Emerging Memory

Bijl, Paul

Published by Amsterdam University Press

Bijl, Paul.
Emerging Memory: Photographs of Colonial Atrocity in Dutch Cultural Remembrance.
Amsterdam University Press, 2015.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/66385.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/66385

Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.
This chapter investigates the two ways in which the Atjeh photographs were framed in the first half of the 1960s. These framings proved to be fundamental for the functioning of these images in Dutch postcolonial memory. The two moments are analyzed here in one chapter to highlight the fact that, although they occurred in rather different contexts, they are intimately related to each other. In both cases, it was the same image that was used, namely KR3 which shows soldiers and Van Daalen standing on the wall of Koetö Réh.

The first can be found in a 1961 photo book that forms the iconic starting point of Dutch postcolonial nostalgia, namely Rob Nieuwenhuys's *Tempo doeloe*. In the Netherlands, this nostalgia for the Indies can be called “tempo doeloe culture”. Tempo doeloe is Malay and literally means “the old days”, but in the Netherlands the phrase has come to mean “the good old days". Within tempo doeloe culture, a nostalgic distribution of the perceptible is active, meaning that a perceptible order is produced in which the Indies become visible as a lost home (in nostalgia, *nostos* means “the return home” and *algia* indicates “longing”). This perceptible order, which visualized the Indies as a tropical, carefree European paradise of fun and games, was produced through many media, including photo books with carefully selected images showing a time in which “gin… was free, as water”, “the natives still knew their place”, and “there was still real cordiality, and love”, as the Dutch author Gerard Reve put it ironically in his poem *Tempo doeloe* (1966: 135).

As can be grasped immediately, the 1904 photographs did not fit this nostalgic distribution of the perceptible. That they nevertheless could be part of *Tempo doeloe* is due to the book’s compartmentalized structure in which a nostalgic perceptible order and an imperial perceptible order, as described in chapter one, could exist next to each other.

The second moment I analyze in this chapter started in the same year, 1961, when one of the Atjeh photographs appeared in a documentary series on Dutch national television entitled *The Occupation*. The series, written and presented by the Dutch historian Loe de Jong, dealt with the German and Japanese occupations of the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies during WWII. In line with Rigney’s scarcity principle, De Jong showed KR3 precisely by pointing it out in Nieuwenhuys's book. In one respect, this moment can also be analyzed in terms of compartmentalization in
the sense that, in the work of De Jong, European overseas and European continental history are discussed in separate chapters. But in the case of *The Occupation*, I will put more emphasis on cultural memory’s potential for what Michael Rothberg has called “multidirectionality”. Arguing against what he calls a zero-sum logic in which one memory necessarily excludes another, Rothberg suggests we “consider memory as multidirectional: as subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing; as productive and not private.” (2009: 3). In a site of multidirectional memory, there is an interaction of different historical memories, which can mutually enable each other. What makes the appearance of the 1904 photograph in *The Occupation* more multidirectional than compartmentalized is the structure of the series and of its accompanying series of books published between 1961 and 1966. Questions are raised about the relations of the different histories being told: between WWII in Europe and Asia, between colonial and national history, and between one massacre (that of the Gajo and Alas villages) and another (that of the European Jews).116

The two central concepts of this chapter, i.e. compartmentalized and multidirectional memory, should therefore not be seen in isolation. What this chapter discusses is how the 1904 photographs in Dutch colonial memory from the early 1960s onwards were both compartmentalized and multidirectionally semanticized in an ongoing negotiation about their relation to Dutch national history.

### Compartamentalized Memory

#### The Nostalgic Distribution of the Perceptible

This section investigates the role of the photographs from 1904 in Dutch postcolonial nostalgia. After Indonesia’s independence, it was in Nieuwenhuys’s *Tempo Doeloe* that one of the photographs (KR3) was first reprinted.117 In 1988, Nieuwenhuys again printed a 1904 photograph (KR2) in the last volume of his acclaimed trilogy of photo books which he produced in the 1980s (reprinted as Nieuwenhuys 1998a, 1998b and 1998c). The great importance of tempo doeloe culture for the position of the 1904 photographs in Dutch colonial memory is its highly influential distribution

---

116 On other interactions between postcolonial and postwar memory in the Netherlands, see Van Ooijen & Raaijmakers 2012.
of the perceptible concerning the memory of the Indies.\textsuperscript{118} For tempo doeloe culture produced a nostalgic perceptible order with strictly separated public and private scenes which made it possible to compartmentalize colonial violence as depicted in the 1904 photographs and bracket it off from the celebration of everyday European life in the colony.\textsuperscript{119} I derive the concept of compartmentalization from Goffman’s \textit{Frame Analysis}. Frames organize experience, according to Goffman: they compartmentalize life and aspects of the self. In tempo doeloe culture, as I will argue, the 1904 photographs were semanticized as depicting scenes of public life, which was framed as separate from the private.

As Stoler has pointed out, there are “political stakes lodged in what is defined as public or private” (2002a: 10). Stoler discusses the work of Jean Taylor who investigated how colonial politics in Batavia between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries were located

\begin{quote}
in commonplaces, in markers of display and discretion in public and at home: how prominent Indies wives styled their verandas, what language they spoke in private, who slept in their beds, where they were born and buried, and where and by whom their children were raised. (ibid: 11)
\end{quote}

Matters like these, which were produced as private, were central concerns of the colonial state and at the heart of colonial politics. Michel Foucault has pointed out how within biopolitics (the management of the population as a whole or man-as-species), racism can introduce a break in the biological continuum of the population between those who must live and those who must die. From this perspective, regulations of the intimate in Batavia in the “private” scene and a massacre in the Gajo and Alas lands in the “public” scene both emerge as aspects through which the colonial state managed its population to become healthy and productive (see Foucault 2003; Stoler 1995). Compartmentalization in tempo doeloe culture, however, produced these two aspects of colonial biopolitics as separate.

Nostalgia has generally received a bad press. Fredric Jameson criticized it as postmodern culture evading history and the present and saw it as essentially a conservative operation: “a history lesson is the best cure for

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{118} For a historical overview of tempo doeloe culture after decolonization, see Van Leeuwen 2008, pp. 99-167.  
\textsuperscript{119} My analysis of tempo doeloe culture in this chapter borrows from Andrew Goss’s analysis of \textit{Tong Tong} and Nieuwenhuys’s \textit{Tempo Doeloe}. Goss uses the concept of “bracketing off”. See Goss 2000.  
\end{flushleft}
nostalgic pathos” (1991: 156). Renato Rosaldo, writing specifically about “imperialist nostalgia”, noted that it “revolves around a paradox:...[s]omeone deliberately alters a form of life, and then regrets that things have not remained as they were prior to the intervention” (1989: 69-70). Paul Gilroy coined the term “postcolonial melancholia” in explaining the British refusal to accept the loss of empire. Instead of working through this loss and acknowledging past horrors and feelings of shame, the British continue to act out their melancholia in popular culture and the debate on immigration (2005: passim).

Svetlana Boym offers a historical analysis of nostalgia. Following Reinhart Koselleck’s analysis of modernity, she has identified nostalgia as a historical emotion of which the modern variant is intimately tied up to the shrinking space available for the present past (or: experience) in favor of the present future (or: expectation):

Nostalgic manifestations are side effects of the teleology of progress. Progress was not only a narrative of temporal progression but also of spatial expansion. Travelers since the late eighteenth century wrote about other places, first to the south and then to the east of Western Europe as “semi-civilized” or outright “barbarous.” Instead of coevalness of different conceptions of time, each local culture therefore was evaluated with regard to the central narrative of progress. (2001: 10)

The production of a new future in modernity entails the production of a new past. As the present future is an always receding horizon, it does not offer a “home”, and this is especially the case when the future is seen as doomed. Spaces such as colonies which were produced as embodying the present past could serve as locations to cure people from the ailments of nostalgia: a move to the colonies was a move to the past and thus a move back home.

On 17 August 1945, two days after the Japanese capitulation, Sukarno read the declaration of independence of the Republic of Indonesia he had written the night before with Mohammad Hatta. In 1957, the Indonesian government told all remaining Dutch (45,000) to leave the country, after large groups had already left in the periods 1945-1948 (44,000), 1949 (68,000), and 1950-1957 (72,000). Between 1945 and 1963 (when New Guinea was annexed), diverse groups of people numbering around 300,000 came to the Netherlands. All of them had literally lost their homes, making nostalgia a very concrete phenomenon for them. These groups and the many subgroups within them each had different memories of the Indies.
As will be shown below, tempo doeloe culture in the late 1950s turned towards photography, making the photo book one of its most important products. Today in every bookstore in the Netherlands you can find richly illustrated works which give a nostalgic depiction of everyday European life in the Dutch East Indies. What distinguished these authors in the postcolonial era from those in the colonial period is that writing about the Indies meant writing about a country that no longer exists. They lived in a new reality, separated from the old one by the unbridgeable discontinuity that decolonization had created. For those who wrote about the 1904 expedition in the years directly following it, it was the recent past, while also for Zentgraaff in the 1930s it was part of a history he was still living. Because of decolonization, however, the expedition and the Indies as a whole moved from what Jan Assmann has called communicative to cultural memory, the former being proximate to the everyday and the latter distanced from it (1995: 126-9).

This section continues with a discussion of the history of the concept of tempo doeloe, especially as it emerged in the late 1950s in the magazine Tong Tong. This is followed by an analysis of Rob Nieuwenhuys’s photo book. The main question running throughout this section is how tempo doeloe set the stage for a compartmentalized positioning of the 1904 photographs and colonial violence in general. Another aim is to show the complexity of memory and forgetting in tempo doeloe culture. Nostalgia is mostly seen as a naive mode of remembrance, and this is also an important conception of tempo doeloe culture in the Netherlands. Boym, however, makes a seminal distinction between restorative and reflective nostalgia: the former is one in which a return to the past is unproblematic, while the latter is one that is characterized by an awareness of nostalgia’s mediated nature. She writes:

Restorative nostalgia stresses nostos [the return home] and attempts a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home. Reflective nostalgia thrives in algia, the longing itself, and delays the homecoming – wistfully, ironically, desperately. Restorative nostalgia does not think of itself as nostalgia, but rather as truth and tradition. Reflective nostalgia dwells on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging... Restorative nostalgia protects the absolute truth, while reflective nostalgia calls it into doubt. (2001: xviii)

120 Recent examples of such books are Botermans and Tichler 2009; Zweers 2008; Aeckerlin and Schonenberg 2004.
One could say that whereas restorative nostalgia is all about proximity, in reflective nostalgia there is no escape from distance. What I will show is how Dutch tempo doeloe culture can indeed be partly characterized as restorative, but that it can also be seen as highly reflexive.

The History of Tempo Doeloe

In Dutch, “tempo doeloe” has the connotation of a slow, relaxed way of life. One racial slur aimed at Indo-European Dutch is that they are “tempo doeloe”, meaning they are languid. This perception of the Indies as languid is mirrored historically in the familiar photographs made of colonial life before the development of short-exposure film, in which figures appear frozen in permanent torpor. Tempo doeloe denotes the good old days when life was colonially luxurious and untouched by rapid modernity.

After decolonization, the concept of tempo doeloe first gained momentum in the early 1960s through the photo books of Hein Buitenweg and Nieuwenhuys, the latter writing under the pseudonym E. Breton de Nijs. In Buitenweg’s *There Is a House in Java* from 1960, for instance, the dedication reads that the book was made “in remembrance of TEMPO DOELOE” (1960: front matter). As Lizzy van Leeuwen has shown, the 1970s saw a tempo doeloe boom, including a successful television program (the *Late Late Lien Show*).

The concept, however, had already been used during the colonial period. In 1913, for instance, the newspaper *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant (NRC)* wrote:

Residents in the outer territories sometimes imagine themselves on the Olympus, equipped with the power to decide about all sorts of things. These days this has become less the case than in the good days of tempo doeloe when it could take months before people here [in Batavia] got to know what happened over there. (10 June 1913)

Tempo doeloe is presented here as a time of slowness, in two ways: slow technology (no telegraph, inferior roads, slower ships) and therefore also a slow government that had not yet penetrated its centralizing powers as far as it would later on. The colonial state was still in the making, not yet in place. This also meant more freedom for individual European civil servants, and

121 See also Pattynama 2007 on reflectivity, especially on intertextuality and *her-herinnering* (re-remembering), in literary works on the Indies.
the example given in this article is of a resident hanging a murderer without permission from the governor-general in Batavia, the colonial capital. By 1921, tempo doeloe could already be imagined as belonging to a lost world, as in the following comment from Het Vaderland (30 July):

People should not forget that it is no longer the Indies of ‘tempo doeloe’, the land of loneliness, plant life, and what have you. In the last ten years the Indies have absolutely changed so that life for example in Bandoeng is already very little different from life here [in the Netherlands].

Life in tempo doeloe is presented here as lonely but independent, especially on the plantations where individual Europeans were largely autonomous. This lifestyle had first disappeared in the cities. On occasion, as in another article from Het Vaderland from 1930, a certain romantic adventurism is connected to it: in those days, one could more easily encounter “tigers, panthers, and other wild animals” (11 October). That the end of tempo doeloe was indeed often connected to the arrival of European modern technology and state intervention can be seen in 1939, when in response to the German invasion of Poland Het Vaderland wrote that “tempo doeloe returns to the Indies”, because the latter would be cut off from the Netherlands and “once again become real ‘tropics’” (12 September).

Other newspaper articles show that neither the term “tempo doeloe” nor its meaning was fixed. In 1923, NRC used the term doeloe-doeloe, which also meant “the old days” (5 October; see also 30 September 1927). In 1927, Het Vaderland used the expression lain doeloe lain sekarang (“before different than now”) (25 August 1927), while NRC in 1926 narrated an episode from tempo doeloe which was located as long ago as 1744 (15 October; see also 6 September 1928). It is important to note that tempo doeloe was sometimes just as much an indication of a certain era as of a certain stage of life, namely childhood or youth. Often people placed childhood memories in tempo doeloe, such as an old widow about whom it was written in 1930 that she still had lively memories of the time of tempo doeloe when she “as the only daughter of an assistant-resident – from the good, old days! – got married with almost princely splendor.”122

At various times, the relation between Europeans and the peoples and land of the Indies in tempo doeloe was a central issue. In 1927, NRC wrote about how “back then”, a Dutch civil servant would travel the Indies on

122 Het Vaderland 15 Jan. 1930. See also Het Vaderland 31 May 1938, where a planter looked back at “tempo doeloe”, starting when he was sixteen years old.
horseback, which brought him to the smallest *dessia* and *kampong*, and which meant that he was intimately acquainted with the people and the land (23 March). During the 1930s, the meaning of *tempo doeloe* as the age in which the European and Indonesian ways of life were more mixed up became stronger:

As the Indies came closer through air travel and telephone, the de-Indization of the Dutch also advanced. The *sarong*, the *kabaja* [type of blouse], the rice table, the old, spacious *Indische* house and the *Indische* hospitality are becoming more and more things from ‘*tempo doeloe*’, things which disappear. (*Het Vaderland* 7 November 1930)

This is the constellation that will be encountered below in the analysis of the work of Rob Nieuwenhuys. However, the opposite constellation was also created, namely how in *tempo doeloe* people were still unmixed, and the races and sexes were self-identical:

This is all *tempo doeloe*! Also art in the Indies, that delightful art of [native] women’s hands is doomed to disappear... [O]n the fairytale island of Bali the rulers are selling their treasures of gold and art in order to possess a car, show off with gramophones and what have you. There is nothing we can do about it!123

In the 1930s, *tempo doeloe* acquired a stronger literary resonance, for instance through its connection to the work of the novelist Maurits (pseudonym of P. A. Daum) whose main subject was the life of Europeans and Eurasians in the Indies in the late nineteenth century.124 In 1939 in the magazine *Groot Nederland*, Nieuwenhuys wrote an article about Maurits in which he calls him the “novelist of *Tempo Doeloe*” (1939: 201).

In the same article, Nieuwenhuys was also the first one to reflect on the meanings of the term. According to him, these Malayan words, more than their literal meaning, imply “for us a nuance... of kindheartedness and appreciation... despite everything”. He continues:

‘*Tempo doeloe*’: it is the time of pajama trousers and *kabaja* for the gentlemen, of the flattering *sarong-kabaja* for the ladies (also as evening clothes), it is the time of owning one’s own carriage with ‘*Sydney horses*’,

---

123 Professor J. A. Loebèr in *Het Vaderland* of 7 Jan. 1938.
124 See for instance the article by Henri Borel in *Het Vaderland* of 14 December 1930.
of ‘nontoning’ [attending a festivity as an outsider] in front of the theater and ‘Concor’ [Club Concordia in Batavia, now Jakarta], of listening to military music on Waterloo Square [in Batavia], of French and Italian operas (those of Balzofiore!), of big house parties, of the chatter and homber [a game of cards] table, of the free gin in hotels, etc.\textsuperscript{125}

Many elements already mentioned above return here, but Nieuwenhuys lards them with words that are only understandable for insiders, making tempo doeloe quite exclusive. He creates a luxurious world of leisure and arts, where soldiers are never far away but only making music, a world that is also eroticized by the “flattering” clothes for the women. He continues:

But as soon as we try to theoretically define the term ‘tempo doeloe’ it turns out to be elastic and every further limitation seems arbitrary. Why would one not consider the V.O.C. time as tempo doeloe? And why would one think of the eighties and nineties, but not Multatuli’s time? Why the Regency period \textit{[pruikentijd]} and not the beginning of the twentieth century? (ibid)

This suggests that in 1939, the concept of tempo doeloe could be used to describe various moments in Dutch colonial history.

After decolonization, tempo doeloe’s meanings gradually became more extended, and as time progressed, the term no longer referred to a specific period in the Indies but to the colonial period as a whole. This is already the case in Buitenweg’s oeuvre published in the 1960s, in which tempo doeloe ends with the Japanese invasion (see Buitenweg 1964: 7). What also changed is that tempo doeloe’s primary medium was no longer literature but photography. The groundwork for this was laid by a Dutch magazine for (mainly) \textit{Indische} Dutch called \textit{Tong Tong}.\textsuperscript{126}

**Tempo Doeloe in Tong Tong**

Already in its first year, \textit{Tong Tong} started publishing old photographs of the Indies. Editor-in-chief and Indo-European Tjalie Robinson (pseudonym of Jan Boon, who also used the name Vincent Mahieu) requested readers to send in pictures:

\textsuperscript{125} Quoted in \textit{Het Vaderland} of 10 September 1939.

\textsuperscript{126} \textit{Tong Tong} was a continuation of \textit{Onze Brug} (\textit{Our Bridge}, 1956-1958) and was itself renamed \textit{Moesson} (1978-now).
from any time, as long as the atmosphere is brought into focus. For example: a school photo (not too small!), a photo at home or at a picnic, barbers, streethawkers, or becak drivers; typical street theater at a market, or whatever. Very old family-photos are also welcome, in short, any image which makes the reader cry out: ‘Oh right!!’ (quoted and translated in Goss 2000: 29)

Andrew Goss writes: “Within a very short time, photos, coming in from far and wide, became the primary discursive tools for demonstrating the power of the past over the present” (ibid: 30). In 1960, both Nieuwenhuys and Buitenweg made requests in Tong Tong for readers to send in photographs for a book and an exhibition. Nieuwenhuys wrote under his pseudonym E. Breton de Nijs:

From my publisher... I got the assignment to compile a photo book, large format, which will contain 200-300 photographs of the Indies of ‘Tempo doeloe’... First of all this: so as not to drown in a mer à boire – especially concerning the later times – I have limited the period from which I want to select the photographs: between about 1860-1870 and the First World War.127

Nieuwenhuys was primarily looking for family photographs, “the more curious the better”, but he also asked for “photographs of the Atjeh War or other expeditions”. His overall goal was:

to make a photo book that will make the people from Holland look up in amazement and which will make you and me experience that country again where we all spent ‘the best years of our lives’.

Buitenweg wrote in that same year:

In Tempo Doeloe, professional photographers and amateurs have recorded the beauty of the Indies. Not only, we think, will it be a delight for old customers [oud-gasten, here people who were in the Indies] to enjoy once again that beauty image for image, but also compatriots who do not know the tropical paradise from their own observation will through such an exhibition have that opportunity and will better learn to understand why those who were driven from this paradise so often longingly recall it.128

127 Tong Tong 4.23 (1960): 7.
128 Tong Tong 5.2 (1960): 10.
Robinson fully endorsed these projects. According to his biographer Wim Willems, Robinson’s mission with *Tong Tong* was to create among his *Indische* reading public

a feeling of solidarity, as in Dutch papers *Indische* newcomers were not able to get a word in... According to him, people from the Indies had much too often let themselves be forced into a complex about being different. By this he meant the color of their skin, their love for *krontjong* [a type of music] or gibbering [*krompraten*] among each other... (2008: 372-3)

A few weeks after Buitenweg’s call for submissions, Robinson wrote:

Things are going excellently with the work of the writers E. Breton de Nijs and Hein Buitenweg... [N]umerous letters have come in, dozens of old photo albums were brought out from *lotèngs* [attics] and *kolongs* [under the bed], and what slowly but surely is growing, readers, underneath their hands is a – well, to tell the truth: *a revelation*:

How big, how broad, how courageous, how princely, how humoristic, how human... our life in the tropics was! Regularly we look at the photographs with the three of us, Hein, Breton de Nijs and me (T.R.) and we experience precious moments.129

In the meantime, the concept of tempo doeloe was appropriated by many in *Tong Tong*, and articles started appearing on all kinds of things related to that era, from soccer, tennis, and magic tricks in tempo doeloe to companies placing ads about how their food tasted just like tempo doeloe. Nieuwenhuys’s book *Tempo Doeloe* was pronounced “the most important book in 1961”,130 and at the end of that same year Robinson mentioned that “[t]he sales are breaking all records.” He hoped that “*Tempo Doeloe* is not a saying goodbye to the past, but a door to the future”, in the sense that this piece of “grandiose Dutch history” would not be forgotten.131

What was the position of colonial violence in *Tong Tong*? The overall tone of the magazine concerning the colonial period is positive: it is considered a paradise lost. Occasionally, however, authors struck a different chord.

129 *Tong Tong* 5.5 (1960): 2. Emphasis in original. Some months later, *Tong Tong* published a positive review of the exhibition, see *Tong Tong* 5.9 (1960): 12.
In 1960, in a review of Rob Nieuwenhuys’s book *Tussen twee vaderlanden (Between Two Native Countries)*, Hein Buitenweg wrote:

We, coming from the old Indies, just have the perfectly human inclination to idealize that Tempo Doeloe and we like to forget its shadow sides. We are prone, Nieuwenhuys says, and in my view correctly, to forget the many conditions in those days that could not bear the light, as well as the frequently occurring dull boredom... \(^{132}\)

While here boredom is the worst thing to occur in the Indies, a letter in *Tong Tong* from the year before by the son of commander Pieter Lawick van Pabst, who had died during a military expedition to the island of Lombok, was followed by a note written by the editors which addressed more serious matters:

Here in the Netherlands war is more or less cultural literature. Impassioned talk about Dürer and Goya and Picasso (Guernica), citing strophes from Xenophon’s ‘The Persian Expedition’. Yet what was done in the Indies is considered an unworthy colonial war... *The colonial wars are no slaughters of defenseless brownies by cruel whites, but tragic clashes between an old and a new time on the border of two civilizations. What was wrong on our side cannot take away all that was good. TONG-TONG likes and is proud to write about the many good things.* \(^{133}\)

Tempo doeloe, though defended, clearly proved also to have been a period of violence. The same article also stated that while “the Netherlands crosses out its ‘colonial history’ in an exalted ethical manner, *Tong-Tong* may be the only magazine in the Dutch press which does talk about it” (ibid: 6). The most important reason to continue talking about the Indies in a country where in the 1950s they were generally not discussed was Robinson’s wish to preserve Indo cultural heritage (Willems 2008: 382), which was essentially built up during the colonial period. Yet there were two other important impetuses for his readers to keep on addressing the colonial period. First of all, many readers were themselves in a way victims of colonialism, for instance because family members had died in colonial wars, \(^{134}\) or because

---

134 See also *Tong Tong* 3.18 (1959): 9, where a certain Madam van Loon writes about the suffering of military families in the Indies (poverty, diseases, many soldiers dying).
they were discriminated against during the colonial period for being of mixed race. At one point the editors wrote:

And should we be ashamed of our ‘brown blood’? The denial or rejection of the mixed race is more than stupidity, it is a shame!\textsuperscript{135}

The second reason to evoke the colonial period is related to the first in the sense that the often mixed-race readership of *Tong Tong* was not only slighted during the colonial period but also in postcolonial Netherlands. In a review of Hein Buitenweg’s *Op Java staat een huis* (*There Is a House in Java*), Robinson defends *Tong Tong*, Buitenweg, and their readers against accusations of having a “National Society [Vaderlandsche Club] mentality” and being cursed with an “everything-was-so-good nostalgia” by pointing out that there were double standards when it came to (white) Dutch who stayed in the Netherlands and (brown or, as Robinson called it, “browned”) Dutch who went to the Indies.\textsuperscript{136} Robinson viewed the assimilation of Indos expected on the part of white Dutch people as a huge stumbling block: “[t]he crux of his vision was that the own background should not be denied” (Willems 2008: 375).

Though the writers in *Tong Tong* wanted to relive what they saw as the splendor of life in the Indies, they did not leave colonial suffering unmentioned, nor were they unaware of the exalted and nostalgic character of the images they sometimes created. As one writer puts it, adopting a meta-perspective on her own situation:

Maybe to understand that I looked at these images with some respect mixed with a touch of nostalgia, one has to have been a child, like me, in that tempo doeloe.\textsuperscript{137}

Yet precisely because they were told not to talk about it, because they were told that they were wrong in the Indies, and because they were considered wrong in the Netherlands, telling exalted stories of tempo doeloe became a tool not of unworldly nostalgia but of political resistance, especially in the hands of Robinson. When a reader asked *Tong Tong* why it kept on dragging up old matters since the Indies were definitively lost anyway, Robinson answered:

\textsuperscript{135} *Tong Tong* 3.18 (1959): 9.
\textsuperscript{136} *Tong Tong* 5.24 (1961): 13.
\textsuperscript{137} *Tong Tong* 4.2 (1959): 2.
Every human being, wherever in the world, likes to talk about his ‘tempo doeloe’. Sometimes sentimentally, sometimes with the hope that with lessons from the past a new future can be served... My God, sir, we cannot help it that our youth happened to be in the Indies. Our youth is as dear to us as yours is to you. Moreover, you have had the good fortune to live in the land of your youth. That luck we are already missing. And on top of that to please you we have to keep our mouths shut about the only joy we are left with?... That devilish colonial forcing of other people, under all kinds of pretexts, will it never stop?138

Dutch postcolonial nostalgia in *Tong Tong* was both reflective and restorative. In *Tong Tong*, attempts were made to remember the colonial past, yet there were also moments when authors showed they were aware that forgetting was necessarily a part of this remembrance. Crucial for this constellation to emerge was that the makers and readers of *Tong Tong* had moved from what Pierre Nora has called a *milieu de mémoire* (the Indies), where memory was an unknown known, to the Netherlands where they had only *lieux de mémoire*. Memory had turned into a sign, a medium, an object of reflection. This can also explain why in later years *Tong Tong* advertised its photographically illustrated calendars with the slogan “Now even more nostalgic!”. Tempo doeloe and its photographs in *Tong Tong* should not only be seen as conservative cultural production, it also produced spaces of relative autonomy through which the readers of *Tong Tong* could ward off attempts to seamlessly incorporate them into the nation. A final important element was that in the magazine, colonial violence was not consigned to oblivion but regularly addressed. However, as colonial violence did not fit the empowering strategy of *Tong Tong*, it was also compartmentalized, making it a story in itself rather than an integral part of the memory of the Indies. This distribution of the perceptible would be of great importance not only for the framing of the 1904 photographs within the *Indische* community but also for colonial memory in the broader social scene in the Netherlands.

**Rob Nieuwenhuys’s *Tempo Doeloe***

The full title of Nieuwenhuys’s book was *Tempo Doeloe: Photographic Documents from the Old Indies, 1870-1914*. In the 1980s, he expanded this book and turned it into a trilogy. Whereas *Buitenweg* was mostly read by the (*Indische*) readers of *Tong Tong/Moesson*, Nieuwenhuys’s work had a

much broader reading audience. It has been widely received, also by the white Dutch cultural elite. For instance, while a 1992 anthology of Buitenweg’s work was published by two relatively unknown authors (Wassing & Wassing-Visser eds. 1992), a tribute to Nieuwenhuys’s work from 1998 had contributions from many well-known literary authors, from Hella Haasse to J. Bernlef (Paasman et al. 1998). In addition, Nieuwenhuys’s books were published by Querido, one of the country’s most prestigious publishers. Nieuwenhuys is not only known for his photo books, he is also considered an important author on Dutch colonial literature from and on the Indies.

Nieuwenhuys was born in the Indies, in Semarang, but eventually went to Batavia where his father became director of the famous Hotel des Indes. His father was white and his mother Indo-European; the family lived a middle-class life. Between 1921 and 1935, Nieuwenhuys studied law and humanities in Leiden. Back in Java, he started teaching. He was imprisoned by the Japanese, and in 1945 he went to the Netherlands. From 1947 to 1952, he was again in Java, working as an official for the Ministry of Education. In 1963, he established a documentation center for Indonesian history at the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) in Leiden (Beekman 1996: 537-40).

*Tempo Doeloe* has 230 photographs on 190 pages. The subtitle of the book indicates that when the book appeared its photographs were about fifty to ninety years old. In the book, all those who were living in the Indies are separated into three racial categories: white Europeans; mixed-race Indo-Europeans (the book calls them *Indisch*, which means that here the term only refers to mixed-race people and not to all Dutch people from the Indies as in this study); and natives. The last chapter with its seventy-four pages is by far the longest in the book. It is called “East-*Indische* Ladies and Gentlemen” and depicts this group of wealthy and middle-class Europeans and Indo-Europeans whose houses, travels, and public life are also the subject of most other chapters. All in all, about 70% of the photographs in the book have this group as their main subject, while 10% are military photographs (chapter 4), 8% show the native ruling classes (chapter 7), and 5% show the native and Chinese working classes (chapter 6). Working-class natives do appear, however, in the margins of many other photographs: they stand on the streets of Batavia, as servants on patios, and are the wives of European men.

The book thus focuses deliberately on propertied Europeans and Indo-Europeans. Nieuwenhuys wrote in the introduction:

I began working on this book with the ambition of giving a cross-section of the European community in the old Indies, in its most important
facets. This turned out to be an illusion. It was only possible to subsume a limited number of photographs under a small number of categories, which of course had to be characteristic. In hindsight, it is questionable if they are more so than others. (1998: 8)

“The Old Indies” from the book’s title do not denote the same space as the country called “the Dutch East Indies” or in hindsight “colonial Indonesia”. The Indies, here, are the space where the lives and loves of Europeans and Indo-Europeans took place, and the book’s three chapters on colonial warfare, working-class and propertied Indonesians (chapters 5, 6, and 7) depict worlds of their own, separated from that of “the Indies”. The book is most interested in a private European sphere that it sees as separate from the political.

The book’s subtitle, *Photographic Documents from the Old Indies 1870-1914*, suggests that from the latter year onwards, the Indies were “New”. Visually, these two Indies form two layers that Nieuwenhuys reads in the photographs he includes in his collection. The Old Indies are seen to form one composite layer of heterogeneous elements, while in the New Indies, several layers emerged that became more and more separated. Nieuwenhuys holds that in the Old Indies, the races were still mixed and living with each other, while in the New Indies, society became more and more segregated. He positions the photographs in a transition period between the two Indies. The unmarked “layer” formed by the natives is present on every page.

Nieuwenhuys favors the mixed layer of the Old Indies. One of the book’s recurring themes is photographs in which he discovered mixed spaces such as the *Indische* domestic interior and garden, and mixed portraits such as fancy dress parties and mixed-race family portraits. Of the *Indische* private houses of the nineteenth century, Nieuwenhuys writes that they “may have had no style, but were in any case striking” (37). In the logic of the book, not having one pure or proper style is preferred, for what is important is the mixture of styles. A photograph of the gallery of an *Indisch* house in Deli (East Sumatra) depicts “portraits from Holland” on the table in the front and “Chinese pots with plants” in the back (45). Multiple perceptible orders are also pointed out by Nieuwenhuys in a photograph of the garden of the Javanese court of Mangkoeenegara in Solo, which he describes as “a type of cultural syncretism... Besides hundreds of flowerpots there were ponds, garden houses and numerous statues; next to classical, also Hindu-Javanese and even Chinese” (106; Figure 3.1). These photographs of interiors and gardens bring together elements from different cultures into a new unity.

Next to these mixed spaces, there are also mixed portraits of people and groups of people. The book has a great interest in fancy dress parties and
features photographs of European and Indo-European soldiers dressed up as American cowboys (73), natives dressed up as characters from Wagner’s *Lohengrin* for a theater performance (94), the (Indonesian) regent of Blora as a general of the Dutch East-Indisch army (110; Figure 3.2), Europeans and Indo-Europeans dressed up as Japanese (165), and a European man dressed up as an Arab (167). With respect to family portraits, Nieuwenhuys says:

> Whoever, like the compiler of this book, has seen hundreds, even thousands of *Indische* photographs from tempo doeloe is struck by the *Indische* character of the society. In nine out of ten cases the families on these photographs turn out to be mixed families. (119)

Here, “Indisch” is the same as “mixed”, and indeed the captions of many family portraits emphasize the mixed character of the families. According to Nieuwenhuys, “about three quarters of the European population had mixed blood, from white with light eyes to a type that was indistinguishable from Indonesians” (130). *Tempo Doeloe* has a strong interest in all the difficulties and ambiguities this categorization produces. It discusses the situation of a boy who was the child of a European man and an Indo-European woman,
raised by an Indonesian woman, and legally a native, and that of a girl, a child of two natives who married a European and consequently became European.

Yet – and this is thematized from the very beginning of the book – a different layer and perceptible order was threatening Nieuwenhuys’s photographs. This perceptible order of the New Indies is brought by Europeans, whose travels to the Indies are the subject of the first chapter of Tempo Doeloe. Europeans going to the Indies are on the one hand seen as essential in creating the mixed perceptible order of the Old Indies, yet on the other hand positioned as causing the segregated perceptible order of the New Indies. It is especially white European women who are positioned as the destroyers of harmony.

The first photographic chapter, “With the Dutch mail to the Indies”, opens with the travels of Europeans to the islands in the late nineteenth century. Nieuwenhuys writes:

Without the digging through of the Suez isthmus, the rapid development and modernization of Java after 1870 would have been unthinkable. This is why this book begins with the opening of the Suez channel on 17 November 1869. (9)
The photographs in this chapter have a montage structure that creates narrative flow and spatial coherence, not only for this opening chapter but for the entire book. The first photograph of the chapter shows boats lying in the harbor of Port Saïd in Egypt, ready to sail through the Suez canal. The camera stands at an elevated point on the quay, and the logic of figuration places the viewer looking towards the stern of the ship and the backs of the people gathered around them. The viewer is a distanced spectator, not involved in what is happening. Through its position in a chapter on Dutch ships sailing to the Indies, the photograph starts functioning as an icon for departure from the West to the East. The diagonal lines of the boat, the quay, and some of the flags, running parallel, place the vanishing point outside the frame and far away. Both viewers and figureheads are oriented toward that direction. The frame is open and thus indicates an area outside it, which makes the suggestion of travel even stronger.

Whereas in the first photograph the perspective was of those who stayed in the Occident, the next two photographs are on board of two ships. These are eye-level group portraits, creating a relationship of equality between the viewer and the people in the photograph. The camera is no longer a distant third person but an intimate second person. We can now see the first photograph as a long shot in which the principal characters (the people in the group portraits in the second and third photographs) are in the distance, namely on one of the boats in the harbor of Port Saïd. These two group portraits, as full shots, have groups of people posing together in front of the camera. Most of them are looking at the camera and at those who will see the photograph, including their future selves. Both photographs have a closed frame: there is hardly any suggestion of a space beyond.

The fourth photograph is positioned as a reverse shot of the first: we see a boat approaching through the Suez canal. Placed between the two third-person shots of boats, the groups of the second and third photograph are now firmly placed on the ships. These first four photographs now also emerge as a set of establishing shots, giving the viewer the basics about place, time, and character before the narration begins. In this fourth photograph, the camera is facing Europe, but the action is heading towards the Indies. This perspective has prepared the viewer for the fifth photograph, which is also facing Europe, not from the banks of the Suez canal but all the way from Java. Showing the roadstead of Batavia, it features numerous ships of which the suggestion in the context of this chapter is that they have just come from Europe. In photograph six, the viewer is still “facing Europe”: we see Europeans in front of a ship in Batavia’s harbor and in the end two
shots of the harbor of Batavia that are positioned as the first sights many people had when they had just arrived.

These last two photographs are a prelude to the second photographic chapter, on Batavia, of which the opening line is: “What was the impression of somebody arriving for the first time in Java in 1880? What did he see?” (17). This chapter shows the gates, streets, houses, parks, churches, bridges, and hotels of the capital of the Indies, followed by photographs of Buitenzorg, a city not too far from Batavia and a regular haunt for Europeans living in the capital. Through the texts and the positioning of the photographs, both the narrative flow and spatial continuity are preserved. The first photograph is of the Amsterdam city gate through which the traveler supposedly entered the city. Next, the text describes a route from downtown to uptown Batavia to Buitenzorg, and the photographs alternately have an open frame (with a road heading directly to the vanishing point, suggesting a space beyond), a semi-closed frame (with the corner of a building alongside the road directed towards the camera, so that we see both the building and the road), and a closed frame (frontal photographs of buildings), suggesting a tour during which heads are regularly turned from left to right and back again. Another example of this flow is a photograph of the outside of hotel Bellevue in Buitenzorg (32), directly followed by two photographs of the views from its windows (33).

This narrative of European travels to and through the Indies can be read on various levels. First of all, it harks back to the earliest history of the photo book, placing *Tempo Doeloe* in line with all those nineteenth-century books in which European photographers gave an account of their travels all over the world, from Egypt to the Holy Land, India, Mexico, and China.139 These photo books were mostly presented as travels not only to another country but also to another time: they registered the antiquities of these countries, sometimes as a study of what was seen as Europe’s cradle (e.g. the Middle East, Egypt, and Greece), sometimes to be able to compare the different antiquities according to the theory that different parts of the world had parallel developments.140 *Tempo Doeloe* is a journey to the past in two ways. On the one hand, its photographs were fifty to ninety years old when it was published. Those who read it in 1961 or later saw old photographs. On the other hand, if we place the book within the tradition of the Orientalist photo book, the Indies, especially the Old Indies, were positioned as a country

139 E.g. Maxime Du Camp’s *Egypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie* (1852), Auguste Salzmann’s *Jérusalem* (1854 and 1856), Linnaeus Tripe’s *Photographic Views in Madura* (1858), Désiré Charnay’s *Cités et ruines américaines* (1862-63), and John Thomson’s *Illustrations of China and its People* (1874).
140 See also Bijl 2009.
in a different temporal frame (or even in no temporal frame at all). It is no coincidence that after the reader went in the time machine that is the boat from West to East through the Suez canal, the chapter on Batavia starts with the city’s seventeenth-century Amsterdam gate. Yet this opening sequence also replays the classic narrative of the European exploration of the globe and its subsequent colonization. It thereby repeats the idea that history outside Europe only began with the coming of Europeans. By creating a visual continuity between Europe and Java through the sequence of photographs, the Indies are positioned within a European space.

In *Tempo Doeloe*, the time brought by European boats has a rather ambiguous meaning, for these boats also bring with them a threat to the kind of colonialism that Nieuwenhuys prefers. Although Nieuwenhuys ostensibly wants to portray the Old Indies, all his photographs are from an era in which they were already being replaced by the New Indies. On the first photograph in the boats chapter he writes, for instance, that “we see two wooden sailing ships with ‘auxiliary steam power’ but all the way to the right, also the rear side of a ‘modern’ steam ship” (11). It is in the words “but” and “‘modern’” that an implicit appraisal is offered. The same can be said of the words “still” and “already” in a sentence about the dresses of the women in another photograph: “You can still see the older ladies in crinoline, the younger ones are already wearing queue de Paris, which became fashionable in these years” (15). And finally a telling “still” can be found in: “How rural and park-like Batavia could still present itself around 1880, can be seen in the photograph above” (26). The phrase “present itself” (which could even be translated as “act”) suggests that the city may already not be so rural and park-like anymore but that it only pretended to be. The New Indies, throughout the book, slowly write themselves on the canvas of Java and the Old Indies, etching away some parts of the latter, painting over others, but mainly pulling the Old Indies apart. The photographs are presented as palimpsests and the text indicates the layers they have, those they will have, those they had and those they will no longer have.

There is a hierarchy of truth between the two Indies:

Until the twentieth century, the European community was like a pioneer society and had – especially in the interior – the typical features of a *boedjang* culture (a boedjang is a bachelor), of which the housekeeper was a natural part. If we also realize that there were all sorts of restrictive rules concerning coming out married, also for officers and civil servants, then the character of a strongly mixed, typically *Indische* society becomes understandable. And this kept on existing until well after 1900. (8)
It is the Old Indies here that get the upper hand: not only were they the age of the bachelor, they were also the times when the Indies were still “typical” – that is, one with themselves. This logic leads to a search for the oldest photographs, for the further you go back in time, the more real the Indies were. “The photograph is from before 1868” (18); “this photograph – found in one of the oldest albums – is probably made before 1870” (22); “this beautiful photograph is from 1860, one of the oldest from this collection” (25).

In the caption of the photograph “from before 1868”, which is the one of the Amsterdam gate, Nieuwenhuys distinguishes several layers of time (Figure 3.3). The natives standing at the side of the road are not discussed at all: they form the side wings of the European stage. The first element mentioned is “the old city gate of seventeenth-century Jacatra, the so-called Amsterdam gate” (18), taking the reader back three centuries. Nieuwenhuys then adds a layer by saying that “from a plate by the draughtsman Johannes Rach it turns out that the gate in its original appearance had a domed roof with a bell”. Again, there is a search for the oldest which is the most real, as can be seen here in the words “original appearance”. Next, the New Indies layer is projected onto the photograph, taking away parts of the gate: “This

Figure 3.3. Walter Woodbury and James Page. The Amsterdam Gate in Batavia, before 1868. Photograph, 18 x 24 cm. KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, Leiden, inv. no. 105834.
photograph is from before 1868. In this year both wings that you see here were already broken down and the tram was passing it (the horse tram, that is)”. Nieuwenhuys places the photograph halfway on a timeline of decay, ending in total destruction as it has one of the very few references in the book to the end of the Indies: “The Amsterdam gate was a curiosity that did survive the Japanese occupation but not the revolution”. All in all, Nieuwenhuys has named the gate (Old Indies) with a dome (Oldest Indies), without the wings (New Indies), and completely removed (post-Indies). In this last instance, all we are left with is the native layer.

As mentioned above, Nieuwenhuys saw European women in particular as guilty of dissolving the unity:

Only later... adjustment went the other way around... The women who were ‘imported’ (this is how they were named) from Europe tried to transfer Holland to the Indies. They started to furnish their house ‘in a European manner’, that is: cozy with curtains, floor lamps, armchairs; they even papered the Indische walls; they introduced the ‘European table’ and sandwich meals. They could hardly talk to their servants
and were not in touch with them; the contact with ‘the other world’ got lost. (120)

Throughout, Nieuwenhuys criticizes white European women who had not “adjusted”, who tried to be as European as possible. In the photographs, they are identified through their display of a European perceptible order. Next to a photograph of a European woman standing in a landscape, Nieuwenhuys writes (Figure 3.4):

This European lady walks along a kampong road along a small brown river, as she would have walked in Holland along a small village road. Her presence in this Javanese landscape strikes one as odd. She does not fit in; she is completely disconnected from it. (54)

This woman is accused of two things: an improper appearance and a lack of observational skills. On the one hand, her white dress is seen as inappropriate, because it has no Indische elements in it, and on the other hand she is accused of seeing the kampong road as a Dutch village road. Nieuwenhuys claims that these women pulled apart the mixed layer that was the Old Indies, particularly because they dissolved the intimate bond between European men and Indonesian women. This was of consequence, for instance, for the figure of the njai, an Indonesian housekeeper who was often also the sexual partner, forced or not, of a European man. As Nieuwenhuys writes:

Only later, after the Indies had become ‘inhabitable’ for European women did her [the njai] presence become a problem... The njai made the life of many a European bearable and relieved his loneliness. It was she who made adjustment possible; through her he learned the language, the way of life and the mentality of the people, through her he learned to understand much more. Together with the slow disappearance of the housekeeper after tempo doeloe, an important piece of association-politics got lost. (86)

As European women became available, Nieuwenhuys holds, European men could marry them and no longer married or lived together with Indonesian women.

 Tempo Doeloe has a separate chapter on the native and Chinese working classes, entitled “The other world”. Comprising 7% of the book’s pages, it offers a glimpse of “the others”, that is, those other than the European and
Indonesian ruling classes. Three of its fifteen photographs are of *njais*; seven are of servants and workers who danced, made music, performed plays, guarded, or worked as prostitutes; and three are of independently working Chinese. The chapter, which is exactly at the center of the book as a whole, starts by stating that:

> The European communities in the Indies – as light disseminations in a green landscape – were always enclaves in the middle of the surrounding people of millions. (85)\\(^{141}\)

In this phrase, Europeans are named, while the “people of millions” are not; Europeans form “communities”, while the “people of millions” are an assemblage; the European communities are plural, while the “people of millions” are one indistinguishable mass; and the Europeans are disseminations – in Dutch it reads that they were “sowed” like the seeds of (cultivated) grain or corn by a farmer – while the “people of millions” are a “green landscape”. Next, Nieuwenhuys starts gendering the two groups, claiming that “the European society had a tendency to close itself off, but that this closing-off could never be sufficient seeing the large surplus of men in tempo doeloe” (85). We might now expect to find white European men on the inside, while outside millions of green-brown native women are surrounding them, but a turnaround has occurred so that we find the “great surplus of men causing a strong suction ‘to the inside’” (85). It is in this “suction” that the book sees the emergence of the Indo-European mixed layer.

“The Indies” in *Tempo Doeloe* are a colony without colonialism. They form a more or less European space where the background is not formed by the North Sea and the Dutch heathland but by the Tengger mountains, bamboo forests, and a lot of people with brown skin. The book hardly thematizes the colonization of Java and the other islands, for they are timeless; it is only the Indies that change. Europeans in the first chapter enter the Indies on a narrative flow to which the chapter on Indonesians does not belong. In *Tempo Doeloe*, the division of chapters runs parallel to the colonial division of races and compartmentalizes the stories of tempo doeloe and Dutch imperialism as the private and the public scene respectively.

\(^{141}\) In Dutch, this reads: “De Europese gemeenschappen in Indië – als lichte uitzaaïngen in een groen landschap – hebben altijd enclaves gevormd temidden van het omringende miljoenenvolk.”
The 1980s Trilogy: Reflective Nostalgia

In 1988, Nieuwenhuys published a photo book entitled *With Strange Eyes: Tempo Doeloe – A Submerged World: Photographic Documents From the Old Indies 1870-1920*. It was the last part of a trilogy of which the first parts were published in the early 1980s. They had the same subtitles, but their main titles were *Rookies and Old Customers* (1981) and *Coming and Staying* (1982). The trilogy more or less reflects the racial classification in the Indies, with one volume on the Europeans, one on those of mixed race, and one on the natives. The order of appearance of these volumes reflects the colonial hierarchy of power. I argue here that there is a shift in Nieuwenhuys’s oeuvre between 1961 and the 1980s from an emphasis on restorative nostalgia to an emphasis on reflective nostalgia.

*Rookies and Old Customers* is the translation of *Baren en oudgasten*. The former refers to Dutch newcomers to the Indies (from the Malay baru, meaning “new”), and the latter are those who were from families that had been there for several generations. *Rookies and Old Customers* is strongly focused on white Europeans, the so-called totoks. It has chapters that are very close to the first chapters of *Tempo Doeloe* from 1961: again “With the Dutch mail to the Indies” on ship travel to the islands, and also a chapter on the capital Batavia. Next to these, there are several chapters on the travels, pleasures, and sorrows of Dutch people in the Indies and, remarkably for a book on white Europeans, a chapter on Javanese prostitutes.142

In *Coming and Staying*, according to its introduction,

> the emphasis is more on the interior [of Java], on the “interior towns”, on the enterprises [tea, sugar], on nature... but also on families and in the second part primarily on *Indische* [mixed race] families and *Indische* people, on that remarkable community of Europeans and Indo-Europeans. (7)

The book is mostly about the chronotope called the Old Indies that was also the main theme in *Tempo Doeloe*. The chapter on the mixed Indo-European community fills about half of the book. Other chapters are also on mixed perceptible orders: the Javanese interior, the outer territories, and “lost Europeans” – those who were closer to an Indonesian than to a European way of living.

142 The only explanation I can think of is that for Nieuwenhuys, these women were so thoroughly commodified that their logical place was indeed in the European volume of his trilogy.
With Strange Eyes, the book on natives, has about 200 photographs on 190 pages. Only a few photographs are of Europeans. While many images are of the native ruling classes, 30% is of the native and Chinese working classes. The last section of the book consists of one of its longest chapters entitled “The common man”, a thoroughly reworked chapter on colonial warfare, a chapter on the Chinese in the Indies, and a chapter on njais. All in all, With Strange Eyes picks up the themes that were addressed in chapters 5, 6, and 7 of Tempo Doeloe on colonial warfare and the native and Chinese working and ruling classes whereby, if we look at the book in the context of the entire 1980s trilogy, the number of photographs that have natives and Chinese as their main subject increases from 13% to 33%, and the share of native and Chinese working classes has gone from 5% to 10%.

In the subtitle of both the 1961 book and the 1980s publications, Nieuwenhuys uses the concept of the photographic document. The word “document” in Dutch can mean two things: 1) every (written or printed) piece of evidence, or record; and 2) a piece of writing (film, object) that testifies to human life as it is. In Tempo Doeloe, only the second meaning of the word “document” was active, while in the 1980s trilogy the photographs also emerge as photographs. Although not completely absent in Tempo Doeloe, in the 1980s trilogy the emphasis on photographs as material objects is much stronger and much more deliberate: the passe-partout of the photographs is emphasized. Rookies and Old Customers, for instance, has a chapter called “Indische photographers” in which the history of photographers in the Indies is rehearsed in brief. In this chapter, Nieuwenhuys addresses different photographic technologies, the way in which photographers worked, and the social aspects of photography, particularly who commissioned the photographs and who could be in them. This chapter also has several images of photographic studios, showing the decorated rooms with their painted backgrounds, their roofs of corrugated galvanized iron, and the cameras. The other important change in the trilogy is that it allows for many more flawed or damaged photographs. Coming and Staying, for instance, has a photograph that was printed in two different intensities (9), and one with craquelure (138).143

In Tempo Doeloe there were only a few photographs of natives, while all photographs were positioned as windows on the world. The first line of With Strange Eyes, on the other hand, reads:

143 Finally, because of the printing technique of the trilogy, it is more visible when a photograph has been retouched, which also emphasizes the photograph as an artifact. Compare, for instance, the same photograph on page 127 of Tempo Doeloe and on page 75 of Rookies and Old Customers.
By far the most photographs that have been included in this third part of my set of three photo books with photographic documents on the old Indies were made by European photographers. (7)

Further on, Nieuwenhuys continues:

These old and very old photographs have one thing in common: they are representative for what the European saw, and that was in the first place the world of the European himself. Of the Indonesian world only that part is visible that was involved in the life of the European. (8)

Here, a strong awareness of eurocentrism is combined with an attempt to give an image of the native society. On the book’s last page, Nieuwenhuys writes:

*With Strange Eyes* I have called my new book, because the majority of the photographs from the Indonesian world were made by European photographers. They looked with the eyes of a stranger, that is they saw of the Indonesian world only that part in which their life as a European was involved. Of the “other world”... they saw very little. (192)

Yet Nieuwenhuys at other moments goes even further than this: he claims that the photographs not only offer a selective view but also give the wrong impression. In the chapter “The common man”, he addresses the hatred and bitterness on the part of Indonesians towards the Dutch, and then says:

If we rely on the photographs, it seems to turn out better than expected; we cannot say that the picture is unfavorable, the contrary is true. Life in the interior looks even idyllic now and then. Yet that is an optical illusion, it is exactly about what is *not* in the photographs: the diseases, the hunger, the natural disasters, the heavy labor, the abuse of authority, the arbitrariness, the injustice, the pressuring burdens, the unsafety, the usury, the evil of opium, the desire to throw dice. (118)

Here, Nieuwenhuys voices a desire in writing to take over from the mendacious medium of photography. The thoroughly reworked chapter on colonial warfare begins with another warning against photography from the Indies:

Whoever has seen the thousands of photographs from tempo doeloe – let us say from 1860 up to the first world war – in the first place gets the
impression of a quiet, careless existence for the European. Now and then, life even looks like an idyll. It is the well-known optical illusion; the medal has another side. (149)

The 1980s trilogy, I conclude, has a much more reflective type of nostalgia than *Tempo Doeloe* from 1961. Whereas in the 1960s Nieuwenhuys was looking for the purest Indies, in the 1980s his work is as much about photography as it is about his native country.

As was shown above, when Nieuwenhuys started working on his photographic oeuvre in the early 1960s, this was in the context of Tjalie Robinson’s tempo doeloe-as-empowerment. As Lizzy van Leeuwen has shown, between then and the 1980s, several shifts took place within the Indo community. The 1970s saw the rise of a body of more reflective literature and other cultural artifacts on the Indies and a reorientation towards Indonesia, for instance through a growing number of people who visited the country, including Nieuwenhuys himself. Van Leeuwen writes how Nieuwenhuys, influenced by his trip, made a plea for more encounters between Indonesians, Dutch, and *Indische* people, in the belief that “[t]he Indies and Indonesia have amalgamated” (quoted in Van Leeuwen 2008: 153). These developments probably influenced the change in Nieuwenhuys’s work towards a more reflective and more Indonesia-centered approach. Conversely, this may also have been a reaction to the rise, also in the 1970s, of a broad popular tempo doeloe culture to which Nieuwenhuys might not have wanted to align himself too much.

**The Atjeh Photographs in Nieuwenhuys’s Oeuvre**

What were the positions of the 1904 photographs KR3 in *Tempo Doeloe* and KR2 in *With Strange Eyes*? In chapter 4 on colonial warfare in *Tempo Doeloe*, almost half of the twenty-eight photographs are studio portraits of soldiers and officers of the KNIL, four are of KNIL soldiers’ graves, one is of a preemptive celebration of the end of the Atjeh War in 1874, and several are of soldiers resting “in the field” in Atjeh. Next to these, there are three photographs of atrocity: Figure 1.10 from 1901, PD from 1898, and KR3, which is dated 1903 (Figure 3.5). Nieuwenhuys wrote in his 1961 book that the deprivations of the Atjeh War were shrouded in romanticism. Strikingly, he does exactly the same by describing the marechaussees as an “elite corps of toughened soldiers, especially trained for guerilla in the bush”, and by emphasizing the fact that Van Daalen’s troops had to go through “indescribable hardships” and forests full of leeches and snakes. In the text,
the inhabitants of the Gajo and Alas lands remain linguistically invisible: “as they moved on the fights started. One siege followed the next. The troop fought mercilessly; they did not take any prisoners, but killed the whole garrison” (68). Nieuwenhuys also mentions the source from which he took the 1904 photograph: Zentgraaff’s Atjeh. This explains his emphasis, despite the initial distancing, on the suffering of the KNIL soldiers, on their masculinity and heroic deaths.

The war chapter in With Strange Eyes has a very different selection of photographs. The number of portraits of KNIL soldiers is reduced from thirteen to two, while many photographs of natives have replaced them, and Nieuwenhuys is much less preoccupied with male suffering. Instead, he tells a critical story about what he calls “one uninterrupted colonial war” in the Indies. The description of Van Daalen’s expedition has also changed: the Gajos and Alas are no longer linguistically invisible, and it is now narrated as a massacre of civilians, not the outcome of a battle between two armies. The chapter has three photographs of atrocity: one of the 1904 expedition with the river of bodies in Koetö Réh (KR2), and two from an expedition to Bali in 1906.

Despite these changes, however, the war chapter in the trilogy is still bracketed off from Nieuwenhuys’s story of European colonialism. In Tempo Doeloe, colonial warfare, just like “the other world” of the natives, was treated in a separate chapter, while in the 1980s trilogy these two subjects
are in a separate volume and are thus still compartmentalized from the rest of the Indies. Colonial warfare is framed as public, colonial intimacy as private. Comparable to how the defenders of the 1904 expedition in the colonial period framed the photographs, Nieuwenhuys tried to semanticize them in such a way that their meanings were no longer a threat to his main story on the Indies. He contained the meanings of the 1904 photographs by compartmentalizing them in a narrative of their own, and his Indies consisted of various possible worlds that could be entered separately but not simultaneously. At the same time, precisely by bringing together different memories of the Indies, Nieuwenhuys opened up the possibility of connecting them and exploring their multidirectionality. By taking up the Atjeh photograph in his 1961 book, moreover, he directly facilitated Loe de Jong, who in that same year was working on his television documentary on the Netherlands and the Indies under the German occupation.

Multidirectional Memory

Introduction

In the academic year 2008-2009, the University of Tilburg in the Netherlands appointed the actor, photographer, and documentary maker Thom Hoffman as Leonardo Professor, a one-year position that is reserved for double talents. Hoffman’s self-chosen theme for his professorship was “The Ideals of Multatuli”, connected to the more general theme of “idealism, and how wastefully we are dealing with it in the year 2009”. A critical professorship, in other words, as can also be seen from Hoffman’s words that “[i]n the Netherlands, there is a strong nostalgia if you speak about the former colonies, a lot of Tempo doeloe, and at the same time those three centuries of rule are weighing us down”. In a 2009 interview in de Volkskrant, Hoffman argued that since the rights of natives had been addressed by Multatuli in his novel Max Havelaar, hardly anybody had picked up this issue again until Sukarno proclaimed Indonesia’s independence. The only people Hoffman believed defended the legacy of Multatuli were Madelon Székely-Lulofs, who according to him wrote novels about Dutch ignorance in the Indies; Joris Ivens, maker of the revolutionary 1946 documentary Indonesia Calling; and Poncke Princen, who had fought on the Indonesian side during the struggle for independence and later became a human rights activist who focused on Indonesia. The de Volkskrant interviewer describes how, at a certain moment in one of his classes, Hoffman picks up a book
written in 1946 about Atjeh, by the then authoritative journalist Zentgraaff. The photographs of a mountain of murdered Atjehnese, men, women, and children, are etched in his memory. He points out a quote, at the end of the book: “If the graves [of Dutch Atjeh veterans, PB] could talk they would call out: ‘draw from our history the lesson that if with relentless severity the system of the last decennia is held on to... every Atjehnese can be sure: we have to accept and rest, our only chance is to cooperate in the development of a land and people under the Dutch flag”.

To which Hoffman responds with indignation: “So this was written after we ourselves had been occupied by the Germans! Isn’t that unbelievable?” Hoffman, who postdated Zentgraaff’s 1938 book by eight years, compares the German occupation of the Netherlands with the Atjeh War and, by extension, with Dutch colonialism, as this is the topic of his class as a whole. By presenting the 1904 photographs as icons of Dutch colonialism, and by comparing the latter with the Second World War, many in 2009 will have thought of what were by then some of the most prominent visual icons of WWII, namely the photographs made by journalists and allied forces of the dead in the liberated Nazi concentration camps (see Zelizer 1998). Yet although Hoffman brought materials together in his class that may have strongly suggested a comparison between the 1904 photographs and iconic Holocaust photography, he did not explicitly make such a comparison. That the topics of the 1904 massacres and the Holocaust in 2009 converged but were not equated tells us something about their complicated relationships.

Loe de Jong and The Occupation

In the early 1960s, just after the publication of Nieuwenhuys’s Tempo Doeloe, a television series and subsequent book series brought together for the first time a 1904 photograph (KR3) and photographs of Nazi atrocities in one cultural artifact. Both were works by the most famous postwar historian of the Netherlands, Loe de Jong, a Jewish social-democrat who had fled to London in 1940. During the war, many of his family members were killed by the Nazis, including his parents and his brother. Back in the Netherlands, he became director of the newly founded Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (RIOD), now the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies. The main topic of De Jong’s television series The
Occupation and his book with the same title was the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands from 1940 to 1945. Three out of twenty-one broadcasts and chapters, however, were devoted to the Indies (about 14% of the total). In one of these chapters, De Jong, who before the war had written critical articles about Dutch colonialism and who in the late 1940s had opposed the Dutch army’s police actions, discussed the photograph of Van Daalen standing on the wall of Koétö Réh, together with photograph PD from 1898.

Ever since historian Hans Blom in 1983 criticized De Jong for adopting a moralistic frame of interpretation, many in the Netherlands have come to see De Jong as a dogmatic writer who divided the world into two categories: the good and the bad. Besides upholding an untenable ideal of value-free history, however, Blom did not have an eye for the many ambiguities that are in fact present in Loe de Jong’s work.

The Occupation was broadcast on Dutch national television from 1960 to 1965, in 21 episodes. It featured De Jong sitting behind a desk and reading his self-written text on the German occupation of the Netherlands and on the Japanese in the Indies. This was interspersed with film fragments (1,868 in total), images (1,908), maps (310), and short narratives and declarations by no less than 197 witnesses (Beunders 1995: 157). As the series progressed, five paperback volumes were published, each of which contained the texts and visual materials of a number of episodes. In 1966, these volumes were brought together in one book entitled The Occupation: Text and Visual Materials of the Broadcasts of the Dutch Television Foundation on the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Second World War, 1940-1945. It was published by the prestigious Amsterdam publisher Querido, which had also published Tempo Doeloe. De Jong was well-known by then for being an authoritative historian who could tell the truth about history and give a final verdict. According to H. W. von der Dunk (2002), the RIOD had by then come to be perceived by the public as an authoritative institute that had the keys to the personal past of perpetrators and victims.

The first episode of The Occupation was broadcast on 6 May 1960. In that same week, the last relay station was installed, with the result that the whole of the Netherlands could watch the one channel of Dutch television. According to Beunders, “the streets were empty, and... on evenings that De Jong appeared on television, no meetings were planned” (1995: 154). A second important broadcast from the same period concerned the trial of Adolf

145 See also Eickhoff, Henkes and Van Vree 2010.
146 Many other data in this section are also derived from Beunders’s article. For a list of broadcast data, see Van Vree 1995.
Eichmann, from 1960 to 1962, during which people heard a detailed account of the Nazi atrocities. “Television developed into a national medium” in the 1960s, Beunders writes. The ratings for the last two episodes of The Occupation in 1965 were 64 and 65 percent, which meant that the final episode of the series was seen by almost four million people of fifteen years and older (ibid: 157), out of a total population of twelve million. In 1960, there were 660,000 television sets; in 1965, at the end of the series, there were more than two million (ibid: 160).

As mentioned earlier, the series included three episodes on the Indies. For us, the most important of these is episode VII, called “The Dutch East Indies Threatened”, as it is here that KR3 reappears. It was broadcast on 8 December 1961 and became chapter VII in the 1966 book. In it, De Jong discusses the history of the Dutch presence in the Indies all the way from 1595 until the Japanese invasion. With an emphasis on the twentieth century, this takes up about half of the chapter and episode, while in the second half the run-up to the Japanese invasion is described. For the period 1870-1914, The Occupation relies several times on Nieuwenhuys’s Tempo Doeloe. One important difference between the two books, however, is that De Jong has many more images and film fragments in which working-class natives take a central position. Often they are laboring for the Dutch, but there are also photographs of poverty and slums in Java (page 286), child labor (only in the broadcast), several Indonesian nationalist leaders (pages 291-3), the nationalist movement Sarekat Islam (page 286), an Indonesian demonstration against the Dutch (page 290), and the sabotage of a train (page 291). The Occupation, moreover, has photographs not only of the atrocities of the Atjeh War (KR3 and PD, like Tempo Doeloe had) but also of the prison camp Boven-Digoel, where Indonesian communists and nationalists had been imprisoned from 1926/27 onwards in a Dutch attempt to suppress communism (page 293).

De Jong’s work is not nostalgic. Both Indonesian agency and Dutch violent repression are addressed and visualized, and the Dutch East Indies are (mostly) positioned not as eternal but as a historical period between
the early nineteenth century and 1942. While in Tempo Doeloe, Indonesian society and colonial violence were compartmentalized, in The Occupation, Indonesians and their struggle gain a much more prominent position and are framed by a larger historical narrative about the historical emergence and collapse of colonialism. As a result, KR3 is less in the background and more structurally embedded in the whole. In his later work on the Netherlands in the Second World War in which he was much more vocal in his criticism of colonialism, De Jong wrote that “in a larger historical context perhaps the most important outcome that the period 1940-1945 has had for the Kingdom of the Netherlands... was an end to the colonial period that had started in the seventeenth century” (De Jong 1969-1991, Part 11a, XII). For De Jong, colonial violence was not detached from colonial history.

In the introduction to his 1966 book made on the basis of the series, De Jong starts by asking his readers a question. He first makes clear that he wants to reach Dutch society as a whole and asks: “What does a historian achieve with his labor in society?” Scholarly publications, he argues, reach a limited number of readers; newspapers and magazines, although read more widely, only summarize scholarly research and are “fleeting”; while the most important contribution of history as a discipline is to education. By contrast, “[t]he medium of television has broken through those boundaries; new, never expected and never foreseen possibilities have been created” (5). De Jong here shows himself to be keenly aware of the potential of television to function as a consensus medium in the creation of a consensus narrative. In the rest of the introduction, the readers and viewers of The Occupation are interpellated as “our people”, an imagined community with a shared past but also a shared future. The broadcasts and the book are not only “a report of the misery of war... endured by complete communities”, they are also a report of “the inspirational example that in the toughest of times was offered over and over again by some” (6). De Jong concludes the introduction with a wish:

I hope that this book finds readers as long as there are Dutch people; perhaps there are those among them who, now or later, in the uncertainty of life, will derive force from the example given by so many in the years 1940-45.

The history of the past cannot, it is true, take upon itself to be didactic. But this is not to say that one cannot derive lessons from that past. In this way, this book wants to be an appeal to the reader: to think about the problems that the war, but even more the occupation, has put forward. (7)
Above the text is a chiaroscuro portrait of the author. His head is turned slightly to the left, while his eyes are turned away to the right where the light is coming from. He looks serious and wise, with a hint of fatherly friendliness, and his hair and suit are impeccable. As becomes clear from the start, for De Jong the Second World War is a source of timeless lessons with universal value, with himself as the great interpreter.

According to Frank van Vree,

_The Occupation_ is the story of the assault of an innocent and ignorant people, which, however, through its mental power and indomitability, inspiringly led by its queen, conquers evil and emerges essentially unbroken and purified from this struggle. (1995)

At the same time, Van Vree holds, the series ignores the possible consequences of passivity and adjustment, pays disproportionate attention to small expressions of discontent and actual resistance, anonymizes collaborators, marginalizes the role of Dutch people and institutions in the persecution of Jews, has scant and apologetic attention for the _Endlösung_ and the fate of individual Jewish victims, sees the occupation as an independent, isolated episode, pays minimal attention to the international context, affirms existing patterns of political and spiritual leadership, and brushes over social, religious, and political differences. According to Von der Dunk (2002: 66), one of the ideas that lay at the basis of De Jong’s work was that it would stimulate national unity, or rather, keep intact the idea of a wholesome community of righteous Dutch people that was created through the war. All this was in order to prevent a relapse to the pre-war, pillared fragmentation in which Dutch society was divided into Catholic, Protestant, socialist, and liberal groups.

After the war, until the second half of the 1960s, the fate of the Dutch Jews was integrated into the fate of the Dutch people as a whole. It was only later, with the 1965 book by Jacques Presser entitled _Doom: The Persecution and Extermination of Dutch Jewry 1940-1945_,¹⁴⁸ that the Holocaust emerged as it is known in the Netherlands today, namely as an event of an importance far outweighing that of the rest of the Second World War. De Jong integrated

148 The first tone-setting sentences of _Doom_ are: “This book contains the history of a murder. A murder, also a mass murder, committed on a hitherto unknown scale, with premeditation and in cold blood. The murderers were Germans, the murdered Jews…”. According to Von der Dunk, the book carries the implicit reproach that the Dutch had been too passive, which led to feelings of guilt in the country. Others, who had been active in the resistance, were indignant. Presser’s book was a bestseller.
the Jews into the nation; people like Presser distinguished the fate of the Dutch Jews from the rest of the population.

**The Atjeh Photographs in *The Occupation***

In *The Occupation*, KR3 and PD function as icons of a certain phase in Dutch colonialism. The episode in which they appear, “The Dutch East Indies Threatened”, starts with a brief discussion of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. A montage of films shows the Japanese military: battleships where the Japanese flag of war is raised, aircraft carriers sailing at full speed, Japanese pilots running to their posts. As the Japanese planes take off, narrator De Jong says in an increasingly loud voice “Every pilot knows his goal: the units of the American battle fleet in the Pacific Ocean, harbored in – [dramatic pause] Pearl Harbor!” In the meantime, the sound is of the motors of ships and planes, while De Jong’s words are followed by violins striking a threatening tone and chord. Then the screen image changes into a map with the Dutch East Indies, while the sound switches to the soft tones of Indonesian gamelan music. The commentator, beginning *mezzo forte* but ending *sotto voce* so as not to wake anyone or make them enter history prematurely, says:

> While the Japanese planes approached Pearl Harbor in the early morning, it was still night in the Dutch East Indies. Between Asia and Australia was that *Indische* archipelago, which was governed by the Dutch authority.

Opposed here are, on the one hand, the modern nation of Japan with advanced military technology, up early in the morning to write history against the background of the sounds of engines and dramatic violins, and on the other hand the Dutch East Indies, at rest as a sleeping beauty accompanied by gamelan music with its connotations of being cultural, traditional, and eternal. Initially, the Indies are shown without the Dutch or colonialism, but “in themselves”. While the gamelan continues playing, De Jong gives an overview of the islands, which are presented as both traditional and on their way to modernity. “The Indies – inhabited by a conglomerate of races and peoples”, the narrator says *pianissimo*. And while a colonial film is shown of three men hunting birds with a blow pipe: “Dayaks in Borneo, who have hardly outgrown the Stone Age, some maintaining themselves with difficulty in almost inaccessible jungles”. Next, people working in a field are shown, while De Jong relates that “[i]n Sumatra the jungle is being pushed back by the fields of more developed peoples, peoples that group themselves in villages with a fixed social structure”. Here, the pushing
back of nature concerns not only the jungle but also the inner nature in the “peoples” of Indonesia, who are represented as a diverse collection of groups yet also as not that far advanced on a developmental timeline. Moving on to Java (“the most developed island”), De Jong explains that

[...] or centuries [the people of Java] were subjected to the authority of feudal rulers in whose palaces, the kratons, even in this century forms of life prevailed that were once the expression of a real royal and aristocratic supreme authority.

A traditional Java is constructed here that is slowly disappearing, while its remaining forms are empty shells. After a display of traditional dance and Hindu-Buddhist architecture, the music suddenly stops, as Islam enters the picture, directly followed by the Dutch:

in the largest part of the archipelago, the population has been won over by Islam. That happened three, four centuries ago, and coincided more or less with, what was for us, an important historical event: the coming to these territories of the Dutch.

While a soothing classical melody sets in, a series of drawings represents the first steps of the Dutch in the Indies. Initially there was no “racial discrimination”: “all who became Christian were equated with the Dutch”. It is emphasized that the Indies were very much like the Netherlands and had the same architecture, the same religion, and the same equality and tolerance. In short, The Occupation gives an overview of the Dutch East Indies in the beginning full of Orientalist ideas, where a population that was both inside and outside time lived together with tolerant Dutch traders.

Then the text makes a shift and becomes more critical of the Dutch as time progresses. A passage that only appears in the book describes the increasing grip on the islands exercised by the Dutch during the nineteenth century. In Java “the population was forced to give up one-fifth of the farmland” for the profit of the Dutch Trading Company, and those who did not possess land were forced into three months of labor. “In a mere fifty years’ time, more than 800 million guilders of Indische profits were transferred to the Dutch treasury – which was about one-fifth of the total state income”. Next, both text (277-8) and broadcast address the “modernization of the means of transportation” and connect this directly to one of the 1904 photographs. After a shot of a boat sailing through the Suez canal and one of a train in Java, we see Loe de Jong himself, saying:
with the modernization of the means of transportation, the Dutch authority could also be expanded to other parts of the archipelago, sometimes in the face of the resistance of the population and her leaders. This resistance was especially fierce in Atjeh [a hand points out Atjeh on a map of the Indies], where people were strongly averse to foreign oppression. Under the supervision of general Van Heutsz... [his portrait is shown] the reinforcements of the Atjehnese were attacked.

We see KR3 and PD. The camera moves along this latter photograph at the level of the soldiers; we do not see the dead at their feet, but they do appear in the book. KR3, on the other hand, is broadcast in full and therefore includes the bodies of Atjehnese lying on the ground. In the book, the two photographs of the army in Atjeh are on one page, together with the portrait of Van Heutsz (Figure 3.6). The caption there reads: “Under the supervision of general J. B. van Heutz... the resistance in Atjeh was struck down” (279).

Another shift then occurs as De Jong introduces the heroes of this chapter: the men who tried to give the Indonesians better lives. He says: “However, development did not halt. Against the belief that it was a matter of course that you exploited a colony in the first place for the benefit of the motherland, protests were raised” (278). He mentions the novel Max Havelaar by Multatuli, a “cry from the heart” for the poor Javanese. Saying that it found thousands of readers in the Netherlands, De Jong implicitly suggests that the Dutch were actually against colonial exploitation. He mentions several ethicists who protested against colonial exploitation and shows a portrait picture of each of them. “And with this,” De Jong proclaims, “we entered the new century.”

The main characteristic of the period 1900-1940 in the Indies, De Jong holds, was “the progressive penetration of Western companies and lifestyles in the Indische society, which was mainly untouched by modern times”. While an orchestra of brass and violins plays uplifting music, the broadcast then shows a number of film fragments in which Indonesians work in the sugar and tea industries, laborious and smiling. Tobacco, oil, petrol, and rubber are exported from a country where for both the Dutch and the Indonesians the circumstances might sometimes have been primitive, De Jong argues, and where workers and employers had different interests, but where the government would also always smooth things over and negotiate between the various parties. The Indies, we are told, were transformed into a modern society with a modern industrial landscape and infrastructure:

> Until the Japanese time, the construction of the modern Indies was mainly established under supervision of Dutch people, and many were deeply attached to that beautiful country. (283)

On top of creating new industries, the Dutch also put a stop to wars between the Indonesians, met with disasters such as bad harvests and inundations, fought deadly diseases “down to the smallest desas”, built irrigation systems, and transferred Western knowledge through education. All in all, De Jong concludes:
What the administrative machinery achieved in only a few decades, also to the benefit of the Indonesian population, compares favorably with what happened in other colonially administered countries. (284-7)

The successes of the Dutch, however, turned against them: because of the containment of epidemics, the population was growing so fast that the Dutch were not able to relieve all the symptoms of poverty, including high infant mortality and very low wages.

It was inevitable that the Indonesians, maybe primarily the younger among them, started comparing the circumstances of their own, traditional life with those of the so much more prosperous European upper layer. (287)

It is from this point onwards that De Jong makes another turn and starts addressing the wish of many Indonesians to become independent. What follows is a short account of the rise of Indonesian nationalism, and the negative response to it by all Dutch except those from the left (among whom De Jong included himself). Then follows the second half of the episode on the Japanese war threat.

De Jong offers a mixed account of Dutch colonialism. The 1904 photograph, which is not given a date in the television series, functions as an icon for its low point, namely the nineteenth century with its exploitation and violent suppression. The rest of De Jong’s story of Dutch colonialism chronicles how a few good men and later on many teachers and doctors tried to help the population of the Indies from about 1900 onwards, but that despite all these good intentions the Indonesians still wanted only one thing: independence.

What is the position of the 1904 photograph in the book as a whole? The eight hundred pages of The Occupation are divided into twenty-one chapters, starting with “The Rise of National Socialism and the May Days of 1940” and ending with “The Liberation”. In between are three chapters on the Dutch East Indies. The book has many images, showing among many other subjects the bombing of Rotterdam, the systematic exclusion of and terror against the Dutch Jews and their deportation to the concentration camps, the allied forces fighting their way through Europe, and the hunger winter in the north of the Netherlands in 1944-45. The text is larded with short, first-person narratives by eyewitnesses who were interviewed.

149 These are chapter VII “The Dutch East Indies Threatened”, chapter VIII “The struggle in the Indies”, and chapter XVI “The Dutch East Indies under Japanese Occupation”.
especially for the project, all of whom have a portrait image in the book. On camera, “ordinary” people like Mrs. W. M. Sneevliet-Draayer explain how she and her comrades procured paper for their illegal newspaper (441); W. B. Vreugdenhil recalls how he arranged a work space for the resistance to make illegal documents (572); and A. M. Noppen tells how he was able to stop Nazi troops from shooting his employees who were on strike (170-1). While collaborators are anonymized, of all these heroic witnesses and of many others who did good deeds but did not survive, portraits are shown.

If we compare the forms used in chapter VII with those used in the rest of the book, a pattern emerges in which certain categories of people are given a name, a face, and often also a voice. There was, for instance, also a witness in chapter VII who told his story: Christiaan Nooteboom, an anthropologist and a Dutch civil servant in the Indies. He tells the viewer about a conversation he once had with an Indonesian leader from South Celebes (Sulawesi) who told him he preferred Dutch rule over English and certainly over Japanese, but who also said that

all Indonesians who were honest towards themselves and their brothers and sisters in their hearts desired nothing but to be liberated from foreign authority. They wanted to be themselves under Indonesian leadership. (288)

This neatly follows the main structure of the chapter, which shows that the Dutch did a lot of good but that nevertheless the colonization of the Indies was wrong. Van Vree (1995) comments on De Jong’s positioning of the witnesses:

… like [an] epic singer De Jong is constantly in the foreground to narrate the events; nobody can open his mouth if he has not first given him the floor. The “monological linguistic attitude” implies a fundamental inequality between narrator and witness: the hundred and sixty-nine men and women who are staged in *The Occupation* seldom express their own standpoint or perspective.

The technique of showing heroes and anonymizing anti-heroes also becomes visible in the other portraits in chapter VII, of which only two are of people who, according to De Jong, played a less benign role in the Indies (Van Heutsz and the conservative Prime Minister Hendrik Colijn), and nine either of Dutch people who fought for the rights of Indonesians (Multatuli, Van Deventer, Van Kol, Kuyper, Idenburg, and J. P. graaf van Limburg Stirum, a progressive governor-general of the Indies) or of Indonesians who fought...
for independence (Sukarno, Hatta, and Sutan Sjahrir). Through its formal structure and visualizations, the book thus facilitates connections between anti-national socialist and anti-colonial positions.

This constellation also returns in the framing of the 1904 photograph. It is, first of all, positioned opposite the portrait of one of the anti-heroes of chapter VII who is named: Van Heutsz. Secondly, if we reread its caption, we see an important code word which in the whole of the book denotes goodness beyond any doubt, namely “resistance”. I am not arguing that De Jong positions German Nazism and Dutch colonialism as essentially the same thing. The word “resistance” that describes the Atjehnese in chapter VII, for instance, does not have the connotation of an organized movement that works underground but instead means “opposition”, or even more basically the physical defense against an enemy force. What happens, rather, is that in the narrative structure of *The Occupation*, the two end up in positions that facilitate multidirectional connections between them. In the other two chapters on the Indies, however, the constellation is completely different, as there it is the Dutch who are the victims, importantly of Japanese cruelties. According to Van Vree (1999), these chapters strongly emphasize Dutch heroism and suffering and marginalize the Indonesians, so that the Second World War in the Indies became a purely Dutch affair. Chapter VII on the Indies was certainly the most critical of the three.

**The Atjeh Photographs and Images of Historical Atrocity**

In addition to these affinities, the book also facilitates connections between the 1904 photographs and photographs of the dead in the Nazi concentration camps. *The Occupation* has several of the latter, made in 1945 when the camps were found by the allied forces, in chapter XV entitled “The Prisons and Concentration Camps”. Half of this chapter is on Nazi prisons in the Netherlands, and half on the Nazi concentration camps in Eastern Europe. The photographs are not framed within the context of the Holocaust, as this frame was not yet available at the time, and the victims are not identified as Jews.

After the early 1960s, the remembrance of Nazi atrocities changed considerably. According to Van Vree and Rob van der Laarse (2009: 7), the Second World War in the Netherlands as well as in many other countries was primarily remembered as a *national* event in the first decades after 1945. Sacrifice, heroism, and national honor were central themes. In the

---

150 Later in the book, De Jong is very critical of Sukarno’s role during the Japanese occupation.
Netherlands, little attention was paid to the fate of the Dutch Jews (75% of the 140,000 Jews in the Netherlands in 1939 did not survive the war), while a 1962 monument in Amsterdam talked about how they “fell” (this text was later removed). In the course of the 1960s this changed, as the acknowledgement of victimhood (particularly of Jews, later on also of Romani, people with a disability, homosexuals, and other groups) took a central position in the remembrance. These days, according to Van Vree, “the Second World War, primarily in Western Europe, has not been remembered for decades as a source of national pride and optimism, but as a period of horror which for that reason alone may not be forgotten” (ibid: 22). From the 1960s onwards, the nationalist and ideological representations, in which unity and continuity were the most important themes, were replaced by an emphasis on diversity. Auschwitz became the central symbol and came to be seen as an irreparable rupture in history (ibid: 33-4). The motive of guilt (of Dutch people actively helping the Nazis, or doing nothing to stop them) replaced the motives of resistance and solidarity. After the early 1960s, the whole idea of the Holocaust as a defining event was also conceived. According to Van Vree, it was the American miniseries *Holocaust* from 1978 that achieved

what uncountable, scholarly solid works, school books and documentaries had not been able to bring about. Regarding this, the fact speaks volumes that the term “Holocaust”, which was as good as unknown before 1978 outside the English-speaking language area, since then has become accepted everywhere. (35)

According to Barbie Zelizer in her book on Holocaust photography in the United States and Britain,

three waves of memory work made the Nazi atrocities rise and fall in the public imagination over time: an initial period of high attention persisted until the end of the forties; it was followed by a bracketed period of amnesia that lingered from the end of the forties until the end of the seventies; and that was followed in turn by a renewed period of intensive memory work that has persisted from the end of the seventies until the present day. (1998: 142)\(^{151}\)

---

\(^{151}\) While in Zelizer’s account on Britain and the US, the period of silence only ended at the end of the 1970s, in the Netherlands, as Frank van Vree and others have shown, it had already ended during the 1960s.
In this third wave, photographs, especially of World War II brutality, became more and more central to cultural memory.

In a study on how the Algerian War was perceived in the Netherlands, Niek Pas has written that the Second World War provided a normative frame of reference around 1960, a great epic. Those on the left, such as the Dutch Communist Party, the Pacifist-Socialist Party, trotskyists, and anarchists, told an anti-fascist and anti-colonial tale about the Second World War. Ideas about the “.lesson of Auschwitz” for Western modernity were absent. The Algerian War was told within the parameters of good and evil as a story of occupation and liberation, persecution and resistance: “The universe of Germany and the Netherlands from the period between 1940 and 1945 was detached from its original context and connected to the French-Algerian relation” (2008: 155). That no connections were made with the Dutch colonial period was an effect of compartmentalization: a French colonial war was not a Dutch one.

What becomes clear in chapter XV is that, for De Jong, the Second World War and the Nazi atrocities were a version of a universal epic from which universal lessons could be drawn. About halfway through the chapter, there is a set of images that illustrates two sections called “Cruelty In History” and “People Against People”. These sections start with the statement that “[t]hroughout the history of the human race on earth runs as a leitmotiv the horrors that people have committed against people” (617). In the broadcast, De Jong is talking with a slow, lofty, and soft voice, sometimes stressing certain words fortissimo to show indignation. The examples given are the Massacre of the Innocents in Bethlehem, the killing of Christians in Roman arenas, the killing of Jews in the diaspora in the Middle Ages, the Spanish inquisition, slave trade by Europeans (“also Dutch people”), terror against the Spanish by the French under Napoleon, English concentration camps in the Boer wars in South Africa, the systematic extermination of one million Armenians by the Turks, and the millions of Russians killed under communism.152 The common ground between the victims in the fifteen photographs and drawings shown in the book and the broadcast is that they are framed as civilians, not as soldiers: children, Christians, Jews,

152 The images in the book are captioned “Jew pogrom in the Middle Ages”; “woman and child in a concentration camp in South Africa during the Boer War”; “torture of Spanish farmer by soldiers of Napoleon (Goya)”; “group of slaves”; “bodies of Armenians murdered by the Turks (1915)”. In the broadcast, supported by grave harp music, were also shown Brueghel’s Massacre of the Innocents (on the biblical story of infanticide by King Herod), Jean-Léon Gérôme’s The Christian Martyrs’ Last Prayer, several drawings of galleys with chained prisoners, another drawing by Goya of French soldiers in Spain, a drawing of British soldiers dispelling Boer women and children in South Africa, and a photograph of a Soviet concentration camp.
Africans, Spanish farmers, Armenians, they are all shown here as unarmed and helpless (Figure 3.7).

Through these images and De Jong’s summoning of the figure of the human race, the photographs of Nazi concentration camps are placed in a universal framework and dehistoricized. The book hereby accords the Nazi killings a special position that is almost outside the scope of this historical account of what happened in the Netherlands in the years 1940-45. De Jong seems to have noticed this himself, as he notes at the beginning of the chapter:
Of course, I have also posed myself the question: is it necessary to devote a separate programme to the suffering of our fellow countrymen in Nazi imprisonment and especially in the concentration camps? And I want to tell you in a few words why that question is answered in the affirmative. (601)

The reasons De Jong then gives are that terror was an essential characteristic of National Socialism, that more than 100,000 Dutch people were killed in concentration camps, and that there was a need to make clear what the survivors – “many thousands amongst us” – went through. In the end, the mass killings by the Nazis have a rather ambiguous position in the book: though it devotes two whole chapters to the persecution of Jews, it hardly addresses their mass destruction; it doubts whether the concentration camps are important enough to warrant a separate chapter, yet it places them among the sites where the great massacres of history took place; and finally it accords them a supra-historical meaning, giving them an exceptional position in an otherwise historical account.

Although photographs of atrocity from Dutch colonial history in the Indies are not taken up in chapter XV, they and the images from the concentration camps nevertheless start resonating with each other, especially due to the presence of the section “Cruelty in History”. Above, it was shown how the structure of the book produced subject positions for heroes (e.g. Dutch ethicists and Indonesian nationalists) and villains (e.g. German occupiers or Dutch warmongers in the Indies). Yet through the parade of images in “People Against People”, an even stronger affinity is brought to the fore, namely that both types of images show large numbers of people killed. In the book, they are the only images that depict such scenes of atrocity. As I mentioned earlier, PD was printed together with the 1904 photograph. In it, dozens of KNIL soldiers with drawn swords pose for the camera with the bodies of dead Atjehnese at their feet. To the right, a soldier has placed his foot on the belly of what appears to be a very young boy. Nowhere does De Jong claim that these two groups of photographs show the same things, yet in bringing them together in one book and in comparable positions within the overall narrative, questions about their relationship are nevertheless raised.

In Multidirectional Memory, Rothberg notes that:

early Holocaust memory emerged in dialogue with the dynamic transformations and multifaceted struggles that defined the era of decolonization. The period between 1942 and 1962 contains both the rise of consciousness of the Holocaust as an unprecedented form of modern genocide and the
coming to national consciousness and political independence of many of the subjects of European colonialism. (7)

This emphasis on the “rhetorical and cultural intimacy of seemingly opposed traditions of remembrance” (7) directs our attention towards an absence in De Jong’s book: the decolonization of the Indies. The last words on Indonesia in his book are “Proclamation Indonesia Merdeka – Indonesia free” (660), while his last words on the Indies are to ask for “understanding for what all who later came to us from the Indies endured” (660) (he meant the 300,000 postcolonial migrants from the Indies, particularly those who had been imprisoned by the Japanese). Still, as was shown above, colonialism was a topic critically debated in The Occupation – one that silently but inevitably carried decolonization along with it. In the 1980s, in the volumes on the Dutch East Indies from his seminal work The Kingdom of the Netherlands during the Second World War, De Jong did pay extensive attention to decolonization while being much more explicitly critical of the Dutch colonial regime and the Dutch-Indonesian Wars of the late 1940s. Concerning The Kingdom, many readers felt that De Jong drew parallels between colonialism, decolonization, and the Nazi crimes in Europe to an excessive degree. I will return to this in chapter 4.

Conclusion

De Jong was the first author to take up one of the 1904 photographs in a larger historical narrative, namely of the history of the Dutch East Indies and of the Netherlands during the Second World War. The reframing of the photograph of Koetö Réh by De Jong removed it from the particular compartment it was placed in by tempo doeloe culture: it was no longer only part of the native but also of the European world in the Indies, and even of the history of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The photograph was, moreover, transformed into an icon for a particular phase in the history of Dutch colonialism. Whereas in Nieuwenhuys’s book, the opening of the Suez canal, for instance, was important for the transportation of families to their houses in Batavia, in De Jong’s work it is directly connected to modernity and imperialism. De Jong was certainly not the first one to distinguish a phase in Dutch colonial history in which the outer territories were subjugated, but he was the first to visually represent this phase using two photographs of atrocity, together with a portrait photograph of Van Heutsz. De Jong’s narrative was, moreover, critical of Dutch history in the
Indies, sometimes even opposed to it, and made an effort to look at Dutch colonialism from the other side of the colonial divide. A phrase about the Atjehnese such as “people were strongly averse to foreign oppression”, for instance, makes the Gajos the focalizers in the 1904 photograph. Secondly, the Atjeh photographs, because of their position in the book, were opened up as sites of multidirectional memory: they cross-referenced other moments of mass violence in European history, and they cross-referenced Dutch resistance against the Nazis.

The third thing De Jong’s broadcasts achieved was that they produced the nation of the Netherlands as an imagined mnemonic community for the photographs. Not only were viewers interpellated as citizens of the Dutch nation, due to the popularity of *The Occupation* everybody seeing the photograph knew that everybody else was seeing it as well. And the next day at work, everybody had seen it. What De Jong achieved, in short, was that the imagined mnemonic community of the Netherlands at least for one moment saw the 1904 massacres through the eyes of the Atjehnese (that is, of course, the Atjehnese as characters in De Jong’s possible world and narrative). By selecting KR3, moreover, he facilitated the convergence of Dutch postcolonial memory on this specific image and invested it with critical meanings.

At the heart of tempo doeloe culture and Dutch national history of the Second World War, the Atjeh photographs proved to be inevitable documents. In neither case is it possible to say that colonial violence was forgotten in the sense that it was erased without a trace: it remained at least *oubli de réserve*. Looking at tempo doeloe culture in particular, the 1904 photographs were truly “present absences”: absent from the main story that was conveyed and yet present in the margins, like the ghosts and skeletons in Albert Hahn’s drawings. The fact that these photographs of atrocity appeared in a different compartment than those of European luxury life shows the aphasic condition produced by the nostalgic distribution of the perceptible in which the Gajo and Alas dead were not recognizable as part of the same story. Tempo doeloe culture, one could say, suffers from what Jakobson calls a “contiguity disorder”: an impairment “to combine simpler linguistic entities into more complex units” (1971b: 251). Here the two entities are aspects of the memory of the Indies which are both present but prove unable to be subjected to grammatical coordination and subordination. This might also be an explanation for the many moments of reflexivity in tempo doeloe culture: they may in fact be induced by discomfort about the rosy pictures that are sometimes painted and implicitly ask whether certain aspects of the colonial past have not been skipped over. Irony and
reflexivity reveal a photograph's passe-partout – the space between the photograph and the frames that semanticize it – and question its meanings.

While the book Tempo Doeloe can be viewed as a word heap consisting of yet-to-be-combined units, The Occupation laid the groundwork for connections that were highly uncomfortable but that would be made in increasing numbers from the second half of the 1960s onwards, as will be discussed in the next chapter. The Occupation made possible the connection of histories that had precisely been kept separate in other contexts. It is this coming together of compartmentalized and multidirectional memory that we can see as essential for what in this study is called “emerging memory”: representations of the past that are periodically rediscovered only to submerge again. In the wake of De Jong’s work, many critics of Dutch colonial memory have sought to connect the Atjeh photographs and other documents of colonial atrocity to larger histories, particularly Dutch national history. These photographs, they held, should be part of imagetexts relating the story of not only a number of massacred Sumatran villages but also of the Netherlands in the twentieth century. Framing them as “forgotten”, they aimed to sway public opinion by producing revelations. What these critics underestimated, however, was the power of compartmentalization. Making these photographs available – revealing them – was not the issue. This had, in fact, never been a problem, as the army had eagerly distributed these pictures the moment they had been made. The difficulty lay in the fact that people do not only need to see things to believe them but also need to believe things to see them.