearly between different groups in the Indies. This chapter discusses the colonial Indo community on Java, and outlines how it became estranged from the Indonesian nationalist movement in the twentieth century on the basis of distinctions established by the Dutch and held up by Indos. I take as my starting point the late nineteenth century because a distinct Indo community only began to emerge in this period in organisations and private initiatives established to ensure Indos did not drop to the status level of those legally defined as native.

After the first Portuguese ships arrived in the Indonesian archipelago from 1512, followed by Spanish vessels shortly after, the descendants of Portuguese and Spanish sailors began to settle in areas key to the spice trade, like the Moluccas and North Sulawesi. The Dutch East India Company (VOC), which arrived in the late sixteenth century, used members of these communities as translators and functionaries in their coastal settlements in Ambon and Batavia. VOC soldiers and administrators, who were not only from the Netherlands but also from other areas in Western Europe, took local women as partners. The children that resulted from these relationships and their descendants eventually replaced the Iberian mestizo communities as intermediaries and came to comprise the main component of permanent European society in the Indies

during the VOC period. They worked as Company officials, soldiers, merchants and bookkeepers.<sup>1</sup>

### **The nineteenth century**

This trend continued after the Dutch state took over the VOC's possessions in the early nineteenth century. The permanent European community filled positions mostly in the lower and middle-level ranks of the colonial civil service, and received lower wages than those born in the Netherlands who began to depart in increasing numbers to seek their fortune in the Indies. From 1825, a new decree mandated that all positions in the civil service would be given to men born and educated in the Netherlands. A further announcement in 1842 that only graduates of the newly-established Delft Royal Academy in the Netherlands would be eligible for entry into the colonial civil service led to general unrest among the permanent European population, including a public demonstration in Batavia in 1848.<sup>2</sup> The requirement that civil servants in the Indies be educated in Europe was lifted in 1864. From 1867, a school for civil servants was established in Batavia, technically allowing the Indies-born easier entry into the colonial civil service once again. In reality, however, differences in relative wealth continued to restrict opportunities for the locally born. Most senior levels of the colonial administration were occupied by Dutchmen born in the Netherlands.<sup>3</sup> This situation, along with the arrival of more and more Europeans in the second half of the nineteenth century, led to a widening rift in the European community between permanent and temporary residents.

Indo-Europeans comprised the largest component of the permanent European community. From 1854, the Indies government implemented a legal system that divided the population into Europeans and 'natives'. In practice these two categories were murky and loosely racial. Access to a Dutch education, employment in the civil service and higher salaries depended upon one's legal status. Indos could have either of the two,

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: Europeans and Eurasians in Colonial Indonesia*, Madison, Wis., University of Wisconsin Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2009. See also Eric Jones, *Wives, Slaves and Concubines: a History of the Female Underclass in Dutch Asia*, DeKalb, Northern Illinois University Press, 2010. Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, however, write that the extent of this process was limited, and in fact less than half of councillors' families between 1795 and 1811 married women born in Batavia. *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies: a History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920*, Singapore, NUS Press, 2008, pp. 68-69.

<sup>2</sup> A.L. Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2009, pp. 73-74.

<sup>3</sup> Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, pp. 118-119; Ulbe Bosma, 'The Indo: Class, Citizenship and Politics in Late Colonial Society', in Joost Coté and Loes Westerbeek (eds), *Recalling the Indies: Colonial Culture and Postcolonial Identities*, Amsterdam, Aksant, 2005, p. 68.

and later three, legal statuses, after 'Foreign Oriental' (*Vreemde Oosterling*) was added in 1925. Their European status depended upon whether they were born in a legal marriage or acknowledged by a European father. Census categories distinguished between the Chinese, Arabs and others known as 'foreign Orientals'. Indos were never given a separate census category, and there was no legal definition of who could be Indo. This situation was somewhat different in British colonies in Asia. British Singapore first introduced a legal category for Eurasians in 1849.<sup>4</sup> The Government of India Act of 1935 defined Anglo-Indians as those who had a European father.<sup>5</sup> In British Ceylon, the Dutch term 'Burgher' meant Eurasians of Portuguese, Dutch and other European descent. The term 'Burgher' took on a racial or ethnic, rather than civic, meaning, and became a synonym for the term 'Eurasian' used in other British colonies.<sup>6</sup> However, it also included Eurasians of Portuguese descent, unlike in the Indies from the nineteenth century where Indos, though many had Portuguese descent, were a separate group from Portuguese and Spanish mestizo groups. In British colonies, then, the definition of Eurasian (and its synonyms) was much more clearly delineated than in the Indies. The Indo community that took shape in the late nineteenth century took as its basis the European status that many inherited from a European father, or aspired to obtain, but the definition of this European status became increasingly complex.

The beginnings of distinctions between indigenous and foreign populations in the Indies can be traced to these initial legal groupings, which were further codified in later laws. The most notable of these was an Agrarian Law of 1870, which forbade the sale of native-owned land to Europeans or other groups identified as foreign, such as Chinese, regardless of birthplace or ancestry.<sup>7</sup> Commonly held ideas about race and ethnicity underpinned these laws, but the legal situation also further facilitated the development of roles considered specific to particular groups in Indies society. In the broadest terms, the colonial administration ruled the indigenous population via indigenous aristocracies, often – though not always – conducted trade and economic activities via the Chinese,

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<sup>4</sup> Alexius Pereira, 'The Revitalization of Eurasian Identity in Singapore', *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science*, vol. 25, no. 2, 1997, p. 19, citing Wong 1963, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Alison Blunt, 'Land of Our Mothers': Home, Identity and Nationality for Anglo-Indians in British India, 1919-1947', *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 54, no. 1, 2002, pp. 52-53.

<sup>6</sup> Rosita Joan Henry, 'A Tulip in Lotus Land': The Rise and Decline of Dutch Burgher Ethnicity in Sri Lanka', unpublished MA thesis, The Australian National University, 1986, p. 46.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Coppel, 'The Indonesian Chinese: "Foreign Orientals", Netherlands Subjects, and Indonesian Citizens', in M. Barry Hooker (ed.), *Law and the Chinese in Southeast Asia*, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002, p. 133.

and administered the colony via Indos with European status.<sup>8</sup> Indos typically became lower- and middle-level civil servants and law-enforcers such as soldiers and policemen. Those with European status were expected to have been raised in a European setting, capable of some Dutch, and loyal to the colonial system that granted them privileges as Europeans. The result, as W.F. Wertheim noted in 1950, was that “Indo-Europeans – in addition to the feudal chiefs, and the Christian Ambonese and Manadonese – increasingly became the mainstays of Dutch authority in the Indies.”<sup>9</sup> They were inextricably linked to the colonial administration, through both employment and legal status. After the expansion of Dutch colonial rule and the subsequent growth of the civil service, lower- and middle-level Indo civil servants, whom Indonesians encountered much more than higher-level Dutch officials, became a fixture of colonial rule and an extension of colonial authority.<sup>10</sup> Legal status not only encouraged Indos and Chinese to try to obtain and maintain a social standing above natives but also, along with colonial economic and administrative practices that made use of these groups, encouraged those classed as indigenous to consider themselves distinct from the former.<sup>11</sup>

In 1898 the Indies government passed a law on mixed marriages that stipulated women followed the legal status of their husbands. This law meant that European women, if they were to marry a man of native status, lost their European status, and that the children of the marriage also took native status.<sup>12</sup> From 1871, however, non-Europeans had been able to request to be *gelijkgesteld* – that is ‘equated’ with Europeans. *Gelijkstelling* was done at the discretion of the Governor General, though until the 1910s very few applications were successful.<sup>13</sup> Many applicants were probably of European descent. Applicants were required to be Christian, and from 1894 to 1913,

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<sup>8</sup> George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1952, p. 41.

<sup>9</sup> W. F. Wertheim, *Herrijzend Azië: Opstellen over de Oosterse Samenleving*, Arnhem, Van Loghum Slater US N.V., 1950, p. 67.

<sup>10</sup> Vincent J.H. Houben, ‘Boundaries of Race: Representations of *Indisch* in Colonial Indonesia Revised’, in Harald Fischer-Tiné and Susanne Gehrman (eds), *Empires and Boundaries: Rethinking Race, Class, and Gender in Colonial Settings*, New York, Routledge, 2009, p. 81; Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, pp. 42-43; Paul W. van der Veur, ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, PhD thesis, Cornell University, 1955, p. 441.

<sup>11</sup> Sharon Siddique and Leo Suryadinata, ‘Bumiputra and Pribumi: Economic Nationalism (Indigism) in Malaysia and Indonesia’, *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 54, no. 4, 1981-1982, p. 667.

<sup>12</sup> Bart Luttikhuis, ‘Beyond Race: Constructions of ‘Europeanness’ in Late-Colonial Legal Practice in the Dutch East Indies’, *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire*, vol. 20, no. 4, 2013, pp. 545-546; Ann Laura Stoler, ‘Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia’, in Avtar Brah and Annie E. Coombes (eds.), *Hybridity and its Discontents*, Hoboken, Routledge, 2000, pp. 19-55.

<sup>13</sup> A. van Marle, ‘De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië, Iets over Ontstaan en Groei’, *Indonesia*, vol. 5, 1952, p. 481-507.

their suitability was assessed on the basis of their assimilation to European culture and their assumed ability to participate in European social life. From 1913 onwards, the authorities considered the legal needs of the applicant, granting European status to those who required it for business purposes.<sup>14</sup> Without a separate census category for Indos, and because of the complicated definition of 'European' which, from 1899, also included Japanese and those who obtained equated European status, it is impossible to estimate precisely how many Indos held European status before 1949, without even looking at those who were not officially European. In general, however, estimates of the number of Indos with European status range between 70 per cent and 90 per cent of a total European population of about 240,000 by the 1930s.<sup>15</sup> Some Indo women who did not hold European status sought to obtain it by marriage, while those who already held it were strongly encouraged to marry other Europeans, in particular pale skinned Indos or *totok* ('pure') Europeans.<sup>16</sup>

After a Law on Dutch Nationality was passed in 1892, the legitimate or recognised children of fathers with Dutch citizenship also took on Dutch citizenship. Although Paul van der Veur has suggested that those termed 'Indo' were only Eurasians of European status who also held Dutch citizenship, in practice this definition is problematic for two reasons. First, the Indo community began to emerge before the 1892 law was passed, with the emergence of an Indo press in the 1880s.<sup>17</sup> Second, many members of the Indo community traced their descent to French, German, English and other Europeans who travelled to the Indies to take advantage of increasing opportunities in the private sector in the second half of the nineteenth century. Other scholars also defined Indos according to varying definitions, not all of them legal. Ulbe Bosma has noted that "the word 'Indo' had in some ways more a social than a racial sense. People were Indo mainly because of their humble social status."<sup>18</sup> Ann Stoler similarly noted that "the term Indo was usually reserved for that segment [of the Indies population] who were *verindische* [sic] (indianized) and poor."<sup>19</sup> The social status of most Indos from the late nineteenth century was indeed humble compared with that of *trekker* (temporary migrant) and

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<sup>14</sup> Lutikhuis, 'Beyond Race', pp. 547, 550-51; Van Marle, 'De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië', p. 506.

<sup>15</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 24-25.

<sup>16</sup> See Paul W. van der Veur, 'Race and Color in Colonial Society: Biographical Sketches by a Eurasian Woman concerning pre-World War II Indonesia', *Indonesia*, no. 8, 1969, pp. 69-80.

<sup>17</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 201-22; for a discussion of the rise of Indo identity see Bosma, 'The Indo', pp. 67-98.

<sup>18</sup> Ulbe Bosma, *Indiëgangers: Verhalen van Nederlanders die naar Indië Trokken*, Amsterdam, Bakker, 2010, p. 13.

<sup>19</sup> Stoler, 'Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers', p. 41.

*totok* Europeans, but probably much better than that of most inhabitants of the Indies who held native status.

### **The changing definition of ‘Indo’ in the Indies**

The now commonly accepted definition of Indos as Eurasians who held European status also poses problems if we are discussing Indos before 1945. In practice there was considerable fusion and over-lap between legal categories from the turn of the century based on class, gender and standard of living. For example, Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben noted that poor Europeans living in kampungs in Surakarta in the nineteenth century were not included as Europeans in government censuses.<sup>20</sup> Eurasians without European status were sometimes able to change their status, whether through true or false paternal acknowledgement, marriage in the case of women, or applications for *gelijkgesteld* status in the case of men. In just one example of the flexibility of what it meant to be European, English anthropologist Geoffrey Gorer in 1936 gave a second-hand account of a young Eurasian woman who considered herself to be European though she had never legally obtained European status.<sup>21</sup>

If the category of European was flexible in practice, then it follows that whoever could be defined as Indo was also subject to changing definitions across periods and contexts. Though the term ‘Indo’ itself never entered Dutch colonial law or censuses as a legal category, there was one exception in what Paul van der Veur referred to as “the political blunder of specifically mentioning the Indo group by name” in a decree in 7 January 1905.<sup>22</sup> This decree suggested that instead of natives, Indos could be given the lowest paid positions in the civil service. The decree thus implied that Indos were *not* native. Even so, one Dutch writer described the poor, illegitimate children living in kampungs at the end of the nineteenth century as kampung-Indos, though it is likely that most of these children held native status.<sup>23</sup> The *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië* in 1918 was brief in its definition of Indos: “the name by which the mixed European-native blood are known.” It did not mention legal status or citizenship but, rather, drew on racial notions.<sup>24</sup> A Eurasian writer in 1931 offered yet another definition, describing Indos as all individuals born in the Indies with a European father, including those

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<sup>20</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being ‘Dutch’ in the Indies*, p. 133.

<sup>21</sup> Geoffrey Gorer, *Bali and Angkor: or, Looking at Life and Death*, London, M. Joseph, 1936, pp. 120-121.

<sup>22</sup> Paul W. van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly: Dutch Colonialism and the Spirit of E.F.E. Douwes Dekker*, Leiden, KITLV Press, 2006, p. 158.

<sup>23</sup> Lt. Clockener Brousson, ‘Indische Penkrassen XXXVI’, *Schager Courant*, 22 November 1903, p. 9.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Pauperisme’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, The Hague, Nijhoff, vol. 2, 1918, p. 143.

without Indonesian ancestry.<sup>25</sup> Clearly, then, ‘Indo’ meant different things for different groups and at different times. The exclusive definition that linked them to European status was not yet fixed at the turn of the twentieth century, and probably did not crystallise for most of the rest of the colonial period.

A number of other terms were used to describe different categories of Indos, including ‘Indisch’ (Indies-born Europeans), ‘*liplap*’s’ (derogative), ‘*kleurlingen*’ (‘coloureds’), ‘*sinjo*’s’ (poorer Indo men, originally of Portuguese descent)<sup>26</sup>, ‘*nonna*’s’ (Indo women, generally lower-class) and ‘*boeaja*’ (literally ‘crocodile’).<sup>27</sup> *Boeaja* was used to describe young Indo men who roamed the kampungs causing trouble as members of gangs.<sup>28</sup> These terms were not associated with sugar and indigo planter families of Central Java of European and Javanese descent like the Dezentjés, who were fabulously wealthy compared with many Indisch families in the cities.<sup>29</sup> Nor were they used to describe the old Indisch families of Banda involved in nutmeg and mace plantations, though almost all of these families had indigenous and European ancestry.<sup>30</sup> The term ‘Indo’ itself arose for the most part on Java and Sumatra, where a much larger European population resided in distinctly European or Eurasian areas of colonial cities. In other areas, where a much greater degree of social integration between European and local populations occurred, there were many fewer Europeans and local words were used to describe people of European ancestry. In these places, the term ‘Indo’ may have been rarely used until Indonesian independence, as was possible in the coastal regions of Minahasa (see Chapter 5). In short, the term ‘Indo’ was not used in all areas of colonial Indonesia, and it was an important term of social classification in the Indies used to describe a group different from both ‘natives’ and *totok* Europeans on the basis of ancestry, skin colour, culture, legal status and class.

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<sup>25</sup> J.Th. Koks, *De Indo*, Amsterdam, H.J. Paris, 1931, pp. 132, 136-7.

<sup>26</sup> ‘Sinjo’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, The Hague, Nijhoff, vol. 3, 1919, p. 786.

<sup>27</sup> W.G. Sonius, ‘Nota over de Indo-Europese Bevolkingsgroep in Indonesie’, March 1951, p. 29, National Archive, Den Haag, Raad voor Sociale Aangelegenheden in Indonesie 2.27.01.01, inventory number 127; Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, p. 247; Bosma, ‘The Indo’, p. 75. The term ‘boeaja’, or *buaya*, in Indonesian today means a man of disrepute, but historically it is linked to roving bands of itinerant *keroncong* musicians, many of whom were Eurasian. See Bronia Kornhauser, ‘In Defence of Kroncong’, in M.J. Kartomi, *Studies in Indonesian Music*, Clayton, Vic., Centre of Southeast Asian Studies Monash University, 1978, pp. 129-134.

<sup>28</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being ‘Dutch’ in the Indies*, p. 270.

<sup>29</sup> See V. Houben, ‘De Indo-Aristocratie van Midden Java: de Familie Dezentjé’, in Wim Willems (ed), *Sporen van Een Indisch Verleden*, Leiden, Centrum voor Onderzoek van Maatschappelijke Tegenstellingen, Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen, Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden, 1992, pp. 39-50.

<sup>30</sup> Bosma, ‘The Indo’, p. 68.

In just one example of the fluidity of the term, Achmad Djajadiningrat, a Javanese intellectual and politician in favour of a close relationship with the Dutch colonial administration, recalled in his memoirs in 1936 an experience in the 1880s. Achmad stayed with a Dutch family in Batavia and went to a Dutch primary school. He described the process he underwent to be admitted to the school: his hair was cut, and he started wearing the clothes of the family's eldest son, so that "I no longer resembled a Bantinese boy, but looked more like an Ambonese or Indo-European".<sup>31</sup> When Achmad moved to another school, the headmaster told him that henceforth he would be called Willem van Bantam. His new Dutch classmates welcomed him as an Indo, and invited him to parties at their homes. Achmad then described how, when he took the entrance exam for European high school, he was forced to use his real name. When word got out among his former classmates and friends that his name was not Willem van Bantam and he was in fact a native, they wanted nothing more to do with him. The exception was one more instance, a masked ball, where, he wrote, he was able to dance with any girl he asked (presumably in perfect Dutch) – until he removed his mask and they realised who he was.<sup>32</sup> During this period, then, it seems that Indos and members of other groups were readily accepted in European society because of outward signs of being European like clothes and hairstyles.

### **European arrivals in the Indies**

In the latter decades of the nineteenth century, after the Indies economy was opened to private enterprise from 1870, an increasing number of European men arrived to work on plantations, especially in Java and Sumatra. With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, sea travel via steam ships, a recent invention, became much easier. Many more Europeans took the previously long and dangerous sea journey and then returned to Europe, often richer than when they arrived. Many of those born in the Indies who also made their fortune in plantation economies repatriated to the Netherlands, and subsequently sent their children to the Indies to make their careers. This process led to a 'migration circuit', in which the wealthiest Europeans in the Indies tended not to remain there permanently.<sup>33</sup> In 1860, there were 43,876 Europeans in the colony. By 1930, this

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<sup>31</sup> Achmad Djajadiningrat, *Herinneringen van Pangeran Aria Achmad Djajadiningrat*, Amsterdam, Kolff, 1936, p. 66.

<sup>32</sup> C.W. Watson, *Of Self and Nation: Autobiography and the Representation of Modern Indonesia*, Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press, 2000, pp. 61-62.

<sup>33</sup> Bosma, 'The Indo', p. 70.

number had increased to 240,162.<sup>34</sup> The growth in male European emigration did not initially correspond to a growth in the number of European women, and so the majority of European men took local women as concubines (*nyai*).<sup>35</sup> The result was a rise in the number of illegitimate, lower-class children, often termed '*inlandsche kinderen*' ('native children', specifically those with European descent). Many of these children were the so-called 'kampung Indos' mentioned above, who were raised with Indonesian relatives after their fathers were relocated, were sent back to the Netherlands or died.

The great majority of these illegitimate children were the children of *nyai* and planters or soldiers in the Royal Netherlands Indies Army (Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch Leger, KNIL). Until 1895, more than half of the male European population of the Indies was employed as soldiers.<sup>36</sup> The KNIL itself indirectly promoted concubinage by only very rarely permitting lower-ranked soldiers to marry, regardless of the legal status of the intended spouse. From 1836, it permitted soldiers to live with native women, thus more or less ensuring widespread concubinage. The system came under increasing criticism in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>37</sup> One reason was probably the large number of illegitimate children that resulted from concubinage, who were often raised as Javanese or Sundanese, rather than European. These children were often seen wandering the streets of colonial cities in increasing numbers in the late nineteenth century, begging and clad in ragged clothes.<sup>38</sup>

The soldiers of the KNIL themselves were considered among the lowest classes of Europeans. An increasing number of European arrivals concerned with sensibility and European social standing also questioned the moral calibre of their Indonesian concubines and, in turn, expressed concern about the conditions in which their children were raised.<sup>39</sup> The children legally acknowledged by a European father from these unions were only a fraction of the much larger, illegitimate majority. Hanneke Ming has noted that in 1889, of 2453 children living in the barracks, only 215 were legally recognised. She concluded that most of these children must have had indigenous fathers. In 1901, of 7107 children living in army barracks, 1,237 had European fathers, and of this latter number, only 410 were acknowledged. The greater proportion of

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<sup>34</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 87, citing Departement van Landbouw 1930, p. 147 and Subsidiary Table No. 8, p. 31.

<sup>35</sup> See Hanneke Ming, 'Barracks-Concubinage in the Indies, 1887-1920', *Indonesia*, vol. 35, 1983, pp. 65-94.

<sup>36</sup> Van Marle, 'De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië', p. 485.

<sup>37</sup> Ming, 'Barracks-Concubinage in the Indies', p. 69.

<sup>38</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, p. 269.

<sup>39</sup> Ming, 'Barracks-Concubinage in the Indies'.

children of European fathers, then, were not legally acknowledged, even when it was commonly known that their fathers were European.<sup>40</sup> Discussions of this group of Indos among Europeans were phrased in terms of class, social status and how they might affect European standing in the eyes of other groups in the Indies.

### **Indos as a class**

A common expression developed among middle-class Indo families to warn each other that if their economic and social status dropped, they would ‘disappear into the kampung’ or ‘go native’. Low wages in the lower and middle levels of the colonial civil service increased the risk that a significant proportion of the European segment of Indies society would be forced to accept a lower-class native standard of living and reside in kampungs separate from European circles. Poverty among the lower classes of Europeans was not a new phenomenon in the Indies, but in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, with increasing numbers of Europeans arriving, it began to emerge as the reference point for who could be classed as European.<sup>41</sup> From about 1885, the Indies press on Java, itself featuring a large number of Indo editors, began to add its voice to concerns that a growing underclass of mostly Indos was negatively affecting European social status above natives. Newspaper editors called for government reforms and more opportunities for ‘Indo paupers’, as they were termed.<sup>42</sup> Church programs, which had long assisted the impoverished in the Indies, and private initiatives like Pa van der Steur’s orphanage in Magelang, were unable to cope with the large number of illegitimate children raised in native environs in this period.

The Indies government established two pauperism commissions to investigate poverty among Europeans, the first of which was conducted in 1872-1874. Its recommendations were largely ignored, and many of the lower class among the European community continued to languish in impoverished circumstances. A second commission was carried out in 1901. Respondents were asked questions such as whether their mothers had been concubines, how often their children skipped school, whether they slept on a bed, a mat or on the floor, whether they spoke to their children in Malay and so on – questions that related more to what was considered to mark a European culturally than

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<sup>40</sup> Ming, ‘Barracks-concubinage in the Indies, 1887-1920’, p. 76, citing *Rapport der Pauperisme-Commissie*, Appendix B, p. 1; and *Verbaal* 30-10-1901, no. 20, Ministerie van Koloniën.

<sup>41</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being ‘Dutch’ in the Indies*, p. 269.

<sup>42</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being ‘Dutch’ in the Indies*, p. 268, citing Termorshuizen, *P.A. Daum*, pp. 277-87.

poverty.<sup>43</sup> Somewhat like concerns in Europe over the moral standards of mothers raising their children in lower-class circumstances, in the Indies the debate on the standards of lower class families also were fixated on the mothers of lower-class Europeans. Because most lower-class Europeans were Indo, the debate tended to focus on their Indonesian mothers, stereotypically concubines and housekeepers, and in so doing, also directly and indirectly drew on popular understandings of race.

Some social reformers focused on improving the circumstances in which lower-class Indos lived, thereby ‘lifting’ them out of poverty and ‘raising’ them to the level of other Europeans. Others were of the opinion that because of their racial background, Indos could never be included socially, culturally or racially as European. Those in the second group chastised European families for allowing native servants too much influence on European children, and tended to discuss Indos in essentialist terms. There was considerable overlap between the two perspectives. For example, one author of a piece in the Dutch newspaper *Schager Courant* in 1903 wrote:

What a difference between the skilled Indos from good families and the so-called kampung *sinjos*. The first is undoubtedly sympathetic and feels attracted to us Westerners, while the latter, a bogus, untrustworthy individual, is stupid and proud and possesses red-hot hatred towards all things Dutch. However, let me immediately add that it is mostly our fault that the *kleurlingen* [coloured] have become so... and that it is therefore long overdue to do something for these unfortunates.... In the army I met very good *sinjos*.... On the whole, the Indo in its ranks has a better opinion of us Dutch than his brother in the kampung.<sup>44</sup>

Common knowledge among some members of the *totok* European community about Indos repeated the idea that Indos were indolent and unreliable, which in turn contributed to their poverty – a characterisation somewhat typical of denunciations of perceived lower-class laziness in other contexts.<sup>45</sup> These two discourses – on the one hand, that the environment in which Indos were raised created degeneracy, and on the other hand, that degeneracy was present from birth on account of their ancestry – were by no means exclusive. Both rejected Indos of a certain class or background from the European community. As a result, wealthier Indo families increasingly tried to define themselves as outwardly European through speaking proper Dutch rather than *petjoh*, the Dutch-Indo creole of Dutch, Malay and Javanese, eating bread, avoiding the kampungs and so on.

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<sup>43</sup> Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, pp. 161-62, citing Knaap, ‘Pauperisme onder de Indo-Europeanen’, pp. 1-2.

<sup>44</sup> Lt. Clockener Brousson, ‘Indische Penkrassen XXXVI’, *Schager Courant*, 22 November 1903, p. 9.

<sup>45</sup> Wertheim, *Herrijzend Azië*, p. 66.

Tensions between *totok* Europeans and Indos grew as European arrivals began to compete with Indos for jobs in the civil service. One writer observed tension between *totok* Dutch and Indos as early as 1881:

I cannot bear the arrogance of the Dutch ladies and gentlemen towards the sinyos. I have witnessed it for years in Batavia. You cannot imagine anything more heartless or conceited than the arrogance of the Hollanders vis-à-vis the colored. If a sinyo becomes even slightly prominent, the true Hollanders immediately close ranks to work against him. They find their greatest amusement in treasuring up the linguistic errors of the sinyos....<sup>46</sup>

Another author blamed Indos for the tensions, noting in 1905 that in the barracks, “Indos are the very opposite of the rough, yet good-hearted European fusiliers. They form two categories of soldiers, who absolutely do not understand each other. Racial hatred is very pronounced among these Indos.”<sup>47</sup> In general, however, denunciations of Indos were restricted to those of lower-classes, while those in the upper classes were more likely to be labelled Indisch.

Indo membership of the European community relied heavily on maintaining a standard of living and distance from the native population of the Indies to avoid such denunciations that declared indigenous influences were negative. However, the salaries given to lower level civil servants, who were unable to afford an education for their children in Europe, limited the extent to which they could maintain this living standard. The colonial civil service was divided into three levels, each of which was based on different educational qualifications and accordingly granted a different salary level. The first level consisted of those educated at the Delft Academy with a doctorate in law and studies of Indies languages, geography and ethnology; the second, those without the law degree, but who had undertaken some study in subjects deemed necessary for colonial administration; and the third, those without training at Delft, but with a secondary Dutch education.<sup>48</sup> As one author noted in 1942, though this system did not officially discriminate based on racial or ethnic origin, in practice the salary groups roughly equated to (*totok*) Europeans, Indos and Indonesians.<sup>49</sup> Cries in the nineteenth century that the colonial government consistently discriminated against the Indies born, who

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<sup>46</sup> J. ten Brink, *Oost-Indische Dames en Heeren: Vier Bijdragen tot de Kennis van de Zeden en Gebruiken der Europeesche Maatschappij in Nederlandsch-Indië*, Leiden, Sijthoff, c. 1885.

<sup>47</sup> W. H. Bogaardt, *Bijdragen tot de Kennis van de Oeconomische en Sociale Toestanden in Nederlandsch-Indië*, Haarlem, H.G. van Alfen, 1905, p. 13.

<sup>48</sup> Amry Vandenbosch, *The Dutch East Indies: Its Government, Problems and Politics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., [S.I.], [s.n.], 1942, pp. 158-159.

<sup>49</sup> Vandenbosch, *The Dutch East Indies*, p. 169.

could not improve their position in Indisch society with such a system in place, continued in late colonial society.

The civil service, however, was not the only area in which Indos struggled to find employment in the changing circumstances of the twentieth century. The private sector began to hire Indos at the same rate of pay as Indonesians.<sup>50</sup> Jean Taylor notes that around the turn of the twentieth century, European parents began to advertise for nannies and teachers who could speak Dutch with a ‘refined pronunciation’. Applicants would describe themselves as European, Dutch by birth or newly arrived from the Netherlands to distinguish themselves from Europeans born in the Indies, or Dutch citizens who had recently acquired Dutch citizenship.<sup>51</sup> This preference for the European-born did not just extend to advertisements for women, but also to male tutors, sales assistants, clerks and so on, which also often required applicants to be European or ‘Dutch by birth’. The increasing criticism that Indos faced from new European arrivals over their links to lower-class indigenous society, as well as the questions that this group faced over whether their language abilities, standard of living and life styles could sufficiently define them as ‘European’, probably to a great extent explain why expressions of racial superiority above indigenous Indonesians were not uncommon among some Indos from the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>52</sup> The issue of false or late acknowledgements hung over the heads of those attempting to gain entrance into European society. The 1919 edition of the *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch Indië* described Indos living in kampungs in less-than-glowing terms:

These so-called ‘rough-paupers’, the scourges of kampungs, run illegal liquor houses and brothels... and trade in young native and Indo girls. Through unscrupulous and other methods, they are so-called Europeans (thanks to false acknowledgements)... Many well-intentioned attempts made by charities in the Dutch East Indies to support the Indo pauper have completely failed, because one must begin to lift him from birth first....<sup>53</sup>

One Dutch writer went so far as to declare that Indos in general, especially those born in the kampungs, could not be European at all:

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<sup>50</sup> Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 1995, p. 172.

<sup>51</sup> Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, p. 140.

<sup>52</sup> Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*, The Hague, W. van Hoeve, 1960, p. 38.

<sup>53</sup> ‘Pauperisme’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff; Leiden, Brill, 1919, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., vol. 3, pp. 367-68.

There is no way in hell that he [the Indo] is European.... Indos born in the kampung, because they are susceptible to environmental influences, show similar characteristics to the Javanese, such as lethargy and inertia from the tropical climate, ignorance and a strong imagination.<sup>54</sup>

Often Indo women were typecast as most typically embodying the worst characteristics. Though the stereotype of the 'loose' Indo woman probably arose before the nineteenth century, the determination of many Eurasian women to obtain Dutch husbands and thereby retain – or obtain – European status contributed to the prevalence of these stereotypes. A large number entered into *de facto* relationships with European men, hoping to eventually turn these relationships into marriage. But the importance attached to European status in other areas of European society in the Indies carried over into selection of wives as well. Many men subsequently rejected their girlfriends and illegitimate children when their wives arrived from Europe, or after they took on a European wife who would be considered far more respectable in European circles.<sup>55</sup>

In all likelihood, despite rising public concern about concubinage, rising levels of poverty in the last decades of the nineteenth century were just as often a result of an increase in the number of Europeans looking for work, almost all of whom were unwilling to accept employment as poorly-paid manual labourers because they considered such work as beneath their status. Low wages in the civil service that did not keep pace with rising housing prices and the increasing cost of living were also contributing factors. Indos complained that their economic opportunities were restricted by the ban on purchasing land if they held European status, though in practice many of them probably used middlemen to make such purchases.<sup>56</sup> Despite their relative poverty in comparison to other Europeans, many Indos with European status were the members of a relative elite community in comparison with most of those who held native status. Poor European families, most of whom were Indo, who had an annual income of less than 1800 guilders did not have to pay elementary school fees in government schools in the nineteenth century.<sup>57</sup> Civil servants and the poor and needy had access to free medical assistance.<sup>58</sup> Maintaining a standard of living above most of the indigenous

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<sup>54</sup> Willem de Cock Buning, 'De Indo-European', *Koloniale Studiën: Tijdschrift van de Vereeniging voor Studie van Koloniaal-Maatschappelijke Vraagstukken*, vol. 1, no. 1, 12 November 1916, pp. 384, 387.

<sup>55</sup> Van der Veur, 'Race and Color in Colonial Society'.

<sup>56</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, pp. 267-68.

<sup>57</sup> C.L.M. Penders, *Colonial Education Policy and Practice in Indonesia 1900-1942*, unpublished PhD thesis, Australian National University, 1968, p. 148; Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 67.

<sup>58</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, p. 270.

population in accordance with societal expectations that accompanied European status was, however, expensive.

### **Indonesian attitudes towards Indos**

Just what attitudes towards Indos were among the non-European population of the Indies – the overwhelming numerical majority – are for the most part unclear before the 1920s. A small number of sources give us some indication of attitudes towards Indos among the non-European elite in the early twentieth century. Bosma and Raben note that when Chinese Indonesians began to demand equality with Europeans like the Japanese, their calls met with derision. Some encountered physical intimidation from Indo men with European status, as well as Javanese.<sup>59</sup> In 1902, Javanese feminist Kartini, in a letter to her Dutch friend E.C. Abendanon, described an Indo who was overseeing the rebuilding of part of the family's house:

This group of workers is under the supervision of an Indo. At first he was quite surly and withdrawn.... Now we are good friends – it was we who first greeted him and thereafter spoke to him.... Yesterday... we talked about religion and it was then that I heard words that touched me greatly. This is how one of those much despised Indos think and feel. Even though the language in which he expressed himself was incorrect, the thoughts it contained were pure. He is kind to those workers who get along with him well while still being respectful.... That's nice, isn't it – many 'bosses' could learn a lesson from that sinyo.<sup>60</sup>

Her sisters Soematri and Kartinah made fun of the Eurasian community in Jepara in their letters to a Dutch childhood friend from 1909 to 1912. According to Joost Coté, the Indo community, as part of the “colonial, Indies-raised European community, rather than the new generation of educated, urbane Dutch officials... most exemplifie[d] the encrusted values of the colonial establishment”.<sup>61</sup> Kartini and her sisters, however, were members of the Javanese elite. Opinions among other groups classed as native towards Indos are unclear. One Dutch army general in a letter noted that Indonesian women who became the concubines of European men would probably not be accepted in indigenous society:

[W]e can be confident that any native woman who has abandoned herself to follow a European soldier has sunk very low in the eyes of her fellow-countrymen.... [I]t

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<sup>59</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being “Dutch” in the Indies*, p. 323.

<sup>60</sup> Raden Ajeng Kartini to E.C. Abendanon, 21 November 1902, in Joost Coté (ed. and trans.), *Kartini: the Complete Writings 1898-1904*, Clayton, Vic., Monash University Publishing, 2013, p. 518.

<sup>61</sup> Joost Coté, (ed. and trans.), *Realizing the Dream of R.A. Kartini: Her Sisters' Letters from Colonial Java*, Athens, Ohio University Press, 2008, p. 20.

seems to me very doubtful that there will be a place for her or her children in the kampong, that is, in native society.<sup>62</sup>

It is likely, then, that the children resulting from these relationships also would be rejected, creating a situation in which they were not easily accepted in either Dutch or Javanese society. This situation created the conditions in which a distinct Indo community could emerge on Java which sought to improve conditions for Indos as Europeans, because they had more opportunities to better their circumstances with European status.

In other areas of the Indies archipelago, however, attitudes towards mixed relationships and Indo children were likely more varied. In areas with large Christian populations, such as the Moluccas and the Minahasa region of North Sulawesi, distinctions along racial and social lines such as place of residence and standard of living were not always so clearly demarcated, and mixed marriages were much more common.<sup>63</sup> One writer noted as early as 1887 that many European and Eurasian women in the Minahasa region were marrying indigenous men, probably more often than European women in Java.<sup>64</sup> When Indonesian nationalist Sutan Sjahrir – himself married to a Dutch woman – was exiled to Banda in the Moluccas in the second part of the 1930s, he observed that “[t]he Indo-Europeans, the Indo-Arabs and the Chinese actually live and think exactly like the people in the kampung. It [society] is... divided only into classes.... In general, they are still more tolerant here than elsewhere.”<sup>65</sup>

### **Threats to Indo social status**

In the nineteenth century, poverty among the indigenous population was barely a matter of concern for Europeans and certainly not the topic of the Pauperism Commissions, which focused on children of European descent. This situation began to rapidly change by the turn of the century. A new Ethical Policy began to focus improving the circumstances of indigenous inhabitants of the Indies. In 1902 the Indies government commenced an inquiry into Javanese poverty, the *Mindere Welvaarts Onderzoek*. The

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<sup>62</sup> Letter from General Boetje to the Governor General, in Ming, ‘Barracks-Concubinage in the Indies, 1887-1920’, p. 72, trans. Ming.

<sup>63</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being ‘Dutch’ in the Indies*; Van der Veur, ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, pp. 61-62.

<sup>64</sup> Van der Veur, ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, citing Nederburgh 1899, cited in A. van Marle, ‘De groep der Europeanen in Nederlandsch- Indië, iets over ontstaan en groei’, *Indonesië*, V, 1951, p. 318.

<sup>65</sup> Sjahrizad [Sutan Sjahrir], *Indonesische Overpeinzingen*, Amsterdam, Djambatan, 1950 [excerpt dated 21 September 1936], originally cited by van der Veur, ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, p. 113.

conservative right-wing Christian Anti-Revolutionaire Partij, elected in the Netherlands in 1888, demanded more support for Christian missions in the Netherlands Indies to improve educational opportunities for indigenous peoples, thereby exposing them to Christian values.<sup>66</sup> This push became official policy in the Netherlands Indies from 1901. Several new technical departments opened in the civil service, like Native Education and Public Works, in which non-aristocratic Indonesians could work. Reforms and expansion were phrased in terms of development for natives. Though the Ethical Policy also focused on administrative and economic reform, its greatest achievement was in the area of education, with Dutch language primary schools opened for Indonesians and more positions in European schools opened up to non-Europeans.<sup>67</sup> As a result, more Indonesians could access higher status jobs and higher salaries, most of which required knowledge of the Dutch language. One reason why more and more Indonesians were given access to a Dutch education was because staff with native status in new government departments, such as Agriculture and Health, could be employed at a lower salary than Europeans.<sup>68</sup> Speaking Dutch not only opened up the civil service to educated Indonesians, but also meant that indigenous Indonesians began to compete with Indos for positions Indos had previously monopolised, because those classed as native were employed at a lower salary rate.

The Indo community foresaw what a Dutch education for indigenous Indonesians could mean for them even before the Ethical Policy was fully implemented, and some protested against the educational reforms. Though the majority of the Indies population supported the concept of indigenous education, the question of whether the language of instruction should be in Dutch or an indigenous language was one that led to friction between early Javanese intellectuals and members of the European Indo community.<sup>69</sup> The majority of pupils in public European schools in the Indies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were Indo, as most *totok* Dutch children were sent to more expensive private schools or the Netherlands. Though the colonial administration eventually allowed Indonesian and Chinese students to attend government schools, to begin with they were charged the highest rate of tuition fees, which meant that only a minority could afford a European education in the Dutch language.<sup>70</sup> The minimum

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<sup>66</sup> Joost Coté, 'Colonising Central Sulawesi: the "Ethical Policy" and Imperialist Expansion 1890-1910', *Itinerario*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2006, p. 90.

<sup>67</sup> Penders, *Colonial Education Policy and Practice in Indonesia*, p. 66.

<sup>68</sup> Penders, *Colonial Education Policy and Practice in Indonesia*, pp. 66-67.

<sup>69</sup> Groeneboer, *Weg tot het Westen*, p. 318.

<sup>70</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 68.

requirement for entry into the lower levels of the civil service was a Dutch primary school diploma, meaning that Indos had enjoyed a more or less monopoly on lower-level positions. Their competition with other groups in the nineteenth century was limited besides a relatively small number of educated Indonesians from very wealthy or aristocratic families.<sup>71</sup> It was inevitable, then, that members of the Indo community, demanding that native education be given in Javanese rather than Dutch, would conflict with the growing number of Javanese intellectuals in favour of a Dutch language education so that more Javanese could obtain better employment than they had accessed in the past. The Indo-European community in Java, not Dutch newcomers, posed the greatest threat to Javanese progressives and their calls for a Dutch education for the Javanese.

Achmad Sosrohadikoesoemo, a Dutch-educated Javanese intellectual employed in the colonial civil service, addressed this conflict with Indos in a letter to Jacques Abendanon, former Director of Native Education, Religion and Industry, and his wife Rosa, in February 1916. Abendanon and Rosa had supported education for the Javanese for years, including Javanese women. Their correspondence with Sosrohadikoesoemo, his wife Soematri and her sisters – among them Kartini – discussed a number of the issues in the debates surrounding native education in the early twentieth century.<sup>72</sup> Sosrohadikoesoemo in this particular letter expressed his worry that education for the Javanese would be given in the Javanese language, and not Dutch. He wrote that if Javanese was used as the language of education,

in the wider arena of life in the struggle against Indos we would lose outright. These latter ... would love to see that it was the Javanese and not the Dutch language that became the language medium of the H.I. Schools. Looking at the issue from their perspective, I could agree with them entirely, since as a result their struggle for existence would become so much easier. Now, there is a possibility that they will become extremely hard pressed. The efforts being made ... [to educate Javanese using the Javanese language] mean for the Indo world a reigniting of their aspirations for glory. Should the Netherlands government be inclined to accept the request of the Javanese to receive a good education in the Dutch language, then that would mean the death knell for the Demi-rulers. They would then be obliged to either merge in with us completely or lead the life of a trapped tiger. For these rulers it would indeed be important to bridge the gap that

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<sup>71</sup> Penders, *Colonial Education Policy and Practice in Indonesia*, p. 129.

<sup>72</sup> Coté, *Realizing the Dream of R.A. Kartini*, p. 27.

stands between them and our people as quickly as possible, not to widen and deepen it.<sup>73</sup>

Not all elite Javanese shared his view, and not all Indos opposed a Javanese language education because of increased competition for jobs with the indigenous population. Soewardi Soerjaningrat, one of the co-leaders and founders of the short-lived Indisch Party, stressed the importance of using the vernacular in indigenous education in a paper to the First Colonial Education Congress in 1916. His reasoning drew on the Indisch Party's core ideological position that the Indies people should have an Indies-rooted identity, separate from the Dutch. As a result, most Javanese progressives refused to support the Indisch Party, which received most of its support from left-leaning Indos and was never particularly popular in any case because of its perceived radical nature.<sup>74</sup> Achmad Sosrohadikoesoemo emphatically opposed both Indo-European and radical (nationalist and Marxist) movements, including the Indisch Party.<sup>75</sup> His criticism in his letter to Abendanon of Indo calls for the use of the vernacular in native education rather than Dutch spoke not only of tensions between elite Javanese and the Indo community, but also of broader tensions between the Javanese over how to improve their circumstances against other groups in Indies society.

### **Rise of a collective Indo consciousness**

By this time, an Indo community had well and truly emerged on Java and was prepared to fight any competition or challenges to its position. Calls from an Indo press from the 1880s to do something for impoverished Indos had probably sparked definitions of a collective Indo identity, in which shared experiences of conflict with and rejection from both the *totok* Dutch and elite Javanese overshadowed individual differences.<sup>76</sup> The perceived threat of indigenous education to Indos' social position in the colony provided further incentive to unite, as did the increase in the number of temporary European settlers in the Indies competing for jobs. The result was the rise of organisations that, though they were never exclusive to Indos, nevertheless featured Indos in leadership, addressed concerns relevant to this group of people and were for members who held European status. In 1898, Indo Karel Zaalberg, assistant editor of

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<sup>73</sup> Achmad Sosrohadikoesoemo to Mr and Mrs Abendanon, Semarang, 26 February 1916, in Coté (ed.), *Realizing the Dream of R.A. Kartini*, pp. 278-79.

<sup>74</sup> Coté (ed.), *Realizing the Dream of R.A. Kartini*, pp. 374-375, fn. 122-123.

<sup>75</sup> Coté (ed.), *Realizing the Dream of R.A. Kartini*, p. 373, fn. 109.

<sup>76</sup> Bosma, 'The Indo', p. 72.

one of the leading newspapers in the Indies, the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, founded the Indisch Bond. The organisation was dedicated to Indisch interests related directly to European status; as Bosma notes, there were no attempts to establish branches of the Indisch Bond in areas with strong mestizo cultures such as the Moluccas and Minahasa, where status and social differences between different population groups were not so great.<sup>77</sup> The organisation declined after 1902, notably after a rift occurred over whether membership should be opened to non-European members or remain restricted to those with European status.

Zaalberg's deputy editor, Ernest Douwes Dekker, who was also an Indo, took the debates stirred up by the Indisch Bond a step further. Douwes Dekker viewed the exclusivism in early Indisch organisations and the superior attitudes that many Indos displayed towards their indigenous contemporaries as antithetical to a broader anti-colonial movement that could topple the system favouring Europeans. In 1912 he co-founded the Indisch Party with Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Soewardi Soerjaningrat, both Javanese doctors, to promote a concept of a collective Indies identity that could lead Indonesia to independence. The Indisch Party drew on the ideas put forward in the Indische Bond, but was much more radical in its denunciations of Dutch colonialism. Most of its members were Indo, but it was open to non-Europeans. Party leaders aimed to work closely with other indigenous organisations such as Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Islam.<sup>78</sup> This intention proved difficult to realise, as Douwes Dekker was in favour of allowing Indos to own land because they were born in the Indies, while most Javanese were against it.<sup>79</sup>

Douwes Dekker and his co-founders drew on several concepts in their attempts to incite a radical form of nationalism that encompassed all non-*totok* Dutch groups living in the Indies. The first of these was the idea of hybrid vigour, in which Indos supposedly embodied the best, rather than the worst, of both worlds. According to this idea, it was only among the world's mixed races that one could find different yet robust character types.<sup>80</sup> This concept paralleled similar ideologies among mestizo leaders of the Filipino nationalist movement, which was much more overt in its statements of racial superiority

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<sup>77</sup> Bosma, 'The Indo', pp. 76-78.

<sup>78</sup> Kees van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War, 1914-1918*, Leiden, KITLV Press, 2007, p. 50.

<sup>79</sup> Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly*, pp. 211-212.

<sup>80</sup> Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly*, p. 150.

above both American colonisers and the indigenous underclass.<sup>81</sup> Douwes Dekker, in June and July 1913, published a series of articles about events in the nearby Philippines, covering not only the American administration but also the Filipino revolution against the Spanish (1896-98), which was led by mestizo Filipinos. He described the revolution in romanticised details, perhaps hoping to inspire a similar movement – led by Indos – in the Indies.<sup>82</sup> His articles had little effect, however.

The second discourse, which Douwes Dekker emphasised to a much greater extent, was the idea that Indos were essentially the same as indigenous Indonesians because all were born in the Indies – or, to put it another way, he proposed that all people born in the Indies shared an Indies Indisch identity. Douwes Dekker stated repeatedly that Indos were closer to indigenous Indonesians than the Dutch. Only a minority of the Indo community shared this opinion. Most were much more inclined, if they did not directly support continued Dutch rule, to advocate for a future Indies in which they would remain relatively privileged *vis-à-vis* indigenous Indonesians, and retain their relatively privileged positions. This second idea made clever use of contemporary Dutch discourses that Indos were closer to indigenous society than European society by celebrating, rather than decrying, the ‘native’ characteristics that Indos were believed to embody. Willem de Cock Buning, who had debated Douwes Dekker in 1912 and 1913, noted that a particular group of Indos also considered themselves the same as the Javanese and the Chinese. He began by suggesting that Indos were no different to the Javanese, and then continued:

[T]hey are not able to think independently and also have no political interests; it is only worthwhile that the better part of the Indo class is taken into account, who have the leadership. These nationalists... have as a political ideal the rapid secession of this colony from the motherland. They claim to feel themselves so completely one with the Javanese and Indo-Chinese that they harbour no fear of the great numerical superiority of these respective groups....<sup>83</sup>

The nationalists he mentioned were undoubtedly those surrounding Douwes Dekker. In late 1912, Douwes Dekker embarked upon a propaganda tour of Java, advertising in advance to attract the greatest number of participants as possible to support the Indisch Party’s anti-*totok* stance. *Totok* Dutch were even refused entry to a meeting in

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<sup>81</sup> Daniel P.S. Goh, ‘Postcolonial Disorientations: Colonial Ethnography and the Vectors of the Philippine Nation in the Imperial Frontier’, *Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 268-270.

<sup>82</sup> N.A. Bootsma, *Buren in de Koloniale Tijd: De Philippijnen onder Amerikaans Bewind en de Nederlandse, Indische en Indonesische Reacties Daarop, 1898-1942*, Dordrecht, Foris Publications, 1986, pp. 40-41.

<sup>83</sup> De Cock Buning, ‘De Indo-Europeaan’, p. 388; Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly*, p. 236.

Bandung.<sup>84</sup> The propaganda tour was the first public and collective attempt on the part of a group of Indos to eschew their Dutch heritage and align themselves with Indonesians. In spite of public calls for Indos and the Javanese to forget their differences, only fifteen hundred of the Indisch Party's more than seven thousand members in March 1913 were indigenous, with most of the remainder Indo.<sup>85</sup>

Pressure from the Dutch prevented the push for mestizo-based nationalism from taking root in the Indies, unlike the Philippines. The immediate influence of the Indisch Party was limited, particularly after its request for legal recognition from the Indies government was turned down in March 1913. The party's leaders decided to dissolve the party in April that year. They encouraged former members to join Insulinde, a non-political organisation founded in 1907. Until 1918, Insulinde's membership for the most part consisted primarily of Indos. From late 1918, the Surakarta branch – in which Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo was involved – expanded and became open to indigenous members. Most of Insulinde's other branches, particularly in major colonial cities such as Surabaya, Batavia and Bandung, continued to consist mainly of Indos.<sup>86</sup> After a change of by-laws allowed those with native status to join Insulinde as a whole, more than a third of its members resigned in protest, most of them Indo.<sup>87</sup> Instead of emerging as a mestizo elite to lead an Indies-based nationalism, then, as occurred in the Philippines, the Indo community withdrew into itself and spoke from a defensive position against the interests of the Javanese, *totok* Dutch and others. The common response among more conservative Indo leaders to the rise of other interest groups in Indies society was to try to align Indos with European society to a greater extent than before.

Though the Indisch Party was disbanded, the anti-Dutch activities of its former leaders continued. When word spread that indigenous Indonesians had been asked in certain areas to provide 'donations' for the centenary of Dutch independence from France, Douwes Dekker announced his determination to oppose the celebrations. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo founded the Komite Boemi Poetera (Committee for 'Sons of the Soil') to ask for Indonesian representation in the Koloniale Raad (Colonial Council),

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<sup>84</sup> Van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War*, p. 51.

<sup>85</sup> Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1990, p. 58.

<sup>86</sup> Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*, p. 137.

<sup>87</sup> Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly*, p. 152.

but also to incite outrage amongst the European community.<sup>88</sup> He and Soewardi Soerjaningrat saw the centenary celebrations as an opportunity to point out that the colonial administration was undemocratic, and that the colonial government oppressed the Indies people just as the French had oppressed the Dutch a century earlier.<sup>89</sup> The Comite produced a satirical brochure, 'Als ik eens Nederlander was' ('If I were a Dutchman'), written by Soewardi and published in both Dutch and Malay. This brochure pointed out that independence celebrations in the Indies, as long as they denied Indonesians independence, were hypocritical. Tjipto and Soewardi were subsequently arrested, followed by Douwes Dekker after he wrote of his admiration for their efforts.<sup>90</sup> The three were exiled to the Netherlands, but still their supporters continued anti-Dutch activities. Members of the former Indisch Party in Semarang, for example, drove through European areas during the independence celebrations, holding party flags higher than orange flags to symbolise their support for the party above the colonial state.<sup>91</sup>

### **Mestizo nationalism versus indigenism**

It is probably is no coincidence that the committee Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo formed used the Malay term '*boemipoetera*' ('sons of the soil', loosely meaning 'Indies born') rather than the Javanese term '*pribumi*' (indigenous, in terms of 'purity' of descent), which would have excluded Indos, Chinese Indonesians and other groups that had been designated as 'not indigenous' in Dutch legal classification. Both the Chinese and Indonesian press popularised *boemipoetera* from the second decade of the twentieth century, and the term was much more popular at the time than *pribumi*.<sup>92</sup> In a number of ways, the Indisch Party's calls for an Indies-based nationalism reflected a similar *bumiputra* (*boemipoetera*) based nationalist movement in British Malaya. Political parties in Malaya consciously opened their doors to non-Malay groups, but in practice the *bumiputra* movement in many parts of Malaya defined *bumiputra* in a similar way to *pribumi* in Indonesia, and excluded groups such as Portuguese Eurasians.<sup>93</sup> Although the political ideal of *boemipoetra* in Indonesia was espoused by only a minority among both Indos and Javanese nationalists, the Indisch Party's openness to other groups, not

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<sup>88</sup> Van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War*, p. 59.

<sup>89</sup> Van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>90</sup> Van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War*, p. 58.

<sup>91</sup> Van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War*, p. 64.

<sup>92</sup> Siddique and Suryadinata, 'Bumiputra and Pribumi', p. 664,

<sup>93</sup> Beng-Lan Goh, *Modern Dreams: An Enquiry into Power, Cultural Production, and the Cityscape in Contemporary Urban Penang, Malaysia*, Ithaca, N.Y., Southeast Asia Program Publications, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 2002.

just Indos, was representative of broad, encompassing nationalism and espousals of collective nationalist identity during the second decade of the twentieth century.<sup>94</sup>

*Boemipoetera* nationalism never entirely took off in the Indies, because another form emerged around the same time in which indigenism, rather than birthplace, was used as the dividing line within colonial society. Between approximately 1890 and the mid-1920s, groups classed as non-indigenous on Java increasingly began to define and delineate the boundaries between themselves and other groups, aided by the rise of the press, education and, most notably, because of the Indies government's treatment of these groups as a concrete legal and social category. Indies society became divided along ethnic, racial, religious and legal lines to a greater extent in the twentieth century than it had previously. For minorities prescribed by colonial law as not native, the privileges accorded to them and fear that they would sink to the status of native led, at times, to very determined formulations of identity to mark themselves as essentially different to indigenous Indonesians, who also began to collectively identify as *pribumi* Indonesians. The extent to which this process took place in Indies society is disputed by a number of authors, particularly in relation to the Chinese, but politically, at least, vocal segments of the Chinese Indonesian, Arab and Indo communities began to withdraw into themselves and construct strong internal boundaries. They fought for the rights of their respective groups in political organisations and in the newly established Volksraad (People's Council) from 1916.<sup>95</sup> The Indisch Party was a short-lived exception to a much broader movement that, by 1920, had increasingly taken form.

By the mid-1920s, indigenous nationalist movements, no longer purely Javanese, began to position themselves as the bearers of Indonesian cultural values and exclude Indos and Chinese.<sup>96</sup> In these circumstances, Indos sought to position themselves, increasingly, as the bearers of Indies-based European cultural values. They no longer comprised an intermediary position between the Dutch and Javanese after the education reforms of the Ethical Policy, but still they faced prejudice from the *totok* Dutch community, and most were unwilling to lose the European status from which they

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<sup>94</sup> For a discussion of this period, see Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*.

<sup>95</sup> Sumit Kamar Mandal, *Finding Their Place: a History of Arabs in Java under Dutch Rule, 1800-1924*, PhD thesis, New York, Colombia University, 1996; Charles A. Coppel, 'Revisiting Furnivall's "Plural Society": Colonial Java as a Mestizo Society?', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 20, no. 3, 1997; J.S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India: a Study of Plural Economy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1944.

<sup>96</sup> W.F. Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition: a Study of Social Change*, The Hague, W. van Hoeve, 1959, p. 184.

continued to benefit.<sup>97</sup> The result was that they increasingly began to define themselves as a permanent European (Indisch) community in opposition to the temporary, often wealthier, European community in the Indies. Interest in a glorious past in which Indos had run huge plantations on Java and lived typically 'Indisch' lives with large houses and servants as a source of pride and Indo identity grew. Cultural productions such as the hybrid Portuguese kroncong music, itself linked to roving bands of Indos termed 'boeaja', became symbolic of an authentic Indisch culture and identity embodied especially in Indos.<sup>98</sup>

Even so, the circumstances of Indos varied considerably during this period. In 1913 the Indies government had adopted the principle of equal pay for equal jobs. Douwes Dekker praised the decision as an advance for Indies society, concluding that it was a win for social equality.<sup>99</sup> The decision to a certain extent was positive for Indos, as it meant that the formerly better-educated Indos would not have to compete with lower-paid Indonesians for the same positions, and those in senior positions were paid the same as Dutch newcomers and those educated in the Netherlands. Yet at the same time more and more Indonesians were able to access education, and both Dutch and Indonesian reformers increased their calls for Indonesians to be included in government. This situation was problematic for Indos, as was the equal pay system that did not enable them to maintain a lifestyle above most Indonesians. The expansion of Dutch colonial authority through the Indies archipelago and increase in the size of the colonial administration meant that more and more lower- and middle-level jobs in the civil service became available, but these jobs did not automatically go to Indos as they had in the past. Even so, between 1907 and 1928, the number of Europeans employed in the civil service increased from 7600 to 15,142.<sup>100</sup> This number included European arrivals, many of whom chose to go to the Indies in the face of rising unemployment and inflation in the Netherlands after the First World War. The boom in employment in the civil service was short-lived, and probably limited in its benefits, as the wages of the civil service could not keep up with rising living costs for Europeans. The increase in the number of Dutch arrivals also meant that private industry and plantations increasingly chose to employ these new arrivals over the Indies born in senior positions, though Indos occupied intermediary roles on plantations to interpret Javanese and

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<sup>97</sup> Jacques van Doorn, *A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia*, Rotterdam, Faculty of Social Sciences, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 1983, pp. 27-28.

<sup>98</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being "Dutch" in the Indies*, p. 331.

<sup>99</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 177.

<sup>100</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 178.

Dutch. The difficult circumstances that arose for Indos on account of these changed circumstances became the focus of Insulinde and a new movement that subsequently arose, the Indo-Europeesch Verbond (Indo-European Alliance, IEV).

### **Conservative Indo movements**

Insulinde had served Indo interests in the Volksraad until 1919 without too much controversy, despite its links to the banned Indisch Party and its political alliances with Boedi Oetomo and the much more radical Sarekat Islam (itself linked to attacks on Europeans). Its work in housing associations and to improve living conditions benefited Indos affected by rising living costs and housing shortages. By June 1919, Insulinde had 17,000 members, consisting not only of Javanese, but also Manadonese and Ambonese as well.<sup>101</sup> However, with the return of Douwes Dekker and Soewardi Soerjaningrat in 1918, who joined their former colleague Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, Insulinde appeared poised to return to its radical past, particularly after it was renamed the Nationaal Indische Partij (National Indisch Party) and began to participate in public demonstrations. Many of its Indo members turned to the IEV, founded in 1919, as an alternative to the radicalism that they considered Insulinde came to espouse.

The IEV, despite its name, from its very beginnings sought to portray itself as an organisation for Europeans. It defined Indos in such terms. One of the organisation's founders was Karel Zaalberg, and as such it was an ideological successor to the ideals espoused by the earlier Indisch Bond.<sup>102</sup> Accordingly, it affixed the fate of Indos to permanent European, or Indisch, society. The strong affinity of its leadership to European status meant that they were reluctant to identify the organisation solely with Indos. According to a report from the first meeting of the IEV, its founders struggled to define who was an Indo, and therefore who was eligible to join: "Lengthy discussions took place. The result: nothing – as indeed was to be expected, because moving such a loose concept as 'Indo' to a decent definition demands a meeting with no opposition. In other words, it is impossible."<sup>103</sup> In theory, the IEV remained open to all Europeans, though in practice its non-Indo members tended to be only those Europeans married to Indos. At its first public meeting in Batavia on 13 July 1919, the IEV declared that the organisation considered Indos to be all persons living in the Netherlands Indies with

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<sup>101</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, pp. 332-33.

<sup>102</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, pp. 308-09; Ulbe Bosma, *Karel Zaalberg: Journalist en Strijder voor de Indo*, Leiden, KITLV, 1997, p. 3.

<sup>103</sup> Koks, *De Indo*, p. 130.

European or mixed European ancestry – a definition that some members who were eager to exclude *totok* Dutch did not agree with.<sup>104</sup> The IEV, according to this definition, was open to Indos of native status, but it sought to raise their status to that of Europeans. The organisation remained politically loyal to the Netherlands. Its leaders were steadfastly determined not to oppose the status quo of legal status and colonial rule, because both seemed to indirectly guarantee that the social position of Indos above the indigenous population would be maintained – so long as they held European status.

After the National Indisch Party was banned in 1923, the IEV grew rapidly, from 5000 members in 1920 to 13,200 members by 1931. Including the families of its members, it could have represented between twenty and twenty-five per cent of the European population of the Indies; certainly its leaders considered the organisation the mouthpiece of even those who could not afford its membership fees.<sup>105</sup> Socially, it increased opportunities for Indos to improve their circumstances, particularly during the Great Depression years of the 1930s. It opened technical schools in Bandung and Surabaya and provided scholarships for Indos to undertake study at universities in both Indonesia and the Netherlands.<sup>106</sup> However, the leadership remained in the hands of elite and well-educated Indos of European status.

The IEV was the largest of the European parties in the Volksraad, and generally sided with conservative parties.<sup>107</sup> In one instance that brought its conservative stance to the fore, after a group of theosophists and progressive Javanese regents commenced a movement for autonomy for the Indies, Douwes Dekker, Soewardi Soerjaningrat and Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, as leaders of the Nationaal Indisch Party, declared their support for the movement along with almost every other Indonesian organisation. The IEV, however, refused to declare its support. The organisation also refused to agree to later, similar proposals. In 1927, the IEV sent a commission of two of the IEV's General Committee members to visit branches to ask for their members' opinion towards the proposed measure of an Indonesian majority in the Volksraad, and to try to convince the membership to vote in favour of it. Needless to say, most Indos were against the measure. The IEV delegation in the Volksraad voted en bloc against it – an

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<sup>104</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 226-28.

<sup>105</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 229-31, citing *Onze Stem*, 16 November 1920.

<sup>106</sup> S. Padmodiwiryo, *Memoar Hario Kecil: Autobiografi Seorang Mahasiswa Prajurit*, ed. H. Widodo, Jakarta, Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1995, p. 696.

<sup>107</sup> In fact it held more than half the seats of the Volksraad independently and in coalition. See Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 300-01.

action that could hardly have portrayed them positively in the eyes of Indonesian representatives. Proposals originating from the IEV further blackened its name outside the European community. When a suggestion that Indos should be viewed as a separate group from both the Dutch and Indonesians was put forward at the IEV's 1941 congress, its leaders rejected the idea on the grounds that Indos were a part of the Dutch population and would remain so.<sup>108</sup> Another proposal in 1931 revisited the long-standing controversial question of whether Indos should be allowed to own land. Legally they were unable to purchase land, but in theory they could still inherit it, buy small plots in towns and cities, or use middlemen to buy property indirectly.<sup>109</sup> The Dutch government continued to champion itself as the defender of indigenous land rights by cracking down on illegal acquisitions that took place without government approval. In doing so it further distinguished between the 'indigenous' and 'non-indigenous' Indies-born populations, and set the two groups against each other.<sup>110</sup> IEV calls for the right of Indos to retain land while continuing to hold European status and its accompanying privileges – which outweighed those of native status in every way except land ownership – increased the distance between Indo and various Indonesian political ambitions.

Another contentious issue that continued to haunt the uneasy relationship between Indo and Indonesian leaders was salary levels. In 1922, a salary commission investigated the century-old problem of salary scales in the civil service. The commission of eight members, of whom two were Indo, recommended that there be three salary scales according to how much each group would need to maintain a decent standard of living. They proposed that the bottom group would consist of indigenous Indonesians, and the top group would consist of trained personnel imported from the Netherlands. The third, 'in-between' group, was intended for Indos, though not exclusive to them. This particular proposal met with fierce opposition from Indonesian delegates in the Volksraad. One Indonesian nationalist, Soeroso, called for a division of only two groups: those who were born in Indonesia and those who were foreign, and called for Indos to join with Indonesians. His calls were echoed by other Indonesians. However, IEV Chairman Dick de Hoog defended the original proposal on the grounds of

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<sup>108</sup> Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, p. 171; Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 239-240.

<sup>109</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 279.

<sup>110</sup> Tony Reid argues a similar point, that the Dutch set the Chinese and Javanese against each other through the reforms of the Ethical Policy. See Anthony Reid, "'Outsider Status" and Economic Success in Suharto's Indonesia', in Michael Godley and Grayson Lloyd (eds), *Perspectives on the Chinese Indonesians*, Adelaide, Crawford House Publishing, 2001, pp. 67-82.

economic differences. He said that an acceptable standard of living for Indonesians was not acceptable for Indos, and suggested that while Indonesians could go without shoes, Indos could not. Therefore, they would need a higher salary to support what the Indo community considered to be a proper and decent living standard.<sup>111</sup> The commission's recommendations were implemented, and in 1926 the *Besluit Burgerlijke Landsdienaren* (Decree on Civil Officials) made this distinction between three salary levels legal. In spite of discussions of 'living standards', the racial undertones of previous systems were carried over into the new system. When most positions in a certain rank were filled by staff of native status, it was declared 'Indianised', or assigned the lowest of the three salary levels.<sup>112</sup> The result was many Indos were still forced to accept the same level of pay as their Indonesian colleagues if they worked in a section consisting of mostly native employees. This system remained in place until 1934.

Related to this point of contention was the issue of paid leave to the Netherlands. The IEV continued to fight against proposals to change eligibility for civil servants to take leave in the Netherlands. These proposals suggested raising the minimum monthly salary required to be eligible for leave, which would have hurt Indos the most because of their lower salaries. The Indonesian press was quick to point out that Indos were keen to acquire the right to obtain land like indigenous Indonesians, yet still wanted to retain the right to go to the Netherlands.<sup>113</sup>

A further point of controversy surrounding the IEV was its alliance with conservative and fascist European parties in the Volksraad over the issue of settler colonies, which it viewed as a possible resolution to the ongoing problem of land ownership. In 1924, the IEV Congress had decided to investigate the possibility of establishing agricultural colonies in Sumatra to provide alternative sources of employment for poor Indos. The Indonesian organisation Boedi Oetomo was strongly against the proposal. It produced material opposing Indo land ownership and urged other nationalist organisations to take a stand as well.<sup>114</sup> The Indies government, however, supported the scheme, and a colony was established in South Sumatra. Despite considerable investment from the IEV, the colony was unsuccessful, as most settlers had little or no knowledge of agriculture. In

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<sup>111</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 252-53.

<sup>112</sup> Cees Fasseur, *De Weg naar Het Paradijs en Andere Indische Geschiedenissen*, Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 1995, pp. 154-156.

<sup>113</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 361-362.

<sup>114</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 284.

1931 the IEV turned to New Guinea as another possible agricultural colony. It mainly cooperated on this issue with the Politiek Economische Bond (Political Economic Association), which was renowned for being the least supportive of the Ethical Policy and most conservative of the European parties.<sup>115</sup> The fascist Dutch National Socialist Movement (Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging in Nederland, NSB), which featured Indos in leadership positions, supported the right of Indos to own land and to establish colonies in Dutch New Guinea. The issue of their Indonesian heritage and how this might contradict the notion of ‘Aryan purity’ was brushed aside. Instead of being called Indos, they were instead referred to as Indische Nederlanders (Indies Dutch).<sup>116</sup>

After tension arose in the Dutch community over the Ethical Policy reforms, which meant that Europeans no longer automatically held senior positions above natives, and Indonesians could become heads of certain departments of the civil service, conservative elements of the *totok* Dutch community founded the Vaderlandse Club in 1929 to argue for preserving colonial rule. Only Dutch citizens could join the Club. In 1930, around 30% of upper- and middle-class Dutch men were members. Among them were some Indos, who joined the initial influx before membership significantly declined in the following years.<sup>117</sup> Both the IEV and the Vaderlandse Club lauded the arrests of senior nationalists Sukarno and Mohammed Hatta in 1933. The Vaderlandse Club’s support for the right for Indos to own land, and for Indo and *totok* Dutch agricultural colonies to be established in Dutch New Guinea in the 1930s, together with support from the Dutch National Socialist Movement, ultimately tainted the IEV’s reputation in the eyes of Indonesian political organisations.<sup>118</sup>

Yet opinions about Indos among Indonesian nationalists were by no means all negative. A small number of moderate nationalists attempted to promote broad definitions of who were included in the definition of the relatively new term of ‘Indonesian’. One moderate, Sutardjo Kartohadikusumo, suggested in 1936 that:

the citizenship of an autonomous Indonesia is exercised by Indonesians, that is... those who wish to acknowledge Indonesia as their fatherland. In other words,

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<sup>115</sup> P.J. Drooglever, ‘Barsten in het Blanke Front. De Vaderlandsche Club en het Indo-Europeesch Verbond’, in Wim Willems (ed.), *Sporen van een Indisch Verleden (1600-1942)*, Leiden, Centrum voor Onderzoek van Maatschappelijke Tegenstellingen, Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen, Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden, 1992, p. 101.

<sup>116</sup> Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly*, pp. 545-46.

<sup>117</sup> Drooglever, ‘Barsten in het Blanke Front’, pp. 102-04.

<sup>118</sup> Drooglever, ‘Barsten in het Blanke Front’, p. 106; Stoler, ‘Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers’, p. 43. For a full discussion of the Vaderlandse Club, see P.J. Drooglever, *De Vaderlandse Club 1929-1942: Totoks en de Indische Politiek*, Franeker, Wever, 1980.

Indonesians in the narrow sense, Indo-Europeans, Indo-Chinese, Indo-Arabs, the Dutch and others who make their home here.<sup>119</sup>

Yet even the most moderate of nationalists expressed their doubt that the contemporary generation of Indos as represented in the IEV could find a place in an independent Indonesia. Sutan Sjahrir wrote while in exile in the Moluccas in 1937 that:

the place occupied by the Indo in this society is changed.... The long-used process of transforming our society at first brought Indos into a privileged position, but the same process is now working to remove those privileges. Their privileged position has thus lost all support in society, and so that must also disappear. However, only a very few Indos see this.... they are pressured from two sides. It is sad but true that as a result they are all psychologically a little distorted.<sup>120</sup>

Other Indonesian nationalists defined 'Indonesian' along racial lines, drawing on Dutch-incited distinctions between indigenous and non-indigenous Indonesians – the latter usually meaning Chinese Indonesians and Indos – to define who could enter their political organisations. Mohammed Hatta in 1926 declared that “we understand the word Indonesians in its purest sense, thus only the original inhabitants of Indonesia who are now designated by the rulers by the term ‘Natives’. We cannot possibly count Indos as our compatriots. As such they cannot enter Perhimpunan Indonesia.”<sup>121</sup> When moderate nationalist leader Mohammad Husni Thamrin, himself of English descent, was charged with presenting a working paper to the Partai Indonesia Raya (Parindra)’s 1938 congress on whether membership of the party should be opened up to non-Indonesians, he was not in favour of allowing Indos to join. Because of their European status, he opined, they had special rights compared with Indonesians and so might be regarded more highly by Indonesian members. He further argued that Indo leaders did not show evidence of truly wanting to become Indonesian.<sup>122</sup> The Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) under the chairmanship of Sukarno, which was founded in 1927 as a fusion of three organisations, including Boedi Oetomo, declared that its membership would consist of people of the ‘Indonesian race’. Before the PNI was established, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, a member of its founding committee, had suggested that Indos should be allowed to become part of the party’s central leadership. After his proposal

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<sup>119</sup> Soetardjo, VH, 28 September 1936, p. 1665, cited by R.E. Elson, *The Idea of Indonesia: a History*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 63.

<sup>120</sup> Sjahrizad [Sjahrir], *Indonesische Overpeinzingen*, p. 138 [excerpt dated 18 Feb. 1937]; also cited by Roger Wiseman, ‘Assimilation Out: Europeans, Indo-Europeans and Indonesians Seen through Sugar from the 1880s to the 1950s’, paper presented to the ASAA 2000 Conference, University of Melbourne, 3-5 July 2000.

<sup>121</sup> Elson, *The Idea of Indonesia*, p. 78.

<sup>122</sup> Leo Suryadinata, *Etnis Tionghoa dan Nasionalisme Indonesia: Sebuah Bunga Rampai, 1965-2008*, Jakarta, Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2010, pp. 139-140

was rejected, he refused to join the party, even though he himself was not Indo (though his wife was).<sup>123</sup> In spite of their positions, it should be noted that both Thamrin and Sukarno maintained a close friendship with Douwes Dekker.<sup>124</sup>

One notable exception to the IEV's unofficial policy of support for the Netherlands is worthy of comment here. After Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo, chair of the association for Indonesian civil servants, introduced a proposal – the so-called Soetardjo Petition – to the Volksraad in 1936 to hold a conference to discuss (gradual) Indies autonomy from the Netherlands, IEV Chairman Dick de Hoog chose to support the Petition. His reasoning was that all decisions regarding the Indies should be made in the Indies and not in the Netherlands, as they currently were.<sup>125</sup> The seven members of the IEV delegation voted in support of the petition and it passed 26-20. However, the Dutch government formally rejected the petition in 1938. To a great extent, this decision by the IEV to support the petition – and other similar decisions that also opposed decisions being made in the Netherlands regarding the Indies – was guided more by opposition to the *totok* Dutch, rather than the desire to support Indonesian calls for autonomy and independence.<sup>126</sup>

## Conclusion

By the late 1930s, the IEV and the majority of the Indo community had become much more conservative in orientation than two decades earlier. Their loyalty to a system that favoured them above indigenous Indonesians, in spite of occasional exceptions like support for the Soetardjo Petition, alienated most Indos from the broader Indonesian population. Shared experiences with Indonesians of inferior status vis-à-vis *totok* Dutch did not lead to shared aspirations to overthrow the Dutch colonial regime. The colonial system created and perpetuated legal privilege for European-status Indos that the mainstream of Indonesian nationalism proposed to remove. Years of privilege extended to Indos in education and employment reinforced the idea for some that they were superior on account of their European ancestry and deserved these privileges, while others sought to improve their social circumstances through the only means they knew how. Further, as lower-level colonial administrators in the civil service and law enforcers in the Indies, Indos were inextricably linked to the colonial system and Dutch

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<sup>123</sup> Suryadinata, *Etnis Tionghoa dan Nasionalisme Indonesia*, pp. 129-30.

<sup>124</sup> Bosma and Raben, *Being "Dutch" in the Indies*, p. 342.

<sup>125</sup> Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly*, p. 547.

<sup>126</sup> See Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 265-66 for examples.

rule in the Indies. Their own public identifications as Europeans in response to calls from nationalist organisations to unite with Indonesians increased their social and ideological distance from most Indonesians. Internal pressures within the Indo community to only marry Europeans or, rarely, Indonesians who had obtained equated European status, only further increased the Dutch-incited divide between indigenous and non-indigenous inhabitants of late colonial Indies society.

On 23 August 1940, the government representative for General Affairs in the Volksraad, H.J. Levelt, announced that the government intended to begin to use the term 'Indonesian' rather than native in official reports and announcements.<sup>127</sup> In official government discourse, the word 'Indonesian' came to mean those of native status, a practice that reflected growing wider public usage encouraged by nationalist leaders. By this time, Indonesian nationalism was more closely linked not with Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo's concept of *boemipoetra* that encompassed all persons born in the Indies, but rather with *pribumi* – a word that reinforced Dutch legal distinctions based on the concept of indigeneity, or groups 'native' to the archipelago in contrast to groups of foreign descent. Hence, the dominant form of nationalism that emerged in Indonesia, unlike in the Philippines, never featured creole-mestizo conceptualisations of national identity at its helm. Indos with European status overwhelmingly supported the colonial system and were concerned with maintaining their rights and status as a distinct, privileged group. Levelt's decree was not significant in itself. It merely normalised existing definitions that had developed from the early 1920s. The exclusion of Indos from the Indonesian nationalist movements was acceptable for most members of the Indo community. As long as the Dutch colonial system continued, they were in a position in which they could try to improve their social circumstances, and manoeuvre for future leadership of an Indies in which both Dutch and local connections would be beneficial. The invasion of the Japanese in 1942, however, completely erased this system, and Indos found themselves pressured to completely reconsider their place in a radically different society in which European status and descent was no longer beneficial.

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<sup>127</sup> Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly*, p. 266.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION, GENOCIDE AND MASS EXODUS, 1942-57

The Japanese Occupation interrupted the lives of all the inhabitants of the Indies, not just Indos. But the policies of the Japanese military administration on Java brought this group to the attention of Indonesians to a much greater extent than before. The results of the Occupation were far-reaching not only for the Indonesian independence movement, but also because they set in train the events that led to the departure of most Indos from Java in the 1940s and 1950s. This chapter outlines how these events led to the final mass exodus of Dutch citizens in 1957. I focus especially on the 1940s in Java, because it was the events of this period that convinced the majority of Indos that they had to leave Indonesia. I argue that the killings of the so-called Bersiap period (1945-47) following Japanese surrender, in which Indos among other groups were targeted by young Indonesian independence fighters, should be viewed as a loosely coordinated genocide with remarkably similar features across Java. The different experiences of Indos in Minahasa, who did not depart on the same scale as Indos on Java, are outlined in Chapter Five.

After the German invasion of the Netherlands in May 1940, the Netherlands Indies government began to arrest suspected suspected Nazi supporters. Billy Janz, an Indo man living in Bandung, recalled that his Dutch father, a member of the NSB like a number of Dutch and Indos, was arrested and interned in Ngawi. He was eventually sent to a concentration camp in Suriname, and never returned to Indonesia. The Indies government began to arrest suspected Japanese collaborators after Japan became an ally of Germany in the Tripartite Act in September 1940. In June 1940, Japan had proclaimed a 'communal prosperity sphere' for Asia. The Japanese subsequently commenced a propaganda campaign targeting Indonesian nationalists, aware of the potential for natural resources in the Indies, particularly in the context of a US-imposed oil embargo in 1941 supported by the Indies government. Radio broadcasts and Japanese living in the Indies spread the word that Japan would liberate the Indies from Dutch rule. The Japanese indirectly financed at least one daily newspaper in Malay to

spread propaganda.<sup>1</sup> Among those arrested for subversive activities was Ernest Douwes Dekker, who began to work with the Japanese Chamber of Commerce in Batavia in September 1940. His exact role is unclear, though no concrete evidence suggests that he was collaborating with the Japanese. He was subsequently sent to the camp for NSB sympathisers in Ngawi.<sup>2</sup> From there he was shipped to Suriname, and did not return to Indonesia until 1947.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the Indies government prepared for an imminent Japanese invasion. Japanese forces landed in Manado and Tarakan, Borneo on 11 January 1942, and Java on 28 February. Ten days later, facing a humiliating defeat, the Indies government surrendered. The 25<sup>th</sup> Army administered Sumatra, the 16<sup>th</sup> Army administered Java and Madura, and eastern Indonesia came under the control of the Navy. Policies regarding *totok* Europeans and Indos were different in each area. On Java, the sheer size of the European community prevented mass internment of Indos. A further factor ensuring that most Indos stayed outside camps was the limited number of trained technical staff among the Indonesian populace who could initially replace Indo internees.<sup>3</sup> All *totok* Europeans, excluding Germans and Hungarians, were interned, along with a small number of Indos. Europeans were required to register, and internment took place gradually throughout 1942, beginning with men. Japanese policy towards Europeans initially targeted those they considered the greatest threat – that is, *totok* European men and former KNIL members. In June 1942 the military administration commenced the large-scale internment of civilian men, followed by women and children.

### **Internment in Java**

Internment policies became more comprehensive over time, as part of a broader push to remove Dutch influence in the Indies, particularly as the administration began to define more clearly who was European and who was not. In total, about 100,000 Europeans and Indos were interned on Java, of whom about one in six died in camps, on the

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<sup>1</sup> Netherlands Information Bureau, *Ten Years of Japanese Burrowing in the Netherlands East Indies: Official Report of the Netherlands East Indies Government on Japanese Subversive Activities in the Archipelago during the Last Decade*, New York, Netherlands Information Bureau, 1942?, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Paul W. van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly: Dutch Colonialism and the Spirit of E.F.E. Douwes Dekker*, Leiden, KITLV Press, 2006, pp. 571-5.

<sup>3</sup> D. van Velden, *De Japanse Interneringskampen voor Burgers gedurende de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, Groningen, Wolters, 1963, p. 441.

Thailand-Burma and other railways, and at sea.<sup>4</sup> Prisoners were registered according to whether they were Dutch, Indo or Indonesian.<sup>5</sup> In some camps, Indos and Dutch were put in different areas, and sometimes even sent to different camps – a reflection of the ambiguity of the way the administration approached Indos. The Japanese were strategic about where they interned men they considered a threat should the Allied forces invade via sea. These prisoners were generally sent to camps in the hinterland, while men who they considered were no threat like the elderly and the sick were sent to camps on Java's north coast.<sup>6</sup> Most KNIL POWs were eventually sent elsewhere in the Indies, to Singapore, the Thailand-Burma Railway and Japan to work in mines, airfields, factories and docks, from October 1942.<sup>7</sup> Among the POWs were many Dutch men who left behind Indonesian and Indo wives and children, like Joseph Moors. Joseph was captured when his son, Hendricus, was less than a year old. He later died in a camp in Japan. Dienne Voges also recalled that her Dutch father Karel was captured by the Japanese and sent to work on the Thailand-Burma Railway, but that her German mother, Charlotte, was never interned.

Few Indos except for members of the KNIL were interned to begin with until the administration began to implement registrations. Those who could prove Indonesian ancestry stayed outside the camps in some areas. More and more were interned after the Japanese administration began to tighten restrictions on who had 'sufficient' Indonesian ancestry to remain outside camps. In some areas Indos later were divided into eight different groups depending on the percentage of their Indonesian ancestry among their parents and grandparents. In other parts of Java Indos were interned from the first registration, along with Indonesian women married to Dutch men.<sup>8</sup> Some families who had denied Indonesian ancestry before the war produced documents from the Landsarchief (Dutch Government Archives) to ensure they remained free, though the Landsarchief was closed in early 1943, probably because of Japanese suspicion that it was producing false records.<sup>9</sup> The military administration established an Office of Indo-European Affairs in Batavia in January 1943. This office was renamed in August 1943, to the Kantor Oeroesan Peranakan (Office for People of Mixed Descent, KOP). P.F.

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<sup>4</sup> L. de Jong, *The Collapse of a Colonial Society: the Dutch in Indonesia during the Second World War*, Leiden, KITLV Press, 2002, pp. 421-2.

<sup>5</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 333-4.

<sup>6</sup> De Jong, *The Collapse of a Colonial Society*, p. 431.

<sup>7</sup> E. Touwen-Bouwisma, 'Japanese Minority Policy: The Eurasians on Java and the Dilemma of Ethnic Loyalty', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 152, no. 4, 1996, p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Van Velden, *De Japanse Interneringskampen*, p. 442.

<sup>9</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 335.

Dahler, an Indo who had been involved in the Indisch Party, was appointed the KOP's spokesperson and the head of its policy division. The KOP provided records of registrations to the Kempeitei (Japanese military police who worked to counter subversion) and Politiek Inlightingen Dienst (formerly the political police in the Indies) upon request. Dahler was able to use his position to help a number of Indo women who were to be interned by declaring that they were indeed of mixed descent.<sup>10</sup>

### **Japanese military policies on Indos**

The military administration's uncertainty in how it should treat Indos is reflected in the way it targeted them as a group in announcements in the press and radio broadcasts.<sup>11</sup> The early hope that Indos would assimilate to Indonesian society, overshadowed by Japanese suspicion that they were loyal to the Dutch, is evident in a special announcement made to Indos on 12 January 1943:

The Eurasians residing in Java... have been of primary administrative concern to the Army.... Now it is a grim fact that under the former government... they received discriminatory social and economic treatment from the Dutch; in addition, they were frowned upon by the natives.... Since the attack on Java, the Army has... adopted a wait-and-see attitude... in hopes that they would appreciate the realities of Greater East Asia.... However, it is extremely regrettable that there are some Eurasians who have... engaged in agitating and manipulating hostile elements, given free play to false rumours, and even dared to attempt anti-Japanese machinations.... Should the Eurasians readily understand the actual situation and sincerely cooperate with the Army, they will be liberally treated in line with the natives; on the other hand, should they lack self-discipline and self-control and engage in insubordinate acts... they will be dealt with by measures utilized against enemy nationals without the least hesitation.<sup>12</sup>

The administration's concern that Indos outside the camps would provide support to an Allied invasion grew over the coming months, as expectations that Indos would align themselves with the ideals of a greater Asia did not eventuate. It issued a warning to Indos on 27 September 1943:

They [Indos] carry out acts of a hostile nature, like espionage in the name of the enemy... or they work together to design secret plans to restore the previous rule again.... The government asks of the Indo group, who are hereby given the opportunity to join with the inhabitants of Java, the following: they must renounce their racial arrogance and their feelings of attachment to the Dutch government.

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<sup>10</sup> De Jong, *The Collapse of a Colonial Society*, p. 518.

<sup>11</sup> Van Velden, *De Japanse Interneringskampen*, p. 444.

<sup>12</sup> 'Announcement to Eurasians', January 12, 1943, in Harry J. Benda, James K. Irikura and Kōichi Kishi (eds), *Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia: Selected Documents*, Translation Series No. 6, New Haven, Yale University, 1965, p. 72.

The government... expects that the Indos will understand completely that they are Asians under the Greater East Asian nations.<sup>13</sup>

Across Java, Indos were subject to regular identity card checks, often by Indonesians working for the Japanese authorities. Though the administration attempted to convince Indos to join Japanese-established organisations for Indonesians, their attempts were largely unsuccessful. Rumours spread of Indo hatred towards the Japanese. One Japanese military report from Bandung demonstrated growing Japanese paranoia towards this particular group. The report's author wrote that Indos referred to the Japanese as 'monkeys' and that when the house of an Indo family was searched, it was discovered that a Japanese flag was used as toilet paper.<sup>14</sup>

The Japanese administration began to train Indonesians to replace Europeans sent to camps, but increasing suspicion of Indos meant that their positions in clerical and professional work were not safe either. Indo journalists who wrote in Dutch lost their jobs after a ban on Dutch, and this ban affected Dutch-educated Indos, many of whom were unable to speak Indonesian, in other professions as well.<sup>15</sup> More and more Indos also were dismissed from the civil service and European businesses, which were mostly closed in any case.<sup>16</sup> The Japanese administration reduced the salaries of those who remained employed, while prices inflated after the Allies destroyed Japanese shipping, which led to a halt on imports and goods shortages and made conditions difficult for everyone.

### **Life outside camps**

Economic conditions for the inhabitants of the Indies steadily worsened over the course of the Occupation. Basic necessities like clothing and utensils became scarce as resources were diverted into the broader war effort and to counter Allied submarine operations in the South China Sea. Compared with 1938, food prices had inflated by 729% by November 1944.<sup>17</sup> Indo families, particularly those who had lost a Dutch or Indo father, were forced to sell their possessions to survive with the internment of European men, job losses and inflation. Willem Flach described in his published memoirs how, after his father was captured by the Japanese and put in a camp, the

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<sup>13</sup> 'Peringatan kepada Orang Peranakan', 27 September 1943, in I.J. Brugmans (ed.), *Nederlandsch Indie onder Japanse Bezetting: Gegevens en Documenten over de Jaar 1942-1945*, Franeker, Wever, 1960, pp. 455-47.

<sup>14</sup> See De Jong, *The Collapse of a Colonial Society*, p. 513.

<sup>15</sup> Kanahale, *The Japanese Occupation of Indonesia*, p. 44.

<sup>16</sup> Daruch, *De Nationalistische Beweging*, p. 66.

<sup>17</sup> De Jong, *The Collapse of a Colonial Society*, p. 525.

family – five children and his mother – was forced to move to smaller and smaller homes. The children managed to earn extra money by selling eggs and knitted items and delivering margarine.<sup>18</sup> Other young Indo men became involved in illegal trade. Some women chose to become ‘barmaids’ and ‘waitresses’ to escape internment, starvation and illness, like the German mother of one woman, who, her daughter reported, became ‘friends’ with a Japanese officer who protected them.<sup>19</sup> An unknown but probably small number of women were forced to become ‘comfort women’ from mid-1943.<sup>20</sup> Others chose to become concubines of Japanese soldiers and officers to avoid or escape forced prostitution.<sup>21</sup> Charities and private initiatives established by wealthy businessmen supported Indo families – as many as 80% of those living in Batavia at one stage. These private initiatives were placed under the control of the KOP in November 1943, which increasingly tightened the definitions under which Indos were eligible for assistance.<sup>22</sup> Those who refused to confirm that they had renounced the Dutch government and that they felt Asian were ineligible for assistance. Those who did were offered low paid-work: in the case of women, knitting socks for Japanese soldiers and spinning thread, and for men, jobs in factories and workshops.

### **Indos forced to declare their loyalties**

In 1944, Indo Committees were established under the auspices of the KOP in major cities across Java to control financial assistance and the movements and registrations of Indos. Dahler addressed a gathering of Indos in Batavia in early May exhort them to work with the Japanese. About twenty per cent of young Indo men in Batavia answered yes to both of the questions of whether they had renounced their loyalty to the Dutch and felt themselves to be Asian.<sup>23</sup> At another series of gatherings in September 1944, called to address young Indo men aged 16-23, the new leadership of the KOP continued to demand that they answer ‘yes’ to the questions. Those who did declare their support

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<sup>18</sup> See Willem Flach, *Never a Dull Moment: The Memoirs of Willem Flach*, Sippy Downs, Queensland, Maju Publications, 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Even so, most Germans escaped internment during the Occupation.

<sup>20</sup> Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, ‘Gedwongen Prostitutie van Nederlandse Vrouwen in Voormalig IMederlands-Indië’, no. 23 607, 1993-1994, available from <[http://resourcessgd.kb.nl/SGD/19931994/PDF/SGD\\_19931994\\_0006526.pdf](http://resourcessgd.kb.nl/SGD/19931994/PDF/SGD_19931994_0006526.pdf)>, accessed 22 February 2016.

<sup>21</sup> Daruch, *De Nationalistische Beweging*, p. 67; Bart van Poelgeest, *Report of a Study of Dutch Government Documents on the Forced Prostitution of Dutch Women in the Dutch East Indies during the Japanese Occupation*, unofficial translation, 24 January, 1994, available from <http://www.awf.or.jp/pdf/0205.pdf>, accessed 30 October 2015. See Jan Ruff-O’Hearne, *50 Years of Silence*, Sydney, Editions Tom Thompson, 1994 for one account of a so-called ‘comfort woman’ of Dutch-Indonesian background.

<sup>22</sup> De Jong, *The Collapse of a Colonial Society*, pp. 527-8.

<sup>23</sup> De Jong, *The Collapse of a Colonial Society*, p. 520.

for the Japanese were sometimes harassed by other young Indos on the streets. In the third of these gatherings, on 15 September, a number of disturbances broke out in the KOP compound. Several Japanese and Indonesian flags<sup>24</sup> were torn from the front of the KOP building. At a subsequent meeting for young men of various backgrounds on 10 October, organised by Djawa Hokokai (Java Service Organisation), an organisation formed by the Japanese to facilitate mobilisation against an imminent Allied invasion, Indonesian youths accused Indo youths of insulting the Indonesian flag and, by extension, the Indonesian people. The young Indo men present refused to apologise, and no solution was reached.<sup>25</sup> This episode marked the beginning of open clashes between young Indo and Indonesian men.

The Japanese authorities began to arrest Indo youths from September 1944 in Batavia, expanding across Java in mass arrests from January 1945. Young Indo men were dismissed from their jobs. Although the Japanese announced that these arrests and subsequent interments were because Indo youths had refused to cooperate, they probably were because the Japanese expected an Allied invasion and were concerned that young Indo men who remained outside internment camps would work with Allied forces.<sup>26</sup> Tension between Indos and Indonesians also grew as expectations arose that an Allied attack was imminent, which would mean a return of the Dutch. According to the diary entry on 24 October 1944 of a Dutch journalist who remained in hiding for the Occupation in Bandung,

The Japanese set the Indonesians against the Indo-Europeans. The Seinendan, a youth organisation, is therefore used as a tool. Seinendan leaders have been instructed to spread the rumour in the villages that the Indo-European community is preparing an action against the Indonesians and Indonesians should therefore be on their guard. Of course this is ridiculous. How can those few tens of thousands of Indo-Europeans who are still free – mostly single women – take action against millions of Indonesians who, moreover, are largely armed by the Japanese? In doing so the Japanese are sowing the seeds for massacres on a large scale, which will take place once the Japanese are forced to withdraw or otherwise defeated. Now I suddenly understand what has caused the verbal abuse of Indonesian street youth against Europeans passing by, which several people have noticed in recent weeks. Now I understand why so many Indonesian boys walk around with knuckle-dusters, bludgeons, bike chains, batons etc. and at every opportunity try to provoke brawls with young Indo-European men.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> By this time the Japanese allowed the Indonesian flag to be flown, after they began to promise from September 1944 that Indonesia would be granted independence in the near future.

<sup>25</sup> De Jong, *The Collapse of a Colonial Society*, p. 521.

<sup>26</sup> Touwen-Bouwsma, 'Japanese Minority Policy', p. 45.

<sup>27</sup> Jan Bouwer, *Het Vermoorde Land*, Franeker, Van Wijnen, 1988, p. 297.

However, one notable exception to this tension was the inclusion of Dahler as a member of the Committee for the Study of Preparations for Independence, established by the Japanese in May 1945.

By the final months of the Occupation, there was no room for identity politics in Indonesia. Indos were forced to choose between being Indonesian and being Dutch, and the public consequence of this decision was that if they chose to throw their support behind the Allies, they could be perceived as loyal to returning colonial forces. Japanese anti-Dutch initiatives and propaganda attempted to remove all Dutch influences in Indonesia, which made life very difficult for those who in pre-war society had aligned themselves to the Dutch. The idea that the Japanese had set the population against Europeans was common among Dutch citizens both during and after the war. As Japan increasingly lost ground in the War, the Japanese threw more public support behind the Indonesian independence movement through very public preparations. These preparations led to the formulation of a constitution that explicitly excluded Indos from being eligible to run for president of a future independent Indonesia. On 15 August 1945, Japan was forced to surrender to the Allies. Two days later, Sukarno and Hatta declared Indonesia's independence. Public Indo support for the return of the Dutch, compared to the support of Indonesian youth for this declaration, inevitably meant that some sort of conflict was imminent, and the predictions of the Dutch journalist mentioned above, particularly in his emphasis on armed youth (*pemuda*), were uncannily accurate.

### **The rise of youth organisations**

The Japanese administration initially established youth organisations, among them the *Seinendan* mentioned above, to mobilise unemployed young men, and gave them limited military training. They were taught the defensive use of bamboo spears after mid-1944.<sup>28</sup> As the threat of an Allied invasion in 1944 and 1945 became more and more likely, the Japanese looked at the possibility of mobilising youth corps to defend Java. They had established PETA (*Pembela Tanah Air, Defenders of the Homeland*) in October 1943 for this purpose. Many company and platoon commanders and members of the general ranks in PETA were *pemuda*. Unlike *Seinendan*, PETA troops were given

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<sup>28</sup> William H. Frederick, *Visions and Heat: The Making of the Indonesian Revolution*, Athens, Ohio University Press, 1989, pp. 155-6.

extensive military training.<sup>29</sup> The political organisation Djawa Hokokai had its own youth section, the Barisan Pelopor (Pioneer Corps). The Barisan Pelopor largely consisted of urban youth who engaged in paramilitary training in bamboo spears and attended speeches by Sukarno and other nationalist leaders.<sup>30</sup>

In Jakarta, young Indonesian men involved in these organisations were aware of the slow pace of Indonesian nationalism under older leaders and the dependence of the nationalist movement on the Japanese. Pemuda leaders already mobilised in war-time organisations viewed the imminent Allied invasion and support for it from groups like Indos with alarm. The term ‘pemuda’ in pre-war society meant privileged, educated, urban youth – often students of Dutch vocational training schools and universities. However, Japanese policies and organisations targeted young men of all backgrounds, and trained them in the basic use of weapons. The result was a revised understanding of who and what comprised ‘pemuda’. Armed members of these groups began to frighten local populations, not just Indos, by gathering at train stations and markets, and they became linked to arbitrary arrests, extortion and rape.<sup>31</sup>

After surrendering, Japanese troops stayed on Java in response to Allied orders to maintain law and order before the arrival of British troops. Pemuda groups led unofficial and largely uncoordinated popular uprisings against the Japanese who remained behind. Lord Mountbatten, Supreme Allied Commander South East Asia, ordered internees to stay in camps guarded by the Japanese and, later, Republican troops, until the arrival of Allied troops. This order was spread via pamphlets dropped and circulated from 29 to 31 August, to try to stop the steady flow from late August of internees returning home.<sup>32</sup> Former internees often found that their property had been taken over by Indonesians during the occupation.<sup>33</sup> Many largely ignored the Indonesian authorities who had replaced Japanese officials deposed or killed by pemuda groups.

On 22 August 1945, thousands of Indonesian villagers spilled out onto the streets of Surabaya carrying Indonesian flags. Among them, mobs armed with clubs, knives and bamboo spears demanded weapons from the Japanese. Armed pemuda targeted and

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<sup>29</sup> Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944-46*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1972, pp. 20-21.

<sup>30</sup> Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>31</sup> Jean Gelman Taylor, *Indonesia: Peoples and Histories*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2003, p. 376.

<sup>32</sup> P.M.H. Groen, “Patience and Bluff”: de Bevrijding van de Nederlandse Burgergeïnterneerden op Midden-Java (Augustus-December 1945), *Mededelingen van de Sectie Militaire Geschiedenis Landmachtstaf*, deel 8, The Hague, Het Sectie, 1985, p. 99.

<sup>33</sup> Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution*, pp. 127-128.

killed Japanese soldiers.<sup>34</sup> Surabaya youth armed themselves to defend Surabaya against the British and the Netherlands Indies Civil Administration (NICA), which was created by MacArthur's South West Pacific Area command to administer the former Netherlands Indies. Young Javanese independence fighter Hario Kecik recalled in his memoir that,

Our first move was to start attacking the Japanese. The politicians were busy meeting to work out ways to form a government, but this was not the direct action we sought. The Dutch and Eurasian troops and civilians released from internment camps were now on the prowl, launching actions in many parts of the city, hoping to take back their old properties and even regain their old positions in government. We knew then we had to hurry and form a fighting corps before they had a chance to use the Allied forces to help them form a new Dutch government.<sup>35</sup>

Some Indo families openly expressed their hope that Dutch rule would return soon. The Dutch Queen's birthday was due to be celebrated on 31 August. When a small group of Indos and Europeans approached the local police in Surabaya about flying royal Dutch colours, they were told that this would not be possible, as the Indonesian flag was to be flown in honour of the Indonesian republic. Young Indo men responded by publicly ridiculing the Indonesia flag, tearing down independence posters, painting anti-Indonesian slogans on walls and trying to establish guards outside public buildings instead of relying on Indonesian authorities. Further tension arose at the end of August when the Dutch and Indos in Surabaya created their own social support group to assist those affected by the war, and received financial support from the Japanese. Indonesian pemuda interpreted this support as evidence of collusion between two former colonial powers.<sup>36</sup> Sporadic outbreaks of violence against Europeans and their perceived supporters became more common and more coordinated.

### **The beginning of the Bersiap**

Late September marked the beginning of a chaotic, lawless period stretching into at least 1947, in which pemuda groups across Java<sup>37</sup> began to target groups seen as enemies of Indonesian nationalism – Japanese, Europeans, Indos, Manadonese, Ambonese, Timorese, Chinese Indonesians and any Indonesians married to or working

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<sup>34</sup> Padmodiwiryo and Palmos, *Revolution in the City of Heroes*, p. ix.

<sup>35</sup> Padmodiwiryo and Palmos, *Revolution in the City of Heroes*, p. 28.

<sup>36</sup> Frederick, *Visions and Heat*, pp. 193-94.

<sup>37</sup> Killings also occurred in Sumatra, targeting not just Europeans but also traditional rulers. Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People: Revolution and the End of Traditional Rule in Northern Sumatra*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Singapore, NUS Press, 2014, Chapter VI; H.Th. Bussemaker, *Bersiap! Opstand in het Paradijs: De Bersiap-Periode op Java en Sumatra 1945-1956*, Zutphen, Walburg Pers, 2005, Chapter 7.

for the Dutch. Dutch observers called this period the Bersiap Period (*Bersiap*), an Indonesian term meaning ‘get ready’ that was often called out by pemuda on their arrival in areas to call fellow pemuda and the local populace to arms.<sup>38</sup> Few records from the period itself survive; most were compiled from eyewitnesses and statements resulting from interrogations in 1947 and 1948 by Dutch intelligence (NEFIS) officers, and from later memoirs and autobiographies published by both victims and perpetrators. In these accounts, perpetrators tended to separate themselves from the violence and blamed it on others. Not all victims were subjected to violence. In the areas surrounding Jakarta, local *preman* (gangsters) deposed officials. Among them was one *preman* who controlled the main road to Jakarta’s west and targeted travellers whose skin was either too light (Europeans, Indos, Chinese and possibly Manadonese) or too dark (Ambonese and Timorese). They were forced to pay a toll and shout the nationalist slogan ‘Merdeka’ (freedom).<sup>39</sup> Pemuda groups also imposed a food boycott against Europeans in many parts of Java.<sup>40</sup> Many Indos recalled that Indonesians were unwilling to sell them food, and they had to rely on former servants who smuggled food to them. But this action was risky; posters were hung deriding former Indonesian servants who continued to assist their colonial employers.<sup>41</sup>

The violence was made possible by an absence of centralised authority and weak local law-enforcement, particularly in East Java, where the pemuda overthrew the Japanese, seized arms and took over internment camps to a much greater degree than in West and Central Java. Violence carried out by pemuda across Java showed a marked similarity in how it was carried out, implying possible coordination or at the very least communication between leaders. Typically, pemuda leaders would spread propaganda in a particular area about Europeans and groups linked to NICA, through radio broadcasts and public rallies, and sometimes arm the population in preparation. This task was probably not particularly difficult because of anti-colonial propaganda spread by the Japanese and because of the fearsome reputation pemuda groups enjoyed. Pro-

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<sup>38</sup> The word ‘siap-siap’, with the same meaning, seems also to have been common. The earliest mention of the Bersiap as a period seems to date from August 1946 in newspaper accounts. ‘Moordenaars Gepaakt: De Razzia te Bandoeng’, *Het Dagblad: Uitgave van de Nederlandsche Dagbladpers te Batavia*, 30 August 1946, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Robert Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: The Jakarta People’s Militia and the Indonesian Revolution 1945-49*, Sydney, Asian Studies Association of Australia in Association with Allen & Unwin, 1991, p. 52.

<sup>40</sup> J.R.W. Smail, *Bandung in the Early Revolution, 1945-1946: A Study in the Social History of the Indonesian Revolution*, Ithaca, New York, Southeast Asia Program, Department of Asian Studies, Cornell University, 1964, p. 64; Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution*, p. 159.

<sup>41</sup> Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries*, pp. 63-66.

Republican Indonesian authorities who replaced Japanese-installed police, regents and kampung heads then arrested all Europeans in an area along with Ambonese, Manadonese – many of whom held *gelijkgesteld* status – and, sometimes, sympathetic Chinese Indonesians. In Kuningan (West Java) and Surabaya in October 1945, prisoners were forced to walk through a crowd of armed pemuda and ordinary Indonesians to reach prisons. Many were killed or severely injured in the process, usually by bamboo spears. There are at least four accounts of prisoners in local prisons in East and West Java being summarily executed or disappearing, often with the compliance – willing or otherwise – of prison wardens and police. Pemuda groups travelled through villages across Java, rounding up Europeans and suspected Dutch sympathisers, or killing families directly in their homes. Sometimes they killed only the men; sometimes women and children were killed as well. Survivors were sent to internment camps.

### **Bersiap camps**

Initially internment camps were maintained by Japanese troops and, later, nationalist troops under orders from Sukarno to maintain law and order. Allied forces were most concerned about the fate of Europeans who had remained in camps on Mountbatten's orders in late August. The British military authorities established an organisation called Recovery of Allied Prisoners of War and Internees (RAPWI) to oversee the welfare of internees and to arrange their repatriation. As a first step, this organization sent food and other aid to the internees. On 10 October, however, nationalists began to boycott aid intended for European internees.<sup>42</sup> From this point, their safety was not guaranteed, and they were joined by other prisoners. On 14 October the pemuda with the support of Indonesian police arrested suspected opponents of the Republic living outside camps in Central Java and placed them in internment camps, including about 2700 Indos, Ambonese, Manadonese, Japanese and RAPWI officials.<sup>43</sup> Eventually, beginning in November 1945 in Magelang and extending into 1946 in other parts of Java, European internees, including former prisoners of war, were evacuated to Dutch-held areas.<sup>44</sup> They were then evacuated via ship to Singapore, Thailand, Ceylon and the Netherlands.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Groen, "Patience and Bluff", p. 112.

<sup>43</sup> Groen, "Patience and Bluff", p. 114.

<sup>44</sup> Groen, "Patience and Bluff", p. 134.

<sup>45</sup> Groen, "Patience and Bluff", pp. 151-52.

Those arrested were sometimes told that they were being picked up to protect them from the fervently nationalist Indonesian masses, and some were indeed protected by Indonesian military forces. However, some internment camps were run by pemuda leaders and sympathisers. In East Java, arrests appear to have been systematic. Prisoners were searched, as were their homes. Those in possession of Dutch flags and trinkets indicating their allegiance to the Netherlands were sometimes executed immediately. Yet many who did not possess such objects were still tortured and killed, or died on their way to subsequent prisons, camps or holding cells. Perpetrators and authorities tended to blame the masses for these outbreaks of excessive violence.

### **The Bersiap in Surabaya**

The events leading up to the Bersiap in Surabaya, where the first outbreak of violence took place, are the best documented. Public rallies were held in September, though they were accompanied by little if any violence to begin with. Then, on 16 September, several Allied parachutists landed on the edge of the city and established themselves in the Yamato Hotel, formerly the Oranje Hotel. They were protected by a Japanese military guard. Worried Dutch and Indos visited them over the course of a few days. According to Hario Kecik, as a result,

The people... went on a killing spree. They set out to kill the Dutch and Eurasians on the streets or wherever they could be found parading their anti-Republican views, beating them to a pulp and stabbing them in violent attacks that went far beyond any of the previous clashes. It was a spontaneous outburst... Of course the Dutch and Eurasians hit back. When the Dutch on the streets were killed the crowds searched for more in hiding. Battered and bloodied bodies were spread around the inner city streets...<sup>46</sup>

On the morning of 19 September, the same day as the mass rally in Jakarta, small groups of Dutch and Indos, probably former internees, began to gather near the Yamato Hotel, armed with tyre irons and other weapons.<sup>47</sup> A number of them raised the Dutch flag above the hotel, witnessed by a group of pemuda and other Indonesians who had been alerted by hotel staff to their plans. One pemuda climbed up the flagpole and ripped the blue section from the flag, leaving only the red and white of the Indonesian

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<sup>46</sup> Padmodiwiryo and Palmos, *Revolution in the City of Heroes*, pp. 40-41. Hario Kecik writes that the pemuda seized arms before the flag incident. A number of other Indonesian sources confirm that this took place on 16 September, but one author has questioned the date because if pemuda did indeed have access to Japanese weapons, the flag incident would have resulted in much more violence. See Han Bing Siong, 'The Indonesian Need of Arms After the Proclamation of Independence', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 157, no. 4, 2001, p. 818.

<sup>47</sup> Frederick, *Visions and Heat*, pp. 199-200.

flag. In the commotion that ensued, W.V.Ch. Ploegman, the former head of the pre-war Surabaya branch of the IEV, was killed. Pemuda groups throughout the city began to arm themselves in preparation, largely with bamboo spears, swords and *kris* (traditional knives).

This incident marked the beginning of outbreaks of open violence between pemuda armed with bamboo spears and bands of young Indo, Dutch and Ambonese KNIL soldiers. On 21 September the pemuda of Surabaya formed a new organisation, Pemuda Republik Indonesia (PRI, Youth of the Republic of Indonesia). The youth-led movement soon spread to other cities, where pemuda similarly expelled the Japanese from state buildings and handed them over to older nationalist leaders.<sup>48</sup> Over the next few weeks, both Indonesian pemuda and young Dutch men in Surabaya continued to put up posters and paint slogans. European former internees barricaded one area of the city to protect women from pemuda groups. The arrival of a mostly Dutch group in the supposedly neutral RAPWI team inflamed pemuda leaders and convinced them that Allied forces would attempt to re-impose colonial rule on Indonesia.<sup>49</sup> The subsequent arrival of Allied forces at the end of September added a new sense of urgency to their cause. According to Hario Kecik,

We were headed into a revolution whose elements were our new political demands, economics, psychology, ethnicity and culture, all deeply rooted in our history of the last century. Former Dutch and Eurasian residents of Surabaya interned by the Japanese now hit back, some armed with Dutch military knives. They were adamant they would take their pre-war properties back from us, and from Yamato Hotel intelligence we knew they were getting moral and perhaps material support from the anti-Republican staffers of NICA who had recently arrived in Jakarta. I was providing all this intelligence to my Jakarta colleagues.<sup>50</sup>

Hario Kecik's account hints that the reason for the outbreak of violence was to 'strike the first blow' against the Dutch before they could take control of Indonesia. It emphasises that gangs of young Dutch and Indo men antagonised Indonesians and were to blame for the outbreaks of violence. Other accounts from pemuda similarly blame Indos in particular for "obstructing the pemuda in upholding independence"<sup>51</sup> and "trying to oppose mass action" supporting independence.<sup>52</sup> The pemuda leader Sutomo (Bung Tomo), whose role in the killings themselves is unclear, though he did spread

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<sup>48</sup> Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution*, p. 130.

<sup>49</sup> Frederick, *Visions and Heat*, p. 202.

<sup>50</sup> Padmodiwiryo and Palmos, *Revolution in the City of Heroes*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>51</sup> Nugroho Notosusanto (ed.), *Pertempuran Surabaya*, Jakarta, Mutiara Sumber Widya, 1985, p. 19.

<sup>52</sup> Asmadi, *Pelajar Pejuang*, Jakarta, Sinar Harapan, 1985, p. 70.

anti-Dutch propaganda via radio broadcasts, suggested in his memoir that there was a rumour circulating of a *Dood Alle Inlanders* (Kill All Natives) movement among Dutch and Indos, writing that “There were Dutch who were not happy to see independence for the Indonesian people. And those Dutch were now ready to kill Indonesian pemuda.”<sup>53</sup> Because of the prevalence of such views, some scholars have suggested that Dutch and Indos contributed to the tense environment of mid-September in the city.<sup>54</sup> Hario Kecik mentioned in passing that Dutch and Indo residents “were adamant they would take their pre-war properties back from us”. Allied forces and groups supporting the Dutch in Indonesia seemed poised to reinstate some form of colonial rule, which fostered extremism on the part of supporters of Indonesian nationalism in response. Although former internees expected that they would be able to regain their property from before the war, taking over or re-taking property was an inherently political act in the highly charged weeks following Japanese surrender, and it was interpreted as such by groups on both sides.

Few perpetrators later acknowledged their own direct role in the killings except in armed clashes with pro-Dutch groups, which might be seen as more legitimate and heroic. The scarcity of eyewitness accounts – not to mention their unreliability – made identifying perpetrators difficult, if not impossible. The general chaos of the period, as areas changed from Dutch to Republican control and vice versa, added to the difficulty of prosecuting suspected perpetrators. Only a small number of perpetrators were ever arrested and tried by the Dutch, and the Indonesian Republican government had no inclination to prosecute agents who cast themselves as heroes of the Revolution. However, the Dutch managed to prosecute and incarcerate Sabarudin, leader of the notorious Patjet internment camp in East Java. Hario Kecik, who described meeting Sabarudin briefly, noted that,

There were several Sabarudin-types guilty of foul murder during these weeks, notably those who had taken the law into their own hands and tortured and killed Dutch civilians. Some had private agendas but most were unstable characters, burning with jealousies and hatred. Others were secret members of the Communist Party, who executed foreigners or ‘enemies’ without cause.... They preferred anonymity in 1945, but in 1948 many joined a Communist coup attempt in Madiun.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Bung Tomo (Sutomo), *Pertempuran 10 November 1945: Kesaksian dan Pengalaman Seorang Aktor Sejarah*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Jakarta, Visimedia, 2008, pp. 26, 31.

<sup>54</sup> Han, ‘The Indonesian Need of Arms’, p. 818; Frederick, *Visions and Heat*, p. 224, n. 97.

<sup>55</sup> Members of one pemuda group, PESINDO (Pemuda Sosialis Indonesia, Socialist Youth of Indonesia), were indeed sympathetic to communism, but Hario Kecik’s dismissal of the worst perpetrators as

A number of perpetrators, like Sabarudin, seemed to have relished their roles as executioners and torturers. Sabarudin was accused of personally executing 172 people.<sup>56</sup> He likely ordered the execution of many more of the one thousand men, women and children imprisoned in Patjet, who were shot, stabbed, beheaded, tortured, beaten to death, buried alive, or tied to vehicles and dragged through Patjet until they died.<sup>57</sup> He also appears to have kept a 'harem' of nine Indo women at Patjet; another account mentions eleven women from Trawas selected as 'typists' and kept in a locked room, the key to which was kept by Sabarudin.<sup>58</sup> Other notorious Patjet murderers were given names by their victims like the 'Butcher of Surabaya' (Moenjadi) and the 'Black General' (Baroedin), who was reputed according to one informant to be the unacknowledged son of a European family in Sidoarjo.<sup>59</sup>

### **Killings across Java**

Absent also in Indonesian accounts of the violence, and mentioned in Dutch and Indo accounts, is the systematic massacre not just of unarmed men but also of Dutch, Indo, Manadonese and Ambonese women and children that took place especially in the second half of 1945 and first half of 1946, though some killings continued as late as 1947. Clear in accounts on both sides is that during the period there were no clear-cut boundaries between victim and perpetrator. Perpetrators often engaged in what they considered forms of pre-emptive action to either re-instate Dutch rule or hasten Republican control. That unarmed men, women, children and the elderly were also killed, however, indicates that there is some cause to consider the violence of the Bersiap, if not as political genocide, then at the very least as politically and ideologically motivated mass murder that extended beyond the bounds of revolutionary conflict. Some killings by crowds assembled by the pemuda seem to have been based on appearance, such as the killing of a Timorese policeman in Surabaya in an otherwise probably unreliable account by Sutomo, who blamed the emotional 'masses' (*rakyat*) for incorrectly assuming the policeman to be an Ambonese spy.<sup>60</sup>

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communist probably reflects the later trend to cast communists as extremists and, at times, less-than-human. Padmodiwiryo and Palmos, *Revolution in the City of Heroes*, p. 118.

<sup>56</sup> NEFIS 2039, Verklaring No. 83/X/ODO (L.Ch. Ezerman), p. 3.

<sup>57</sup> See NEFIS 2027 (complete file) for various accounts of the methods Sabarudin and others used on their victims.

<sup>58</sup> NEFIS 2027, No. 165/X/ODO (Heer Soekardjo), p. 2; NEFIS 2039, No. 83/X/ODO (L.Ch. Ezerman), p. 2.

<sup>59</sup> NEFIS 2044, No. Ri/559/Geh.

<sup>60</sup> Bung Tomo, *Pertempuran 10 November 1945*, pp. 47-49.

Killings in West Java, targeting entire families at home, also do not neatly fit into the narrative of legitimate armed conflict between soldiers. These are not as other killings because of the few surviving eye witnesses. In West and East Java, gangs and mobs incited by – if not largely comprised of – pemuda entered the homes of Europeans, Indos, Ambonese and Manadonese and slaughtered families. In Pelabuhan Ratu in West Java, eight Europeans were imprisoned and killed.<sup>61</sup> Entire families in Bogor were killed.<sup>62</sup> Such massacres, which often included Indonesian women married to Dutch men and, sometimes, adopted Indonesian children, also took place in Tumpang and surrounds in East Java.<sup>63</sup> In nearby Balapulang, eighteen Europeans were rounded up and forced to spend the night in a vacant building. The next morning they were taken to the backyard, where a platform made of bamboo with a red and white flag placed above it had been built next to the well. The victims were forced to kneel before the flag. They were beaten and stabbed to death. Two children were caught by the legs and smashed against the well, and thrown into it. They both managed to escape, though one later died. In nearby villages, a child was burned to death, and an old man was buried alive by the same perpetrators.<sup>64</sup>

### **The Simpang Club**

A significant number of Dutch language personal statements concern the killings in October and November that took place in the former Dutch Simpang Club, where the PRI established their headquarters, and at a number of other locations throughout the city of Surabaya, including Bubutan and Kalisosok prisons.<sup>65</sup> The bloodiest of these killings took place 15-17 October, after the pemuda of East Java managed to seize weapons on a much greater scale from the Japanese than elsewhere on Java.<sup>66</sup> Across the city, pemuda rounded up members of groups perceived as loyal to the Netherlands, often on the pretext that they were being taken into custody for their own protection. One Indo woman, in the only account I found that directly linked Sutomo to the violence, recalled being arrested on suspicion of owning a Dutch flag. On arrival at the Simpang Club, she and the other prisoners were separated between those to be sent to Kalisosok prison and those to be executed on the spot. Victims were of all backgrounds,

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<sup>61</sup> NEFIS2042, No. AAS/473/Geh.

<sup>62</sup> See NEFIS 2046.

<sup>63</sup> NEFIS 2053, No. Rd. 3893, 23 March 1948.

<sup>64</sup> NEFIS 2037, Onderwerp: Massamoorden te Balapuelang en Omstreken, 1 August 1947.

<sup>65</sup> William H. Frederick, 'The Killing of Dutch and Eurasians in Indonesia's National Revolution (1945-1949): A "Brief Genocide" Reconsidered', *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol. 14, nos. 3-4, 2012, pp. 362-63.

<sup>66</sup> Siong, 'The Indonesian Need of Arms', p. 822.

not just Indo and European. Her own 'guilt' was undetermined, and so she was left alone to witness the killings. Victims were beaten and then ordered to lie face-down on the concrete dance floor, with their heads resting over the edges. An executioner beheaded them using a "samurai sword". According to her account,

Before each execution, Sutomo mockingly asked the crowd what should be done with this 'enemy' of the people. They shouted 'kill!' Roestan the executioner stepped forward to cut off the head of the victim's body with his samurai sword, after which the unfortunate was left to the bloodlust of Indonesian boys aged 10, 11 and 12. The next generation of Indonesians then threw themselves with an obscene lust on the corpse to further mutilate it. I could not say how many were killed that way but the number was certainly in the hundreds.

She said that she later "heard Sutomo give the orders for the bodies, whose severed heads were to be collected, to be taken by truck to the sea and thrown in." When she went in search of a toilet, she found a room with a pile of naked corpses and "hanging on the wall opposite the door, a piece of rope about a metre in length." She also recalled seeing a tree in the backyard to which a number of women were tied:

who, judging by the cries of the executioners and spectators, had lived with Japanese.... The executioners... drove their bamboo spears with all their strength into the genitals of the helpless victim[s].... They pierced a part of the abdomen with their bamboo spears until the victim through injuries and loss of blood died. The bodies were thrown in the Mas River.... How many women met their end this way, I cannot say; the number ran into dozens.<sup>67</sup>

After pemuda returned from the woman's house without finding any conclusive evidence of her support for the Dutch, Sutomo asked her what her nationality was. She told him Ambonese, upon which, she said, he announced that there were "no Ambonese, no Manadonese, no Javanese, etc., any more, but only Indonesians." She then "agreed wholeheartedly that I was Indonesian." She was taken to another building, which she described as the PRI-Sulawesi, or "the Manadonese and Ambonese department of the PRI", where she was further interrogated, and subsequently set free.

The extent of Sutomo's role in the Simpang Club killings is not entirely clear, partly because of the lack of witnesses who identified him in their statements in 1947 and 1948. In a highly unreliable account of his role in events before the Battle for Surabaya, he implied that he was at the Simpang Club only once during the violence of October. He wrote that he was brought by pemuda on the orders of Moestopo, a former PETA

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<sup>67</sup> NEFIS 2039, No. 605/X/ODO.

officer and self-declared Republican Minister of Defence.<sup>68</sup> According to Sutomo, Moestopo had ordered the PRI to “protect” (*melindungi*) him, which they wrongly interpreted as the kind of ‘protection’ they offered to the Dutch when they picked them up. The pemuda took him to the Club to await further orders. Sutomo wrote that he considered himself a “prisoner” of the pemuda (even though he was their leader) and as such, when he noted the dozens of Dutch imprisoned in the Simpang Club who had been “treated beyond the boundaries of humanity... What could I do as a prisoner? Perhaps it would be my turn later.” Sutomo entirely blamed the “pemuda [who] had broken all the rules established by their own organisation, encouraged by their own sheer lust.” He wrote that he then ate a few pieces of chocolate to pass the time, until he was taken to Moestopo.<sup>69</sup>

One man of indeterminate background recalled on 16 October a systematic process in the Simpang Club, in which victims were ‘registered’, forced to undress, beaten, told to look into the sun, and then had the letters NICA drawn on their backs. They were subsequently beaten and stabbed to death with bayonets, bamboo spears and knives. This man’s task, with a group of prisoners, was to clean the thick layer of blood off the floors.<sup>70</sup> Like a number of other survivors declared ‘not guilty’, he was transferred to Kalisosok prison and managed to survive. Even those who escaped ‘trial’ at the Simpang Club faced the further possibility of a violent death. Another man recalled on 15 October being transferred from the Simpang Club to Kalisosok. An armed crowd awaited the transfer of prisoners outside the prison. They were forced to walk about a hundred meters through the crowd to reach the prison gate. He protected himself with a travelling case, but many others were speared by bamboo spears and hit by blunt weapons. These prisoners were among the fortunate; he noted that no one transported to Bubutan prison was ever seen again. After Kalisosok was liberated by the British, this man continued to work as an interpreter for the British. He recalled seeing a pile of severed legs in Bubutan prison when they inspected the premises, with shoes still attached, but no bodies were to be found.<sup>71</sup>

### **Prison murders**

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<sup>68</sup> Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries*, p. 112.

<sup>69</sup> Bung Tomo, *Pertempuran 10 November 1945*, pp. 98-101.

<sup>70</sup> NEFIS 2039, no. 217/X/ODO.

<sup>71</sup> NEFIS 2039, no. ?/X/ODO (Verklaring Hubert Reinier Henri van Afhelen).

This man's account of being forced to walk through a crowd armed with bamboo spears and other weapons is remarkably similar to the account of a massacre that took place in Kuningan in West Java. This event took place in several stages. Twelve Indo men were arrested and taken by the market place where, according to a likely exaggerated NEFIS report, members of the Islamic Masyumi party, and probably Pesindo (Pemuda Sosialis Indonesia, Socialist Youth of Indonesia), had incited the population by declaring Indos murderers of Indonesians, and the "greatest enemies of the Indonesian people." The police informed locals that the prisoners would be transferred on foot from the police station to the local prison. An angry mob armed with bamboo spears and knives, consisting mostly of Masyumi and Pesindo members, gathered outside the police station to await the prison transfer. The prisoners were led out one by one. Once they reached the street, they were overwhelmed by the mob. Few reached the prison alive. The following day the police rounded up the remaining Indo men, eleven in total, who lived in Kuningan and surrounds. They were subject to the same procedure. Not all victims died on the spot; some were later stoned or killed with shovels. Their bodies were thrown into a pit. According to the same report, "it was known that the victims planned to become Indonesian citizens".<sup>72</sup> An Indonesian report written immediately after the events declared that three of the victims were Ambonese and one was Manadonese, and the killings took place 14-16 October to in revenge for killings of Indonesians in Batavia, presumably by Indo and Ambonese militia. This report suggested that 'the people (*rakyat*)' killed eleven while they walked to the prison, and attacked two guards accompanying them. The crowd then went to the prison and forced the jail guards to hand over the keys to the cells housing the remaining twelve.<sup>73</sup>

Prison killings followed similar patterns of imprisonment and then execution, sometimes in public areas, other times in secrecy in the middle of the night. On 10 October 1945, Japanese forces took Bandung from Indonesian revolutionaries, killing many Indonesians in the process. They then forced pemuda leaders in Bandung to publicly appeal to their comrades for an end to attacks on the Japanese.<sup>74</sup> In response to this humiliation, pemuda in East Java sent Sutoko, the main pemuda leader of Bandung, the gift of a lipstick and powder to express their derision.<sup>75</sup> Word reached locals in

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<sup>72</sup> NEFIS 2035, Rapport No. CC.1., Onderwerp: Massamoord op Europeanen te Koenigan, 6 August 1947.

<sup>73</sup> NEFIS 2035, No. 762/K.O., Pemboenohan Blanda Indo oleh Rakjat di Kota Koenigan, 16 October 1945.

<sup>74</sup> Anthony Reid, *The Indonesian National Revolution, 1945-1950*, Hawthorn, Longman, 1974, p. 50.

<sup>75</sup> Djen Amar, *Bandung Lautan Api*, Bandung, Dhiwantara, 1963, p. 97.

Serang, Banten, of what had happened. Pemuda then seem to have spread word that Indos in Batavia were fighting alongside the Japanese and were responsible for Indonesian deaths. On 10 and 11 October, authorities in Serang rounded up Europeans, ostensibly to protect them from the angry populace. As in Surabaya and Kuningan, a number of those imprisoned were executed in prison, reportedly five Europeans and a Manadonese man.<sup>76</sup> In Sidoarjo, employees of a sugar factory were arrested and imprisoned in the Sidoarjo prison in October 1945, to join nineteen others imprisoned there. Groups of seven or eight at a time were taken from the cells, blindfolded and executed, amounting to about twenty victims in total according to an informant.<sup>77</sup> One report noted that in Tegal and its surroundings in Central Java, Europeans and suspected Dutch supporters were imprisoned in two houses on 12 October 1945. The men were taken away and killed, and the women and children sent to an internment camp. As many as sixty-five people were killed in the area.<sup>78</sup> Prison murders also took place in Bandung of Dutch, Indos, Manadonese and Chinese Indonesians. In Mojokerto in East Java around fifty Europeans were prisoned and never seen again. The arrests appear to have taken place with the approval of the Indonesian governor of Mojokerto. He had replaced the previous governor of Mojokerto, who had warned Europeans of the danger facing them and was arrested and later killed in Patjet for doing so, along with the former vice regent.<sup>79</sup>

### **Other characteristics of the Bersiap**

It is clear from scattered references that pemuda armed and assembled mobs, but often did the killings themselves, though they laid the blame on ‘the rage of the *rakyat*’.<sup>80</sup> They frequently referred to victims as ‘*andjing NICA*’ (NICA dogs), even if their victims were politically uninvolved or did not own items linking them to the Dutch. An Indo woman from Subang reported finding placards before the mass arrests took place, on which were written, “Be careful, don’t be arrogant or despise the Indonesians because if you do, the Indonesian *kris* [dagger] will pierce your heart.”<sup>81</sup> In Bogor, a group declaring itself to be the ‘people’s army’ spread a pamphlet on 11 October 1945

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<sup>76</sup> NEFIS 2029, No. 871/X, 30 July 1948.

<sup>77</sup> NEFIS 2044, No. Ri/559/Geh.

<sup>78</sup> NEFIS 2036, No. ?, Ondersvraging Rapport, 26 June 1947/July 1947.

<sup>79</sup> NEFIS 2027, Reg. No. 206/X/ODO.

<sup>80</sup> In fact, the concept of the *rakyat* was a central ideological component of the revolution. See Remco Raben, ‘On Genocide and Mass Violence in Colonial Indonesia’, in Bart Luttikhuis and A. Dirk Moses (eds), *Colonial Counterinsurgency and Mass Violence: the Dutch Empire in Indonesia*, London, Routledge, 2014, p. 336.

<sup>81</sup> NEFIS 2039, no. 219/X/ODO.

declaring that the Indonesian people had declared war on NICA and instructing each Indonesian to seek out his own victims.<sup>82</sup> In Batavia, placards called for the eradication of ‘Indische parasites’. In one instance the slogan ‘death to the Ambonese and Indos’ was painted on a building.<sup>83</sup> Some pemuda, though responsible for spreading propaganda, were just as paranoid as the populations they targeted, and killed innocent victims who happened to wear the Dutch tricolours unintentionally.<sup>84</sup>

The NEFIS archives occasionally paint a more complex picture of Indonesian bystanders and victims of circumstances. According to one set of documents, in the early hours of 10 October in Garut in West Java, a car fitted with a loudspeaker drove slowly through the town, broadcasting the message that all Europeans, Manadonese, Ambonese and Japanese should be killed. An hour or so later, members of these groups – among them the Sundanese wife of a European and the Indonesian adopted child of a European family – were dragged from their homes, imprisoned and taken to the town square (*alun-alun*), where several hundred people were gathered. After members of the mob killed the prisoners, the leader divided up the jewels and gold taken from the victims and paid the killers. Four Indo children, the oldest eleven and the youngest aged 3, were not taken to the *alun-alun*, but put on the street to fend for themselves. Eventually an Indonesian woman picked them up, and adopted them as her own.<sup>85</sup> Another, highly questionable account of a victim of circumstances was given by the one-time chauffeur of Sabarudin. This man, presumably Indo, was arrested in Malang and imprisoned from the end of August to 28 October in the Simpang Club. He worked as a mechanic in the backyard of the Simpang Club with another boy, and then was forced to become Sabarudin’s chauffeur. After Sabarudin’s arrest, he briefly led a Republican force and then went to Yogyakarta, where he reported to General Moestopo. He subsequently commanded a team of thirteen to set fire to warehouses in the port of Tanjung Priok in Batavia. There, he was arrested by the Dutch, and became chief witness in the interrogation of the men under his command. According to his account, “because my life was threatened by the pemuda, the army leadership sent me by plane

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<sup>82</sup> Mary C. van Delden, ‘Orde in De Chaos? De Internering in en Evacuatie uit de Republikeinse Kampen’, in Wim Willems and Jaap de Moor (eds), *Het Einde van Indië: Indische Nederlanders tijdens de Japanse Bezetting en de Dekolonisatie*, The Hague, Sdu Uitg., 1995, p. 193, endnote 8, citing Wicherts, *Herinneringen van A.H. Wicherts: Oud-Voorzitter van de Afdeling Buitenzorg van het Nederlandse Rode Kruis Afdeling Indonesië*, p. 16.

<sup>83</sup> Hans Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld: de Twintigste Eeuw*, Amsterdam, Bakker, 2004, p. 245.

<sup>84</sup> Reid, *The Indonesian National Revolution*, p. 54.

<sup>85</sup> See NEFIS 2045.

to Denpasar.”<sup>86</sup> Whether this man was the same “Indo man of pale complexion” known by eyewitnesses as ‘Bob van den Broeke’ who was reputed to be Sarabudin’s ‘right hand man’ or, in an alternative account, was forced by Sarabudin to shoot a European in the Sidoarjo Club to prove his loyalty, is unclear.<sup>87</sup>

Few accounts directly recount sexual violence towards women, apart from second-hand reports of the women whom Sabarudin enslaved. One man recalled being arrested on 15 November 1945 and taken to the Simpang Club. He was locked in the toilets with an Indo woman. She was taken away and only returned in the evening, completely naked. Her torturers had burned her genitals with cigarettes.<sup>88</sup> The only first-person account implying sexual violence was from an Indo woman interned in Subang internment camp, who said that “One day the scoundrel Amsar, the head of Indonesian police, called me separately and made me indecent proposals, guaranteeing the lives of my husband and father-in-law, who were imprisoned in the police station.” What happened after that is unclear, except that the woman mentioned that her father-in-law later only died after the camp was liberated.<sup>89</sup> The scarcity of accounts mentioning sexual violence could be because victims were killed or, more likely, were unwilling to admit what had taken place.

The violence was not all one-sided. Former KNIL soldiers began to form militias to hasten the return of colonial rule and protect their own interests, and also to carry out revenge for attacks on Europeans, Ambonese and other groups. Among these militias was the infamous Battalion X in Jakarta, which consisted of mostly Ambonese soldiers commanded by Dutch and Indos.<sup>90</sup> Other Dutch and Ambonese militias targeted Indonesian civilians in Batavia, including children. Their paranoia was so great that at one stage, according to British reports, they fired on each other. One British major in charge of a supply company reported in February 1946 that as many as a dozen youths and children a day came to the company office, beaten, horrifically wounded and shot. Dutch militias also seized Indonesian property and engaged in looting.<sup>91</sup> Another battalion operated in Bandung, the members of which were ironically called ‘Andjing

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<sup>86</sup> NEFIS 2039, No. 83/X/ODO.

<sup>87</sup> NEFIS 2044, No. Ri/617/Geh; No. Ri/1448/Geh.

<sup>88</sup> NEFIS 2039, no. 157/X/ODO.

<sup>89</sup> NEFIS 2039, no. 219/X/ODO.

<sup>90</sup> Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries*, p. 58.

<sup>91</sup> Richard McMillan, *The British Occupation of Indonesia, 1945-1946: Britain, the Netherlands and the Indonesian Revolution*, New York, Routledge, 2005, pp. 86-88.

Nica'.<sup>92</sup> In Hollandia in West New Guinea, Manadonese members of the KNIL were particularly worried about their families living on Java. After weapons disappeared from an army depot, a rumour began to spread among the KNIL forces that the Javanese in Hollandia were planning a coup on 15 December 1945. Local authorities sent the Manadonese battalion to maintain law and order, and according to reports the troop was particularly harsh in putting down the suspected rebellion, probably in revenge for atrocities committed against Manadonese in Java.<sup>93</sup>

### **The role of ideology**

The extent of official Republican involvement in the violence carried out by Indonesian pemuda is unclear. Sjahrir, among other leaders, condemned extreme pemuda actions in a pamphlet in November 1945, and took the view common among the Dutch that pemuda actions were a direct result of Japanese propaganda targeting youth:

Our youth... were unconsciously influenced by Japanese propaganda.... This psychological influence was manifested most clearly in hatred of foreigners, particularly those whom the Japanese denounced as our enemies: the Allies, the Dutch, the Eurasians (our own countrymen), the Chinese and the *pangrehpradja*<sup>94</sup>.... Marching about with bamboo spears spread, and has now turned into robbery, murder and other acts which either have no meaning for our democratic struggle or are reactionary.... [Pemuda] methods of agitation and propaganda among the masses were those they had seen and learnt from the Japanese.... But with the growing number of incidents, such as looting and murder... which can scarcely be regarded as legitimate expressions of our struggle for freedom, international sentiment towards our cause has begun to change.... Eurasians, Menadonese and Ambonese... are our fellow-countrymen.... Hatred for Eurasians, Ambonese and Menadonese can only be understood by the outside world as proof that a genuine national consciousness among the masses of our people is either still very superficial, or simply does not exist at all.<sup>95</sup>

He further noted that the Indonesian independence cause had excluded “various groups who are more or less isolated from the rest of our citizens: foreigners, Europeans and Asians of mixed descent, Christians, Ambonese, Menadonese, and so forth....” Among the Republican leadership, there was still no “satisfactory attitude and policy towards all these groups.”

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<sup>92</sup> ‘Nica dogs’. Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld*, p. 250.

<sup>93</sup> Peter Drooglever, *An Act of Free Choice: Decolonization and the Right to Self-Determination in West Papua*, Oxford, Oneworld, 2009, pp. 85-86.

<sup>94</sup> Indonesians used by both the Dutch and the Japanese as an aristocratic administrative elite.

<sup>95</sup> Sutan Sjahrir, *Our Struggle*, trans. Benedict R. O’G Anderson, Ithaca, Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, 1968, pp. 19-22.

Sjahrir was relatively open in his denunciations of pemuda actions. Though Sukarno continued to appeal for calm, his response to the pemuda violence was much more oblique. In a letter to the Allied commander in Jakarta on 9 October 1945, he wrote,

When mob psychology replaces ideological arguments, who is going to guarantee the safety of Dutch and Eurasian non-combatants? Here and now I want to make it plain that no power in Indonesia, no leader however popular, will be able to exercise control over fanatical mobs waging a race-war.... At such time all Europeans and Eurasians, irrespective of their nationality, will be similarly endangered.... I want to go on record as having pointed out to you... the obvious dangers consequent upon a struggle foredoomed to be conducted along racial lines.<sup>96</sup>

Further complicating the role of Republican troops was the attack by uniformed Indonesian troops on a convoy of Dutch and Indo women and children, guarded by British Indian troops, travelling from Gubeng Station in Surabaya to an internment camp. The events surrounding the massacre of the convoy are unclear, but Indonesian troops seem to have ended up fighting pemuda in the violence that ensued.<sup>97</sup>

Most scholarly accounts and memories from the Indonesian side of the Bersiap have explained the targeted violence on both sides in terms of ideology, rather than ethnicity or skin colour.<sup>98</sup> Reports of the time and subsequent memories among Dutch Indos tend to blame the Japanese for inciting racism and violence. Similarly, there is a general tendency in scholarly literature to discount pemuda violence – just like the anti-communist violence of 1965 – as sudden, unexpected and an anomaly among a generally calm populace. Understated in scholarly accounts is the violence towards Indonesians targeted as suspected Dutch supporters on the basis of their ethnicity. In some cases Indonesians were rounded up and executed en masse. These killings were probably not as well documented as the killing of Europeans and Indos in NEFIS archives. Javanese suspected of suspicious activities were among the victims. Javanese and Sundanese women married to Dutchmen were interned. Some Manadonese, Ambonese, Timorese and Chinese Indonesians were targeted on sight. Estimates of the total number of Dutch and Indos killed during this period range from 3,500 to 30,000.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Sukarno to Lt.-Gen. Sir Philip Christison, in Frederick, 'The Killing of Dutch and Eurasians in Indonesia's National Revolution', p. 372.

<sup>97</sup> Frederick, 'The Killing of Dutch and Eurasians in Indonesia's National Revolution', pp. 365-66.

<sup>98</sup> Robert Cribb, 'The Brief Genocide of the Eurasians in Indonesia, 1945/46' in A.D. Moses (ed.), *Empire, Colony, Genocide, Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2008, p. 436.

<sup>99</sup> J.J.P. de Jong, *De Waiier van het Fortuin: van Handelscompagnie tot Koloniaal Imperium: de Nederlanders in Azie en de Indonesische Archipel 1595-1950*, Den Haag, Sdu Uitgevers, 1998, p. 586; Frederick, 'The Killing of Dutch and Eurasians in Indonesia's National Revolution', pp. 368-69.

It is possible that many more Indonesians were killed by pemuda than Dutch and Indos, but few accounts detail these massacres, and there have been no attempts to my knowledge to document the killing of Indonesians by Indonesians.

My argument that the killings were a loosely coordinated genocide of varying extremes carried out by pemuda groups across Java draws on social, rather than legal, definitions of genocide, because of the limited documentation of the Bersiap killings. Though perpetrators later cast their actions as pre-emptive to prevent the colonial state being re-established, the victims were not only soldiers and young men who might lend their support to returning Dutch troops, but also young and old members of groups linked in some way to NICA – women, children and the elderly, Indonesians married to Europeans, Indos who had declared their desire to become Indonesian citizens and so on. This intent to eliminate all individuals popularly linked by appearance or general association to the colonial regime – whether actual or imagined – suggests that it may be appropriate to describe the violence as a form of political genocide.<sup>100</sup> Like the mass killings of 1965, which were driven directly by government propaganda and military directives,<sup>101</sup> much of the violence during the Bersiap was incited by propaganda<sup>102</sup> deliberately spread by pemuda groups. The UN Convention on Genocide mentions that victims should be targeted as members of national, ethnic, racial or religious groups in its definition of what comprises genocide.<sup>103</sup> The Bersiap victims were targeted on the basis of their ethnicity and appearance, but many members of these ethnic groups were also linked by their citizenship, areas of employment or legal status – as Europeans and *gelijkgesteld* Europeans, or because of their marriage to Europeans – to the colonial administration. Though Dutch, Indos, Manadonese, Ambonese, Timorese and Chinese Indonesians comprised separate groups in colonial Indonesia, perpetrators identified them as being common agents of colonialism. The fact that more Manadonese and

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<sup>100</sup> Though the term ‘genocide’ is subject to debate, I have taken ‘intent’ and ‘plan to eliminate’ as definitive of the term. Several authors have already used the term ‘genocide’ to describe the Bersiap killings. See Raben, ‘On Genocide and Mass Violence in Colonial Indonesia’; Cribb, ‘The Brief Genocide of the Eurasians in Indonesia, 1945/46’; Frederick, ‘The Killing of Dutch and Eurasians in Indonesia’s National Revolution’.

<sup>101</sup> Jess Melvin, ‘Documenting Genocide’, *Inside Indonesia*, vol. 122, Oct-Dec 2015, available from <http://www.insideindonesia.org/documenting-genocide?highlight=WyJqZXNzIiwibWVsdmluIiwiamVzcyBtZWx2aW4iXQ%3D%3D>, accessed 5 November 2015.

<sup>102</sup> Populations also seem to have been incited by one-sided newspaper reports that most closely aligned with propaganda. See Muhammad Yuanda Zara, ‘“Trust Me, This News is Indeed True”: Representations of Violence in Indonesian Newspapers during the Indonesian Revolution, 1945-48’, in Bart Luttikhuis and A. Dirk Moses (eds), *Colonial Counterinsurgency and Mass Violence: the Dutch Empire in Indonesia*, London, Routledge, 2014, pp. 214-39

<sup>103</sup> See Scott Straus, ‘Contested Meanings and Conflicting Imperatives: A Conceptual Analysis of Genocide’, *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2001, pp. 349-75.

Ambonese held equated status on average than other ethnic groups inextricably tied them to the colonial regime, while Indos were linked to returning Dutch forces because of their response to Japanese propaganda during the Japanese Occupation. Victims were identified, then, on the basis of nationality or ethnicity, or both, though the motivation of the killers was political. Not all victims were killed, however – many were sent to internment camps and, in some cases, Ambonese and Manadonese appear to have been released unharmed – which makes it difficult to describe the violence across Java as consistent.

Finding evidence for coordination based on limited interrogation reports by the Dutch is difficult, though the forms in which the killings were carried out, outlined above, show similarities across different regions. There were dozens of pemuda groups, representatives of whom attended the Pemuda Congress in Yogyakarta on 10 November 1945. One outcome of this congress was the decision to form the Badan Kongres Pemuda Indonesia (Council of the Pemuda Indonesia Congress, BKPI).<sup>104</sup> Seven pemuda groups at the conference decided to unite in one organisation, Pesindo, mentioned in the NEFIS report of the Kuningan massacre.<sup>105</sup> Besides this conference, the lipstick affair in Bandung also indicates that pemuda groups were in communication with each other. There was no Java-wide leadership, however. The killings that do not seem to have been coordinated are the slaughters of entire families in their homes that took place especially in West Java, but these killings possibly were committed by the same armed gangs.

### **Indos supporting Indonesian independence**

In the wake of the violence, most Dutch and wealthy Indos left Indonesia. Between 1946 and 1949, 106,976 arrived in the Netherlands from Indonesia.<sup>106</sup> Poorer Indos stayed, among them soldiers supporting the Dutch as well as Indos loyal to the Republican cause. Dahler drafted a citizenship law for the Republican government, which defined Indonesians not just as indigenous inhabitants of Indonesia but also people of Indonesian descent born and living in Indonesia. Those who held a different nationality were given the right under this law to reject Indonesian citizenship, provided

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<sup>104</sup> Murwati Djoened Poesponegoro and Nugroho Notosusanto, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia: Zaman Jepang dan Zaman Republik Indonesia*, vol. IV, Jakarta, Balai Pustaka, 2008, p. 181.

<sup>105</sup> Slamet Muljana, *Kesadaran Nasional: dari Kolonialisme sampai Kemerdekaan*, vol. II, Yogyakarta, LKiS, 2008, p. 68.

<sup>106</sup> Esther Captain, *Achter het Kawat was Nederland: Indische Oorlogservaringen en Herinneringen 1942-1995*, Kampen, Kok, 2002, p. 128.

they made a declaration in writing within a year to the minister of justice.<sup>107</sup> An organisation dedicated specifically to persuade Indos in Republican-controlled areas to become Indonesian citizens, Indonesia Merdeka, was founded in October 1946 in Yogyakarta under the auspices of the Indonesian ministry for education.<sup>108</sup> The organisation produced a Dutch-language magazine specifically aimed at Europeans, Indos and others in internment camps protected from pemuda by Republican forces. It convened an Indo congress in Yogyakarta in February 1947. The organisers sent an invitation to the IEV in Jakarta, but IEV leaders rejected the invitation, saying that they preferred to wait until negotiations between the Indonesian and Indies governments had concluded.<sup>109</sup> Probably one reason why they were unwilling to attend was hope that the loose promises expressed by the Dutch East Indies authorities to protect minorities like Indos in a federal state would eventuate.<sup>110</sup>

One of the conference speakers was Douwes Dekker, newly returned from exile. Douwes Dekker, along with other leaders, advocated complete assimilation to Indonesian society. He even suggested that Indos should take on more 'Indonesian' sounding names, which he himself eventually did, calling himself Danoedirdja Setiaboedi.<sup>111</sup> Another group, connected to Indonesia Merdeka and led by Dick Hage (chair) and A.W.F. de Roock, advocated retaining the cultural identity of Indo-Europeans. It was supported by a number of senior nationalist leaders, including Vice-President Mohammad Hatta. Some Indos involved in the Republic's propaganda efforts were arrested, interned and 'rehabilitated' by the Dutch. They were, however, a small but vocal minority.<sup>112</sup>

In November 1946, the Netherlands agreed to recognise Republican rule over Java, Madura and Sumatra if the Republic became part of a Netherlands-Indonesian Union. In 1947, however, this agreement broke down and the Dutch commenced the first of two 'police actions' against the Republic. In August 1948 the Dutch Prime Minister announced to Parliament that the government would still go ahead with a 'United States

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<sup>107</sup> Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly*, p. 621.

<sup>108</sup> Peter Schumacher, 'De Coup van Ernst Douwes Dekker tegen de 'Indo-Pioniers' in Yogyakarta', in Wim Willems and Jaap de Moor (eds), *Het Einde van Indië: Indische Nederlanders tijdens de Japanse Bezetting en de Dekolonisatie*, The Hague, Sdu Uitg., 1995, pp. 210-11.

<sup>109</sup> Van der Veur, *The Lion and the Gadfly*, p. 624.

<sup>110</sup> Robert Cribb, 'Democracy, Self Determination and the Indonesian Revolution', in Jane Drakard and John Legge (eds), *Indonesian Independence Fifty Years On, 1945-1995*, Clayton, Victoria, Monash Asia Institute, 1996, pp. 9-10.

<sup>111</sup> Schumacher, 'De Coup van Ernst Douwes Dekker', p. 214.

<sup>112</sup> Schumacher, 'De Coup van Ernst Douwes Dekker', pp. 213-14.

of Indonesia' whether the Republic agreed or not.<sup>113</sup> This decision led to a political stalemate, and was followed by Dutch capture of Republican leaders in late 1948. Eventually, in February 1949, after considerable international pressure, the Dutch government invited representatives from the United Nations to a round table conference in The Hague to obtain UN assistance in transferring sovereignty to a federal Indonesian state. Delegates from Indonesia, the Netherlands and the United Nations agreed that the Republic of Indonesia would become part of the United States of Indonesia, and that further round table discussions would determine the details of the transfer of sovereignty.

Representatives from the IEV and the pro-Republican and much smaller, Partai Nasional Indo (National Indo Party)<sup>114</sup>, an ideological successor to the Indisch Party, attended the subsequent, much more formal Round Table Conference, which was held in The Hague from August to November 1949. Delegates decided to adopt the proposal of an 'active system of citizenship, proposed at a federal conference in Bandung in 1948 and the Inter-Indonesia Conference of July 1949, whereby Dutch citizens would retain Dutch citizenship, but have the option of choosing to take Indonesian citizenship.<sup>115</sup> Dutch citizens were given two years in which to decide, starting from the official transfer of sovereignty on 27 December 1949. The conference also guaranteed employment for former colonial civil servants who stayed on in the Republican bureaucracy. Former KNIL soldiers could choose to become part of the Indonesian Army (TNI).

### **Indos in the new republic**

The exact number of Indos with European status at the time of the transfer of sovereignty is unclear but was probably around 200,000. Estimates generally fall within a range of about 170,000 to 200,000, though several authors suggest that as many as 300,000 Indos repatriated to the Netherlands in the 1940s and 1950s. This figure equates more closely to the total repatriation of all groups to the Netherlands from 1945,

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<sup>113</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 341.

<sup>114</sup> The Partai Indo Nasional only had around three hundred members in August 1949. Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 216.

<sup>115</sup> Paul W. van der Veur, 'The Eurasians of Indonesia: Castaways of Colonialism', *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 127-128; Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld*, pp. 312-13.

including *totok* Dutch, Indos, Ambonese, Chinese Indonesians and so on.<sup>116</sup> The approximately 10,000 European government officials who retained their positions and salaries for two years in the Indonesian civil service at the request of the Dutch government encountered antagonism from their Indonesian colleagues and were given few duties in the new Republic.<sup>117</sup> The 15,000 or so Indo members of the former KNIL were expected to either join the Indonesian armed forces – their enemies for the last four years – or seek other employment, which most opted to do.<sup>118</sup> In July 1950 the Dutch government allowed former KNIL soldiers to join the Dutch Army and evacuate to the Netherlands or to Netherlands New Guinea, which remained in Dutch hands. Around 7000 soldiers decided to take this opportunity.<sup>119</sup>

Most Dutch citizens remaining in Indonesia delayed making a decision regarding their citizenship. At stake was not just the issue of national identity, but also their economic and political prospects in Indonesia, which prior to independence had been tied to European status. Political events, such as an attempted coup by Istanbul-born Dutchman Raymond Westerling in January 1950 led to increasingly anti-Dutch rhetoric from the Indonesian media and elite.<sup>120</sup> Tensions between Indonesians and Europeans grew, making many Dutch citizens reluctant to take Indonesian citizenship. An increase in the cost of essential goods in tandem with job losses and difficulty finding new jobs further added to the disinclination of many to opt for Indonesia. According to a document accompanying a member's circular produced for members of the Entrepreneurs Association for Indonesia (De Ondernemersbond voor Indonesië) in November 1951, applicants for Indonesian citizenship had to be Dutch, at least eighteen years old or married, and either born in Indonesia or having resided there for at least six months by 27 December 1949.<sup>121</sup> The Association asked employers to leave the decision concerning Indonesian citizenship to their employees, mentioning 'rumours' that some employers were strongly pushing their workers to become Indonesian. The

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<sup>116</sup> Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld*, p. 302; Paul W. van der Veur, 'Eurasian Dilemma in Indonesia', *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 20, no. 1, 1960, pp. 58-59; Pamela Pattynama, 'Assimilation and Masquerade: Self-Constructions of Indo-Dutch Women', *European Journal of Women's Studies*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2000, p. 281; Thomas Janoski, *The Ironies of Citizenship: Naturalization and Integration in Industrialized Countries*, Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 163.

<sup>117</sup> Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld*, pp. 307-08.

<sup>118</sup> Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld*, pp. 308-10.

<sup>119</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 413.

<sup>120</sup> See Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, Jakarta, Equinox, 2007 [1962], pp. 61-63.

<sup>121</sup> De Ondernemersbond voor Indonesië. Bijlage van Ledencirculaire no. 43 dd. 24 Nov. 1951, 'Optie-Procedure', National Archive, Den Haag, Raad voor Sociale Aangelegenheden in Indonesië 2.27.01.01, inventory number 79.

Association's president outlined the reasons for this push in a confidential memo, mentioning the possibility that the Indonesian government would demand that certain occupations only be open to nationals, and that a foreign labour quota was a distinct possibility for particular positions.<sup>122</sup> Problematising the position of those who did opt for Indonesian citizenship was the perception in both Indo and Indonesian circles that their main motivation for becoming Indonesian was self-interest, and not because of their support for the Republic.

The IEV, which had strongly identified as an organisation for Europeans before the war, completely reversed its stance after the transfer of sovereignty in order to seek the best outcome for Indos by advocating that they adapt to the changed circumstances. It sought to convince Indos to become 'Indonesian' as much as possible, but the organisation itself was subject to a split over this issue. In 1951 the Indonesian part changed its name to *Gabungan Indo untuk Kesatuan Indonesia* (Indo Association for a United Indonesia, GIKI), while its branch in the Netherlands, which was not in favour of assimilation, continued as the *Vereniging Indische Nederlanders* (Union of Indisch Dutch).<sup>123</sup> Few rank and file members appeared to take GIKI's recommendations seriously. An increasing number of its leaders, mostly professionals, intellectuals and writers, began to repatriate to the Netherlands. The IEV was strongly in favour of the federal system of government discussed at the Malino Conference in July 1946, which had preserved a special place for Indos. In the federal state of Pasundan, for example, minorities had held 25 of 100 seats. Of these, Europeans were represented in 12 seats, and eight of these were IEV members.<sup>124</sup> However, the federal structure of the United States of Indonesia, which in theory had the potential to protect minority rights through their representation in a central parliament, collapsed in 1950. Even so, the unitary system, based on the 1950 provisional constitution, still required a minimum of six representatives from the European group.<sup>125</sup> In theory, then, political representation was still a possibility for Indos, until 1959 when the Provisional Constitution of 1950 was replaced by the original 1945 Constitution.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> J.S. Sinninghe Damsté, '*Keuze Indonesisch Staatsburgerschap*', 24 Nov. 1956, National Archive, Den Haag, Raad voor Sociale Aangelegenheden in Indonesië 2.27.01.01, inventory number 79, pp. 7-8.

<sup>123</sup> Ulbe Bosma, *Terug uit de Koloniën: Zestig Jaar Postkoloniale Migranten en hun Organisaties*, Amsterdam, Bakker, 2009, p. 96.

<sup>124</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 347-48.

<sup>125</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', p. 395; Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, p. 457.

<sup>126</sup> See *Undang-Undang Dasar Sementara 1950* [Provisional Constitution of 1950], article 58, no. 1.

The Dutch government also sought to convince Indos to take Indonesian citizenship. Overcrowding and unemployment in a Netherlands still struggling to recover from the German occupation made the prospect of several hundred thousand migrants problematic. The Dutch High Commissioner to Indonesia, Arnold Theodore Lamping, appealed to the Indisch Dutch in a media statement on 7 December 1951, three weeks before the deadline for them to take Indonesian citizenship:

[T]he Dutch government has repeatedly... suggested that they [the Indisch Dutch] make use of this option and in so doing become Indonesian. For those oriented to this land... this is deemed the most natural solution. Now that the opting period is coming to an end, however, one must note that only a small number... have accepted Indonesian citizenship.... To the Indisch Dutch who... are still in doubt about whether they will accept Indonesian citizenship, I would assure them... that there is nothing reprehensible in abandoning Dutch nationality.... [N]on-acceptance of Indonesian citizenship by those who still consider Indonesia to be their real homeland will lead to less employment and therefore an increase in the struggle for survival.... Moving to the Netherlands where... the odds are even lower and, moreover, the climate and living conditions are quite different, would only make the situation worse.<sup>127</sup>

The general reaction from members of the Indo community who still retained Dutch citizenship to Lamping's speech was negative. Many believed that the Dutch government was trying to get rid of them by encouraging them to take Indonesian citizenship.

The situation appears to have been more complex than this popular belief suggests. The Dutch government established Councils for Social Affairs in most major cities in Indonesia to assist poor Dutch citizens struggling with unemployment and rising inflation, from the second half of 1950.<sup>128</sup> These councils consisted of local Protestant churches and charitable organisations, but they received funding from the High Commission. Though many Indos had lost their papers during the Japanese Occupation and Indonesian National Revolution, the Dutch government adopted a "flexible" approach in determining whether an individual was a Dutch citizen or not. The government decided to accept as Dutch those who possessed Dutch passports or who could prove (Dutch) military service or membership in public bodies in the Indies. The government also considered accepting statements from witnesses declaring an

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<sup>127</sup> 'Woorden van Hart tot Hart tot de Indische Nederlanders. Hoge Commissaris Lamping over Nationaliteitskeuze. Prijsgeving Nederlanderschap Zeker Niet Laakbaar.' *Javabode*, 8 December 1951, p. 1, in National Archive, Den Haag, Raad voor Sociale Aangelegenheden in Indonesië 2.27.01.01, inventory number 74.

<sup>128</sup> Van der Veur, 'Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia', pp. 403-04.

individual to be Dutch as proof of their citizenship. These approaches were probably so flexible because the Dutch government expected few Indos who held Dutch citizenship to want to repatriate to the Netherlands, particularly because of reports circulated that the Netherlands was suffering from chronic overcrowding and unemployment. After 1951, this flexible approach changed in response to the growing number of repatriates and migrants. Those whom the embassy and consulates had declared to be Dutch citizens based on this flexible interpretation before the end of the opting period were no longer automatically considered so if subsequent information came to light that suggested otherwise. Only equated Europeans who had received their *gelijkgesteld* status before the Dutch Nationality Law of 1892 was enacted were considered to be Dutch citizens automatically, while Europeans who obtained their status after the Law had to prove their citizenship in the absence of documents.<sup>129</sup>

The risk of losing their jobs, and perhaps the realisation that the Republic was likely to stay, led to a rush of applications for Indonesian citizenship from Indos who still held Dutch citizenship in the remaining weeks before the 27<sup>th</sup> of December 1951. 88% of all applications were made in the last eighteen days. By the end of 1951, about 30,000-33,000 choices for Indonesian citizenship had been made, 85% of which, according to Hans Meijer, were made by Indos. The majority of applicants lived in Java (73%).<sup>130</sup> Dutch documents termed these former Dutch citizens ‘*warga negara*’, an Indonesian term meaning ‘citizen’. Children followed their fathers’ decisions, some of them unwillingly. The Catholic Church decided that orphans in its care would take Indonesian citizenship.<sup>131</sup> Some of those who took Indonesian citizenship faced a backlash from family members. As a result, some did not even inform their families and friends about their decision, out of fear that they would face derision and accusations that they were not loyal to the Dutch.<sup>132</sup>

### **Dutch citizens in Indonesia**

At the beginning of 1952, more than 100,000 Dutch citizens still remained in Indonesia, almost all of them born in the Indies.<sup>133</sup> After 27 December 1951, 434 former colonial civil servants who had retained their positions under the agreements of the Round Table

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<sup>129</sup> Van der Veur, ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, pp. 420-22.

<sup>130</sup> Meijer, *In Indië geworteld*, p. 330; van der Veur, ‘Eurasian Dilemma in Indonesia’, p. 58.

<sup>131</sup> Van der Veur, ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, p. 419.

<sup>132</sup> Van der Veur, ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, p. 414.

<sup>133</sup> Paul W. van der Veur, ‘Luctantur et Emergunt. Indo-Europeanen tussen 1942 en 1962’, in Wim Willems and Jaap de Moor (eds), *Het Einde van Indië: Indische Nederlanders tijdens de Japanse Bezetting en de Dekolonisatie*, The Hague, Sdu Uitg., 1995, p. 16

Conference were dismissed in Bandung, of whom 248 registered for support from the Dutch government.<sup>134</sup> The Netherlands government enacted legislation valid from June 1950 guaranteeing support for certain groups of Indies civil servants and their free passage to the Netherlands.<sup>135</sup> From 1 July 1953, Indos who had become Indonesian citizens also became eligible to apply to Dutch relief organisations if they were unemployed.<sup>136</sup> The Dutch government tasked a commission, under Ph. H.M. Werner, in May 1952 to investigate the economic and social position of Dutch citizens born and living in Indonesia. The Werner Commission was less than complimentary in its discussion of Indos. It differentiated between the ‘eastern-oriented’ and ‘western-oriented Dutch’. The commission recommended that the first group – generally those of Indonesian descent – should be encouraged to assimilate as Indonesian citizens.<sup>137</sup> Few, however, showed any inclination to assimilate.

Eventually the Dutch government was forced to face the fact that the majority of its citizens in Indonesia had no intention of becoming Indonesian and in fact were applying in increasing numbers to repatriate, though many could not afford the cost of passage. In May 1953, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the encouragement of the High Commissioner, proposed developing a specific government agency in Jakarta independent of the consular departments to deal with providing loans and advice for Dutch citizens who wished to repatriate. This agency was named the Raad voor Sociale Aangelegenheden in Indonesië (Council for Social Affairs in Indonesia).<sup>138</sup> Among the departures of Dutch citizens during this period were writers Rob Nieuwenhuys in 1952, and Tjalie Robinson (Jan Boon) in 1955, who became key members of the Dutch Indo community. In 1955, the Dutch government acknowledged that Dutch nationals in

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<sup>134</sup> A.T.H. ‘Afschrift Telex’, in National Archives, Den Haag, Nederlands Commissariaat te Makassar 2.05.61.04 165, p. 5, 7 March 1952.

<sup>135</sup> The law was passed on 11 May 1950: the Garantiewet Burgerlijk Overheidspersoneel Indonesië. For a discussion of the position of former Dutch civil servants, see S. Pompe (ed.), *Indonesian Law 1949-1989: A Bibliography of Foreign-Language Materials with Brief Commentaries on the Law*, Dordrecht, Boston, M. Nijhoff Publishers, 1992, p. 68.

<sup>136</sup> Van der Veur, ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, p. 405.

<sup>137</sup> Van der Veur, ‘Luctantur et Emergunt. Indo-Europeanen tussen 1942 en 1962’, pp. 16-17.

<sup>138</sup> Hans Meijer, ‘“Een Hemeltergende Toestand”. De Maatschappelijke Positie van Indische Nederlanders in Indonesië, 1950-1957’, in Wim Willems and Jaap de Moor (eds), *Het Einde van Indië: Indische Nederlanders tijdens de Japanse Bezetting en de Dekolonisatie*, The Hague, Sdu Uitg., 1995, pp. 247-248.

Indonesia indeed belonged to the Dutch community. The government began to accept repatriation applications from Indos who had previously been rejected.<sup>139</sup>

The great majority of Dutch citizens remaining in Indonesia following the end of the opting period were Indos. One report on the social position of the Dutch community remaining in Makassar in mid-1952 concluded that ‘with a few exceptions, the whole group of people remaining are Indo-European’.<sup>140</sup> The report noted that ‘the group has few ties with Indonesian society; nor with Dutch society.’<sup>141</sup> An academic report from 1955 concluded that the Indo community in Bogor was endogamous and had little contact with other groups; brothers in one family would frequently marry sisters in another family.<sup>142</sup> The exception was a small number of Indo women married to Manadonese men.<sup>143</sup> Most members of this Indo community spoke Dutch or *petjoh*, a Dutch Indonesian creole language. No political parties represented them.<sup>144</sup> Many children attended ‘concordant schools’ – that is, schools run by the Dutch business community that provided education equivalent to a Dutch education in the Netherlands. Children whose parents were employees of Dutch businesses, or those whose parents were temporarily employed in the Indonesian civil service, were charged lower school fees than other children, but most other Indo families were unable to afford to pay the high tuition costs.

In April 1950 the Indonesian government had announced that all public education was to be given in Indonesian, and Dutch was no longer to be taught. This announcement caused practical problems for many Indo children who did not speak Indonesian. The IEV established transitional schools in Surabaya with the support of the Indonesian government that provided teaching in both Dutch and Indonesian.<sup>145</sup> As in Bogor, wealthier families elsewhere in Java enrolled their children in concordant schools, as most families preferred their children to have a Dutch education if at all possible. However, they faced the problem that a Dutch education no longer provided the

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<sup>139</sup> Wim Willems, ‘No Sheltering Sky: Migrant Identities of Dutch Nationals from Indonesia’, in Joost Coté and Loes Westerbeek (eds.), *Recalling the Indies: Colonial Culture and Postcolonial Identities*, Amsterdam, Aksant, 2005, p. 258.

<sup>140</sup> ‘De Sociale Positie van de Nederlandse Blijversgemeenschap te Makassar’, in National Archives, Den Haag, Nederlands Commissariaat te Makassar 2.05.61.04 165, p. 4.

<sup>141</sup> ‘De Sociale Positie van de Nederlandse Blijversgemeenschap te Makassar’, p. 19.

<sup>142</sup> E. Allard, ‘Laporan Sementara tentang Penyelidikan Kemasjarakatan dari Golongan Indo-Eropah yang Dilakukan di Bogor Tahun 1953’, *Bahasa dan Budaya*, vol. 3, no. 5, 1955, p. 18.

<sup>143</sup> E. Allard, ‘Laporan Sementara tentang Bagian Kedua Penyelidikan Dilapangan atas Susunan Kemasjarakatan Orang-Orang Indo-Eropah di Indonesia’, *Bahasa dan Budaya*, vol. 3, no. 5, 1955, p. 31.

<sup>144</sup> Allard, ‘Laporan Sementara tentang Bagian Kedua’, p. 35.

<sup>145</sup> Van der Veur, ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, pp. 408-09.

employment opportunities and privileges that it once had. Education was one compelling reason for many families to leave for the Netherlands. Of those who remained, many young Indo men moved away from government employment in the bureaucracy, police force and army, and turned to trade, though they faced an increasingly hostile Indonesian population from which they often felt disconnected.<sup>146</sup>

### **Netherlands New Guinea**

Much of the hostility of ordinary Indonesians towards Dutch citizens stemmed from anti-Dutch sentiment over the Netherlands New Guinea issue. This sentiment was largely incited by the government and fuelled by the media. The decision of the Netherlands government to retain Netherlands New Guinea was supported by a number of conservative members of Dutch parliament for a number of reasons. They considered it an ideal solution to the problem of a 'fatherland' not only for Indos unsuited to the Dutch climate, but also for migrants direct from the Netherlands struggling to adapt there.<sup>147</sup> Colonisation associations established in late colonial society continued to lobby the Dutch government to retain Netherlands New Guinea for this purpose.<sup>148</sup> The government also argued that Papuans were completely different racially and culturally from other Indonesians. A further impetus for the Netherlands to hold on to Netherlands New Guinea was to save face by retaining part of what had been the Netherlands' most important colonial possession.<sup>149</sup>

After the federal system agreed to at the Round Table Conference collapsed, and the Sukarno government violently squashed the Republic of the South Moluccas (RMS) movement in November 1950, Ambonese and Indo residents of Netherlands New Guinea became worried that the Dutch government planned to hand over the last remaining part of the Dutch empire in Asia to the Indonesian government.<sup>150</sup> Many of the approximately four to five thousand Ambonese in New Guinea aimed to merge Maluku and Netherlands New Guinea to form either an independent state or an autonomous unit in a Dutch or Indonesian federation.<sup>151</sup> Former leaders of the RMS movement migrated to Netherlands New Guinea, and their supporters attempted to

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<sup>146</sup> Allard, 'Laporan Sementara', p. 6.

<sup>147</sup> C.L.M. Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonisation and Indonesia, 1945-1962*, Adelaide, Crawford House Publishing, 2002, p. 75.

<sup>148</sup> Drooglever, *An Act of Free Choice*, p. 118.

<sup>149</sup> J.A.C. Mackie, 'The West New Guinea Argument', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 16, no. 1, 1962, pp. 27-29.

<sup>150</sup> Drooglever, *An Act of Free Choice*, p. 253.

<sup>151</sup> Drooglever, *An Act of Free Choice*, pp. 257-58.

obtain arms and ammunition to try to continue the struggle and gain international recognition. The Dutch government eventually transferred these leaders to the Netherlands.

The status of New Guinea had been a contentious topic during the Round Table Conference. Eventually delegates decided that its status would provisionally remain unchanged, though they disagreed on what exactly that status was. After the transfer of sovereignty, the territory remained in Dutch hands. A conference held in December 1950 on the future of Dutch New Guinea failed to resolve the situation. The Dutch government became increasingly inflexible over who it should belong to from 1951, as did the Indonesian government. Calls from Indonesia to discuss the dissolution of the Dutch-Indonesian Union were tied to the Netherlands New Guinea issue. Although the Dutch-Indonesian Union was formally dissolved in 1954, the issue of Netherlands New Guinea was dismissed and effectively brushed aside.<sup>152</sup> Indonesia took the matter to the United Nations in December 1954 but did not obtain the required votes for its proposal to succeed. Sukarno himself remained against any negotiations with the Netherlands regarding Netherlands New Guinea. After a vote by the Dutch parliament took place in 1956 to incorporate Netherlands New Guinea as part of the kingdom of the Netherlands in the Dutch constitution, negotiations completely broke down.<sup>153</sup>

The total European population in Netherlands New Guinea by the end of 1949 numbered less than one thousand.<sup>154</sup> Organisations dedicated specifically to encourage emigration to Netherlands New Guinea produced propaganda representing the land as a paradise in which Indos would become part of the upper layers of society, though this propaganda had little effect before the transfer of sovereignty. From 1950, immigration was restricted because of concern that the area could not cope with a large number of migrants who were mostly office workers and not manual labourers. Even so, in 1950 4,500 newcomers arrived in Netherlands New Guinea.<sup>155</sup> By the end of the year, 8516 Europeans – mostly Indos – resided there.<sup>156</sup> Among the migrants were about a thousand young Indo-European men, aged around 20 years old, the so-called Deta boys (Deta Jongens). They were recruited to work for the Dienst Economische en Technische Aangelegenheden (Department of Economic and Technical Affairs, DETA), to develop

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<sup>152</sup> Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, pp. 217-218.

<sup>153</sup> Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, pp. 287-288.

<sup>154</sup> Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, p. 85.

<sup>155</sup> Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld*, p. 311.

<sup>156</sup> Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld*, pp. 306, 310; Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, p. 85.

the land. Though they could speak Dutch and had some Dutch education, they did not have the necessary documents to prove their eligibility for Dutch citizenship, and had found themselves unemployed and unskilled after the transfer of sovereignty. Most assumed that once their short-term contracts ended, they could stay. When it became clear that they would have to return to Indonesia, they refused, and struggled to eke out a very rough existence until the early 1960s.<sup>157</sup>

### **Increasing hostility towards Dutch citizens**

Back in Indonesia, the Indonesian media cast Dutch citizens as living in luxury compared with Indonesians, most of who struggled to maintain a minimum standard of living as the Indonesian economy languished throughout the 1950s. The Netherlands rapidly became a scapegoat for political and economic turmoil, and in this highly charged environment the High Commission and Dutch businesses were linked to purported attempts to destabilise the fledgling Indonesian nation. The media highlighted the role of a small number of Dutchmen suspected of being Dutch agents in Darul Islam, an Islamic anti-government organisation that waged civil warfare against the government throughout the 1950s. Reports spread that Indonesian militias tried and convicted in Hollandia in Netherlands New Guinea had not had access to Indonesian counsel, and that Dutch submarines were active in the islands in the eastern part of the archipelago. Paranoia that Dutch agents would attempt another Westerling-type event to reinstate colonial rule led in October 1953 to a law that gave authorities freedom to act regarding foreigners suspected of subversive activities.<sup>158</sup> A number of high-profile trials of Dutchmen tried under this law, beginning in 1954 and ending in 1956, provided further fodder for a press that continued to paint Dutch citizens as agents of colonialism. L.N. Jungschlaeger and Captain H.C.J.G. Schmidt were both Dutch nationals accused of engaging in subversive activities against the Indonesian government. State witnesses in their trial declared that British and American embassy planes supplied Darul Islam troops with food and weapons. It hardly helped matters that the Dutch government published a 'white book' containing evidence that Dutch prisoners were tortured and

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<sup>157</sup> J. van den Berg, 'De Deta-Jongens op Nederlands Nieuw-Guinea', in W. Willems and J.A. de Moor (eds), *Het Einde van Indië: Indische Nederlanders tijdens de Japanse Bezetting en de Dekolonisatie*, The Hague, Sdu Uitg., 1995, p. 256.

<sup>158</sup> Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, pp. 227-32.

brainwashed to confess to crimes that they had not committed, and shared the book with foreign governments such as the US and various European nations.<sup>159</sup>

Domestic political turmoil resulting from the Darul Islam conflict and two rebellions in Sumatra and North Sulawesi, the PRRI and PERMESTA rebellions from late 1956, prompted Sukarno in March 1957 to declare a state of emergency and impose martial law. He subsequently imposed his system of Guided Democracy on the government and effectively took control. The issue of Netherlands New Guinea and the nationalisation of foreign companies became central components of Sukarno's increasingly militant rhetoric. In early October 1957, Indonesian Cabinet announced a 'West New Guinea week' to be held across Indonesia while the future of Netherlands New Guinea was debated at the United Nations. The government established a Committee for the Liberation of West Irian. Anti-Dutch slogans were painted on Dutch homes and offices in Jakarta. Homes were vandalised and Dutch citizens were intimidated on the streets. Anti-Dutch demonstrations were held in Jakarta throughout November in the lead-up to the UN decision.<sup>160</sup> On 8 November Sukarno declared that "we will use a new way in our struggle which will surprise the nations of the world."<sup>161</sup> Then, on 11 November he threatened to end all commercial relations with the Netherlands. A mass meeting held on November 18 attended by Sukarno and several other government officials urged the 'Indonesianisation' of Dutch businesses along with a general ban on allowing all Dutch citizens to enter Indonesia.<sup>162</sup> However, the Indonesian motion at the UN was unable to obtain the required fifty-four votes and was defeated on 29 November.<sup>163</sup>

In response, the government announced a general strike in Dutch businesses and banned all publications in the Dutch language. On 3 December, the head of the immigration office announced that Dutch citizens would no longer be allowed to enter Indonesia, while Indonesian representative to Den Haag confirmed that visas would no longer be

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<sup>159</sup> Justus M. van der Kroef, 'Problems in Indonesia, II', *Far Eastern Survey*, vol. 24, no. 11, 1955, p. 167.

<sup>160</sup> Amigoe di Curacao: Dagblad voor de Nederlandse Antillen, photo caption, 23 November 1957, p. 1.

<sup>161</sup> Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, p. 583.

<sup>162</sup> C.W.A. Schurmann, 'Nota van de Permanent Vertegenwoordiger van Nederland aan de Secretaris-Generaal der Verenigde Naties te New York', 23 December 1957, p. 2, in Zitting 1957-1958, 4900, *Rijksbegroting voor het Dienstjaar 1958*, Hoofdstuk III Buitenlandse Zaken, Brief van de Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken, Nr. 15, Koninklijke Bibliotheek: Nationale Bibliotheek van Nederland, available from [http://ressourcessgd.kb.nl/SGD/19571958/PDF/SGD\\_19571958\\_0000503.pdf](http://ressourcessgd.kb.nl/SGD/19571958/PDF/SGD_19571958_0000503.pdf), accessed 17 November 2015.

<sup>163</sup> '41 voor, 29 tegen, 11 Blanco: Resolutie W. Irian Krijgt Geen Tweederde Meerderheid in VN', *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad: de Preangerbode*, 30 November 1957, p. 1.

granted to Dutch citizens.<sup>164</sup> KLM flights to Jakarta were stopped, and Indonesian labour activists seized Dutch firms, including the Dutch shipping company Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij (KPM). Indonesian Cabinet decided on 5 December that seized enterprises would come under Indonesian Army control, meaning that they were indirectly seized by the Indonesian government.<sup>165</sup> Activists were ordered to surrender the firms they had taken over to the military, and the government also took control of Dutch banks and agricultural estates. In Surabaya and Bandung, Dutch passengers were refused entry into taxis, and phone lines to Dutch homes were cut.<sup>166</sup> Dutch celebrations of St Nicholas Day on 5-6 December were low-key after Indonesian radio urged the indigenous population not to support the observance of a Dutch holiday.<sup>167</sup> Then, on 6 December, the Ministry of Justice ordered all Dutch nationals to leave Indonesia. The holiday was subsequently termed 'Zwarte Sinterklaas' (Black St Nicholas Day) in response to this announcement.<sup>168</sup> The Dutch embassy and consulates were closed, and the Dutch government offered immediate repatriation to its remaining citizens.<sup>169</sup>

In March 1951 there were approximately 150,000 Dutch citizens in Indonesia.<sup>170</sup> By early 1957, according to an estimate from the consular section of the High Commission, about 65,000 Dutch citizens remained in Indonesia.<sup>171</sup> Approximately 15,000 of these chose to leave during 1957 before the expulsion. The remaining Dutch population who were expelled from December numbered about 45,000-50,000.<sup>172</sup> Over the following months they departed for the Netherlands by ship, beginning with women and children.<sup>173</sup> Among these departures were also stowaways, mostly Indos unable to

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<sup>164</sup> 'Alle Visa Vervallen: Geen Nederlanders meer Toegelaten in Indonesie', *Gereformeerd Gezinsblad*, 4 December 1957, p. 1.

<sup>165</sup> Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, p. 584.

<sup>166</sup> J. Thomas Lindblad, 'The Importance of *Indonesianisasi* during the Transition from the 1930s to the 1960s', *Itinerario*, vol. 26, 2002, p. 67.

<sup>167</sup> 'Sinterklaas Ook in Djakarta' *De Waarheid: Volksdagblad voor Nederland*, 6 December 1957, p. 3.

<sup>168</sup> General information about the expulsion tends to state 5 December as the day when the Dutch were ordered to leave Indonesia, leading to the term 'Black Santa Claus', but newspaper articles indicate that the declaration first took place on 3 December.

<sup>169</sup> Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, p. 584.

<sup>170</sup> W.G. Sonius, 'Nota over de Indo-Europese Bevolkingsgroep in Indonesie', March 1951, p. 29, National Archive, Den Haag, Raad voor Sociale Aangelegenheden in Indonesie 2.27.01.01, inventory number 127

<sup>171</sup> Aantal Nederlanders in Indonesia, in National Archives, Den Haag, Raad voor Sociale Aangelegenheden in Indonesie 2.27.01.01, inventory number 80.

<sup>172</sup> 'Soekarno Blijft op Irian-Aanbeeld Hameren: Djakarta wil Aandacht van Interne Situatie Afleiden', *De Tijd: Godsdiensig-Staatkundig Dagblad*, 6 December 1957, p. 5; 'Demonstraties in Djakarta: Vrijdag a.s. Weer Grote Nieuw-Guinea-Meeting', *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 11 November 1957, p. 1.

<sup>173</sup> 'Vrouwen en Kinderen naar Nederland: Stap van Vrijwel Alle Nederlandse Ondernemingen in Indonesie', *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 30 December 1957, p. 2.

obtain visas.<sup>174</sup> Of the former Dutch citizens who had taken Indonesian citizenship, numbering approximately 33,000 individuals, 25,510 eventually changed their minds and applied for Dutch visas, including Chinese and Indonesians.<sup>175</sup> They were termed ‘*spijtoptanten*’ in Dutch, or ‘regretters’. A small number continued to trickle into the Netherlands in the late 1950s and 1960s, until as late as 1967. In the end, about 6000 former Dutch citizens in total remained in Indonesia. This figure does not include the unknown number who had never held Dutch citizenship.

## Conclusion

When the Japanese invaded Java, Indos with European status were a small minority, still privileged compared with most Indonesians, but socially and politically isolated from indigenous Indonesian society and concerned with their position vis-à-vis *totok* Dutch. Japanese policies targeting Indos demanded that they make a choice between Dutch and Indonesian identity, which meant there was no room for a distinct Indo identity. The majority chose a Dutch identity, despite the costs that such a decision would entail under Japanese rule. This choice increased their visibility and, in the eyes of Indonesians, linked them irrevocably to the former colonial regime and problematized their position after independence was declared in August 1945. Indonesian pemuda targeted groups linked to the Dutch, and killed and tortured as many as 30,000 Indos and Dutch across Java. The propaganda techniques that pemuda groups used to incite Indonesians to take action against members of these groups were also a product of Japanese training, but the link between Indos and colonialism was long established. After the transfer of sovereignty in 1949, only around 25,000 of a total of about 200,000 Indos of Dutch citizenship took Indonesian citizenship, but most Indos with Dutch citizenship stayed in Indonesia. Increasing suspicion and hostility from Indonesians during the 1950s made their circumstances difficult, as did adjusting to a

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<sup>174</sup> These stowaways, like the seventy discovered in June 1958 when the *Johan van Oldenbarneveldt* arrived in the Netherlands, were mentioned in the back pages of Dutch newspapers. Photo caption, ‘De Johan van Oldenbarneveldt’, *Amigo di Curacao: Weekblad voor de Curacaosche Eilenden*, 27 June 1958, p. 5; Humphrey de la Croix, ‘Repatriëren als Verstekeling. Deel 4: Max Ferdinandus: Het Levensverhaal van een Verstekeling uit Indonesië (2)’, July 2012, Indisch Historisch: Geschiedenis Online van, voor en met Indische Nederlanders, available from <http://www.indischhistorisch.nl/tweede/repatriering/repatriering-repatrieren-als-verstekeling-deel-4-max-ferdinandus-het-levensverhaal-van-een-verstekeling-uit-indonesie-2/>, accessed 17 November 2015.

<sup>175</sup> Geets *et al* write that the *spijtoptanten* immigration ended in 1967, while Meijer writes that the total number of successful applications between 1951 and 1967 was 22,510, with the last applications were processed in 1968. Gijs Beets, Corina Huisman, Evert van Imhoff, Santo Koesoebjono and Evelien Walhout, ‘De Demografische Geschiedenis van de Indische Nederlanders’, Nederlands Interdisciplinair Demografisch Instituut, Rapport no. 64, Den Haag, 2002, p. 13, available from <http://www.nidi.nl/shared/content/output/reports/nidi-report-64.pdf>, accessed 20 February 2015; Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld*, p. 378.

postcolonial society in which their Dutch language abilities and education were no longer relevant. More and more chose to migrate to the Netherlands or Netherlands New Guinea. However, Sukarno increasingly campaigned for Indonesia to take control of Dutch New Guinea throughout the 1950s, making the position of those who migrated there increasingly uncertain. When tensions reached boiling point in late 1957, the Sukarno government expelled Dutch citizens from Indonesia over this issue. In the memories of many Indos who retained Dutch citizenship and were forced to leave, this action became representative of Indonesian racism towards Indos, beginning with the Bersiap killings and culminating with their final mass expulsion. They left Indonesia disillusioned by their experiences of violence and poverty there and embittered towards the Sukarno government. This idea of Indonesia, and how it has affected ongoing representations in the Netherlands of Indos remaining there, is the subject of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER THREE

### MEMORY, ACTIVISM AND BEING DUTCH IN TRANSNATIONAL INDO COMMUNITIES

Between 1945 and the late 1960s, around 200,000 Indos repatriated to the Netherlands.<sup>1</sup> Of those in the Netherlands, about 60,000 later migrated to the United States.<sup>2</sup> Approximately 10,000 Indisch Dutch (Dutch citizens born in the Indies) migrated to Australia. Six thousand of these migrants migrated directly from Indonesia, most of them *totok* Dutch, and the remainder departed from the Netherlands, though many others were unable to obtain visas because of Australia's White Australia policy.<sup>3</sup> An unknown number migrated to other countries, such as Brazil, Canada and New Zealand. Most of those who left Indonesia brought stories with them of poverty and discrimination during the Sukarno years. Concern that those 'left behind' in Indonesia continued to experience difficult circumstances inspired Indos outside Indonesia to establish charities to support them. Most of the money that these charities raised came from members of these transnational Indo communities who kept in contact with each other. The material produced by these charities painted a grim picture of life for Indos in Indonesia – often, in fact, the only picture – but this information over time reflected more the memories of postcolonial Indonesia from Indos who left, rather than those who stayed who encountered changed circumstances in Indonesia.

This chapter outlines the process by which memories of the Indies as a peaceful tropical paradise, and of a violent, poverty-stricken Indonesia hostile towards Indos, became standard tropes in a genre of speaking and writing about the Indo past in the Netherlands and among transnational Indo communities. This genre, which developed in the 1980s, has experienced a boom in the Netherlands in the last twenty years or so. First-hand experiences and memories of the Indies and Indonesia have become 'historical capital' in the booming memoir and personal history market of the Netherlands. The frameworks established by this genre have had an impact on

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<sup>1</sup> Pamela Pattynama, 'Assimilation and Masquerade: Self-Constructions of Indo-Dutch Women', *European Journal of Women's Studies*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2000, p. 281; Guno Jones, 'Tussen Onderdanen, Rijksgenoten en Nederlanders: Nederlandse politici over burgers uit Oost en West en Nederland, 1945-2005', unpublished PhD thesis, Amsterdam, Vrije Universiteit, 2007, p. 338, available from <http://dare.uvu.vu.nl/bitstream/handle/1871/12686/7909.pdf?sequence=5>, accessed 23 November 2015. The figure varies widely, but in academic sources generally ranges from 100,000 to 200,000 Indos.

<sup>2</sup> 'Status of Indos in the United States', *AmerIndo*, available from <http://amerindo.berkeley.edu/history/status-of-indos-in-the-united-states/>, accessed 23 November 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Wim Willems, 'No Sheltering Sky: Migrant Identities of Dutch Nationals from Indonesia', in Joost Coté and Loes Westerbeek (eds.), *Recalling the Indies: Colonial Culture and Postcolonial Identities*, Amsterdam, Aksant, 2005, p. 312, n. 3.

contemporary writing about Indos outside and in Indonesia, and influence the ways members of transnational Indo communities identify as Indo and recall a shared past. I also examine the process by which Indo communities, especially in the Netherlands, established organisations, magazines and websites, which created the space for a collective transnational identity and collective voice about the colonial and postcolonial past.

### **Dutch historiography on Indos in the Netherlands**

In the Netherlands, the term ‘Indische Nederlanders’ (Indisch Dutch) refers to Dutch citizens who were mostly members of the European community in the Indies, along with their descendants. The term ‘Indisch’ broadly relates to the culture and people of the European population in the Netherlands Indies. ‘Indisch Dutch’ used in its contemporary sense generally refers to Indos because they form the largest and most vocal component of the Indisch Dutch community.<sup>4</sup> History writing about Indos born in the Indies is a fairly recent development that has arisen in tandem with rising interest in the Netherlands in the history of the Dutch empire. The Indisch Dutch community since the 1980s has argued for a revised history of Dutch colonialism in which their role is acknowledged and affirmed.<sup>5</sup> The new Indisch history frames them as part of the Dutch nation, even if, as one scholar notes, their history is placed in ‘brackets’ in broader narratives of Dutch history.<sup>6</sup>

Before the 1980s and 1990s, Indos were generally thought to have successfully assimilated to broader Dutch society. They were considered a ‘model minority’ and were often compared favourably with later, mostly Muslim, minorities.<sup>7</sup> Those who were Dutch citizens were officially termed ‘repatriates’ rather than ‘migrants’, though many had never visited the country. Indos began arriving in the Netherlands in significant numbers from 1945, but it was not until the 1957 mass exodus that the broader Dutch public became aware of them as a group after the media began to cover their arrival in Dutch ports. The Central Committee of Religious and Private Initiatives

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<sup>4</sup> Robert Cribb, “‘Indisch’ Identity and Decolonization”, *IIAS Newsletter*, vol. 31, July 2003, p. 52, available from [http://www.ias.nl/sites/default/files/IIAS\\_NL31\\_52.pdf](http://www.ias.nl/sites/default/files/IIAS_NL31_52.pdf), accessed 27 November 2015.

<sup>5</sup> See Vincent J.H. Houben, ‘Boundaries of Race: Representations of *Indisch* in Colonial Indonesia Revised’, in Harald Fischer-Tiné and Susanne Gehrmann (eds), *Empires and Boundaries: Rethinking Race, Class, and Gender in Colonial Settings*, New York, Routledge, 2009, pp. 66-85.

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Goss, ‘From *Tong-Tong* to Tempo Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History, 1957-1961’, *Indonesia*, no. 70, October, 2000, pp. 9-36.

<sup>7</sup> Gloria Wekker, “‘After the Last Sky: Where Do the Birds Fly?’ What Can European Women Learn from Anti-Racist Struggles in the United States?”, in Helma Lutz, Ann Phoenix and Nira Yuwan-Davis (eds), *Crossfires: Nationalism, Racism and Gender in Europe*, London, Pluto Press, 1995, p. 80.

for the Social Care for Repatriates (Central Comité van Kerkelijke en Particulier Initiatief voor Social Zorg aan Gerepatrieerden, CCKP) looked after new arrivals from 1950 onwards. Together with the media, the CCKP appealed to the Dutch public to help smooth their integration.<sup>8</sup> Some Indos were housed in repatriation camps, while others went immediately to *pensions* (boarding houses) to reside with other Indo families. They were given food vouchers and other forms of assistance from private initiatives.<sup>9</sup> The postwar government expected them to assimilate to one of the main religious and ideological ‘pillars’ widely believed to comprise Dutch democracy and society, in what was termed the ‘*verzuiling*’ (pillarisation) system. Around 25,000 refugees arrived from Indonesia between 1957 and 1965, including those from Netherlands New Guinea. Despite initial media attention, Indo assimilation to Dutch society was viewed as a ‘silent’ and largely invisible process.<sup>10</sup> The general view among politicians and academics until the 1980s was that Dutch society relatively easily accepted new arrivals from Indonesia.<sup>11</sup> A few episodes suggest that this perception was not entirely true, such as riots that broke out in June 1958 in The Hague between young Indo and Dutch men, graffiti demanding ‘Indos ga weg’ (Indos go away)<sup>12</sup> and memories from Indo arrivals who recalled experiencing indifference or complete ignorance as to who they were. Some also reported feeling affronted that they were labelled ‘Indonesian’ and encountering surprise from other Dutch citizens that many of these ‘Indonesians’ could speak Dutch.

### **Tjaalie Robinson**

Among the new arrivals after 1957 were the so-called *spijtoptanten* (‘regretters’), or former Dutch citizens who had taken Indonesian citizenship but then changed their minds. Indo writer Tjaalie Robinson (Jan Boon), together with others, campaigned for nation-wide support for the Dutch government to grant *spijtoptanten* visas. He emphasised that responsibility for their fate lay with the Netherlands and that they were of Dutch heritage.<sup>13</sup> He established the Comité Nationale Actie Steunt Spijtoptanten Indonesië (National Campaign Committee for Support to Indonesian

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<sup>8</sup> Goss, ‘From *Tong-Tong* to *Tempo Doeloe*’, pp. 15, 20.

<sup>9</sup> Gert Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands: Sixty-Five Years of Forgetting, Commemorating, Silencing*, trans. Annabel Howland, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2010, p. 40.

<sup>10</sup> Willems, ‘No Sheltering Sky’, p. 255; Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands*, p. 30.

<sup>11</sup> Wim Willems, ‘De Wetenschappelijke Stand van Zaken over Indische Nederlanders’, in Wim Willems (ed.), *Indische Nederlanders in de Ogen van de Wetenschap*, Leiden, Centrum voor Onderzoek van Maatschappelijke Tegenstellingen, 1990, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> Lizzy van Leeuwen, *Ons Indisch Erfgoed: Zestig Jaar Strijd om Cultuur en Identiteit*, Amsterdam, Bakker, 2008, p. 48.

<sup>13</sup> Willems, ‘No Sheltering Sky’, p. 258.

Spijtoptanten, NASSI) and succeeded in engaging academics and Dutch MPs to support the spijtoptanten cause. Eventually NASSI succeeded in changing government policy, and *spijtoptanten* were granted visas to migrate to the Netherlands.

Tjalie Robinson became the mouthpiece of a sizeable proportion of the Indisch community thanks to *Tong-Tong* (taken from a Malay onomatopoeic word meaning the sound a signal drum makes), his magazine for Indos. *Tong-Tong* originated as the magazine *Onze Brug* (Our Bridge), which was generally considered a mouthpiece for Dutch New Guinea propaganda. Once its name was changed to *Tong-Tong* in 1958 and it began to feature colonial photographs of groups of Indisch Dutch in which readers could recognise family members, old friends and acquaintances, *Tong-Tong*'s number of subscribers began to soar. Robinson and his readers sought to portray a pleasant version of the colonial past, termed 'Tempo Doeloe' ('Times Past'). This period of comfortable memories, stretching over roughly four decades from the end of the nineteenth century to the 1920s, lived in the magazine's pages, even as many Indos quietly assimilated to outward appearances to broader Dutch society. *Tong-Tong* provided one of only a small number of written forums in which Indo repatriates felt they could speak about colonial Indonesia. By the end of 1960, *Tong-Tong* had ten thousand subscribers.<sup>14</sup> Robinson used the magazine's network to organise rallies, exhibitions, meetings, banquets and festivals.<sup>15</sup> Among these festivals was the annual Pasar Malam Besar (Large Night Market), established in 1959 and held in The Hague. Many Indos had settled in The Hague, which gave rise to its jocular nickname of the *grote kampoeng* (big [Indies] village). This festival featured public displays of what its organisers considered to be Indo culture – kroncong troupes, Dutch Indonesian food, theatre, lectures and so on.<sup>16</sup> Robinson migrated to the United States in 1963 after becoming increasingly frustrated with Dutch lack of interest in the version of a separate Indo identity and history that he promulgated. In 1963, he founded an American version of *Tong-Tong*, which was later called *De Indo*. This magazine began as the magazine of the American Indo Community Centre 'De Soos' (The Sociëteit) – an echo of the Indisch social clubs of the Netherlands Indies – and continued *Tong-Tong*'s tradition of publishing photographs for the American Indo community.

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<sup>14</sup> Goss, 'From *Tong-Tong* to Tempo Doeloe', p. 26, citing Anthonio, 'Tjalie Robinson', p. 113.

<sup>15</sup> Goss, 'From *Tong-Tong* to Tempo Doeloe', p. 26.

<sup>16</sup> The festival continues to be held to the present.

## Facing the colonial past

During the 1950s there was limited interest in the colonial past in the Netherlands beyond the group surrounding Tjalie Robinson.<sup>17</sup> Broader Dutch society was almost completely unaware of the Pacific War. Few Indos were willing to speak about their often traumatic experiences during the Japanese Occupation and the Indonesian National Revolution, and those who did frequently encountered indifference towards a former colony that the Netherlands was eager to forget after its embarrassing loss in 1949. During the 1960s, awareness of the Pacific War began to increase, though willingness to critically re-examine the Dutch role in Indonesia's Revolution proceeded much more slowly.<sup>18</sup> The first notable break in this silence came in 1969, after a Dutch war veteran admitted that Dutch troops had committed atrocities in Indonesia in 1945-49. Though questions have been raised about just how influential this single interview was in opening the topic up for wider conversation<sup>19</sup>, it did herald the beginning of a new interest in the colonial past. More and more academic studies on the Dutch East Indies began to be published from the 1970s. These studies were followed in the 1980s by novels and stories about the colonial past that presented a romanticised, idealised 'paradise' established by the colonial genre of novels about the Indies.<sup>20</sup> But Dutch Indos did not agree with all representations of the colonial past. Louis de Jong's portrayal of Indisch Dutch in his official history of the Netherlands Indies during World War Two in particular met with outrage.<sup>21</sup> This outrage led the Indisch Dutch community to publish a book to refute De Jong's portrayal of Indos, which they perceived as disparaging.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps in tandem with the belief that Indos provided an example of a 'successful' minority came increasing interest in explaining why Indos could apparently assimilate so seamlessly to Dutch society. At times they were contrasted with other, 'problematic' minorities like Moluccans and Muslim groups. After members of the second generation of Indisch Dutch reached adulthood in the 1970s and 1980s, some began to criticise

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<sup>17</sup> Goss, 'From *Tong-Tong* to *Tempo Doeloe*', p. 12.

<sup>18</sup> Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands*, p. 89.

<sup>19</sup> Remco Raben, 'On Genocide and Mass Violence in Colonial Indonesia', in Bart Luttikhuis and A. Dirk Moses (eds), *Colonial Counterinsurgency and Mass Violence: the Dutch Empire in Indonesia*, London, Routledge, 2014, pp. 340-41.

<sup>20</sup> Willems, 'No Sheltering Sky', p. 252; Joost Coté, 'Romancing the Indies: the Literary Construction of *Tempo Doeloe*, 1880-1930, in Joost Coté and Loes Westerbeek (eds.), *Recalling the Indies: Colonial Culture and Postcolonial Identities*, Amsterdam, Aksant, 2005, pp. 133-71.

<sup>21</sup> L. de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, vol. 11a, *Nederlands-Indië*, The Hague, Staatsuitgeverij, 1969.

<sup>22</sup> Houben, 'Boundaries of Race', p. 68.

their parents' generation for outwardly assimilating and only maintaining cultural distinctiveness in the private sphere. They also criticised their parents for clinging to memories of the Japanese Occupation and Tempo Doeloe and not coming to terms with events from 1945.<sup>23</sup>

Around the same time, Indisch Dutch organisations – including Indos, war veterans and other Dutch citizens born in the Indies – also began to lobby for their recognition in Dutch memorial culture and in Dutch historical consciousness.<sup>24</sup> Members of both generations of Indos pushed for the government recognise Indo wartime experiences and provide compensation for loss of property during the Japanese Occupation, just as Dutch citizens living in the Netherlands had been compensated for losses incurred during the German occupation. The government offered a series of measures aimed to provide some benefits and payments for internees and victims of the Second World War in the Indies. However, these organisations continued to ask for full back-pay from the Dutch government for former Dutch civil servants in addition to compensation. These civil servants had never received the pay they were due during the Japanese Occupation. The Indonesian government – to whom the Dutch government transferred responsibility with the transfer of sovereignty – never paid the salaries owed. One parliamentary bill for payments to victims or their widows addressed only the claims of former internees of Japanese camps, who were mostly *totok* Dutch. A central rallying point for the many organisations lobbying for compensation and back-pay for Indisch Dutch was that *totok* Dutch from Indonesia continued to be unfairly privileged in the Netherlands, as they had been in the Netherlands Indies. From the 1970s, Dutch policy began to distinguish between citizens who were labelled '*allochtoon*' (of foreign birth, or an individual with one parent of foreign birth, including Indos born in the Indies) and the majority who were termed '*autochtoon*' (of Dutch heritage).<sup>25</sup> Awareness among Indos of how government and society distinguished them from *totok* Indisch Dutch, as well as from the majority of the Dutch population born in the Netherlands, encouraged many to

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<sup>23</sup> Willems, 'No Sheltering Sky', p. 261; Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands*, p. 111.

<sup>24</sup> Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands*, p. 84.

<sup>25</sup> The Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics came to distinguish between 'western allochtoon' and 'non-western allochtoon', with migrants from Indonesia classed under the first category. Dvora Yanow and Marleen van der Haar, 'People out of Place: Allochthony and Autochthony in the Netherlands' Identity Discourse – Metaphors and Categories in Action', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2013, pp. 227-61.

throw their support behind these Indisch organisations, nineteen of which united in 1992 to become the Indisch Platform.<sup>26</sup>

### **The ‘new Indisch history’**

In 1995, as Vincent Houben has noted, the Dutch government and broader society were forced to confront the colonial past much more directly. The year not only featured commemorations of the first Dutchmen who left to search for spices in the Indies but also the fifty year celebrations of independence in Indonesia. In December 1994, the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs announced the decision to grant a visa to a Dutch deserter, Poncke Princen, who had sided with the Indonesian Republic in Java in 1948 and was accused by Dutch veterans of war crimes. Veteran groups and the Indisch Platform lobbied the Dutch government to cancel Princen’s visa. His visit went ahead, but the public outcry surrounding the issue led to the chairman of the Dutch parliament to call for a debate on the nation’s colonial past.<sup>27</sup> This past was largely represented in public culture as idyllic and utopic under colonial rule, and generally brushed over the Indonesian independence cause. Novels, films, photo books, television series, restaurants and festivals across the Netherlands, including smaller versions of the much more famous Indisch Tong Tong Fair, paid tribute to this romanticised version of the Netherlands Indies. Most notable among these forms of public culture was the installation of several rides and attractions at the most popular theme park in the Netherlands, De Efteling, which included an ‘Old Indische’ train station and a VOC-themed rollercoaster ride.<sup>28</sup> Discussion of the Japanese Occupation and decolonisation, however – particularly alternative accounts that suggested violence on the Dutch side – were for the most part limited.

In response, in 1996 the Dutch government sponsored a project to write a history of the Indisch Dutch in the Netherlands Indies and the Netherlands. The project resulted in four books in what Vincent Houben has termed the ‘new Indisch history’ for its attempts to put the Indisch Dutch at the centre of a historical narrative.<sup>29</sup> The books notably frame Indos as members of the Indisch Dutch community. Their history in these volumes is presented as an important component in the history of Dutch colonialism

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<sup>26</sup> Oostindie, *Postcolonial Netherlands*, pp. 80-81.

<sup>27</sup> Vincent Houben, ‘A Torn Soul: the Dutch Public Discussion of the Colonial Past in 1995’, *Indonesia*, vol. 63, 1997, pp. 48-52.

<sup>28</sup> Paul Bijl, ‘Colonial Memory and Forgetting in the Netherlands and Indonesia’, in Bart Luttikhuis and A. Dirk Moses (eds), *Colonial Counterinsurgency and Mass Violence: The Dutch Empire in Indonesia*, London, Routledge, 2014, p. 265.

<sup>29</sup> Houben, ‘Boundaries of Race’, p. 69.

and the Dutch state.<sup>30</sup> These books comprise the ‘canon’ of Dutch Indo history in the Netherlands and sparked other, personal histories in response. Indos’ life histories, as recounted to me in interviews and in other material, appear to be framed against the histories outlined in these volumes. The volumes themselves both drew on narratives produced by Indos in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century Netherlands, and contributed to the ongoing production of oral histories about this group, so that the two bodies exist in dialogue with each other. They also drew on terms used by the Indisch Dutch community, such as ‘*warga negara*’ (former Dutch citizens who remained in Indonesia, not ‘citizens’ more broadly as the term means in Indonesian), ‘*Indië*’ (the Netherlands Indies, rather than colonial Indonesia) and ‘*pemoeda*’ (pemuda, specifically those during the Bersiap period). This project was followed by a massive oral history project in 2001 to interview Dutch citizens born or who had lived in the Indies and Indonesia about their experiences in the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s.<sup>31</sup>

### **Transnational Indo activism**

In 2000, the government provided 3000 guilders to each Indisch war victim in what was largely derided by Indisch organisations as a gesture (*Het Gebaar*) and nothing more. Indo organisations, particularly the Indisch Platform and the United States-based Indo Project, established in 2009 as an English language project for younger generations of Indos in the United States and elsewhere, continue to campaign for full back-pay to be paid to Dutch citizens who had been civil servants during the Japanese Occupation.<sup>32</sup> On 3 November 2015, the Dutch government negotiated an agreement with the Indisch Platform to pay compensation of €25,000 each to former civil servants still living.<sup>33</sup> Inez Hollander, member of the Indo Project’s board of directors, published a response on the Indo Project’s website criticising the agreement:

Does this mean the Indische Kwestie [Indisch Question] is closed once and for all?  
What about the many Japanese internees, relatives of those same soldiers and civil

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<sup>30</sup> Ulbe Bosma, Remco Raben and Wim Willems, *De Geschiedenis van de Indische Nederlanders*, Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 2006; Hans Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld: de Twintigste Eeuw*, Amsterdam, B. Bakker, 2004; Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, *De Oude Indische Wereld 1500-1920*, Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 2003; and Wim Willems, *De Uittocht uit Indië: 1945-1995*, Amsterdam, Bakker, 2001.

<sup>31</sup> See ‘Stichting Mondelinge Geschiedenis Indonesië (SMGI)’, Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (KITLV), 2001: *Thematische Collectie: Interviewcollectie Stichting Mondelinge Geschiedenis Indonesië*. DANS, available from <http://dx.doi.org/10.17026/dans-29j-n5st>, accessed 27 December 2015.

<sup>32</sup> For a full discussion of this issue, see Hans Meijer and Margaret Leidelmeijer, *Indische Rekening: Indië, Nederland en de Backpay-Kwestie 1945-2005*, Amsterdam, Boom, 2005.

<sup>33</sup> Gijs Herderscheê, ‘Ambtenaren Krijgen Achterstallig Salaris na 70 Jaar Uitbetaald’, *De Volkskrant*, 3 November 2015, <http://www.volkskrant.nl/politiek/ambtenaren-krijgen-achterstallig-salaris-na-70-jaar-uitbetaald~a4177485/>, accessed 30 November 2015.

servants, who were interned, starved, tortured and killed because they carried Dutch passports? And what about the brave men and women who resisted the Japanese? In the Netherlands, resistance heroes were recognized, honoured and received pensions after the war, but many who resisted the Japanese on behalf of their queen and country never saw a penny. Their children, orphaned at times, and traumatized by the camps and the Bersiap were treated in a similar way.... Back pay is great, but not if it means that the topic of reparations for all is off the table.... Yet, the fact that some money is now actually coming out of Dutch coffers... is a form of REAL RECOGNITION which has been 70 years overdue.<sup>34</sup>

This response drew on the narratives produced in decades of campaigning for acknowledgement of Indos' suffering as Dutch citizens. Even though it came from outside the Netherlands, it indicates the close relationship and similar ways of identifying between transnational Indo communities, as Dutch citizens who suffered because of the Dutch loss of the Indies in 1949.

Besides criticism among transnational Indo communities over the Dutch government's treatment of Dutch Indos, a further issue raised by Indo activists is that of government responsibility towards Indos remaining in Indonesia who were refused a visa. Dutch Indo and American Indo charities support a number of these Indonesian Indos and broadcast information among transnational Indo communities regarding their plight. The tradition of charities established to support impoverished Indos can be traced back to the emergence of the Indo community in the late nineteenth century, when Indo activists began to promote initiatives to support Indos in the Indies. After independence, these charities and foundations took on a distinct character of their own. In the early 1950s, such organisations assisted Dutch citizens remaining in Indonesia, and often had connections with the Dutch High Commission. One document from the Bandung Consulate recounted a Mr Leidelmeyer's request to the Consulate on 28 March 1953 to establish a social association for the Indisch Dutch.<sup>35</sup> The document's author noted that Mr Leidelmeyer was an Indo from Kemajoran (an area noted for its lower class Indo population who spoke poor Dutch), "but was determined not to belong to this type" of people.<sup>36</sup> He was, it should be noted, presenting his case to a Dutch audience, to support Dutch citizens, and so the term 'Indisch Dutch' was more relevant than 'Indo'. Within just a few years after this episode took place, however, the situation had drastically

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<sup>34</sup> Capitals in original. Inez Hollander, 'Civil Servants to Receive Back Pay after 70 Years – Great Gesutre but at What Cost?', *The Indo Project*, 4 November 2015, <http://www.theindoproject.org/featured/civil-servants-to-receive-back-pay-after-70-years>, accessed 30 November 2015.

<sup>35</sup> Nationaal Archief, 2.05.61.03, 500,

<sup>36</sup> Susan Abeyasekere, *Jakarta: a History*, Singapore, Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 61.

changed. Particular areas famous for Indo communities like Kemajoran no longer featured mostly Indo families. The few Indos who remained were scattered across Indonesia, most of them married to Indonesians.

The main organisation supporting Indos who remained in Indonesia after 1957 was *Hulp aan Landgenoten in Indonesië* (HALIN). HALIN was established in 1955. Thanks to its connections with churches it was able to continue supporting Indos between 1957 and 1965 when diplomatic channels between the Netherlands and Indonesia were closed.<sup>37</sup> HALIN relied on personal and religious networks to find Indos, and tended to identify eligible recipients by their ability to speak Dutch. Its former Vice-Chairperson, Pierre Bovens, noted in 2007 that this second method proved unreliable, because so many former *gelijkgesteld* status and Dutch-educated Indonesians were able to speak Dutch as well.<sup>38</sup> In its heyday HALIN supported 1400 people, though not all of these were Indo.<sup>39</sup> As of November 2013, according to HALIN's Indonesia secretary Josta Rumahlaiselan, HALIN supported approximately six hundred people across Indonesia. Most were concentrated in Java, particularly Jakarta, Bandung and Surabaya, followed by Sumatra and Sulawesi. It had only one recipient in Ambon and one in East Nusa Tenggara. Until 2005, the foundation also supported former *gelijkgestelden* and several African former members of the KNIL who had migrated to the Indies from Dutch colonies in Africa. All recipients were born before 1945, thus restricting HALIN's work to people with a concrete link to colonial Indonesia and excluding a younger generation born during the Revolutionary period and the 1950s. HALIN focused on supporting impoverished Indos whose situation was "partly due to the poor relationship between the Netherlands and Sukarno's Indonesia (the dispute over New Guinea and others) in the '50s and early '60s, when many people lost their jobs and possessions."<sup>40</sup> Bovens explained that "as former Dutchmen and women they were marginalised by Soekarno. If they already had a job as a civil servant or in the large Dutch companies, they were pushed out and replaced by Indonesians." Yet, their circumstances were also "determined by the war and the efforts of the Dutch government to resist the independence of Indonesia, along with an unwillingness to send these people to the

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<sup>37</sup> HALIN, 'Het Werk van de Stichting HALIN in Perspectief', *HALIN: Hulp en Landgenoten in Indonesië*, <http://www.stichtinghalin.nl/Werkhalin.htm>, accessed 15 May 2014.

<sup>38</sup> Interview, F. Steijlen with P.J.G. Boevens, 8 March 2007.

<sup>39</sup> Interview, F. Steijlen with PJG Boevens, 8 March 2007.

<sup>40</sup> HALIN, 'Grote Behoeftaan Medische Hulpvoor Oude, Zieke, Voormalige Indische Nederlanders in Indonesië', *HALIN: Hulp en Landgenoten in Indonesië*, <http://www.stichtinghalin.nl/vdlboek.htm>, accessed 15 May 2014.

Netherlands.”<sup>41</sup> According to Josta, because many HALIN recipients had lost their parents during the war and the Bersiap period, or their papers during the 1940s, and were unable to prove that they were eligible to repatriate to the Netherlands, they could not obtain a visa to leave.

### **Popular ideas about Indos in Indonesia**

HALIN frequently referred to the Sukarno years to explain the difficult circumstances that its recipients found themselves in today. A book it produced in 2008 on the life stories of a number of recipients living on Java focused entirely on their experiences during the 1950s and 1960s, and made no mention of what happened during the Suharto years and later.<sup>42</sup> This focus is not unique to HALIN; in fact, it is a common theme in the material produced by other organisations established more recently to support Indonesian Indos. The US-based Alan Neys Memorial Fund (ANMF), established in 2000, also focused on this immediate period of decolonisation. The founder of the ANMF, Henny Neys, explained that after the *spijtoptanten* program ended,

when the borders of Holland were closed the discrimination to those people began. Not all but very many of those "people who were left behind" [as] I call them, became very poor. They lost their jobs which were given to the Indonesian people, their houses and now live in the very very poor so to say kampongs...<sup>43</sup>

Help de Indischen in Indonesia, established in 2010, also emphasised the decolonisation period of the 1950s. “Because of political developments after the transfer [of sovereignty] in 1950, the *Indischen* [Indisch Dutch] through no fault of their own ended up in needy circumstances.”<sup>44</sup> Common to the portrayals of Indonesian Indos in the material produced by these charities is the Dutch identity of Indos who stayed in Indonesia, and how anti-Dutch sentiment is still evident in Indonesia today. The opening dialogue of a Dutch television episode about the work of Help de Indischen in Indonesia, entitled ‘Vergeten Ouderen Surabaya’ (the Forgotten Elderly of Surabaya), painted a sobering picture of living conditions of Indos living in Surabaya:

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<sup>41</sup> HALIN, ‘Historische Achtergrond’, *HALIN: Hulp aan Landgenoten in Indonesië*, [http://www.stichtinghalin.nl/joomla/index.php?option=com\\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=59](http://www.stichtinghalin.nl/joomla/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=59), accessed 15 May 2014.

<sup>42</sup> Vilan van de Loo, *Familie Gebleven: Hulp aan Landgenoten in Indonesië*, De Rijp, Orange House, 2008.

<sup>43</sup> Henny Neys, personal communication via email, 15 November 2012.

<sup>44</sup> Stichting Help de Indischen in Indonesia, *Jaarverslag Help de Indischen in Indonesia 2013*, Prinsenbeek, Proficio Administraties, 15 March 2014, p. 8, available from <http://www.helpindischeninind.com/files/Jaarverslag%20Help%20De%20Indischen%202013.pdf>, accessed 31 December 2015.

Among the predominantly Islamic population live almost 100 elderly, invisible Indisch Dutch scattered throughout the city. They are called Indos. They live in severe poverty. Some live on the street, most without medicine or food and all without a pension. The Indos are Dutch, but cannot prove it, with all subsequent consequences. They all speak Dutch and love our queen. Some even have a Dutch parent. They all have Dutch names. Thus, they are discriminated against and excluded from society.<sup>45</sup>

A recent book titled *Vergeten door het Vaderland* (Forgotten by the Fatherland) also draws on the narrative that the Dutch government abandoned Indos in Indonesia, who continue to experience poverty and discrimination today as a result of decolonisation.<sup>46</sup> But the small number of researchers who have looked at Indos in Indonesia have questioned the material produced by Indo charities. In a study of Indisch families in Indonesia in 1992–1993, Carol Annink made “[t]he tentative conclusion... that not *all* Indisch Indonesians were treated as enemies by the Indonesians....”<sup>47</sup> Pamela Pattynama also wondered whether Indos experienced deliberate discrimination at the hands of Indonesians, referring to a “story doing the rounds in the Netherlands... [about] the discrimination and subordination of Indos in Indonesia. Were Indos really discriminated against?” She also questioned the idea that Indonesian Indos were poor: “For many Indisch Dutch, the idea that Indonesian Indos had financial difficulties is still alive. No doubt that was true, but not only for Indos [during that period].”<sup>48</sup>

The idea that Indos in Indonesia still consider themselves to be Dutch is evident not just in material produced by charities but also in popular opinion among transnational Indo communities. Leslie Boon, a Dutch Indo who interviewed Indos supported by HALIN and the ANMF in Jakarta, Depok and Bandung noted that not all Indos in Indonesia were comfortable with the Dutch term ‘Indisch’, or even ‘Indo’, in the mid-2000s:

In contrast to the Indo Pride that flourishes here in the Netherlands, most interviewees were not proud of their ‘Indischness’. Some found the word historically and, especially, politically tainted. Others used the word Indo only when talking about the beautiful actors on television with a mixed

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<sup>45</sup> Max Maakt Mogelijk, ‘Vergeten Ouderen Surabaya [The Forgotten Elderly of Surabaya], *Stichting Max Maakt Mogelijk*, available from <http://maxmaaktmogelijk.omroepmax.nl/projecten/indonesie/vergeten-ouderen-surabaya/>, accessed 16 July 2015.

<sup>46</sup> Wilma van der Matan and Wieteke van Dort, *Vergeten door de Vaderland*, Schoorl, Uitgeverij Conserve, 2015.

<sup>47</sup> Carol Annink, ‘*Orang Indo en Indonesian-Dutch: Indische Nederlanders in Indonesië en de Verenigde Staten van Amerika*’, in Wim Willems and Leo Lucassen (eds), *Het Onbekende Vaderland: de Repatriëring van Indische Nederlanders (1946–1964)*, The Hague, Sdu Uitgeverij Koninginnegracht, 1994, p. 149, emphasis in original.

<sup>48</sup> Pamela Pattynama, ‘Ik Woon Hier and Ik Hoor Hier. Indo’s in Indonesië. Hoe is Het hun Vergaan?’, *Pasarkrant*, November 1996, p. 8.

background.... It was striking how often, on being asked ‘do you feel Indisch’, they replied with a sigh that ‘we are already assimilated’....”<sup>49</sup>

Ingrid McCleary, editor of the Indo Project’s e-newsletter, wrote in the newsletter’s 2014 spring edition that “To many Indos, Holland will remain their first Homeland, even as we are now spread around the world.”<sup>50</sup> Speaking Dutch was a central component of this transnational Indo identity. In the newsletter’s 2013 fall/winter edition that looked especially at Indonesia, McCleary wrote about a conversation she had with a third generation Indo in Indonesia who reported he did not know of any Indo communities in Makassar, Jakarta and Bandung:

This perturbed me because I’d naively envisioned being able to speak Dutch to some Indos when I finally made it back to Sumatra, Indonesia.... I asked Henny Neys [from the Alan Neys Memorial Fund].... She also said, ‘No, the Indos are too spread out.’ [M]y heart dropped a beat because when I had returned to Holland for the first time in 49 years in 2011, I felt a strong connection to Indos there, in large part because I could speak Dutch with them. Was it really possible for the Dutch-Indos to have been fully assimilated in only 50 years? But no, I am happy to report that this is not the case for all of Indonesia. In Bali, near the Kuta Region, many Indos either vacation or retire there. Ron Elmensdorp, who lives in Soesterberg, Netherlands, vacations in Bali every year for a month. He states, “Yes, in Kuta, there is an Indo community. We speak Dutch, English and Indonesian and meet almost every day on Oranjeplein located on Kuta beach.” Whew! I breathed a huge sigh of relief.... With Indos spread out around the world, it is good to know that there remain those who remember the Dutch East Indies to keep the candle lit.<sup>51</sup>

This conceptualisation of Indo identity across borders is very strongly connected to the Netherlands and to the Netherlands Indies as a component of the Dutch empire, and does not frame Indos as a part of Indonesian history. In many ways it does not apply to most Indos living in Indonesia today (see Chapter Four), but rather reflects the concerns of transnational Indo communities in their struggles for recognition and compensation from the Dutch government as Dutch citizens.

### **Dutch-Indo identity**

It also reflects the position of the Indo community in late colonial Indies society, which sought to portray itself as Dutch, and in immediate postcolonial Netherlands where Indos defined themselves as Dutch in response to pressures to assimilate. Jim from Alkmaar, for example, explained to me proudly in an interview that he was top of his

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<sup>49</sup> Leslie Boon, “‘We zijn als Kemeleons’: Indo’s in Indonesië”, *De Sobat: Nieuwsbrief voor Donateurs van de Stichting Tong Tong*, April 2004, p. 20.

<sup>50</sup> Ingrid McCleary, ‘Letter from the Editor’, *The Indo Project Newsletter*, Spring (March-May) 2014.

<sup>51</sup> Ingrid McCleary, ‘Letter from the Editor’, *The Indo Project Newsletter*, Fall/Winter, 2013.

class in the Netherlands for Dutch geography. He arrived in the Netherlands in 1958 aged ten, but had been Dutch educated in the Netherlands Indies as well. In a subsequent written statement he highlighted that he knew Dutch and was familiar with the Netherlands, even though he was not born there: “We went to school [in the Netherlands] and knew we were different from the other kids. We spoke the language and knew a lot of the Netherlands.” Another man, Louis, who was born in Hollandia in Netherlands New Guinea, was even forbidden to use Indonesian by his parents once they repatriated to the Netherlands in 1962. Louis never identified as Indo until he went back to Indonesia in 2005 for the first time. Humphrey de la Croix, a Dutch Indo himself, was of the opinion that “once established in their new homelands Indos never explicitly considered themselves as a different ethnic group.”<sup>52</sup> The fact that Indos like Jim and Louis were termed ‘repatriates’ by the Dutch government, and never really considered ‘migrants’ to the same extent as other, later groups in the Netherlands, is indicative of the special position they had as ‘almost, but not quite’ Dutch in postcolonial Netherlands.<sup>53</sup>

But Indos who had lived in the Netherlands and then migrated to third countries also identified as Dutch, thanks to the strong networks between transnational Indo communities. In 1996, a group of Australian Indos held an exhibition on Dutch Indo history called ‘The Other Dutch’. Loes Westerbeek remarked that the title of the exhibition was significant: “they did not, for instance, call themselves ‘The Other Indonesians’. In their perception, this term would not have done justice to their specific Dutch European background.... It emphasize[d] their historical ties with the Netherlands.”<sup>54</sup> Similarly, in analysing oral history interviews with Australian Indo women, Westerbeek wrote that these women stressed similarities and “historical and cultural connections” with the Dutch, but discussed Indonesians in terms of opposition/difference, rather than similarities and connections.<sup>55</sup> When these same women went back to Indonesia, they did not find the Indies that they remembered. In

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<sup>52</sup> Humphrey de la Croix, ‘Eurasians of the Netherlands Indies: People in Diaspora (2)’, *Latitudes*, May 5 2013, available from <http://latitudes.nu/eurasians-of-the-netherlands-indies-people-in-diaspora-2/>, accessed 27 December 2015.

<sup>53</sup> Yanow and van der Haar, ‘People out of Place: Allochthony and Autochthony in the Netherlands’ Identity Discourse – Metaphors and Categories in Action’, p. 253, n. 9.

<sup>54</sup> Westerbeek, ‘An Indisch Identity in Australia’, in Joost Coté and Loes Westerbeek (eds.), *Recalling the Indies: Colonial Culture and Postcolonial Identities*, Amsterdam, Aksant, 2005, p. 303.

<sup>55</sup> Westerbeek, ‘An Indisch Identity in Australia’, p. 308.

fact, according to one woman, “there is no place to go back to”, except in memories and stories.<sup>56</sup>

Paul van der Veur, in a 1953 study of Indos in a replacement centre in the Netherlands, reported mixed responses from Indo repatriates to questions about their relationships in Indonesia with *totok* Dutch. Many reported that *totok* Dutch excluded them and discriminated against them though they had held European status. On the other hand, most reported their relationship with Indonesians to be good. Typical comments included “The lower-class Indonesians treated us as superiors, but intellectual Indonesians were our equal”; “We were honoured and respected; they were afraid of us”; and, in one comment illustrating the social and geographical distance between European status Indos and Indonesians, “We visited them; they treated us with respect; they knew we were a little higher.”<sup>57</sup> Pressures to assimilate in the Netherlands cemented the identity of this group as Dutch citizens, a status which nonetheless held a different meaning in there from what it had meant in the Netherlands Indies.

Shared experiences of migration to the Netherlands in the 1950s and 1960s, their desire to support charities, and the circulation of newsletters and websites meant that transnational Indo communities outside Indonesia could relatively easily find similarities with each other. As a result, some assumed that Indos in Indonesia must similarly speak Dutch, identify as Dutch and wish that they had taken the opportunity to repatriate to the Netherlands. Few newsletters feature stories about Indonesian Indos, partly because few in Indonesia can speak Dutch and partly because the frames of reference used among transnational Indo communities have little relevance for Indonesian Indos, particularly their emphasis on preserving the colonial past and a Dutch-Indo identity for younger generations.

The most well-known of these newsletters was *Tong-Tong*. *Tong-Tong*'s name was changed to *Moesson* (‘Monsoon’) in 1978. Tjalie Robinson's wife Lilian Ducelle took over as editor and director of the magazine following her husband's death. A new editor from 2001, Marjolein Asdonck, fostered a new focus in the magazine on preserving Indisch Dutch culture for younger generations.<sup>58</sup> Today, *Moesson* is aimed at all generations of Indisch men and women, mostly in the Netherlands. It is written in

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<sup>56</sup> Westerbeek, ‘An Indisch Identity in Australia’, p. 303.

<sup>57</sup> Paul W. van der Veur, ‘Introduction to a Socio-Political Study of the Eurasians of Indonesia’, PhD thesis, Cornell University, 1955, pp. 132-33.

<sup>58</sup> Moesson, ‘Geschiedenis’, *Moesson: het Indisch Maanblad*, <http://www.moesson.nl/historie/>, accessed 27 December 2015.

Dutch, sprinkled with occasional Malay words that are familiar to most Indisch Dutch. For the most part it discusses Indos in the Netherlands and focuses on life in the Netherlands Indies, with occasional stories about contemporary Indonesia or about issues relevant to the Dutch Indo community. These articles are written from the cultural and geographical position of the contemporary Netherlands. One issue featuring, for example, an historical article on Port Said, an important port-of-call for many Indos travelling to the Netherlands by boat, described it as “Port Said, the end of the civilised West.”<sup>59</sup> Difficult issues such as violence during the Japanese Occupation and subsequent Revolutionary Period are not emphasised, but do make occasional appearances. In one example, in the October 2006 edition of the magazine, an article discussed the fate of the large number of children with Dutch surnames buried in the Kembang Kuning cemetery in Surabaya, killed during the Bersiap period.<sup>60</sup> Sections on *Tempo Doeloe* are a regular feature, as are reviews of books on colonial Indonesia, along with Indisch (in most cases, Indonesian with Dutch spelling) recipes. Each edition also features advertisements about regular Indo *kumpulan* (social gatherings) in the Netherlands, which are a common activity among Dutch Indo communities in the Netherlands, the United States and Australia.

*De Indo*, the American version of *Tong-Tong*, has been edited and published since its founding by American Indo René Creutzburg.<sup>61</sup> In 2011 the magazine reached as many as 2000 readers, mostly in the United States and the Netherlands, but also in Indonesia and other countries.<sup>62</sup> The magazine is written predominantly in Dutch, with some English language letters from readers and English terms, and occasional Indonesian (Malay) words. One writer expressed delight that the July 2012 edition had featured only Dutch articles, and implying the belief that Indos were defined by their common language, Dutch: “It seems that everyone now realises that Dutch was and is still our common language.” *De Indo* largely features articles on the history of European society in the Netherlands Indies and personal memoirs, such as ‘My Childhood in a Sugar Company’ and so on.<sup>63</sup> Very few editions feature articles on the recent history of Indonesia, though there are accounts of holidays and readers’ impressions of Indonesia

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<sup>59</sup> Moesson, ‘Passagieren in Port Said’, *Moesson*, vol. 51, no. 5, November 2006, pp. 30-31.

<sup>60</sup> H. Vervoort, ‘De Dodentocht’, *Moesson*, vol. 51, no. 4, October 2006, pp. 42-45.

<sup>61</sup> René Creutzburg, personal communication via email, 6 March 2014.

<sup>62</sup> Humphrey de la Croix, ‘Amerindos 4: Mr. René Creutzburg and “His” Indo Magazine’, *Indisch Historisch*, <http://www.indischhistorisch.nl/derde-pagina/amerindos-2/amerindos-amerindos-4-mr-rene-creutzburg-and-his-indo-magazine/>, accessed 27 December 2015.

<sup>63</sup> H. van Ligten, ‘Mijn Kinderjaren op een Suikeronderneming -2 [My Childhood in a Sugar Company - 2]’, *De Indo*, vol. 49, no. 12, August 2012, pp. 27-28.

sixty years after leaving.<sup>64</sup> Some Indonesian Indos had access to *De Indo*, but this number was limited to those familiar with Dutch. Most of those who I asked were unaware of its existence. Similarly, most had never heard of *Moesson*, and few would have been able to afford its subscription fees in any case.

In Australia, the Indisch Dutch magazine *Bambu* was among the most popular magazines in terms of readership, with 536 subscribers at its peak.<sup>65</sup> *Bambu* was founded in 1995 by Andreas Flach, an Australian Indo who first repatriated to the Netherlands, then went back to Indonesia and subsequently lived in a number of other countries, including Ecuador and Suriname, before moving to Australia. *Bambu* began as the magazine of a group of Indos who continue to meet on Australia's Sunshine Coast every month, but its readership soon extended beyond Queensland to elsewhere in Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, France, Canada, and Indonesia, with former subscribers in Malaysia and Spain as well. It consists of letters and articles in Dutch and English on both colonial Indonesia and contemporary Indonesia, cartoons in a mix of Dutch and Malay, and a regular feature on 'Oude Indische Photo's' (old Indisch photos), perhaps an indication of the enduring influence of *Tong-Tong*. More so than *Moesson* and *De Indo*, it incorporates information about contemporary events in Indonesia; for example, one edition featured a short article and photos about the 2013 Jakarta floods.<sup>66</sup> Another recent feature in several editions of *Bambu* was 'Latihan Bahasa' (Indonesian language lessons).<sup>67</sup> A 2001 special edition of *Bambu* featured a collection of recipes, titled *Dapur Kecil [The Little Kitchen]: Indonesian Recipes Published by Bambu*.<sup>68</sup> Most recipes were submitted by a lecturer in Indonesian cooking at a technical college in Queensland. These recipes were listed as Indonesian and written in English, with names spelled with contemporary Indonesian spelling, rather than with Dutch spelling of Malay terms.

However, even though it dealt to a certain extent with modern Indonesia and was written in English, *Bambu*, like *De Indo* and *Moesson*, was written for an Indisch Dutch audience, who not only were mostly separate from Indonesian society in the 1940s and

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<sup>64</sup> One exception, an incomplete account in English by J.K. Stutterheim, of 'Bung Sukarno's Pan-Indonesia: 1961 through 1963', *De Indo*, vol. 50 no. 11, July 2013, pp. 28-29. For an example of a travel account, see J. Vogelsang, 'Recente Ervaringen in Indonesia [Recent Experiences in Indonesia]', *De Indo*, vol. 50, no. 7, March 2013, pp. 16-19.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Andreas Flach, Sippy Downs, 12 March 2014.

<sup>66</sup> B. Philip, 'Jakarta Bids to Keep the Floods at Bay', *Bambu: Independent International Dutch Indonesian Magazine*, vol. 26, no. 110, July-August 2013, pp. 23, 29, first published in *Le Monde*.

<sup>67</sup> W. Hoogendoor, 'Latihan Bahasa', *Bambu: Independent International Dutch Indonesian Magazine*, vol. 26, no. 114.

<sup>68</sup> *Bambu, Dapur Kecil: Indonesian Recipes Published by Bambu*, 2001 [self-published].

1950s but also, with the final expulsion of Indonesian citizens in 1957, were physically removed from Indonesian soil. While this group might consider the Dutch East Indies home, postcolonial Indonesia was a foreign country for most of them. The travel accounts of Indonesia in these magazines portrayed Indonesia as a holiday destination; the journeys were those of tourists, not migrants returning to their homeland. The advertisements in these magazines for heritage tours to Indonesia catered specifically to the Indisch Dutch, and involved visits to historical areas relevant for this group rather than just typical Indonesian tourist spots.<sup>69</sup> One woman declared in the December 2011 edition of *De Indo* that, “Indonesia is always in my heart and often on my mind. ‘De INDO’ provides me a window to the land and the people of the past. The beauty and culture are those seen nowhere else in the world.”<sup>70</sup> The past, then, and not contemporary Indonesia, is central to the way many Indos outside Indonesia choose to interact with Indonesia today.

The narrative(s) of suffering, difficulties and discrimination that hundreds of thousands of Indo immigrants experienced in Indonesia, particularly during the Bersiap, have led to a popular imagining of an independent Indonesia in which there was and is no place for Indos. Turbulent events, particularly of the 1940s, as well as later discrimination and the poverty of the 1950s provided the reason for their departure. Violence, discrimination and poverty were a feature of everyday life for many Indos during these decades, perhaps remembered more vividly by those who left than those who stayed because of their standard of living both before these events and after they settled in wealthier countries. But the trauma of this period for individuals who experienced it should by no means be understated or overlooked in any analysis of the place of this period in Indo history. One Australian Indo man, Andrew Marks, described how, when working with his mother in the kitchen of a Japanese internment camp during the Japanese Occupation of Java, he saw an Indo man tortured and shot. His family’s thirteen-bedroom home was ransacked and made unliveable during the Occupation. Andrew’s mother died in 1948. After the orphanage he and his siblings were sent to was burned down, the children lived on the streets, taking Indonesian names for their own safety. They almost starved. He suffered from beriberi and experienced temporary blindness from trachoma as a result of lack of food. He never returned to Indonesia,

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<sup>69</sup> Inez Hollander Lake, ‘General Meeting Today’, 10 December 2015, *The Indo Project*, available from <http://www.theindoproject.org/featured/general-meeting-backpay>, accessed 15 December 2015.

<sup>70</sup> A. Mahler, ‘Amerindo’s hebben Ook Talenten = “Moni Lisa”’, *De Indo*, 49e Jaargang [49<sup>th</sup> Year] No. 4, December 2011, p.18.

citing the trauma he experienced as a child as too difficult for him to face again. According to Vaya, a second generation Dutch Indo woman living in the Netherlands, in an interview with her mother Elly Schippers Soedarmo, her father of Dutch and Chinese descent “was beaten up almost until he died because of his looks. He was of Chinese and Dutch descent, so he had no rights. For a while he lived in the gutter.” In what seemed an exception to the rule, Elly did not experience poverty after her Chinese Dutch husband, mentioned above, was given a good position at a bank. It was their perceived wealth, along with the political situation in the mid-1960s, that drove her family to seek repatriation:

In 1966, Indonesians wrote in big letters on our fence, “OKB” (*orang kaya baru*), the new rich, because my husband had so much money. The Indonesians saw we had new furniture. I said to my husband we have to go now. At that time, communism was everywhere, all the generals, and then we were lucky that he worked at the bank and earned much money, while many, many people didn’t have a job....

On the other hand, it was extreme poverty that drove Yvonne Schlunt Boden and her family to become *spijtoptanten*. After three attempts, they were granted a visa in 1965, thanks to lobbying by family in the Netherlands, and she settled eventually in Rotterdam. Experiences varied, but many remembered the 1940s and 1950s with a mixture of fear, regret and sadness, and the colonial years of their relatively untroubled childhoods as the children of Europeans seemed much more tranquil by comparison.

### **Remembering life in the Indies**

Willem Flach described in his published memoirs how after the Japanese Occupation, his father returned to work as a customs official in Semarang and the family was able to resume life like before the War:

Life at home was like the good old days. We had a *baboe tjoetji* (a woman servant doing the washing only...). We had a *kokkie* (A cook, also female), and a *kebon* (a gardener)... It is amazing how they managed to do all that work without the aid of the modern tools that we have now.<sup>71</sup>

This life was far removed from the everyday lives of Indonesian inhabitants of the former Netherlands Indies, besides the servants with whom the family spoke broken Malay. Willem went on to recount how, when the family left for the Netherlands in 1948,

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<sup>71</sup> Willem Flach, *Never a Dull Moment: the Memoirs of Willem Flach*, Sippy Downs, QLD, Maju Publications, 2005, pp. 75-76.

we got our first shock. The Dutch wharfies came on board and started to carry the baggage.... They were all white people like Pa.... Sure, the shock did not last long, but we, *Indische mensen* (Indos), had to get used to the changed circumstances, where white people were doing menial tasks like the *tukangs* (labourers) in the *Indies*.<sup>72</sup>

Because the lives of many Indos were so far removed from the vast majority of the population of the Indies, the realities of starvation, manual labour and poverty that they encountered from the Japanese Occupation and after seemed all the more extreme. If the short-lived violence of 1945-47 was not enough to demonstrate that life for many middle- and upper-class Indisch families had irrevocably changed, difficulties retaining and finding employment for those with Dutch names and European features, the expulsion of Dutch citizens in 1957 and Sukarno's decision to nationalise Dutch companies in early 1958 made postcolonial Indonesia a nightmare for many.<sup>73</sup> Susan Rodgers asked whether the central place in Indo narratives given to the suffering of the 1940s is an attempt to deal with colonial guilt in remembering luxurious Indies lifestyles of Tempo Doeloe while most indigenous Indonesians lived in conditions vastly different Indisch society.<sup>74</sup> Susie Protschky described how a number of colonial Indies memoirs follow a particular narrative structure: idyllic lives from before the War that were then interrupted by the horror of internment camps and subsequent politicised violence.<sup>75</sup> Indos who remained in Indonesia did not recall 'hard times' of the 1940s and 1950s without prompting. Those I asked mentioned that while life was difficult, these difficulties were not unique to Indos, but a reflection of wider economic problems in Indonesia during the period. This is not to say that the thousands of Indos remaining in Indonesia did not experience poverty or discrimination during this period. Rather, as many were born into poverty and continued to experience difficult conditions like thousands of other Indonesians born illegitimately or with limited access to educational opportunities, and because the concept of 'government responsibility' is vastly different in Indonesia compared with the Netherlands, the way Indos in Indonesia described this period tended to be different from how Indos outside Indonesia described it. Suffering and trauma were normalised in the memories of Indonesian Indos; everyone struggled, not just Indos.

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<sup>72</sup> Flach, *Never a Dull Moment*, p. 77, italics and brackets in original.

<sup>73</sup> Jasper van de Kerkhof, 'Dutch Enterprise in Independent Indonesia: Cooperation and Confrontation, 1949-1958', *IAS Newsletter*, vol. 36, March 2005, p. 18, available from [http://www.ias.nl/sites/default/files/IAS\\_NL36\\_18.pdf](http://www.ias.nl/sites/default/files/IAS_NL36_18.pdf), accessed 27 December 2015.

<sup>74</sup> Susan Rodgers, 'A Nederlander Woman's Recollections of Colonial and Wartime Sumatra: from Sawahlunto to Bangkinang Internment Camp', *Indonesia*, vol. 79, 2005, p. 102.

<sup>75</sup> Susie Protschky, 'The Flavour of History: Food, Family and Subjectivity in Two Indo-European Women's Memoirs', *The History of the Family*, vol. 14, no. 4, 2009, p. 370.

Viewed from the perspective of the present, in which food, medical care and mobility are readily available to the majority of Indos living in the Netherlands, the United States and Australia, it is understandable why Dutch Indo memories of postcolonial Indonesia recall it as a poverty-stricken and hostile environment – a brief interlude that stands out in memories as very different to what came before. Poverty was a feature of everyday life for the majority of the inhabitants of what would become the Indonesian archipelago during the Japanese Occupation and during the twenty or so years following Independence in 1949. As Elly, from Enschede, who left Indonesia in 1965, described life in the early 1960s in Indonesia:

At that time in Indonesia, 1964, beginning '63, when my first child was born, you could not get soap, sugar – even rice you could not get at the market.... Also we could not get petroleum or fuel for cooking, and we bought wood to cook our rice. No soap, no sugar, no salt, no petroleum or rice. The Catholic church gave us food, and we used that to cook and eat.

But for those who left in 1957 or before, and who had little contact with non-Indos, their collective memories of poverty, discrimination and violence have become emblematic of postcolonial Indonesian. Perhaps some convinced themselves that conditions in Indonesia stayed the same so that they would not regret leaving.

Leaving Indonesia irrevocably changed Indos who departed for the Netherlands and elsewhere, and shaped the way that they and their children came to identify as a group. A second, third and even fourth generation of Indos in the Netherlands and the United States, who identify as Indo but never experienced life in Indonesia, have over the past two or so decades rallied around essentialised expressions of ethnic identity encouraged by an environment in both countries which promotes the search for one's roots and the celebration of cultural identities. Ricky Risolles, Dutch YouTube sensation and *Moesson* columnist, sold shirts declaring the bearer to be '100% Puur Indisch' ('100% Pure Indisch'), perhaps a response to popular ideas about 'racial purity' particularly prevalent in British colonialism. The US Indo Project website in 2012 began to sell badges with the words 'Indo Pride' printed on them.<sup>76</sup> Other items taken from Indonesian cultural heritage are claimed by many Indos in the Netherlands to be part of

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<sup>76</sup> See Ricky Risolle's personal website, <http://rickyrisolles.nl/toko/>, accessed 31 December 2015. The term '100% Indisch' was also used in the title of a heated editorial commentary by Siem Boon for the May 2010 edition of the popular Dutch Indo magazine *Indisch Anders* (Indisch Others). See Siem Boon, 'Authentiek Gemengd: 100% Indisch', *Indisch Anders*, vol. 5, no. 1, May 2010, p. 3, available from <http://siemboon.nl/indisch/authentiek-gemengd-100-procent-indisch/>, accessed 27 December 2015. For more information on Indo Pride badges, see <http://www.theindoproject.org/site/blog/indo-pride>, accessed 27 December 2015.

a Dutch Indo culture, such as Indonesian dishes carried over from the Netherlands Indies, and *kroncong* (*krontjong* in Dutch), a form of folk music influenced by Portuguese and Dutch music and instruments that today forms a genre of Indonesian music. Online resources and communities for the broader Dutch Indo community in the Netherlands, like *Indisch 3.0*, draw heavily on prescriptive statements, accepted as self-evident truths, about what it means to be Indisch or Indo. Several of these statements seem to be defined against stereotypical ‘Dutch’ characteristics, like being financially independent and stinginess. The Agerbeek family in Alkmaar jokingly used the anecdote of a biscuit tin in an interview as an example of what it meant to be Indo. In a typical Dutch family, they said, the biscuit tin would be opened and briefly offered to guests, and then snapped shut again before all the biscuits were taken. In an Indo family, the tin would be opened and left open until all the biscuits were eaten or the guests left. Two articles by authors Henny N. Edelman and David J. Edelman on leisure among retired Indos in The Hague, from 2002 and 2011, discussed the importance of family, food, hospitality for Indos. They described an Indo culture that was a syncretic mix of ‘Asian’ and ‘western’ cultures.<sup>77</sup> According to one article,

an important element of Indo culture, which is due to the heavy influence of Asian culture, is the very clear priority that family has in life. In Eastern cultures, it is critical to society’s judgement of a family’s success in life to be able to show that a family’s bond is strong.<sup>78</sup>

Similar ideas were repeated in my own interviews in the Netherlands, and in Loes Westerbeek’s interviews in Australia<sup>79</sup>. Such ideas are also evident in online material – in particular, the concept of a merging of East and West, and the persistence of strong ‘Asian values’. ‘Asian values’, ‘Asia’ and an ‘East’ were never mentioned by Indonesian Indos who had no experience living in Western nations. Nor was there any reference from Indonesian Indos to family values. This absence suggests that these ways of self-identifying among transnational Indo communities were the product of exposure to narratives specific to the Netherlands and spread after Indos migrated elsewhere and kept in contact via the internet and magazines.

A vocal component of the Dutch Indo community considers the Dutch government responsible for the difficulties that they experienced in Indonesia, first under the

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<sup>77</sup> Henny N. Edelman and David J. Edelman, ‘Leisure among Retired Immigrants: The Indos of the Hague’, *CMU. Journal*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2002, pp. 177-204; Henny N. Edelman and David J. Edelman, ‘Leisure among the Retired Indos of the Hague’, *Advances in Applied Sociology*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2011, pp. 22-47.

<sup>78</sup> Edelman and Edelman, ‘Leisure among Retired Immigrants’, p. 185.

<sup>79</sup> Westerbeek, ‘An Indisch Identity in Australia’, p. 294.

Japanese and then during the Bersiap. This assigning of blame is perhaps one response to the grief of losing their lives and positions in the Netherlands Indies. The author of a letter in *De Indo* in February 2013 wrote that,

The grief [of the first generation of Indos and their descendants who remember them] could perhaps be softened through justice... We owe it to the elderly. The government should pay its old debts and they need to know that we Indos have finished with silence and that we are able to fight together for something good.<sup>80</sup>

Some also blame the Dutch government for the fate of Indonesian Indos who they consider to still suffer poverty and discrimination on account of government neglect in the 1950s. In an indirect way, they hold the Dutch government responsible for losing Indonesia in 1949. To some extent, activism to demand full compensation for war losses, the unpaid back-pay of Dutch civil servants during the Japanese Occupation and for greater recognition of the role of Indos in Dutch school history provide an outlet for Indos outside Indonesia to come to terms with the loss of the Indies. The continued criticism from some Indos of government attempts to meet their demands, most recently an agreement to fully pay back-pay from 1942-45, suggests that these demands are merely symptoms of a much larger sense of resentment towards the way in which history unfolded and the loss of their homeland – not just a geographical homeland, but also Indisch society, culture and the status that came with it.

## **Conclusion**

The postcolonial circumstances of Indos who left Indonesia determine the ways in which members of transnational Indo communities remember the past, whether they remember the ‘good old days’ of Tempo Doeloe in Indië or trauma, discrimination and poverty in postcolonial Indonesia. Conversely, most Indonesian Indos looked back at pre-Independence Indonesia with very little sentimentality or sense of loss besides references to, for example, the quality of Dutch architecture, and the absence of their relatives who moved to the Netherlands and elsewhere. They also did not remember discrimination or poverty in postcolonial Indonesia without being prompted, and those who were prompted emphasised that these circumstances were common for most Indonesians during that period. The memories of both groups were strongly influenced by national frameworks that determined how and what should be remembered. If we rely on the memories of Indonesian Indos, we do not find mentions of the Bersiap killings and violence, because these are absent in Indonesian historical consciousness

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<sup>80</sup> T. de Brouwer, ‘De Indische Kwestie’, *De Indo*, 50e Jaargang [50<sup>th</sup> Year] No. 6, February 2013, p. 7.

and historiography. If we rely on the memories of many Dutch Indos of the same generation<sup>81</sup>, we encounter a romanticised colonial past that featured very little friction between Indos and Indonesians until the arrival of the Japanese. As Ann Stoler and Karen Strassler have pointed out, Indonesian servants remember their relationships with the Dutch and Indo middle- and upper-class families very differently from the sentimental, nostalgia-laden colonial memoirs currently popular in the Netherlands.<sup>82</sup> Interaction with Indisch families for these servants was limited to work-space. Neither set of memories, in both Stoler and Strassler's study and this one, is completely reliable if one is searching for a realistic account of the past. However, they do tell us something about how national contexts frame and season the memories of groups that are often celebrated as transnational in origin and transcending the boundaries of nation states.

Both versions of Indo memories of colonial and postcolonial Indonesia, then, are important not only for what they reveal about a past life in Indonesia, but also because they are muddy reflections of the present. The present concerns of Dutch Indos in searching for recognition of and compensation for their wartime suffering from the Dutch government and wider Dutch society have led to the creation of a space in which certain experiences are emphasised over others – namely, suffering, poverty and discrimination in postcolonial Indonesia. This is not to say that such events did not occur; nor is it to downplay the terrible experiences of violence, trauma and poverty that many Indos experienced in Indonesia. However, these experiences were not exclusive to the Indo community. Indisch campaigns for the Dutch government to compensate Indos and publicly recognise their suffering are intricately tied to sadness over the loss of the Indies and of Indos' special place as Europeans in colonial society. The commonly held ideas that Indos in Indonesia continue to experience discrimination and poverty and still feel themselves to be Dutch suggest that the Dutch loss of the Indies remains a festering wound even today among Indisch communities – and the fact that these circumstances are often blamed on the Dutch government, not the Indonesian government, illustrates this point. Indonesia, remembered, experienced, and confirmed in modes of knowledge transmission produced by members of transnational Indo

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<sup>81</sup> Later generations of Dutch Indos explicitly reject the nostalgia of Tempo Doeloe and the associated sense of loss and victimhood that accompany it. See Ana Dragojlovic, 'The Search for Sensuous Geographies of Absence: Indisch Mediation of Loss', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 170, no. 4, 2014, p. 490.

<sup>82</sup> Ann Laura Stoler and Karen Strassler, 'Memory-Work in Java: A Cautionary Tale', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New York, Routledge, 2006, pp. 281-309, originally published in Ann L. Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002, pp. 162-203 and 270-81.

communities is represented as emphatically different to Indië. But it is weaved so inextricably with memories of Indië – the paradise that could never become a paradise *until* it was lost – that the two can hardly be separated. This Indonesia is so different from the Indonesia remembered and experienced by Indonesian Indos that disjuncture in the ways they describe the past and upon meeting is inevitable. This disjuncture is described in the next chapter, which outlines memories of Indos in Indonesia about the remaining years of the Sukarno government and the subsequent Suharto years.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DECOLONISATION, ASSIMILATION AND BEING INDONESIAN IN POSTCOLONIAL JAVA

The expulsion of Dutch citizens in 1957 led to very different decolonisation experiences for Indos who remained in Indonesia compared with Indos who departed. Their experiences were dependent upon distinctions in law and policy between ‘indigenous Indonesians’ and ‘Indonesians of foreign descent’. This distinction was evident first and foremost in the 1945 Constitution’s requirement that the Indonesian president be ‘indigenous’ (*asli*). It was not used in the 1949 federal constitution, which was drafted to enable the transfer of sovereignty, nor in the 1950 unitary constitution, which served as a provisional document until an elected Constituent Assembly had prepared a definitive constitution. However, in 1959, amidst growing domestic instability, President Sukarno announced that the country would go back to the 1945 constitution, including the provision requiring a president to be an ‘indigenous’ Indonesian.<sup>1</sup> In the Constitution, only this passage explicitly favoured ‘indigenous’ Indonesians.

In 1967, Major General Suharto replaced Sukarno. His New Order government began formulating assimilation policies that targeted Indonesians of foreign descent. In practice, these assimilation policies mostly affected Chinese Indonesians. This situation arose partly because Chinese-Indonesians formed the largest, most visible minority from the non-native groups who had held distinct identities in the Indies. It was also partly because, just as Sukarno’s domestic popularity had been grounded in strong anti-Dutch fervour, so Suharto fomented anti-Chinese sentiment and used it from time to time to deflect public attention from the corruption and excesses of his government. Even so, Indos also faced strong pressures to assimilate to a new, constructed national identity and to ‘decolonise’ themselves, just as the nation had undergone political and economic decolonisation.

By 2013, when I carried out interviews in Java and North Sulawesi, former New Order officials and a number of Jakartan elites with whom I spoke were of the opinion that, although Indos had formed a large community in colonial society, it was no longer possible to speak of Indos in Indonesia because they had all assimilated. This statement

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<sup>1</sup> Thung Ju Lan, ‘Contesting the Post-Colonial Legal Construction of Chinese Indonesians as “Foreign Subjects”’, *Asian Ethnicity*, vol. 13, no. 4, 2012, p. 378; Charles Coppel, ‘The Indonesian Chinese: “Foreign Orientals”, Netherlands Subjects, and Indonesian Citizens’, in M. Barry Hooker (ed.), *Law and the Chinese in Southeast Asia*, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002, p. 144.

was probably true on Java during the New Order years, but following the fall of Suharto in 1998, a number of new collectives formed for Indos, often the initiative of Dutch and American Indos. These collectives, along with increased contact via the internet, allowed Indos in Indonesia the opportunity not only to meet each other but also to establish contact with Indos who left Indonesia. As a result, they began to define themselves as Indonesian Indos, in comparison with Dutch Indos. Political circumstances, support from Indos outside Indonesia, and social media combined to enable Indos in Indonesia to begin to express a collective, Indonesian Indo identity. In the thirty years prior, however, exposure to New Order assimilationist discourse meant that most had no choice but to downplay or denounce their colonial links and to identify as Indonesian in the public sphere. Decolonisation in Indonesia was not merely a political process that had more or less ended by 1951 after the dissolution of the federal structure in 1950. Nor was it merely an economic process that ceased with the end of special privileges extended to Dutch companies and nationalisation in the 1950s. It was much more than ‘decolonising the mind’, in which colonised peoples rejected using the language of colonialism – though the Sukarno government’s ban in 1957 on Dutch language material stood out in the memories of Indonesian Indos as an irrevocable rejection of the colonial past.<sup>2</sup>

If colonisation was much more than the political rule and economic exploitation of subjugated peoples but also the ideologies, social practices and expressions of identity that went in tandem with colonial rule, it also follows that decolonisation was much broader than events in the realms of governance and economics. The ways individuals identified with and were related to broader social structures, the ways they behaved, the languages they used, the foods they ate, how they remembered the colonial past – all were subject to an at times traumatic process of decolonisation in response to changed societal configurations after 1949. For those who traced their origins to colonial encounters, particularly groups who had benefited directly from colonial structures, decolonisation was hardly the liberating experience often portrayed in nationalist histories, and it was far more likely to be a negative experience. At the level of the individual, the long term repercussions of political decolonisation continue to affect groups like Indos.<sup>3</sup> The informal networks between former colony and metropole –

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<sup>2</sup> Simon P.X. Battestini, ‘Deconstruction and Decolonization of the Self’, *The American Journal of Semiotics*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1988/1989, pp. 117-131.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Cribb and Li Narangoa, ‘Orphans of Empire: Divided Peoples, Dilemmas of Identity, and Old Imperial Borders in East and Southeast Asia’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 46, no. 1, 3004, pp. 164-187; Rosalind Hewett, ‘Children of Decolonisation: Postcolonial Indo (Eurasian)

commercial, business, cultural and family-based – that remained commonplace in postcolonial nations were temporarily disrupted in Indonesia when the Sukarno government cut formal diplomatic ties with the Netherlands in 1957. But for many, ties to the past and to identities could not so easily be severed.<sup>4</sup>

During the Sukarno years, rejection of colonial structures was much clearer in government policies, particularly in the context of privileges extended to minorities that were subsequently removed. But the ways in which individuals related to the postcolonial world also required reformulation, and this process was much more drawn out. Memories and ways of behaving and interacting were often removed from the public arena to the private sphere, where they were not transferred to children and grandchildren. A number of Indos in Java expressed their regret that they had never taught their children Dutch, unlike Dutch Indos in the Netherlands who sometimes taught their children Malay words. This trend never occurred in Indonesia because the colonial past, under successive governments, was portrayed in a very different way to the Netherlands. Successive versions of the past have presented indigenous Indonesians as victims of both foreign colonisers and Indonesians of foreign descent, who were considered to have benefited from the colonial system at the expense of indigenous groups. This chapter examines, through oral history interviews conducted mostly on Java, the ways in which Indos remaining in postcolonial Indonesia adjusted to the changed circumstances brought about by political decolonisation, and how they reformulated their identities in response. It focuses particularly on the latter years of the Sukarno government (1957-1965), in which anti-Dutch measures continued, and the New Order period under the Suharto government (1966-1998), which actively carried out assimilationist policies. On Java, Indos largely disappeared from public attention, partly because of their small numbers but also because government attention shifted to Chinese Indonesians. To date, research on the assimilation of minorities in the New Order has focused almost exclusively on Chinese Indonesians, and so in this chapter I adopt a comparative approach. Many of these assimilationist measures had an equal impact on Indos, though they were never identified in government rhetoric as a ‘problem minority’, and in fact were cast as a ‘model minority’ in comparison to Chinese Indonesians.

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Communities in Indonesia and the Netherlands’, *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol. 43, no. 126, pp. 191-206.

<sup>4</sup> Martin Thomas, Bob Moore and L.J. Butler, *Crises of Empire: Decolonization and Europe’s Imperial States, 1918-1975*, London, Hodder Education, 2008, p. 411.

## Indos who stayed in Indonesia

The total number of Indos who remained in Indonesia after 1957 is unclear, partly because of the unclear definition of the term ‘Indo’ itself. Between 30,000 and 33,000 former Dutch citizens had chosen to take Indonesian citizenship by the end of 1951. 22,510 of these became *spijtoptanten* and departed for the Netherlands by 1967.<sup>5</sup> Included among *spijtoptanten* departures were individuals who had never been Dutch citizens. Because they had “certain ties with the Netherlands” and were struggling to survive in Indonesia, they were granted visas as ‘culturally Dutch’.<sup>6</sup> These figures would suggest that between about 7,500 and 10,500 former Dutch citizens remained in Indonesia after 1967, though not all of these were Indos, as a small number of *totok* Dutch chose Indonesian citizenship and members of other groups may have held Dutch citizenship. The somewhat smaller figure suggested by both Ellemers and Vaillant, and Van Imhoff and Beets, of 6000 former Dutch citizens who remained indefinitely in Indonesia, covers groups besides Indos.<sup>7</sup> Like the figure mentioned above, it does not take into account minors born after 1951, Indo women married to Indonesian men, or illegitimate and unrecognised children – that is, individuals who were not Dutch citizens during the opting period, but still identified as Indo in postcolonial Indonesia.

After 1967, however, numbers changed again. Between 1969 and 1980, 11,018 ‘Indisch Dutch’ migrated to the Netherlands from Indonesia, but just who this group comprised – whether former or current Dutch citizens, Chinese Indonesians or *gelijkgestelden* – is not clear.<sup>8</sup> Reverse migration, of elderly Dutch Indos back to Indonesia, also took place during the same period. It probably increased after 1980 as the generation born in the Indies aged and began to return to Indonesia to retire on Dutch pensions. Estimating the total population of those who identified as Indo is well nigh impossible, particularly because successive Indonesian censuses until 2000 did not collect data on ethnicity and later censuses, although they recognised Chinese Indonesians as a category, did not feature an ethnic category for Indos. A figure of a minimum of 10,000 Indos in Indonesia today who trace their descent to colonial encounters, including the children of

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<sup>5</sup> Hans Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld: de Twintigste Eeuw*, Amsterdam, B. Bakker, 2004, pp. 330, 378; Paul W. van der Veur, ‘Eurasian Dilemma in Indonesia’, *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 20, no. 1, 1960, p. 58. Ellemers and Vaillant note that figures vary, and that 22,000-25,000 applicants were successful between 1956 and 1969. J.E. Ellemers and R.E.F. Vaillant, *Indische Nederlanders en Gerepatrieerden*, Muiderbert, Dick Coutinho, 1985, p. 43.

<sup>6</sup> Ellemers and Vaillant, *Indische Nederlanders en Gerepatrieerden*, p. 43.

<sup>7</sup> Ellemers and Vaillant, *Indische Nederlanders en Gerepatrieerden*, p. 128; Evert van Imhoff and Gijs Beets, ‘A Demographic History of the Indo-Dutch Population, 1930-2001’, *Journal of Population Research*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2004, p. 58

<sup>8</sup> Ellemers and Vaillant, *Indische Nederlanders en Gerepatrieerden*, p. 38.

Dutch soldiers from the Revolution, is possible. This figure would take into account former Dutch citizens who remained in Indonesia, illegitimate children, and children born after 1949 who had a European parent who decided to stay in Indonesia with an Indonesian spouse.

### **Reasons for staying**

A small number of former Dutch citizens who applied to the Dutch embassy as *spijtoptanten* during the 1950s were rejected. Eddie Samson, president of De Indo Club Surabaya, was fifteen when his father became an Indonesian citizen in 1949. Eddie tried to travel to the Netherlands three times as a stowaway but was discovered on each occasion, once making it as far as Rotterdam. He then applied twice to repatriate, and was rejected both times. Eddie kept a picture of Queen Juliana on his wall as a symbol of his loyalty to the Netherlands, though he had never set a foot on Dutch soil, but he was one exception to the rule. In some cases, impoverished Indos stayed because they were illegitimate children and could not prove their Dutch ancestry. According to Marianne de Kok of Jakarta, “If you go to an old people’s homes, you will see maybe 50% of them [are] Indos, because they have no family left to take care of them.”<sup>9</sup> The great majority of Indos in Indonesia, however, said that they willingly chose to stay because they were married to Indonesians, or because someone needed to remain with an ageing Indonesian parent after the rest of the family departed for the Netherlands. Women were much less likely to have a choice to repatriate than men; they followed the citizenship of their fathers, and once married took their husbands’ citizenship according to Dutch law.<sup>10</sup> Edmee Schultz of Surabaya, whose mother and father were both Indo, married a Manadonese man in 1945. After the war, her parents left Indonesia, as did all seven of Edmee’s siblings. She applied to repatriate, but “was rejected because my name was Indonesian”. Her marriage to an Indonesian was probably the deciding factor. In one unusual case, Inneke Bollebakker of Bandung described how her Indo mother in 1949 chose to remain a Dutch citizen and Ineke’s father went with her to the Netherlands. Her parents subsequently divorced, and Inneke’s father returned to Indonesia and remarried.

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<sup>9</sup> Only a minority of the elderly in Indonesia are put into retirement homes, which are viewed as dirty, isolating and evidence of selfish children.

<sup>10</sup> Indonesian law is not as clear. According to the 1958 Law on Citizenship, foreign women who married an Indonesian citizen obtained Indonesian citizenship if in their first year after marriage they requested it. In practice, most women assumed that the process was automatic.

Many Indos who remained were the children of Indo or Dutch women and Indonesian men who had *gelijkgesteld* status. A large proportion of these husbands were Ambonese and Manadonese men and, to a lesser extent, Javanese Christians. Anita and Ingrid Nikijuluw's father was Ambonese, and formerly an equated European. Their mother, Henrietta, was Dutch, though born in the Indies. Ingrid explained that their parents had prepared all the necessary documents to repatriate to the Netherlands but changed their minds, as her father held a senior position in a sugar factory in East Java. They were concerned that if they repatriated, he would have to start from the bottom again. Eventually her father lost his position and was accused of corruption, but the family remained in East Java. Anita recalled in the 1960s that when other Indonesians had visited the family's house and said to Henrietta, "oh this is a big house yeah, a Dutch house", her mother had angrily responded with "I am a Dutch woman, I'm not Indonesian." Anita said that when tensions over Netherlands New Guinea were at their height in the early 1960s, "no one wanted to sell us food", just like the food boycott of the Bersiap. Henrietta learned Indonesian and became a well-known figure in the local marketplace.

Anita and Ingrid's situation was somewhat helped by the fact that their mother, rather than father, was Dutch. Their father was thus able to find work. One woman in Surabaya, Victoria Westerlink, had a Dutch mother and an Indo father. She said that they chose to stay "because we were happier here," citing the warm weather in particular. In a study of life histories of Indos in Indonesia, the Netherlands and the United States, Carol Annink also referred to an Indo man and his Indo wife, who both had fathers with *gelijkgesteld* status and Indo mothers.<sup>11</sup> Sophie Hehuat, born in 1919, was also married to an Ambonese man. She recalled that when she married her husband in 1945 in a simple ceremony,

the young nationalists gave us a red-white banner (the nationalist banner)... The young nationalists appreciated me being on their side, despite my Dutch background.... I knew my husband's feelings towards the Dutch. He was a nationalist.... I couldn't go against his beliefs by choosing to remain a Dutch citizen. At that time, I didn't have any close family left.... I was an only child, my father had died in a Japanese prison camp, and my mother had died long before that..... I never regretted the decision. The Indos who went to the

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<sup>11</sup> Carol Annink, 'Learning Minority Status: A Qualitative Study of the Educational Experiences of Indonesian-Dutch People', unpublished PhD thesis, Ohio State University, 1993, p. 22.

Netherlands were better off] in material terms, especially in the Soekarno years. At that time, we had to squeeze every penny.<sup>12</sup>

Her daughter Alexandra Taribuka, however, born in 1946, noted that sometimes Sophie, in perhaps a joking manner, would say to her husband, “What a horrible country is this country of yours.” Alexandra and her sister also married Ambonese men of European descent, because “many Ambonese were raised in the same way we were, the European way. Maybe, therefore[,] we are attracted to each other.... My husband speaks the Dutch language better than I do.”<sup>13</sup> Sylvia Huisman-Carels noted in 1990 that Indos more often socialised with Chinese Indonesians, other Indonesians of foreign descent and Christian Ambonese than with *pribumi* Indonesians.<sup>14</sup> Shared language, religion, European and equated European status, and similar upbringing appear to have been the main reasons why marriage and friendships between members of these groups, along with Manadonese, were common.

After independence, many families like Sophie’s experienced little discrimination compared with other Indo families and were able to find work and survive, often thanks to Indonesian fathers. Finding employment was problematic for Dutch men who remained with their Indonesian or Indo wives. Louise Haccou’s father, who was Belgian-Dutch, chose to stay in Malang to be with his Javanese wife. He was unable to get work in the difficult circumstances of the 1950s and 1960s, and the family struggled to live off the produce of their small garden. Louise was born in 1942. Like her older siblings who repatriated to the Netherlands, she was a Dutch citizen. She planned to follow them, but then she met her Javanese husband and remained with him in Malang. It was not until 1990 that she realised when she applied for an Indonesian passport that technically she was still a Dutch citizen. She said that “I thought we all became Indonesian citizens automatically, but apparently not. We could choose. Of course I wanted to choose to become [Indonesian] – I have a husband here, children here, grandchildren.... It’s only because I married an Indonesian that I became an Indonesian....”

Most Indos born after the Japanese Occupation expressed no desire to repatriate to Indonesia. Irene Tampinongkoh Wever from Bandung, born in 1948, became an Indonesian citizen after her father took Indonesian citizenship and became one of the few former KNIL soldiers to transfer to TNI (Tentara Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian

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<sup>12</sup> Annink, ‘Learning Minority Status’, pp. 366-67.

<sup>13</sup> Annink, ‘Learning Minority Status’, p. 370.

<sup>14</sup> Huisman-Carels, ‘Indische Mensen in Indonesie’, p. 55.

National Army). Similarly, Yfke Laquais, born in 1951, also became an Indonesian citizen after her father opted for Indonesian citizenship shortly after her birth. Like Irene, she married an Indonesian citizen, and remained in Indonesia to be with her husband. Both women were of a generation born at the very end of the Dutch East Indies. Neither expressed any desire to repatriate to a distant homeland. Yet familial ties to the Netherlands still remained for the members of this generation. Yan Ferdinandus, born 1947, had only one letter from his Dutch father, a soldier during the Revolution who had returned to the Netherlands before Yan was born. Few Dutch soldiers were permitted to marry Indonesian women during this period, and were unable to take their girlfriends back to the Netherlands. Some were unaware that they had fathered children, while others had their own families back home and wanted little to do with the children that they left behind.<sup>15</sup> Yan spent decades trying to trace his father and finally was able to contact a half-sister after his father's death. She was completely unaware of his existence. This sort of situation was not just specific to children born during the Revolution, but also to members of the older generation who were raised as illegitimate plantation or barracks children and spent lifetimes trying to trace their fathers, almost always without success.

### **Memories of departure**

The relative lack of contact and few meetings that followed over subsequent decades between families split by decolonisation meant that memories of when their relatives departed was imprinted in the memories of Indos who remained. In 1957, Cara Oliveira accompanied her grandmother to the port of Tanjung Priok in Jakarta where Cara's grandmother was to depart by ship for the Netherlands. The docks were crowded with Indonesian grandmothers and mothers saying goodbye to their fair Indo children and grandchildren – the reverse of Cara's situation. When the time came for passengers to board the passenger-ship *Willem Ruys*, many of these women fainted from emotion, thinking that they would never see their families again. Cara's memory of saying goodbye to her own grandmother was clouded by the spectacle of these distraught farewells. When her mother also decided to leave the following year, Cara did not accompany her to Tanjung Priok because "I couldn't stand... that kind of grief." Her own marriage to Ambonese musician George de Fretes prevented her from following five of her eight siblings who also went to the Netherlands. George later left her to pursue his musical career overseas, and Cara struggled by in Jakarta to support her

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<sup>15</sup> Hans Goedkoop and Annegriet Wietsma, *Tuan Papa*, Hilversum, NPS/VPRO.

children. She worked as a model, then in Jakarta's first department store, Sarinah, thanks to her friendship with Sukarno, and finally as a Dutch and English teacher. The freezing of Dutch-Indonesian diplomatic and political relations meant that she would not see her mother until 1971, thirteen years later. She visited the Netherlands many times once the diplomatic relationship allowed travel between the two nations, but she was one of the few who could afford the boat and, later, plane ticket.

Like many other Indos who remained in Indonesia, Cara recounted how her family members, classmates and friends steadily departed one by one for the Netherlands in 1957 and 1958, leaving behind their empty houses in areas once renowned for their colonial Indo communities. She particularly noticed their absence in Menteng, where a large number of Dutch families had lived. Soedarmadji (Adji) Damais, son of French academic Louis-Charles Damais, lived in Menteng at the same time. He noted that one by one, almost every Dutch family he knew left. He distanced himself, as a French Indo raised in an anti-colonial family, from Indos of Dutch descent who were tied to the colonial system, describing:

the tragedy of these [Indos] who never went to Europe... They [Indos] hated... hated the Indonesians, who kicked them out but also... there was lots of prejudices on the Indo side to the Indonesians – I mean to the *pribumi*, let's put it that way.

Indos who remained were to a certain extent divided by class. Adji recounted how a friend had suddenly said to him in the middle of a conversation,

Yes, Adji, you're at least not an Indo like those Indo *krupuk* [prawn cracker] people'. And why [did he say that]? Those who are orphans, from an orphanage, in Jalan Johar there, who had to look for more money and they were selling *krupuk* in houses, and they would always come and tell you '*di mana Ibu, di mana Bapak* [are your mother and father at home]?' They didn't want to speak to me, they were looking for my parents. And my mother would come out and they would speak Dutch to her, bad Dutch. So there was this idea of being, [that] they were different, not just physically, not only by name, but also by the type of language they were using.

Adji's father, who was decidedly anti-colonial in his opinions, did not encourage his family to use Dutch at home.<sup>16</sup> Adji said that home life "was very French. I think he had this French attitude in the sense that the French want to rationalize everything. He hated the Dutch... because they were so narrow-minded, and he liked to mix with the 'educated' Indonesians." Adji himself spoke only limited "Eurasian Dutch". "I learned

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<sup>16</sup> Harry J. Benda, 'Louis Charles Damais', *Indonesia*, no. 3, April 1967, p. 219.

Dutch again in the 1970s because my Dutch was then very bad; it became Eurasian Dutch, what you call Belanda Indo... what the Dutch call Indisch spreken... mix[ed] Malay and Dutch.”

### **Speaking Dutch in postcolonial Indonesia**

Many Indo families interpreted the 1957 ban on distributing Dutch language material as a blanket ban on spoken Dutch, particularly after the government carried out raids in Jakarta in January 1958 and arrested fifteen people for possession of Dutch language material and weapons.<sup>17</sup> However, no evidence in Indonesian law or Dutch newspapers of the time proves that there was even a presidential decree banning the use of spoken Dutch in Indonesia. Marcus Dirgo-De Seriere, a retired lawyer living in Surabaya, explained that no law ever prohibited spoken Dutch, “just sentiment”. One man, Freddy Waterkamp, reported that the Dutch language continued to be used in everyday life in the Minahasa region of North Sulawesi. Java was a different matter, but even so, the lack of documentary evidence suggests that only sentiment dictated that the use of Dutch was forbidden in public and at home. Such a ban would not only have been difficult to enforce but also unpopular because it would have impacted a great many senior Indonesian politicians and intellectuals. As Rudolph Mrázek noted in a study of Javanese elite in Jakarta, many Javanese intellectuals were raised to speak Dutch by their parents in late colonial Indonesia, and in fact were often forced to do so at home growing up.<sup>18</sup> Members of this generation frequently spoke to each other in Dutch and some considered it their first language. Sukarno himself noted in 1965 that “All the classes [at school] were taught in Dutch. It became the language in which I did my thinking. Even today I automatically curse in Dutch. When I pray to God, I pray in Dutch.”<sup>19</sup>

Just how long the ban on Dutch material remained in place is unclear. Eddie Samson of Surabaya said that in practice it was about ten years: “beginning in 1957 until 1967, we could have no relationship with the Netherlands. Dutch was not allowed, reading Dutch books was not allowed... because of West Irian [Netherlands New Guinea].” Rose Albert of Bandung, who had worked as a presenter on a Dutch language radio program

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<sup>17</sup> De Tijd, ‘Razzia’s en Arrestaties in Djakarta: Bepaalde Nederlandse Boeken Weer in Indonesië Toegelaten’, *De Tijd: Godsdienstig – Indonesiëstaatkundig Dagblad*, 11 January 1958, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Rudolf Mrázek, *A Certain Age: Colonial Jakarta through the Memories of Its Intellectuals*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2010, pp. 156-159.

<sup>19</sup> Sukarno, *Sukarno: an Autobiography as Told to Cindy Adams*, Hong Kong, Gunung Agung, 1966, p. 67.

in Bandung since 2005, noted that the program began in 1966, which suggests that by this time Dutch was once again allowed in public. But no matter its length, the effect of the ban of Dutch material had ar-reaching consequences. Many families were forced to learn Indonesian and some stopped using Dutch altogether with their children at home. Only couples who both spoke Dutch as a first language continued to use it in private after the ban was lifted. Sophie Hehuat recalled that, “our youngest daughter hardly speaks any Dutch because it was a banned language when she was young. Only years later, we started to speak Dutch again, at home.”<sup>20</sup>

The ban on Dutch material was accompanied by legislation enacted in 1960 prohibiting the use of Dutch in school teaching for Indonesian citizens. Jan Ban, born in Makassar in 1955, recalled almost failing the third grade when the Dutch-language school he attended changed the language of instruction to Indonesia. His entire family spoke Dutch and not Indonesian.

We couldn't use Dutch any more. It was really difficult for us. It took me two years to adapt. Dutch was really forbidden, even listening to it was forbidden, so at home it was torture.... After two years it began to emerge again but by that time Dutch was no longer routine.

Yvette Freudenberg, born in 1938 in Bandung, spoke Indonesian regularly because her stepmother was Indonesian. Unlike Jan, she “never experienced any problems with this change” when the language of instruction at her Catholic secondary school was changed from Dutch to Indonesian. The Dutch nun teachers, however, still tried to enforce students' loyalty to the Netherlands in other way:

Eighty per cent of the students were Indo-Dutch, with Indonesians, especially Ambonese students, in the minority. I remember hating the nuns for making us wear an orange (color of the Dutch royal house) ribbon on Dutch national [h]olidays, like Queen's Day. We all thought that was ridiculous, Indonesia was already an independent country! I was really embarrassed having to walk around with that ribbon. Of course, Indonesians would comment when they saw us.<sup>21</sup>

Yvette recalled that Dutch was banned “in the latter part of Soekarno's ruling years... But at home we just continued using Dutch. It was an absurd ruling. They didn't realise that there were many Indonesians who spoke Dutch in and outside their homes too.”

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<sup>20</sup> Annink, 'Learning Minority Status', p. 367.

<sup>21</sup> Annink, 'Learning Minority Status', p. 352.

The question remains why so many Indo families on Java were convinced that they were not allowed to use Dutch at home. Oral histories and accounts reproduced after events often feature resilient myths and stories about historical circumstances that seem to make sense when placed in context. Such myths appear to have a basis in reality and are repeated by various respondents as truth. However, finding documentary and pictorial evidence of these myths is often impossible. Cees Fasseur has written about the relatively common idea that the Netherlands Indies featured signs declaring swimming pools and other public areas to be ‘forbidden for dogs and natives’. Yet “evidence for the existence of such signs is never delivered; all investigations for photos, eyewitnesses and the like were unsuccessful.” Though the Netherlands Indies colonial regime undoubtedly featured other forms of what would be considered overt racism today, he wrote, the state had “access to more subtle methods to maintain itself.”<sup>22</sup> The myth probably originated in unsubstantiated stories circulating about signs forbidding natives and dogs in Shanghai’s Huangpu Park.<sup>23</sup> In the memories of Indonesians who experienced unspoken segregation, the existence of signs forbidding ‘natives and dogs’ seemed a natural product of the *zeitgeist* of the time because Dutch clubs and certain restaurants were not open to those with native status. The perceived ban on spoken Dutch in 1957, then, became representative of the pressures that many Indos felt in Indonesia in the late 1950s and early 1960s to assimilate. It was an extension of the ban on Dutch language material, but it never became official government policy, and certainly would have been problematic for the Dutch-educated elite who occupied senior positions in the Sukarno government and continued to use spoken Dutch with each other.

Speaking Dutch, for some Indos, was central to their identities as people of Dutch descent. Even a ban on Dutch could not remove it from their internal worlds. Susilo Gidroen of Bandung said that he counted in Dutch and even dreamed in Dutch. Sophie Hehuat, though supportive of Indonesian nationalism, said that “after so many years in independent Indonesia I still prefer to read Dutch books.... Dutch is my first language, the language of emotion, whereas Indonesian feels like a foreign language.”<sup>24</sup> As Louise Haccou of Malang explained,

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<sup>22</sup> Cees Fasseur, *De Weg naar het Paradijs en Andere Indische Geschiedenissen*, Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 1995, p. 140.

<sup>23</sup> Robert A. Bickers and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, ‘Shanghai’s “Dogs and Chinese Not Admitted” Sign: Legend, History and the Contemporary Symbol’, *The China Quarterly*, vol. 142, June 1995, pp. 444-66.

<sup>24</sup> Annink, ‘Learning Minority Status’, p. 368.

I feel myself to be someone of Dutch descent and I still don't feel that it was final, that I decided to become a local after marrying my husband. That's [because of] my Dutch education. To this day, of course, the way I think, in my thoughts when I pray, is still in Dutch. Prayer is from the heart, right? From a young age I was taught in Dutch.... All my family spoke fluent Dutch. Not all Dutch people were educated in Dutch ways by their parents... [but] my father was almost 90 when he died, so he still taught us in the Dutch way, in the Dutch language; all our ways of doing things were not Indonesian. Just because I became an Indonesian citizen didn't mean I threw away [my Dutch ancestry], of course not. In everything I kept feeling in my heart that I was someone of Dutch descent, naturally. It was only because I married an Indonesian that I became an Indonesian. Of course I educated my children in Indonesian – Indonesian ways, Indonesian language, but they understand Dutch if I speak it, and I still can use it with my older siblings.

Nonetheless, to outward appearances, Louise became Indonesian. “Those of us here had to adapt, had to become Indonesians. If not, people would say I lived with my head in the clouds.... It was a process.” She never identified explicitly as Dutch but rather as an Indonesian of Dutch descent.

### **Becoming Indonesian**

Hendricus Moors, born in 1941 and of the same generation as Louise, spoke only a little Dutch. Hendricus's Dutch father Joseph, a member of the KNIL, was captured by the Japanese in 1942, when Hendricus was only nine months old. It was not until ten years later that the Red Cross sent word to Hendricus' mother that Joseph had died in a camp in Japan in 1943. Hendricus was raised by his Indonesian step-father and his Indo mother, who took on her new husband's status as an Indonesian citizen. Hendricus's home environment growing up perhaps influenced how he later felt about Indonesia and the Netherlands:

Those in Indonesia like me don't have a relationship with the Netherlands at all, because I lean more towards Indonesia, and that cannot be thrown out. My eyes may be blue, I might be white, but yeah, what can I do? I am Indonesian.... Those remaining here became Indonesian citizens and don't feel themselves Dutch any more. Those who went to the Netherlands feel themselves to be Dutch, not Indonesian any more.... Those who live in Indonesia Indonesianised themselves, automatically. Their children automatically became Indonesian....<sup>25</sup>

Nonetheless, Hendricus admitted, there is “a strong Dutch influence in my blood and I can't get rid of it.” He was never given a Dutch education, partly because of the loss of

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<sup>25</sup> Rosalind Hewett, 'My Eyes May be Blue but I am Indonesian', *Inside Indonesia* vol. 118, Oct-Dec. 2014, available from <http://www.insideindonesia.org/my-eyes-may-be-blue-but-i-am-indonesian>, accessed 15 July 2015.

his father and partly because of the disruption of the war years and subsequent revolution. For most of his life he had only a passive understanding of Dutch through the words that his mother used when he was young. “I can’t speak Dutch. I don’t know the Dutch nation. So I also can’t feel that I am Dutch. No, I cannot feel it.” When I asked him what he most identified as, he said Javanese,

because my grandmother was Javanese. I was raised Javanese, and added to that my wife is Javanese.... My mother was of Javanese descent, mixed with Belgian, so I’m more European [than not].... Perhaps not many [other Indos] want to talk about who they are. But not for me. I am who I am.

Thea Jonathans-Loppies of Depok, born 1940, applied to repatriate to the Netherlands but was rejected. She explained that she subsequently had to adapt and become Indonesian. If not, “it wouldn’t be fair if we lived here but considered ourselves foreigners.... So we continued to consider ourselves Indonesian.” Although her first language was Dutch and she had lived in the Netherlands for two months, “I have never felt that I am Dutch. I only know that... on my mother’s side they are Dutch, and I am part of them, but I have never felt that I myself am Dutch....” Her determination to become Indonesian led her to declare that she did not identify as Indo, though she went to Indo *kumpulan* and was willing to describe what she thought comprised Indo identity in Indonesia.

With a few small exceptions such as Louise, most Indos like Hendricus and Thea said that they did not feel Dutch. They were more likely to identify as Indonesians of European (not necessarily Dutch) descent. Eleonora Nirihuwa of Malang, born 1941, in fact, turned the question of whether she felt herself to be Indonesian back on me, the interviewer:

Yes, that’s already clear: I live in Indonesia, so I can’t say I feel Dutch, because I wasn’t raised in the Netherlands; I was raised in Indonesian. Now, you were born in Australia. You’re of English descent, but you can’t speak as an English person, because you’re Australian, you live in Australia.

Yet many of these statements belied the process through which many Indos were pressured to identify publicly as Indonesian in much more overt ways than those classed as *pribumi* Indonesians. Some even chose to hide their heritage because of their experiences when they were younger. Yan Suyanto, born in 1947 and of a younger, post-war generation, moved from town to town in Central Java as a child as his father was a policeman. His mother, who was of Dutch, West Sumatran and Filipino descent, was the only member of her family who decided to remain in Indonesia. He said that

when he was young, “the hatred of the local people [towards the Dutch] was still burning in their hearts.” He attended a Catholic school from grades one to four, where no one was concerned about his background, because many of his friends were also from similar mixed backgrounds. After his family moved to another town and he started going to a government school, problems began. If he made a mistake or did something wrong, the other children would scornfully call him ‘Londo’ (‘Hollander’, or Dutchman in Javanese). Yan explained that the reason for this was because “their background [was] only one culture, different from mine.” His father’s Javanese family also referred to Yan and his siblings as ‘Londo’, and forced them to use high Javanese when visiting to reinforce their Javanese identity. Even Yan’s teacher called him ‘Londo’. He recounted how once, after getting into a fight with a school friend, his teacher tried to force him to apologise. Yan did not feel that he was in the wrong and refused to do so. His teacher slapped him across the face and demanded, “Are you the child of Londo or Jowo [Java]?”

Yan, like many other Indos, was sometimes mistaken for being Manadonese. Even many of his friends thought he was Manadonese, and he did not correct peoples’ mistaken assumptions. A fellow Indo, Yan Ferdinandus, admitted that at first he thought Yan Suyanto was Manadonese or Chinese Indonesian. Adji Damais also acknowledged that at times he was mistaken for being a Sumatran from Medan or Manadonese, though he told strangers he was from Jakarta. Yfke Laquais of Jakarta said that she was sometimes mistaken for being Manadonese or, outside Indonesia, Filipino. Irene Tampinongkoh Wever of Bandung, born in 1948, admitted that the only time she used the name ‘Wever’ was with other Indos. At all other times she used her Manadonese husband’s surname. “They [everyone] know I am Manadonese. They don’t know I have Dutch descent.” Pretending that they were from distant parts of the archipelago including, especially, Manado – as many Manadonese have European ancestors, use foreign surnames and tend to have paler skin than most other Indonesians – was easier for some Indos than explaining that they were locals with European ancestry.

The process of becoming Indonesian, for some, extended to legally changing their surnames. Whereas Douwes Dekker had changed his name to Setiabudhi to show his ideological support for the Republic, most of the name changes that took place after 1949 were for practical purposes. Many worried that their property could be confiscated if they continued to use obviously foreign surnames. Ramdol Lamers van Buren, born in 1947 in Batusuya, Central Sulawesi, was the only sibling of nine children who did

not change his name from Van Buren. His Dutch grandfather had worked on a coconut plantation near Palu and married a Manadonese woman. Ramdol's Indo father died a week after he was born, and Ramdol inherited the darker skin of his mother, who was from Central Sulawesi. Though his siblings were afraid that if they kept their foreign surname the land that they inherited would be confiscated, or they would be deported to the Netherlands, Ramdol never changed his name. He said that, "I really like having a [Dutch] grandfather.... I love my Dutch name.... Even if my life became difficult, I wouldn't want to change my name." However, Ramdol eventually moved to Manado, where having a European surname was relatively common. His Manadonese wife was a member of the local Borgo community. As a result, Ramdol frequently met other Indonesians of European descent and to listen to members of the older generation speak Dutch. He admitted, further, that his nationality would not be called into question because "I have Indonesian skin, dark skin".

Though many mentioned that they knew of Indos who had changed their surnames, some vehemently opposed the idea. In just one example, Hendrik Jansen of Malang, born in 1938, announced that he would keep his Dutch surname "until I die" because "I was born with it. Right or wrong, that's my ethnicity. God gave it to me, so why should I reject it?" But retaining a foreign surname could lead to bureaucratic difficulties. Many Indos faced challenges applying for passports. Eduard Grohe of Surabaya explained that when his father became an Indonesian citizen, he removed the umlaut from the original family name (Gröhe) to avoid questions in immigration. Even so, Eduard admitted that immigration officials had still questioned whether he was a foreigner. After 1966, bureaucratic obstacles extended to obtaining identity cards, even after providing naturalization certificates.<sup>26</sup> It became relatively commonplace to change obviously foreign surnames to ease bureaucratic encounters. Rudy Damwijk of Batu changed his surname on his identity card so that he could enter the public service. He explained that the reason for this was because "Indos could rarely enter the public service. There was discrimination." He began using his Javanese grandfather's surname on his identity card, and also changed his year of birth as he was too old to apply<sup>27</sup>, and in 1979 was accepted. But Freddy Breemer of Bandung never changed his surname and still was able to join the public service, working on electricity for trains. However,

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<sup>26</sup> The identity card became common in many areas from 1966 following state attempts to identify communists, though it was not encoded in law until 1977. Karen Strassler, *Refracted Visions: Popular Photography and National Modernity in Java*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2010, pp. 135, 138.

<sup>27</sup> The maximum age for eligibility to enter the civil service in Indonesia is 35.

Freddy noted that immigration had also questioned whether he was Indonesian on account of his name.

More problematic than a foreign surname was appearance. Hendricus Moors had obvious foreign ancestry, with a long face, blue eyes and sharp cheekbones. He noted that,

I, as an Indonesian Indo, am perhaps more Indonesian than [other] Indonesians.... I try my best to show them hey, I am Indonesian... and I can't get rid of it. I do have foreign descent, I can't lie. Is there a division inside, is there still a feeling towards another nation? No. I was born in Indonesia; I'll die here; my wife is Indonesian. Look at my children, Indonesians, who can't speak Dutch.... I was raised Indonesian, so I feel more Indonesian than Indo. But the word Indo cannot be thrown out because where in Indonesia can you find someone with the name Hendricus Moors? Nowhere. Where can you find an Indonesian with a sharp nose, with blue eyes? Nowhere. I can't lie and I don't want to lie. Because I'm proud to always say that my father was Dutch – what's wrong with it? He was my father. If I'm Dutch, what are you going to do about it?

When he applied to enter the Indonesian air force (AURI), the issue of his European heritage was briefly raised during the admission process for the Air Force Academy in Yogyakarta. Generals present during his final round of testing tried to intimidate him by saying: “Wow, this is definitely a poor Dutchman, no Dutchman unless he was poor would want to join AURI.” This kind of jeering based on a potential recruit's background or appearance was commonplace for new recruits. Hendricus explained in a mix of Indonesian and English that,

they tried to, what do you call it, press you down and check whether you are tough enough to go further. I say nothing. ‘What is your hobby?’ I say, I like to play volleyball, music... ‘What kind of music?’ I like listening to kroncong. (You know what kroncong is? Typical Javanese music.) ‘Ha! See? A poor Dutchman, right, kroncong.’ So Dutchmen, if they are poor, like kroncong. I say nothing. ‘Sing a kroncong song’.... I try my best... just a few words. ‘Enough, enough, that was terrible!’ That's how they test you.... But I think it's just kind of joking. Because they have all my paperwork in front of them: my birth, everything, who my [step-]father is....

Indos who did not attempt to hide their identity by changing their surnames, particularly those whose appearance highlighted their foreign descent, recalled that Indonesians addressed them as foreigners in every day interactions. Hendrik Jansen said that other Indonesians called Indos like him ‘om’ (from *oom*, the Dutch word for uncle) rather

than the Indonesian ‘bapak’ (mister).<sup>28</sup> Hendricus Moors recounted how once, when he was stopped at traffic lights, some street children had caught sight of his face through the car window and called him ‘mister’, a term usually only reserved for white foreigners. Margareta van Vonno noted that other Indonesians called her ‘Indo’: “I have dark skin but they knew I wasn’t Indonesian from my eyes.” Then there were the relatively large number on Java who reported that as children they had been called ‘Londo’, a term that gradually lost most of its negative connotations.

Most Indos remaining in Indonesia whom I spoke to were members of the middle-class. They lived in Indonesian neighbourhoods, which meant they interacted with other Indonesians on a daily basis and regularly encountered comments about their foreign appearance. Unlike most other Indos in Indonesia, Yfke Lacquais lived segregated from broader Indonesian society for most of her life, save for a brief period married to an Indonesian man. As a child, her family was split between those who chose to repatriate to the Netherlands and those who stayed. After her mother left her father, Yfke and her siblings were raised by a strict Indo aunt who limited how much interaction the children had with *pribumi* children. This aunt called the Indonesian maids *binatang* (Indonesian) and *beesten* (Dutch), meaning ‘animals’. After Yfke’s father remarried, the family relocated to a much smaller house in north Jakarta, and the children had to play outside. Yfke’s first experience of playing on the street was strongly imprinted in her memory:

Our neighbours’ children, the neighbours, everyone came out. They were all looking at us, at our toys. We thought, ‘kampung kids, kampung kids!’ Because it was normal to think like that – we’d been raised [to think that way] – we were afraid of outsiders. Although actually they weren’t really kampung kids, just our neighbours.

After Yfke ran away to live with her mother, she changed schools from Santa Ursula, an elite Catholic school for the children of Jakarta’s upper class – many of them Indos before the 1957 exodus – to an Indonesian high school, Bulungan. Bulungan famously had a large number of rough children who engaged in frequent fights. She admitted that at Santa Ursula,

we were naughty too, but relatively proper. But I think these [students] misbehaved like they were *kampungan* [lower class].... They laughed and shouted.... They have this animal instinct: fight, fight, fight!... But I wasn’t raised like that. So I was quiet. I thought, if I fight, I’ll also be *kampungan*.

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<sup>28</sup> Both terms were used to address an older man, not necessarily a relative. In Manado use of the term ‘om’ to address older men is commonplace, but on Java the Indonesian ‘(ba)pak’ is much more likely to be used.

Instead of fighting, she said, after school she and her mother would visit the home of the child wanting to fight Yfke and discuss the issue using “manners, not by fighting in the street.” Through words such as *binatang* and *kampung* – a term meaning the behaviour exhibited by lower-class villagers – Yfke’s family reinforced the idea that they were different from *pribumi* Indonesians.<sup>29</sup> Yfke admitted that her family “felt themselves superior to *pribumi*.” Yet they accepted her first marriage to an American-educated Indonesian, whose father had worked for the United Nations, probably because he was from an upper-class family. The marriage did not last, and Yfke eventually married a New Zealand expatriate. She began to live in an exclusive complex in Jakarta that mirrored her childhood because of its limited contact with *pribumi* Indonesians save the very wealthy and servants. She said that her aunt’s principle that “you cannot be nice to them” was true, adding that “they can’t accept kindness.... They cheat you.... If you give them a finger, they will take your hand.”

Many Indos had transnational connections through siblings who left Indonesia and foreign sons- and daughters-in-law. Some, however, completely lost contact with their relatives outside Indonesia, particularly parents who left during the 1940s. Billy Janz of Bandung only managed to contact his father’s family in 2012 after more than seventy years of no contact. His father had been a member of the Indies branch of the fascist NSB. Along with other members, Billy’s father was captured and interned in 1940 for being pro-Nazi after the German invasion of the Netherlands. In 1942 he was sent to a concentration camp in Suriname, and from there went to the Netherlands in 1946. He then married another woman in 1947, and moved to Brazil. Billy thus had relatives in the Netherlands and Brazil, while his Indo wife, Tris Wernicke, had family members in Australia and Belgium. Billy and Tris’s family connections were hardly exceptional. Other Indos reported family members in the Netherlands, and many had relatives in third countries like Belgium, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and so on. It was often these connections who told them about charities established outside Indonesia to assist Indos ‘left behind’.

### **Did poverty and discrimination continue?**

The information spread by these charities suggests that Indos in Indonesia continued to experience the discrimination and poverty that many Dutch Indos experienced in Indonesia during the 1950s (see Chapter Three). But few of those I interviewed

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<sup>29</sup> Hewett, ‘Children of Decolonisation’, p. 10.

struggled financially; those who had pensions were supported by children and received additional funds from HALIN or Help de Indischen in Indonesia. A study by Sylvia Huisman-Carels in 1990 also indicated that in general, by this period most Indos were able to maintain a standard of living above the poverty line, after they started their own businesses or gained employment in private enterprises.<sup>30</sup> Indonesian Indos admitted that during the 1950s and 1960s, they did indeed encounter some forms of discrimination. Some, like Edmee Schultz of Surabaya, noted that they were charged higher prices in the marketplace in the years immediately following independence. Rudy Damwijk admitted that Indos could not work in the public service on Java until the late 1970s at least.

Not all Indos experienced discrimination, and few reported that it continued after the 1960s. Wim Hernie rejected the general perception that all Indos in Indonesia experienced discrimination on account of their backgrounds. He reported that one of his brothers served as an Indonesian independence fighter, and two others worked for the Dutch police. He said, “my eldest brother was a guerrilla fighter, an Indonesian nationalist. Can you imagine, within one family, two brothers worked for the Dutch police, while one fought for Indonesia’s independence?” His brothers’ support for the Dutch did not seem to affect Wim’s own circumstances. By the age of 39, in 1967, he had become a senior official in the Indonesian government:

So, I cannot say I encountered any negative discrimination by the Indonesian government.... It seems that my Dutch upbringing and education provided me with a privileged position in the new Indonesia.... My wife looks more European and, often times, is asked how long she has lived in Indonesia.... Again, *we* didn’t experience any discrimination because [of] our mixed Indonesian and Dutch ancestry. But different Indo families have different experiences.... There are Indo families that didn’t make it, like we did. I wonder whether their failure has to do with their pride. Maybe they still expect to have certain privileges, like in colonial days.... I consider myself to be a real Indonesian.<sup>31</sup>

Eventually, many of the forms of everyday discrimination that Indos encountered, from higher prices to difficulties finding employment to name-calling, faded as the Suharto government began encouraging the population to focus on other internal enemies. The small number of studies on Indos in Indonesia in the 1990s and early 2000s that state that by this period, Indos had assimilated and no longer identified as Indo conflict with

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<sup>30</sup> Sylvia Huisman-Carels, ‘Indische Mensen in Indonesie’, *Jambatan: Tijdschrift voor de Geschiedenis van Indonesia*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1990, p. 54.

<sup>31</sup> Annink, ‘Learning Minority Status’, pp. 122-23.

the statements of those I met in 2013.<sup>32</sup> Dutch terms like ‘Indisch’ had little meaning for most, yet many identified as Indo. The question, then, is what had led to their almost complete assimilation by the end of the New Order, and what caused the shift in the ways that they identified in 2013?

### **New Order assimilation policies**

The answer lies in assimilationist policies enacted during the New Order period. 1966 marked the fall of the Sukarno government and the beginning of Suharto’s rise to power. The final departures of *spijtoptanten* took place in 1968, meaning that they brought few stories about how the recent change of government affected the Indo population.<sup>33</sup> During the New Order period, there was very little in the way of overt expressions of a collective Indo identity, probably because few met with other Indos. Social gatherings, particularly those where Dutch was the main language used, were limited compared with the post-Reformasi period, except in the Minahasa region. From 1998, with the end of the New Order, Indos increasingly began to attend *kumpulan* for Dutch speakers, where they regularly met not only other Indonesian Indos, but also Dutch, American and Australian Indos visiting or retiring in Indonesia, who often sponsored or suggested these social gatherings. Many had reached retirement age and, like other retirees, enjoyed meeting childhood friends and reminiscing. As a result, they began to identify collectively as Indonesian Indos. This identification as Indonesian Indos emerged both because of the fall of the Suharto government and because they noted differences between themselves and Dutch, American and Australian Indos who they met at these social gatherings. The pressure that the Suharto government applied to groups it termed ‘foreign minorities’ had prevented these expressions of identity from being publicly stated during the thirty years of the New Order.

Key to Sukarno’s power had been his ability to manage the military, the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and Islamists. During the latter years of his rule power struggles between these competing factions began to dominate domestic politics. Ultimately, the army emerged as the winner of these power struggles. On 30 September 1965, a small group of soldiers tried to kidnap seven senior anti-communist army

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<sup>32</sup> Leslie Boon, “‘We zijn als Kemeleons’: Indo’s in Indonesië”, *De Sobat: Nieuwsbrief voor Donateurs van de Stichting Tong Tong*, April 2004, p. 20; see also Carol Annink, ‘Orang Indo en Indonesian-Dutch: Indische Nederlanders in Indonesië en de Verenigde Staten van Amerika’, in Wim Willems and Leo Lucassen (eds), *Het Onbekende Vaderland: de Repatriëring van Indische Nederlanders (1946–1964)*, The Hague, Sdu Uitgeverij Koninginnegracht, 1994, pp. 147-71.

<sup>33</sup> Ellemers and Vaillant, *Indische Nederlanders en Grepatrieerden*, p. 41.

generals. When they arrived at the home of General Nasution, the former army chief of staff, his Indo wife, Johana Sunarti, managed to warn him and he escaped, but one of his aides, Manadonese Indo Pierre Tendean, was mistaken for him, captured and killed like the other generals. The army, under Major General Suharto, portrayed itself as Sukarno's saviour from the coup, which it declared the senior ranks of the Indonesian Communist Party had planned. Over the next few months, Suharto took control of the media and encouraged civilian groups to take action against suspected communists together with the army. Sukarno was effectively sidelined, and Suharto officially became president in 1967, marking the beginning of the New Order government. The events of 1965 became the subject of a national propaganda project in which the New Order government's version of what happened, and how they had restored order, was indoctrinated at all levels of society.

Until recently, convincing many victims of this particularly bloody period of Indonesian history to share their stories was a challenge.<sup>34</sup> Asking Indos to talk about this period was equally challenging, probably because most still lived in fear that discrimination and violence at the hands of popular militias during the Bersiap could recur. Victoria Westerlink of Surabaya admitted that her Javanese husband was almost taken away. She remembered when going out of Surabaya seeing the heads of people killed hung above traffic signs. Eduard Grohe recalled staying home for a week in 1965. Andreas Manurip, born in 1956 in Surabaya, described how "all the neighbours disappeared" in the street where he grew up. He noted that suddenly he had no more friends to play with, because even the children of his neighbours vanished. He thought his family members had been spared because they were '*bule*' and so were not suspected of having links with the PKI. However, he also noted that his family had not experienced the problems that many other Indo families faced on Java during this period because his father was a policeman.

The Suharto government from its very beginnings encouraged minorities identified as 'foreign', in particular Chinese Indonesians, to assimilate to an Indonesian national identity. In doing so it was initially supported by a group of Chinese Indonesians in the

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<sup>34</sup> See, for example, Robert Cribb, 'Unresolved Problems in the Indonesian Killings of 1965-1966', *Asian Survey*, vol. 42, no. 4, 2002, p. 559; Vanessa Hearman, 'The Uses of Memoirs and Oral History Works in Researching the 1965-1966 Political Violence in Indonesia', *IJAPS*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2009, pp. 21-42.

Lembaga Pengkajian Kesatuan Bangsa (Institute for the Promotion of National Unity).<sup>35</sup> Assimilation (*pembaوران*) became official New Order policy. A Presidential Cabinet Decision in 1966 aimed at Chinese Indonesians in particular declared “that in the framework of Indonesian nation and character building, the process of assimilation of Indonesian citizens of ‘foreign descent’ in the body of the Indonesian nation should be accelerated.” It further announced “that the name change of Indonesians of foreign descent to names that conform with indigenous Indonesian names will be able to support these assimilation efforts.”<sup>36</sup> As early as 1967, a direct presidential decree targeted “Indonesians of foreign descent”. This decree affirmed that Indonesians of foreign descent had the same rights as other groups, but then declared that “the development of Indonesians of foreign descent will be carried out through the process of assimilation, mainly to prevent racially secluded lifestyles.” The context in which it declared that “differences in treating Indonesians of foreign descent and indigenous Indonesians are declared null and void” is unclear – perhaps it meant privileges extended to Indonesians of foreign descent, or discrimination that these groups experienced.<sup>37</sup> The decree then went on to specifically encouraged Chinese Indonesians to change their surnames. It did not mention any other groups by name, such as Indos, Indians and Arabs.

Over the next two decades the government enacted legislation to enforce the assimilation of minorities. In legal documents, the term ‘Indonesians of foreign descent’ almost always was interpreted to mean the Chinese Indonesian population. Indos during this period were occasionally referred to as ‘WNI keturunan Eropa’ (Indonesians of European descent). Many members of ‘foreign minorities’ changed their names. Chinese Indonesians stopped using Chinese after it was forbidden, just as Indos had stopped using Dutch in 1957. Public celebration of ‘foreign’ holidays such as Chinese New Year and Sinterklaas Day stopped.<sup>38</sup> Just as the Sukarno government had established transitional schools for Indos so that they could make the transition from Dutch education to Indonesian education, so the Suharto government established

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<sup>35</sup> Nobuhiro Aizawa, ‘Assimilation, Differentiation, and Depoliticization: Chinese Indonesians and the Ministry of Home Affairs in Suharto’s Indonesia’, in Marleen Dieleman, Juliette Koning and Peter Post (eds), *Chinese Indonesians and Regime Change*, Leiden, Brill, 2011, pp. 51-53.

<sup>36</sup> Keputusan Presidium Kabinet No. 127/Kep/12/1966.

<sup>37</sup> Keputusan Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor 240 Tahun 1967 tentang Kebidjaksanaan Pokok jang Menjangkut Warga Negara Indonesia Keturunan Asing, Bab II, Pasal 3-4.

<sup>38</sup> I could find no references to the public revival of Sinterklaas in Jakarta after the Black Sinterklaas event of 1957. This situation probably is related more to religious tensions than assimilation. Visits to children from individuals dressed as Sinterklaas and Zwaarte Piet remain common in Manado and a central feature of public Christmas celebrations there. The Dutch embassy and Dutch expat community in Jakarta continue to hold Sinterklaas events.

Special National Project Schools (Sekolah Nasional Projek Khusus), which were open to both foreign Chinese and Indonesian citizens. In 1975 the Minister of Education and Culture, Mashuri Saleh, abolished these schools and announced that the period of adjustment for Chinese children had ended.<sup>39</sup>

Assimilation remained a central focus of government policies on foreign minorities well into the 1980s, and also entered public consciousness. Suharto announced in a speech to Parliament (DPR) on 16 August 1983, that “we will further intensify the assimilation efforts of the nation in various fields of life in order to strengthen national unity and national defence.”<sup>40</sup> According to Sayidiman Suryohadiprojo, a New Order military general, writing in 1987,

Assimilation of Indonesians of Chinese descent presents the most obstacles, as there are other factors beyond race, like economic, cultural and religious factors. The assimilation of Indonesians of Arab descent is made easy because they have the same religion, Islam [like the majority of Indonesians], while those with European descent (usually called Indo-Europeans) easily became Indonesians if they intended to do so.<sup>41</sup>

His words were reproduced in an essay written by a middle-school student for a national contest. The essay was published in a 1992 document printed by the Directorate of History and Traditional Values in the Department of Education and Culture, which indirectly meant they had received the government stamp of approval.<sup>42</sup> Both works touched on several elements key to discussions of Indonesians of foreign descent, and illuminate why Chinese Indonesians might be distinguished from other groups like Indos who were cast as a ‘model minority’ compared with Chinese Indonesians.

Most Indos had left Indonesia during the 1950s and 1960s, but the majority of Chinese Indonesians remained. They comprised about 4 per cent of the total population.<sup>43</sup> The small number of Indos who stayed were rarely involved in business and few were members of the business elite, though some were part of the political elite. However, according to Adam Schwarz, writing in 1999, as much as 70 per cent of all private

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<sup>39</sup> Suryadinata, *Pribumi Indonesians, the Chinese Minority and China*, pp.154-59.

<sup>40</sup> Soeharto, ‘Pidato Kenegaraan’, 16 August 1983.

<sup>41</sup> Sayidiman Suryohadiprojo, *Menghadapi Tantangan Masa Depan*, Jakarta, PT Gramedia, 1987, pp. 218-219.

<sup>42</sup> Lili, ‘Persatuan: Kunci Utama Tercapainya Integrasi dan Masa Depan Bangsa, in *Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Sejarah Nasional, Kumpulan Naskah Pemenang Sayembara Mengarang Tahun 1991*, Jakarta, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional, Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Sejarah Nasional, 1992, p. 57.

<sup>43</sup> Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia’s Search for Stability*, St. Leonards, NSW, Allen & Unwin, 1999, p. 99.

economic activity in Indonesia was carried out by businesses owned by Chinese Indonesian families. This predominance led to a public perception that Chinese Indonesians were wealthier than *pribumi* Indonesians, especially in the last ten years of Suharto's rule. Discussions about cultural differences and the perceived unwillingness of Chinese Indonesians to put aside these differences should be viewed within this lens. Cultural and religious differences are often mentioned when economic and political tensions between groups become the focus of government rhetoric, but in and of themselves they do not necessarily translate into minority-majority tensions. Indo families reported using Dutch at home again after the fall of Suharto and eating western food, and almost all were Christian. Thus, the 'cultural and religious factors' mentioned above regarding Chinese Indonesians could certainly apply to them, yet collectively they did not enter public discourse during the New Order. Indo responses to pressures to assimilate to some extent explain why they were rarely mentioned as a 'problem minority', but it is more likely that their reduced numbers and marriage to Indonesians, not to mention their areas of employment – in transnational companies, the civil service and small local businesses – away from the public eye contributed to the perception that they had completely assimilated. They simply were not a strong enough group in numeric, financial and political terms to be identified as a public threat.

The New Order explicitly forbade public discussions of what it termed SARA: *suku* (ethnicity), *agama* (religion), *ras* (race) and *antar golongan* (class). The Ministry of Home Affairs (DEPDAGRI) became responsible from 1967 for drafting and issuing laws and policies regarding all matters related to SARA, including assimilation. From 1975, the Directorate General of Social and Political Affairs (Direktorat Jenderal Sosial dan Politik, Dirjen SOSPOL), one of five divisions within the Ministry of Home Affairs, was responsible for formulating assimilation policies. Its responsibilities extended to intelligence and monitoring suspected threats to Indonesia, particularly those connected to SARA, which made it an object of fear among the general populace.<sup>44</sup> From 1978, the Ministry of Home Affairs established SOSPOL divisions at the provincial, municipal and county levels. Each division featured a Directorate for Promoting National Unity (Direktorat Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa, KESBANG). In 1980, Dirjen SOSPOL instructed Chinese Indonesian community leaders to carry out a survey on the state of assimilation in provinces with large Chinese Indonesian populations. Areas that had 20 per cent or more non-*pribumi* inhabitants became the

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<sup>44</sup> Aizawa, 'Assimilation, Differentiation, and Depoliticization', p. 54.

focus of assimilation programs. Neighbourhood heads were trained to report on the *pribumi-non-pribumi* relationships in their districts.<sup>45</sup>

In November 1977, the Minister for Home Affairs, Amirmachmud, ordered that a code be added to the identity cards of Chinese Indonesians. He further ordered that this code and the issue date of an individual's Citizenship Document (Surat Bukti Kewarganegaraan Republik Indonesia, SBKRI) should be recorded with their name. This document had been issued from 1958 to those who had a foreign birth certificate or, in the case of Chinese Indonesians, were of foreign descent, even if they were born in Indonesia.<sup>46</sup> From 1978 an SBKRI for Indonesians with a birth certificate issued in the Netherlands Indies was required to apply for marriage and death certificates, to register the birth of a child and to apply for a passport.<sup>47</sup> The children of Chinese Indonesians did not automatically become Indonesian citizens; upon reaching seventeen years of age, they were required to apply for this document.<sup>48</sup> Indos who had Dutch birth certificates were required to produce the document upon request.

### **Proving citizenship**

The identity card code for Chinese Indonesians eventually became practice, but it never applied to Indos. However, many still faced difficulties applying for documents. Yfke Laquais recalled that she almost was unable to obtain a passport on account of her foreign surname and the European birth certificate she had received as the daughter of a Dutch citizen:

I had a European birth certificate because I was born in June 1951. In December 1951 my father chose [to become an Indonesian citizen], so at that time I was still young. I had problems for ages with my birth certificate. But now I've got an Indonesian birth certificate. I should have already been an Indonesian citizen, because my father chose to become one, but when I went to apply for a passport, because I didn't take my naturalisation document, they saw my birth certificate and said, oh this is a European, and so they didn't want to give me a passport. But when they saw my husband who is white, and my husband said 'my wife is very sick' – and it was true, at that time I was sick and I had to go to Singapore, and I had a doctor's letter – and my husband said 'if anything happens to my wife, I'm going to sue you', so finally they released my

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<sup>45</sup> Aizawa, 'Assimilation, Differentiation, and Depoliticization', pp. 58-59.

<sup>46</sup> To date, the initial SBKRI requirement has been interpreted as evidence of Sukarno's anti-Chinese stance in the context of Mao's claim that all Chinese outside China would be considered Chinese citizens, but the date of the Citizenship Law – 1958 – suggests that anti-Dutch sentiment and the expulsion of Dutch citizens should be taken into account as well.

<sup>47</sup> Lan, 'Contesting the Post-Colonial Legal Construction of Chinese Indonesian', p. 283.

<sup>48</sup> Filomeno V. Aguilar, 'Citizenship, Inheritance, and the Indigenizing of "Orang Chinese" in Indonesia', *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2001, p. 518

passport although I had previously held a passport. If I'd previously held a passport, they already should have had my data... but we still had to deal with behaviour like that. And I was allowed to leave... but in my passport it was written that I had to report as soon as I got back to the immigration office in South Jakarta, meaning show them my naturalisation document. But then I said that I'd lost my birth certificate. I went to the civil records office. They issued me a new copy, but as an Indonesian citizen.

Yfke thought that the problem was not with her French father's surname, but rather with her Chinese mother's name, Liauw Kwat Eng.

They didn't really cause problems with my father's name [Francois Gerrit Laquais], though the names of both [my parents] were foreign, smacked of being foreign. Always the problem is with China.

Yet other Indos experienced similar difficulties applying for passports. In 1988, Hendricus Moors applied for a civilian passport. It was only then that he realised that he was still a European based on his birth certificate. He was amazed that he had been able to enter the armed forces using this birth certificate without questions being raised. He thought that his stepfather's support for his application – his stepfather had a military background – perhaps had helped and “maybe administration wasn't as strict then”. When he applied for a civilian passport, he received a call from the head of immigration himself to arrange a meeting. Hendricus discovered that he was still legally considered a European. The only reason the head of immigration was willing to give him a civilian passport without demanding an SBKRI was because Hendricus wore the uniform of the Indonesian air force.

Applying for a naturalisation document was problematic for those whose birth certificates were lost or destroyed during the Japanese Occupation and the Bersiap period. For Indonesians of foreign descent, the process could develop into an expensive bureaucratic nightmare, meaning that some could never afford to become Indonesian citizens. Some, even after they paid the fee, were unable to get essential documents like an identity card (KTP). Sylvia Huisman-Carels, in a study of six Indo families in Indonesia in 1990, reported that the oldest son of one couple was forced to fill out a form declaring his ethnic background before he could graduate from school. His father then had to explain that he was not *asli* Indonesian.<sup>49</sup> Getting a death certificate was also problematic. Yfke's uncle, Adriaan Fuchs, said that it was difficult to get a death certificate for his deceased wife because he was asked for proof that she was not a European. She had an Indonesian passport, but her birth certificate recorded her as

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<sup>49</sup> Huisman-Carels, 'Indische Mensen in Indonesie', p. 53.

European. It is likely that public servants during the corrupt years of the New Order government considered ‘Europeans’ wealthy, and presented them with bureaucratic obstacles in order to obtain a bribe. Yet Adriaan’s nephew Roy, Yfke’s brother, explained that “I have no problems because maybe I am a Muslim, and if they ask about my foreign name I say that I am from Sulawesi.” Roy also did not particularly look ‘foreign’, unlike Yfke. Identity cards also listed religion, a problem for some Indos who became, in a sense, ‘double minorities’ on account of both their foreign descent and, in most cases, their Christian religion in Muslim-majority Java.

After 1974, the New Order government began to focus on implementing official state ideology, Pancasila. Pancasila consisted of five principles, including the unity of Indonesia. This particular principle became one of the ideological cornerstones of the Suharto government. From 1978 it initiated classes to train civil servants in Pancasila ideology in order to ‘Indonesianise’ the Indonesian population.<sup>50</sup> These classes, as well as classes for all levels of society, emphasised ‘Indonesian values’ such as communalism over individualism, the value of consensus decision-making and the centrality of the family.<sup>51</sup> Wim Hernie was among the instructors of classes for civil servants. Wim’s grandfather on his mother’s side was European, and his father was Manadonese with *gelijkgesteld* status. In spite of his ancestry, no one would ever have considered Wim Dutch on the basis of his looks because “my features are Indonesian, on [the] basis of my looks they will never confuse me with a Dutchman.”<sup>52</sup> The New Order’s version of Pancasila ideology during most of the 1980s allowed little room for any expressions of ethnic identity that were not state prescribed. A number of senior members of the government and military known for their commitment to this version of New Order ideology were in fact of European descent. Among them were General Leonardus Benyamin (Benny) Moerdani and Yapto Soerjosoemarno, the leader of Pemuda Pancasila, a group of state-sponsored gangsters closely connected to the Suharto government. A small number of senior members of the armed forces were Indo. Hendricus Moors rose to the rank of colonel in the air force. None, however, publicly identified as Indo. Until the 1990s, censorship and press limitations prevented writers from publishing anything that might lead to ethnic, religious or racial tension.<sup>53</sup> From

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<sup>50</sup> Elson, *The Idea of Indonesia*, p. 248.

<sup>51</sup> David Bouchier, ‘Indonesianising Indonesia: Conservative Indigenism in an Age of Globalisation’, *Social Semiotics*, vol. 8, nos. 2-3, 1998, p. 207.

<sup>52</sup> Annink, *Learning Minority Status*, p. 123.

<sup>53</sup> Virginia Matheson Hooker and Howard Dick, ‘Introduction’, in Virginia Matheson Hooker (ed.), *Culture and Society in New Order Indonesia*, Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 6.

1985, all social organisations were required to use Pancasila as their only philosophical foundation.<sup>54</sup>

The New Order built upon the Sukarno government's language policies by enforcing the use of Indonesian, which at independence had been a second language for the overwhelming majority of the population.<sup>55</sup> For much of the 1980s and part of the 1990s, owners of signs that featured foreign words in Jakarta could be liable to a fine.<sup>56</sup> Political parties and associations perceived to pose a threat to national unity, including those based on ethnicity, were disbanded, banned or absorbed into larger organizations. Ethnic groups recognized as indigenous were acknowledged but this acknowledgement usually only extended to visual displays in national museums that posed no threat to national unity. The theme park Taman Mini, which opened in 1975, is one example of the way the Suharto government limited expressions of ethnic identity to appearance. On the surface, Taman Mini was a visual tribute to particular ethnic groups – traditional houses, costumes and dances – but it removed the more controversial components of regional identities so that they could conform to the national motto of 'unity in diversity'.<sup>57</sup> It only featured one ethnicity per province and never featured any mention of Chinese Indonesians or other 'foreign' minorities, as members of these groups were expected to assimilate to Indonesian identity more broadly and, indirectly, an indigenous ethnic identity.

One interpretation of this situation might be that these groups were expected to forget their non-Indonesian roots and practices that marked them as foreign. Dutch influence was relegated to the past, even if the Indonesian language featured a great many loan words and forms derived from Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish. Ironically, it was Joop Ave, Indonesian Minister of Tourism, Post and Telecommunications from 1993 to 1998, who himself was of Dutch descent, who launched the first two volumes of an encyclopaedia series on Indonesia's heritage in April 1996 which contained few mentions of enduring Dutch influence in contemporary Indonesia apart from

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<sup>54</sup> Bourchier, 'Indonesianising Indonesia', p. 208.

<sup>55</sup> Keith Foulcher, 'The Construction of an Indonesian National Culture: Patterns of Hegemony and Resistance', in Arief Budiman (ed.), *State and Civil Society in Indonesia*, Clayton, Victoria, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies Monash University, 1990, p. 304.

<sup>56</sup> Ariel Heryanto, *Language of Development and Development of Language: The Case of Indonesia*, Canberra, Department of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, 1995, p. 41.

<sup>57</sup> Michael Hitchcock, 'Tourism, Taman Mini, and National Identity', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol. 26, no. 75, 1998, pp. 126-127.

language.<sup>58</sup> My own interactions in 2013 with a number of Javanese New Order-era generals, retired government officials and individuals closely tied to the New Order elite were similarly revealing. Several said that Indos had been prominent in colonial Indonesia, but the few remaining after independence assimilated so that there were no Indos in Indonesia today. One woman of Dutch descent from an elite family refused to talk to me because, she said, she was an assimilated Indonesian and not Indo. Even though some Indos of the same generation, such as August Melasz and Doris Callebaut, became prominent in Indonesian popular culture during the New Order (see Chapter 6), publicly they were celebrated as Indo more so because of their mixed appearances rather than because of other identity markers that might cast them as different from the homogenous Indonesian identity promoted by the government.

If we exclude the very different historical experiences and postcolonial trajectories of Indos in the Minahasa region, it becomes apparent that even though the New Order never explicitly targeted Indos as it did Chinese Indonesians, Indos living on Java were subject not only to ideological pressures to assimilate but also very practical pressures. Possibly foreign policy had a role to play in the New Order's inconsistent approach to 'foreign minorities'. Much of its legitimacy rested on the claim that it had rescued Indonesia from a communist crisis.<sup>59</sup> The anti-Dutch fervour of the Sukarno years over the Dutch New Guinea debacle was replaced by anti-communist fervour during the Suharto era that never vanished from public discourse. In fact, the Suharto government became relatively pro-west in its outlook in comparison with Sukarno, though domestically this approach probably had little impact on the circumstances of Indonesians of European descent. Ideological considerations and the relationships of different groups to administrations shifted with regime change, as did who was identified as a domestic economic or political threat. Yet the requirement that Indos produce their SBKRI was a frequent reminder that even though they were no longer the target of government rhetoric, Indos could still be subject to different treatment from other Indonesians.

Despite pressures to assimilate, some Indos were able to take active roles in public life, and continued the practices that would have marked them as Indonesians of European descent only in private. Eleonora Nirihuwa, whose grandmother was Dutch and

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<sup>58</sup> Jonathan Rigg, *Indonesian Heritage: vol. 2, The Human Environment*, Singapore, Archipelago Press, 1996.

<sup>59</sup> Leo Suryadinata, *Pribumi Indonesians, the Chinese Minority and China: A Study of Perceptions and Policies*, Kuala Lumpur, Heinemann Educational, 1978, pp. 153-54.

grandfather was Portuguese, was elected as a local parliamentarian in Malang for the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) from 1992 to 1997. Hendrik Jansen, also from Malang, was active in the local branch of the Catholic Party until it was dissolved, and then later became an advisor to the local Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P). In private, those raised in Dutch families continued to eat Dutch food occasionally. Some noted that they could not stomach rice in the morning, which other Indonesians generally ate, but had bread instead. Anita Nikijuluw, her brother and Dutch mother ate *leverpastei* from the Netherlands on special occasions. Relatives regularly posted tins to them, or Anita's sister Ingrid brought tins back from the Netherlands. Juliana Welcker of Jakarta, who was of German descent, said she ate Indonesian food in daily life, but for New Year and birthday celebrations ate 'Dutch' food such as *huzarensla*, *slag* (*hagelslag*), salad, spaghetti and the Dutch-Manadonese dish *klappertaart*.

### **Changes after Reformasi**

The 1990s were relatively open in comparison with the first two decades of the New Order. Important changes in policy towards Indonesians of foreign descent took place even before the reforms of the post-1998 Reformasi period after the fall of Suharto.<sup>60</sup> Presidential Decree 56 in 1996 declared invalid "all laws and regulations which for certain interests require Proof of Citizenship of the Republic of Indonesia (SBKRI)". It was followed by a presidential instruction in 1999 to reinforce this point. Yet local legislation containing discriminatory passages often carried over into the post-Suharto years.<sup>61</sup> In one exceptional example, the city of Surakarta required from 2002 that citizens classed as European under colonial law report a birth within ten days compared with sixty days for other citizens. If they were late, they had to obtain a court decision, whereas other Indonesians (apart from Chinese Indonesians) required a decision from the city's mayor.<sup>62</sup> The law remained in place until 2010, four years after the 2006 Law on Citizenship which further attempted to abolish the SBKRI. A 2006 regulation on population administration also legislated for the removal of classification based on colonial divisions into 'European', 'Foreign Oriental' and 'Native'. Nonetheless, in many parts of Indonesia, if officials doubted that an individual was an Indonesian

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<sup>60</sup> Ariel Heryanto, 'Ethnic Identities and Erasure: Chinese Indonesians in Public Culture', in Joel S. Kahn (ed.), *Southeast Asian Identities: Culture and the Politics of Representation in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1998, p. 96.

<sup>61</sup> Lan, 'Contesting the Post-Colonial Legal Construction of Chinese Indonesians', pp. 382-386; Chang-Yau Hoon, 'Assimilation, Multiculturalism, Hybridity: The Dilemmas of the Ethnic Chinese in Post-Suharto Indonesia', *Asian Ethnicity*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2006, pp. 154-55.

<sup>62</sup> Peraturan Daerah Kota Surakarta Nomor 6 Tahun 2002 tentang Penyelenggaraan Pendaftaran Penduduk dan Akta Catatan Sipil, pasal (article) 18.

citizen, even after presentation of an identity card, they continued to ask for an SBKRI.<sup>63</sup> A further complication was that even after 1998, many Indonesians of ‘foreign descent’ on Java never obtained identity cards. In April 2008 a newspaper article reported that 800 Indonesians of foreign descent in Malang, including Indos, still did not have an identity card. It noted that the problem obtaining a KTP had begun during the Suharto years.<sup>64</sup> This report aligns with stories recounted by Josta Rumahlaiselan of HALIN Indonesia, who mentioned a number of HALIN recipients in Jakarta who did not have KTPs and lived on the streets.

Yet the fact remains that successive governments continued the late New Order government’s tradition of removing national discriminatory legislation. A Law on Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections in 2008 declared that “Indonesian citizens from birth who had never been citizens of another country of their own volition” could become presidential and vice-presidential candidates.<sup>65</sup> This law followed an amendment to the Constitution in 2001, which removed the requirement that the president should be an *asli* Indonesian and instead stipulated the the president and vice-president should have been uninterrupted Indonesian citizens from birth who had never committed treason, and were “spiritually and physically capable” to carry out their duties.<sup>66</sup> The reforms with the greatest effect, however, were those allowing freedom of expression and public gatherings, which opened up the space for new identities to emerge.

### **Rise of an Indonesian Indo identity**

Though the New Order government never identified Indos as a ‘problem’ minority, and in fact New Order ideologues rarely mentioned Indonesians of European descent, pressures during the New Order probably discouraged Indos from regularly organising *kumpulan*. Only in the mid-2000s, well into the Reformasi era, did *kumpulan* for Dutch speakers, most of whom were Indo, began to emerge on Java. This phenomenon can be explained partly by the ageing of the generation tracing their descent to colonial encounters, which meant that they had more time and, for many, more inclination to remember the days of their youth. However, increased contact through the internet with

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<sup>63</sup> Lan, ‘Contesting the Post-Colonial Legal Construction of Chinese Indonesians’, p. 382.

<sup>64</sup> ‘800 WNI Keturunan di Kota Malang Belum Miliki KTP’, *Malang Raya*, 28 April 2008, available from <http://malangraya.web.id/2008/04/25/800-wni-keturunan-di-kota-malang-belum-miliki-ktp/>, accessed 21 July 2015.

<sup>65</sup> Undang Undang Nomor 42 Tahun 2008 tentang Pemilihan Umum Presiden dan Wakil Presiden, pasal 5, paragraf b.

<sup>66</sup> Perubahan Ketiga Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945, Pasal 6(1).

Dutch, American and Australian Indos who promoted the idea of *kumpulan* for Indos also had a role. Indos who met at these *kumpulan* collectively began to create a new Indo identity that was based on Indonesian identity, and drew on a new awareness of similarities with other Indos in Indonesia with whom most had little contact during the Suharto years. This sense of shared awareness developed *vis-à-vis* Dutch and American Indo identity, as more and more Indos returned to Indonesia to retire in cooler mountain cities like Bandung and Malang and tried to re-create the *kumpulan* culture of Dutch and American Indo communities.

The most striking example of how Dutch Indos in Indonesia sponsored *kumpulans* that led to the beginning of regular Indo social gatherings is Surabaya's Indo Club, which has affiliated members across Indonesia. Yan Ferdinandus, Eddy Samson and Marcus Diergo were among of the founders of De Indo Club. It was established in 2006 at the suggestion of Dutch Indos. De Indo Club provided Indos from outside Indonesia and a small number of Indonesian Indos in Surabaya an opportunity to speak Dutch with the few members remaining of a generation who could still remember it. As a result, the Club was open to non-Indos such as Chinese Indonesians of the same generation who wanted to use their Dutch. Yan, Eddy and Marcus went in search of Indos in Surabaya and surrounds and discovered many more than they had previously suspected, so that the Club had around two hundred members by 2013. One of them, Victoria Westerlink, thought that De Indo Club in Surabaya also provided an opportunity to assist poor Indos, many of whom had been unable to obtain a good education when they were younger. She said, "I feel that we have to do something for our ethnic group.... [Many are] not in a good state. We must help those who are poor."

Groups in other cities, similarly, met to practise their Dutch, like a *kumpulan* Martje Ban-Wahupongoh mentioned that in the past regularly met in Manado, and a club specifically for Dutch speakers in Jakarta that Cara Oliveiro referred to, *Voor Onze Jeugd* (VOJ, For Our Youth). Rose Alberts and her husband Harry, a Chinese Indonesian, established a regular Sunday afternoon *kumpulan* at their home on the outskirts of Bandung around 2007 or 2008 as a "recreation place". Though almost all attendees spoke Dutch or were Indo, including Hendricus Moors, Billy Janz and American and Dutch Indo retirees who had returned to Indonesia, Rose and Harry explained that the *kumpulan* were not especially aimed at Dutch speakers. Rose and Harry were well-known as Dutch speakers, however, thanks to their roles as hosts on a local Dutch radio program. Harry explained that most attendees at the *kumpulan* were

“polyglots” and had been educated to speak multiple languages. But one exception to the trend of *kumpulan* for Dutch speakers was monthly *kumpulan* organised by the ANMF in Bandung. The purpose of these social gatherings was to distribute funds face-to-face to recipients, not all of whom could speak Dutch.

The indirect result of these social gatherings was an increasing sense of who comprised Indos in Indonesia and what they had in common. One central component of being Indo that a number referred to was religion. Almost all Indos identified as Christian, mostly Dutch Reformed (Calvinist) or Catholic. When I met Yan Suyanto in Surabaya in 2013, he gave me a copy of his latest album and explained that the second song on the album, which was about sparrows, was a metaphor for Indos: “The Indo people are like sparrows. No one keeps them as pets. They just live around the church.” Rudy Damwijk mentioned his confusion trying to trace impoverished Indos in Batu for the Dutch charity Help de Indischen in Indonesia because some Indo women in the area were Muslim and wore the hijab. Jopie van Zwierten described himself as surprised (*‘heran’*) if he encountered an Indo who was not a Calvinist or could not speak Dutch, though in the second opinion he was alone among all those I interviewed in Indonesia. Notably, he expressed this comment during an interview at an ANMF *kumpulan* in Bandung attended by two Muslim women wearing the hijab who had never been able to trace their fathers and had no memory of them. Several others outside interviews said to me that they could not consider women wearing hijab as Indo. The only exception I encountered was Roy Laquais, who converted to Ahmadiyah Islam when he was sixteen. Another exception, a well-known Muslim Indo who was a public figure from the Sukarno years onwards was Johana Sunarti Nasution-Gondokusumo, General Nasution’s wife, whose father was Javanese and mother was Dutch. She died in 2010.

Victoria Westerlink of Surabaya said she thought that, “Indos are good at socialising, but not good at making money.” Some acknowledged that their parents had never married, which meant that they were raised as illegitimate children and often had limited access to a good education. None, however, used the term *‘nyai’* to describe their mothers; nor was there a mention of royal ancestry as is common among Indos outside Indonesia. Only those who had lived outside Indonesia referred to having ‘Asian’ characteristics. Cara Oliveiro said that “We [Indos] are more modern, more disciplined, organised, open, and Indos are famous for always being friendly....” Common terms that Indos in Indonesia used to describe Indos included *‘disiplin’* (disciplined), *‘mandiri’* (independent) and being ‘on-time’ (expressed in English).

These characteristics are commonly used in Indonesia in a positive sense to describe westerners, in contrast to Indonesians who are stereotypically cast as late for appointments and financially dependent upon family members. Just as Dutch Indos expressed an identity in opposition to negative aspects of a stereotypical Dutch identity, Indos in Indonesia expressed an identity in opposition to negative aspects of a stereotypical Indonesian identity. None referred to the negative stereotypes of *bule*: that they are often considered *bebas* (promiscuous), *individualis* (detached from familial and communal relationships) and irreligious.<sup>67</sup> The single negative stereotype expressed about Indos was from Thea Jonathans-Loppies, who commented that Indo girls are considered flirtatious.

Although De Indo Club was open to Dutch speakers and provided an opportunity for members to use Dutch, Yan Ferdinandus explained that 'Indisch' was the Dutch term to describe Indos, and not usual in Indonesia: "Usually we say Indo. Indischen is the Dutch language." A number of Indos who had encountered Dutch and American Indos thought that they were different on account of forty or more years of separation. Several who had encountered Indos in the Netherlands did not identify with them at all. Marianne de Kok, who lived in Jakarta, was of Chinese and Portuguese, not Dutch, descent. She was invited to attend Indo *kumpulan* when she lived in the Netherlands between 1950 and 1963. After a year, she stopped attending because she did not identify with their stories of the war, even though she was interned during the Japanese Occupation. She said that when she chose to marry a Javanese man, who was studying in Rotterdam at the time, and decided to convert to Islam (though she later reverted to Christianity), "one of my aunties was very upset. 'You are going to marry an inlander?'" her aunt asked. Marianne's decision to go back to Indonesia with him "very much hurt my parents." Her father cried at her wedding "because in his eyes, Holland is better." She chose to identify as Eurasian (English) rather than Indo, even though "it's nonsense of course, it's easier to say Indo here [in Indonesia].... [But] I'm Eurasian and I'm proud of it."

Adji Damais had developed the opinion that it was difficult to speak of an Indo identity in Indonesia compared with the Netherlands. His first encounter with Indos was in the Netherlands in 1964:

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<sup>67</sup> Hewett, 'Children of Decolonisation', p. 197; Judith Schlehe, 'Concepts of Asia, the West and the Self in Contemporary Indonesia', *South East Asia Research*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 503-04.

It was the first time I came back to Holland after 1949, and the whole Indo world revealed itself to me.... For me it was a foreign country. Actually everyone treated me as an Indo, but they understood that it didn't click and actually after that I went back to 'oh, he's French,' and yet I was Indonesian too, because my whole education until senior high school was Indonesian. There are a lot of Indos in Indonesia left, but they became Indonesian. That's what I was trying to explain to them [Dutch Indos] but it didn't work. They thought that they were a separate 'race'. For me it was not a racial matter; it was more a cultural matter.... Indo is just a popular term to what shall I say, to describe people of mixed blood. But once again, I don't think that blood is the matter; the culture is. You know if you go to East Java in the mountains, you go to Bandung in the mountains, you see villagers with blue eyes. Nobody treats them as Indos. They're just Sundanese or Javanese, and naturally that's the heritage of all these plantation masters in the highlands of Java.

Indeed, a small number of Indonesians of European descent who had little contact with other Indos tended not to identify as Indo. Yet for those who did meet regularly with other Indos, the term appeared flexible and not limited to birth in colonial Indonesia, or the ability to speak Dutch. It was not necessarily limited to appearance, either, as many admitted that they 'looked Indonesian', while many of those who did have paler skin often pretended that they were Manadonese when they were not with other Indos.

Confusion over what and who comprised Indos in Indonesia is evident in the life story of one woman from Malang, Dienke Voges. In a newspaper article detailing Dienke's life, she said that, "most see me as a Belanda [Dutch woman] and rich. I'm Indonesian, alone and poor.... This is my country. Yet I'm still considered an outsider."<sup>68</sup> Dienke's appearance with pale skin, blue eyes and blond hair marked her irrevocably as a foreign *bule*, who are often viewed as fabulously wealthy compared to ordinary Indonesians.<sup>69</sup> She noted in an interview with me in Malang that other Indonesians went to her if they were struggling financially, even though she worked in housekeeping at a local guesthouse at a very low salary. "Why do people come to me if they need money?" she complained.

Dienke was born in Indonesia and had lived there her entire life. She spoke Indonesian and Javanese fluently. Her German mother Charlotte raised her to believe that she was of Indonesian descent. It was not until after the death of Dienke's Manadonese father that Charlotte told her the truth: he was in fact her stepfather. Her real father, Karel, a Dutchman, had been captured by the Japanese during the Second World War. He was

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<sup>68</sup> Duncan Graham, 'Two Halves Make a Whole', *Jakarta Post*, 16 September 2013, available from <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2013/09/16/sige-dina-voges-two-halves-make-a-whole.html>, accessed 12 August 2015.

<sup>69</sup> Foulcher, 'The Construction of an Indonesian National Culture', p. 307.

shipped to Thailand to work on the Thailand-Burma Railroad. After the war, word reached Charlotte that Karel had died on the railway, and she remarried. Years later, when Dienne was working as a tour guide in Sumatra, an Indo woman approached her and asked if she was related to a Dutchman called Vogels in Bangkok. It transpired that the man was her father's younger brother. From there Dienne learned that there had been a mix-up after the war: it was her uncle who had died, and her father was still alive. After the war, he went to the Netherlands, remarried, and eventually migrated to Australia. Dienne was able to track him down and they met in Singapore. They met several more times before he died. He told her that he had assumed that Charlotte was dead because she had never contacted him. Dienne's own confusing background meant that she struggled to identify as neatly as many other Indonesians with an ethnic group. She said, "I'm mixed, but I don't know any more.... If I'm in the Batak region, I feel Batak... But maybe deep down inside I am Manadonese.... It's true I'm Dutch, since I was small that was a part of me, but then I went back to Manadonese [identity when I married a Manadonese man]." Even so, several Dutch Indos who had retired in Malang referred to Dienne as Indo.

## **Conclusion**

An analysis of the experiences of Indos living in Indonesia reveals not only the rifts and fractures that emerge when trying to construct a transnational Indo identity that includes Indonesia, but also the racialised nature of Indonesian national identity as it has developed over the last seventy-odd years. Indos who looked obviously foreign were subject to different terms of address and were treated differently from other Indonesians. Those whose appearance merely hinted at foreign ancestry or difference often were identified as Manadonese, or consciously chose to cultivate this image. Decolonisation included legislation that removed the privileges of groups that did not hold native status in the Netherlands Indies. This legislation and the bureaucracy that accompanied it meant different processes and rules for, especially, Chinese Indonesians and Indos with European birth certificates. Both Sukarno and Suharto targeted domestic 'foreign' minorities to boost their popularity. An analysis of their policies towards, respectively, the Dutch and Chinese-Indonesians reveals remarkable similarities. Celebrations of Sinterklaas Day ceased after 1957 in Jakarta, just as public celebrations of Chinese New Year disappeared in New Order Indonesia. Material in Dutch was banned, just like Chinese language publications and signs. Both governments exerted pressures on residents of foreign descent to hold only a single citizenship, and then

questioned the status of those who did take Indonesian citizenship by forcing groups identified as Indonesians of foreign descent to produce SBKRI certificates. Both the Dutch during the 1950s and Chinese Indonesians during the New Order were identified as wealthier than *pribumi* Indonesians. Indos, however, mostly did not take Indonesian citizenship or changed their minds and left, while most Chinese Indonesians stayed. The exception was around 60,000 Chinese Indonesians, a relatively small number in comparison with the total Chinese Indonesian population, who left for China during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>70</sup> Indos were largely removed from the public sphere and this influenced public perceptions regarding them as a group.

Many Indos who remained were the children of Dutch women and Indonesian men who had held *gelijgkesteld* status, often Ambonese and Manadonese, but also Javanese Christians. Stories from Java reveal that from the late 1970s discrimination in employment seems to have disappeared, but the requirement that their applications for identity cards, passports, birth certificates and death certificates should be accompanied by the SBKRI was frustrating for all who mentioned it, because they considered themselves to be Indonesians. In some cases this requirement prevented Indos and other Indonesians of foreign descent from obtaining identity cards, which in turn led to impoverishment and unemployment. Though the New Order government never identified Indos as a 'problem' minority, and in fact New Order ideologues appear to have mentioned Indonesians of European descent as a 'model minority' compared with Chinese Indonesians, it is nonetheless significant that most *kumpulan* for Dutch speakers, mostly Indos, only began to emerge on Java in the mid-2000s, well into the Reformasi era reforms. The explanation for this emergence lies partly in the lifting of restrictions on expressions of ethnic identity, but also partly because of the ageing of this population and their increased links with Indos outside Indonesia. In other parts of Indonesia, where pressures to assimilate were not so great and social stratification during the colonial period not so delineated, members of the same generation recalled quite different experiences. The next chapter looks at the diverging trajectories of Indos in the Minahasa region, where many intermarried with Minahasans and the local mestizo Borgo community, and encountered little, if any, discrimination or comments on account of their foreign descent.

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<sup>70</sup> See Michael R. Godley and Charles A. Coppel, 'The Pied Piper and the Prodigal Children: a Report on the Indonesian-Chinese Students Who Went to Mao's China', *Archipel*, vol. 39, no. 1, 1990, pp. 179-98.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### BURGERS, BORGOS AND BEING INDO IN COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL MINAHASA

The Minahasa region of North Sulawesi was one of the most intensively colonised regions of the Netherlands Indies. Legacies of its colonial past are still evident today. Historically, the area was important for its strategic location between the Philippines and the Moluccas, both major trade areas. It also provided the VOC vessels with rice on their voyages to the Moluccas, which was never suitable for substantial rice production. Minahasa was subject variously to indirect Spanish rule, Portuguese and Spanish missionary work, indirect VOC rule and, later, direct Dutch colonial rule. This more or less constant presence of Europeans for more than three and a half centuries resulted in a large mestizo population. The descendants of Spanish and Portuguese missionaries, Spanish soldiers and Company officials protected European forts in towns along the Minahasan coast from pirates and raiders.

By the nineteenth century, the Dutch consistently referred to the descendants of these mestizos and other groups living in coastal areas as *inlandsche burgers*, or ‘native citizens’. As a group, they were distinct from the heathen Minahasans living in the hinterland, who were in fact an assortment of tribes initially designated the ‘Alfuresé’ by the VOC. Burgers formed an intermediary class for both the Spanish and the VOC by working as translators, traders and local officials in the absence of a large, permanent European population. In the nineteenth century their position was codified in a series of laws that granted them special privileges that roughly equated them with Europeans in exchange for their services. Though their legal status was abolished in the early twentieth century, the term ‘Borgo’ or *orang Borgo*<sup>1</sup>, as a local derivative of ‘burger’, has remained in use to describe Eurasians residing in certain coastal Minahasan towns, including the capital Manado. Over the course of the nineteenth century and during the first half of the twentieth century, Borgos frequently intermarried with newer generations of Eurasians who had Dutch, German, Belgian and English ancestors. These Eurasians were often termed ‘Endo’ (the local pronunciation of ‘Indo’) but over time the two groups became largely indistinguishable in the capital, Manado. In the three other major Borgo settlements on the coast, Tanawongko, Kema and Amurang,

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<sup>1</sup> The Malay term *orang Borgor*, mentioned in the *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië* – if it was not a misprint or wrongly heard – has not survived to the present. P.A. van der Lith et al., ‘Burgers’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1895, vol. 1, p. 300.

intermarriage with other Eurasians was probably not as common, but Dutch, German and English surnames are still found in Borgo communities there.

Over the past few decades, the Borgo community has experienced a relative revival thanks to the activism of several community leaders in Manado. Today, it is acknowledged as one of the nine ethnic groups of Minahasa. In 2006, it was granted membership to the grassroots adat organisation, the Indigenous Peoples' Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN, *Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara*). Application for membership to AMAN required Borgo leaders to define Borgo history, identity and community boundaries on a scale not seen among other Eurasian groups in Indonesia since the 1950s. Other areas of the archipelago also feature descendants of Iberian communities, mostly living in fishing communities in coastal areas.<sup>2</sup> One author has described these groups as 'lost communities', because they have been absorbed by other, larger ethnic groups.<sup>3</sup> Many coastal inhabitants of the Moluccas have Eurasian surnames and ancestry, most notably on the island of Kisar. A large number of the residents of the district of Lamno in Aceh, believed to be the descendants of Portuguese sailors and soldiers, were reported to have blue eyes, blonde hair, pale skin and 'sharp' noses before the 2004 tsunami laid waste to the area.<sup>4</sup> The former village of Tugu in North Jakarta hosts a community of *Mardijkers*, the descendants of former freed slaves who claim Portuguese descent. Besides the *Mardijkers*, these other groups have generally not promoted a distinct Eurasian or mestizo identity in contrast to indigenous groups.

Like the *Mardijkers*, Minahasan Borgos intermarried with Indos during the colonial period, partly thanks to the *gelijkgesteld* status that many were able to obtain with relative ease. In Minahasa, Borgos also held the intermediary positions that Indos on Java held as lower-level colonial administrators and interpreters, because of the small number of permanent *totok* Dutch officials in the region. Thanks to their intermarriage

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<sup>2</sup> Other communities in the Indonesian archipelago include the Larantuqueiros of Flores and the Topasses of Timor, who the Dutch termed the 'black Portuguese'. The Topasses developed a fearsome reputation and were largely unfriendly towards the Dutch. See Antonio L. Rappa, *Saudade: The Culture and Security of Eurasian Communities in Southeast Asia*, Singapore, Ethos Books, Singapore Management University, 2013, pp. 124-25.

<sup>3</sup> John Byrne, 'The Luso-Asians and Other Eurasians: Their Domestic and Diasporic Identities', in *Portuguese and Luso-Asian Legacies in Southeast Asia, 1511-2011: The Making of the Luso-Asian World*, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2011-2012, vol. 1, p. 132.

<sup>4</sup> Shane Joshua Barter, *Explaining the Genetic Footprints of Catholic and Protestant Colonizers*, S.I., Palgrave Pivot, 2015; Anggit Satriyo, 'Dulu Ada Dua Ribu, Kini Tinggal Hitungal Jari', *jpnn.com: Jaringan Berita Terluas di Indonesia*, 30 December 2009, available from <http://www.jpnn.com/m/news.php?id=55782>, accessed 30 December 2015.

with Indos and their special status in colonial Minahasa, this mestizo community cultivated a Eurasian identity from at least the late nineteenth century that has persisted to the present and been revived more recently. The leaders of the Borgo community used the indigenous history of the group, in tandem with traditions distinct to coastal communities in the Moluccas, to successfully argue that they should be recognized as an indigenous ethnic group. This chapter looks at the historical circumstances that allowed such a transformation to take place. It draws on oral history interviews that I carried out in Minahasa in 2013 and 2015, and also compares the historical trajectory of Borgos with that of Sri Lankan Burghers whose circumstances most closely align with the *inlandsche burgers* of the Indies.

### **Defining ‘Borgo’**

The complexity of the term ‘Borgo’ is reflected in the different definitions attached to it from both within and outside Minahasa. One fisherman whom I interviewed in the Borgo village of Tanawangko, Lefianus Junginger, said that his father had been “pure German”, though born in Indonesia. He said that Borgos were different from Indos: Indos had lighter skin and a sharp nose, while Borgos had flat noses. Anne-Marie Bergman, living in the same complex, whose grandfather was Dutch, said that her father was called ‘Endo’ and other people described her as ‘Endo descent’ (*keturunan Endo*). Freddy Waterkamp, who lived in a Borgo complex in Manado, was of the opinion that Indos and Borgos were the same. He explained that “the Dutch said burger, Manadonese say Borgo. All of them have European descent, German, Portuguese.” He said that at school he had never been called ‘*bule*’ or ‘Indo’, but rather ‘Borgo’. Jan Ban, his neighbour, said that “in general they [Borgos] live by the ocean.... They [Europeans] came from outside so they lived in coastal areas.... Some stayed and lived here, and married locals.” Mona de Winter, also of Manado, had a European birth certificate and was of Dutch descent. She said that Indos were the same as Borgos, who were of Portuguese descent. One key difference between Indos and Borgos, however, was that the term ‘Borgo’ was specific to coastal areas. Other Minahasans of European descent who were born and grew up in the hinterland never mentioned being ‘Borgo’ in interviews. Evie Sael, of Dutch and German descent, said that Borgos lived by the seaside in answer to the question of who were Borgos. Altje Matthieu of the village of Tatelu noted that she was called ‘*budo*’ (Manadonese for ‘white’), not Borgo. Paulus Heydemans of Manado, who had devoted several decades to researching and defining Borgo history and identity, had a more specific definition. He said that Borgos were

Minahasans descended from locals who held burger status, including but not limited to those of European descent. Indos, he said, were those who definitely had European descent.

The few academic sources written after Indonesian independence that mention Borgos are fraught with even more inconsistencies. One author was of the opinion that a Borgo is a “foreigner of Asiatic descent”.<sup>5</sup> Another author noted that the term ‘Borgo’ was used to differentiate the coastal peoples of Eurasian background, almost all of whom were Christian, from the Alfurese heathens of the hinterland.<sup>6</sup> A Dutch author wrote in 1993 in a volume on Minahasans in the Netherlands that Borgos were “the descendants of children fathered by the Portuguese, Filipinos, freed slaves and others with Minahasan women during the VOC period.”<sup>7</sup> An Indonesian author wrote that the term ‘Borgo’ means “European descent, or Indos, or *blasteran* [mixed]”.<sup>8</sup> Mieke Schouten in her history of Minahasa wrote that Borgos were “immigrant people of Asian or Eurasian origin, and runaway slaves, who settled along the coast, principally in Kema, Likupang, Manado, Tanawangko and Amurang.” She also noted the “special legal position” of Borgos under the VOC.<sup>9</sup> These slaves were likely from the Minahasan hinterland, where slavery was common. They also could have been from the Philippines, small islands to the north of Minahasa such as Sangihe, and other areas of the eastern archipelago such as North Maluku or neighbouring Gorontalo.

### **The arrival of the Portuguese and Spanish**

Minahasan tribes originally only inhabited the inland areas of the northeast coast of Sulawesi. Coastal peoples had links to Sangihe, Ternate, groups further down the northeast peninsula, and other trading groups. They were often the target of slave-hunting pirates from Sulu in the Philippines. The Babontehu people of Manado Tua, an island just off the coast of present-day Manado, had their own raja and probably engaged in trade with Ternate. Parts of the coast, including Manado Tua, came under indirect rule from the Ternate sultanate, but the original Minahasa region itself was

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<sup>5</sup> Wil Lundström-Burghoorn, *Minahasa Civilization: A Tradition of Change*, Goteborg, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1981, p. 258.

<sup>6</sup> Rita Smith Kipp, ‘Two Views of the Minahasa; or, Whatever Happened to the Poor, Heathen Bushnatives’, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 63, no. 3, 2004, p. 604.

<sup>7</sup> Menno Hekker, *Minahassers in Indonesië en Nederland: Migratie en Cultuurverandering*, The Hague, [s.n.], 1993, p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Remy Sylado, *9 Oktober 1740: Drama Sejarah*, Jakarta, Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2005, pp. 194-95.

<sup>9</sup> M.J.C. (Mieke) Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society: Minahasa, 1677-1983*, Leiden, KITLV, 1998, p. 49.

largely isolated from the outside world until the arrival of the Portuguese in the eastern archipelago in 1512.

The Portuguese quickly concluded an alliance with the sultan of Ternate. When the Spanish arrived at rival kingdom Tidore in 1521 via South America and the Philippines, they were treated as enemies of both the Portuguese and Ternate. The two European powers sought spices in the Moluccan archipelago, but the increasing number of Portuguese and Spanish ships that arrived in the eastern archipelago over the next century also carried Jesuit and Fransiscan missionaries to commence work converting local populations to Catholicism. The Portuguese established some measure of control over Ternate through successive alliances with the sultans of Ternate, until they were expelled in 1570. They continued to compete with the Spanish in the region until Portugal and Spain were formally united after Philip II of Spain took control of Portugal in 1580.<sup>10</sup>

Unlike in the Moluccas, the Portuguese had little interest in Minahasa beyond what was initially unofficially sanctioned missionary activity. Spanish involvement in the area was much more extensive, particularly in the seventeenth century. Just when the first Spanish arrived on the Minahasan coast is unclear. One reason for this confusion is that the first missionaries did not receive formal approval to extend their work to Minahasa from North Maluku. Another is that scholars have paid very little attention to the Spanish empire in the Indonesian archipelago, which was fleeting and really only present to a significant and lasting degree in Tidore and Minahasa. One Indonesian author has suggested that after the two remaining ships from Ferdinand Magellan's fleet arrived in Tidore in October 1521, a group of Spanish sailors split from the original fleet and anchored on a Minahasan beach. According to the author, among them were probably missionaries, who immediately set to work converting the local population.<sup>11</sup> The source cited for this information, however, does not refer to this Spanish arrival in Minahasa, suggesting that it could be an oral tradition.<sup>12</sup> Another author has suggested that one of the two remaining ships of Magellan's fleet, the *Trinidad*, was forced to return from Tomor to Tidore, where the crew were captured by the Portuguese and imprisoned. A group of about forty managed to escape, thanks to help from Babontehu people residing there at the time, and fled to the island of Manado Tua. From there they

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<sup>10</sup> Azyumardi Azra, '1530-1670: A Race between Islam and Christianity?', in Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink (eds), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, Leiden, Brill, 2008, p. 30.

<sup>11</sup> H.B. Palar, *Wajah Lama Minahasa*, Jakarta, Yayasan Gibbon Indonesia, 2009, p. 221.

<sup>12</sup> H. van Kol, *Uit Onze Koloniën: Uitvoerig Reisverhaal*, Leiden, A:8.W. Sijthoff, 1903.

moved to the coast and settled in Kema.<sup>13</sup> This source also appears unreliable, as it featured no references and its account of the *Trinidad's* misadventures in Tidore is dubious. The Portuguese were based in Ternate, not Tidore, making it unlikely that they would have imprisoned Spanish sailors on Tidore. Portuguese ships regularly passed by Manado on their way to Ternate via northern Indonesia, and Spanish ships regularly passed by Minahasa between Ambon and Manila from the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps as early as the 1530s.<sup>14</sup> However, documentary records do not indicate that any sailors or missionaries settled on the Minahasan coast permanently during this period, and just when the first Europeans set foot on Minahasan soil is open to speculation – though a matter of some importance for the contemporary Borgo community.

Early efforts from Portuguese and Spanish Fransiscan and Jesuit missionaries to convert locals in the area met with little success, partly because few settled for periods longer than a few months.<sup>15</sup> A number of encounters in the Minahasan hinterland ended in fatalities on both sides. Missionaries were somewhat more successful in coastal areas. Reports suggest that the locals of these areas asked actively for Christian missionaries and took charge of spreading Christianity in the area, as occurred in other parts of the Moluccas.<sup>16</sup> A Jesuit report from 1556 mentioned a ‘Christian king’ in Manado, before any Jesuit missionaries officially visited the area. This raja could have been baptised by a lay cleric travelling on a passing Spanish fleet, or he could have been baptised in Ternate.<sup>17</sup> Another possibility is that the oral tradition mentioned above of Spanish castaways who fled to North Sulawesi from Tidore does have some truth in it. In Minahasan oral traditions the rajas of Manado are considered to be the rajas of Babontehu, not Manado. According to Minahasan cultural memory, the tribes of Minahasa, who were located in the hinterland, never had a raja or a common leader. Complicating this issue is that a number of European documents directly mention a ‘raja of Manado’. Contemporary Manado, lying on the coast, is now included as part of Minahasa, but in the past Minahasan tribes were located in the hinterland and other tribes lived on the coast. The general explanation is that this raja was the king of the island of Manado Tua (Old Manado), which was sometimes labelled Manado on Spanish maps, where the Babontehu people lived.

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<sup>13</sup> Taulu H.M., *Sedjarah Minahasa*, Manado, Rame, 1955, pp. 26-27.

<sup>14</sup> Jouke S. Wigboldus, ‘A History of the Minahasa, c. 1615-1680’, *Archipel*, vol. 34, 1987, p. 67; Brett Charles Baker, ‘Indigenous-Driven Mission: Reconstructing Religious Change in Sixteenth-Century Maluku’, unpublished PhD thesis, the Australian National University, 2012, p. 85, fn. 104.

<sup>15</sup> Wigboldus, ‘A History of the Minahasa’, p. 67.

<sup>16</sup> Baker, ‘Indigenous-Driven Mission’, pp. 284-85.

<sup>17</sup> Baker, ‘Indigenous-Driven Mission’, pp. 80-81.

Even so, subsequent accounts of missionary activity, after the Jesuits finally decided to officially send missionaries to North Sulawesi, do not mention this island, and only refer to the mainland and the islands of Sangihe and Talaud much further to the north. In 1563 Sultan Hairun of Ternate sent a fleet to North Sulawesi to increase Ternatean power there and to encourage the spread of Islam. The Portuguese captain of Ternate sent a Jesuit priest, Fr. Diego de Magelhaes, to Manado to spread Christianity after years of requests from the locals for more missionaries before the Ternatan fleet could convert the local population.<sup>18</sup> His visit was brief, but he continued to visit Manado from Ternate a number of times. He was succeeded by another missionary in 1568, who visited Manado and other areas further west. At least one observer considered Christianity extinct in Sulawesi by 1588 because of the small number of missionaries sent there, but requests continued to come from locals for more missionaries.<sup>19</sup>

### **Spanish settlement**

Spanish imperialism on the mainland of North Sulawesi did not really begin until after 1606. After the Spanish seized Tidore and Ternate in 1606, they made official contact with the peoples of North Sulawesi.<sup>20</sup> In August 1606 the governor of Maluku sent a letter inviting the raja of Manado to ally himself with the Spanish.<sup>21</sup> In 1608 a number of individuals from Manado sent to Ternate a request for priests to be sent to the region. They repeated the request in 1610. In May 1610 the governor of Ternate sent provisions and building material to North Sulawesi, accompanied by a priest.<sup>22</sup> Again, in June 1614, the raja of Manado sent a request to Ternate asking for an alliance with the Spanish and for missionaries.<sup>23</sup> Not until 1619, however, was the request for missionaries granted. Three Franciscans joined the small number of Jesuits in Minahasa.<sup>24</sup> Between 1617 and the mid-1650s, at least two or three missionaries worked continuously among Minahasans. They were protected by a more-or-less permanent unit of Spanish troops.<sup>25</sup> The coastal peoples who had accepted Christianity, including those under the raja of Manado, served as interpreters for the missionaries. They also supported the small number of Spanish troops in the event of violent outbreaks.

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<sup>18</sup> Heuken, 'Catholic Converts in the Moluccas, Minahasa and Sangihe-Talaud', p. 62.

<sup>19</sup> Heuken, 'Catholic Converts in the Moluccas, Minahasa and Sangihe-Talaud', p. 63.

<sup>20</sup> Wigboldus, 'A History of the Minahasa', p. 66.

<sup>21</sup> Achilles Meersman, *The Franciscans in the Indonesian Archipelago, 1300-1775*, Louvain, Nauwelaerts, 1967, p. 87.

<sup>22</sup> Meersman, *The Franciscans in the Indonesian Archipelago*, p. 87.

<sup>23</sup> Meersman, *The Franciscans in the Indonesian Archipelago*, p. 91.

<sup>24</sup> Heuken, 'Catholic Converts in the Moluccas, Minahasa and Sangihe-Talaud', p. 63.

<sup>25</sup> Wigboldus, 'A History of the Minahasa', p. 91; Van der Lith et al (eds), 'Spanjaarden in den Maleischen Archipel, De', *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 4, 1895, p. 48.

Gradually, the Spanish began to realise the potential commercial value of Minahasa for rice production and as a source of provisions for ships travelling between the Moluccas and the Philippines. In 1623 they built a fort in present-day Manado and named it Manados. They built another fort in Amurang and also settled in Kema, which they possibly termed Las Quemias.<sup>26</sup> Lay missionaries and soldiers in the area married mestizos or locals.<sup>27</sup> Intermarriage between soldiers and women in the hinterland probably occurred to a significant extent only with the women of the inland town of Tondano. Tondano developed a close relationship with the Spanish, most likely to improve its position against a number of the more powerful Minahasan tribes.<sup>28</sup> Spanish troops developed a reputation for raucous behaviour and chasing Minahasan women, which led to repeated violent skirmishes with Minahasan tribes.

According to a Jesuit report, in 1644 there were five hundred Christians in Manado. Many of these Christians are likely to have been the mestizo descendants of missionaries and soldiers. A scholar of Fransiscan missionary work in the Indonesian archipelago has recounted that in the Minahasan hinterland, there were a number of “mestiços” who exploited and abused the locals.<sup>29</sup> These mestizos often abused their positions and even took Minahasans as slaves for themselves.<sup>30</sup> Missionaries attempted to play a role as peacemakers between the Spanish and the Minahasans, as well as between the mestizo population and locals. In 1644, probably in reaction to Spanish soldiers pursuing Minahasan women, forty Spaniards and a missionary were killed in a village near Manado. This event marked the beginning of the end of Spanish influence in the region, and Minahasan tribes began to look to external powers to help expel the Spanish.

### **Minahasan alliance with the VOC**

In 1644 the Tombulu tribe sent a mission to VOC authorities, who had arrived in Ternate in 1599, to ask for an alliance against the Spanish.<sup>31</sup> This alliance was largely

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<sup>26</sup> Meersman, *The Fransiscans in the Indonesian Archipelago*, p. 94.

<sup>27</sup> N. Graafland, *De Minahassa: Haar Verleden en Haar Tegenwoordige Toestand*, Rotterdam, Wijt & Zonen, 1867, p. 83; David Henley, *The Idea of Celebes in History*, Clayton, Vic.: Monash University, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1989, p. 11.

<sup>28</sup> J.G.F. Riedel, ‘Het Oppergezag der Vorsten van Bolaang over de Minahasa (Bijdrage tot de Kennis der Oude Geschiedenis van Noord-Selebes)’, *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 17, 1869, p. 515.

<sup>29</sup> Meersman, *The Fransiscans in the Indonesian Archipelago*, p. 111.

<sup>30</sup> Adolf Heuken, ‘Catholic Converts in the Moluccas, Minahasa and Sangihe-Talaud, 1512-1680’, in Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink (eds), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, Leiden, Brill, 2008, p. 30; Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society*, p. 50.

<sup>31</sup> Wigboldus, ‘A History of the Minahasa’, p. 68.

unsuccessful in its aim to expel the Spanish, but it opened Minahasa up to lasting Dutch presence. The VOC, looking to establish the monopoly over spices, had rapidly cemented its presence in the eastern archipelago in the seventeenth century. By 1605, the Dutch had displaced the Portuguese in Ambon. Throughout the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, they fought with Spain for control throughout the region. VOC officials settled in Minahasa in either 1653 or 1654. They fortified an outpost in Manado in 1656.<sup>32</sup> In 1660 they expelled Spaniards from northwest Minahasa and chased them as far west as Amurang. In 1663 the Spanish were forced to withdraw their troops from Indonesia to defend the Philippines from a potential Chinese attack. The last Spanish withdrawal from North Sulawesi, from the island of Siau in 1677, marked the end of their presence in the area. They were unable to return after increased VOC control of Minahasa. Their descendants, however, remained in a number of outposts, notably in Manado, Amurang and Kema.

The Dutch called Kema ‘*Spanjaardsgat*’ (‘Spanish hole’) on account of its close connection with the Spanish.<sup>33</sup> They probably made use of the local mestizo population, as had the Spanish; certainly they expected this group to guard the coast from roving bands of pirates looking to capitalise on trade and rice exports. Most members of this community eventually settled in the Dutch fort in Manado, probably because of their conflict with Minahasans.<sup>34</sup> One author has estimated that there were about a hundred foreigners in Minahasa in 1678, almost all of whom were termed ‘Burghers’, whom he characterised as the “Creole descendants of Iberian and Dutch crews who had settled in the Dutch fort after the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century”.<sup>35</sup> Possibly some mestizos in North Sulawesi had left with Spanish soldiers and missionaries for Manila in 1663 because, in about 1658 or 1659, around 200 families of what were described in contemporary texts as Spanish creole-speaking *malayos* also departed from Ternate with the Spanish fleet.<sup>36</sup> However, the number left behind was almost certainly much larger, given the fairly regular reports of Spanish soldiers pursuing local women. Mestizo populations who assisted the Dutch were termed ‘burgers’ in the towns, to distinguish them from VOC

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<sup>32</sup> Wigboldus, ‘A History of the Minahasa’, p. 69.

<sup>33</sup> E.C. Godée Molsbergen, *Geschiedenis van de Minahassa tot 1829*, Weltevreden, Landsdrukkerij, 1928, p. 9.

<sup>34</sup> Wigboldus, ‘A History of the Minahasa’, p. 72.

<sup>35</sup> Wigboldus, ‘A History of the Minahasa’, p. 72. The author, J.S. Wigboldus, only refers to a draft report that he wrote in 1978, which I have been unable to trace. The report is J.S. Wigboldus, *A Promising Land on Close Examination. Rural History of the Minahasa ca. 1680-1825*, draft report, Wageningen 1978.

<sup>36</sup> Keith Whinnom, *Spanish Contact Vernaculars in the Philippine Islands*, London, Oxford University Press, 1956, p. 4; Karel Steenbrink, ‘The Arrival of Protestantism and the Consolidation of Christianity in the Moluccas 1605-1800’, in Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink (eds), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, Leiden, Brill, 2008, p. 117.

employees and foreign populations.<sup>37</sup> As in Ambon, *inlandsche burgers* in Minahasa to begin with were probably exclusively adherents of Christianity or Islam. The Christianisation of Minahasa initially proceeded at a much slower rate than in Ambon, and almost all Christians resided in the coastal areas where the Spanish had had some influence and other foreign traders, Chinese, Indian and Arab, had settled. They therefore had the most contact with Company officials, and intermarriage probably continued with the Dutch and other Europeans as it had with the Spanish.

The VOC concluded its first treaty with the Minahasans of northeast Sulawesi in a document signed by the governor of the Moluccas on 10 January 1669. Over the next several decades, VOC representatives also signed a number of contracts with local Minahasan rulers. The most significant was in 1679. Local leaders declared in this treaty that they were Company vassals, which meant the beginning of partial VOC rule in the region.<sup>38</sup> Minahasans were required to provide the Dutch with rice. In return, they would receive limited protection from foreign powers such as the Makassarese. The Moluccas, though rich in spices, were not self-sufficient in rice production, and therefore unable to provide sustenance for VOC ships just like Spanish ships. Minahasa, with its fertile soil, promised bounteous rice harvests. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a number of VOC governors referred to it as ‘*de broodkamer*’ (breadbasket) of the Moluccas.<sup>39</sup> Yet VOC hopes that Minahasa would produce copious amounts of rice failed to materialise, in spite of increasing interference in local affairs to try to enable consistent and bounteous harvests. The VOC established their own ‘council of Minahasan chiefs’ and attempted to set several chiefs above the others, contrary to previous tradition. The word Minahasa first appeared in Dutch records in 1789 to refer to the council of chiefs, but by this time the VOC had effectively sidelined much of their power.<sup>40</sup>

### **The emergence of an intermediary burger class**

In spite of its importance for food, Minahasa was largely peripheral to VOC interests during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It remained under the administration of the Governor of the Moluccas until the second half of the nineteenth century. During this period, a creole version of Malay became the *lingua franca* used in coastal trading

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<sup>37</sup> ‘Burgers’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, The Hague, Nijhoff, vol. 1, 1917-39, p. 422.

<sup>38</sup> Maria (Mieke) J. Schouten, ‘Manifold Connections: The Minahasa Region in Indonesia’, *South East Asia Research*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2004, p. 219.

<sup>39</sup> Godée Molsbergen, *Geschiedenis van de Minahassa tot 1829*, pp. 105-06, 127; Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society*, p. 41, fn. 5.

<sup>40</sup> Henley, *Nationalism and Regionalism in a Colonial Context*, PhD thesis, p. 69.

areas throughout the Moluccas. A version of this Malay emerged in the towns of Minahasa which had VOC forts: Manado, Kema, Amurang and Tanawangko. This *pasar* (bazaar) Malay (in Minahasa, Manado Malay) was the official form of Malay used by the VOC in correspondence and contracts with locals in North Sulawesi and the Moluccas until 1850. It was probably the colloquial, everyday language of the citizens of these coastal areas.<sup>41</sup> As such, it incorporated Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and Malay words with Ternatean and Minahasan terms. Manado Malay was very similar to Ternatean and Ambonese Malay, partly because of the links between these areas and partly because their shared historical circumstances produced similar mixed communities of coastal dwellers who engaged in regular inter-island trade. The residents of these coastal areas found themselves in favoured positions thanks to their ability to communicate with European powers, and also because of their willingness to adopt Christianity.

As a result, a burger class was not exclusive to Minahasa, but was a key feature of society in Ambon and Ternate as well. The Dutch collectively termed the three areas the Moluccas until the second half of the nineteenth century. Outside these areas and Timor, there appear to have been no classes of *inlandsche burgers*, though Batavia featured its own special class of people, the *Mardijkers*, who had similar rights. Colonial government regulations did not acknowledge the existence of *inlandsche burgers* before the late nineteenth century.<sup>42</sup> Even so, they were a regular feature of VOC rule in Christian settlements in eastern Indonesia. Beginning in the seventeenth century, after the establishment of a VOC fort in 1605, a large *inlandsche burger* class emerged on Ambon. The British expanded this class when they temporarily took over in 1796 by allowing villagers to migrate to towns to work as soldiers and labourers for a wage.<sup>43</sup> The original use of the term '*inlandsche burger*' in Ambon seems to have been mostly to distinguish Christians from non-Christian Ambonese. Later, however, burgers were divided into European burgers, Chinese burgers, Moor burgers (Muslim Malays, Javanese and Arabs) and *inlandsche burgers*.<sup>44</sup> *Inlandsche burgers* comprised as much

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<sup>41</sup> F. Watusseke, 'Het Minahasa- of Manado-Maleis', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 137, nos. 2/3, 1981, pp. 325-26

<sup>42</sup> Ch.R. Bakhuizen van den Brink, 'De Inlandsche Burgers in de Molukken', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 70, nos. 3/4, 1915, p. 648.

<sup>43</sup> R.Z. Leirissa, 'Social Development in Ambon during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Ambonese Burger', *Cakalele*, vol. 6, 1995, p. 2; 'Burgers', *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 1, 1917-1939, p. 423.

<sup>44</sup> R.Z. Leirissa, 'The Bugis-Makassarese in the Port Towns Ambon and Ternate through the Nineteenth Century', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 156, no. 3, 2000, p. 620.

as 25 per cent of the population of Maluku from the late nineteenth century.<sup>45</sup> Besides indigenous Christian locals, they could be descendants of freed slaves brought by the Portuguese from the Indian subcontinent (Mardijkers), or they could be mestizos of distant European descent.<sup>46</sup>

The term 'Mardijker' does not seem to have been applied consistently in Ambon. At times it was used to refer to freed indigenous Christians, and at other times it meant individuals of possible Portuguese descent or the descendants of slaves brought by the Portuguese and Spanish to the Indonesian archipelago. As in Batavia, the Mardijkers of Ambon (and Ternate) had their own *kampung*. In Ternate they lived in a predominantly Christian area known as *kampung Borgor Mardika*, a term remarkably similar to Borgo. Later the *kampung* became absorbed into a larger area that became known as *kampung Serani* (Christian *kampung*).<sup>47</sup> In Ambon, the Mardijker area of residence also became known as *kampung Mardika*, a term that remains in use today.<sup>48</sup> The situation in Ambon was remarkably similar to that in Batavia, where Mardijkers also had their own *kampung* and served as soldiers for the Dutch during the VOC period. Similarly, this group was also believed to consist of the descendants of freed Portuguese slaves, mostly from India.<sup>49</sup>

When P.A. Mattes, who became the Resident of Manado in 1878, stated that the native burgers of Manado were descended from Mardijkers, he probably was thinking of the Mardijkers of Ambon and Batavia, whose link with the Portuguese was established and noted as early as 1616.<sup>50</sup> Burgers in Minahasa were a different matter, however. No documentary evidence exists to prove any lasting Portuguese presence in the area besides limited missionary activity before Spain and Portugal were united in the Iberian Union in 1580. Even after this date, contemporary and later sources continued to refer to the Spanish in Minahasa, rather than the Portuguese. Manado Malay does feature a large number of Portuguese words, but these probably developed as a result of ongoing trade with Ternate rather than from direct interaction with the Portuguese. There was no

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<sup>45</sup> Richard Chauvel, *Nationalists, Soldiers and Separatists: the Ambonese Islands from Colonialism to Revolt, 1880-1950*, Leiden, KITLV Press, 1990, p. 14.

<sup>46</sup> Bakhuizen van den Brink, 'De Inlandsche Burgers in de Molukken'.

<sup>47</sup> Leirissa, 'The Bugis-Makassarese in the Port Towns Ambon and Ternate through the Nineteenth Century', p. 622.

<sup>48</sup> Ch.R. Bakhuizen van den Brink, 'De Inlandsche Burgers in de Molukken', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 70, no. 1, 1915, p. 597. This Christian *kampung*, in fact, seems to have been one of the main actors involved in religious conflict in Ambon in 1999.

<sup>49</sup> F. de Haan, *Oud Batavia: Gedenkboek Uitgegeven ter Gelegenheid van het 300-Jarig Bestaan der Stad in 1919*, Batavia, G. Kolff, 1922, p. 515.

<sup>50</sup> De Haan, *Oud Batavia*, p. 512.

reason for the Portuguese to leave a regiment or settlement of freed slaves in Minahasa because they did not recognise its value and, indeed, there is no evidence that they ever did so, or left behind freed slaves.

The Spanish, however, did have a permanent settlement in Manado. There is, then, another possibility. Contemporary authors in Batavia and Ambon distinguished between *Mardijkers* and *Papangers*. The Spanish brought *Papangers* as slaves from the Philippines to serve as soldiers and eventually set them free, just as the Portuguese had done with slaves from the Indian subcontinent. *Papangers* and *Mardijkers* eventually intermarried, and some also married Portuguese *mestizos*. As a result, in Batavia they became known as the ‘Portuguese’ group.<sup>51</sup> By the early nineteenth century, freed slaves were often listed as *Papangers* in Batavia.<sup>52</sup> According to tradition the captain of the *Papangers* in Batavia was a Christian with a European name.<sup>53</sup> In Ambon, *Papangers* also used Spanish names. It is possible that members of a similar group, perhaps led by Spanish commanding officers, protected Spanish agricultural interests in Minahasa. Further support for this argument lies in the 1917 edition of the *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië* which, in its definition of *burgers*, noted that they could be the descendants of the Portuguese, slaves, *Papangers* from the Philippines or *Mardijkers*.<sup>54</sup> There is no way to prove this supposition in the context of Minahasa, however, except by drawing the tenuous link between freed slaves and *burgers* in the Moluccas, who were often conflated in nineteenth century sources as the same group. Even so, some contemporary observers who were more familiar with local situations – not merely visitors who sailed from Batavia on to Manado and the Moluccas – distinguished between the groups. One author noted that a regulation in 1877 on the *schutterij* (city militia) in Kupang distinguished between *Mardijkers*, *Burgers* and *Papangers*.<sup>55</sup> Another author, writing in 1915 on Manadonese and Moluccan *burgers*, emphatically denied that the two were synonymous.<sup>56</sup> Contemporary authors who travelled briefly from area to area were inclined to consider a group on one island the same as a group on another, but definitions and identities were not always consistent across the archipelago before the establishment of the colonial state.

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<sup>51</sup> Justus van der Kroef, ‘The Eurasian Minority in Indonesia’, *American Sociological Review*, vol. 18, no. 5, 1953, p. 485; de Haan, *Oud Batavia*, pp. 514-15.

<sup>52</sup> De Haan, *Oud Batavia*, p. 521.

<sup>53</sup> De Haan, *Oud Batavia*, pp. 515-16.

<sup>54</sup> ‘*Burgers*’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 1, 1917-1939, p. 422.

<sup>55</sup> Bakhuizen van den Brink, ‘*De Inlandsche Burgers in de Molukken*’, p. 647.

<sup>56</sup> Bakhuizen van den Brink, ‘*De Inlandsche Burgers in de Molukken*’.

## Burgers in colonial Minahasa

Burgers in Minahasa were defined by both their religion (Christianity and Islam) and their place of residence. Christian burgers used European family names such as Christoffel, Thomas, Holderman, Marcus, Heydemans and so on.<sup>57</sup> They lived almost exclusively in Manado, Kema, Amurang, Tanawangko and other important ports of call for both Spanish and VOC ships. It was not until after the Dutch state took over the administration of the Netherlands Indies from 1800, however, that their position became a fixture in local colonial practice as the colonial administration began to administer a more direct style of rule. This direct rule did not begin until the third decade of the century, after the British interregnum from 1810 to 1817. During this period, intermarriage probably introduced the small number of English surnames found among the Borgo and Indo community in Minahasa, such as Armstrong and Davis. After the Dutch returned, they quickly realised that the fertile lands of Minahasa were suitable for coffee plantations. They established a state monopoly on coffee and imposed forced labour upon an increasing number of Minahasans. Beginning in 1822, the administration required Minahasans to work on coffee plantations in an early version of the Cultivation System which was later implemented in Java.<sup>58</sup>

Minahasa subsequently became the most important region in eastern Indonesia for the new colonial state in economic terms. Though Minahasa was not formally declared a directly ruled territory until 1870, the introduction of forced labour on coffee plantations and the construction of infrastructure throughout almost the entire region to assist rice production meant that it was subject to direct rule at a much earlier date than other parts of the archipelago. The Manado residency, which included Minahasa, was created in 1824, though it remained under the jurisdiction of the Governor of the Moluccas until 1864. Each division of Minahasa was administered by an official who represented the Dutch administration, originally called an *Opziener* and then, from 1857, a *Controleur*. For most of the nineteenth century these officials were of Eurasian descent, and almost all were burgers.<sup>59</sup> From the very beginning of the establishment of colonial rule, then, burgers were directly tied to state administration and control.

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<sup>57</sup> Neil Armstrong Kumaat, *Sejarah Masyarakat Borgo di Kema 1919-1950*, undergraduate thesis (*skripsi*), Universitas Sam Ratulangi, Fakultas Sastra, Manado, 1996, p. 4.

<sup>58</sup> Henley, *Nationalism and Regionalism in a Colonial Context*, PhD thesis, p. 72.

<sup>59</sup> Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society*, pp. 54-55.

The legal division of the Indies population into Europeans and natives did not mean the erasure of the intermediary class of burgers in eastern Indonesia. This class did not have European status, but in social terms it stood above those classed as natives. The *inlandsche burger* class was phased out much faster in Batavia, but it remained an element of Moluccan and Minahasan society for a much longer period, where there were few Europeans in the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>60</sup> Burgers had their own district heads (*wijkmeesters*). They were tried by magistrates, and so not subject to local law. The burger population could not own land and did not pay tax, which exempted them from corvée labour, or working on plantations for a certain number of days, and constructing roads to enable transport of coffee and copra. Instead, they worked in the *schutterijen* to protect Dutch interests. The *schutterijen* were an institution established during the VOC period, as early as 1620 in Batavia. Initially the *schutterijen* consisted of ‘free’ (burger) residents in Batavia.<sup>61</sup> They were used not only locally but also in the Java War (1825-1830).<sup>62</sup> In other areas of the Indies, the establishment of *schutterijen* and the use of burgers in local administrations went hand-in-hand. However, a *schutterij* was not officially established in Manado until 1848, though it is likely that this establishment merely formalised existing arrangements in which burgers protected Dutch property and possessions, even if there was no Resident.<sup>63</sup> In Minahasa, the description of burgers in the nineteenth century sometimes aligned with the description of members of the *schutterijen*. According to N. Graafland, a Dutch missionary writing in 1867,

They [burgers] are used in turbulent times, in a fire or in defence against coastal pirates, and in a state of emergency. They guard the Resident’s office and if the number of soldiers is not enough they also fulfil that need....<sup>64</sup>

In the sense of maintaining law and order, the tasks of the *schutterijen* were similar to those of the KNIL. The *schutterijen* existed alongside the KNIL until the second decade of the twentieth century, by which time the KNIL consisted of many soldiers who came from the areas of the Indies where burgers had been an important component of local society – namely, Minahasa and Ambon.

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<sup>60</sup> ‘Burgers’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 1, 1917-1939, p. 423.

<sup>61</sup> For a detailed overview of the obligations of the *schutterijen*, see J.A. van der Chijs, *Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakaatboek 1602-1811*, vol. IX, Batavia, Landsrukkerij, 1891, pp. 505-521.

<sup>62</sup> ‘Burgers’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 1, 1917-1939, p. 423.

<sup>63</sup> ‘Schutterijen’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 3, 1917-1939, p. 729.

<sup>64</sup> N. Graafland, *Minahasa Masa Lalu dan Masa Kini* [translation of N. Graafland, *De Minahassa: Haar Verleden en Haar Tegenwoordige Toestand*], Jakarta, Lembaga Perpustakaan Dokumentasi dan Informasi, Yayasan Pengembangan Informasi dan Pustaka Indonesia, 1987, p. 28.

Burgers were also intermediaries in the economic sphere, meaning that in Minahasa they took the place typically held by Indos and Chinese in Java, though both of these groups were also present to a limited degree. The requirement for Minahasans to deliver rice to the Dutch continued until 1852. For most of the nineteenth century, burgers benefited from their status by profiting from rice deliveries and in other areas of trade.<sup>65</sup> The *Opzieners* required Minahasans to deliver rice directly to them, which they then exported for a personal profit.<sup>66</sup> Many also worked as fishermen in order to earn a living because they were forbidden to own land. Indeed, many refused to engage in agricultural labour, which explains to some extent why both Minahasans and the Dutch administration had negative attitudes towards them.<sup>67</sup>

Locally burgers were called ‘*njongs*’, from the Dutch ‘jong’, or young man. Graafland described them in less-than-flattering terms:

Unfavourable above all, we must consider the so-called burgers. These people [achieved this status] through some service to the government, or by favour, or because they have served as soldiers, and eventually because of their birth they were dismissed from corvée labour, and perform no other service except as *schutters* [soldiers].... In spite of their multiple privileges and free time, they are not much more advanced than native villagers, and even their dwellings and their appearance make a most unfavourable impression on you.... They are lazy to the worst degree, and in doing so – and how could it be otherwise? – rely on their burger status, and are extremely brutal and unruly.... The majority are cocky, indolent, unruly, hostile towards religion and lead a scandalous life. They contaminate all who come into contact with them. On Ambon this state of affairs exists, too, to a much greater degree.<sup>68</sup>

The negative reputation of burgers was hardly helped when, in September 1879, a *Controleur* was killed in Kema. Several new *Controleurs* had arrived in April that year from Java to work in coffee production and roads. They were probably unaware of the special status granted to a segment of the population in Minahasa and the Moluccas and so tried to suggest that special rights for burgers should be abolished. The *Controleur* of Kema had tried to force Kema’s burgers to engage in corvée agricultural labour. One refused outright, declaring, according to a local newspaper: “I will not work. I’d rather put a bullet to my head!” The *Controleur* confronted a number of burgers who refused

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<sup>65</sup> Ulrich Mai and Helmut Buchholt, ‘Markets, Trade, and the Reproduction of Trader Households’, in Helmut Buchholt and Ulrich Mai (eds), *Continuity, Change and Aspirations: Social and Cultural Life in Minahasa, Indonesia*, Singapore, Social Issues in Southeast Asia, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1994, p. 156.

<sup>66</sup> Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society*, p. 55.

<sup>67</sup> Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society*, p. 55. See fn 10.

<sup>68</sup> Graafland, *De Minahassa*, p. 224.

to work, and was killed in the confrontation. The colonial government subsequently carried out an investigation into the rights of burgers. Almost all of those who had been forced to engage in *corvée* labour under the new *Controleur* – about a hundred – were restored to their previous position. The burgers of Kema, according to one writer, were very pleased with the result and duly praised the Resident of Manado. When a *Controleur* tried to enforce labour in Amurang, the burgers of Amurang complained to the Resident. After an investigation, the rights of the Amurang burgers were also confirmed. The *Controleur* was subsequently transferred to another district. But three burgers were eventually tried for the Kema *Controleur*'s murder. One was sentenced to death, and the other two were given five years of hard labour.<sup>69</sup>

This situation brought the question of the burgers' position in Minahasa to the fore. Their original task had been to guard the coast and the Resident's office from heathen Minahasans, but this duty was now no longer necessary.<sup>70</sup> From the mid-nineteenth century, mass conversion of the Minahasan population to Dutch Calvinism meant that fewer locals were labelled 'heathens' in comparison with the Christian and Muslim burger population, and few were hostile to the Dutch. Many also learned Malay and Dutch in missionary schools, removing the need for interpreters. One author, writing in 1919, suggested that the special privileges of burgers in Minahasa originally may have been granted to encourage more Minahasans to convert to Christianity, though statistics and contemporary sources indicate that burgers consisted of both Christians and Muslims.<sup>71</sup> By the middle of the century, however, the indigenous Christian group, separate from burgers, was beginning to expand rapidly.

### **Burger status and *gelijkgesteld* status**

Before 1889, there was no register for burgers, so those living among burgers were also considered burgers, including the Bajau people and migrants from Sangihe.<sup>72</sup> According to one author, of a total population of 56,583 in Minahasa (including Manado) in 1821, 1516 were Christian *inlandsche burgers*, thirteen were Europeans and 2,532 were native Christians.<sup>73</sup> According to another author, by 1851 Minahasa's population comprised 1999 Christian burgers, 1323 Muslim burgers and 28,017 native heathens, from a total

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<sup>69</sup> Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society*, p. 74.

<sup>70</sup> J.N. Wiersma, 'Een Brief uit de Minahassa', *De Indische Gids*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1880, pp. 820-32.

<sup>71</sup> A.C.J. Edeling, 'Memorie Omtrent de Minahassa', *Adatrechtbundels*, vol. 17, 1919, p. 87.

<sup>72</sup> Edeling, 'Memorie Omtrent de Minahassa', p. 88.

<sup>73</sup> C.G.C. Reinwardt, *Reis naar het Oostelijk Gedeelte van den Indischen Archipel, in het jaar 1821*, Amsterdam, F. Muller, 1858, pp. 582-583.

of 92,546.<sup>74</sup> The same author noted that the *schutterij* in seven towns, including Manado, Tanawangko, Kema and Amurang, consisted of Europeans and natives who held equated European status.<sup>75</sup> Presumably these equated Europeans were burgers, because another author, who drew on the same statistics, noted that the 600-man strong *schutterij* consisted of Europeans and *inlandsche burgers*, both Christian and Muslim.<sup>76</sup> Legally, burgers were equated with Europeans, and in fact their status should be seen as a precursor of the formalised *gelijgesteld* status. In the second half of the nineteenth century, it became increasingly common for Christian burgers in Minahasa, Ambon and Ternate to obtain official *gelijgesteld* status in the Indies thanks to their pre-existing equated status.<sup>77</sup> Until 1894 the requirement for *gelijstelling* (equating) was adherence to Christianity. After 1894, applicants had to prove that they were culturally suited to take part in European social life. From 1913, applications depended upon the legal needs of the applicant. Burgers were easily able to meet most of these requirements. Three-quarters of those with *gelijgesteld* status in the Indies were government officials or former soldiers, the majority of whom were from the Moluccas and Minahasa.<sup>78</sup>

In Ambon, burgers were allowed free entry to the Ambonsche Burgerschool, which was founded in 1856. The Ambonsche Burgerschool provided a Dutch language European education. It accepted as pupils only the children of Christian Ambonese burgers. Nine years after the school opened, the Governor of the Moluccas advised that it should be closed. He considered that the school produced Dutch-speaking graduates who refused to do manual work – a situation that reflected developments in Java among the Indo community – with the result that those who could not find employment as clerks became “indolent”. The school was officially recognised in 1869, however, after the administration realised that burgers would refuse to send their children to native schools.<sup>79</sup> It became the most famous of the burgerschools, but in Minahasa, in Tondano

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<sup>74</sup> A.J. Duymaer van Twist, *Aanteekeningen Betreffende eene Reis door de Molukken*, The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1856, p. 20.

<sup>75</sup> van Twist, *Aanteekeningen Betreffende eene Reis door de Molukken*, p. 21.

<sup>76</sup> Pieter Bleeker, *Reis door de Minahassa en den Molukschen Archipel, Gedaan in de Maanden September en Oktober 1855 in het Gevolg van den Gouverneur Generaal Mr. A.J. Duymaer van Twist*, Batavia, Lange, 1856, pp. 40-41.

<sup>77</sup> Van der Lith et al. (eds), ‘Burgers’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 1, 1895, p. 300.

<sup>78</sup> A. van Marle, ‘De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlandsch-Indië, Iets over Ontstaan en Groei’, *Indonesië*, vol. 5, no. 6, 1952, p. 506.

<sup>79</sup> Chauvel, *Nationalists, Soldiers and Separatists*, pp. 30-32; ‘Burgers’, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 1, 1917-1939, p. 423.

and Manado, there were also ‘special schools’ that provided a European education to non-Europeans.<sup>80</sup>

Burgers were able to obtain a European education, and so to some extent their social circumstances resembled those of Indos. The European population of Minahasa was tiny. As a result distinctions between *totok* Europeans, Indos and burgers were significantly less than in other areas. These groups lived in adjacent, if not the same, neighbourhoods. Marriage between them was common, particularly because they shared Christianity and communicated in Dutch. Intermarriage with Christian Minahasans also became increasingly common. European education in colonial Minahasa was provided to non-Europeans on a scale unseen in other parts of the Indies. Access to a Dutch education was available partly thanks to the efforts of Dutch missionaries who, from 1831, converted almost the entire population of Minahasa to Protestantism within the space of about half a century. Part of this process involved establishing an unprecedented number of mission schools. Initially these schools used Malay as their language of instruction, which was originally only spoken by burgers, traders and Dutch officials. As a result, many Minahasans viewed attending these schools as a way to improve their social mobility.<sup>81</sup> The government also established its own schools that used Malay and Dutch as their language of instruction, and increasingly displaced the missionary schools from 1882.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Minahasans had emerged as the most literate ethnic group in the Indies. Thanks to their education, they were placed in positions of authority over other groups labelled as natives. They migrated to other regions, where they worked for the colonial administration as overseers, policemen, clerks and teachers. From the early twentieth century, they were also found extensively in shipping, railway and oil companies. One author noted in 1912 that Minahasans “everywhere have a good name because of their reliability in money matters, and they are equated with Indo-Europeans and as such, at least in the private sector, are paid the same.”<sup>82</sup> They became the largest group represented in the indigenous Christian component of the KNIL.<sup>83</sup> Outside Minahasa, they became known in Sulawesi as the

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<sup>80</sup> A.D.A. de Kat Angelino, *Colonial Policy, Volume II: The Dutch East Indies*, Dordrecht, Springer Netherlands, 1931, p. 247, fn. 1.

<sup>81</sup> Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society*, p. 113.

<sup>82</sup> N. Dirkzwager, ‘Het Nederlandsch-Indisch Gouvernement en Zijne Tekortkomingen tegenover de Minahassa’, *De Indische Gids*, vol. 34, 1912, p. 1162.

<sup>83</sup> C. Bosscher, ‘Het tegenwoordige Regeeringsbeleid in de Residentie Menado’, *De Indische Gids*, vol. 2, 1880, p. 229.

*Belanda Manado* (Manadonese Dutch) because of their close relationship with the Dutch.<sup>84</sup> Within Minahasa itself, the almost complete Christianisation of the population, the high literacy rate and the ‘Europeanisation’ of the population – seen in the relatively widespread adoption of Dutch clothing, language and food – meant that Minahasans themselves increasingly displaced the social need for a burger group between a small number of Dutch officials and a native majority. Intermarriage between all groups became increasingly common.

### **The merging of Borgo and Indo identity**

In 1889 Minahasan burger status was officially defined by law in terms of place of residence. Staatsblad 1889 no 255 regarding Manado’s *inlandsche burgers* declared that they were “residents of Manado, with place of residence in the capital or Kema, Tanawangko, Amurang, Belang and Gorontalo, if their names are mentioned as such [i.e. burgers] by the head of the local administration in registers”. Those who settled outside these areas would irrevocably lose the status of *inlandsche burger* unless they moved back within a year. Ironically, this law marked the beginning of the erasure of burger status. A series of legal measures from the third decade of the twentieth century gradually eroded their exclusive privileges and rights, but did not solve the problem of their lack of land.<sup>85</sup> In 1925, *corvée* labour – by this time, on copra rather than coffee plantations – was replaced with a road tax.<sup>86</sup> Burgers were subsequently allowed to vote in the Minahasaraad (Minahasan Council).<sup>87</sup> The effects of such measures led, in Ambon, to a large number of former burgers joining Insulinde to fight for burger rights. At the time this party was known in Java for its predominantly Indo membership.<sup>88</sup> The colonial administration in Ambon attempted to solve the issue of their lack of property, and therefore livelihood, by incorporating burger kampungs into neighbouring districts.<sup>89</sup>

In Minahasa, the erasure of their special status did not immediately mean the erasure of a sense of collective identity. One Dutch author in 1936 described burgers in Minahasa as “a tough, recalcitrant group, which was probably largely due to the fact that their

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<sup>84</sup> Henley, *Nationalism and Regionalism in a Colonial Context*, PhD thesis, p. 154.

<sup>85</sup> Chauvel notes that this happened in Ambon with Staatsblad 1937 no 152. *Nationalists, Soldiers and Separatists*, p. 15.

<sup>86</sup> Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society*, p. 173.

<sup>87</sup> Marten Brouwer, *Bestuursvormen en Bestuursstelsels in de Minahassa*, Wageningen, Veenman, 1936, pp. 113-14.

<sup>88</sup> Chauvel, *Nationalists, Soldiers and Separatists*, pp. 86-87.

<sup>89</sup> Chauvel, *Nationalists, Soldiers and Separatists*, p. 118, fn 8.

rights and obligations were inadequately controlled.”<sup>90</sup> Yet in the decades leading up to the Japanese Occupation, collective Borgo identity increasingly merged with a Minahasan Indo identity, so that it became difficult to distinguish between the two groups. The reasons for this merging were twofold. First, The European community was tiny and Minahasa never had more than a dozen *totok* Dutch officials at any one time.<sup>91</sup> Most colonial administrators were burgers and Indos, rather than *totok* Dutch. Endogamous marriage among the Indo community in Minahasa was virtually impossible by virtue of its size. Also, Burgers often held the same status as Europeans and so intermarriage would not be viewed as a step down in social status. As a result, after burger privileges were erased, burgers were socially indistinguishable from Indos. Minahasa featured a high degree of social integration from the late nineteenth century onwards. The main result of the widespread ‘westernisation’ of Minahasa was a breakdown of the barriers between social and legal categories that, in twentieth century colonial Java, were much more pluralist.

By 1941 a quarter of Manado’s European population consisted, in fact, of *gelijkgestelde* Manadonese.<sup>92</sup> Missionaries frequently married locals and Indos. Minahasa’s two most famous missionaries Johann Friedrich Riedel and Johann Gottlieb Schwarz, whose efforts led to the widespread adoption of Protestant Christianity, both had Eurasian wives. Riedel’s daughter married a Minahasan chief. Whereas Indos filled the lower ranks of the civil service in other parts of the archipelago – namely Java and Sumatra – Minahasans increasingly took those positions in the twentieth century after the establishment of the first training school for native officials in Tondano.<sup>93</sup> Minahasan politician Sam Ratulangie in 1914 wrote that the different groups residing in Minahasa were very friendly and treated each other equally. He further noted that “Minahasans have grown up in an environment in which such [mixed] marriages because of their multiplicity do not even draw attention to themselves.”<sup>94</sup> In 1922, he told a gathering of Minahasan soldiers that, “I hope this meeting will understand my meaning if I say that we Minahasans are almost like part of *bangsa Indo*, the Indo-European group. But if we

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<sup>90</sup> Brouwer, *Bestuursvormen en Bestuursstelsels in de Minahassa*, p. 113.

<sup>91</sup> Henley, *Nationalism and Regionalism in a Colonial Context*, PhD thesis, p. 134.

<sup>92</sup> M. van Rhijn, *Memorie van Overgave van het Bestuur van den Aftredenden Resident van Manado*, 1941, p. 154, cited by Henley, *Nationalism and Regionalism in a Colonial Context*, PhD thesis, p. 136.

<sup>93</sup> Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society*, p. 144.

<sup>94</sup> G.S.S.J. Ratulangie, ‘Het Minahassisch Ideaal’, *Voordrachten en Mededeelingen, Indische Vereeniging*, vol. 9, 1914, p. 38.

have anything to do with the government, we are immediately only natives.”<sup>95</sup> In 1930 he announced in the Manadonese newspaper *Fikiran* that,

Europeans, Indo-Chinese and Minahasans live in the same neighbourhoods and have almost the same lifestyle. The three groups intermarry extensively and are dissolving into one another. The Indo-Europeans and Manadonese in particular can be said to have fused into a single social group, and feel themselves simply to be Manadonese.<sup>96</sup>

If the distinctions between Indos and other Minahasans were not entirely clear, the distinctions between the former burgers, henceforth referred to as Borgos, and Indos were even more opaque. Intermarriage between the various social groups residing in the major towns of Minahasa was already at quite a high rate in comparison with Java, but among the Borgo community marriage with Europeans and Indos were particularly prevalent, if the life histories of the contemporary Borgo community about their Dutch, German, Belgian and other grandparents and great-grandparents are reliable.

To a certain extent this situation explains why stories of hiding fair-skinned children from the Japanese are consistent between those who identify as Borgo and Indo. In the words of Paulus Heydemans:

During the Japanese Occupation, they considered that those of European descent, like the Heydemans family, were Dutch henchmen, so they [the Japanese] didn't trust them and tortured them and imprisoned them. In '41, '42, '43, many Borgos who were Indo experienced difficulties. Some were killed. Several from the Nicolaas family were killed, because they were indeed Indo. Other Indos immediately blackened their skin and changed their family name. Then, at independence, my father was not considered a Dutch lackey... and the independence leaders gave him the opportunity to enlist as a soldier [for the Republic]. Yet in the independence struggle they did not fight the Dutch face-face. We still feel that we are not *inlanders* and that's proved by the opinion of the Japanese.... My father, who looked like me [dark skinned], was considered a Dutch henchman, tortured, imprisoned, could have been killed, was beaten up, because once it was known that his name was Benjamin Heydemans and he was the brother of David Heydemans [also Borgo], oh he was immediately imprisoned and beaten, and they shouted “*antek Belanda* [Dutch lackey], *antek Belanda!*”

The high degree of social inclusion and intermarriage in Minahasa also explains why there are no documented *Bersiap* killings of Indos in the region; indeed, Manadonese themselves became targets on Java during this period because of their close connection

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<sup>95</sup> Henley, *Nationalism and Regionalism in a Colonial Context*, PhD thesis, p. 163.

<sup>96</sup> Sam Ratulange, in *Fikiran*, 26 April 1930, cited by Henley, *Nationalism and Regionalism in a Colonial Context*, PhD thesis, p. 133.

to the Dutch. Minahasan exceptionalism, however, may also to some extent explain self-depictions emphasising that Indos and Minahasans were the same.

Yet circumstances after independence were indeed very different in Minahasa from those in Java. Indonesian was used as the language of instruction in schools from 1950 in Minahasa, unlike in Java, where Dutch continued to be used in many private schools for most of the decade.<sup>97</sup> Inter-marriage outside the Indo group was much more common in Minahasa, particularly with non-Europeans.<sup>98</sup> Many Minahasans of the pre-war generation could speak Dutch and Minahasa remained predominantly Christian. Minahasans were, in general, not particularly anti-Dutch, though the region had its own small independence movement; in fact, it was probably more stridently anti-Javanese and anti-Muslim than it was anti-colonial. This situation helps to explain to a great extent how an Indo and Borgo identity could merge in the twentieth century in, at least, Manado and coastal towns, though not in the hinterland.

### **Indos in postcolonial Minahasa**

In the early 1950s, Elisabeth Allard, a researcher, carried out a comparative study of Indos in Bogor (West Java) and Minahasa. Allard visited Minahasa in 1954 and recorded that in Manado there were about 250 Indo families, or 1000 individuals. In Minahasa (presumably including Manado) 750 Dutch, most of them Indos, had chosen to become Indonesian citizens. This total also included *totok* Dutch and Indos who were not Dutch citizens before 1949. About twenty or twenty-five heads of Indo families had elected to retain Dutch citizenship.<sup>99</sup> If these statistics are reliable, they suggest that about 88 per cent of Indos in Minahasa chose to become Indonesian citizens, though this is a rough estimate. Many Indos in Minahasa did not have Dutch family names, but French, Flemish, English, German and other European names. Allard calculated that for every 100 Dutch names there were at least 66 non-Dutch family names. The majority of Indo-European families in Minahasa, then, were not Dutch Indos. This conclusion perhaps helps to explain why so few chose to repatriate to the Netherlands compared with Java, and might also be one contributing factor to the absence of violence during

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<sup>97</sup> Elisabeth Allard, 'Laporan Sementara tentang Bagian Kedua Penjelidikan Dilapangan atas Susunan Kemasjarakatan Orang-Orang Indo-Eropah di Indonesia (Sambungan)', *Bahasa dan Budaya*, vol. 3, no. 5, 1955, p. 35.

<sup>98</sup> Inter-marriage among Indos on Java did occur outside the Indo group, though often with *totok* Dutch and, if with native Indonesians, frequently with those who held *gelijkgesteld* status. In Ternate, according to Allard, the Indo community was entirely closed. Indos only married other Indos. Allard, 'Laporan Sementara', p. 40.

<sup>99</sup> Allard, 'Laporan Sementara', pp. 30-31.

the Bersiap period. In a further contrast to Java, most Indo-European families whom Allard recorded consisted of a Minahasan, rather than Dutch, man married to an Indo woman. Minahasans and those of former European status repeatedly reported to her that Indos in Minahasa felt themselves to be Minahasan and indeed were considered as such. Allard reported that a common statement was: “If an Indo born in Minahasa goes to Java to continue their study or to work, they prefer to join other Minahasans and not other Indos there.”<sup>100</sup> According to an explanation from the head of Djawatan Sosial Daerah Minahasa (Social Services for Minahasa) and a representative of the Dutch High Commission, there were no unemployed or very needy Indos in Minahasa, unlike on Java.<sup>101</sup>

Most Indos in Minahasa, Allard reported, lived in the harbour towns: Manado, Kema, Amurang and Tanawangko – notably Borgo areas.<sup>102</sup> One of the categories of Indos whom she listed consisted, in fact, of “families who are called the ‘Borger’ group whose origin according to tradition is Portuguese or Dutch.”<sup>103</sup> Allard noted that when she tried to trace Indo families in Amurang, many people reported that there were no Indos there, but suggested she seek out the twelve or so Borgo families in Amurang instead. Before 1950 a number of these families had held Dutch citizenship, though all had become Indonesian citizens. One of Allard’s contacts suggested, as an example of Eurasian families, a number of Borgo families in Kema as people of Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch descent. The two groups, then, seem to have merged according to some observers, but according to others, remained distinct but related.

Allard ultimately came to the conclusion that there were no identity markers for the Indo group in Minahasa. Most married Christian Minahasans. Like other Minahasans, they used Dutch and ate European-influenced food. They did not have their own schools, as did Arab Indonesians, Chinese Indonesians and Dutch speakers in Java. As a result, Indo-Europeans in Minahasa in the 1950s had no sense of a collective identity separate from the majority population. More than half had non-Dutch family names, many of which were inherited from Borgo families. Many former burgers were Dutch citizens and/or had held European status as *gelijkgesteld* Europeans. The term ‘Endo’ remained in use to describe the appearance of a good proportion of Minahasans who

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<sup>100</sup> Allard, ‘Laporan Sementara’, p. 32.

<sup>101</sup> Allard, ‘Laporan Sementara’, p. 35.

<sup>102</sup> There were also Indo families in the cooler mountain towns of Tondano and Tomohon and the village of Airmadidi.

<sup>103</sup> Allard, ‘Laporan Sementara’, p. 33.

had pale skin or clearly looked like they had European ancestors. Inter-marriage between Borgo families, at least in Manado, continued in the twentieth century so that, even if it was not possible to talk of an ‘Indo-European community’ in Minahasa, a collective Borgo identity that traced its origins to various European nationalities, not just Spanish and Portuguese, continued to exist.

### **Borgos and Sri Lankan Burghers compared**

The term ‘Borgo’, for the most part, was used after independence to identify those of European descent who lived in Manado and other coastal settlements, though many Borgo families themselves were unaware of the history behind the term ‘Borgo’. Some identified as members of the tribes of Minahasa as well through marriage with other Minahasans. Poorer Borgo families outside Manado, particularly in Tanawangko and Amurang, continued to work as fishermen.<sup>104</sup> Wealthier Borgo families, such as the Heydemans family, became recognisable as more elite Manadonese families involved in political and bureaucratic circles. Borgo graveyards in former burger compounds continued to be used, though inter-marriage with other Minahasans and overcrowding meant that not all who identified as Borgo were buried there. In 1956 the Borgo community established a social organisation for Borgos to support their interests. Borgos listed as one of the groups residing in Minahasa – though not an adat group – in school history curriculum. They appear to have faced few administrative difficulties in the Minahasan civil service, probably because so many Manadonese have foreign descent and distinctions between many groups in Minahasa remain superficial (notable exceptions being Muslim minorities and migrants to the region). The only non-Manadonese study that I could find on Borgos in postcolonial Indonesia besides that of Allard noted that after their legal status was removed, “Borgo identity seems to have shifted from a legal to an ethnic category. They... have uniformly come to see themselves as partial descendants of Europeans.”<sup>105</sup> Just what this ethnicity meant, however, was not consciously defined until after the fall of Suharto, which heralded the rise of a new form of grassroots ethnic activism across the archipelago. Before I turn to the ‘rediscovery’ of a Borgo ethnicity, however, a comparison with Portuguese and Dutch Burghers in Sri Lanka seems appropriate here because of their similar historical circumstances and the name that they share.

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<sup>104</sup> See Sini Cedercreutz, ‘Borgo Fishermen: The House, the Fish House and the Giop Sailing Boat in North Sulawesi’, in Stephen Sparkes and Signe Howell (eds), *The House in Southeast Asia: A Changing Social, Economic and Political Domain*, London, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pp. 171-94.

<sup>105</sup> Cedercreutz, ‘Borgo Fishermen’, pp. 175-76.

Unlike in Minahasa, the Eurasian Burgher community of colonial Ceylon was divided along ethnic lines, between the earlier Portuguese Burghers and the later Dutch Burghers. Ceylon was nominally ruled by the Portuguese from 1505, then by the VOC from 1658. The British took over from the Dutch, first as the East India Company from 1796 and then as a colonial administration from 1802. Unlike in the Indies, where the Portuguese descent of *Mardijkers* was called into question because of their historical link to the large number of South Asian slaves that the Portuguese brought to the Indies, the Portuguese ancestry of Portuguese Burghers is much better documented. This mestizo population, like burghers in Minahasa, served as interpreters and soldiers for both the Portuguese and the Dutch.<sup>106</sup> The Dutch originally applied the term ‘Burgher’ to European free settlers and colonists – that is, the Dutch, Germans, Swiss, Belgians, French and other Europeans who worked for the VOC and after completing their contracts settled in Ceylon. The title of Burgher was subsequently applied to the descendants of Europeans who dressed and behaved like Europeans. Many former VOC officials who decided to settle in Ceylon, termed *vrijburgers*, found wives and concubines in the Portuguese mestizo populations who lived in the major ports of Colombo and Galle. Some Portuguese mestizo men worked for the VOC as minor employees. All Burgher men who were Christian and wore European dress but did not work for the Company were required to work in the *burgerij*, or militia, a parallel to the Indies’ *schutterijen*.<sup>107</sup> Distinctions formed between Europeans born in Europe, Europeans born in Ceylon and mestizos, for whom a great number of terms existed based on how far back or from which parent they traced their European heritage. European arrivals generally held negative opinions towards Burghers. Dutch Burghers were described by Company directors as lazy and drunkards.<sup>108</sup> Portuguese mestizo men in particular were considered immoral and overly sensual.<sup>109</sup> Thanks to VOC regulations, Burghers were given a monopoly as bakers, tailors and tavern-keepers. The VOC also allowed Burghers to own land to encourage agricultural production, though few were inclined to take up farming. As in the Indies, most Burghers used a creole form of Portuguese in their daily lives.

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<sup>106</sup> One term for Portuguese mestizos was ‘Topass’, from which the term ‘Topasses’ in the Indies undoubtedly developed. McGilvray, ‘Dutch Burghers and Portuguese Mechanics’, p. 328.

<sup>107</sup> McGilvray, ‘Dutch Burghers and Portuguese Mechanics’, p. 249.

<sup>108</sup> McGilvray, ‘Dutch Burghers and Portuguese Mechanics’, p. 240.

<sup>109</sup> Henry, “‘A Tulip in Lotus Land’”, pp. 15-16.

Under the British colonial administration, the title of Burgher became much more of a racial term for all Eurasians, of both Dutch and Portuguese descent.<sup>110</sup> The census category for Burghers did not distinguish between Dutch and Portuguese, but there was a very real division of labour. Portuguese Burghers were usually associated with manual labour, while Dutch Burghers commonly worked in administration and the professions in colonial Ceylon.<sup>111</sup> British racial classification in the nineteenth century contributed significantly to the increased split between the two groups in Colombo. Portuguese Burghers were typified as poorer and darker skinned, with fewer links to their much older European ancestry, while Dutch Burghers were stereotypically (and often actually) wealthier. One anthropologist has noted, however, that this division did not always exist among lower classes, and often the two groups were indistinguishable.<sup>112</sup> Burghers, mostly Dutch, took positions in the British colonial administration, in transport, communication and technical departments. Thanks to their jobs in the bureaucracy and their *bourgeois* position in colonial Ceylon, Dutch Burghers adopted British manners and the English language in the nineteenth century. Portuguese Burghers in towns worked in trades and crafts. They were a much more visible target for nineteenth century British descriptions of the perils of miscegenation. Contemporary accounts described at length their general indolence and drunkenness, such as one account from a British army officer in 1803 that declared them “lazy, treacherous, effeminate, and passionate to excess.... They... are usually esteemed the worst race of people in India... and they combine all the vices of the Europeans and Indians, without any of their virtues.”<sup>113</sup> The same account also criticised Dutch Burghers, claiming that they also were “lazy and indolent... ignorant and stupid.... [T]he women... are nearly as ignorant on their wedding-day as in their infancy.”<sup>114</sup>

Dutch Burghers, keen to distance themselves from negative stereotypes, increasingly sought to distinguish themselves from Portuguese Burghers. The founding of the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon in 1908 was one step towards encouraging this distance. This organisation, like the IEV in the Netherlands Indies, sought to assist needy Dutch Burghers, but it was also dedicated to reviving the Dutch language, as many Burghers

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<sup>110</sup> Henry, “A Tulip in Lotus Land”, p. 3; McGilvray, ‘Dutch Burghers and Portuguese mechanics’, pp. 242-43.

<sup>111</sup> Dennis B. McGilvray, ‘Dutch Burghers and Portuguese Mechanics: Eurasian Ethnicity in Sri Lanka’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 24, no. 2, 1982, p. 236.

<sup>112</sup> McGilvray, ‘Dutch Burghers and Portuguese Mechanics’, p. 237.

<sup>113</sup> Robert Percival, *An Account of the Island of Ceylon, Containing Its History, Geography, Natural History, with the Manners and Customs of Its Various Inhabitants*, London, C. and R. Baldwin, 1803, pp. 145-46.

<sup>114</sup> Percival, *An Account of the Island of Ceylon*, pp. 137-38.

continued to use creole Portuguese. It also published Dutch Burgher genealogies for members to trace their European heritage. Members had to demonstrate that they were the direct patrilineal descendants of VOC employees in Ceylon, though those who claimed descent from Dutch Burgher women married to European men were also granted membership. Like the IEV, the Dutch Burgher Union increasingly affixed itself to the European community of Ceylon and sought to distance itself from indigenous roots.

After Sri Lanka's independence in 1948, a large number of Dutch Burghers chose to migrate to Australia. They rapidly became aware that their special position as English speakers in a Sinhalese-speaking nation would no longer be an advantage and would be difficult to sustain, particularly after it became clear that education would no longer be provided in English. In 1956, a conference for all Burghers was held to discuss their position in postcolonial Sri Lanka.<sup>115</sup> This conference marked the beginning of the end of deliberately drawn sharp divisions between Dutch and Portuguese Burghers. The number of Dutch Burghers remaining in Sri Lanka diminished, which further encouraged the two groups to unite. The long-term effects of British racial classification have meant, nonetheless, that Burghers remain a separate ethnic group in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan government has implemented affirmative action policies in education to reverse the privileges granted to specific groups under colonialism, among them Burghers. Wealthy Burghers today often reside in particular areas and are Christian in contrast with the Theravada Buddhist majority. Many attend Christian private schools and are able to obtain a much higher level of education than most Sinhalese.

In Minahasa, common religion and almost universal access to education from the late nineteenth century meant that the burger population, at least in these terms, was hardly different from most Minahasans in the twentieth century. The Indies did feature a stratified social system that granted special privileges to Indos based on patrilineal European descent, and to burgers based on their place of residence and historical involvement in the colonial administration. However, this system was not as heavily racialised as in British Ceylon, and it much more complex in everyday life after the introduction of *gelijkstelling*. Burger special status was based on long-standing practice, area of residence, language and religion, not necessarily ethnic or racial descent. When burger privileges were removed, it was because the status of the indigenous population was 'raised', rather than because burger status was 'lowered'. Burgers did not leave

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<sup>115</sup> Henry, "A Tulip in Lotus Land", p. 110.

Indonesia *en masse* after independence like Dutch Burghers of Ceylon left for Australia and other countries. By this time they were incorporated as part of the Minahasan population, and their distant ancestry could be from any one of a number of European countries.

### **Contemporary Borgo identity**

Today, a distinction between Indos and Borgos in contemporary Minahasa does become apparent in certain circumstances. One does not speak of the children of modern mixed marriages as ‘Borgo’; usually they are termed ‘Endo’. Nor does one refer to Indos as *orang Borgo* in inland areas, where those of European descent are known as Endo and sometimes derogatively termed *orang Compagnie* (Company people). However, the descendants of Indo migrants from other areas in Indonesia who married Borgo men and women and lived in Borgo compounds (*kampungs*) identified as Borgo. Anne Marie Bergman of the Borgo complex in Tanawangko explained that her grandfather was *totok* Dutch. Her Indo father was born in Central Java and later moved to Minahasa, where Anne Marie was born. Her parents were given the chance to repatriate to the Netherlands, but Anne Marie’s grandmother refused and so the family remained in Tanawangko, living alongside other Borgo families. Ramdol Lamers van Buren, who was born in Central Sulawesi to an Indo father, married a Borgo woman in Manado. He subsequently hosted Borgo *kumpulan* in his home, where the older generation continued to speak Dutch. He explained that Borgos “have dark skin” and had “not just Dutch” ancestry, but other European ancestry as well. Freddy Waterkamp, who lived in a Borgo complex in Manado, said that his grandmother was ‘Endo’. His neighbour in the same complex was an Indo of Dutch descent, Martje Ban-Watupongoh, who had married a Manadonese man. Martje’s family, including her son Jan, had lived in Makassar during the 1950s and 1960s, where Jan went to a Dutch school. They later moved back to Manado and lived among other Borgo families. Mona de Winter also had Dutch ancestry. Her Dutch grandfather married a Borgo woman from Kema whose family name was Christoffel. Mona married a Chinese national and, with her husband, opened a Minahasan restaurant. Her children took her surname because her husband was not an Indonesian citizen. Her own family circumstances extended beyond simple essentialised terms like ‘Indo’, ‘Borgo’, ‘Minahasan’ and ‘Chinese’.

In the 1980s Paulus Heydemans, one of the Borgo community leaders, began searching for information about the Borgo community in Minahasa. In 1986 he began to compile

his family tree, and from there began to collect documents about Borgo history. His work became the foundation upon which the Borgo community built its application for recognition as an ethnic group in Minahasa. The establishment of the Indigenous Peoples' Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN) in 1999, after the fall of Suharto, inspired Paulus and a number of his colleagues to try to register the Manadonese Borgo community as an indigenous ethnic group on the basis of their descent from local women. Initially, no *Lembaga Adat* (Adat Institution) existed in Minahasa for Borgos to apply to for recognition. Word reached them of AMAN's work in 2003 and they decided to prepare an application. According to Paulus, before the Minahasaraad was established in 1919 eight *suku* (ethnic groups) were recognised in Minahasa. But the former burger community also was able to obtain a voice in the Minahasaraad as an indigenous group. However, he said, Borgos were not considered by other Minahasans to be *suku adat* (an indigenous ethnic group) because they did not have their own adat (indigenous traditions). They were considered a modern rather than traditional ethnic group, and so many refused to class them as indigenous. He explained that the common idea that the Borgo group only emerged after European arrival in North Sulawesi was wrong because it did not take into account the role of local women. It was these women, from the Babontehu group of Manado Tua, who comprised the foundation of the Borgo application to AMAN for recognition as an indigenous group.

AMAN developed partly as a grassroots response to the former Suharto government's appropriation of land, along with land-grabs by mining conglomerates and agricultural companies. It also emerged as part of an international movement, indigenism, to recognise the rights of indigenous minorities and their land rights, but drew on the Indonesian term 'adat'.<sup>116</sup> The concept of adat itself emerged in late nineteenth-century colonial Indonesia. The term 'adat law' (*adatrecht*) was first used in 1893, but it did not enter legal language until 1910.<sup>117</sup> Its main champion, Cornelis van Vollenhoven, was appointed as the Leiden chair of adat law. He and his students spent more than three decades 'discovering' and defining adat (customary) law for the nineteen adat regions (*adatrechtskringen*) that they defined in the Indies archipelago. The definitions that they developed became the basis for native law, which to that point had been largely

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<sup>116</sup> David Henley and Jamie S. Davidson, 'Radical Conservatism – the Protean Politics of Adat', in Jamie S. Davidson and David Henley (eds), *The Revival of Tradition in Indonesian Politics: the Deployment of Adat from Colonialism to Indigenism*, New York, Routledge, 2007, pp. 1-49.

<sup>117</sup> Cees Fasseur, 'Colonial Dilemma: Van Vollenhoven and the Struggle between Adat Law and Western Law in Indonesia', in Jamie S. Davidson and David Henley (eds), *The Revival of Tradition in Indonesian Politics: The Deployment of Adat from Colonialism to Indigenism*, London, Routledge, 2007, pp. 51-52.

undefined. Adat became central to indigenous claims to land that, if unclaimed, could be appropriated by Chinese and European planters – a legal loophole that bypassed the 1870 Agrarian Law.<sup>118</sup>

Under the Suharto government, land was frequently appropriated by the state and state-sponsored institutions to further the New Order's development policies. The fall of Suharto allowed groups the opportunity to express their claims for land rights based on customary, rather than state, law. AMAN's formation was just one component of a growing movement that David Henley and Jamie Davidson have termed 'adat revivalism'. Central to adat revivalism is the issue of land rights and local, rather than national, politics. AMAN received a large amount of funding from international donors, which made it attractive to groups who had been unable to access the funds provided by local governments for other organisations, a point that Paulus acknowledged.

Membership of AMAN required emphasising not the Borgo community's European roots, which had facilitated their special status as *inlandsche burgers*, but rather their indigenous roots. Application for recognition required proof of a common ancestor, traditional lands and shared culture (*peradaban*), including language and customs. According to Paulus, Spanish shipwreck survivors of the *Trinidad*, one of the two remaining ships from Magellan's fleet, escaped from Portuguese imprisonment on Tidore to the Minahasan coast in 1523, thanks to help from the Bawontehu (probably Babontehu) people. The Babontehu people were the original inhabitants of the island of Manado Tua who engaged in trade with Ternate. This group among others probably met the first Spanish and Portuguese ships and missionaries, though contemporary Spanish and Portuguese sources distinguished only between coastal and hinterland peoples and tended not to mention individual groups in the region. Paulus explained that the some of the "original Bawontehu" people who helped Iberians then married Portuguese, Spanish and later, Dutch soldiers, missionaries and traders, so that it was impossible

to distinguish between them, between those who had Portuguese descent, [and] who had Spanish descent during the Dutch [VOC] period, by the 1700s.... Bawontehu people moved from the islands [to the present-day city centre of Manado].... Most couldn't read but they were Endo. They could speak Portuguese-Spanish-Dutch but just verbally.

Whether Bawontehu women were indeed the mothers of the first mestizo children in Minahasa is unclear, though plausible. Paulus explained that even if these mixed

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<sup>118</sup> Henley and Davidson, 'Radical Conservatism', p. 20.

relationships did provide the roots of the modern Borgo community, not all borgos had European descent.

Endo is blood. Indos came into being because of marriages between Europeans and Indonesians, while Borgos are, firstly, Endo but, secondly, not Endo. If this is the case, Borgos exist not because of descent but because of status... residential status which the Dutch gave to people of both [European] descent and those who did not have foreign descent, but were not indigenous, because they were domestic workers for the colonisers.

More important for the Borgo application to AMAN, Minahasans had no claim to the islands off the coast of the north-eastern tip of Sulawesi, including Manado Tua. Paulus' own work tracing his family history provided a common indigenous ancestry from the Bawontehu people for the Borgo community, but he was also researching possible Filipino ancestors who came to the islands off the coast in the fourteenth century.

In 2003 Paulus registered the Borgo Bawontehu community with *Majelis Adat Minahasa*, a Minahasan adat organisation that they could finally apply to for indigenous recognition.<sup>119</sup> He defined the Borgo Bawontehu community as the descendants of Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, German and English men and Bawontehu women. The Borgo Bawontehu community subsequently registered with AMAN in 2006. Paulus explained that Borgo Bawontehu had to be built from the bottom up. "Our right hand grasps Indonesia as an aspiration that began seventy years ago, but in our left hand we build up a Minahasa that includes Bawontehu Borgo, which is not an aspiration; it is a reality from hundreds of years ago, from 1523." Further, "we play with two feet. Our left foot is in AMAN.... Our right foot is in *Majelis Adat Minahasa*." The Bawontehu link fulfilled the 'traditional' requirement for Borgo identity, and also proved a common, ancient ancestry. The Borgo Bawontehu claim to the islands off the coast could not be contested by Minahasans of the hinterland, who had no tradition of boat-building. Initially the community registered one kampung, but as of 2015 they had registered 23 kampungs and so were eligible to take 23 representatives to the next AMAN congress. They listed Manado Malay as the indigenous language of the Borgo Bawontehu community to fulfil the third requirement of *peradaban*. This component of their application also included the blue hats that they wore in Borgo ceremonies. Borgos also use *giop*, or traditional sailing boats today used by Borgo fishermen in Amurang

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<sup>119</sup> Note that a different group, under the name of Babontehu, is also registered with AMAN.

and Tanawangko (formerly also in Kema and Manado)<sup>120</sup>, perform a dance called *cakalele*<sup>121</sup>, and have their own Iberian-influenced songs. Every year, usually in late January, they perform *figura*, a cross-dressing festival featuring masks and costumes, accompanied mostly by western instruments in their own orchestra. In recent years *figura* has involved not only Borgos but other Manadonese as well.

Paulus noted, however, that some Minahasans still did not want to acknowledge Borgos as an adat group:

There are some Minahasans who don't want to mention Borgos in the context of adat. But we say, 'oh that's your interpretation, but our understanding is that Borgo is adat' because, if we take a temporal perspective, there are adat communities in South America. Recently they made it 500 years that the Spanish had been in Peru or the Portuguese had been in Brazil. 500 years resulted in adat [indigenous communities].<sup>122</sup> Why should that not be acknowledged here, if it occurred there? Figura features all European songs, right, European culture? The longer time goes on, the more we flourish. Should other people give us a name, or should we name ourselves?

Thanks to AMAN, the Borgo community could exist as an adat community and avoid the much more definitive *pribumi* and *asli* designations prevalent in the New Order that are based more on notions of 'pure' descent than tradition, land and community, even if the three terms are all synonyms for indigeneity.<sup>123</sup> Paulus explained that,

My grandfather didn't form this organisation because there was no opportunity then. Now is its moment, [via] AMAN. And it was because of the efforts of my friends and me who, without intent, in 1986 began to search [for our family history] so that when Borgo Bawontehu was launched in 2004, it was easy for us to do it; we didn't need to do any more research....

Paulus recounted that "my grandfather knew the family history but he didn't know global history" and how Borgos fitted into it. Over three decades, Paulus obtained material about the Spanish and Portuguese empires and Ternatan history from the National Archives in Jakarta to put his family history in perspective. His original aim was to publish a book on the history of the Borgo community, but instead the material became part of the community's grassroots push for recognition in local identity

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<sup>120</sup> See Cedercreutz, 'Borgo Fishermen', pp. 171-94.

<sup>121</sup> *Cakalele* is known in the Moluccas as a war dance, though the Manado Borgo communities also perform it on special occasions.

<sup>122</sup> In fact, these recent 'indigenismo' communities in South and Central America distinguish themselves from the mestizo majority. In those regions, individuals claiming hybrid 'mestizo' identities are privileged and those claiming 'indigenous' identity historically have been marginalised. This is the reverse of the situation in Indonesia, but in some respects closer to that in the Philippines.

<sup>123</sup> Henley and Davidson, 'Introduction', p. 28.

politics. As a result, just as Borgos were given a voice in the Minahasaraad, so they now have a voice in *Majelis Adat Minahasa* as a traditional group.

## Conclusion

The Borgo case brings to the fore a number of binaries in which expressions of the traditional/modern, pure/mixed and indigenous/foreign are often conflated. *Masyarakat adat* (indigenous community) is not a substitute for *pribumi*, but it also refers to indigeneity, or the original inhabitants of a community. Successive regimes – the VOC, the Dutch colonial state and the Suharto dictatorship – repressed and privileged different minorities based on the indigenous/foreign divide. Under the Suharto government, transmigration, mining, logging and the establishment of plantations meant that local groups in, especially, the eastern part of the archipelago found themselves displaced from land that they had lived on for generations. Mining and plantations led to foreign and Chinese Indonesian owned conglomerates taking huge profits at the expense of local communities. Although collective memory in Minahasa has not retained the image of Borgos as a privileged group in colonial Minahasa, until recently they were not included as an indigenous community because they were seen as a ‘modern group’, even though collective Minahasan identity is itself a relatively recent Dutch invention. Yet in this shifting environment, in which non-indigenous and indigenous groups were alternately favoured across different regimes and the debate over favouritism was usually expressed in the language of indigeneity, claims for recognition by one group did not necessarily lead to willingness, upon their recognition, to also recognise other groups. Paulus emphatically declared, for instance, that the Sangihe people could never be recognised as an adat group in Minahasa, because they were outsiders and had no history on the mainland, though Sangihe communities had existed for years in Minahsa.

A recent rise in identity politics in the Reformasi period has resulted in increasingly narrow definitions in official organisations for groups to obtain state and foreign funds. Ariel Heryanto noted in 2001 that “identity markers”, so central to a sense of self, were at risk of continuing to be unchallenged – or were even encouraged – in the post-Suharto era.<sup>124</sup> Identity politics has continued in the post-1998 era but in revised forms. Boundaries between adat groups do not reflect the racialised boundaries based on patrilineal descent seen among the Sri Lankan Burgher community and diaspora; nor do

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<sup>124</sup> Ariel Heryanto, ‘Remembering and Dismembering Indonesia’, *Latitudes*, vol. 1, 2001, p. 10.

they greatly resemble the language- and Indies-rooted identity of Dutch Indo communities outside Indonesia. History, however, is used in contemporary identity construction among the Borgo Bawontehu community not only to provide a source of authenticity for its claim of indigeneity, based on matrilineal rather than patrilineal descent, but also used to concretely define who is Borgo and who is not.

Borgo identity for more than half a century meant someone of mestizo or Eurasian descent but, as occurred in the Dutch Indo community, a ‘rediscovery’ of roots also meant a narrowing of group boundaries. While it would be easy to draw the conclusion that the Borgo case is an example of agency employed by an in-between group, the tightening of ethnic boundaries often facilitates a return to plural societies and identity politics which, in Indonesia, have a coloured past. Engagement with AMAN meant, for Borgo leaders, fulfilling the requirements of AMAN membership. Engagement with *Majelis Adat Minahasa* meant protecting Borgo interests at the expense of other groups in Minahasa, including those who also want to apply for adat recognition. The contemporary Borgo community in Minahasa is one notable example of how a Eurasian community in postcolonial Indonesia has used the preference for indigeneity to carve an indigenous identity for itself. Borgo identity is based on old roots, which has meant that the children of modern mixed marriages in Minahasa are not referred to as Borgo. Members of this generation are more likely to be told that they are destined for stardom and modelling in Jakarta. This third group of Indos in postcolonial Indonesia is the topic of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER SIX

### POPULAR CULTURE, SKIN COLOUR AND INDO IDENTITIES ON AND OFF SCREEN

For at least the last three decades, public discussion of Indos in Indonesia has centred on their role in *Sinetron* (television dramas), film and, to a lesser extent, modelling.<sup>1</sup> From around the 1980s Indos began to dominate in domestic television and films. A small number of these celebrities were the children and grandchildren of parents born in the Indies, but most were the children of expatriates and Indonesians. This situation suggests that historical baggage determined their success or lack thereof in postcolonial Indonesia more than essentialised understandings of race and ethnic identity. Of these younger generations, a significant number had Indonesian fathers who received scholarships to study abroad in communist countries during the Sukarno years, or who worked abroad and later returned to Indonesia with foreign wives. The majority, however, were the children of western men and their Indonesian wives. These men moved to Jakarta during the Suharto years to work in transnational companies and had met their wives there.<sup>2</sup> The colonial generation of Indos had limited employment opportunities in 1950s and 1960s Indonesia, but it was relatively easy for them to gain positions as models and actors. They established a tradition of Indo faces on television and theatre screens. Members of the younger generations also frequently took modelling and acting jobs to improve their own social circumstances, particularly those from poorer backgrounds.

As in other nations in Asia, the ‘Eurasian look’ became the benchmark of beauty and, subsequently, the most acceptable appearance in TV and film in Indonesia during the 1980s and 1990s. Their predominance was often criticised by social commentators and academics.<sup>3</sup> After the fall of Suharto, and with the rise in popularity of dramas and films from Northeast Asia, the place of Indos in Indonesian popular culture began to shift. This chapter outlines the history of Indo involvement in Indonesian popular culture, and process by which directors began to choose to cast Indo women as primarily antagonists, and *pribumi* actresses as protagonists. I also examine the consistent casting

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<sup>1</sup> Asriana Kebon, ‘Stars and Stereotypes’, *Inside Indonesia*, vol. 103 (January-March), 2011, <http://www.insideindonesia.org/stars-and-stereotypes?highlight=WyJpbmRvIiwiaW5kbyciLCInaW5kbyIsIidpbmRvJyJd>, accessed 24 September 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Adji Damais outlined these three broad categories to me in an interview in Jakarta in 2013, though he defined the second group as only the children of scholarship recipients.

<sup>3</sup> Eduard Depari, ‘Eurasian Faces in Indonesian Films’, *Indonesian Film Festival*, Jakarta, Indonesian Film Festival Committee, 1990, pp. 77-79.

of Indo men as wealthy, cosmopolitan love interests. I draw especially on interviews I carried out in 2013 with directors and Indos involved in the entertainment industry, and examine the stereotypes that a younger generation engages with outside entertainment that frame their roles and identities both on and off screen in the post-Suharto era. The chapter builds on the arguments of previous chapters about the place of foreign minorities in memory of colonial and postcolonial Indonesia, and looks more closely at how audience expectations about particular appearances are played out on-screen in popular culture. I use terms like ‘western’ and *bule* to describe the same category that interlocutors referred to: that is, a racialised category that means ‘Caucasian’ foreigners, popularly imagined to be wealthy, attractive and promiscuous.

### **Indos and popular culture in the Indies**

Indo involvement in popular culture stretches back at least to the final decades of the nineteenth century. The norms and features that became characteristic of contemporary Indonesian popular culture began to emerge in this period.<sup>4</sup> Popular urban plays, known as *stamboel*, set the melodramatic plot twists and archetypical characters that are a feature of *Sinetron*.<sup>5</sup> According to Matthew Cohen, one particular form of travelling theatre, the *Komedie Stamboel*, established the Eurasian look as the preferred appearance in melodrama for Indonesian audiences.<sup>6</sup> The *Komedie Stamboel* was founded in Surabaya in 1891. Popular belief attributed its founding to Auguste Mahieu, one of its most prolific Indo actors. In fact the theatre probably was founded by Chinese entrepreneur Yap Gwan Thay, who financed the company, along with the Indo theatre makers who formed the company.<sup>7</sup> The idea for a multi-ethnic troupe was probably taken from popular travelling Parsi theatre troupes. The plays were taken from Arabian Nights and European operas and fairy tales, but they were performed in Malay. Chinese Indonesian entrepreneurs continued to provide financial backing for *Komedie Stamboel* troupes. Audiences were from various ethnic groups and social classes, though some wealthy Europeans disregarded the *Komedie Stamboel* as lower-class entertainment. Actors and actresses were Indo, many of them unemployed and impoverished. They were probably from the Surabaya slum areas that were famous for their lower-class

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<sup>4</sup> Ariel Heryanto, *Identity and Pleasure: the Politics of Indonesian Screen Culture*, Singapore, NUS Press, 2014, pp. 16-17.

<sup>5</sup> Pauline D. Milone, ‘Review of *Java en Madura in de Uitvoerende Kunsten: Th. G. Th. Pigeaud’s Javaanse Volksterveningen en Latere Studies*’, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 58, no. 1, 1999, p. 276.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew Isaac Cohen, *The Komedie Stamboel: Popular Theater in Colonial Indonesia, 1891-1903*, Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Center for International Studies, 2006, p. 344.

<sup>7</sup> Cohen, *The Komedie Stamboel*, pp. 40-2.

Indo communities, who became the target of Pauperism Commissions.<sup>8</sup> The *Komedie Stamboel* provided them a means of employment and subsistence that did not require Dutch language abilities or a European education. Music was often performed by *kroncong* musicians, which was typically associated with lower classes. *Kroncong* developed as a genre of syncretic folk music with Portuguese roots among mestizo communities in the Indies, including *Mardijkers*. In the nineteenth century it was linked to itinerant bands of young male Indo musicians who stereotypically stirred up trouble wherever they went, and were known as *buaya* (crocodiles, or predators).<sup>9</sup>

Travelling theatre set the precedent for film, which arrived in the Netherlands Indies in 1900.<sup>10</sup> Films were largely imported until they began to be produced locally from 1926. Chinese entrepreneurs owned the majority of movie theatres, and film production was also largely by Chinese immigrants, in particular the Wong brothers. A number of early Indies films, until about the mid-1930s, featured Chinese or Dutch protagonists and *pribumi* antagonists. By the 1940s this practice had disappeared.<sup>11</sup> Mostly these domestically produced films were for a Chinese audience. Theatre and imported western films continued to dominate popular culture and were favoured by other groups in the Indies. One attempt to make films specifically about Indos with Indo actors failed, partly because the Indo community preferred foreign films, but also probably because they sought to identify themselves as Dutch in this period. Other attempts to create films for Indos featuring Indo actors also failed because of controversy among the Indo community about how these films portrayed Indos.<sup>12</sup> The domestic film industry, then, was plural, catered to specific social groups, and reflected social relationships of the 1920s and 1930s.

A small number of films were produced by Europeans just before the Japanese invasion, including a private Dutch-Indo company in Bandung, Java Pacific Film, but the outbreak of the Pacific War interrupted this particular trajectory before it could gain momentum. Chinese and Europeans were usually excluded from film production and roles – mostly propaganda – for the duration of the Japanese Occupation. After 1950, Indonesian film-making by *pribumi* Indonesians began in earnest. Indonesian scholars

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<sup>8</sup> Cohen, *The Komedie Stamboel*, p. 43.

<sup>9</sup> See Bronia Kornhauser, 'In defence of *Kroncong*', in Margaret J. Kartomi, *Studies in Indonesian Music*, Clayton, Vic., Centre of Southeast Asian Studies Monash University, 1978, pp. 129-134.

<sup>10</sup> Krishna Sen, *Indonesian Cinema: Framing the New Order*, London, Zed Books, 1994, p. 13.

<sup>11</sup> Sen, *Indonesian Cinema*, pp. 14-16.

<sup>12</sup> I could find no other mention of these films besides a brief mention by Said. Salim Said, *Shadows on the Silver Screen: A Social History of Indonesian Film*, Jakarta, Lontar Foundation, 1991, pp. 21-23.

of film date the beginning of the Indonesian film industry from this period. Ariel Heryanto has criticised the use of this date because it excludes previous films made by Indonesians of European and Chinese descent who do not fit the definition of *pribumi*.<sup>13</sup> However, many of the films produced before 1950 catered to specific groups, but after this date they were produced for much more diverse audiences.

### **Indo film stars in postcolonial Indonesia**

It was relatively easy for Indos to obtain roles during the 1950s and 1960s. Eddy Wypachman of Surabaya, born in 1937 to Dutch and Chinese-Indonesian parents, recounted in an interview that in the mid-1950s there was a producer's office near his school. He decided to try out 'just for fun', and asked the producer's staff whether he had to register. They sent him directly to the producer, and he was subsequently cast in two films, including *Mira* (1960) with Suzanna, who was to become one of the most prolific Indo film stars of the twentieth century. Like *Komedie Stamboel*, film and modelling provided this generation with an alternative source of work, particularly for those whose financial circumstances limited their social mobility and employment opportunities. Among them was Doris Callebaut (1952-2013). Though a semi-autobiographical account recounting her life never mentioned the background of her father, from whom she inherited her surname, it noted that he was unable to obtain any work in postcolonial Indonesia. Doris, to support her family, gave up work as a teacher and became an escort. She subsequently began to act in films and was able to earn a much higher income.<sup>14</sup>

Outside film, more and more Indo faces began to appear in beauty advertisements, particularly after the departure of most Europeans. During the Sukarno years, advertisements for soap and beauty products largely featured Indo and *bule* models. After Suharto came to power, fewer and fewer *bule* models appeared in print, though Indo women remained a feature of beauty advertisements. Indo models continued to represent major international brands.<sup>15</sup> As a result, an 'Indo look' became representative of western-oriented modernity and its products. It also became representative of class relations, in which dark skin represented manual labour, and lighter skin, especially among women, represented the modernised urban elite. Few Indonesians took issue

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<sup>13</sup> Heryanto, *Identity and Pleasure*, p. 151.

<sup>14</sup> See Lala Bonnie, *Doris Callebaut*, Jakarta, Karya Baru, 1977.

<sup>15</sup> Luh Ayu S. Prasetyaningsih, *The Maze of Gaze: The Color of Beauty in Transnational Indonesia*, PhD thesis, University of Maryland, 2007, pp. 118-123.

with the presence of Indo models in beauty advertisements, compared with their presence in film and television. One Indonesian academic noted in 1989 that “there is little to take issue with. This is due to the fact that commercial advertisements (on television) are still relatively rare. And... Eurasian faces... do not dominate printed advertisements.”<sup>16</sup> The context in which models appeared, however – largely in connection to western products and skin-whitening creams – probably accounts for the little attention given to their presence, even if they did become the subject of several academic analyses.<sup>17</sup>

In film, the super-star status of Suzanna became tied to her connection with the emerging Indonesian horror genre in the 1970s, and she was eventually labelled the ‘Queen of Horror’. Suzanna, who was born Suzzanna Martha Frederika van Osch Boyoh, had her first role in the 1958 black and white film *Asrama Dara* (Girls Dormitory). Her first horror film was in 1971’s *Beranak dalam Kubur* (Birth in the Grave). She became known for her “skin as white as marble”.<sup>18</sup> More significantly, her roles, along with those of Doris Callebeaut, Rudy Wowor and the Salam brothers, continued what the Komedi Stamboel had started: a preference for an Indo look in films that could appeal to a broad range of ethnicities. The predominance of Indo faces – or, more to the point, the issue of whether Indos were an appropriate casting choice – was noted in an article in 1989. The author was of the opinion that “Eurasian faces are forced inappropriately into appearances in Indonesian films.” He outlined two examples, both of them featuring Suzanna, in which she played the wife of a village religion teacher and a Javanese goddess. His main objection was that Suzanna was foreign, even if she was only of foreign descent, writing that “it certainly wouldn’t make any sense at all if Cleopatra was played by a woman from Tibet, or if Snow White was played by an actress from Ghana.”<sup>19</sup> He further criticised the casting choice of Ida Iasha, a Dutch-Indonesian actress born in the Netherlands who spoke little Indonesian. Her Dutch accent was so heavy that her voice was frequently dubbed over by an Indonesian native speaker. Saraswati Sunindyo, in a 1993 discussion of *Sinetron*, wrote that the choice to cast Indo women in films was “an obvious example of ideological

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<sup>16</sup> Depari, ‘Eurasian Faces in Indonesian Films’, pp. 77-79.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Suzie Handajani, ‘Female Sexuality in Indonesian Girls’ Magazines: Modern Appearance, Traditional Attitude’, *Antropologi Indonesia*, vol. 30, no. 1, 2006, pp. 49-63; Aquarini Priyatna Prabasmoro, *Becoming White: Representasi Ras, Kelas, Feminitas dan Globalitas dalam Iklan Sabun*, Yogyakarta, Jalasutra, 2003; Prasetyaningsih, *The Maze of Gaze*.

<sup>18</sup> ‘Suzanna: Syukur Bisa Menakut-nakuti Anda’, *Tempo*, 17 February 2003, p. 78.

<sup>19</sup> Depari, ‘Eurasian Faces in Indonesian Films’, pp. 77-79.

control in Indonesian films.”<sup>20</sup> Just what this ‘ideological control’ was is unclear. The decision of mostly Indian directors and producers to cast Indos was probably financial, as a Eurasian look could be more easily exported to Malaysia.

### **The rise of Sinetron**

After the Suharto government allowed the television industry to expand beyond the state-owned television station, TVRI, in 1989, several new commercial television stations were established. Around the same time the Indonesian film industry experienced a collapse. Many stars, producers and directors turned to television. One of the most successful media moguls who capitalised on this expansion was Raam Punjabi. He and his brother Dhamoo began to produce commercials for RCTI, one of the new commercial stations. They approached Indo models used in these advertisements and offered them leading roles in the Sinetron produced by their production house, Multivision Plus. They then approached the international companies whose commercials they shot and asked for sponsorship for the Sinetron featuring these Indo models. As a result, they were able to sell their Sinetron as a complete package with advertisements to commercial television, itself still a relatively new and struggling industry.<sup>21</sup> Unlike other production houses, they did not have to ask television stations for funds to produce Sinetron. Their productions began to dominate the market, and the ‘Indo look’ – which had been so popular in films – also became the norm for Sinetron characters. However, Raam was of the opinion that in film an Indo look was dictated by the preferences of foreign audiences. In his autobiography he wrote that international film festival organisers “advised me to use an Indo face, aka westernised, to meet international tastes.”<sup>22</sup> Indeed, Japanese and Chinese popular cultures also feature a large number of Eurasian models and actors, as do those of many other nations in Asia such as the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.<sup>23</sup> Even so, Indonesian films and

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<sup>20</sup> Saraswati Sunindyo, ‘Gender Discourse on Television’, in Virginia Matheson Hooker (ed.), *Culture and Society in New Order Indonesia*, Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 137.

<sup>21</sup> Maria Myutel, *Indians in Indonesia: Behind the Seen*, PhD thesis, Canberra, the Australian National University, 2016, Chapter 3, in progress.

<sup>22</sup> Raam Punjabi, *Panggung Hidup Raam Punjabi*, Jakarta, Gramedia Widiasarana Indonesia, 2005, p. 175.

<sup>23</sup> See for example Jinthana Haritaworn, *The Biopolitics of Mixing: Thai Multiracialities and Haunted Ascendancies*, Farnham, England, Ashgate, 2012; Shima Yoshida, *Being Hafu (Biethnic Japanese) in Japan: Through the Eyes of the Japanese Media, Japanese University Students, and Hafu Themselves*, MA Thesis, University of Utah, 2014; Emma Jinhua Teng, *Eurasian: Mixed Identities in the United States, China, and Hong Kong, 1842-1943*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2013, p. xvi.

television had a very limited audience outside island Southeast Asia. Indonesia's largest and main export market for films was Malaysia.<sup>24</sup>

An Indo look was popular among Malaysian audiences because it appealed to a wide range of audiences across Malaysia's different ethnic groups. From 1947 to 1977, the Malaysian film industry was dominated by Chinese production houses and Indian directors.<sup>25</sup> Casts, on the other hand, were almost always Malay *bumiputera*, the equivalent of Indonesia's *pribumi* population. After 1977, partly because of external factors, but also perhaps because of affirmative action policies favouring *bumiputera* groups, the industry became Malay-dominated. Few actors were Eurasian. Outside film, in the late 1980s criticism began to increase about the large number of Eurasian models used in TV advertisements. The Malaysian government became concerned that Malaysian viewers considered pan-Asians or Eurasians to be attractive and the benchmark for beauty.<sup>26</sup> The prevalence of Eurasian models was also problematic for a government that cast itself as anti-western. In 1993 the Malaysian Minister of Information declared that advertisements should only feature Malay, Chinese or Indian models, and not Eurasian or pan-Asian (unclear ethnic status, often Eurasian) models who looked Caucasian, i.e., those considered foreign.<sup>27</sup> He later shifted his position and suggested that pan-Asian models could feature in advertisements, provided they were shown alongside Malay, Chinese or Indian models. By this time, the pan-Asian look had become the preferred appearance in other countries in Southeast and South Asia whose populations were ethnically diverse, such as Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and India. Advertisements could be reproduced across the region, while within a specific national context they could appeal to a broad audience and transcend ethnic boundaries.<sup>28</sup>

The Indonesian government did not interfere in entertainment as had the Malaysian government in advertising, despite public discussion about the appropriateness of Indos for certain roles in film. The Indo appearance by the early 1990s was favoured, and lighter skin colour was linked directly to class. Sylvia Huisman-Carels in 1990 noted that Indos of the younger generation "associate it [lighter skin] with a higher social

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<sup>24</sup> Williem van der Heide, William, *Malaysian Cinema, Asian Film: Border Crossings and National Cultures*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2002, p. 147.

<sup>25</sup> Van der Heide, *Malaysian Cinema, Asian Film*, p. 117.

<sup>26</sup> Kemper, *Buying and Believing*, pp. 55-6.

<sup>27</sup> Depari, 'Eurasian Faces in Indonesian Films'; Steven Kemper, *Buying and Believing: Sri Lankan Advertising and Consumers in a Transnational World*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2001, pp. 54-5.

<sup>28</sup> Kemper, *Buying and Believing*, pp. 53-54.

status and better humanity. For them, poverty, a dark complexion and an inferior nature are not far apart.... They embrace western consumer culture, which makes life better in their eyes and gives status.”<sup>29</sup> The Indo look became favoured through the 1990s through advertisements and, subsequently, Sinetron. For the remainder of the New Order and into the Reformasi period, the predominance of Indo faces in Indonesian television continued, especially in Sinetron. Most Indo actors from the film generation moved to Sinetron. Suzanna noted in a 2003 interview with *Tempo* magazine that she had been offered dozens of offers to play in horror Sinetron.<sup>30</sup> A huge wave of new Indo faces began to appear as well. Indo predominance became noted in popular media and in celebrity gossip to the extent that many Indonesians expected Indo children to automatically become models and gain automatic entry into Sinetron.<sup>31</sup>

### **The shift against Indo faces**

From the mid-2000s, however, this trend began to change. Indonesian celebrities increasingly began to make use of plastic surgery and skin-whitening creams, which often made them indistinguishable from Indo celebrities. At the same time, from 2005, public debate about the moral state of the nation, centring on the proposed Anti-Pornography Bill, led to broader anti-western sentiment among certain groups against perceived sexual freedom evident in American popular culture.<sup>32</sup> Historically, modernity had been associated with western countries and western appearance. An alternative version of modernity began to emerge from this time in popular culture on Indonesian television. It was rooted in Northeast Asia, particularly K-Pop and television dramas imported from Taiwan, Japan and South Korea. In these dramas, the most notable of which was the Taiwanese drama *Meteor Garden* (2001), the protagonists were frequently hard-working lower or middle-class women who rejected the materialism of their antagonists and their wealthy romantic love interests.<sup>33</sup> Unlike many western dramas, Northeast Asian dramas usually featured little sexual contact and promoted restrained sexuality, which made them appealing for an Indonesian audience and for television stations keen to adhere to the mores of public morality. Indonesian

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<sup>29</sup> Sylvia Huisman-Carels, ‘Indische Mensen in Indonesie’, *Jambatan: Tijdschrift voor de Geschiedenis van Indonesia*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1990, p. 55.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Suzanna: Syukur Bisa Menakut-Nakuti Anda’, p. 79.

<sup>31</sup> For a discussion of this stereotype, see Asriana Kebon, ‘Stars and Stereotypes’, *Inside Indonesia*, vol. 103 (January-March), 2011, <http://www.insideindonesia.org/stars-and-stereotypes?highlight=WyJpbmRvIiwiaW5kbyciLC;InaW5kbyIsIidpbmRvJyJd>, accessed 24 September 2015.

<sup>32</sup> For a discussion of public reactions to the Bill, see Pam Allen, ‘Challenging Diversity? Indonesia’s Anti-Pornography Bill’, *Asian Studies Review*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2007, pp. 101-15.

<sup>33</sup> Heryanto, *Identity and Pleasure*, pp. 175-80.

dramas do often imply sexual activity, but usually it is a female villain who engages in adultery or *seks bebas* (promiscuity), not the protagonist.<sup>34</sup> *Meteor Garden*'s popularity was one reason behind a new demand in the mid-2000s for Chinese looking models and celebrities, but it also coincided with – or was part of the broader causes of – a shift in Sinetron casting. Directors increasingly chose to cast *pribumi* Indonesians as protagonists. This shift took place because of public pressure, revised understandings of beauty that allowed *pribumi* Indonesians into the space that Indos had formerly dominated, and revised character types of protagonists.

Because of this revision of the stock 'type' of protagonists, Indo women were often cast as wealthy antagonists, and Indo men were often cast as wealthy love interests. Sanjay Mulani, the Casting Director at MD Entertainment, one of Indonesia's leading Sinetron production houses and owned by a company founded by Dhamoo Punjabi, explained this casting choice in terms of the stereotypes attached to appearance. He explained that commercially the Indo look was still very sellable, unlike a Chinese look which remained "very segmented".<sup>35</sup> He said that more recently, however, because of their "hard face, people don't pity" Indos. A typical Indonesian look (whatever such a look might entail in an ethnically diverse nation) was now preferred, because audiences favoured a "soft, petite face" – possibly similar to the soft, petite faces that were presented in the now broadly popular Korean dramas. Because the body language of Indos was more powerful, and they had a presence of "yes, I am" compared to *pribumi* actors, he said, he preferred to cast them in negative roles. Even so, "not all Indo is good. Sometimes I reject based on feeling." He refused to take any Indo actors from the lower classes. Karan Mahtani, the Creative Director at MD Entertainment, also made similar comments:

If we are doing a typical Indonesian local show... then we will need a local face, but if we are doing a regular drama then an Indo look.... It depends on the story; it depends on the character. Say, for example, we are doing a show on a girl who is being tortured who is poor, you cannot give an Indo look. An Indo look is usually more... a bit rich, but if you are doing a drama of a rich person... then it's okay to give an Indo look. But if poor, being tortured, coming from a low-class family then you prefer it to be... a proper Indonesian look. Mainly this is true for female characters because the shows worked on here are usually female-oriented.

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<sup>34</sup> Heryanto, *Identity and Pleasure*, pp. 185-86.

<sup>35</sup> For a discussion of Chinese Indonesians in film, see Krishna Sen, "Chinese" Indonesians in National Cinema', *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, vol. 7, no.1, pp. 171-84; Ariel Heryanto, 'Citizenship and Indonesian ethnic Chinese in post-1998 Films, in Ariel Heryanto (ed.), *Popular Culture in Indonesia: Fluid Identities in Post-Authoritarian Politics*, New York, Routledge, 2008, pp. 70-92.

The choice of these directors to cast Indos as antagonists was phrased in terms of their appearance. Both thought that an audience would not believe that an Indo could play a poor but morally upright protagonist. In just one example of many, Tatiana Sivek, a model and actress of Polish descent, confirmed that in her roles in *Sinetron* and telemovies, she mostly played antagonists because she “look[ed] mean” and these characters were usually rich.

A dichotomy has emerged on screen, then, between a poor, suffering, rural *pribumi* woman, and a rich, privileged, urban Indo woman. This dichotomy appears to apply only to female characters, but there are antecedents for men, such as August Melasz and Johny Indo, a former jewellery store robber who became famous after his 1987 biopic film *Johny Indo* and went on to star in a number of other films in the late 1980s and early 1990s. A contemporary fixture of *Sinetron* characters is the wealthy, urban love interest of the female protagonist. These characters seem most often to be played by Indo men. Common to both archetypal characters played by Indos is the association of wealth with Indo appearance and, for women, loose morals.

### **Stereotypes represented on-screen**

These representations are by no means universal. Indo actresses continue to take a small number of leading roles, and many antagonists are played by *pribumi* actresses. Indo actors still play protagonists, antagonists and supporting characters. But more broadly these representations do, however, draw on fixed stereotypes in Indonesian popular culture that have existed for decades. Such stereotypes draw both on popular historical understandings of who previously comprised the rich in Indonesia (westerners and Chinese) and on contemporary understandings of the global system, in which western visitors to Indonesia are still considered wealthier than most Indonesians.<sup>36</sup> Through popular culture and public debates about morality, westerners are represented as fabulously wealthy though individualistic, materialistic and *bebas* (morally loose).<sup>37</sup> This stereotype is evident in the higher prices asked of those termed ‘*bule*’ (Caucasian or of western descent) in markets, though more recently an increasingly visible, wealthy Indonesian upper class has begun to enter the popular imagination as well. Popular understandings of Indonesian history cast *pribumi* Indonesians as poor and exploited by

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<sup>36</sup> Ariel Heryanto, ‘The Years of Living Luxuriously: Identity Politics of Indonesia’s New Rich’, in Michael Pinches (ed.), *Culture and Privilege in Capitalist Asia*, London, Routledge, 1999, p. 159.

<sup>37</sup> For a discussion of Indonesian views of the west, see Judith Schlehe, ‘Concepts of Asia, the West and the Self in Contemporary Indonesia: An Anthropological Account’, *South East Asia Research*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2013, pp. 497-515.

non-Indonesians, including Indonesians of foreign descent.<sup>38</sup> On-screen, such images have a long tradition, extending back to the 1970s when Indo actress Suzanna became emblematic of the horror genre and the mysticism and eroticism it entailed outside religious norms, particularly as the ghosts of victims of crimes of passion.<sup>39</sup> She played a rape victim who then murders the residents of a nursing home in the 1973 film *Nafsu Gila* (Uncontrolled Lust). She also played the ghost of a prostitute in *Sundelbolong* (1981). These roles were just several of many in a genre considered overtly pornographic.<sup>40</sup>

The casting of Indos in all types roles in films during the 1980s and 1990s, whether protagonist, antagonist or minor characters, makes it difficult to make any categorical statements regarding their film presence, except that they were celebrated on the basis of their appearance. More recent examples include Rudy Wowor's role as a racist Dutchman in two films set during the Revolutionary period, *Merah Putih* (Red and White, 2009) and its sequel, *Darah Garuda* (Blood of the Garuda, 2010), in which he drunkenly flirts with a presumed Indonesian prostitute. But Sinetron draws much more deeply on popular stereotypes than film, which historically has been much more likely to provoke controversy or play with cultural norms. In the 2013 Sinetron *Sang Pejabat dan Istri-Istri Gelapnya* (The Functionary and His Mistresses), August Melasz – who has long played antagonists in Sinetron – plays an incompetent and irreligious public servant who takes several additional wives in secret because of his uncontrolled lust. He eventually tries to murder one. Cinta Laura plays a spoiled rich girl, alternating between English and American-accented Indonesian, in *Upik Abu dan Laura* (Upik Abu and Laura, 2008). In the opening scene, she demands that her wealthy father arrange for her new car to be delivered immediately. This scene alternates with shots of her hard-working, poor *pribumi* co-star preparing rice for breakfast. In *Dia* (Him/Her, 2003), Ari Wibowo plays an urban cosmopolitan love interest who has business interests in America. In a slightly different example, Nicholas Saputra also plays a young, New York-residing Rangga in the 2014 Line-sponsored short sequel to the film *Ada Apa dengan Cinta* (What's Up with Love, 2002). The latter was produced at the height of Indo popularity and launched his own career, but his original character was never overtly wealthy, nor cosmopolitan. This is not to say that only Indos play these sorts of

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<sup>38</sup> Heryanto, *Identity and Pleasure*, p. 153.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas Alexander Charles Barker, *A Cultural Economy of the Contemporary Indonesian Film Industry*, unpublished PhD thesis, National University of Singapore, 2011 p. 162.

<sup>40</sup> Meghan Downes, 'Critical Pleasures: Reflections on the Indonesian Horror Genre and its Anti-Fans', *Plaridel: A Philippine Journal of Communication, Media and Society*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2015, pp. 1-18.

characters, or that they cannot play different types. However, the current trend to cast Indos as antagonists in *Sinetron* was noted by a number of Indos involved in the entertainment industry. It is a reflection of broader understandings of what it means to be Indo and someone of European (or *bule*) descent in contemporary Indonesia.

Today, according to Tatiana Sivek, Indos whose Indonesian language abilities are limited can obtain work only as models, not actors or actresses. This situation arose because of criticism over Indos like Ida Iasha. The choice to cast famous Indo figures who did not speak Indonesian well as Indonesians led to so much public backlash that casting directors and talent agents were forced to look beyond the appearance of celebrities. This situation is not unique to Indonesia. In Japan, for example, some *hafu* (mixed) celebrities are criticised for not being able to speak Japanese properly.<sup>41</sup> One criticism of Nadine Chandrawinata, Indonesia's Miss Universe contender in 2006, was her very limited English, which was surprising for some Indonesian commentators. In a parallel case, one researcher of *hafu* celebrities noted similar surprise expressed by a Japanese TV viewer towards Japanese celebrity Wentz Eiji, of German and American descent, because he could not speak English.<sup>42</sup> The expectation that individuals of European or Anglo descent are able to speak English transcends nationality and often is based on the idea that a western appearance and modernity, itself linked to the English language, go hand-in-hand.

One of the most persistent ideas about the younger generation of Indos is that their fathers are wealthy CEOs who met their Indonesian mothers in bars and clubs. Books with catchy titles like *How to Catch Mr Bule* reinforce the idea that marriage to a *bule* man means wealth and privilege. The book's synopsis reads,

Is it true that mixed marriages can go well? Is it true foreign men are more romantic, loving and care more than Indonesian men? Do they really know the way to make women feel needed, or are they just looking for an exotic experience, a little fun, with highly-strung Asian women because foreign women are too independent and selfish? ...Foreigners generally like keeping pets like dogs, sleep without a light on and like to cook their own food. These are only small issues, but they can cause cracks in your relationship if they are not overcome in the right way. *How to Catch Mr Bule* is a handbook to guide you if you want a relationship with a foreigner. Forget the stereotypes and be cautious. Not all men are what they appear. Some are good and some are not, so be careful not to judge based on first impressions.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Yoshida, *Being Hafu (Biethnic Japanese) in Japan*, p. 33.

<sup>42</sup> Yoshida, *Being Hafu (Biethnic Japanese) in Japan*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>43</sup> Erlinawati, *How to Catch Mr Bule: Buku Panduan bagi Perempuan untuk Berkencan dengan Pria Asing*, Jakarta?, Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008.

The book provided suggestions on where Indonesian women could find *bule* men in Jakarta, notably in bars. It dealt with the issue of Indonesian hanging out in bars by advising,

You're a good Indonesian woman and know how to behave properly. Going to a bar or hotel with a foreign man would be really shameful... but you're just going there to chat while listening to music and drinking a little, not to do anything else. Large hotels are safe and reputable. If you don't like drinking alcohol, they also serve mineral water or orange juice.<sup>44</sup>

The idea that mixed couples meet in bars, which considered inappropriate places for 'good Indonesian women', subsequently affects popular ideas about the children of these relationships. Similar negative stereotypes also apply to western women married to Indonesian men. These women are often viewed as *bebas* and inclined to quickly divorce their Indonesian husbands who, so the joke goes, marry *bule* women in order to *memperbaiki keturunannya* ('improve their bloodline').

### **'Damaged children'**

In both cases, the moral standards of the mothers of Indo children are often called into question. Stereotypes about the moral quality of Indonesian women marrying western men and the children that result from these relationships are more often expressed because the majority of mixed relationships are between Indonesian women and foreign men. Guido Schwarze, a German-Indonesian man born in 1974, outlined the effects of stereotypes about mixed marriages at the prompting of a mutual acquaintance, entrepreneur Bob Sadino, when we first met in an expatriate supermarket in South Jakarta. Bob Sadino drew heavily on these stereotypes, saying that mentally, Indos were "not very good, but physically very nice." He drew on his own experience with ex-girlfriends who were Indo, noting that he thought Manadonese and Indo women were fun and "never serious". Guido further elaborated on Bob's comments in an interview and said that, even if Indo appearance is considered very attractive, Indos are often considered *anak rusak*, or 'damaged children' on account of popular ideas about their mothers' background:

During my younger years, basically, very often, people had basically [a] quite negative opinion about Indos, in the sense that they would consider Indos to be obviously vastly superior in physical appearance but very often vastly inferior in terms of mental abilities. A lot of the Indos were associated with being *anak rusak* and in the university I remember my sister was really the opposite because she excelled [academically].... She graduated number one not in her faculty but from

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<sup>44</sup> Erlinawati, *How to Catch Mr Bule*, p. 16.

the whole university... and so it was quite surprising for a lot of the lecturers because they came with... certain preconceptions [about] how Indos are. And I remember my lecturer... would say 'you know people like Guido, you know, people who have a lot of girls' and play around, and he would crack these jokes or maybe half jokes... because of the preconceptions that the lecturers had about Indos....

Guido was keen to emphasise that he and his siblings were intelligent because his mother was from an upper-class background:

During my tender years and my younger years and my teenage years it was a big deal because Indos would usually get more attention, and they would become the special children in the crowd. It wasn't for me; in the German school it wasn't like that at all. It was quite the opposite. But in Indonesia, when you're an Indo, you are by definition... special. And especially maybe in the teen years where appearance is such an important issue, being an Indo is definitely an advantage. You have more friends. You get all the attention, but it's not necessarily productive because it can become a big distraction. So that's why Bob Sadino said 'Indos, physically they're perfect but maybe there's nothing up there [in their head].' Often it's true. And my theory is because, well it's a combination again of the environment, but also it's because Indos get special attention and then it becomes a real distraction. But this of course is very, very general.... You have stupid Indos but you also have brilliant Indos as well. It depends on the mother. I mean my mother is very strict.

His own explanation of the negative stereotypes of Indo children was that they were based on the stereotypes typically associated with lower-class Indonesian mothers. He distanced himself from the stereotype by emphasising that his own mother was descended from Javanese royalty, and said,

From my observation it is the quality of the mother and the stage of evolution of the mother that translates into the upbringing and it then affects or even to a great extent forms the children's behaviour. And very often what I see is that educated mothers usually also create properly educated children.... More importantly it's the character of the mother which then forms the character of the children's character in turn. I've seen quite a few mixed marriages where it did work out and the children turned out okay mainly because of the mother.

He also thought that very few mixed marriages worked out on account of the different educational backgrounds of the parents:

To me in most cases, in maybe over 90 per cent of the cases that I know of, those are very superficial relationships.... It's sad. I've seen many disasters, disastrous marriages where the men would let go of the sweet wife and children for a younger woman.... In Indonesia, if you're a foreigner, you are privileged. No matter how old you are, you can date a girl half your age and it's not difficult at all. And very often the background is just about money because the woman needs a break, she's had a hard life, she has her whole family to feed in many cases that I know, and for her it would be the chance of a lifetime. And some of them, they do climb up the social ladder.

He cited a famous case in which an American lawyer married an Indonesian waitress, who then was able to obtain law degree “and she lifted herself up in society.” This case was one of a small number of success stories, Guido said. Once the initial whirlwind romance had subsided, most mixed couples struggled to adapt because of their vast differences in education and social status. They often ended up divorcing, and the children were the ones affected. “Many of the young wives of foreigners, they’re just not prepared yet.... They never took courses in psychology or child psychology and they just don’t know how to really properly bring up children.”

Like many other children of wealthy expatriates, Guido attended an international school, first the German School where he struggled to adapt to the discipline and intense competition, followed by the Gandhi School. Until the 2006 Citizenship Law, which allows children of mixed marriages under the age of eighteen to hold dual citizenship, Indo children could hold citizenship of only one country. Those wealthy enough to afford the exorbitant fees – usually those whose fathers, rather than mothers, were expatriates – attended international schools. Guido became an Indonesian citizen around 2003. His German father also eventually took Indonesian citizenship, because it eased bureaucratic difficulties running a business. However, he said that “I also heard from a lot of foreigners if you are a foreigner in Indonesia, you’re privileged, you are treated well as a foreigner. And I get treated well in Indonesia too.” Guido noted that he had not come across the term ‘Indo’ in a while because he did not socialise a lot outside his own group of friends. The term was no longer relevant for him in his professional life in his father’s company, but he said that the last time he had contacted a talent scout friend who owned a production house, his friend still had the opinion “that Indos are just suitable for the movies but not so much more than that.” Guido further noted that he could not recall a single Indo in the past ten years who had held a senior position in the government or corporations, and he explained this absence by suggesting that Indos in general were not exceptional. “One can argue that... the population is too small, but one can also say that because they’re in general, like Bob Sadino said, not very smart”. He emphasised, however, that there were causes and conditions and “you can’t just stereotype”. When I raised the example of Joop Ave, Guido said, “he was an exception. And he was brilliant, I remember. And he got an overseas education and he grew up in the right environment.... But I don’t know whether there are Indos as brilliant as him who were not exposed to a foreign education or a foreign environment.”

Guido's mother Irma, in a separate interview, emphasised she was not a 'bar girl', and so the quality of her own children was different from that of most other Indos. She cited one example of a western man who left his wife for a "low-life" Indonesian woman and gave her "everything". "You know the children, the quality is really horrible. So sometimes I pity the children because there will be no future." She raised the issue of the 'nyai stigma' from the "Dutch times" of her own accord, but thought that it no longer existed. Many Indo children grew up to behave wildly, she suggested, and only uneducated Indos became Sinetron stars. Both Guido's explanation and hers drew on long-standing understandings about the role of women in transmitting traditional values to their children, a role that Julia Suryakusuma argues the New Order government deliberately promoted.<sup>45</sup> The morality of mothers, partly because they were expected to raise children while their husbands worked, was subject to a much greater degree of scrutiny than that of fathers, a double standard not just evident in Indonesia. As a result, the moral standards of those considered *anak rusak* were and continue to be attributed more often to the characteristics of their mothers and how these women raised their children rather than to their fathers.

### **The rich and famous Indo**

As well as the negative *anak rusak* stereotype on account of the class backgrounds of mothers of children raised in mixed relationships, there was also an expectation that Indos would be wealthy on account of their expatriate fathers' incomes. Estelle Townshend, an American-Indonesian born in 1986, was raised by her Indonesian mother after her American father left. Estelle emphasised that her circumstances took her out of the 'expat bubble' of international schools and forced her to be independent. Before her father left, she attended international schools where "you would get a Mercedes for your birthday." Her circumstances changed with her father's departure when she was twelve:

I was wealthy when my father was around but when he left I had no money.... When my dad was around we had maids, gardeners, drivers, cooks, each of us had a nanny, so many cars, quite well off in an expat way.... We lived in an Indonesian mansion. But then after my dad left we just had a maid. So I learned to drive, when I was thirteen or fourteen.

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<sup>45</sup> Evi Eliyanah, 'Contesting the Female Body, Modernity and Globalization', *Masyarakat, Kebudayaan dan Politik*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2010, p. 39; Julia Suryakusuma, *State Ibuism: The Social Construction of Womanhood in New Order Indonesia*, Depok, Indonesia, Komunitas Bambu, 2011.

She started going to a National Plus school (Indonesian schools that offer subjects in addition to the standard curriculum and often teach in English) where “I was the white girl among a sea of Indonesians.” She was thrown out of school three or four times because her mother could not afford the tuition fees. Sometimes, she recalled, “my mom would just leave me and go away looking for money.” Her Indonesian classmates jokingly called her ‘*bule Depok*’, a term that refers to the descendants of freed slaves of the Dutch in Depok who have Dutch family names. Nonetheless, she still encountered expectations that because of her appearance and background, she must be wealthy:

There’s a lot of the mixed kids and they’re the top two per cent and then there’s my kind.... We’re usually quite under the radar because we’re the ones that usually the foreign father has left. So you’re left with this Indonesian mother who’s got to figure out how to raise this child raised in an international school, who speaks English.... I know a lot of kids like me and it’s either because their western father either died or left.... It’s kind of a confusing middle to be in because you’re *bule* but at the same time you’re Indonesian so you’re kind of expected to be wealthy but you’re not.... It’s not as glamorous to be Indo because you look the part but you’re not really living the part.

Modelling and acting, according to Estelle, were several ways for poorer Indos to survive, though she herself had no desire to enter the entertainment industry. Her mother worked odd jobs, and her sister who modelled overseas helped pay the bills when Estelle was younger. Estelle said of acting that, “Sinetron is seen as a joke, not serious acting. If you’re a mix you can get some kind of celebrity job. And they also always assume that you’re good-looking.” This stereotype existed, she said, because only good-looking Indos were featured on television. Yet there appeared to be deeper currents that made Indos appear attractive, below the level of appearance: “Indonesians feel like Indos have the best of both worlds. Every Indonesian guy you ask says he would want to marry an Indo girl because she’s western but she understands Indonesian culture and knows how to interact with your family.”

Estelle recalled that even though she remained friends with her schoolmates from the Jakarta International School, “I have the other side.... I moved to a National Plus school, so I’ve got the ‘darker side’.” She noted that many graduates of international schools became involved in drugs and alcohol. She differentiated herself from this group, saying that she never became involved “not because I’m an angel but because my mom had so much on her plate. So I would go out with kids who were thirteen and throwing up.” Estelle’s mother chose to speak to Estelle in Indonesian at home, though she was able to speak fluent English. Estelle’s environment growing up – her schooling

and the language her mother used with her – shaped the way she interacted with Indonesians.

I felt really connected to Indonesians.... When I go to a market people always have a heart attack because of the lingo, the way of talking... When I dream or I fall in love or I want to write poetry it's all in Indonesian.... I don't know any JIS [Jakarta International School] kids who'd ride the Metro Mini or the Angkot [public transport in Jakarta]. Maybe they'd take an *ojek*<sup>46</sup> in high school but... everyone's got a driver who comes and picks them up.

Estelle was an American citizen, though she had spent most of her life in Indonesia. As an adult, she moved to the US, where she struggled to adapt to different ways of practicing Islam. Eventually her mother moved there in 2011, but Estelle moved back to Indonesia to begin her own business in Bali. After moving back, however, she realised that “Seattle was home” because her mother and friends were in the US. Like many children of expatriates, she was raised in transnational contexts, and never had to choose one or the other like Indos in Indonesia in 1957 did. The result, however, was that those of this generation were probably more likely to identify as feeling ‘in-between’ than the older generation. They spend their lives living in several countries rather than just Indonesia and are no longer subject to pressures to assimilate but rather grow up in cosmopolitan Jakarta’s international schools and ‘expatriate bubbles’.

### **Indos as wealthy expatriates**

Between 1960 and 2003, international schools were restricted to foreigners. This restriction was a result of the Sukarno government’s nationalisation policies that attempted to stamp out foreign-language education, mostly Dutch and Chinese.<sup>47</sup> Danau Tanu noted in a study of an international school in Jakarta that because international schools featured so many foreign nationals, they trained students to view Indonesia through foreign eyes, even if many of these foreign nationals had an Indonesian parent. Indonesian teaching staff in some of these schools taught only Indonesian language, society and history, and not other subjects. Security guards, cleaners and clerical staff were Indonesian, which encouraged students to consider Indonesians as lower status. Local staff were paid at a different rate from international staff.<sup>48</sup> The education that they were given in international schools probably had some influence on the ways in

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<sup>46</sup> A motorcycle and driver available for hire like a taxi.

<sup>47</sup> Danau Tanu, ‘Educating Global Citizens’, *Inside Indonsia*, vol. 102, Oct-Dec 2010, available from <http://www.insideindonesia.org/educating-global-citizens-2>, accessed 29 September 2015; Danau Tanu, ‘Unpacking ‘Third Culture Kids’: The Transnational Lives of Young People at an International School in Indonesia’, unpublished PhD thesis, the University of Western Australia, 2013, p. 64.

<sup>48</sup> Tanu, ‘Unpacking ‘Third Culture Kids’, pp. 50-51.

which Indos viewed Indonesia and Indonesians. It also influenced their ability to speak Indonesian, like eighteen-year-old Evan Robinson who spoke English at home with his American father and Indonesian mother: “I haven’t spoken much else but English so my Indonesian is abysmal.” Evan had attended a National Plus school and an international school, but many National Plus schools provide English language education to their students, even if they follow the requirements of the national curriculum. He grew up in Indonesia, but among transnational and expatriate circles in Jakarta who lived largely separate lives from the rest of the population. Members of this relatively elite community now include not only foreign nationals but also Indonesians involved in national politics, such as former presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto and his family.

Paul Lemaistre, born in 1985, noted that he was often mistaken for being a foreigner in Indonesia because of his appearance. His mother Mayrani Ekowati, Prabowo’s sister, is from one of Indonesia’s elite political families. His Indonesian grandparents met in the Netherlands in the 1930s, where – as the children of relatively privileged colonial civil servants – they were both studying. His grandfather Sumitro Djojohadikusumo was involved in the failed Permesta Rebellion and the family lived in self-imposed exile for almost a decade following the Rebellion’s failure. Paul’s mother was educated in international schools and studied at a US university. Her first language was English, and she struggled to adapt to Indonesia when the family returned to Jakarta. She later met Paul’s French entrepreneur father there. Paul and his sister were educated at the Jakarta International School and also went to university in the US. Growing up, they used mostly English at home. Of his time in an international school, Paul said, “I’m very fond of my time there.... At its worst [it] was a bit of a bubble.... I had my interactions with my cousins and my different family friends but my cousins were the offspring of my mother’s siblings, right, they were all very cosmopolitan and westernised also and they had also gone to private schools and universities in the UK or the US.” Further, at school, “there were so many people like me that it never really felt out of place, so many people whose stories and whose personal histories mirrored my own.... It was very familiar and very comfortable.” Paul took his father’s French citizenship, though he said he was open to the idea of dual citizenship if the Indonesian government allowed it. He explained that many others like him were unable to stay and work in Indonesia for extended periods because their foreign citizenship led to visa restrictions and the requirement that they needed an employer to sponsor them.

Paul had been approached several times to act and model, though he took a modelling job only once to help a friend. He said that his sister had modelled “for some pocket money in high school.... [I] thought it was a kind of joke thing to do. I didn’t want to really play into the stereotype of Eurasian *artis* [celebrities] doing modelling for a commercial purpose.” He jokingly said that if he told his mother that he wanted to become a model or celebrity, she might disown him. When I asked Paul about the stereotypes he had encountered about Indos, he said that,

there have never really been any stereotypes that I encountered that deal with intelligence or temperament or personality, really, but more to do with the types of professions we might choose. And that has to do with the entertainment industry, with the creative industry, the fashion industry.

He said of the term ‘Indo’,

I actually have always understood it as a historical term, to do with mixed race Indonesians during the colonial and maybe immediate postcolonial era. When I... describe myself in Indonesian to Indonesians, I use the word *campuran* [mixed] or maybe if I’m joking *blasteran* [‘half-breed’]. Indo is a period of time for me really – that’s mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Indos, like a racial category, a government-set racial category.

He noted that friends, family members and colleagues had called him Indo. “I don’t find it derogatory, just descriptive.” However, Paul had grown up in a transnational, very cosmopolitan environment in which having foreign ancestry was more the norm than the exception. He noted that “on the scale of Indo-looking I fall maybe more towards the Caucasian side”, and so Indonesians had asked him where he was from. “I’ve been told many times that I could easily be mistaken for just another white guy.”

Many Indos of mixed descent of Paul’s generation occupied a social and economic position in which they could turn down acting and modelling roles and still have other alternatives for work. Andrew Stevens Wilson, a young entrepreneur, was an Indonesian citizen. He said that “I’m not interested in Sinetron.... [But] Sinetron is a good thing when you want to put your career seriously in the Indonesian film industry, because you’re going to see your face every single day practically there.” He thought that the excessively emotional and exaggerated acting required in Sinetron was “kind of dumb, based on my [level of] knowledge, if you have to be like that.” Those whose fathers were wealthy expatriates tended to have far more opportunities after graduation, often because they went to international schools and foreign universities, which meant that they could apply for jobs in transnational corporations and organisations in Jakarta.

For Indos who grew up in other levels of society and were of an earlier generation, experiences varied, as did their opportunities for social mobility. A small number, usually those whose father was Indonesian, took Indonesian citizenship. As a result, they went to Indonesian schools and often grew up in an entirely different milieu.

### **Class and celebrity status**

Two of Indonesia's biggest Indo celebrity 'success stories', Ari and Ira Wibowo, did not grow up in international schools. Their Indonesian father received a scholarship to study in Berlin. He was one of hundreds of Indonesian students during the early 1960s who received scholarships to study in Europe, in particular Communist and Soviet bloc countries.<sup>49</sup> After Suharto came to power and news reached these students of the mass anti-communist killings, many were scared to return home. Their father remained in Germany, where he later met their German mother. In 1980, when Ari was ten, his father moved the family back to Jakarta with the promise of work from relatives. These promises did not eventuate, and the family struggled to find money to pay their bills. Ari's mother was unable to maintain a standard of living like other German expatriates or afford European food. Ari explained in an interview that he and his sister went to Indonesian schools and took public transport, unlike many other children of expatriates who had chauffeured cars. After school, Ari's fourth grade teacher taught him how to read Indonesian from kindergarten books. Ira, who was three years older than Ari, began to act in movies to earn extra cash for the family. Ari explained that "at that time, to be mixed, in the entertainment business it was a bit easier so she started doing this and supported our family...." When Ari picked up his sister in 1986 from a theatrical show in which she had a role, he was spotted and offered a job as a male model. Ari said there were still very few male models and "only very, very few" Eurasian models when he was given an entry point into the industry. "The good thing is that it... was a very big event. There were many reporters taking pictures. From there it was very easy to go up the ladder." He moved to magazine covers to commercials and then into acting. "I was a catwalk model.... From there photo-shoots and then movies and then TV series, even singing, like boy band[s], basically I tried everything. So that's how we supported each other and I financially supported my [university] education myself."

Ari began starring in movies in 1989. His first role was the main lead in *Valentine Kasih Sayang Bagimu* (Valentine, Love for You, 1989), about a music band consisting

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<sup>49</sup> Vannessa Hearman, 'The Last Men in Havana: Indonesian Exiles in Cuba', *RIMA: Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2010, pp. 85-86.

of three men and three women. He noted that of these six characters, four were played by Indos, “so I think at that time, even my first movie, the trend was already there.” Then, he explained, the movie industry declined in the early 1990s “and everybody moved to TV series.” Ari moved to television in 1994 and became one of Sinetron’s most recognisable faces. His parents divorced in 1993, and his mother went back to Germany. Ari decided to stay in Indonesia because of the “chance to earn a living.... Being in the entertainment industry at that young age I think I already started to be self-sufficient, so moving to Germany... I think would be a bad move”.

Aris noted that for those of a similar background of him – raised in two countries, with parents of different nationalities – feeling that they belonged somewhere was difficult:

you are always different. You always feel in a way that you don’t belong.... But the good thing about it is that I started my career quite early and so once people recognised me – and I have a very Indonesian name, Raden Arianto Wibowo Wirjodiprodo Alimustopo, it doesn’t get any more Indonesian than that, but I’m just known as Ari Wibowo because I really try to avoid the Raden because you know, oh ‘blue blood’, it has no meaning for me – so I think because people recognise me as an actor... you are in their living room, in their area of comfort. Because they see me on TV every day, people feel close [to me].... So that is always a plus point.

Like Estelle, he took the religion of his Indonesian parent, Islam, though he later converted to Christianity. His father was concerned about Ari’s conversion, not because he was devoutly Muslim, but because,

he was more worried about my career because ninety per cent [of Indonesians] are Muslims and I was already at that time on top of my career. I was very famous; everybody knew me, and to suddenly change my religion to a very minority one for most Muslims... would be *penghinaan* [an insult].

Ari subsequently moved away from action TV series because of his new religious stance and began to star only in dramas. It was these roles which established him as one of TV’s most recognisable faces. He explained that his children, unlike him, went to an English-speaking National Plus school that had Indonesian, Chinese, Indo and foreign students “so I don’t think they will be under the same pressure that I was” when he was young. These pressures included language barriers, but also “just because we look different, then they [Indonesian students] treat us different, you know they make fun of us... but of course because I didn’t speak that fluent Indonesian it didn’t really soak in, all the bad things that they said....” His grades were average in school “but what this entertainment business gave me was... a big head start whereas all my friends from

college... they just started their career... from zero... and I already [had] accumulated enough money to have my own investments.... It opened up many more doors.”

Jovanka Mardova’s father also received a scholarship to study overseas, in Czechoslovakia. He left in 1962 and remained overseas for seventeen years, where he married Jovanka’s Czech mother and had two daughters, of whom Jovanka was the younger. In 1979 or 1980, when Jovanka was one, the family moved back to Indonesia. At the time, Jovanka said, mixed marriages were not especially common, and initially her father’s Minangkabau side of the family struggled to accept her parents’ marriage. Jovanka’s father was unable to get work and was subject to interviews and background checks because of suspicion about his connections to communism. Eventually he left the family for a year to take a job in the Middle East because he was unable to find a job in Indonesia. Jovanka’s mother could not speak Indonesian to begin with and struggled to adapt to life in Jakarta while raising two young children alone until Jovanka’s father returned. Eventually she opened up a training school to teach English, typing and accounting. Because of her parents’ circumstances, Jovanka was raised outside expatriate circles. She was an Indonesian citizen and went to a Catholic private school. As a teenager, she worked as a model to save money to go to university in the US. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, she starred in Sinetron and TV films. She later lived in Canada, where she also worked as a model. Eventually, however, she moved back to Indonesia because it was much easier to find work there through her networks. Jovanka said that growing up in Jakarta during the 1980s was

not easy, I have to say. It’s nice that you can make money as a model because they like your face, but in school you get bullied because you’re different. I was always bullied, all my life. And it’s funny because people don’t believe that, like ‘oh how come, you’re so famous’.... And especially if you’re in a magazine... that’s even worse. Growing up was not easy but it kind of toughened me up.... I said to myself, ‘you know, we are in the seventh grade or eighth grade, you guys hang out in the mall. While you guys hang out in the mall, I make money and I work. I go to photoshoots, I appear on television.’ I never said it out loud but that’s what I said to myself.... What was also not fun was going on public transport, on the bus. I hated that ride because it was a half hour ride... and it was just terrible, it was unbelievable. I was the only white girl on the bus and sometimes you passed by state schools, and state schools are very Indonesian .... In a private school you have mostly Chinese and it’s just a very different mentality, and the state schools are local Indonesians and usually from [the] lower class, and so these kids would go on the bus, and they’re in a group, in a gang.... I was just terrified because... here no one will help you.... I knew I had to protect myself and just do whatever it takes to not be noticed... but thank God nothing major happened.

Like Jovanka, Todora Radisic also experienced some bullying on account of her appearance. Her circumstances mirrored Jovanka's. She was born in 1976. Her father was Serbian. She grew up among Indonesians and attended an Indonesian school. She said that "when I was [a] kid, they made fun of me because I have so many friends.... They always make fun 'oh you are Belanda, you are Belanda'." She pointed out to the bullies that she was Serbian and told them to go home and ask their father "what is the difference between Belanda and Serbia". She considered herself to be Indonesian and stated emphatically that, "I am proud to be Indonesian." Despite this declaration, Todora was active in lobbying the government for dual citizenship for people like her.

### **Colonial links**

At first glance the contemporary identities of younger Indos in Indonesia seem far removed from those of an older, colonial generation, particularly those who left Indonesia and settled in the Netherlands. Yet there is some connection between these two groups. Rafael Klavert, born in 1984, was the grandson of two Indos born in the Netherlands Indies. He lived in Indonesia until he was fourteen and then lived overseas until 2011, including a period spent at university in the Netherlands. He was approached by talent agents in Indonesia several times:

the first time it happened I was on one of my summer holidays back home here... and there was somebody who claimed he knew me. I did not recall his face but apparently he was a primary school friend or something like that, but anyway... after some pleasantries exchanges he immediately went on, would you be interested to star in a Sinetron? I was like, um, are you serious? And he was like, yeah, now I'm actually working for a casting agency, and I was like, what kind of Sinetron is it? 'Well, we don't know yet, but...' Well, basically what he does is compile all potential talents and if there is a casting call or whatever, usually one of these production companies would approach one of the agencies and the agencies would provide the profile shoot and so on.... And, of course, I think I might have been slightly interested then but the fact that I wasn't living there obviously made it not possible....

After Rafael moved back to Indonesia, he worked in an advertising agency. The talent department there also proposed that he star in commercials for their clients. Rafael said that he had been approached five or six times. "That first time... was quite different from the rest, because [in the other offers] I was actually in the company and they were just desperate...." He never accepted any offers or requests to become an actor, which he discounted as mostly joking.

Rafael's circumstances spanned a number of generations and continents. He encountered stereotypes about Indos in both Indonesia and the Netherlands. Unlike most young Indos living in Indonesia, he had relatives in the Netherlands who had repatriated there after independence. While studying there, he lived with his great uncle's family. He was introduced to the Indo community in the Netherlands, and was invited to attend Dutch Indo *kumpulan*. However, he said that he felt out of place:

I don't really relate to them, aside from similarity in terms of ancestry. They are very much Dutch but they are Dutch who almost worship the Indo Indonesian culture, and they are proud to call themselves half Indo or a quarter Indo.... Over there I considered myself a native Indonesian compared to the rest of them.

When he was growing up, he said, he understood the term 'Indo' to "refer specifically to half Indonesian, half Dutch". By the time he was a teenager, it was "more about if you have some sort of Caucasian ancestry." In middle school "it was used to refer to anyone" of Caucasian descent. "If you have some sort of non-Indonesian features, be it maybe skin colour is a bit lighter, maybe the eyes are a bit wider, something like that, usually friends would call them Indo." He said that his most noticeable features that marked him of foreign descent were his light brown eyes and the lighter skin he had growing up. He considered Indo a descriptive term to refer to someone when they were not present, performing the same function as 'the Japanese man' or 'that Ambonese girl'. However, he noted that when he met someone from a similar background of Dutch ancestry with a foreign name, they immediately identified that they had something in common: "he would say oh yeah, my mother is an Indo, and oh yeah... so we're Indos".

## **Conclusion**

Until the Reformasi period, popular culture in Indonesia featured a large number of Eurasian models and celebrities, as in many other postcolonial nations in Asia. Unlike in Malaysia, the presence of Indo faces in modelling in Indonesia attracted relatively little attention. But criticism from critics, social commentators and academics of Indo predominance in film and TV from the 1990s began to influence audience expectations about what roles they were suitable to play. In the early 2000s, popular culture from Northeast Asia began to enter the Indonesian market, providing a hugely popular alternative to Indonesian and western television and films that coincided with a rise of anti-western sentiment in the mid-2000s. The influx of television dramas from Northeast Asia changed audience expectations about the character types and appearance of protagonists. In doing so it provided the space in which *pribumi* celebrities could

replace Indo faces on television screens, which critics and commentators had long called for. Television directors now choose to cast actors with ‘soft faces’, or what one director termed a ‘proper Indonesian look’, as protagonists from a poor background. Sinetrons now frequently feature a poor female protagonist from a village or lower-class urban background who, unlike those in many western dramas, is expected to behave morally. Antagonists in Sinetron are frequently wealthy and engage in what are considered immoral acts, such as adultery. As a result, few would believe now – partly thanks to the influence of dramas from Northeast Asia, and partly because of public debate over the negative moral influence of perceived western norms in Indonesia – that a character with an obviously Indo face could play a poor character. As a result, Indo actresses are today cast most often as antagonists. According to directors, this is because of their ‘harsh appearance’. However, those I interviewed also mentioned that if a protagonist is wealthy, an Indo could play that character. Wealthy, cosmopolitan love interests continue to be played by Indo men in Sinetron and TV movies.

Even though the decision of directors to cast Indos in these roles is expressed within the framework of physical appearance, the social meanings attached to appearance draw on much deeper social currents and popular understandings about Indonesians’ relationship to foreigners, who are popularly conceived to have exploited Indonesia across different regimes. These social meanings also draw on stereotypes about *bule* who are often considered wealthy and attractive but morally loose. Young Indos today face the expectation that they are fabulously wealthy because of their western parent and transnational links, even if their circumstances vary considerably. They are also expected to have loose morals, whether their mother is Indonesian – stereotypically a ‘bar girl’, an echo of the ‘nyai’ stereotype – or *bule*. Those with significant cultural capital available to them, including financial resources and education in international schools, often deride the decision of other Indos to take modelling and acting jobs. Many of those who become celebrities are seen to fulfil stereotypes through the public exposés of infidelity, drunkenness and divorce cases that typically accompany celebrity status in many contexts, not just Indonesia.

From the 1960s, popular culture was one area available for Indos to work in without encountering difficulties on account of their backgrounds until the rise of domestically produced Sinetron from 1989. The questions raised about their presence have reflected the overarching public concerns of different periods, from whether they are ‘Indonesian’ enough to whether they can play ‘good’ characters because of essentialist

ideas about class and race. The younger generation of Indos in Indonesia, among them the descendants of colonial era Indos, are much more visible than their grandparents' and parents' generations were, thanks to the path paved by older Indos whose decision to become models, actors and entertainers tended to be guided more by financial concerns than the desire to become famous. In spite of more recent changes in casting choices in *Sinetron*, the result is that the most common statement heard in Indonesia today about Indos is not that they were Dutch supporters, a problematic or model minority, or that they can never really be Indonesian because of their foreign descent. It is that Indos are destined for stardom in Jakarta.

## CONCLUSION

In November 2013, I happened to wander into a bookshop in The Hague and came across what appeared to be a complete section of books dealing with Indonesia. If this bookshop was any indication of The Netherlands' concern with commemorating and discussing its colonial past, then Indonesia seemed to be well-represented in Dutch historical consciousness. Yet after closer examination, it became apparent that almost the entire contents of the section were about European (Indisch) society in the Indies. The extensive assortment of personal memoirs, photo collections and popular historical works on display presented the Indies as a peaceful tropical paradise; indeed, the word '*paradijs*' seems particularly prevalent in titles of Dutch works on colonial Indonesia.<sup>1</sup> A few books also detailed personal experiences of the Japanese Occupation and the Revolution. The differences in tone in these works are striking compared with those discussing the colonial years. A scant few dealt with politics and major events in Indonesia from 1945 to the present. Dutch assertions that the Netherlands brought enlightened colonial rule to the Indies in the twentieth century, encapsulated in the frequently used phrase *rust en orde* (peace and order), appear alive and well in popular histories. But one can hardly criticise the authors for drawing on such narratives, because *rust en orde* generally were a feature of everyday life for the European community, particularly for many children growing up in late colonial Indisch society.

If, however, one were to walk into Gramedia, one of Indonesia's major bookstore chains, in any major city across the archipelago, one would find almost the reverse. Memoirs about the Revolution, a proliferation of first- and second-hand accounts of key events in 1945-49, and biographies of key political figures from the period dominate the historical sections of bookstores in Indonesia. Few non-academic books discuss personal memories of everyday life in *Hindia Belanda*, a term rarely used outside academic circles.<sup>2</sup> *Zaman kolonial*, or the colonial period, does not feature widely in the public historical imagination, except to prove that Indonesia was and continues to be exploited by foreigners. The exception to this trend is the popular statement that *lebih menderita dijajah Jepang selama 3,5 tahun daripada dijajah Belanda 3,5 abad* (three and a half years of Japanese colonialism was far worse than three and a half centuries of

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<sup>1</sup> Two are referenced in this thesis: Herman Bussemaker, *Bersiap! Opstand in het Paradijs: de Bersiapperiode op Java en Sumatra 1945-1946*, Zutphen, Walburg Pers, c2005; Fasseur, Cees, *De Weg Naar het Paradijs en Andere Indische Geschiedenissen*, Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 1995.

<sup>2</sup> One notable exception is in fiction, *Semua untuk Hindia*, published in 2014. See Ariel Heryanto, 'Indonesia dalam Indo: Menghargai Semua untuk Hindia', *IndoProgress*, edisi XXXIII, 20 April 2016, available from <http://indoprogess.com/2015/04/indonesia-dalam-indo-menghargai-semua-untuk-hindia/>, accessed 2 January 2015.

Dutch colonialism)<sup>3</sup>, even if the neat chronology presented in this statement is not strictly true. Interest in historical or contemporary Netherlands, if the books on Gramedia bookshelves are any indication, is far less than interest in books on other nations such as the United States. The Netherlands and its empire are far removed from popular historical consciousness in contemporary Indonesia. There are no centres or major festivals commemorating the colonial past. Only here and there, in cities frequented by Dutch tourists, can one find a café deliberately evoking the colonial past like Van Oosten in Malang and Café Batavia in Kota, Jakarta, or a colonial-style hotel like Hotel Majapahit (the former Oranje Hotel) in Surabaya. I was never able to find any evidence to confirm rumours originating in the Netherlands that Jakartan elites have revived the old Indisch tradition of *rijsttafel* (a banquet-style meal of Indonesian dishes served in small bowls), which continues to be served in some Indies restaurants in the Netherlands. If the trend did exist, it was fleeting and left few traces confirming that it ever took place.

Official and popular versions of history are problematic not only for their unspoken disapproval of alternative stories. Without a public historical narrative, expressing memories about certain forgotten events like the Bersiap is difficult for those who remember fragments but have no framework in which they can make sense of these memories. Public memorial culture commemorates only a certain version of the past, and in Indonesia the predominant version of the past emphasises that foreigners have exploited *pribumi* Indonesians for centuries and the violence of 1945-49 was necessary for the good of the nation.<sup>4</sup> This phenomenon is hardly exclusive to Indonesia. In most national contexts, governments, the media and schools contribute to developing a consensus about the past that emphasises certain citizens and excludes others, or lauds some and suppresses others.<sup>5</sup> Historical capital, by which I mean the prestige attached to personal involvement in events identified as key moments in the nation, influences which memories and stories ever take narrative form, while context determines how they are framed. Among the over-represented stories in Indonesian historical memory is the flag-pole incident in Surabaya; far too many individuals have claimed to have been

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<sup>3</sup> Christine Susanna Tjhin, 'Two Giants are Better Than One? Indonesia's Relations with China and Japan', in Lam Peng Er and Victor Teo (eds), *Southeast Asia between China and Japan*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Pub., 2012, p. 100.

<sup>4</sup> See Benedict Anderson, 'Cartoons and Monuments: the Evolution of Political Communication under the New Order', in Benedict Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia*, Jakarta, Equinox, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Jean Gelman Taylor, 'A History of Indonesian History', in Eric Tagliacozzo (ed.), *Producing Indonesia: the State of the Field of Indonesian Studies*, Ithaca, New York, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 2014, p. 167.

the young Indonesian who tore the blue section from the Dutch flag, or to have been there to witness the event. Among the under-represented stories is the targeted killing of unarmed Europeans, Indos, Ambonese, Manadonese, Chinese-Indonesians and Timorese by young independence fighters in 1945-47. In the Netherlands, over-represented narratives among Dutch Indo communities include displays of loyalty to the absent Dutch during the Japanese Occupation, and accounts of discrimination at the hands of *totok* Dutch in the Indies and Indonesians in postcolonial Indonesia. Under-represented narratives include stories of Indos who did not identify as Dutch, chose to become Indonesian and never experienced discrimination or poverty on account of their backgrounds.

Public memorial culture plays a significant role in emphasising which version of the past is 'true' to ensure that certain narratives about the nation are sustained. The Monumen Bambu Runcing (Bamboo Spear Monument) in Surabaya commemorates the role of the pemuda in Indonesia's National Revolution, particularly the Battle of Surabaya. So too does the Balai Pemuda (Pemuda Building), the former Simpang Club where, according to spurious legend that has persisted to today, the famous phrase "*verboden voor honden en inlanders*" ("dogs and natives forbidden") was inscribed on a wall. In this context, there is little room for memories that suggest the pemuda were not the heroes that public monuments, biographies, autobiographies and historical accounts make them out to be. According to a plaque outside the Balai Pemuda,

During Dutch times this building was used as a club for white people. *Pribumi* and dogs were forbidden to enter. From September to November 1945 it was used as the headquarters of the PRI (Pemuda Republik Indonesia) as the centre for the struggle of Indonesia's pemuda against the British Allied forces, a struggle that stunned the world.

In this instance, the idea that the Simpang Club explicitly equated *pribumi* with dogs is an ironic twist in the narrative that the building became the PRI's headquarters from which they successfully expelled Europeans from Indonesia. The fact that no physical evidence, photos or documentary records confirm that the phrase was written in the Simpang Club or anywhere else in Indonesia is testament to the strength with which an anecdote can capture the public historical imagination because it 'makes sense' and fits contemporary historical narratives about the past.

In further examples of the strength of contemporary historical narratives in framing memories, many Indos on Java were convinced that spoken Dutch was forbidden in 1957. But public government announcements only prohibited written and audio material

in Dutch, and older generations of Javanese politicians who spoke Dutch as a first language – including Sukarno – would have struggled to adapt to such a ban. Framed within the anti-Dutch sentiment of the period, memory of a ban on spoken Dutch made sense to those who had lived through the period, and was probably ‘common knowledge’ spread by word of mouth at the time. The idea that no Indos remained on Java was relatively common outside Indo circles during the New Order period, and probably accounts for the limited academic interest in this group. Even in 2013 when I carried out interviews, this view was common, whether because most Indonesians from that generation believed they had all repatriated to the Netherlands, or because Indos were thought to have completely assimilated as a ‘model minority’, unlike Chinese Indonesians, who were perceived and portrayed as stubbornly adhering to a foreign culture. The absence of a group in public consciousness does not mean that it has disappeared, however. The fact that Indo *kumpulan* began to emerge in the mid-2000s was at least partly because of the relative freedom of expression of ethnic identities – and a rise in ethnic consciousness – that developed following the fall of Suharto.

In the Netherlands, though alternative versions of history have emerged since the famous 1969 television interview about Dutch war crimes during the Revolution, among the generation born in the Indies there is greater historical capital to be gained in personal memories that present the Indies as a paradise, the Japanese as anti-colonial agents who incited a peaceful population to revolt, and postcolonial Indonesia as violent, chaotic and poverty-stricken. Contemporary accounts in the Netherlands that suggest Indos in Indonesia continue to experience poverty and discrimination from a hostile, anti-Dutch population attest to the strength of these frameworks that continue to shape popular histories of colonialism and decolonisation. This is not to say that accounts conforming to dominant national narratives in either context are untrue or unnecessarily exaggerate the past; rather, they are important for what they tell us about popular historical consciousness, cultural memory and how national frameworks determine the ways in which the past is recounted in a former colony and a former metropole.

Yet dominant narratives of the past can also be subverted. For decades the Borgo community of Minahasa was considered a ‘modern’ group that could never take its place alongside the eight Minahasan tribes considered adat groups. The main reason for this designation was the European descent of most members of the community, many of whom continue to be called ‘Endo’ in contemporary Manado. Borgo community leaders

successfully negotiated, on the basis of their ancestry from local Bawontehu women, to be included as an adat group, but in the process they re-defined who could be termed 'Borgo' (the descendants of *inlandsche burgers*) based on colonial status rather than descent. This group is largely removed from broader histories of Dutch Indos because it did not identify in the same ways as Indos on colonial Java, did not experience a Bersiap and continued to exist in Minahasa after independence. The history of the Borgo community, however, is part of the broader history of Indos in Indonesia. It shows that context, rather than merely affinity to the Netherlands, strongly determined the decision of Indos to stay or leave postcolonial Indonesia.

A striking absence in the accounts of Indos of the colonial generation living in Java and Minahasa is mentions of the *nyai*, the concubine/mother so central to Dutch Indo histories and novels about Indisch colonial life. This figure returns in stereotypes about mixed marriages in Indonesia, albeit in revised form as the Indonesian 'bar girl' from the lower classes unable to raise her Indo children in the 'proper' way. As in the late nineteenth century, when lower-class Indos turned to the *Komedie Stamboel* for employment, so Indos in postcolonial Indonesia turned to modelling and acting when they had few alternative options available to them, leading to admonitions from elite mixed families to their children that only uneducated, lower-class Indos worked in popular culture. This current characterisation of 'Indo' in Indonesia – the pale-skinned model and celebrity – is excluded in transnational Indo-Dutch history, but many film and TV stars from the 1960s to the 1990s were the children of parents who met in the Dutch East Indies and chose to remain there, like Suzanna and Roy Marten, or Indos who decided eventually to return to Indonesia of their own accord, like Rudy Wowor and Ida Iasha. A further link between the different generations is the fact that the children and grandchildren of the colonial generation who remained in Indonesia, like other Indos in contemporary Indonesia, are also likely to be approached by talent agents to star in *Sinetron* and films on the basis of their appearance. The success of younger generations of Indos – mostly the children of expatriates – in Indonesian popular culture implies that historical baggage determined Indos' success in postcolonial Indonesia much more than shifting essentialised understandings of 'mixed-race'. However, their success would never have taken place without the work of older generations, many of whom were the children of parents who met in the Indies.

National context not only dictated the ways in which memories were recalled among transnational Indo communities, but also the ways in which Indo communities

identified. Indos outside Indonesia often identified as being ‘Asian’ and self-identified with certain characteristics in opposition to a stereotypical Dutch identity, like being generous, family-oriented and friendly. In immediate postcolonial Netherlands, some Indos were referred to as ‘Indonesians’ by other Dutch. Indonesian Indos who had never lived outside Indonesia did not refer to being ‘Asian’. Some reported being treated as *bule*, or ‘whites’, by other Indonesians in the way Indonesians addressed them, or the way Indonesians considered them to be stereotypically wealthy. Indos in Indonesia identified with certain characteristics in opposition to a stereotypical Indonesian identity, like being independent, on-time and disciplined. Those born before 1942, and Indos born after this date who were raised in closed families, were more likely to identify with the Netherlands and speaking Dutch, but even so, members of this generation said that they were Indonesian, albeit Indonesians of European descent.

The stories of people of Indonesian and European descent who never obtained European status or Dutch citizenship in the Indies suggest that the definition of Indo in the Indies was not necessarily tied to European status or Dutch citizenship, as is popularly imagined today in literature on the history of Dutch Indos. Moreover, just as the definition of what it meant to be Indo varied across different contexts, so the definition of what it meant to be indigenous varied across different historical periods. The concept of *boemipoetera* espoused by the leaders of the Indisch Party in the 1910s, in which all persons born in the Indies were considered locals, never took root. Another concept that emerged at the same time, *pribumi*, took on explicitly racial connotations and became a feature of New Order policies towards groups defined as ‘foreign’ on the basis of descent. A third concept, *adat*, developed by Dutch academics, was used to define local law for those of native status, but in the twenty-first century, it relates more to the rights of local groups to claim land on the basis of their ‘indigeneity’ in a certain area. ‘Native’ status in the Indies did not necessarily mean that one was *pribumi* Indonesian, as it is understood today. ‘European’ status did not necessarily mean that one had any ancestors from Europe, because European status in the Indies in the twentieth century covered Japanese, Armenians and *gelijkgestelde* Indonesians, including many Manadonese and Ambonese who had held special status as *inlandsche burgers* in the nineteenth century and during the VOC years. ‘Indonesians’ in the late colonial period were popularly, though not always, defined as those of native status, but in immediate postcolonial Indonesia the concept of being Indonesian was attached to citizenship, even if, in everyday life, divisions increasingly occurred between different groups of

Indonesian citizens based on the concept of *pribumi*. Today, popular understandings of what it meant to be *pribumi* and someone of *bule* descent dictate casting choices in Sinetron by emphasising that *pribumi* characters are poor and Indos and westerners are rich. The structure of colonial and postcolonial Indonesian society, however, was far more complex than these simple characterisations would suggest.

More than seventy years after Indonesia's declaration of independence, most members of the generation in Indonesia who can recall the Netherlands Indies have passed away. Only a small number of Indos alive in Indonesia have personally experienced life in colonial Indonesia. A larger number lived through the Bersiap period, yet none personally were willing to recall violence, though they admitted on prompting that they had heard of it happening to others. Few Indonesians link the younger generations of Indos to this older generation, or know of the extensive process of self-decolonisation that they underwent. Few younger Indos are aware of what happened to Indos in the 1940s and 1950s, even though the histories of these different generations are links in a chain stretching back to the late nineteenth century when an Indo community first began to emerge in Java. The memories of the older generation are in danger of disappearing from the historical record with the deaths of the last remaining Indos who were born in colonial Indonesia. Though no older Indos in Indonesia expressed a desire to keep the past alive for future generations, surely it is time for a history of Indos in Indonesia to be included in Indonesian and Dutch history writing alongside the histories of other minority groups. Their accounts are valuable for the differences they reveal in how a former colony and a former metropole decided to come to terms with the colonial past. These differences continue to affect the ways in which memory and concepts like 'indigenous', 'foreign', 'Indo', 'Indonesian' and 'Dutch' are configured today, and provide insights into how contemporary social relations have emerged in postcolonial Indonesia.



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- 2.05.61.04    Commissariaat Makassar
- 2.05.61.08    Commissariaat Soerabaja
- 2.05.188      Ambassade Indonesië
- 2.10.62      Netherlands Forces Intelligence Service/Centrale Militaire  
                 Inlichtingendienst (NEFIS/CMI): 02026-02053
- 2.20.26      Nationaal Nieuw-Guinea Comité
- 2.20.27      Stichting Spijtoptanten Indonesië
- 2.27.01.01    Raad Sociale Aangelegenheden Indonesië

## INTERVIEWS

- Adriaan Fuchs, 23 March 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Altje Matthieu, 21 December 2013, Tatelu, Indonesia
- Amalia Eleonora (Nora) Nirihuwa, 7 December 2013, Malang, Indonesia
- Amanda Cole, 4 December 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Andreas Flach, 12 March 2014, Sippy Downs, Australia
- Andreas Samuel Manurip, 24 April 2013, Manado, Indonesia
- Andrew Marks, 13 March 2014, Narangba, Australia
- Andrew Stevens Wilson, 22 November 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Anne Marie Burgman, 24 April 2013, Tanawangko, Indonesia
- Ari Wibowo, 30 October 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Arthur Michaels, 3 June 2013, Tugu, Indonesia
- August Melasz, 10 September 2013, Puncak, Indonesia
- Billy Janz, 27 September 2013, Bandung, Indonesia
- Bob Sadino, 30 August 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Cara Oliveiro, 16 March 2013, Depok, Indonesia
- Dienke Siga Dina Vojas, 7 December 2013, Malang, Indonesia

Eddie Samson, 2 August 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
 Eddy Wypachman, 29 July 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
 Edmee Schultz, 29 July 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
 Edward Grohe, 29 July 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
 Elly Schippers Soedarmo and Vaya Nijhof, 29 November 2012, Enschede, the Netherlands  
 Estelle Townshend, 16 December 2013, Bali (via Skype), Indonesia  
 Etti Amen, 5 July 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
 Evan Robinson, 16 December 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Evie Sael, 22 December 2013, Manado, Indonesia  
 Firry Rassad, Image Management, 8 April 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Franklien van der Kley, 12 January 2013, Tondano, Indonesia  
 Fransisca Anita Nikijuluw, 8 December 2013, Malang, Indonesia  
 Freddy Breemer, 5 July 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
 Freddy Waterkamp, 24 April 2013, Manado, Indonesia  
 Guido Schwartze, 6 September 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Hendricus Moors, 6 October 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
 Hendrik Jansen, 7 December 2013, Malang, Indonesia  
 Henrietta Lemon, 8 December 2013, Malang, Indonesia  
 Hortenge Victoria Westerlink, 29 July 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
 Ineke Bollebaker, 5 July 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
 Ingrid Nikijuluw, 12 December 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Irene Tampinongkoh Wever, 5 July 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
 Irma Schwarze, 13 September 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Isla Winarto, 30 May 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Jack Smit, 7 December 2013, Malang, Indonesia  
 James Herman Agerbeek, Virginia (Junita) Agerbeek, Henriette Hendruks and Ludwig Hendriks, 4 December 2012, Alkmaar, the Netherlands  
 Jan Ban, 24 April 2013, Manado, Indonesia  
 Johannus (Joop) Zuidberg, 7 October 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
 John Bakker (pseudonym), 10 October 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Jopie van Zwiethen, 5 July 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
 Josta Rumahlaiselan, HALIN Indonesia, 11 October 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Jovanka Mardova, 10 December 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Judith Achmad, 29 March 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Juliana Welcker, 29 May 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Karan Mahtani, MD Entertainment, 13 March 2013, Indonesia  
 Lefianus Junginger, 24 April 2013, Tanawangko, Indonesia  
 Lexi Rasu, 12 January 2014, Tondano, Indonesia  
 Louise Haccou, 7 December 2013, Malang, Indonesia  
 Louise Laisana, HALIN Indonesia, 2 August 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
 Marcus Dirgo-De Seriere, 29 July 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
 Margareta Cynthia van Vonno, 5 July 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
 Marianne de Kok, 11 November 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Martje Ban-Wahupongoh, 17 April 2013, Manado, Indonesia  
 Maulani Saririzky, 22 March 2013, Image Management, Indonesia  
 Mira Wurangian, 29 July 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
 Mona de Winter, 12 January 2013, Manado, Indonesia  
 Nadia Woodhouse, 11 December 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Nelly Verhoeven (Sri Suyati), 5 July 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
 Paul Lemaistre, 16 October 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
 Paulus Heydemans, 31 July 2015 and 2 August 2015, Manado, Indonesia

Peggy Pratomo, 31 May 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
P.J.G. Boevens (interview with Fridus Steijlen), 8 March 2007  
Purdo Suwondo, 3 November 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Rafael Klavert, 3 April 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Randol van Biren, 19 April 2013, Manado, Indonesia  
Ron Mullers, 1 October 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Rose Albert and Susilo Gadoèn, 6 October 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
Roy Laquais, 23 March 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Rudy Damwyk, 6 December 2013, Batu, Indonesia  
Rudy Wowor, 26 September 2013, Bogor, Indonesia  
Ruth Hulst, 24 April 2013, Tanawangko, Indonesia  
Sanjay Mulani, MD Entertainment, 13 March 2013, Indonesia  
Sie Poo Ham, 29 July 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
Soedarmadji (Adji) Damais, 5 November 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Tatiana Sivek, 8 April 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Thea Jonathans-Loppies, 11 March 2013, Depok, Indonesia  
Todora Radisic, 16 December 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Tris Wernicke, 27 September 2013, Bandung, Indonesia  
Yan Ferdinandus, 29 July 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
Yan Suyanto, 29 July 2013, Surabaya, Indonesia  
Yfke Laquais, 22 March 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia  
Yvonne Schlundt Boden, 3 December 2012, Rotterdam, the Netherlands