Speaking Together:
exploring discourses of 'Dutchness' in language learning, voluntarism, and active citizenship

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Abstract

My dissertation examines everyday understandings of citizenship as expressed by voluntary Dutch language coaches in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Based on thirteen months of ethnographic research, the primary methods used in this study were in-depth semi-structured interviews and participant observation. These methods were complemented by archival research examining policy documents, key discussions in mainstream Dutch media, and promotional materials developed by the voluntary organizations studied. Adopting a Foucauldian approach to governmentality informed by the work of Tania Li, Mitchell Dean, Ann Laura Stoler, and Aihwa Ong, this study considers how volunteer Dutch language coaches both reproduce and challenge contemporary discourses around citizenship and belonging in Dutch society.

Since the 1990s, in the Netherlands and across the European Union, concerns over increasing cultural diversity and diminishing social cohesion have centred on marginalized, non-Western (Muslim) newcomers and their descendants. These concerns have developed concurrently with neoliberal interventions that have included the downloading of social service provision – including immigrant integration – to lower levels of government, private and not-for-profit civil society organizations, and individual citizens as volunteers. Cross-cutting historical, colonial calculations of 'Dutchness' and more recent expressions of neoliberal "active" citizenship (Ong 1996; Muehlebach 2012), the Dutch language has emerged as a key symbol of belonging, and technique for teaching the technology of government to newcomers. In this context I argue that Amsterdam's Dutch language coaching volunteers fill an important role as front-line citizenship educators, offering a unique perspective through which to study citizenship. Alongside teaching newcomers the language skills required to naturalize, coaches convey their

own ideas of citizenship and belonging as an everyday ethic and practice of community building. Through their voluntary work and expressions of meaningful social integration and citizenship, these research participants consent to and extend the reach of government into the private lives of (potential) citizens. The tensions, practices, and contradictions around belonging revealed by these participants underscore the "awkward continuities" (Dean 2010:57) with the powerful grammar of difference and Dutchness developed through the experience of empire, and how entangled discourses of cultural difference and neoliberal "active" citizenship shape state and everyday notions of morally and culturally attuned citizenship practice.

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Introduction: Foregrounding questions of citizenship in the Netherlands

> The ball is in the hands of the citizen. In the face of countless social problems, people today look expectantly to the citizen. Policy makers do it, as do politicians from all points on the political spectrum, directors of civil society organizations and organizations of citizens themselves: all lay the ball at the feet of the citizen. If a problem surfaces, the searchlight is quickly directed to citizens and their organizations: civil society. The citizen is respected, invited, stimulated, begged, seduced to become an active citizen. (Tonkens 2006:5; my translation)

So began Evelien Tonkens in her inaugural lecture on the occasion of her appointment to the special post[1] of Professor of Active Citizenship in 2006 at the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* (University of Amsterdam, *UvA*). Tonkens took up this position at a time when citizenship was being connected by politicians, policy makers, in the media, by scholars, and by citizens themselves to notions of "active participation" in society (cf. Hurenkamp et al. 2011). This notion of "active" participation has been expressed in many guises, and from a wide variety of sources: from federal and municipal governmental actors, media commentators, among educators, policy makers, academics, and many citizens in their everyday lives.

Among these various articulations, the figure of the volunteer is uncontested as a true expression of "active" citizenship. While Tonkens remarks upon the vaunted position of the volunteer as the "caring" (*zorgzame*) citizen, the volunteer arguably embodies all of the positive qualities that "active citizenship" is thought to cultivate in Dutch society: responsibility (*verantwoordelijkheid*), decency (*fatsoen*), and deliberation (*deliberatie*)[2] (Tonkens 2006:5). "Active" citizens take responsibility for the care of themselves, their physical and social surroundings, and work with other citizens (and/ or the government) to build society together (Tonkens 2006). These notions of "active" citizenship practice reflect contemporary understandings of Dutch sociality – of being *sociaal* – as an expression of socially-oriented

behaviour and personal responsibility that helps to build (civil) society.[3] Being *sociaal*, as sociologist Jan Willem Duyvendak has indicated,[4] is considered the foundation of Dutch culture. This local conception of Dutch sociality encompasses not only positive normative social behaviours, but also societal (as in civil society; *maatschappelijk*) practices and relationships. Being *sociaal* expresses ideas about how to behave in public and the role of personal responsibility in civil society.

With this notion of citizenship and its connection to Dutch sociality in mind, the trend of looking to citizens – especially to volunteers – to solve what are seen as the problems of both government and society has become increasingly common since the mid-1990s (cf. Putnam 1995). This has been the case not only in the Netherlands, but across Europe and around the world (cf. Muehlebach 2012; Hemment 2012; Erickson 2012; Cattelino 2004; Kidd 2002). These changing expectations have occurred alongside shifts in the meaning and practice of citizenship, which in turn have been tied to broader social, political and economic processes. Since the late 1990s, anthropologists and other social scientists have been attentive to how globalizing processes have affected notions of belonging and citizenship practice in relation to the nation-state and local societies. These studies have focused on how such processes – for instance, inter- or transnational migration and settlement, the state's internalization of neoliberal logics – have transformed people's lived realities (cf. Ong 1999, 2006; Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001; Mosher 2006; Mandel 2008; Geschiere 2009; Duyvendak 2011; Muehlebach 2012; Hemment 2012). These changes have affected how social issues, boundary markers, and practices – including citizenship – are conceptualized and articulated by governments, policy makers, civil society organizations, the media, and by people in their everyday lives. The change in the relationships between citizens, the state and civil society have produced transformations with

regard to the very meanings of citizenship.

As Tonkens asked in her inaugural lecture, "since we expect so much of citizens, mustn't we ask what they themselves think might be expected of them" (2006:18; my translation)? In this dissertation, I refocus and expand upon this question to ask not only what can be expected of citizens, but what citizens expect of one another. In particular, what is it that 'native' Dutch[5] citizens expect of newcomers to Dutch society? In asking such questions, I examine the ways in which contemporary citizenship practices come to be understood by ('native' Dutch) citizens, and how these in turn shape what it means to belong in the Netherlands today. How one participates in and contributes to society, that is, how one is "active" as a citizen has been increasingly discussed as more important in how belonging is calculated in the everyday than other identity markers – including legal status, but also race, religion, migration trajectories, class, cultural difference. However, further examination of the idea and practice of citizenship at national and local levels, and through specific practices reveals how these markers resurface and continue to matter in the context of the everyday in the contemporary Netherlands. In following these processes of nation-building and citizenship practice through diverse historical, colonial, state and everyday contexts in the Netherlands, my ethnographic research explores how the turn to "active citizenship" and the reconfiguring of the relationships between citizens, the state, and civil society reveal processes of governmentality.

From a Foucauldian perspective informed by the work of Tania Li, Mitchell Dean, Ann Laura Stoler, and Aihwa Ong, my ethnography speaks to how governmentality operates through the everyday experiences and explosive events or interventions that reveal the elisions around difference in the Dutch context. These elisions contribute to the messiness around contemporary understandings and management of Dutchness. Locating these processes in citizenship, I trace

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how older discourses of difference morph into new, even more powerful divisions in the contemporary context, how such conceptions of difference are reproduced, changed, challenged, reconciled, and normalized through processes of "subject-ification" (Ong 1996:737). The ways in which Dutch citizenship practice has developed in relation to "common sense" ways of thinking and being have enabled certain sets of problems to emerge. In examining how Dutch citizenship practice has been 'problematized', I trace how citizenship and the criteria that inform this status and practice have developed as an object of thought and a technical arena for governmental intervention. Understanding particular relationships, processes, and agents as problems has helped to rationalize particular kinds of interventions in the direction of the conduct of the self and others (Dean 2010:27, 31). In attending to the historical development of morally and culturally attuned Dutch citizenship practice, I examine "how programs take hold and change things, while keeping in view their instabilities, fragilities and fractures, and the ways in which failure prepares the ground for new programming" (Li 2007a:279). Of particular interest to my research are the moral and cultural dimensions of citizenship that impact notions of belonging in both national and local societies (cf. Tonkens et al. 2008; Hurenkamp 2011; Schinkel 2008, 2010; Duyvendak 2012; Muehlebach 2012; Mandel 2008).

As critical scholars, we employ an analytic of government "to understand how different locales are constituted as authoritative and powerful, how different agents are assembled with specific powers, and how different domains are constituted as governable and administrable" (Dean 2010:40). In pursuing such questions we seek to make sense of the ways in which "we are formed as various types of agents with particular capacities and possibilities of action" (Dean 2010:40). To begin from this point of problematization is to ask how both the 'governors' and 'the governed' in a particular context (are directed to) conduct themselves (Dean 2010:38). In

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their attempts to direct the conduct of others, governors or experts (such as policy makers, academics, or local leaders) often contribute to governmental interventions through operating on, as Li says, "population in the aggregate, or on subgroups divided by gender, location, age, income or race, each with characteristic deficiencies that serve as points of entry for corrective interventions" (2007a:276).

An examination of government therefore requires us to explore the ways in which governmental rationality is expressed through programs that direct (or reform or redirect) the assemblage of processes, relations, practices, ways of thinking and doing, strategies and techniques to achieve specific goals (Li 2007a:279; Li 2007b:266). These programs depend upon rendering particular domains technical, as bounded populations that can then be linked not only to a problem but to mechanisms and measures through which such problems are then able to be addressed and success evaluated. By investigating citizenship practice as a technical arena, a number of important effects are observed, including the ways in which the nuances and tensions that allow and prompt assemblages to form in relation to citizenship as a bounded domain are discursively erased (Li 2007b:270). The assemblage or (national) 'community' that coheres around contemporary notions of citizenship often appears more coherent than is necessarily the case on the ground (cf. Sunier and van Ginkel 2006; Anderson 1991; Handler 1989; McDonald 1989; Mackey 1999; Beriss 2004). In part, this erasure is a product of the ways in which various elements of an assemblage are positioned in fields of power, in relation to one another, and through programs that render certain grammars of difference "easy to think," "common sense," or literally unthinkable (Foucault 1991:103; Stoler 2011:129-130; cf. Gilroy 2004). These grammars – for instance, those circulating around notions of "active" or "good" citizenship practice in the Netherlands – also extend to the ways in which sentiment is distributed, assessed

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and managed in the pursuit of program goals (Stoler 2009:58).

In following the various threads of how citizenship is understood and valued through my engagement with a particular group of "active" Dutch citizens – volunteer Dutch language coaches and their coordinators – my ethnography underscores how studying citizenship as moral and cultural practice rearticulates historical discourses and incorporates new discursive techniques for belonging in the contexts of Amsterdam and the imagined national community of the Netherlands (cf. Anderson 1991). This study necessarily traces the genealogy of Dutch 'civilizing missions', and the uneven reassembling of these governmental programs as they relate to the cultivation of the "good" citizen in the contemporary Netherlands. The genealogical method, understood from a Foucauldian perspective, tasks us as critical scholars

> to sort out what we take to be necessary and contingent in the ways in which we think and act in regard to the 'conducting' of our lives and those of others, and to discover what problematizations of this are possible. Further, it is the attempt to discern which of these problematizations indicate the lines of fracture and transformation and which indicate a consolidation of regimes of government. (Dean 2010:56)

The programs I trace in this dissertation unfold through the complex expressions of morally and culturally attuned citizenship practice in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. These expressions now draw on discursive threads of neoliberal "active" participation in Dutch society (Ong 1999; Tonkens 2006; Muehlebach 2012), which I locate in the support for voluntarism and the development of immigrant and minority integration projects. Through an ethnographic lens, I explore how these citizenship education programs are envisioned and engaged by various actors, at the level of the state, of local organizations, and of individual participants.

As a flexible and opaque category, a political technology that draws on and masks many other powerful frames of reference (including race or ethnicity, gendered or sexual norms,

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considerations of class), my research highlights the continued significance of 'culture' in the dual

processes of making the (national, local) self and marking Others as on the precarious edges of

'imagined community', or beyond it. These discussions are revealed in many less controversial

or visible conversations about immigration and the role of "cultural" difference in the

Netherlands today, especially as articulated through Dutch language use and ability. They find

traction in the increasingly normal or "common sense" exclamations from the Dutch populist

Right, and erupt in the context of the now annual controversy over the practice of ritualized

black-face in the Dutch winter children's holiday, *Sinterklaas*. The tense discussion around the

holiday figure *Zwarte Piet* (Black Peter) is a striking example of the ways in which the expansive

will to govern can produce a range of unplanned and indirect effects that require the assemblage

to adjust or compromise to continue to hold together (Li 2007a:280; Li 2007b:279). I explore

such clashes as part of a much larger and ongoing set of processes and discussions about the

changing nature of difference and Dutchness. The "*Zwarte Piet* discussion" and other points of

tension evident through my examination of the politics of the everyday illustrate the gaps

between different domains of knowledge – what can be known, spoken or thought – and the

ways in which boundaries of belonging in Dutch society come to be differently configured by

diverse socially-situated subjects (Stoler 2011; Li 2007a:275). Controversial national discussions

and the more nuanced contestations that occur in everyday interactions or utterances underscore

how fields of knowledge and the power relations that it reflects have an uneven impact across the

population to be governed. These processes have had profound impacts on the morally and

culturally attuned expressions of citizenship practice in contemporary Dutch society.

The question of 'cultural' difference and Dutchness is also entangled in contemporary

discourses that draw upon emerging neoliberal technologies of government. The shrinking of the

welfare state, and the downshifting of responsibility for social service provision to lower levels of government, private and non-governmental organizations and individuals has imprinted all other spheres of daily life with the logic of market-mechanisms. The nature of belonging in the local or national community has been transformed, as citizens are required to reduce their demands on the state and operate as "self-enterprising," risk-managing citizen-subjects (cf. Ong 2006; Holmer Nadesan 2008; Muehlebach 2012). By tracing the ways in which neoliberal forms of governmentality in the Netherlands have been grafted onto existing liberal forms, I show how even when the criteria for belonging have been substantially rearticulated, the foundations of difference and Dutchness laid out during the colonial period continue to matter (Li 2007b:244-245). My detailed historical and ethnographic analysis draws out important tensions and continuities between this view of citizenship with culturalized notions of belonging in the Netherlands, underscoring how governmental programs build upon and rework the past. A potent example of this is explored in how, unlike the languages spoken by many 'non-Western' newcomers (e.g. Turkish, Arabic), the English language is a powerful symbol of cultural commensurability and "active" citizenship practice in Amsterdam and elsewhere in the Netherlands. English was frequently read by my 'native' Dutch interlocutors and others in Dutch society as signifying notions of "cultural" resemblance to the Dutch through associations with acceptable behaviours and values, civilizational, racial, religious, classed, and other forms of 'culturalized' similarity. Even in volunteers' progressive conception of "good" citizenship practice, the English language is the exception that proves the rule of Dutch citizenship.

The power of these discourses, practices of calculation, and modes of perception to influence and shape the "conduct of conduct" of the national population is revealed through expressions that show how socially-situated subjects variously consent to, challenge, or reconcile

these governmental techniques that inform citizenship as a practice. My ethnography shifts the focus of study from the often marginalized subjects of integration frequently studied by anthropologists – non-Western immigrants – to those framed as 'native' Dutch (cf. Silverstein 2005; Herzfeld 1987; Gupta and Ferguson 1997). Tracing the messiness and unevenness of these fields in everyday life, the ways in which these relationships and "common sense" conditions are experienced by a particular group of socially-situated subjects – voluntary Dutch language coaches in Amsterdam – is an important contribution of my research to the study of the nation. While these research participants can provide only partial insights into what it means to be Dutch or a "good" Dutch citizen, their experiences and expressions flag some of the many tensions in contemporary calculations of belonging in the Netherlands.

Language coaching in Amsterdam: Teaching the technology of government in everyday life

As Li (2007a:276) has observed, governmentality operates not through a monolithic state, but through a dispersed and diverse array of socially situated actors, organizations, institutions and other elements that assemble to regulate the conditions of life at the level of the everyday. In this dissertation, I argue that Dutch language coaching volunteers provide a unique lens into understanding these processes in Amsterdam. Though their voluntary labour is informal, as front-line citizenship educators, these language coaches effectively extend the reach of government, its will to educate the desires of newcomers to Dutch society, to shape their aspirations, habits, and beliefs (Li 2007a:275). Through the perspectives of my key research participants – language coaches, volunteers working in administrative capacities for language coaching programs, and program directors – and through my own perspective as a language learner in one of these

programs, this ethnography draws out some of the subtle, banal or benign ways in which government insinuates itself in the private lives of (potential) citizens, is (re)articulated, reconciled, and/or challenged in people's lived experience.

The nature of the language coaching that volunteers provide situates their views and experiences as a unique point of entry for examining questions of governmentality in the Netherlands. Unlike formal classes (cf. Björnson 2007; Schiffauer et al. 2004) that rely on the teaching of a specific curriculum as well as or through language learning, volunteer language coaches and their partners are guided to discuss different topics, questions, or address social etiquette through their own interests or needs-based requests made by the non-native speaking partner. The relative independence of these conversation partnerships from governmental bodies and oversight raises ethnographically interesting questions about the ideas of belonging and "good" (that is, morally or culturally attuned) citizenship practice that may be conveyed during these sessions from volunteers to their partners. Through my ethnography, I explore how the ways in which contemporary citizenship is understood by 'native' Dutch citizens shape what it means to belong in the Netherlands today. From this guiding research question I explore several other key concerns: What is it that immigrants to the Netherlands are being asked to integrate into? Who and what kinds of practices are now considered 'Dutch', and by whom? Who participates in the construction, negotiation, and dissemination of these concepts at the level of lived experience, and in what ways is this accomplished?

What emerges from this study is a picture of belonging and citizenship practice that is questioned, considered, and built through volunteers' social relationships and in everyday life. The experiences and views of voluntary Dutch language coaches underscore how what it means to belong in Dutch society today, to be Dutch, is not a question with a simple answer. Rather,

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many differing opinions on this issue surfaced throughout my research, signalling important tensions in contemporary Dutch society over the place of newcomers to the Netherlands, the role and meaning of racial or ethnic difference, religious belief, gendered and sexual cultural difference, language, classed differences and labour participation, parenting and education. In my historical and ethnographic analysis, I explore how these tensions are the result of diverse, socially-situated subjects' engagement in non-linear processes of problematization (cf. Li 2007a:280). These volunteers and the integration projects in which they are engaged are part of a complex assemblage that draws together a particular set of socially situated subjects (like these volunteers and their student-partners), objectives (integration, the cultivation of "good" or "active" citizens), and a constellation of knowledges and discursive practices (e.g. ways of thinking about Dutchness, difference, social participation, citizenship), institutions (including schools, charitable organizations, community centres, municipal or national legislatures), laws and regulatory regimes (such as those related to immigration or citizenship acquisition). The views of language coaching volunteers show how people are actors in complex fields of power relations who may simultaneously occupy different positions or roles, consenting to or reconciling certain techniques to direct their conduct, while challenging or rearticulating others. This emerges very clearly in some of the ways in which volunteers express a sense of Dutch cultural norms, values, behaviours and etiquette as keys to belonging and "good" citizenship practice.

As proponents and implementers of "good" citizenship, volunteer language coaches relate to their newcomer-clients in ways that reflect, and also differ from how they are framed in policy, in the rhetoric of (populist Right) politicians, and other 'native' Dutch. How they interpret and articulate their work as volunteers, and the role of their work in Dutch society reveals how

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connections between social belonging, active participation, and communication influence language coaches' ideas of "good" Dutch citizenship practice. My observations show that while these views resonate with those held more widely across mainstream Dutch society, they also rearticulate some of the key criteria for belonging in the neighbourhood, city and nation in ways that envision a more inclusive society. Among the most striking of these rearticulations is the consistent downplaying or denial of 'culturalized' criteria for belonging that continue to draw from colonial categories of difference. Language coaching volunteers reject arguments about the problems caused in Dutch society by immigrants' "backwards" cultures and difference from mainstream, 'native' Dutch society. Instead, language coaches favour criteria for belonging more closely associated with neoliberal logics, where individuals are understood as "rational, self-responsible/choosing agents" (Holmer Nadesan 2008:32). They point to structural impediments (e.g. poorly designed or implemented integration policy) and individual barriers (e.g. lack of initiative or support in learning Dutch) that hinder newcomers in accepting personal responsibility in "different spheres of everyday life" to reduce their burden on the state and fellow citizens (Ong 2006:14). Echoing important policy interventions for immigrant integration, the Dutch language is viewed as key to accessing the socially-productive forms of participation that language coaches and other research participants view as central to "good" citizenship practice. In engaging with processes of inclusion without necessarily disrupting structures of hierarchy, this understanding of "good" citizenship practice is part of an intricate constellation of signifiers that both connects to and challenges ideas of belonging in the Netherlands today.

Organization of the dissertation

I begin this dissertation by outlining this project's theoretical, contextual, and methodological framework. In Chapter 1, "Anthropological contributions to the study of the nation," I position my work in relation to this body of scholarship, outline how I approach citizenship, and theoretically ground the examination of governmentality I undertake through my ethnography. Chapter 2, "Navigating 'the field': Selecting field sites and methods," addresses my methodological choices. My experiences as a volunteer and a Dutch language learner lead me to focus on voluntary Dutch language coaching projects in Amsterdam as a key point of ethnographic entry. My positionality not only shaped the specific actors and issues on which my project came to focus, but how my interlocutors interacted with me as front line citizenship educators. In this chapter I also give attention to Amsterdam's historical experience as a site of religious and cultural diversity through immigration, and how this history affects what it means to conduct research into citizenship practice in this city. I address how the questions at the heart of this research are not determined by any one factor, but variously and unevenly by the many different attitudes, events, and historical phenomena that have shaped the city of Amsterdam, its place in and in relation to the rest of the Netherlands, as well as the lives and experiences of my research participants.

These two preliminary chapters are important to situate and ground my ethnographic and historical analysis in the context of existing scholarship, and my specific choice of field site and key participants. Building upon this foundation, the analysis I undertake in the rest of my dissertation examines how key connections, concepts, and practices have been problematized. I do this through tracing key threads of continuity – such as the importance attributed to the Dutch

language – and identifying moments of fracture, reassembly, and the incorporation of new elements and rationale into the assemblage that coheres around Dutch citizenship. Informed by a Foucauldian theoretical perspective, as in the ethnographic work of Stoler and Ong, this necessarily includes an examination of these threads and breaks through the space of empire and into the present, as observed in the politics of the everyday.

In Chapter 3, "Imagining Dutchness: Tracing programs of social difference through empire," I examine the ways in which the role and mutability of categories such as religion, race or ethnicity, language, class, gendered and sexual norms developed through the engagements of empire as particular 'problems' for government. In this chapter, I follow how certain practices and criteria came to be framed as 'Dutch' or 'European', serving an important role in early Dutch nation-building. Drawing together a vast array of religious, racial, linguistic, gendered, sexual, and classed signifiers, these notions of difference and acceptability in the space of empire came to be thought of as 'cultural'. This chapter lays the groundwork for understanding how grammars of Dutchness developed during empire continue to have lasting impacts for what it means to be Dutch today, even as the vocabulary used to mark these differences has changed.

Following the end of World War II and the collapse of empire, changes in migration patterns marked by the arrival of culturally diverse, 'non-Western' newcomers to the Netherlands created supposedly new 'problems' for nation-building. In Chapter 4, "'What do you mean by *allochtoon*?' Everyday grammars of difference," I examine how through policy interventions to remedy the problems associated with newcomers to Dutch society, the imperial preoccupation with 'cultural' difference has been rearticulated in the late twentieth- and early twenty-first centuries. Recognizing the language of autochthony as a new term in the Dutch grammar of difference, this chapter speaks to how the successes of government are contingent on

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the particular ways in which socially-situated subjects consent (or not) to its strategies in specific times and places. Demonstrating that government is not totalizing, my research participants challenge and reconcile aspects of the underlying exclusionary categories of Dutchness embedded in the language of autochthony (Li 2007a:276).

Chapter 5 continues to unpack how ways of knowing connected to culturalist discourse are engaged not only in government policy or by my research participants, but among many other actors in Dutch society, such as politicians in mainstream and populist Right parties, commenters in the news and other Dutch media, and anti-racism activists. In attending to the ways in which diverse, socially-situated actors imagine the national community, and some of the problems it is thought to face, Chapter 5, "Configuring the new 'savage slot': Effects of immigration to the Netherlands," addresses how the Dutch grammar of alterity "operates at different levels and moves not only between different political projects but seizes upon *different* elements of earlier discourses reworked for new political ends" (Stoler 1995:72). Drawing on the rise of the populist Right and the now annual "*Zwarte Piet discussie*" (Black Peter discussion), I show how the flexible and unevenly engaged nature of powerful discourses around difference can be understood as part of structures and expressions of 'cultural racism'. Through analysis of these case studies, I highlight how certain understandings and ways of talking about difference and Dutchness have become "common sense." Importantly, these taken-for-granted ways of defining and defending the discursive boundaries of the Dutch national community are not uncontested. While the ethnographic moments explored in this chapter are useful for showing the "awkward continuities" (Dean 2010:57) with the past, they also underscore how assemblages are fragile, subject to fragmentation and require compromise and adjustment in order to cohere (Li 2007b:279).

The processes and engagements tied to the 'civilizing mission' of the imperial Dutch that have contributed to how 'cultural' differences are understood today have also profoundly impacted the ways in which neoliberal rationale has settled in the Netherlands. In Chapter 6, "Activating citizens: Neoliberal governmentality and the rise of voluntarism," I trace the genealogical connections between the early self-positioning of the Dutch as a 'guiding nation' (*gidsland*), its 'civilizing mission', and contemporary understandings of "active" participation, integration policy, and civil society initiatives like voluntary language coaching projects. The conception of the Dutch as moral exemplar to the rest of the world shaped how people were seen as targets for religious charity or mission overseas and among the poor in Europe. As such, Dutch social service provision, ideas of "social uplift," and voluntary labour are deeply connected to a history of religious and charitable giving. This chapter shows how the promotion of voluntary labour in the twenty-first century is part of these broader, historical processes and relationships of power, deeply connected to a rationale that educates and configures the "conduct the conduct" of contemporary Dutch citizens. In this context, aspects of neoliberal rationale and understandings of "active" citizenship (Ong 1999; Muehlebach 2012) have become "easy to think" as they resonate with pre-existing social norms, relationships, moral expressions, and current experiences of the 'withdrawal' of the welfare state. Neoliberal rationale, which directs citizens to become "free, self-managing, and self-enterprising individuals in different spheres of everyday life" (Ong 2006:14) extends to Dutch citizenship education projects that support and promote the integration of all members of Dutch society. However, such programs particularly target newcomers and their descendants who are framed – especially through their Dutch language 'deficit' – as having diminished capacity to meet the expectations of "active" citizenship practice.

How neoliberal rationale is reworked and articulated through local ideas and everyday experiences of citizenship is examined through my ethnographic lens in Chapter 7, "Citizenship as practice: Volunteer ethics and Dutch sociality." Informed by their position as volunteers, my research participants invoke aspects of neoliberal rationality alongside and in the capacity of Dutch cultural norms and values – as through behaving in a *sociaal* manner – to speak about what it means to belong and participate in building Dutch society as "good" citizens. Through this discussion, where local understandings of sociality are used to make sense of citizenship as a moral and cultural practice, this chapter traces the flexible contours of these citizen-subjects' agency as subjects of government.

In Chapter 8, "On the front lines of citizenship education," I show how Dutch language facility has become a central technique in teaching the technology of government to potential citizens, and affirming consent to the aims of government among all citizen-subjects. Throughout this chapter, I explore how volunteers' conceptions of citizenship as a practice contributes to these participants' criteria for integration and goals in helping their language learning partners. While these coaches agree with the requirements set out by the federally-mandated 'civic integration' (*inburgering*) courses, they nonetheless contest the inflexible 'social' criteria immigrants are required to learn to become eligible for naturalization. In drawing on neoliberal rationale and Dutch cultural ideas of sociality, language coaching volunteers reject the exclusionary, xenophobic criteria for belonging given voice and popularized by the populist Right. Through their position as front line citizenship educators, volunteer language coaches extend the reach of government. Yet, in this capacity these same non-governmental actors contribute in powerful ways to how citizenship and integration are problematized. Acting in ways that express their own self-interest as "active" or "good" citizens, volunteers not only teach

newcomers how to communicate, but direct them to "do as they ought" as active participants in Dutch society (Li 2007a:275).

The thread of continuity represented by the role of language in defining "good" citizenship practice among language coaches and other volunteers, policy makers, politicians and media commenters is further explored in Chapter 9, "Exceptions to the rule in the Dutch language of integration." This chapter examines an important tension observed in relation to the significance of the Dutch language for newcomer integration as active citizen-subjects: the role, value, and meaning attached to the English language. I found that most 'native' Dutch believed that unlike other newcomers, English speakers need not necessarily learn to speak Dutch. Associations made between fluency in English and ideas of cultural similarity, having the skills deemed necessary to express an ethic of "active" participation, meant that for many in Dutch society English speakers were often thought to already be integrated enough. Significantly, these associations reveal the ongoing impact of the kinds of 'cultural' criteria for belonging that language coaches reject in their discussions of "good" citizenship practice.

Throughout this ethnography, a key concern is to underscore how governmentality operates through diverse channels, and is subject to critique as well as consent by the many parties and actors involved in regulating the conditions of life (Li 2007a:276). In showing the messiness of how governmentality works through "practices of compromise and accommodation, resistance or outright refusal" (Li 2007a:279), this ethnography reveals the complexities of power in lived experience. I conclude this dissertation by reiterating the strength of ethnography in the study of the nation through making sense of these broader processes on the ground and through lived experience. I close with a consideration of where these reworked discourses of citizenship may be taking the Netherlands in terms of nationalism, and introduce

potential future directions in research.

1. Anthropological contributions to the study of the nation

Over the course of the past few centuries the nation-state has flourished, to the extent that it is recognized as a principal form of political, social and economic organization the world over. Many scholars writing on the phenomenon of the nation, its historic rise and defining contours have regarded Europe as the birthplace of the nation. This literature places European nation-states in a unique, often archetypical position in the study of nationalism. Europe's status as the privileged site of 'universal history' (Segal and Handler 1992:52) underlies powerful beliefs that have greatly informed how the nation has been imagined, engaged, and deployed as a site of identity politics and government, especially from the perspective of European or Western scholars (cf. Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003:578-580).

Contributions to this body of literature often sought to define the nation-state formation as a distinct unit of analysis. The nation as a 'container model' for society is common across many of these classic studies of nationalism, where the nation-state compartmentalizes the economy, polity, culture, and historical experience of a particular social (national) group (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003:579). Ernest Gellner (1983) has described nationalism as a "theory of political legitimacy." In this view, the nation (conceived as a distinct ethnic group, or 'people') and state (the site of politics) should align, and power over the state is held by the members of the ethnic or national group (1983:1). The nation-state configuration therefore organizes a specific population (such as an ethnic group) through a centralized agency for maintaining order over that population (Gellner 1983:5-7). The ways in which nation-states formed in Europe has led to a widespread assumption that national peoples are not only homogenous (for instance, in terms of ethnicity, race, language, religious belief, etc.), but natural

and even primordial social formations (cf. Comaroff 1996:166). Thus, beyond a fluctuating, minimal threshold, social difference in the key forms associated with any particular national imaginary is often considered (theoretically and often empirically) intolerable (cf. Bunzl 2004; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Geschiere 2009; Hage 2000).

These views and the study of the nation were impacted by the ways in which Western scholarship organized the division of intellectual labour across different scholarly disciplines during the early twentieth century; the disciplines of history, political science, sociology, economics, and anthropology each addressed only a slice of the various phenomena connected to the institution of the nation-state (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003:578-579). Since the laying of these scholarly foundations, significant global shifts, interventions, and developments in political, economic, social, and scholarly relationships have had profound effects on the (study of the) nation-state. These shifts have also revealed some of the ways in which each of these scholarly fields maintain particular methodological assumptions around the study of the nation. This has certainly been the case during the latter half of the twentieth century, where numerous interconnected developments have reorganized populations and impacted government programs and practices. These have included (but are not limited to): the two World Wars; the fall of European empires and the independence of new postcolonial nation-states; nationalist movements and conflicts within the borders of established nation-states; the increased and accelerated pace at which people, goods, ideas, and money traverse the globe; increasing (cultural, religious, racial) diversity among nation-state populations due to international migration processes; the rise of new non-national scales of rights and identification (such as the supranational European Union), or ways of imagining belonging and political entities incongruous with the geographical borders of the nation-state.

These various developments challenge many long-held assumptions about the nature and working of the nation-state, including those among scholars. The task of studying contemporary nationalism thus benefits from insights gained from those interrogating these various shifts. This includes not only insights gained from literature written by postcolonial scholars, and in the context of postcolonial and 'settler society' nationalisms, but also the theoretical perspectives and methodology of anthropology. Across these interconnected bodies of literature, scholars have drawn attention to how the institution of the nation-state has been constructed, and the assumptions embedded in the nation-state concept in relation to Eurocentric traditions of scholarship and government.

In the following literature review, I provide a brief examination of how anthropological scholarship has addressed the study of nationalism and situate my research in relation to this body of knowledge. I first address the concerns of the disciplinary tradition of ethnographic research and the insights gained through a focus on cultural particularities. Building on these foundational studies, I examine how the consideration of emerging processes and phenomena have brought new insights from anthropologists to the study of nationalism. Given its significance for my research in Amsterdam, I focus on scholarship that has considered the effects of multiculturalism, globalization, and the rise of supranational state bodies. Finally, this review draws connections between the study of nationalism and governmentality.

Cultural particularities: ethnographic attention to national detail

A significant contribution to the study of nationalism has been the examination of nation-building through ethnography. This has meant looking at the nation as a powerful social

construct in the same ways that anthropologists have already considered a wide range of social phenomena, such as kinship, sexuality, economic or medical practices, ethnicity and race. Stressing cultural particularities, the strength of anthropology's ethnographic approach has been to show the relationships between wider processes and their rootedness in local practice and belief. As in the study of other topics that have long interested anthropologists, turning the ethnographic lens toward the study of nationalism and processes of the nation-state reveals the importance of culture, relationships of power, and how local and historical experiences can both shore up and contradict or critique accepted explanations of sociopolitical phenomena.

While blatant examples of nationalist sentiment catch our attention in the media, become talking points for politicians, and points of entry for critical social researchers, following the more "banal, routine, almost invisible" national expressions allows us to probe deeper into the processes and structures that underlie the nation-state (Billig 1995). Ethnographic methodology provides a unique lens to understanding how nationalism operates discursively through a protracted and careful analysis of cultural experience in daily life. Complex relationships and assumptions about who belongs and how in the neighbourhood, city, and the nation-state are put into daily discourse by citizens as well as those in positions of power in the state. Social scientists trace how the language used by those we study not only describes, but reproduces (or challenges) these social realities (cf. Baumann 2004; Anderson 1991[1983]). This is precisely because ideas of belonging, as in the nation, are articulated through "the embodied habits of social life," through the common sense ways of "thinking and using language" (Billig 1995:8).

Richard Handler's *Nationalism and the politics of culture in Quebec* (1988), Maryon McDonald's *"We are not French!"* (1989), and Hobsbawm and Ranger's collection, *The Invention of Tradition* (1983) are important early contributions to the anthropological study of

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the nation. Giving special attention to (minority) nationalist movements that draw on notions of culture and language, Handler and McDonald's ethnographies – in Quebec and Brittany, respectively – resonate in many ways with my own research in the Netherlands (cf. Beriss 2004). These works trace how notions of a national language and culture are mobilized and engaged (to often differing ends) by the various local peoples and organizations at the hearts of these studies.

These ethnographies are not only important contributions to the study of nationalism, but also to the discipline of anthropology more generally. Ethnographic studies of the nation-state, national identity politics and related phenomena were, at the time that Handler and McDonald conducted their research, still rather novel in anthropology. Developed as a colonial science, anthropology attended to the empire and people framed as decidedly Other in relation to the Western scholar (cf. Blok and Boissevain 1984:335-336). When European empires began to deteriorate, anthropologists began to turn their scholarly attention 'homeward' to the study of the peoples of Europe and of the West. Yet, where sociology, political science, history and economics studied a 'Europe' characterized by the most powerful nation-states (France, Germany, Great Britain), the margins came to represent 'Europe' in the anthropological imagination. Anthropology's 'Europe' was composed of the 'exotic' or 'marginal' culture areas of "the Mediterranean" with its "vulnerable underbelly, the South European countries of Italy, Spain and Greece" (Goddard et al. 1994:2), the "Celtic fringe," remote Alpine regions (Rogers 1998:25), or the Balkans (Todorova 1997).

As isolated, or in some way on the peripheries of Europe and the Western world, ethnographic subjects in the Anthropology of Europe were chosen for how they reflected the anthropological tradition of studying non-Western peoples (Herzfeld 1987:6). As is clear in McDonald's work especially, the decision to study Breton nationalism runs counter to the ideas

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of anthropology prevalent at the time (cf. Herzfeld 1987; Boissevain 1975; Gupta and Ferguson 1997). In addition to situating her work in Western Europe (albeit among the 'disappearing world' of a 'Celtic' people), McDonald writes that:

> Most metaphors of traditional anthropological expression run counter to the inclusion of intellectuals in the ethnography, whether in the guise of administrator, tourist, activist, or academic. For social anthropology, urban and educated people have not seemed sufficiently traditional and 'native', or sufficiently and authentically real, to constitute a fit object of study. (McDonald 1989:23).

One of the strengths of anthropology as a discipline has been to provide nuanced, ethnographic accounts of how broader social and political processes affect the people we study at the level of everyday experience. This contribution is no less valid when anthropologists look to perhaps 'non-traditional' topics and sites of study, as McDonald and Handler's work demonstrates. Works such as these have helped to broaden scholarship on the nation, which has been afflicted by what Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2003) identify as a problem of 'methodological nationalism'. In the history of scholarship on the nation, the nation-state's "principles were so routinely structured in the foundational assumptions of theory that they vanished from sight" (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2003:579).

Ethnographic and historical realities

In ethnographic texts, scholars such as Handler and McDonald point to the very real process of constructing or building the nation and the complexities of national identity politics, situating their research participants in their broader historical, economic and political contexts. This approach underscores how nationalist discourses are embedded in complex fields of power

relations. It also points to how such discourses have been used, for instance, to objectify national

cultures as both distinct and potentially threatened. In understanding how a distinct 'Breton

culture' was conceptualized and deployed by her various research participants, McDonald has

usefully suggested that anthropologists seek to study the boundaries of 'culture' (1989:308).

These boundaries are sites of rich ethnographic detail that reveal the discursive tensions,

contradictions and confluences between these various actors, their aims and understandings of

minority national identity. These boundaries also point out the multiple intersections of

identification that shape the lived experience of the culture in question.

In conceptualizing the nation as part of a discursive process, anthropologists flag how

processes of 'cultural objectification' enable certain actors to privilege and control particular

threads of nationalist discourse. For Handler, "seeing culture as a thing," that is, as "a natural

object or entity made up of objects and entities ("traits")" (1988:14) emerges clearly in how an

urban elite mobilize the notion of a Québécois *patrimoine* seated in an imagined rural

agricultural past existing undisturbed into the present. McDonald reveals similar processes at

work in the relationship between Breton's "militant" nationalists learning a standardized version

of Breton and native-Breton speaking peasants speaking the (often distinct) dialect of their

village or region. In both of these studies, the authors underscore how the individuals posed by

nationalist groups as the ideal 'folk' may not share the nationalist visions for which they have

become symbols. Moreover, these works show how Breton peasants' and Québécois farmers'

lived experiences and interests may directly contradict nationalist imaginaries. These points of

contact, located at the boundaries of culture, provide fertile ethnographic sites for the study of

nationalism. Importantly, these studies turn on the messiness of social realities, drawing attention

to how the nation – a powerful and pervasive institution – is constructed, contingent, subject to

individual agency, and changes over time (cf. Li 2007b:264).

The nature of these points of contact with difference shape how national communities are 'imagined', and national traditions and symbols are 'invented' (Anderson 1991; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). For minority nationalisms, such as those studied by Handler and McDonald, the notion of a distinct national culture "was constructed in the spaces of conceptual opposition, and its character and homogeneity imposed from without" (McDonald 1989:309). This conceptual opposition has been important in many nationalist projects, regardless of their position vis-à-vis a state. This includes nationalisms associated with established nation-states in Western Europe. Where the most important sources of opposition for minority nationalisms might be the nation-states in which the minorities live, for many established nation-states the sources of conceptual opposition might be internal as well as external: other nation-states, political formations or movements (including those they may be part of, such as the European Union); differences conceptualized through notions of race, religion, civilization, language, sexuality stemming from contact with Others, as through empire; minority nationalist movements; other internal "deviants," for example envisioned along the lines of class, race, or sexuality (cf. McClintock 1995; Mosse 1985; Bunzl 2004; Stoler 1995). The nature of such opposition has ranged widely given the cultural context of the nationalist discourse invoked. For this reason, anthropologists and other social scientists have emphasized how important it is to look both to the larger contexts in which nations have developed, as well as local instances where these ideas are worked out in daily life.

These cultural processes do not take place in an eternal ethnographic present. Rather, anthropologists studying the nation have addressed the supposed timelessness and self-evident nature of nationalist projects through an examination of the historical processes and relationships

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that have contributed to their present configurations (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; Comaroff 1996). Examples of this social constructionist approach are found in the work of scholars such as Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), Hobsbawm (1997[1990]), as well as Benedict Anderson (1991[1983]) and Michael Billig (1995). These works underscore how the powerful institution of the nation-state and national cultural traditions and symbols are discursively constructed, invented, imagined, and reaffirmed through banal as well as explicit events.

The importance of understanding historical context in the study of nationalism flagged in the earlier works discussed above continues to echo throughout the anthropological literature on the nation. In part, this attention to history comes from the focus on the nation(-state) itself. As McDonald states pace Radcliffe-Brown, in studying the nation (perhaps especially in Europe), there is

> no divorce of anthropology and history, or of ethnographic and historical reality. We are dealing throughout with 'peoples' from a nation with a long, strong, and well-documented historical tradition. There can be no question here of ignoring history because "In the primitive societies that are studied by social anthropology there are no historical records." (McDonald 1989:18)

Concerned with how contemporary nation-building can only be made sense of in relation to the genealogies of key markers and processes of governing, Ann Laura Stoler has deepened and extended this argument. This necessitates, as in the case of European nation-states, looking at the nation-state in the same analytical field as empire (Stoler 1995:xi). The importance of 'imperial formations' to nation-building comes clearly into view for Stoler in that empire is a process that generates historically and culturally situated effects, criteria for social membership and exceptions (Stoler et al. 2007:xii). As processes, imperial formations "create new subjects that must be relocated to be productive and exploitable, dispossessed to be modern, disciplined to be

independent, converted to be human, stripped of old cultural bearings to be citizens, coerced to be free" (Stoler and McGranahan 2007:8).

The contextual approach advocated and exemplified by anthropologists studying the nation seems to become only more important as we address how contemporary experiences of migration, identification, affiliation and obligation may challenge modes and practices of national belonging thought to be traditional. In my work, important and interconnected late-twentieth century interventions that have had a profound impact on the operation of the nation-state include: processes of globalization, the development and spread of neoliberal governmental rationale, the emergence of 'multicultural' governance structures, and the growing significance of supranational state configurations, such as the European Union.

Spaces and scales of the 'national' field

Since the 1990s, social scientists have become increasingly interested in 'globalization' (cf. Tomlinson 1991; Appadurai 1996). Advances in technology, changes in global politics and economies, all drove the flow of ideas, images, money/ economic practices and people across borders at a rate and scale unknown throughout history. In historical perspective, these transformations are not entirely new. These flows frequently continue to trace the contours of long established power relationships, such as along the corridors of European empires, even as they reveal new or strengthen existing but minor relations of exchange (cf. Leichty 2003). Anthropologists have shown interest in how these shifts have changed the structures and experiences of people's daily lives, including in relation to the nation-state. For an ethnographer, these shifts represent the boundaries where culture (including norms, values, practices, beliefs

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and etiquette) is produced, negotiated, contested, and reconciled by the 'assemblages' (of people, things, institutions, objectives, knowledges, discourses, laws and regulatory regimes) that we study (Li 2007b:266; cf. McDonald 1989).

This dissertation is situated ethnographically and historically in relation to citizenship and related questions of national belonging in the Netherlands. In this context, the historically high rates of international migration and settlement during the latter half of the twentieth century is of particular importance. The international migration and settlement that governments saw as necessary for economic and/ or demographic growth frequently had the effect of increasing the diversity of the population living in the nation-state along cultural, ethnic or racial, linguistic, and religious lines. This was the case, for example, in both Canada and the Netherlands, especially following the Second World War as these economies recovered. For Canada, immigrants arriving from 'traditional' source countries – Western European countries sending "white," Christian individuals and families – dwindled during the post-WWII period. Instead, increasing numbers of people sought to immigrate to Canada from the global South and spaces of former empire (cf. Sharma 2006). For many countries, whose nationalist discourses have figured around shared traits like ethnicity or race and language, these shifts have unsettled many assumptions about national culture and belonging (cf. Gilroy 1987; Hall 1988). As Canada has shown, this has been the case even in countries that have been traditionally understood as 'immigration countries' or 'settler societies' (Mackey 1999; cf. Hage 2000). At the same time, those who immigrate (and their descendants) may express affective sentiments that traverse nation-state borders and pose potential challenges to nationalist projects. This might include the development of diaspora communities that form (more) meaningful cultural and political sites of identification and action alongside the nation-state in which their members live. It may also

encompass the building of transnational relationships that span one or more nation-states in a single affective and/or political field, regardless of legal affiliation through formal citizenship status (cf. Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001; Brah 1996; Appadurai 2006; Baubock 1994; Castles 1994; Ong 1999; Mosher 2006). Diaspora communities or transnational practices, especially those facilitated by the ability to hold multiple citizenships, have led some nationalists to fear for the creation of divided loyalties among these citizens.

These phenomena have been identified by anthropologists as spaces for inquiry about nation-building processes. In studying the national imaginary, 'local' sites for ethnographic research may now be connected to or encompass geographically distant or even virtual spaces (cf. Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001; Bouchard 2014). This has led anthropologists to innovate, adapt and incorporate new strategies of transnational, multi-sited and digital fieldwork into their ethnographies. The insights from these studies have also lead to a reconsideration of how we, as social scientists, approach and conceptualize the nation-state in our work. With echoes of Stoler's call to address the legacies of history and empire, Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2004) appeal to anthropologists to consider the nation in a broader analytic field.

Anthropologists and other social scientists have discussed how the increased cultural diversity experienced by those living in contemporary nation-states has often challenged or conflicted with existing national imaginaries (cf. Mackey 1999; Hage 2000; Holmes 2000; Wikan 2002; Povinelli 2002; Prins 2002; Beriss 2004; Bunzl 2004; Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007; Mandel 2008; Duyvendak 2011). In the wake of these changes, citizenship has become an important way of policing the boundaries of the nation-state, which has in turn had important impacts on the ways in which the nation has been imagined and governed. Through citizenship, people living within the borders of the nation-state become target populations for government.

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They are rendered as citizens or foreigners subject to specific sets of rights and obligations based on their status in relation to the state.[1] In the wake of cultural diversity wrought by late twentieth century migration, there have typically been two responses by states to the incorporation of newcomers.

For some countries, for instance Germany (until recently), Switzerland, or Israel, a very strong 'ethno-nationalism' has been used to deny the majority of newcomers the rights of citizenship or full access to the polity (cf. Mandel 1994, 2008; Koopmans et al. 2005; Shapiro 2013). For instance, newcomers able to claim ethnic or religious affiliation with the nation are entitled to citizenship, for example Germany's policy around "*Aussiedler*" or 'ethnic Germans' (Mandel 2008), whereas other non-EU citizens (without German spouses) are only able to naturalize after eight years' residency.[2] In these countries, newcomers may have been recruited on a temporary basis as labourers to fill industry shortages, or arrived as asylum seekers. In the cases of these particular types of migrants, newcomers are rarely granted citizenship. Even among those who are granted citizenship status in these countries, they may remain discursively positioned outside or on the margins of the nation. This may even be the case for immigrants' descendants who may have been raised in the host country, and perhaps have no other citizenship status due to a misalignment of *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis* provisions (cf. Shapiro 2013).

Alternatively, many countries (especially 'settler societies' like Canada or Australia), have responded to demographic and economic dilemmas through the recruitment and incorporation of newcomers as productively labouring citizens. In the face of a heterogeneous citizenry, these nation-states have reworked governance structures to incorporate aspects of cultural diversity into the national imaginary. Older notions of national (Western, Enlightenment, liberal) 'core values' have become embedded in legal apparatuses (e.g. Canada's Charter of

Rights and Freedoms), while minority rights and expectations for cultural tolerance have shifted understandings of nationhood away from notions of shared ethnicity, race, language, religion, etc. (cf. Hage 2000; Mackey 1999; Povinelli 2002; Thomas 2004; Beriss 2004; Bunzl 2004). As Mackey (1999) has shown in her work on Canadian identity, and Beriss (2004) illustrates in his ethnography of Antilleans in France, these shifts reveal unintended effects of new programs of government. Older strategies and discourses governing affective sentiment around national belonging are shown to uneasily resurface in new discourses, for instance as cultural racism (Silverstein 2005). Ethnography shows how calculations of belonging based on criteria of difference that are no longer supposed to matter in nationalist discourse continue to affect the ways in which people envision and experience the nation (cf. Stoler 2011). Beriss' Antilleans (French citizens from the overseas *départements*) find that their claims to Frenchness in the 'metropole' are challenged by recent waves of racialized migrants from sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere. Suddenly, Antilleans' legal and cultural claims to Frenchness – appealing to Republican values, through shared language, history, educational and bureaucratic institutional experiences – are overshadowed for (white or ethnic) French citizens by unspoken racial difference. Analogously, Mackey's "*Canadian*-Canadians" – white, middle-class, Anglophones – stress how the tolerance of cultural difference is a foundational Canadian value, while simultaneously (and without irony) challenging and censuring the expression of minority cultural rights by "ethnic-Canadians."

The increased and changing patterns of migration and settlement have also shown how the nation-state and its borders may be troubled by affective relations, sociopolitical rights, obligations and polities operating on scales beyond that of the nation-state. Glick Schiller and Fouron (2001) have outlined the ways in which the migration of Haitians (e.g. to New York City

in the USA) has created a translocal space of Haitian national identification. Incorporating the perspectives of Haitians in New York, in Haiti, and from the auto-ethnographic perspective of Fouron himself, the ethnography underscores how Haitian transnational practice creates and imposes a new set of obligations on Haitians to support and build the nation-state – regardless of their formal citizenship status or place of residence. That the Haitian government also supports this "long-distance nationalism" is an important challenge to the concept of the nation-state from the perspective of early scholars of nationalism. As Aihwa Ong (1999) has shown in her work on 'flexible' citizenship, the nation-state and nationalist practices are rearticulated elsewhere as well. Ong's ethnography examines how the transnational strategies of Chinese refugees and business migrants is a reaction by these migrants and by the industrializing Southeast Asian states to globalization. While operating in a transnational field, Ong maintains that "the nation-state—with its supposed monopoly over sovereignty—remains a key institution in structuring spatial order" (1999:215). Especially attentive to the role of the state, Ong discusses how in spite of a plethora of changes that many have heralded as leading to the erosion or demise of the nation-state, these changes may in fact speak to 'mutations' in the nation-state and its modes of governing.

Similarly, scholars studying the supranational European Union have shown how this multi-level governance system has added another dimension to the study of the nation-state. The EU may figure in people's lives as a way to challenge legislation in individual member states, give greater voice to (transnational and local) regional interests, serve as another source of difference against which to define the national self, or support and encourage the spread of certain ideas, policies, and discourses (cf. Bellier and Wilson 2000; Borneman and Fowler 1997; Shore 2000; Stacul et al. 2006; Amselle 2003; Bunzl 2004; Geddes 1999; Gingrich 2006;

Holmes 2000). The EU may also fulfill each of these (and other roles) simultaneously, as citizens of member states are at the same time citizens of the European Union.

Anthropologists have also shown how ideas and practices that travel and settle in different nation-states have affected the conception and practice of citizenship and national belonging on the ground. The transformation of meaning around citizenship practice is clear in the work of Andrea Muehlebach (2011, 2012) in Italy. Her ethnography traces the impacts of the transition from a Fordist to a neoliberal economic model on the lived experience of citizenship. Muehlebach shows how in the face of these pervasive changes, especially the withdrawal of the state from social services, some citizens now struggle to redefine their participation as morally-attuned and productively labouring citizens through voluntarism (cf. Hemment 2012; Erickson 2012; Cattelino 2004; Welty Peachey et al. 2011). In her work on neoliberalism, Ong's (1999, 2006) ethnographies on 'flexible' and 'mutated' citizenship practice reflect similar transformations in the ways in which citizens make claims to belonging through labour.

In each of these ethnographic studies, it is clear that broader processes and developments – from increased cultural diversity or migration practices to processes of globalization and the rise of supranational or non-national sites of rights, obligation and identification – affect how people engage with and build the nation. Yet, what remains key for anthropologists in the study of the nation-state is

> how, when, and why these and other categories of identity recruit people into them, and appear to demand the behaviour that they do. It is the way in which these identities are constructed, their capacity to persuade or repulse, the ideas and actors they evoke, which interest us here. (McDonald 1989:22)

While the disruptions and developments encountered by the nation-state at the end of the twentieth century and beyond offer anthropologists novel sites for exploration, we are still

engaged in examining how boundaries of national culture are created, negotiated and acted upon in the everyday by people, institutions, and organizations.

Anthropological research offers new insights to the study of the nation-state through the careful ethnographic and historical consideration of people's everyday lives vis-à-vis this powerful social institution. The ways in which the field has been conceptualized in the transnational study by Glick Schiller and Fouron (2001), the multi-sited work of Beriss (2004), or the virtual sites of Russian nationalism studied by Bouchard (2014) certainly appear to differ from the earlier ethnographies of Handler or McDonald. Despite these new methodological challenges and contextual considerations, recent ethnographic studies of the nation nonetheless appear to continue the task of following the processes of nation-building exemplified by McDonald and Handler. Where more recent studies of the nation appear to make their greatest contributions, building on the foundational work of earlier scholars, is through the researchers' analytical insights, connections and explanations drawn between the nation-state and other powerful processes and practices at local, national, and transnational scales. This has ranged from exposing the continued power of colonialism or the transfiguration of older forms of exclusion in contemporary nation-building to showing the importance of citizenship as a way of exerting individual agency in the face of processes such as globalization and the spread of neoliberal governmentality.

Locating the boundaries of national culture in citizenship

I recognize citizenship as one of the sites of entry for the ethnographer, a boundary where national culture is negotiated and deployed in discourse. In my ethnographic work, I trace

aspects of contemporary processes of citizenship with an awareness of the historical patterns and concepts that took root in colonial Dutch discourses of social difference. These ongoing patterns come into view through everyday discussions and observations, which reveal how "[n]ationalism is simultaneously obvious and obscure" (Billig 1995:14).

Where scholarship on the nation has often avoided discussions of the state, scholarship on citizenship has frequently omitted the importance of the nation in how citizenship is lived. The focus on state rights and obligations is of vital importance to understanding citizenship. Yet, this emphasis often obscures the ways in which the criteria for citizenship have been developed, and how these remain deeply entangled with historical processes and notions of national belonging. In this respect, the literature on citizenship, like that on the nation-state, has benefitted from the more recent interest shown by anthropologists. Many scholars now contest the predominant, myopic view that examines citizenship only as a formal legal status in relation to the nation-state (cf. Ong 1999, 2006; Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001; Beriss 2004; Mandel 2008; Tonkens et al. 2008; Duyvendak 2011; Mosher 2006). Such scholars question long-held scholarly and political assumptions about the nature and function of the rights and responsibilities located in the relationship between the individual citizen and their nation-state.

I situate my research project in relation to the ethnographic work of scholars such as Ong (1996, 1999, 2006), Muehlebach (2012), Mandel (2008), as well as that of Dutch scholars working on questions of citizenship; notably the work of Dutch "culturalization of citizenship" scholars associated with the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR, *Universiteit van Amsterdam*): Tonkens et al. (2008), Duyvendak (2011), Verkaaik (2009), Hurenkamp et al. (2011), Schinkel (2010), as well as Geschiere (2009). These scholars consider citizenship as a cultural process of national subject-making, rather than a taken for granted legal

status. Their work attends to how such processes are played out in daily negotiations between individuals and nation-states, in the media, in relation to policy, as well as among one another as claims are made to belonging within multiple spaces, from the neighbourhood or city to the nation-state, and beyond.

Methodologically, Hurenkamp (et al) have framed their investigations through an understanding of citizenship as "a discursive practice in the sense that citizens actually talk citizenship into being – by defining, including, and excluding certain people and practices" (2011:211). Drawing explicitly on Foucault, Ong views such banal practices of subject-making ("subject-ification") as cultivated through complex and pervasive power relations (Ong 1996:737). She elaborates on this understanding in her discussion of "cultural citizenship" as:

> the cultural practices and beliefs produced out of negotiating the often ambivalent and contested relations with the state and its hegemonic forms that establish the criteria of belonging within a national population and territory. Cultural citizenship is a dual process of self-making and being-made within webs of power linked to the nation-state and civil society. (Ong 1996:738)

While not explicitly drawing on Ong's work, Dutch scholars (particularly those mentioned in connection with AISSR's work) have developed a "culturalized" understanding of citizenship that echoes Ong's approach. These scholars argue that in the Netherlands (and Europe) in recent years, discussions of citizenship have become increasingly framed through cultural or moral concepts, rather than considering citizenship as a strictly judicial-legal category of belonging. In my work, powerful discursive practices around citizenship have been expressed particularly through ideas connected to communication in the Dutch language, as well as local expressions of Dutch sociality, of being *sociaal*. According to Tonkens (et al) this "culturalized" understanding of citizenship has come to dominate the discourse and experience of citizenship

from the perspectives of policy makers and politicians, discussions within the media and among their research informants. Ethnographically, this discourse clearly underscores the struggle to control the boundaries of national culture in the presence of a culturally diverse citizenry. Tonkens (et al) describe this phenomenon as "a process in which more meaning is attached to cultural participation (in terms of norms, values, practices and traditions), either as alternative or in addition to citizenship as rights and socio-economic participation" (Tonkens et al. 2008:6). This process of culturalization has also contributed to the (re)moralization of citizenship, through which formal citizenship is "discursive[ly] suspend[ed] through a problematization of moral citizenship, which turns citizenship into a possibility instead of an actuality, and which turns it into a virtue" (Schinkel 2010:266). This process is identifiable in Muehlebach's (2012) work with volunteer care-givers in Italy, but also has much broader reach for many newcomers and their descendants whose belonging in the nation-state is discursively questioned, regardless of their formal claims to citizenship (cf. Beriss 2004; Mackey 1999; Hage 2000; Ong 1999).

This understanding of citizenship as a complex and even messy expression of power relations underscores the role and operation of governmentality in lived experience. Through the site of citizenship it is possible to discern the processes and relationships that "regulate the conduct of subjects as a population and as individuals in the interests of ensuring the security and prosperity of the nation-state" (Ong 1996:738).

Educating citizens: an exploration of the will to govern

In this dissertation, I examine the will to govern (Li 2007a) as a way to understand local processes of nation-building. Drawing on theoretical perspectives informed by Foucauldian

governmentality, as in the ethnographic work of Ann Laura Stoler and Aihwa Ong, and in the critical and programmatic studies of these processes by Tania Li and Mitchell Dean, this dissertation traces how "government operates by educating desires and configuring habits, aspirations and beliefs" (Li 2007a:275) of the national population, so that people do as they ought. Theoretical lenses employing governmentality have frequently been more popular in analyses of non-Western and colonial contexts, especially in anthropological work on development (cf. Ferguson 1994[1990]). This is clear in Li's (2007b) work on community forest management in Indonesia, as well as Stoler's work (1995, 2009, 2011) on the colonial archive, how colonialism resonates in the national societies of contemporary Europe. In Western contexts, there has been a tendency to favour the Foucauldian notion of 'discipline', directing studies toward the analysis of specific institutions – as in Foucault's own work using the cases of the asylum and prison. The concept of discipline is useful in examining specific groups, for instance the education of students in schools or specific courses (e.g. Dutch 'civic integration' classes). These are groups of people that have been rendered into technical subjects of specific education or reform through detailed supervision (Li 2007a:275). Governmentality instead concerns how populations at large are governed, with particular attention to these populations' welfare and improvement.

I focus on voluntary Dutch language coaching partnerships and their organizations in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Given that these are educational programs and are part of the wider Dutch project of immigrant integration, it may seem that this dissertation should more rightly employ the lens of discipline than that of governmentality. It is therefore important to consider how, in spite of the specificity of some governmental interventions, the bounded populations that governmentality targets differ from the fixed groups that are targets of disciplinary control.

Studying power relations in the delimited space of a prison or school differs from the study of the "whole society" where the target "is a set of processes and relations always in motion" (Li 2007a:279). This difference means that the techniques of government (such as statistics, planning, monitoring) operate quite unlike those of disciplinary regimes. Processes of governmentality operate through relationships of power at a distance, rather than direct force; they operate through the cultivation of consent, setting the conditions for people to follow their self-interest in line with the calculations of government (Li 2007a:275). Where newcomers to Dutch society undertaking 'civic integration' courses (known as *inburgering*) or working with language coaches may indeed be subject to disciplinary techniques, these directed interventions are situated within the much broader processes operating at the level of Dutch society at large through a technical field of citizenship practice. From this perspective, it becomes less clear which agents may be considered 'governors' and which 'the governed', as both groups are subjects whose conduct is shaped and conducted to certain ends (Dean 2010:38; Li 2007a:276). Even as language coaches or policy makers may intervene in the conduct of language learners and potential citizens, the former too are part of wider processes to cultivate "active" or "good" Dutch citizens (cf. Tonkens 2006; Hemment 2012).

The citizenship education that occurs through programs connected to the *inburgering* policy or voluntary language coaching is, in fact, part of a much broader program that seeks to educate not only newcomers, but also 'native' Dutch volunteers and the members of Dutch society at large about moral citizenship practice. Through everyday "forms of power, the channels it takes, and the discourses it permeates in order to reach the most tenuous and individual modes of behavior [*sic*]" (Foucault 1990:11), everyday experiences are impacted by the practices and effects of governmentality (Stoler 1995; Ong 1996; Li 2007a). Volunteers are

shown to be implicated in and impacted by the same governmental rationalities as the newcomers with whom they work as frontline citizenship educators. Through acknowledging these discursive techniques it becomes possible to discern how people may both seek to resist and yet continue to be implicated in a particular way of working within, understanding, and (re)making their social worlds (Foucault 1990; cf. Hall 1988).

I speak specifically to the messy and contingent operation of the will to govern through what could be conceptualized as an assemblage, regime of practice, or technology of government that centres on citizenship as a technical field for intervention. Li's usage of the concept of the 'assemblage' is a useful heuristic tool for thinking through the ways in which socially-situated subjects, objectives, and "an array of knowledges, discourses, institutions, laws and regulatory regimes" are drawn together in the project of government (Li 2007b:266). Agency, contingency, temporality and spatiality come to the fore as the successes of an assemblage are shown to be unstable, subject to critique, and malleable. These characteristics derive from how assemblages are perpetually reworked by various parties to keep them not only coherent, but governable (Li 2007a:279; Li 2007b). The various policies and regulations, political bodies, discourses and images prevalent in the media, the practices of volunteer organizations (language learning and immigrant integration) and the people who engage in these fields, the objectives, motives, and opinions they express in relation to citizenship practice enables an analysis of how governmentality operates.

As I show through my ethnography, the messiness of such assemblages on the ground has important effects for how 'problems' develop, persist, change over time, and are envisioned by different actors and institutions. This messiness also contributes to how specific solutions are conceived to fix these problems, and their effects evaluated (Dean 2010:20,41). The ways in

which certain subjects, behaviours, affective sentiments, relationships, or processes become objects of thought and sites of governmental intervention does not follow a linear progression. Rather the development of governmental problems are in themselves highly problematic, revealing contradictions and contestations as governmental programs attempt to correct, redirect or reform the conduct of the self and others in daily life. In acknowledging that there can be "no divorce of anthropology and history, or of ethnographic and historical reality" (McDonald 1989:18), it is necessary to situate the ethnography in an historical analysis of Dutch colonialism and its impacts. In particular, I address colonial and twentieth century government policies pertaining to citizenship, immigration, and cultural integration. Addressing these historical precedents, allows for a recognition and exploration of the tensions inherent in the Dutch nation-building project as terms gain traction and recede in the Dutch grammar of alterity historically, in policy, and ethnographically across Dutch society. Across the development of the various regimes of practices of government I trace in this dissertation, language – the Dutch language in particular – is revealed as an important site of continuity, as a key technique in teaching subjects the strategies of government (Dean 2010:269-270). By focusing on voluntary Dutch language coaches in my ethnography, I examine how these differing governmental discourses are synthesized by specific socially-situated subjects in their everyday practice. This dissertation therefore offers

> an ethnographic inquiry into government that combines analysis of governmental interventions (their genealogy, their diagnoses and prescriptions, their boundaries and exclusions) with analysis of what happens when attempts to achieve the "right disposition of things" encounter—and produce—a "witches' brew" of processes and practices that exceed their scope. (Li 2007a:279)

This "witches' brew" must be understood, as anthropologists studying the nation have shown,

through situating it in its cultural and historical context.

First, however, I address how I came to access the ethnographic context at the heart of this research. In the following chapter I attend to some of the key events and processes that guided me to focus on voluntary Dutch language coaches as a way to understand Dutch citizenship practice. In the recounting some of the key processes through which I came to settle on this particular site the significance of the Dutch language as a technique for teaching subjects how to conduct themselves as "good" citizens is also clear. In outlining these methodological choices, I place Amsterdam in its wider national context.

2. Navigating "the field": Selecting field sites and methods

In this chapter, I discuss how my choice of field site and key research participants evolved from the directions taken as my ethnographic research unfolded during my initial year of fieldwork. This dissertation draws on my thirteen months of fieldwork in Amsterdam, conducted between August 2009 and August 2010, with follow up research conducted during May 2011. The ethnographic data in this dissertation comes primarily from semi-structured, in-depth interviews with key informants, as well as participant observation in selected sites. My ethnography of the politics of the everyday is given focus through the lens of voluntary projects and volunteers connected with language coaching programs geared towards newcomers. As such, my key informants were mainly 'native' Dutch volunteers (and their coordinators) involved in Dutch language speaking partnerships as language coaches (*taalcoaches*). Interviews were conducted in Dutch or English at the discretion of the participant. All individual participants have been given pseudonyms, while the names of the organizations and their projects appear in the text. Participant observation was carried out over the course of fieldwork in voluntary projects as both volunteer and student, but also at significant public events in Amsterdam and elsewhere in the Netherlands. This data is complemented by an engagement and reflection on key news stories and issues that circulate in the Dutch mainstream and social media, as well as digital archival research on Dutch policy and governmental social research reports.

The focus of my ethnographic work on the politics of the everyday presented particular challenges of identification and access to research participants. I begin this chapter with a discussion of ethnographic points of entry to the field, and how I came to focus my interest and energy in certain sites. Following this discussion, I elaborate on how voluntarism and the

language coaching projects I study are part of a unique lens to the study of citizenship and governmentality. This entails a discussion of who volunteers as language coaches, and a survey of the various language coaching organizations in Amsterdam that became my key site. I conclude this chapter by situating these research sites and questions within the wider context and complexities offered by the city of Amsterdam as a site for research into issues of cultural diversity, immigrant integration, and meanings attributed to citizenship. Amsterdam's unique social, economic and political history, the experiences and attitudes of its inhabitants developed through the city's relationships with the rest of the Netherlands, across Europe, and through its prominence as an imperial hub all impact and shape, but do not determine, what it means to be Dutch.

Points of ethnographic entry: language learning and voluntarism

During my early months in the field, how to locate my research questions in a particular locale or site in Amsterdam was a pressing question that was considerably influenced by issues of access. From the understanding of dynamics around national belonging I gathered from the existing literature, news media, and my observations and discussions with 'native' Dutch people during these early weeks, I intended to locate my research in a site associated with immigrant integration projects. However, locating such a site where those involved were open to speaking or working with me presented a significant hurdle. I discovered that the process of identifying and accessing my field site was deeply entangled with my position as a Dutch language learner. This position greatly influenced how I chose to navigate barriers to recruiting research participants and how I came to understand the politics of the everyday.

Without a more narrowed focus through particular community hubs or through a network of key contacts, my initial fear in the field was that I might find that, like Erin Martineau, I was "the only person lingering around outside, with no one to observe" (2006:12). In her dissertation research, Martineau was frustrated to find that the informal socialization she had anticipated being a key research method for her work in Amsterdam Noord was instead a misguided assumption connected to her "deeply held idealization of fieldwork." Informal socialization has worked well for researchers conducting fieldwork in particular types of communities, as shown in McDonald's (1989) work with Breton peasants. In her work in this rural, insular Breton village, McDonald was recognized as an outsider, and through her work became a point of community interest whom locals often sought to engage. Yet, as Martineau's experience of research in a diverse neighbourhood in Amsterdam shows, informal socialization may not be productive as an initial or key research strategy without first identifying a more focused point of entry. Reflective of the research McDonald conducted with Breton militant groups in a larger urban centre as part of the same study into Breton nationalism, Martineau soon found that she was required to schedule appointments and interviews, attend committee meetings and other publicized gatherings in order to meet potential research participants. Seeking out particular points of engagement and community organization around specific issues – i.e. Martineau's *hangjongeren* (hang around youth), or McDonald's Breton nationalists – facilitates ethnographic continuity across a smaller group, while speaking to issues concerning a broader population.

Given my research interest in the politics of the everyday, my decision to learn the local language of my field site was guided by professional concerns for first accessing research participants, and for understanding the detailed social cues and discourses of everyday life in the Netherlands. It was also obvious from my preliminary review that knowledge of the language

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would enable access to the considerable Dutch language scholarship, news and popular media connected to my field of study, to which many Anglophone scholars do not have access. Many of the important discussions that have occupied public discourse in the Dutch media that I raise throughout my dissertation have been little reported upon in English language media, or even in English-language Dutch news publications (which tend to be oriented toward the community of 'expatriates' in the Netherlands, e.g. *RNW*). In a similar vein, competency in Dutch has also been instrumental in accessing historical and policy documents, social research reports, and other archival material. Access to these documents has proven vital not only to grounding my understanding of the key issues I engage throughout this dissertation, but to tracing the emergence of particular discursive formations and vocabularies. Like news and other media, many of these documents are freely available through online databases, for instance through Dutch ministry offices, the *WRR* (Netherlands Scientific Research Council), and *SCP* (Social and Cultural Plan Bureau). While these documents often have English-language summaries, the majority of the data is still presented in Dutch making knowledge of the language essential. Similarly, even as Dutch scholars increasingly publish in English, there is a significant volume of literature on the Netherlands that is only accessible in the Dutch language. This includes not only important historical analysis, but also more recent social science scholarship on questions of immigration, voluntarism, and citizenship.

When I arrived in Amsterdam in August 2009, I had completed beginner-level Dutch at the University of Toronto (advanced beginner or A2 level according to the Council of Europe's Framework of Reference for Languages). I undertook an intensive intermediate-level course during my first three weeks living in the city (Amsterdam-Maastricht Summer University, B1 level). Over the course of my year in the field my facility with the language strengthened, and I

was able to comfortably interview research participants in their choice of Dutch or English, follow casual conversations, and keep up with Dutch language media. Yet, learning Dutch has proven important for the way my research unfolded far beyond my ability to communicate in the language. In a city where most locals I encountered spoke English, learning Dutch helped to shape the ways I was seen as a foreigner and researcher by my research participants, even when we spoke in English. It also facilitated contact with certain groups of people in Dutch society in ways that English-language communication did not. Many 'native' Dutch people I met were surprised and pleased that I was learning Dutch – especially given my position as an English speaker without Dutch heritage. These initial conversations about my language learning often became an opening to speak with people about my research and to gauge their opinions on issues or questions related to my work. In this way, I learned about key Dutch terms and ideas, public events, political dramas, and policy issues that resonated with everyday understandings of citizenship practice, immigration, integration, difference and Dutchness. Knowledge of the local language brought to light more nuanced understandings of key discussions about Dutchness and difference, pointing me in directions and flagging questions, tensions, and contradictions in day to day life. As I discuss later in this chapter, the significance of my learning Dutch was especially clear as my research came to centre on voluntary Dutch language coaches.

My decision to learn Dutch was also driven by the knowledge of how important the language has become to the questions of immigrant integration and citizenship I planned to study. Even before I arrived in the Netherlands it was clear that given its position as an important tool for teaching citizenship, learning Dutch would be an important dynamic in my field research (cf. Björnson 2007; Entzinger 2004; Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2009; Lechner 2007). For instance, the *inburgering* ('civic integration') policy enacted in 1998 requires newcomers to

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undertake 500 hours of Dutch language training and pass a series of exams in order to qualify for Dutch citizenship. In trying to identify possible points of ethnographic entry before I arrived in the field, some contacts I had made in the Netherlands had suggested I begin my research among the neighbourhood centres (*buurthuizen, wijkcentra*) scattered across Amsterdam and other Dutch cities. These centres were identified as places where newcomers and other neighbourhood residents came together for sports or other activities, and where newcomers may learn about how to 'integrate' in the Netherlands through language or skills classes. While these sites seemed to offer promising entry points for my research, those that I contacted for meetings either did not respond, or denied my request (indicating that they were too busy with the daily running of their centre to speak with me). These initial messages had been written in English. Faced with the dilemma of locating a new prospective point of entry to the field, a colleague in Amsterdam suggested that I pursue volunteer work as a way to facilitate connections with potential research participants. Still concerned about my limited knowledge and confidence in speaking Dutch, finding volunteer programs – especially those that required little knowledge of Dutch – became my next obstacle. I began volunteering in two projects in Amsterdam: the English-language coaching program, the Native Speaker Project, on Monday mornings; and on Wednesday afternoons helping to run a nursing home's art therapy project, the painting club.

The Native Speaker Project was organized by *Hart voor Amsterdam*, a not-for-profit organization concerned primarily with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).[1] It relied on English-speaking volunteers to help students aged 11-13, in the lowest academic stream in the Dutch education system (*VMBO, voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*, preparatory middle-level applied education) to improve their English speaking skills. *Hart voor Amsterdam* worked with several international corporations in the city to provide opportunities for their

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employees to give back to the local community. Many volunteers (particularly 'native' Dutch participants) were drawn from this CSR initiative. Most other volunteers were recruited through English-language media (such as the monthly publication, *Time Out Amsterdam*), through communication channels at the American Embassy, English or American business clubs, or international schools. I found the program through Amsterdam's central volunteering website (*VCA*, Volunteer Centre Amsterdam, www.vca.nu), in an advertisement indicating that little or no knowledge of Dutch was required of volunteers. The program asked for a minimum of three weeks' of participation, one day a week, at one of the three schools in which the program operated. The target schools all taught at the *VMBO* level, and were considered colloquially as *zwarte scholen* ('black' schools), that is, characterized by their disproportionately high number of 'non-native' or 'non-Western' Dutch students. The students we met with were considered behind in their English-language skills, and our participation in this project enabled the students to receive an extra hour of conversational English practice that they would not have had otherwise.

I decided to participate with the Native Speaker Project because it dealt with language (albeit English), socially/ educationally marginalized youth, and from practical concerns related to my then limited comprehension of Dutch. Although this was not a Dutch-language program, the privileged position of English among 'native' Dutch, especially in Amsterdam, and that its target group were 'non-Western' Dutch youth suggested to me that it might expose some of the interesting tensions and ideas around social belonging in the Netherlands. It was a space where questions of language butted against questions of integration, as foreigners like myself were positioned as teachers and privileged contributors to Dutch society over (often) Dutch-born students, who were seen as falling behind in their studies, and faced a language 'deficit'.

Through *VCA*, I was also able to apply to a position with an art therapy program in a

nursing home that indicated little knowledge of Dutch was required. I had hoped that this might mean I would be able to converse in English with senior Amsterdammers about their experiences in Amsterdam and how the city and its inhabitants had changed over the course of their lives. Through my failure to discern the important distinctions between the terms for senior's home (*bejaardenthuis*) and nursing home (*verpleeghuis*), I found myself working at the latter with elderly people who often suffered from some form of dementia. Many did not (or could no longer) understand English, and illness often slurred their speech in Dutch, meaning that even Astrid, my 'native' Dutch supervisor and the art therapist sometimes had difficulty understanding the painting club participants. Among the staff and other volunteers I found that few people working at the home spoke English or were comfortable speaking English with me, and I had to mainly rely on speaking Dutch in this space.

The nursing home that I volunteered at was part of a much larger network of care facilities (for elderly patients, as well as people with mental disabilities). Volunteers were an active part in many aspects of life at these care facilities: from helping the staff to care for residents, to organizing outings and activities. These included things as varied as helping to feed residents at nursing homes, or taking one resident who lacked the capacity to ride a bicycle herself on outings using a special tandem-bike so that she could "feel the wind in her face." In the wake of cuts to the welfare state throughout the 1990s, volunteers have become essential providers of Dutch social services (Knijn 1998; cf. Muehlebach 2012). My involvement in the painting club was mainly composed of simple tasks: helping the coordinator with the set up and clean-up of the art room, helping to escort the elderly participants to their rooms afterwards, retrieving the beverage cart from the cafeteria, serving the club members coffee or tea, or helping participants with their paintings. While Astrid, the art therapist and my supervisor, could have

done these tasks herself (and did before I began volunteering), my assistance helped the club to run more efficiently. On occasion, it also allowed Astrid to spend more time with particular participants, as I supervised the larger group.

Participating in the Native Speaker Project was a rather different experience than my work at the nursing home, but both projects revealed important continuities around practices of voluntarism. My experiences in these sites were important in constructing a broader understanding of voluntarism in the Netherlands: who volunteers (and who does not), the motivations of those who volunteer, and the role of volunteers in the daily operation of certain organizations, or during special campaigns or events. These experiences also highlighted the increasing importance of voluntarism in the context of a receding welfare state. The deep connections between voluntary work and notions of "good" or "active" citizenship (Ong 2006; Tonkens 2006) practice came into greater focus after I had enrolled as a client in a voluntary Dutch language coaching program. This realization, coupled with the central importance of Dutch language learning for newcomers' access to Dutch citizenship (cf. Björnson 2007; Entzinger 2004; Scheffer 2000), directed me to focus on voluntary language coaching projects. As a site where concerns about immigrant integration, citizenship practice, the role of voluntarism, and everyday meanings of belonging in Amsterdam and the Netherlands coalesce, these Dutch language coaching projects presented a potentially rich site for my ethnographic research.

It was primarily in order to improve my Dutch language speaking and comprehension that I first came into contact with voluntary Dutch language coaching projects. In early January 2010 I registered as a client (non-native speaking participant, *anderstaliger*) in the voluntary language coaching project run by *Gilde Amsterdam* (Guild Amsterdam) known as *SamenSpraak*

(Speaking Together). The *SamenSpraak*, like the Native Speaker Project and my work at the nursing home, filled a gap in service provision. This program, and other such programs in Amsterdam provided conversation partnerships that paired volunteers as language coaches with newcomers to the language, and often city or country. As I learned more about these language coaching projects I found that many, if not most, of the language learners in these programs sought out the free services to help improve their Dutch language skills in order to pass the mandatory *inburgering* tests and become eligible for Dutch citizenship. Language coaching volunteers often took on the role of front-line citizenship educators and integration workers for their immigrant partners, helping them to make sense of everything from letters from the municipality to everyday Dutch social etiquette. For many of the immigrants in these programs, their language coach may be the only 'native' Dutch person with whom they have regular and meaningful contact. Clients who were not pursuing Dutch citizenship – for example temporary residents or EU citizens, often English speakers like myself – sought out these programs as a way to better connect with the local society through learning the language. Through weekly, informal conversations, language coaches became "gatekeepers" to Dutch society for the newcomers with whom they worked.

My involvement in each of these projects as a volunteer and client helped to facilitate the interest and cooperation of participants when I later sought to organize interviews with volunteers and their coordinators. The willingness of these projects' coordinators to circulate my request for interviews strongly contrasted the rejection I earlier faced from the neighbourhood centres seeking an introduction and preliminary interview. In addition to having successfully cultivated relationships with these projects, I could not help but feel that part of the welcome reception I received as a researcher was also due to my requests to volunteers and coordinators

having been written in Dutch. (As an English-language project, my communications with the Native Speaker Project were in English.) In contrast, my earlier introduction to the community centres had not been facilitated by previously established connections, and had been written in English.

My ability and willingness to speak Dutch with prospective interviewees appeared to add another layer to their interest in my work and comfort in speaking with me. As I would learn from these interviews and through participant-observation, learning to speak Dutch was often considered to show commitment to living in and understanding Dutch society. In meeting each potential research participant, I offered to conduct our interview in either Dutch or English. While many people chose to take this opportunity to practice their English with a native speaker, others felt more comfortable speaking in Dutch. Even when research participants and I spoke English, there were moments when my knowledge of Dutch helped to carry or explain their point. For instance, when a participant forgot or was unsure of the English translation for a Dutch term, we were able to puzzle it out together. I was frequently invited to meet research participants in their homes to speak over cups of tea. I met other research participants in their places of work or voluntary work, such as a meeting room in the *Gilde Amsterdam* offices or in the cafeteria at the nursing home. Some research participants were also helpful in arranging interviews with other volunteers or coordinators in their programs.

What became especially clear in speaking with language coaches, whether in English or Dutch, was that these participants were interested in: a) helping me – as a researcher and language learner or volunteer – with my project, and; b) the questions I asked about integration and citizenship practice in the Netherlands. These were clearly topics on which these volunteers had opinions which they were happy to share with me. For many volunteer language coaches,

helping newcomers in Amsterdam to "find their way" through learning or improving their Dutch language skills was discussed as a personal or professional interest and commitment. As a language learner, I was interestingly implicated in these concerns, occupying a particular position in relation to the ways my participants understood these questions and goals, and the questions I posed through my research. This emerged most clearly in my meetings with José, a volunteer with *Gilde Amsterdam*. In arranging our first interview (my first formal interview with a language coach), I had expressed my hesitancy in speaking Dutch with her, but indicated that if she preferred we could conduct the interview in Dutch rather than English.[2] In her friendly email response, José wrote to me in Dutch telling me not to

> worry about this. My English is reasonably good and your Dutch is better than reasonable! (With Swahili or Urdu we can always fill in the details). But I understand very well that with research like this the nuances can be important, so I will really do my best.

During our interview – as during my meetings with my own *Gilde Amsterdam* language coach – José made me feel comfortable speaking Dutch. She spoke clearly, corrected my mistakes, and offered clarifications for her answers where needed. As I interviewed José, her experience as a language coach was clear not only in our interaction during the interview, but in her experience and views of issues related to belonging in Amsterdam and the Netherlands, "good" citizenship practice, the role of language learning for integration, etc.. In this way, my position as a Dutch language learner not only facilitated communication with José and other language coaches about the problems newcomers were thought to pose to Dutch society, but communicated some of the key discursive tensions and contradictions connected to these issues in this particular time and place.

Situating volunteers in the study of citizenship

Throughout my initial year in the field, Wednesdays were particularly busy as I went from volunteering in the afternoon at the nursing home to being a client of voluntary services in the evening when I met to speak Dutch with my language coach, Frank. I met Frank through *Gilde Amsterdam*'s free language coaching program, *SamenSpraak*, and every Wednesday evening from mid-January 2010 until I left the field, I met with Frank to practice speaking Dutch. We covered a wide range of topics, including my voluntary work, with Frank often greeting me by asking how the elderly (*bejaarden*) were doing that day. On one evening we discussed how common it has become for young people to move across the country (or even across the EU or the world) to find work. Frank himself had moved from elsewhere in the Netherlands to work in Amsterdam. In Frank's opinion, these new patterns of movement and settlement made institutions like nursing homes much more important than in generations past, when families relied on one another for care in illness or old age. Referring to a common Dutch adage, Frank explained that it is "better to have a good neighbour than a far friend" (*beter een goede buur dan een verre vriend*). Volunteers, Frank implied, were examples of contemporary "good neighbours" in Dutch society (cf. Tonkens 2006; Putnam 1995; Muehlebach 2012; Erickson 2012).

This understanding of the role of the volunteer as a "good" neighbour or citizen is widely shared across the Netherlands, and in other (especially Western liberal democratic) countries. For many, the connections between voluntarism and morality also elicit important affective sentiments. Among my research participants, it was clear that voluntarism is understood as selfless, a good deed, an expression of giving, and as cultivating positive and meaningful

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connections with one's neighbours or fellow citizens in working toward a shared goal. Among my research participants examples of shared goals had a wide range, for instance putting together a neighbourhood block party, working for the promotion of animal welfare, helping to keep the neighbourhood safe, volunteering time for a professional cause or interest, or helping out with activities at a school, church, or nursing home (cf. Muehlebach 2012; Putnam 1995). Volunteers were thought of as freely choosing to commit their time, effort and expertise to helping others. I was frequently commended by acquaintances when they learned of my work as a volunteer. Some people I met even expressed self-reproach that they too should be volunteering their time to a cause or service.

In spite of the critical lens I applied to my fieldwork among voluntary programs, I too found myself implicated in and consenting to the powerful web of deeply held moral and affective sentiments widely understood to be connected to this form of labour (cf. Stoler 2009; Li 2007b:269). Notions of voluntarism as selfless and good work often gave me momentary pause as I reflected on my decidedly self-interested motivations for volunteering. That my participation as a volunteer was driven by my research rather than as a selfless good deed sometimes made me feel uneasy. These feelings were somewhat reconciled by the idea that this labour was also a way of "giving back" to the community I studied. For instance, my work at the nursing home helped Astrid organize the routine tasks of the painting club, as well as in preparation for special events (like our spring art exhibit during the home's open day). The people I worked with appreciated my participation, and I felt good about these contributions even if they were done out of self-interest as part of my research strategy. My voluntary labour helped to fill the service gaps recognized by certain social programs or added something valuable to the experiences of the programs' clients. These feelings, alongside knowing that without my help the service gap would

be reintroduced, contributed to the commitment I felt to the programs for which I volunteered. Even during moments when the usefulness of these particular programs to my research seemed less clear, the sense of social obligation I felt to them was part of why I continued to work for the Native Speaker Project and nursing home. My long term engagements with these projects, however, have been important in grounding my understanding of the connections between voluntarism, belonging, and "good" or "active" citizenship through extended immersion and observation of the politics of the everyday.

My interviews with volunteers, my participant observation across these voluntary programs, and my personal reflections on the experience of voluntarism, revealed that voluntarism offers a point of ethnographic entry in a way I had not considered when I first sought out these programs. The ways in which citizenship, service and morality have coalesced around voluntarism in the Netherlands points to voluntarism, even generally speaking, as an ethnographically challenging site through which to examine how "good" citizenship is conceived, negotiated, and practiced (cf. Muehlebach 2012; Hemment 2012; Erickson 2012; Cattelino 2004). In the case of volunteer language coaches, I argue that their unique positioning in the process of immigrant integration, embedded within notions of increasingly culturalized citizenship, marks them as important "gatekeepers" to understanding the meanings attributed to "good" citizenship practices in Amsterdam and the Netherlands. Considered models of "good" citizenship practice themselves, language coaches' voluntary work in projects that facilitate the integration of newcomers to Dutch society through language learning provides a unique and powerful lens on questions of citizenship – as a practice, understood through lived experience, and as a legal status (cf. Erickson 2012). In the course of informal meetings between conversation partners, much more than the Dutch language is communicated. Speaking partners

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learn about each other's lives, experiences, and their ideas about how to live in Dutch society and Amsterdam, including when and how Dutch norms and values are learned, challenged, confronted, or upheld. Through interviews with these informants, as well as through participation in various public, national events and numerous encounters over the course of my fieldwork, I examine how multiple, shifting signifiers of belonging and exclusion – ranging from citizenship status, to language, religion, race and culture – are imagined by these individuals in their discussions and views of an immigrant presence and the question of their integration in the Netherlands. While my informants frequently questioned or challenged the normative understandings and discussions circulating within the popular media and from politicians and policy makers about what it means to be Dutch, their participation as voluntary Dutch language coaches also reveals how certain aspects of the Dutch nation-building project have themselves become common sense, discursively implicated in "a whole complex of *savoirs*" (Foucault 1991:102-103).

Voluntary Dutch language coaching programs are of particular importance in the project of immigrant integration, precisely because of the high value placed on immigrants' learning the Dutch language in the current civic integration regime. In Amsterdam, at the time of my research, there were five different organizations offering free, volunteer-based Dutch language coaching services. The first of these programs, the *Gilde Amsterdam SamenSpraak* (Guild Amsterdam's Speaking Together), had been launched in 1999 becoming a model for those that have since sprung up across Amsterdam and the Netherlands. As many of my research participants and their program websites indicated, these projects were not intended to provide formal language training; volunteers were not so much teachers as language coaches, conversation partners, neighbourhood resources, and friendly faces. Although many different

factors motivate their choices, language coaching volunteers nonetheless contribute their time, expertise, and experience to the broader project of social and cultural integration through the Dutch language in the Netherlands, through the locus of their city or own neighbourhood in Amsterdam. Voluntary language coaches are placed in a unique position in the context and landscape of integration in Amsterdam as citizenship educators. This role, normally the purview of the state, is reconfigured as individual volunteers communicate what they think is important about living and belonging in Amsterdam and the Netherlands to newcomers and potential citizens. In this way, volunteers reveal the ways in which their conceptions about citizenship practice are impacted by and resistant to the governmental rationality of the Dutch state. These volunteers act as local ambassadors and resources for particular people in the city or neighbourhood who are framed, to varying degrees, as outsiders or strangers by a number of different social and political actors: politicians and policy makers, media commentators, language coaching programs, other neighbours, even the volunteers themselves. In these calculations, the significance of the Dutch language in questions of belonging and "good" citizenship practice is not to be underestimated. The many layers of meaning attributed to the Dutch language today is a key reason why Dutch language coaching organizations and their volunteers in Amsterdam form the primary lens through which my research explores questions of 'being Dutch' in the contemporary Netherlands.

All language coaches and program coordinators I spoke with stressed the importance of spoken, not written Dutch in these programs[3]; correct grammar is less important than just helping newcomers to the Dutch language feel comfortable enough to "dare" to speak Dutch in the public sphere. This goal is reflected in the kind of training volunteer language coaches received. Regardless of their program of participation, volunteers typically attend an orientation session

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before they begin to work. For language coaches, this orientation may be the only training that they receive from the language coaching organization before they meet their partners and begin coaching. In May 2011, I attended one such orientation session organized by *Mixen in Mokum* (Mixing in Amsterdam) in preparation for the launch of their next six-month cycle of language partnerships in the Amsterdam West neighbourhoods. In this combined recruitment and orientation meeting, both potential clients (language learners) and volunteers (language coaches) met with the program director to learn about the project. At this initial meeting, the director explained the mission of the program, what was expected of participants, and some of the activities that the program organized to facilitate speaking Dutch between the partners. Those attending the session interested in joining the project's upcoming cycle as volunteers were given an information packet that contained a short handbook[4] that provided tips for being a successful language coach, a list of resources, and a *strippenboekje* (a small booklet) of ideas for topics and activities to facilitate conversation during sessions at home and around the neighbourhood. According to the *Mixen in Mokum* director, much of the handbook that the organization provided to their volunteers is borrowed from the program booklet put together by *Gilde Amsterdam*. This resource includes general rules for language coaching volunteers, such as: speaking clearly, simply, and slowly; being careful to build trust between the partners so that the student is not afraid to make mistakes; how to correct your student in a way that encourages further conversation. The final "golden rule" given to language coaches in the *Mixen in Mokum* handbook addresses the commonly shared idea across language coaching organizations that communication is more than just learning the language: communication "forms the basis for further contact and integration, and language acquisition" (my translation).

The *Mixen in Mokum* handbook and *strippenboekje* also provided language coaches with

suggestions for discussion topics and activities during conversation sessions. This included many different low-cost or free activities such as: sharing and describing photos from 'home' with one another; visiting one of the partners' social clubs, church or mosque, or a local neighbourhood centre (*buurthuis* or *dienstencentrum*) listed in the booklet; taking a walk through the park; or participating in special outings sponsored by the organization, such as a boat tour of the canals, a tour of the central library, visiting the cinema, theatre, or museums. Other organizations, such as the *Gilde Amsterdam*, also provide their volunteers with a special pocket dictionary specifically designed for use by Dutch as a Second Language (*NT2*, *Nederlands als tweede taal*) learners. This dictionary provides simple definitions of words, including pictures. Further resources for session topics and activities (or lesson material, in the case of the two organizations mentioned that do provide language lessons) are often linked or available for download on the organizations' websites or on the central Amsterdam site for language coaching projects (*TaalcoachWijzer Amsterdam*). Administrative volunteers or employees at these organizations may also be contacted to help resolve any issues that might arise for language coaches and learning participants.

My experiences meeting with Frank, my language coach at *Gilde Amsterdam*, appeared to reflect the kinds of meetings described by other language coaches with whom I spoke, as well as the topics suggested in the *Mixen in Mokum* training and activity booklets. Frank and I were put into contact by *Gilde Amsterdam* about two weeks after I had registered with the organization as a language learning client (*anderstaliger*). During my intake meeting with the organization, I had been asked a number of questions (in Dutch) about my age, nationality, education, employment, marital status, whether I had children, hobbies and interests, where and for how long had I lived in the city, my reasons for moving to Amsterdam, as well as my usual mode of transportation. I

was also asked about my reasons for learning Dutch and what classes I had taken, as well as whether I preferred to speak with a man or a woman.[5] The intake interview was also a moment to assess the level of Dutch possessed by non-native speaking applicants. After we covered this information, the administrative volunteer I spoke with explained more about the nature of the *Gilde Amsterdam* speaking partnership program. My partner and I would be expected to meet for one or more hours each week, normally for a year. After one year, we would be able to continue if we wanted, find a new speaking partner, or stop participating. Other organizations asked for similar time commitments of their participants (with program cycles running from six months to a year). I was told by *Gilde Amsterdam* that they would try to set me up with someone who lived close by, and with whom I might have something in common. (This criteria for matching language couples was common among other programs as well.) Some people who volunteer as language coaches might also express an interest in speaking with someone from a particular country, or who speaks a particular foreign language. Others might only be able to meet on particular days or at certain times.

Frank was a young professional in his late twenties, who lived an easy distance from me – about ten minutes away by bicycle. We set up our first meeting in late January, which we agreed would take place at his home after he finished work. For other language coaches – such as Anouk or Susanne, both 'native' Dutch women in their late twenties – it was customary to meet in the homes of their partners, or perhaps to arrange a meeting in a public place such as a library or café. In our first meeting at Frank's house, we spent an hour and a half chatting. Over several cups of tea we covered a range of topics, including our work, my research, where I was from in Canada, the new laws affecting the Red Light District in Amsterdam where I lived, tourism and prostitution, and the old Dutch stand-by, the weather.

For the rest of my time in the field we met regularly to spend two hours or so chatting over tea. As the weeks went on, the topics varied, often connecting to local or national events such as the 2010 winter Olympics, holidays like Christmas, Queen's Day or the *Dodenherdenking* (Remembrance Day), the Dutch elections, Canadian politics, or my research, or voluntary work at the nursing home. One week, after Frank had returned from a vacation with some of his friends to the US, he dug out his old school atlas. We spent two hours poring over different maps, describing his trip, places we had been, lived, or wanted to see, geography and travel in general. Another week we talked for almost two hours about cooking and food, or different animals. Some evenings when the weather was clear we might sit by the windows of Frank's eighth-floor apartment and describe what we saw across the city, talking about different places and things to do in Amsterdam. We usually spoke about things we did that week, and sometimes we talked about for the future, what I would do after I left the Netherlands. I found it both challenging and refreshing to have someone with whom I never spoke English. When I found myself searching for a word or concept, Frank patiently tried to help me find it, offering descriptions or definitions in Dutch. In most of the conversations I attempted to have with others, it would be at this point of hesitancy or confusion that the conversation would naturally lapse into English. With Frank this was never the case, although I soon realized that like many other 'native' Dutch in Amsterdam, and given his education, profession, and travel stories, he spoke English fluently. Once or twice we also met for dinner at his house with his girlfriend, and when it was nice enough outside I was invited to join Frank and Jolande for a picnic and tour of the Amsterdam canals on their boat.

Other language coaches also took their partners on outings in their neighbourhood or around the city. Anouk (who worked with the women-only group) had described trying to

"activate" her partner more by introducing her to her local community centre. This was a resource where her partner could practice her Dutch while participating in free or low-cost classes, for instance on sewing or crafting. José, a coach in her sixties who worked with *Gilde Amsterdam*, described taking one of her partners to see a special exhibition of Orthodox Christian art at a local museum that she felt would be interesting to her partner, an Egyptian Coptic Christian. Going on outings during meetings was especially common among *Mixen in Mokum* participants, as this project sought to be "more practical" by situating learning in the neighbourhood and doing daily activities together. Marjolein, a language coach and ambassador for the *Mixen in Mokum* project, had been invited to the May orientation session I attended to talk about her experiences with the program. She began working with *Mixen in Mokum* after she had retired, and when we met worked simultaneously with three different language learning partners. Two were Muslim Moroccan women who were 'civic integration' (*inburgering*) students living in the Nieuw-West neighbourhood. The third partner, a Christian Egyptian woman, had a higher level of Dutch than the other two, which presented its own challenges as they usually held their sessions jointly. They would frequently walk together in the park and play games intended to help develop their language skills. Marjolein described the activities she did with her partners as being as simple as walking through the park and describing what they saw and where they went. They had also made excursions to the *buurthuis* (neighbourhood community centre), the market, and to their local library. One of the women did not know how to use the *OV chipkaart* (the public transport payment) system when they first met, so this was the subject of one of their sessions. Marjolein was pleased to communicate to the *Mixen in Mokum* orientation attendees that her partner had become completely independent (*helemaal zelfstaandig*) in this, and was able to use the public transit system to meet elsewhere in the city.

Marjolein discussed how she often used children's books with simple text that she had purchased from a thrift store in her sessions, suggesting that this was a good way to help her partners learn and improve their Dutch. She also described a language game they often played, where they tried to give words starting with a particular letter. Other activities they did together were intended to help them get to know their neighbourhood and the city better by exploring these places. On one occasion, Marjolein took her partners and some of the other Moroccan women from their 'civic integration' classes to Amsterdam's famous Jordaan neighbourhood. They went to a particular canal where the historic canal houses are decorated with many different types of gables (*gevels*). She asked the women to describe them as best as they could in Dutch, and recounted the outing as a great success.

My sessions with Frank and the experiences of Marjolein generally reflected the sessions described by other language coaching volunteers. One notable exception that I heard from different participants, for instance José and Anouk, was the important role that many language coaches played in advising language learners on answering letters to the municipality, dealing with the bank or other bureaucratic institutions, or proof-reading job applications and other important texts. For many of the people who seek out language coaching services it was clear – from my interviews and from the organizations' websites and materials – that language coaches were often the only 'native' Dutch people that newcomers might regularly come into contact with, and on whom they could rely for this kind of advice.

The reality that nearly all language coaching volunteers, as informal "gatekeepers" of Dutchness, are 'native' Dutch is important to consider in this study. Instead of reflecting the demographic diversity of Amsterdam or the Netherlands,[6] most language coaching volunteers fit a particular profile: while volunteers ranged in age from students in their twenties to retirees in

their seventies, reflected a wide variety of occupations (from carpenter to teacher and civil servant), most volunteers were well-educated (with a university or college degree) and nearly all were 'native' or ethnic Dutch.

That non-'native' Dutch Amsterdammers rarely volunteer as language coaches is not directly attributable to the formal selection criteria of language coaching organizations in recruiting their volunteers. All five of the language coaching projects operating in Amsterdam during the time of my research stipulated few qualifications for participation as a language coach. From interviews with language coaching coordinators and these organizations' websites, the advertised or desired qualities of potential language coaches included fluency in spoken Dutch, interest in other cultures, enthusiasm for the work, and patience. These programs also required a certain level of time commitment to the program (usually a few hours per week for a period ranging between six months and a year). One program coordinator remarked[7] that when talking about processing new volunteers: "We don't ask any information about education, background or previous volunteer experience from our volunteers. The 'old Amsterdammers' [volunteers] should know the Dutch language well." On the one hand, it was not apparent that special efforts were being made by any of these organizations at the time of my research or earlier to reach out specifically to Dutch speakers who were not 'native' Dutch.[8] On the other hand, through my extended experiences in one of these language coaching projects as a language learner, my interviews with volunteers, project coordinators, and other participants, as well as in my study of years' of promotional, recruitment, and other documents from these various organizations it was clear that all qualified applicants were generally accepted for training as volunteer language coaches.

Language coaching programs, including the two that did provide more formal lessons,

therefore delivered these lessons in ways that were different than regular, classroom-based study. Formal, classroom-based courses tended to focus on specific evaluable outcomes, particularly the mechanics of grammar, vocabulary, writing, and written comprehension. This was the case for the intensive course I undertook when I first arrived in Amsterdam, as well as the courses described by my research participants and other scholars (cf. Björnson 2007). Unlike these classes, the free language coaching services provided by volunteers are intended to be fun and relaxed, giving newcomers a chance to practice and improve their spoken Dutch. The partners usually meet in a place they agree upon, such as in their homes or elsewhere in their own neighbourhoods.

In spite of the apparent openness of the criteria and broad reach of recruitment strategies, there was an over-representation of 'native' Dutch volunteer language coaches. The *Mixen in Mokum* coordinator told me that although there were but a handful of non-'native' Dutch language coaches currently participating, she hoped that in the future those who came to the program as language learners would eventually return to the program as coaches. José, who also worked at *Gilde Amsterdam* as a volunteer coordinator mentioned that there were indeed some volunteers who were not 'native' Dutch. She had met with "a young Turkish gentleman," who she described as "an excellently good civil servant [*ambtenaar*]. He is a Turk. And a really good guy." Casper, another volunteer coordinator who had worked at the *Gilde Amsterdam SamenSpraak* for several years, told me that in his experience he had only met with one Surinamese volunteer, and another who was English but had lived in the Netherlands for many years. In May 2011, I attended an information session for the launch of a new *Mixen in Mokum* cycle where there was only one non-'native' Dutch woman (who identified as Surinamese) present in the capacity of a new volunteer language coach, or "*oud Amsterdammer*" (old

Amsterdammer). All of the other people of colour were present at the meeting as "*nieuwe*

Amsterdammers" (new Amsterdammers, language learners). This division of new participants at

orientation sessions is both anticipated by these organizations (as is clear in their promotional

materials, see figures 2.1 to 2.11), as well as borne out in the experience of coordinators running

such programs. For instance, when the "*oud*" and "*nieuwe*" *Mixen in Mokum* participants were

asked to separate into two groups to discuss their questions and expectations, the program

coordinator again asked the Surinamese-Dutch '*oud Amsterdammer*' if she was in the right group

for the discussion.

The patterns for formal volunteering among members of ethnic minority groups have also

been shown to differ from those of 'native' Dutch. In Amsterdam during 2010, figures indicated

that 'non-Western' Dutch volunteer less frequently than 'native' Dutch (as well as Western

immigrants, also called "expats") (Houben-van Harten and te Riele 2011:10).[9] Frequently, as

Dekker indicates, the types of ethnic community organizations and initiatives that attract "non-

Western *allochtonen*" as formal volunteers are directed at

> improving the social-economic position of minorities, activities that can ground
> and promote their own identity (especially in the form of participation with their
> religious organizations, such as mosque and Islamic associations), and assistance
> to relatives and members of their own ethnic group. (1999:209, fn 3; my
> translation)

While volunteer coordinators at Dutch language coaching programs talked about the

diversity of their volunteers, it was clear in my interviews and other materials that the language

coaching program spoke to the individual personal or professional interests (e.g. enjoying

language, teaching, interest in meeting and learning about people from different cultures), and

motivations for volunteering (e.g. helping others, sharing their city, sharing their expertise) of

some Dutch more than others. Language coaches also talked about volunteering as a way to fill some of their time, whether the volunteer in question was retired, working, or a post-secondary student. Although the amount of time language coaches committed to volunteering each week was not generally seen by my informants as burdensome (usually 1-4 hours each week), most programs required volunteers to participate for cycles of six months (e.g. *Mixen in Mokum*) to a year (*SamenSpraak*). Clearly, this level of time commitment is only possible for some potential volunteers.

Amsterdam's Volunteer Language Coaching Initiatives

The five prominent volunteer language coaching organizations in Amsterdam through which I contacted my key research participants could be found (in Dutch) via *Taalcoachwijzer Amsterdam* (Language coach compass Amsterdam, www.taalcoachwijzer.nl) a website developed by the city of Amsterdam as well as the main volunteering website, *Vrijwilligers Centrale Amsterdam* (*VCA*; www.vca.nu). These projects are the outcome of complex layers of governmental intervention, "pulled together from an existing repertoire, a matter of habit, accretion and bricolage" (Li 2007a:276) that have been directed toward the cultivation of what I identify as "good" citizenship practice.

The *SamenSpraak* (Speaking Together) program that had arranged my speaking partnership with Frank was the first of these projects in the Netherlands. According to the director of *Gilde Amsterdam* (Guild Amsterdam), when it was first developed in 1999, the local *SamenSpraak* project was organized to fill a perceived need in the city rather than in relation to the national *inburgering* ('civic integration') program which had become law the year before.

The early success of this local program to tackle the *taalachterstand* (Dutch language deficit) of city residents from a foreign background prompted the federal Minister of Large Cities- and Integration-Policy (*Grote Steden- en Integratiebeleid*) Van Boxtel, in 2001 to recommend the development and spread of these initiatives through the national umbrella organization, under the name *Gilde SamenSpraak*.[10] In terms of both structure and funding the *SamenSpraak* program became a template for other Dutch conversation and integration projects developed in Amsterdam and across the country, including those operating independently of the *Gilde* organization. The minister's enthusiasm for these voluntary initiatives as a supplement to formal Dutch as a Second Language education for adults led to the government's financial support of the projects (Gilde Nederland 2012). The success of these programs has become linked to the funding structure and concerns for the 'civic integration' program at the federal and municipal levels. For instance, much of the funding for Amsterdam's *SamenSpraak* program comes from the City of Amsterdam's Living, Care and Society department (*Dienst wonen, zorg en samenleven*, which is also responsible for *inburgering* programs in the city) and Work and Income department (*Dienst Werk en Inkomen*) (Gilde Amsterdam 2010:10, 15). Additional funds may be granted through non-governmental charitable organizations and trusts, such as the *RCOAK* (Roman Catholic Old Poor Foundation) which financially supported a special *SamenSpraak* initiative during 2011.

These voluntary programs offer an informal way of learning Dutch, intended by these organizations to complement (rather than replace) the formal learning required of 'civic integration' or other language students. A common goal across these different conversation partnership and language coaching programs is providing a safe and encouraging space for newcomers to "dare to speak" Dutch, and thereby to improve their fluency and comfort in terms

of the Dutch language, as well as knowledge of Dutch society and culture. While any non-native

Dutch speaker is welcome to take advantage of such opportunities to practice their spoken

Dutch, these language-coaching programs mainly draw their non-native speaking participants

from the pool of usually non-Western *inburgeraars* (students completing the *inburgering* or

'civic integration' course). As such, volunteer language coaches provide an important service for

people who want to continue to improve their fluency and confidence in spoken Dutch outside of

the classroom, whether that of the *inburgering* course or private lessons for well-educated

"expats." Although less common, some of these language programs do provide the space for

formal lessons to vulnerable or marginalized people who cannot participate in other language

classes (e.g. due to legal status, cultural, financial, or time constraints). Language coaching

programs in general are something that the non-native speaker (*anderstaliger*) and volunteer

pursue from a personal ethic of social engagement and improvement. In this way, these projects

express some of the ways in which neoliberal governmentality has informed the development of

particular *savoirs* relating to "active" or "good" citizenship practice (cf. Foucault 1991:103;

Muehlebach 2012; Stoler 2009).

    Gilde Amsterdam, established in 1984, is a not-for-profit organization that is both

volunteer-run and service-oriented. This is clear in their mission statement, where *Gilde*

Amsterdam explains that "Amsterdammers, young and old, with knowledge and (life) experience

are committed to their fellow townsmen. This is for the promotion of participation of these

Amsterdammers and their townsmen" (Gilde Amsterdam 2010:21 my translation). The director of

Gilde Amsterdam indicated in our interview that when this organization began in 1984, part of its

mission was to provide volunteer opportunities for people over sixty years of age, who were seen

as having valuable knowledge to share with others gained from their professional careers,

hobbies, and life experiences. Over the past decades this organization has grown and changed. Although most of the *Gilde Amsterdam* volunteers continue to be older individuals, this is no longer a requirement. The organization still offers advice, for example, on starting small companies and career support (Advice and Guidance), but has also branched out into other areas. This includes the popular *Mee in Mokum* (Come along in Mokum) city walking tours, and Language Guidance (Writing and Speaking). Language Guidance encompasses a range of activities: from organizing volunteers to read with children, to language help (writing and presentation) for non-native speakers attending higher education (university, *WO*, and college, *HBO*), and the well-known *SamenSpraak* language coaching program. In 2010, more than a thousand volunteers were directly affiliated and actively participating with *Gilde Amsterdam*: This included 38 volunteers working at the offices of *Gilde Amsterdam* to help coordinate its various projects, 165 Advice and Guidance advisers, 107 *Mee in Mokum* walking tour guides, and 417 volunteers working in the area of Language Guidance – of which 317 were active in the *SamenSpraak* program working with 333 non-native speakers[11] (Gilde Amsterdam 2010:4, 10). Just over 400 more volunteers participated in programs run in partnership with the organization (Gilde Amsterdam 2010:4).[12] The most popular activity among new volunteers in 2010 (40 of 156 new volunteers) was to work as a language coach with the *SamenSpraak* program (Gilde Amsterdam 2010:3).

 Mixen in Mokum (Mixing in Mokum) was organized through *Mozeshuis* (Moses House), an organization with the mandate to support community building and adult education with a view to promoting tolerance, civic participation, and social cohesion in Amsterdam (Mozeshuis 2012a).[13] *Mozeshuis* operated through the *Mozes en Aäronkerk* (Moses and Aaron Church), a former Roman Catholic church. The church building, no longer used for religious services, was

used by the organization for their various programs, which included things such as different adult education courses, remembrance services, an inter-religious Christmas celebration, art exhibitions, and a regular concert series (making use of the former church's impressive organ). *Mozeshuis'* own voluntary language coaching project, the *Mixen in Mokum* program, operated on a neighbourhood-basis, bringing together 'old' Amsterdammers (Dutch speakers, usually 'native' Dutch) and 'new' Amsterdammers (non-native speakers) into speaking partnerships or groups for six month cycles. Similarly, *SamenSpraak Oost* (Speaking Together East; an initiative supported by *Opbouwwerk van Dynamo*) is neighbourhood oriented, but operates only within Amsterdam Oost whereas *Mixen in Mokum* organized cycles in each district of the city.

The *ABC* (*Amsterdam Buurvrouwen Contact*, Amsterdam Neighbourhood Women Contact) began in 2000 as a project under the then named *Diaconie van de Hervormde Gemeente* (Diaconate of the Reformed Church), but has been an independent organization since 2004 (ABCAmsterdam 2012c). The organization operated in partnership and with sponsorship from many diverse organizations and governmental departments. During 2011, some of these included the centre for refugees, youth and education services, community centres, the *VCA*, church organizations (the Protestant Parish of Amsterdam and the Evangelical Lutheran Parish of Amsterdam), the City of Amsterdam's Department for Work and Income, the European Integration Foundation, and the royal charitable organization *Oranje Fonds* (ABCAmsterdam 2012d). The *ABC* language coaching program differs from the other projects in that its volunteers and participants are exclusively women. The mandate of this organization is to help "migrant women" who are otherwise isolated from mainstream Dutch society to become more self-reliant and less vulnerable through learning the Dutch language (ABCAmsterdam 2012a). Unlike the conversation partnerships organized by *Gilde Amsterdam*, *Mixen in Mokum* and *SamenSpraak*

Oost, *ABC* volunteers do offer more formal lessons in Dutch, help for the non-native speakers with daily matters they may find difficult to navigate in the city (e.g. finding work or activities outside of the home, helping with forms or contact with officials), as well as speaking partnerships similar to those of the other programs (ABCAmsterdam 2012b).[14]

The *Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk Amstel tot Zaan* (*SVAZ*, Foundation for Refugees Amstel to Zaan) is first and foremost a resource for refugees and asylum seekers in the Netherlands, helping with a broad spectrum of issues that concern this vulnerable population. It is the Amsterdam regional branch of the national Dutch Council for Refugees (*Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland*). Many asylum seekers in the Netherlands find themselves waiting for extended periods of time before a decision is made by the state on their case. During this time, refugees are unable to access the formal Dutch classes offered to people wishing to *inburger* (undertake 'civic integration' courses). The *SVAZ* notes that "[m]any refugees ... have indicated that they wish to have more contact with Dutch people and more possibilities to learn the language" (SVAZ 2011:11; my translation). To this end, *SVAZ* has organized voluntary language coaching partnerships that pair a refugee with a volunteer for the course of six months, meeting "at least one and a half hours a week together to practice the Dutch language and explore the society" (SVAZ 2011:11; my translation).

Although these kinds of projects now operate across the Netherlands, it is important to get a sense of how and why they may have first developed in Amsterdam. I conclude this chapter by considering some of the particular experiences, relationships, and attitudes that developed in Amsterdam, and how these dynamics shaped the study of questions of immigration, citizenship, and Dutchness that I examine through the lens of voluntary language coaching programs.

A city "used to immigration": researching nationalism and citizenship in Amsterdam

The city of Amsterdam can simultaneously be considered exemplary of Dutchness and unusual in terms of attitudes and experiences of living in the Netherlands. As a prominent site of immigrant and migrant settlement across the centuries, Amsterdam is a place where the benefits and drawbacks of migration are magnified and normalized in ways that they are not in many other places in the Netherlands. The city's inhabitants have effectively been pioneers and pilot study subjects for interventions into citizen practice that have since spread across the rest of the country. The development of voluntary Dutch language coaching projects as well as service learning initiatives in secondary schools are examples of this phenomenon. While the Dutch adage "just be normal, because that's crazy enough" (*doe maar gewoone, dan doe je gek genoeg*) exemplified an attitude I heard frequently expressed by my informants in Amsterdam, the very notion of what is normal for Amsterdammers was not necessarily applicable for Dutch from other cities or villages in the country. Alternatively, as the historical economic and cultural centre of the Netherlands, Amsterdam has often strongly influenced what would later become widespread norms and values across the Netherlands. This occurred in spite of important regional differences, such as along the lines of religious and political belief. Even in the religiously mixed north-western region of the Netherlands in which the city is located, Amsterdam represents a space apart. This has much to do with its economic prosperity.

At least since the sixteenth century, economic prosperity was the primary concern of Amsterdam's administrators (and arguably, continues to be highly valued among their contemporaries). Thus, religious minorities and migrants were considered tolerable insofar as they were economically productive residents of the city. This concern for the creation of wealth

is what has given Amsterdam its historical reputation for openness and tolerance, and its Yiddish pet name, *Mokum*.[15] The tolerance of Jews and other (often oppressed) minorities in Amsterdam – and in other wealthy cities, particularly in the provinces of North and South Holland[16] – stemmed from the attitude of the city administrators toward the tolerance of religious and political minorities. Indeed, Amsterdam and other Dutch cities competed to bring skilled labourers to work in their industries. This practical tolerance was extended to other so-called minority groups (such as wealthy Catholic merchants prior to the emancipatory constitution of 1848), and was further developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, where powerful consociational pillars encompassed all aspects of Dutch social and political life. Conversely, (foreign) individuals and groups who were not considered economically productive, who were thought of as a drain on Amsterdam's (and, more broadly, Dutch) society faced strict and punishing social, political, and economic controls. A selective remembrance of these historical attitudes toward newcomers continues to under-gird the idea of *Mokum* today as a cosmopolitan space of tolerance, openness, and diversity. This experience has shaped the city differently than other regions in the Netherlands, especially with regard to politics and attitudes toward immigrants.

In addition to Amsterdam's historically strong economy, the city also boasts a rich culture of arts and learning as the national capital. Beginning in 1900, the normative understanding of Dutch national culture began to take shape through the circulation of print media, as well as the establishment of important nationally-oriented public institutions and exhibitions. The use of private and (to a lesser degree) public funds to found such institutions in Amsterdam made the state capital "the undisputed cultural capital of the Netherlands" (Bossenbroek 1996:18; my translation). All sought to raise the cultural capital of Amsterdam and the Dutch people more

generally, such as through the "social uplift" of the working classes. These and other developments situated Amsterdam as a significant focal point for the formation of a nationally 'imagined community' (Bloembergen 2006:52-53). With time, the Netherlands in general succumbed to the dominance of Holland's urban cultural norms, which contributed to the erosion of regional specificities of norms, behaviours, and celebrations.[17]

As the economic and cultural centre of the Netherlands, Amsterdam's history has made the city into a space where living together in diversity has become the norm – an experience that is perhaps very different than for people living elsewhere in the Netherlands. People in Amsterdam often told me about the centuries' long history of migration to the city, and how living together with people from different religious and cultural backgrounds has always been an accepted part of life. José, one of my research participants in her sixties, drew on the special history of Amsterdam as a centre for immigrant settlement when giving me her opinions (in Dutch) about whether or not newcomers (*allochtonen*) could ever become "real Amsterdammers" (*echt Amsterdammers*). Newcomers, said José, "can be better Amsterdammers than Dutch. Because Amsterdam is," she stressed, "used to immigration. Throughout the ages."

> And we're less cramped than a lot of other Dutchmen. For instance, Rotterdam. I am sorry to say, but that's true. Rotterdam is a bit crazy. In this aspect, I think. So, I think yes. *SamenSpraak* has a few times a year, what they call a theme-day and we have a professor or a journalist, or someone to speak about society and language or non-native speakers [*anderstaligen*] or immigration. And, coincidentally, we had this past November [2009] a professor who elaborated on how this aspect of immigration has been in Amsterdam throughout the centuries. Is it new? No. It is not new. It is old. How old? Eight centuries old. Amsterdam has always been an immigration city. So here it is not so crazy and is only being made ridiculous by politicians. It was never crazy. Never.

Undoubtedly, the impact of and attitudes toward immigration and the nature of diversity has changed over the centuries in Amsterdam and across the country. From the late nineteenth

century into the years following the Second World War, Dutch society was organized through consociational pillars (*verzuiling*). In this context, social difference in the Netherlands was mainly thought of in terms of the different sects of Christianity, and the different secular corporate pillars, thus, class. Other forms of difference – notably racial or cultural difference – became a fixture of daily life during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, at first through the colonies and later in the Netherlands itself. This occurred in relation to the arrival of newcomers from the former colonies, new labour migrants (e.g. low-skilled Turks and northern Africans, highly-skilled and mobile 'expats' from elsewhere in the West), and new political refugees from around the globe. These recent newcomers have dramatically expanded the meaning of diversity in the Dutch context, unsettling the criteria for belonging. In many ways, these changes have been more intensely focused in Amsterdam than in other parts of the country as these newcomers predominantly settled in this city, and in the other large cities in the *Randstad* (i.e. Rotterdam, Den Haag, and Utrecht).

While many of these changes have happened gradually, some shifts have occurred within people's lifetimes. This has especially been the case for those who have lived through the latter half of the twentieth century, with the Second World War, the collapse of the empire, the implementation of international guest worker programs, the secularization and social 'emancipation' of the 1960s and 1970s, and the rise of the European Union. Each of these shifts and events had repercussions for Amsterdam and the nature of social diversity in the city. For instance, Bart, another language coaching volunteer, a life-long Amsterdammer in his sixties talked about the differences he experienced in his city during the twentieth century:[18]

> The sort of people living where has changed a lot. Outside of the ring [road] there
> are more people and *allochtonen*. Inside the ring there are also more Surinamese,
> people from Ghana, Dutch people too. The poorer regions of course. But

changes— [Amsterdam]'s gotten bigger. ... You see in the paper, more middle-class people moving to Almere and lower middle-class Dutch people going to Almere and so on. But essentially we have always changes, had some *arbeiderswijken* [workers' neighbourhoods] ... That stratification of population of Amsterdam. Yes, half of the people of Amsterdam, almost, is foreigner. Or not from Dutch origin. Now it is. And for me it's normal. I don't see it anymore. But my wife's mother, when she used to live, she's dead now for five years, but she lived in Zeist, which is a bourgeois [area]. You know Zeist? It's east of Utrecht. ... But, it's a typical, classical white region. Was. Anyway, when her mother was here, came in Amsterdam, she was astonished there were so many coloured people and foreigners! But it changed, of course. When I was born everyone was white. Coloured was very, very special. So that's the change you notice. Really, you notice!

As Bart indicates, white-flight from Amsterdam to regions peripheral to the city (such as the new city of Almere, about thirty kilometres east of Amsterdam) was the response of many of the people who negatively experienced these contemporary shifts in the meaning and realities of social and cultural diversity in the city.

By 2010, the population of Amsterdam had grown to 767,773 (documented) residents, with a population density of 4,648 people per square kilometre (City of Amsterdam, Research and Statistics 2010:6). Through the census data and policy categories, this population has been constructed and represented in a particular field of power relations to which we must be attentive as researchers (Asad 1994). Among these residents, the city and national research organizations classify 385,009 (50.1% of the local population) as "native Dutch" (*autochtonen*) whereas 218,108 (28.5%) of these Amsterdammers are "first generation people with a foreign background," and 164,656 (21.4%) are "second generation people with a foreign background" (both latter groups are known as *allochtonen*) (Gemeente Amsterdam 2010b).[19] The City boasts of this diversity (over 170 different nationalities making a home in Amsterdam) in different publications and campaigns with pride, but also notes that it represents unique challenges. These challenges are coloured not only by the demography of the Amsterdamse population, but also by

the political approach to solving the problems that such differences pose. These are problems that have often been discussed by policy makers, politicians, academics and my interlocutors as issues of "social cohesion" and (through the language of neoliberal governmentality) the promotion of "active" or "good" citizenship.

The ways in which these "challenges" have been approached by the municipal government, and the people of Amsterdam itself are shaped by the city's particular political legacy. Of the cities in the Netherlands, Amsterdam is especially famous for its radical politics in the post-World War Two period. As Uitermark notes, you can still see traces of the protests and demonstrations that rocked the city centre during the 1970s in some of the monuments around the Nieuwmarkt (2009:348). During the 1970s, residents of the city and members of these protest movements (e.g. Provos, squatters) sought to make the city both "just" and "liveable," and the preservation of the historic Nieuwmarkt became a symbol of these values.[20] Although the brilliance of this passion and radicalism has faded, it is clear that it still is a significant part of the image many of my informants have about Amsterdam as a city space, its cultural and political legacy.

The rhetoric and debate that dominated much of the 2010 federal election campaign between the populist Right politician Geert Wilders and Job Cohen (who had recently taken over as leader of the national labour party, *PvdA*) is illustrative of the political sentiments and special position of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. One of Wilders' favourite attacks on his *PvdA* opponent was to denigrate his approach to the 'problems' of multicultural society during the latter's nine-year tenure as mayor of Amsterdam.[21] Cohen's reputation for bringing people together, and forging unity through communication and conciliation was proven through many difficult moments in the city's history, such as the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004 by a radical

Muslim Moroccan-Dutch man, the ongoing issues of criminality among youth (especially those of Moroccan heritage), and a bomb scare during 2009. This approach is epitomized by Cohen's motto to "keep the things together" (*de boel bij elkaar houden*). As José explained to me, Cohen's goal as mayor was to involve the diverse stakeholders and residents of the city in communicating both perceived problems and collectively producing potential solutions. Under Cohen, the City's answer was to promote dialogue between the different ethnic and religious groups, seen as creating a stronger sense of community, social cohesion, and through that, security.[22] The weight of Cohen's approach is better understood when one considers the contemporary demographic make-up of Amsterdam. As mentioned, the city's residents are almost equally 'native' Dutch (Dutch by ethnicity) and *allochtone* or non-'native' Dutch. Among the 'non-native' population in Amsterdam the largest 'ethnic' groups[23] are Surinamese, as well as of Moroccan and Turkish origin (most of whom are Muslim). To put this in perspective in terms of the wider Amsterdam population, between 2006 and 2010 approximately 9% of Amsterdam's residents were Surinamese by 'ethnic origin', another 9% Moroccan, and about 5% were Turkish (Gemeente Amsterdam 2010e).

It is with 'non-Western' Dutch in mind that many integration-oriented services and policies (such as 'civic integration') have been developed in Amsterdam and elsewhere in the Netherlands. The diverse network of religious groups that have long provided support to marginalized groups now frame immigrants and refugees as in need of such outreach and services.[24] Such historic resources are part of a much larger constellation of contemporary programs, many of which are volunteer-supported initiatives aimed at helping immigrants. Some of these now nation-wide programs, developed and supported by non-governmental or non-profit organizations, have had their roots in Amsterdam, only later to be adopted in other Dutch cities.

Amsterdam's large and diverse immigrant presence, especially since the end of the twentieth century, has meant that government, non-governmental and non-profit organizations have been key in establishing and delivering services to help support these newcomers, and their integration into the neighbourhood, city, and nation. As some of my research participants relayed, the relatively strong economy of Amsterdam has also acted as a buffer against some of the hostility toward immigrants experienced in other Dutch cities, such as Rotterdam. The long established reputation of Amsterdam as a cultural hub has also been thought to facilitate an openness to cultural and social difference, drawing many foreigners to the city on both temporary and more permanent bases as tourists, temporary migrant labourers (including highly skilled "expats" and lower-skilled manual labourers), and immigrants. All of these factors – which have uneven impact – make Amsterdam a particularly rich space for ethnographic research into questions of citizenship and belonging in the Netherlands today. These factors also contribute to the messiness of how certain people and processes are made and re-made into problems for governmental intervention, and how such interventions are contested or reconciled by actors like my research participants in their everyday practice of citizenship.

With these factors in mind, the following chapters address the ways in which citizenship practice has been problematized in the Dutch context. The significance of locating my research among these language coaches – informal, frontline citizenship educators – in Amsterdam will become increasingly clear to the reader as I trace the ways in which notions of 'cultural' difference have developed historically and are (re)configured today.

Figure 2.1 *Gilde Amsterdam - Kletskoppen,* Chatterbox campaign (2011)

Figure 2.2 *Gilde Amsterdam - Kletskoppen,* Chatterbox campaign (2011)

Figure 2.3 Image from the *Gilde Amsterdam'*s website (2012)

(http://www.gildeamsterdam.nl/taalbegeleiding/ nederlands-spreken)

Figure 2.4 *Amsterdams Buurvrouwen Contact* (*ABC*) banner (2012)

Figure 2.5 *ABC* Dutch language student

Figure 2.6 *ABC* Dutch language student

Figure 2.7 *ABC* Dutch language student

Figure 2.8 *Mixen in Mokum*: "Let new Amsterdammers see your city, and see it yourself from another side." (2012)

Figure 2.9 *Mixen in Mokum*

(http://www.mozeshuis.nl/main.php?obj_id=523236195)

Figure 2.10 Photo from the *SamenSpraak Oost* website (2012)

Figure 2.11 Photo from the *De Stichting VluchtelingenWerk Amstel tot Zaan* (*SVAZ*) website (2012)

(http://www.wijkopbouworgaanoost.nl/activiteiten/samenspraak)

(https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/amsteltotzaan/)

3. Imagining Dutchness: tracing programs of social difference through empire

The production of the modern nation and its subjects relies not only on the production of Otherness, but also on the myths surrounding the self through the careful control of knowledge and safeguarding the invention of the past (cf. Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). As anthropologists have shown, a full understanding of these processes requires an examination of the colonial past; nation-building and empire-building were mutually constitutive projects (Stoler and Cooper 2007:22; Dirks 1992:15, 22). The history of European nation-states is built on the fact that

> [e]mpire primed the modern state through expectations, habits, and tribulations. Bureaucracy, sovereignty, nationalism, and other attributes of the modern state were developed—at least in part—through imperial practices abroad and in response to the anxieties they often generated in Europe. (Stoler and McGranahan 2007:29)

These anxieties and practices stem, at least in part, from how social difference was constructed, normalized and deployed through processes of governmentality. Such expectations for behaviour and belief also mark the boundaries of national 'culture', sites where meaning about national communities and belonging are generated (McDonald 1989:308). These imperial experiences continue to undergird "common sense" ways of living, and relating to others in contemporary nation-states.

In this chapter, I trace how the Dutch have been rendered as a national people through examining some of the techniques and strategies that fostered this imagined community, drawing boundaries that defined what it was not. The genealogy of the program(s) that I begin to trace through the experience of empire is crucial for understanding the ways in which the individuals and voluntary projects central to my ethnography negotiate, reconcile, and challenge citizenship

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practice in their lives and work with newcomers. Volunteers' perspectives and experiences of "good" citizenship practice in Dutch society come into focus only through a comprehensive understanding of the historical processes and policy interventions that have shaped the cultural and political landscape in which my participants live.

I begin this exploration by addressing some of the ways in which 'cultural' difference has been historically problematized among the Dutch (as with management of internal religious minorities and the treatment of labour migrants or refugees), through the intimate relationships generated through the experience of empire (cf. Stoler 2011; McClintock 1995). This dissertation approaches empire in the sense of Stoler's (2006) "imperial formations": as

> macropolities whose technologies of rule thrive on the production of exceptions and their uneven and changing proliferation. Critical features of imperial formations include harboring and building on territorial ambiguity, redefining legal categories of belonging and quasi-membership, and shifting the geographic and demographic zones of *partially* suspended rights. (2006:128)

Empire in this sense, is not usefully thought of in terms of a clearly defined geopolity or historical period, but as a system of knowledge and processes that enabled particular relationships of explotiation and social hierarchies to develop as "common sense." Such projects or modes of governance were continually forming and transforming across time and space. Even so, many scholars (and political pundits) connect empire to a specific time in the past: Western European rule over colonies located around the world from the sixteenth century (earlier for Portugal and Spain) until the mid-twentieth century, with the height of European empire occurring during "the long nineteenth century" (Stoler 2006:127; Bossenbroek 1996; cf. Thomas 1994:12-13). This dissertation traces the Dutch imperial experience through the ideas, affective ties, and relationships built since before the end of the Eighty Year's War (1568-1648), as Dutch

mercantile interests expanded into the Indonesian archipelago and elsewhere. Importantly, as Cooper has discussed in relation to the French empire, the Dutch empire "was not located in the colonies," but should be understood as a "single but differentiated" Netherlands (Stoler 2006:138). The loss of the Dutch East Indies in 1949 may be considered a decisive moment in the diminuation of the Dutch empire, yet technologies of rule formed through empire continue to resonate in contemporary questions around meanings connected to belonging in the Netherlands and "good" Dutch citizenship.

In understanding empire in this way, it is analytically important to examine empire's profound effects on the ways in which questions of social difference, management, and nation-building were answered and configured 'at home' (Stoler and Cooper 1997:5). This analysis shows how powerful discourses around social difference developed through the translocal space of empire. The people and processes that came to be considered 'problems' for government in Europe and overseas formed in relation to the same processes of problematization, drawing on the same systemic ways of thinking and knowing the world (Stoler 1995:93). Understanding this national narrative and Dutch genealogies of social difference are essential to laying the foundations for an analysis of the contemporary reactions, tensions, and contradictions extending from late twentieth century immigration and settlement patterns in the Netherlands, as well as the roles of sociality, social service provision, and (voluntary) labour in contemporary citizenship practice.

In this chapter, I outline some of the key markers of difference that were engaged in the Netherlands and in encounters between the Dutch and Others through mercantile and later colonial endeavours. As I show here, the notion of 'cultural' difference has developed as new problems emerged through the experience of empire. Relationships with faraway peoples and

places were particularly important for the development of ideas of the Dutch as a national people, a civilizing force, and moral exemplar to the rest of the world. These conceptions of 'Dutchness' were importantly impacted by of ideas of racial difference and the paternalistic role of the Dutch vis-à-vis the 'family of man' that developed through encounters in the colonies. Building on these historical foundations, I trace some of the ways in which notions of 'culture' drew on and reconfigured older notions of difference and Dutchness in combination with expectations for behaviour and affective relations in both public and private spheres. I analyze how these 'cultural' forms emerged as an important grammar for understanding difference and the problems facing colonial governors. These developments are especially clear in the experiences of the Dutch in the East Indies (cf. Stoler 1995), but are echoed across the Dutch empire (cf. Van Lier 1971[1949]; Oostindie and Paasman 1998), and re-echoed in other colonial and nationalist projects (cf. McClintock 1995; McClintock et al. 1997; Thomas 1994; Stoler and Cooper 1997; Stoler 2011). Across these spaces and times, the Dutch language is recognized as an important thread of continuity in how problematic categories of culturally different subjects have been recognized and managed. I close this chapter by alluding to some of the ways in which considerations of difference, and governmental strategies for the management of problematic classed, religious, racial, and other differences traverse the space of empire. Ways of thinking about and managing the difference of Dutch East Indies or Surinamese subjects (or Indians in the British East Indies, or Algerians in French Northern Africa) bear striking parallels to how poor or working class Dutch (or English, or minority language 'French' peasants) in Europe were approached as in need of charity, mission, and discipline. The notions of difference developed through empire have had lasting effects for contemporary understandings of how boundaries are and should be drawn around the Dutch national community.

Developing a grammar of difference and Dutchness

Questions of diversity have had a long history in the Netherlands. This history of diversity management was often a point of national pride for many 'native' Dutch with whom I spoke. In these conversations, in scholarship, policy, political rhetoric, and discussions in the media certain signifiers of difference have been pivotal in defining cultural (or civilizational or national) similarity and difference among the Dutch.

The historically central role of religious difference in the lives of the Dutch was shared by others across Europe as regional 'peoples' were progressively consolidated through appeals to religious authority into larger political entities (the beginning of modern nations). Conflict, especially due to religious persecution, prompted large-scale population movements that shaped the geopolitical space of Europe during this early period of state formation. For instance, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation movements of the sixteenth century split the people and powers of Europe on issues of religion, as Protestantism and Catholicism divided the continent. Protestantism, especially the churches established by Luther and Calvin, took hold in much of what are today Germany, Switzerland, Scotland, and the Netherlands. This schism played an integral role in many of the conflicts in Europe for centuries – including the Eighty Year's War (1568-1648) between the Holy Roman Empire and what would become an autonomous, Protestant Netherlands. Since their break with the Holy Roman Empire, the northern, Protestant, wealthy, coastal provinces – especially Holland – have been dominant in the political, economic and cultural life of what would become the contemporary Netherlands.[25] With the independence of the Netherlands from Spain at the end of the Eighty Year's War, Calvinism was instituted as

the state religion, and the practice of all other religions was outlawed (until the constitutional changes of 1848). Unsurprisingly, the question of religious difference was important in establishing the power dynamics between the different regions within the Netherlands, particularly between the north and predominantly Catholic south. Such differences were significant in the formation of the country, in the politics of national identity, and the organization of social difference.

Significantly, Dutch engagements with religious and other forms of difference have often been tempered by economic concerns. This is clear in the reception of migrants and refugees throughout the history of the Netherlands. This was certainly the case for those living in the larger and wealthier urban centres, as I have discussed in Chapter 2 with regard to Amsterdam. Since the early 1600s, the Dutch often had contact with foreigners, from migrant labourers working in sea-faring, agricultural or skilled industries to religious and political refugees.[26] Indeed, among the (northern) economic centres, cities competed with one another to recruit and secure skilled newcomers. Even so, many were not welcomed. Religious or political beliefs – especially those differences not softened by wealth or desirable skills – could just as easily be framed as objectionable qualities and used to bar the entry of certain groups (such as Jesuits), or individuals (particularly notable political refugees, such as the English King Charles II) (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:79).

The accumulation of wealth was in other ways a defining factor in early Dutch nation-building. Although the relationships with faraway places like the Indonesian archipelago, the Caribbean and South America were first fomented by non-state mercantilism, exploitative relationships between the Netherlands and these sites and peoples evolved with the establishment of empire (cf. Dirks 1992:19). As the Dutch provinces fought for independence from Spanish

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rule at the end of the sixteenth century, Dutch merchants became increasingly involved in

mercantile and colonial expansion overseas. With the founding of Batavia (later, Jakarta) in

1619, the imperialism of the Dutch began in earnest; significantly earlier than other modern

imperial powers (namely England and France, the Portuguese and Spanish empires were by this

time beginning to wane) (cf. Helgerson 1992:49). The Netherlands' relatively minor status as a

European state was thus amplified through its positioning on the world stage as a great imperial

power by the end of the 1870s (Kuitenbrouwer 1991:25). Among the Dutch people, it was

through the overseas colonies of "the Indies and South Africa [that] the Netherlands strengthened

its national self-consciousness and enriched its national culture" (Bossenbroek 1996:10; my

translation). As self-described leaders of global commerce, the Dutch trading empire –

dominated by the northern, coastal province of Holland[27] – spanned for over three centuries from

the East Indies (Indonesia), to the Boer Republics (South Africa), to the New World of the

Caribbean (the Dutch Antilles) and South America (Surinam). In 1900, Holland was, as the

Dutch historian Martin Bossenbroek (1996) writes, "at its broadest" (*op zijn breedst*) in terms of

its influence around the world. The empire brought the small European country of the

Netherlands immense wealth, but also contributed significantly to how the Dutch came to view

themselves as leaders in the world.

Through empire, the Dutch – politicians, the monarchy, missionaries, and academics –

saw themselves as cultural and moral teachers, a 'guiding nation' (*gidsland*) for those

encompassed by the territories of the empire, and, indeed, the rest of the world (Kuitenbrouwer

1991:322). These sorts of national sentiments, cultivated and refracted through the lens of

empire, were commonly shared among European imperial powers (cf. McClintock 1995;

Smedley 1999; Thorne 1997; Comaroff 1997; Chakrabarty 1997; Conklin 1998; Colonna 1997;

Wildenthal 1997). While the work of the Dutch overseas as a guiding and civilizing leader was important for building a Dutch national identity, the realities of this mission were sanitized for public consumption. In the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe, this has been observed in the how the relationship with the colonies was presented through popular media (e.g. Christian missionary groups' illustrated periodicals), museums or monuments (highlighting the nationalist triumphs of imperial industry, wealth, and sovereignty), or through federal budget reports (where violence against indigenous workers in the colonies was balanced against the prospect of a national surplus or deficit) (Bossenbroek 1996; Stoler 1989; Taussig 1992).

This understanding of the role of the Dutch and other Europeans overseas as a benevolent civilizing force for the rest of the world was, paradoxically, used to justify the grim and often brutal realities of imperial relations with the colonies (cf. Taussig 1992:164). In the Netherlands, and in other Western European nation-states, the discourse of the nation relied on "a hierarchy of moralities, prescriptions for conduct and bourgeois civilities that kept a racial politics of exclusion at its core" (Stoler 1995:93). These sentiments grew from generations of encounters with Others, a striking example which is clear in the "[c]ynical pragmatism and blatant contempt [that] dominated Dutch and Dutch colonial perspectives towards Africans and their Caribbean offspring" (Oostindie and Paasman 1998:353; cf. Van Lier 1971). Necessary to the Surinamese plantation colony, the enslavement and inhumane treatment of Africans here and elsewhere was morally justified by the Dutch and other Europeans. These colonizers understood Africans and their Afro-Caribbean descendants as lesser humans, who were "by nature course, lascivious, not prone to civilization," but who may in time (and with their benevolent removal by the Dutch from the "brutality of Africa"), improve through the adoption of Western cultural forms, such as conversion to Christianity (Oostindie and Paasman 1998:353, 354; cf. Comaroff and Comaroff

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1992:258; McClintock 1995; Smedley 1999).

Religion, as a marker of Europeanness or civilization, became important for calculations of social difference and legal privilege in relations between Dutch merchants and others abroad during the colonial period. However, in the colonies, unlike in the Netherlands, racialized and linguistic markers of difference increasingly came to matter in determining who was European or Dutch and who was not.[28] These ideas, like religion, were tied to culture during the *VOC* era (*Verenigde Oostindische Compangie*; Dutch East Indies Company). In fact, during this period religion and culture came to be viewed by colonial administrators as more or less inseparable, and Christianity – particularly Protestantism – was considered a sign of political allegiance to the Dutch in the East Indies (Smith Kipp 2003:87).[29] Connections made between culture and religion allowed East Indies Christians to be given the same legal status as *VOC* employees. In Surinam, religious belief and practice was also associated with Dutchness but with different effects: a "black's ability to be Christianized and to stick to 'the true faith' became a yardstick for measuring his or her civilization or even for establishing the sheer possibility to civilize any black person" (Oostindie 1990:234; Goldberg 2000:160). Telling of the complexity and power of culturalized difference in both colonies, adherence to Christianity did not always translate into a parallel social status with Europeans. This was clear in the ways in which local ('native' or 'mixed race') East Indies women classified as 'European' through marriage to European men (*VOC* employees, Batavian bureaucrats, Dutch traders) were nonetheless barred from migration to the Netherlands with their husbands (unless their husbands were of considerably high rank in the *VOC*) (Smith Kipp 2003:87-88; Stoler 1997:217-218; cf. Van Lier 1971:76-78). While the *VOC* was distinct from the Dutch state, the kinds of discourses and legal boundaries developed to define 'Europeans' and colonial Others during this early period would later inform nationalist

discourse in the empire and the Netherlands.

As European overseas empires continued to strengthen and expand, one of the questions that began to trouble imperial powers was that of just how 'Dutch' (or 'French' or 'German' or 'European') colonial subjects should be (Colonna 1997; Conklin 1998; Wildenthal 1997; cf. Beriss 2004). Moreover, upon what basis should 'Dutch' or 'European' status (at minimum, in the legal sense) be recognized and defined? Emerging ideologies in Europe during the late eighteenth century (the Enlightenment, liberalism, revolutionary ideals, and classical economics) were part of a powerful discourse that influenced these questions as they applied to the colonies. Processes of conquest, exploitation and subjugation in the colonies occurred in tandem with the deployment of these universal ideas 'at home' in Europe (Stoler and Cooper 1997:1; cf. Colonna 1997; Thorne 1997). Debates about citizenship and the 'rights of man', as during the French Revolution, extended to questions of how these principles should apply to the peoples of the conquered, overseas territories. For European imperial powers, the colonies "did more than reflect the bounded universality of metropolitan political culture: they constituted an imaginary and physical space in which the inclusions and exclusions built into the notions of citizenship, sovereignty, and participation were worked out" (Stoler and Cooper 1997:3). The colonies and their peoples were a tool in the European construction and management of social difference based on evolving categories, such as race, religion, class, gender, sexuality. These categories of the imperial order were connected to and articulated through notions of "culture" which was, as Stoler writes,

> harnessed to do more specific political work; not only to mark difference, but to rationalize the hierarchies of privilege and profit, to consolidate the labor [*sic*] regimes of expanding capitalism, to provide the psychological scaffolding for the exploitative structures of colonial rule. (1995:27)

Thus, colonial peoples served as a distant, yet intimate site of alterity against which ideas of national, civilizational, cultural, and individual selfhood could be built, tested, and deployed across the space of empire, from the overseas colonies to the European nation-state. The organizing grammars developed during this period and across the space of empire have had profound and lasting effects on how difference and citizenship has come to be understood and experienced in the contemporary Netherlands.

Technical drift: refining problems and sites for governmental intervention

The working out of these logics reflected multiple and dynamic practices of boundary making. The ways in which certain categories of difference became objects of thought and problems requiring intervention developed alongside the changing conditions of empire. To take the example of the Dutch East Indies, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a growing mestizo society, born of relationships between European men and Asian women, had become central to economic, political and social life in this colony. The conditions for the production of this 'mixed' society, concubinage (and to a lesser extent marriage) between Batavian officials, *VOC* men, and other Europeans with local, Asian women had to a certain degree been previously condoned. From the 1770s, similar practices of concubinage had occurred in Surinam between prestigious white men and free, middle-class creole women. Yet, the social and legal implications of "marriage Surinamese-style" were far different than concubinage in the Dutch East Indies. In Surinam, while the social and financial status of concubines and their families might rise through such intimate relationships, these women and their children remained barred from attaining legal status equivalent to Europeans (Van Lier 1971:102). In the East Indies, on

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the other hand, 'European' was a legal status that applied to people living in the colony who had come directly from Europe, but also for people born in the Dutch East Indies who were recognized by a father who held this status, and for women who married men of 'European' status. By the nineteenth century, the potential legal ramifications of concubinage in the East Indies had contributed to the increasing anxieties over 'miscegenation' and the question of race (and racial mixing) was understood as ever more problematic. The legal and political tensions surrounding 'mixed marriages' and a growing population of 'mixed' race children were not limited to the Dutch. French (Conklin 1998) and German (Wildenthal 1997) colonial and national governments were also faced with the problem of racial mixing or 'degradation'. It was in this context that discourses of eugenics, racial degeneracy, and social hygiene among the white, European populations emerged across the space of empire(s) (Pattynama 1998:98-99; cf. Stoler 1995:41; Conklin 1998; Thorne 1997; Wildenthal 1997).[30] In the Dutch East Indies, the administration was particularly uneasy over "the children of European fathers and Asian mothers, for whom a carefully constructed educational curriculum and vocational environment would be devised to make them into what one Dutch official called 'perfected natives, not imitation Europeans'" (Stoler and Cooper 1997:7). Where these people fit into the categories of the empire, of European Self and colonized Other was considered by colonial powers as a serious problem among the groups of people who were 'mixed', no longer purely 'indigenous' or 'European'.

Considerations of language, culture, and race were of utmost importance in such calculations for the Dutch, yet these preoccupations crossed empires, and connected with politically-charged debates about difference circulating in Europe at the time (cf. Anderson 1991; Gilman 1986; McClintock 1995; Mosse 1985; Viswanathan 1995). The national discourse

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cultivated among the Dutch thoroughly connected a vision of the Netherlands as a 'guiding nation' (*gidsland*) and a moral exemplar. The civilizing mission of the Dutch was clearest in the East Indies, in part because of the colonizers' understanding of different colonial subjects' position within the 'family of man'. This understanding of humanity had rather different consequences for the indigenous and Afro-Caribbean slave populations of Surinam and Curaçao, whose cultures were seen by the Dutch as so primitive that they were not worth acknowledging or preserving. It was debated whether these peoples could indeed be civilized, a position that no doubt justified the brutality of the New World extractive and plantations colonies (Oostindie and Paasman 1998:353). Such beliefs about the inferiority of other "races" were widely shared by other European peoples. In eighteenth century America, for instance, Africans especially were considered "culturally backward, primitive, intellectually stunted, prone to violence, morally corrupt, undeserving of the benefits of civilization, insensitive to the finer arts and … aesthetically ugly and animal-like" (Smedley 1999:695; cf. Goldberg 2000). Alternatively, the Dutch considered indigenous peoples of the East Indies to have distinct cultures that were to be respected, even if not considered the equal of European cultures (cf. Cohn 1983; Dirks 1986; Chakrabarty 1997). Reflecting other European imperial discourses regarding the colonies, Dutch schoolchildren learned to frame "Indonesians, the elite in particular, … as part of the family of man but still a younger generation or as creatures occupying a lower rung on the evolutionary ladder, waiting to be educated by their Dutch tutors" (Locher-Scholten 1998:133; Bossenbroek 1996:274; cf. McClintock 1997:91; Viswanathan 1997; Oostindie and Paasman 1998; Smedley 1999). The presentation of the Dutch East Indies in Dutch schools at the turn of the twentieth century highlighted the colony as a place of idealized 'ethical' imperial politics. Nowhere was this moral commitment to the East Indies more clearly stated than in development of the so-

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called 'Ethical Policy' of Kuyper's Calvinist Antirevolutionary government (Kuitenbrouwer 1991:32; 319-322).

As a key figure in Dutch politics during this period, Kuyper's Ethical Policy was a response to the problems in governing the Dutch East Indies. Drawing strongly on his views and position as an orthodox Calvinist minister, Kuyper's political approach framed the Dutch responsibility toward this colony as part of a civilizing mission rooted in religious and racial stewardship, which heavily reflected what has elsewhere been called the "white man's burden" (cf. Pattynama 1998:89; Gouda 1998; McClintock 1995). First articulated in 1874 (though not officially implemented until 1901), the "self-consciously parental discourse" of the Antirevolutionary Party toward the Dutch East Indies considered the (Christian) moral duty of the colonial government to instruct, develop, and guide the indigenous population (Gouda 1998:237; Pattynama 1998:89; Locher-Scholten 1998:133). (Notably, such tactics became observable in policy for governing Surinam only following the abolition of slavery (Van Lier 1971; Oostindie 1990; Oostindie and Paasman 1998).) This 'ethical' stance toward the colonies reveals how engagements with difference manoeuvred between civilizing mission discourse and processes of boundary making between metropole and colony. This tension emerges, as when Kuyper

> emphasized that the Netherlands East Indies were not an integral part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. They were, rather, an obligation inherited from the bankrupt United East Indies Company (VOC). Subject peoples in the Netherlands East Indies were not Dutch citizens, and had no rights under the Dutch constitution. (James and Schrauwers 2003:60)

As James and Schrauwers indicate, the impetus for this 'ethical' shift in policy toward the colonies grew out of the sense that the Netherlands owed the peoples of the East Indies a debt for

centuries of abuse and economic exploitation. Through the moral rhetoric of the 'white man's burden', the entire 'family of man' could, or rather must be brought under the control and guidance of the white imperial father-figure (McClintock 1995:232-257; Thomas 1994). Having envisaged the world through the language of kinship, Europeans found new ways to justify their position of political and cultural domination, including measures of brutal violence, vis-à-vis those they colonized. Through programs of education, or actions articulated as educative or civilizing, the processes of imperialism continued and intensified (Colonna 1997; Chakrabarty 1997; Thorne 1997). This was especially true of the ways in which racialized hierarchies were normalized in the colonies and the nation through the incorporation of other 'symptoms of modernity' such as class, gender and sexuality (Conklin 1998:67; Viswanathan 1995; McClintock 1995; Mosse 1985).

Such hierarchies have been marked by scholars such as Stoler in colonial administrators' deep concerns "around issues of sentiment and their subversive tendencies, around 'private' feelings and their political consequences, around racial attribution to sensibilities, and around assessments of affective dispositions and their beneficent and dangerous political effects" (2009:58; cf. Chakrabarty 1997). In policing the murky boundaries of "culture" that drew on racial, linguistic, religious, classed difference and affective habits among colonial subjects, education and child-rearing played an important role (Stoler 1995; Colonna 1997; Conklin 1998). However, the diverse contexts of different colonies deeply impacted the ways in which such boundaries were conceived and policed, and colonial subjects were understood in relation to specific sets of problems for governors. For example, as the Dutch approached emancipation in 1863, Christianization of the slave population in Surinam – discouraged during previous centuries – was promoted as an important tool in creating "an obedient free population"

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(Oostindie and Paasman 1998:354). Similarly, as the Surinamese population grew culturally and linguistically more diverse with the arrival of indentured labourers from the British and Dutch East Indies during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, administrators in the Netherlands and Surinam sought to promote the "[a]doption of Western cultural elements … via primary education in Dutch" (Van Lier 1971:221). The problems that education was intended to solve in Surinam reflected its history as an extractive site, rather than a colony where large numbers of Europeans settled. Surinam's marginal and routinely transitory European population meant that educational uplift was primarily directed at maintaining the colony's "Western, Christian cachet" by 'improving' or 'civilizing' the former slave masses, creole population, and growing numbers of East Indians – not at making these natives into acceptable 'European' subjects (Van Lier 1971:193).[31]

In the Dutch East Indies, with its prominent European and mestizo society, the relationship between culture, education and upbringing was more fraught than in Surinam. Here, the attention to the moral uplift of the empire's colonial 'children' was set directly against anxieties over determining and maintaining the legal (and cultural) status of the biological children of Dutch or European colonials and indigenous women. At the turn of the twentieth century, racial markers superseded (but did not erase) the religious markers prominent during the earlier colonial forays of the *VOC* in the Dutch East Indies in delineating the privileges of nationality. In understanding difference in this way, the problem of miscegenation became paramount in formalizing legal distinctions between Indies colonial subjects as well as with distinguishing them from the 'real' Dutchmen of Europe (Smith Kipp 2003:90). This turn of the century preoccupation with strictly defined racial categories emerged from the perceived dilemmas of the eighteenth century, where lines between race and class were frequently blurred

(Stoler and Cooper 1997:34). Terminology that delineated status "equated to" (*gelijkgesteld*) European or indigenous was replaced with the purely racialized categories of 'European', 'Foreign Oriental', and 'Native' (Smith Kipp 2003:91). Resonating with the experiences of German 'pioneers' in Southwest and East Africa, and Samoa (Wildenthal 1997), by the twentieth century, Dutch colonial authorities too were faced with the difficulty of providing

> legal precision to categories that were never pure in any case and were continually confounded by the messy realities of life. Whether one was 'European' was a question most acute, perhaps, for the many Eurasians or Indo-Europeans, some of whom had received Western educations and had been raised in a Dutch-speaking environment, and others whose families had become dissolved (*opgelost*) into the native population. As the special position for Japanese[32] suggests, who was legally a 'European' had almost as much to do with wealth and politics as it did with one's parentage or ancestry. (Smith Kipp 2003:91)

By the end of the nineteenth century, religious, racial, as well as linguistic, sexual, classed and affective disposition had become conceptually organized around notions of European or Dutch civilization or culture. Laws enacted in 1884 stipulated that "access to European equivalent status in the Indies required a 'complete suitability [*geschiktheid*] for European society', defined as a belief in Christianity, fluency in spoken and written Dutch, and training in European morals and ideas" (Stoler 1997:217). Social behaviour in the Dutch East Indies, particularly relating to domestic arrangements (how marriage and family were constituted) had profound effects on questions of class, nationality, citizenship and 'whiteness' or 'Europeanness' (Stoler and Cooper 1997:25-27; cf. Gouda 1998; Smedley 1999; Wildenthal 1997; Colonna 1997; McDonald 1989). The terms involved in these legal reckonings were highly discriminatory given that "[a]t issue were the means by which European *beschaving* (civilization or culture) would be disseminated without undercutting the criteria by which European claims to privilege were made" (Stoler 1997:202). Such legal distinctions between subjects in the colony and those

'at home' in the Netherlands would become of utmost importance with the dissolution of the Dutch empire in the East Indies.[33]

Definite effects: discourses of Dutchness in imperial power politics

The development of culturalized notions of difference has historically proven a powerful "common sense" way of understanding and problematizing social, political and economic relationships. This is especially visible when one contrasts the contemporaneous attitudes toward the Boer 'dream' colonies in South Africa with the Dutch East Indies at the turn of the twentieth century. It was in the context of imperial power politics that the Dutch viewed the Boer Wars as a cynical expression on the part of the British Empire of power over justice. Meanwhile, the war being fought in Aceh, Sumatra by the Dutch against a Muslim, indigenous sultanate during this same period was explicitly not viewed in the same light (Kuitenbrouwer 1991:215). The role of culturalized difference – drawing in notions of race, language, religious practice and belief, gendered and sexual norms and behaviour – was a key lens through which such distinctions were made. These dynamics presented distinct problems for the conception, normalization and management of social difference, highlighting the role of different signifiers in how the boundaries of respectable Dutchness were developed and conducted across the space of empire.

A significant factor in the making of this distinction between the two contexts was the "supposed cultural relatedness of the Boers, degenerate remnants of an earlier Dutch diaspora during a 'Golden Age' of Dutch commercial hegemony" (James and Schrauwers 2003:49). This view facilitated notions of the Boers as 'kin' (*stamgenooten*) who were connected by a shared religion, language, race and culture as members of an imagined *Groter Nederland* (Greater

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Netherlands). As rediscovered close kin to the Dutch in the 'family of man', the Boers were seen as bearers of 'authentic' Dutch culture that had been degraded through generations of cultural isolation in southern Africa. This created a moral imperative that the nineteenth century Dutch in the Netherlands intervene to help 'revive' aspects of Dutch, middle-class sensibilities that had been 'lost' by the Boers (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:198-204).[34] These shared connections were, coincidentally, viewed as supporting valuable political and economic connections between the Netherlands and the colony, at the time under British control (Kuitenbrouwer 1991:196). These interests were promoted through the improvement of material interests (agriculture, industry, trade, mining), and a moral conviction among the Dutch to spread enlightenment ideals to all of southern Africa (Bossenbroek 1996:244).

As with the public support for the Boers, the Dutch administration was concerned in the East Indies with the recuperation and maintenance of "Europeanness" among its mixed-race and native European subjects in the colonies. As discussed, the centuries-long phenomenon of racial mixing in the Dutch East Indies had become a distinct problem for legal status classification, as well as a problem of cultural, civilizational, and racial dilution or contamination (Pattynama 1998: 99; Stoler 1997:211-212; cf. Wildenthal 1997; Conklin 1998). These moral dilemmas were amplified by the ongoing threats to Dutch rule and economic interests posed by the indigenous population. This concern underscores how governmental programs are impacted by processes that occur beyond their scope. These programs are subject to instability, fracture, and critique by those they govern, even as they powerfully educate and shape social conduct (Li 2007a:279).

By 1900, practices of concubinage and mixed-marriage between Europeans (usually men) and Asians (or Eurasians, usually women) in the Indies were seen as more than simply undesirable, and became cause for political unrest. More than 70,000 people living in the Dutch

East Indies were legally considered 'European' and of these, nearly three-quarters were of mixed descent. Almost seven in ten knew little to no Dutch, and many outright rejected the norms and values of "respectable bourgeois European society" (Stoler 1997:199, 210; cf. Stoler 2009). While these conditions echoed those found among the rediscovered Boers, the problems this population posed for the colonial administration differed in many important ways. Children from mixed-unions were seen as both physically and morally tainted as more rigidly defined boundaries were drawn between 'Indo' and 'European' social and legal statuses (Pattynama 1998:100). Even "pure-blooded" Europeans who stayed on (or too long) in the colonies (*blijvers*, *verindische*) were thought to be threatened by the 'transformative' and 'degrading' power of the colonial climate and cultural mixing (Stoler 1997:213, 214; Pattynama 1998:99; McClintock 1995; Conklin 1998; Wildenthal 1997; cf. Briggs 1996; Salomon 2002; Young 1995; Chakrabarty 1997). As Conklin shows in a parallel case in the French empire, there was a widespread concern among colonists that white children were especially vulnerable and unable to thrive in the 'dangerous' tropical climate (1998:79). Compounding anxieties over the threat posed by the physical environment of the colonies, further peril was engendered by the 'decivilizing' influences of social mixing with native peoples – especially European men and native or mixed-race women (Conklin 1998:78). Among French and Dutch colonial officials of this period, there was a pressing concern that "the Europeanness of the métis children could never be assured, despite a rhetoric affirming that education and upbringing were transformative processes" (Stoler 1997:211; Conklin 1998:77). This fed into the development of a highly stratified educational system in the Indies, where the standards for white-collar posts remained unattainable for anyone but those Dutch who were from Europe. It was felt, during the 'Ethical Policy' period, that it was "impossible for persons raised and educated in the Indies to be the

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bearers [*dragers*] of Western culture and civilization" (Stoler 1997:216) and they were therefore barred from coveted administrative posts. Similarly, though less explicitly than stated in the Dutch 'Ethical Policy', were the processes whereby students were evaluated and placed during teacher training in Algeria. As Colonna (1997:354) details, "educational performances or pedagogical aptitudes had less weight in this evaluation than the so-called personal qualities." Thus, the selection of teachers in French colonial Algeria had less to do with academic achievement, and more to do with notions of racialized, classed, and other criteria denoting French cultural belonging. Although the form of implementation varied in practice, racialized or culturalized segregation between those deemed able to hold the post of administrators and those subjects in need of guidance or discipline was a common practice across different European colonies (Blom Hansen and Stepputat 2005; cf. Viswanathan 1997).

Social distinctions of Europeanness existed alongside and in relation to legal ones in the East Indies, leading to the circulation of a number of different terms that applied to people legally-constructed as European. Someone termed an 'Indo' could have European legal status, but in everyday discourse, this category included people who had 'fallen' from the pure social conceptualization of Europeanness. 'Indo' was applied to *blijvers* (literally, stayers) and the *verindische* (Indianized), meaning first generation Europeans who stayed in the colony, and poor whites in the colony. Meanwhile 'Indo-European' might apply equally to, for example, people considered mixed (*mengbloeden*, mixed-blood; Eurasian), Europeans born in the Dutch East Indies but of Dutch nationality, and European *blijvers* who saw the Indies as a second fatherland (Stoler 1997:222). These concerns about colonial wolves in sheep's clothing were amplified by the panic at the turn of the twentieth century over the possibility of European men in the Indies taking bribes from local, indigenous people to legally-recognize children, and thereby obtain

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'European' status for them (Gouda 1998:242). Fears over these 'artificially fabricated Europeans' (*kunstmatig gefabriceerde Europeanen*) were one and the same with fears about blurred distinctions between ruler and ruled, between 'native' and 'European' cultural fashions (Stoler 1997:211). In one sense, 'Europeans' were considered 'white' – or at least not marked as 'native' or 'mixed' – but their 'whiteness' was also considered precarious (cf. Wildenthal 1997). This is because, as colonial scholars have repeatedly shown, cultural and racial distinctions have long operated in tandem, with racial categories drawing from a range of "hierarchies of civility, on cultural distinctions of breeding, character, and psychological disposition, on the relationship between the hidden essence of race and what were claimed to be its visual markers" (Stoler and Cooper 1997:34; McClintock 1995; Thorne 1997; Colonna 1997; cf. Mosse 1985; Jhally 1996; Hall 1997; van Nieuwkerk 2004). Through the proliferation and spread of this culturalized rationale, the Dutch state extended the techniques of governmentality from the individual body to the population as a whole (Stoler 1995:82).

These considerations were worked out simultaneously with the imperial management of the local indigenous populations. Among these populations, as with the Boers, overlapping considerations such as religion, race, and culture played a central role in demarcating social difference and supporting moral intervention in the Dutch East Indies. Here, Islam (much more than local animist beliefs or Hinduism) had historically been viewed as a potentially dangerous tool for nationalist and anti-Dutch organizing, and was politically suppressed (cf. Gouda and Clancy-Smith 1998; Kuitenbrouwer 1991; James and Schrauwers 2003). The Dutch Islamic and Orientalist scholar, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936), famously stated that Islam and modernity (that is, Dutchness or Europeanness) were incommensurable, citing the position of Muslim women as a measure of the supposed cultural "backwardness" of these colonized

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peoples and others. These sentiments regarding the dangers of Islam were shared by other European colonizers, notably among the French in North Africa (Gouda and Smith-Clancy 1998:5; Colonna 1997; Conklin 1998). Islam was elsewhere framed as a 'parasite' endangering the moral authority of the Dutch in the East Indies (Kuitenbrouwer 1991:117). The colonial government implemented policy that aimed to 'depoliticize' religion (in favour of culture), in part because of the negative views of Islam. More than simply a threat to the expansion of Protestant missions in the archipelago, Islam was viewed as a dangerous and potentially subversive force of nationalist organizing (Gouda and Clancy-Smith 1998:5; Kuitenbrouwer 1991:153; James and Schrauwers 2003:61, 63). These negative opinions of Islam were no doubt also encouraged during conflicts between the Dutch and local authorities, for instance during the lengthy wars with the Muslim Sultanate of Aceh (1873, 1874-1880, 1883-1913), or the Muslim rebellion – often remembered by Dutch historians as the 'betrayal' – at Lombok (1894) (Bloembergen 2006:170-173). These conflicts also worsened Dutch perceptions of Muslims in the colonies through framing them as culturally, religiously, and morally different than (even incommensurable with) European styles of living (cf. Bloembergen 2006:170-173). Due to these tensions and ideas connecting religion to other salient markers of social difference, Dutch colonial perceptions of Muslims were worse than that of other religious or cultural groups.

Such conflicts served another important role in the development of Dutch nationalism. These conflicts helped to unify the Dutch in the Netherlands as national interest in the affairs of the colony was shared by people from all classes and professions, religious sects, and urban and rural locales across the different provinces. This was especially important given the powerful divisions in Dutch society along religious, regional and classed lines. Protestantism had been the state religion of the Netherlands since the Seven Provinces' independence from the Holy Roman

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Empire, and this fact powerfully shaped relations and divisions between Dutchmen and their provinces. While only Calvinism was openly practiced, other religions were more or less tolerated by the state and Catholicism remained a fixture in the Dutch social landscape, especially in the southern provinces (Kalb 1997). In 1848, the *Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (the Kingdom of the Netherlands) underwent a major change that has marked its modern character, and continues to reverberate through contemporary discussions of social difference. In response to international political pressures, particularly the revolutions in France and Germany (James and Schrauwers 2003:54), the Constitution of 1848 'emancipated' the various (non-Calvinist) religious groups. With the formal recognition of freedom of all religions and the right to organize along religious lines enshrined in the constitution, all religious groups in the Netherlands became *de facto* 'minorities'. This changed the landscape of social difference in the Netherlands significantly, and set the conditions for the emergence of a new form of social organization in response to these shifts: *verzuiling*, or pillarization (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:25; cf. Lijphart 1968; Bax 1989). *Verzuiling* formalized the organization of Dutch society into four denominational/ socio-economic pillars (Protestant, Catholic, Liberal, and Socialist), which oversaw all aspects of social and political life in the Netherlands for a century.[35]

In the face of these deep divisions between the people of the Netherlands, the Aceh and Lombok conflicts helped to cultivate and reinforce fledgling nationalist sentiments (Hobsbawm 1983:14). The East Indian army (*Indische leger*) was honoured by Princess Wilhelmina when it returned from the Lombok expedition (Bossenbroek 1996:211-212; 320). The symbolic combination of a young monarch, overseas military heroes and the Dutch flag in heralding the efforts of "*Onze Kolonialen*" (our Colonials) reinforced the national imaginary for the Dutch (Bossenbroek 1996:235). The commemoration of this event through media reports meant that

people from all over the kingdom could participate in this "highpoint of national unity, the elevation of the colonial warriors to the fatherland's hall of honour" (Bossenbroek 1996:322; my translation; Anderson 1991).

Adapting tactics of governmental problematization

By 1920, although the status of 'European' in the colonies was no longer formally considered a racial category or defined through racialized criteria, it was still defined and supported by an array of cultural traits (e.g. linguistic competence, upbringing in a 'European milieu') that continued to justify and support racial discrimination (Stoler and Cooper 1997:10). This phenomenon – what Silverstein (2005) and others have termed cultural racism – was, of course, not limited to the Dutch imperial adventure, but was a strategy shared across multiple fields of social difference-making. In British and French colonial arenas in Africa charges of 'cultural backwardness' soon replaced arguments of racial inferiority in colonial discourse (Stoler and Cooper 1997:10-11; Stoler 1997:214; Colonna 1997; Conklin 1998; Thorne 1997; cf. Goldberg 2000). In French Algeria, turn of the twentieth century education policy began from the premise "that civilizing practices had to be imposed since the children are semisavages, reduced to a vegetative existence and living, as it were, in a state of nature" (Colonna 1997:361). Stoler posits that the reason that this issue became so highly charged at this time among all colonial administrations was because it threatened the criteria that governed not only social concepts of Europeanness, but also the practical matters of citizenship and nationality (Stoler 1997:199). By the 1920s, the definition of 'Dutchness' was becoming much tighter in the Indies,

creating new cultural boundaries while shoring up its old ones. Racial hate

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(*rassenhaat*) and representation were watchwords of the times. A renewed disdain for the Indos permeated a discourse that heightened in the depression as the nationalist movement grew stronger and as unemployed 'full-blooded' Europeans found 'roaming around' in native villages blurred with the ranks of the Indo poor. (Stoler 1997:222)

What emerges quite clearly from these colonial anxieties is that racialized conceptions of difference build on, blur, and are subsumed by other meaningful categories, from socioeconomic class, to national identification, and the various categories (such as gender, sexuality, religion) from which these complex entities are configured. Problems of 'racial' degeneracy thus become issues for national, or even civilizational, concern. As part of a problem/ solution dynamic, such concerns also flag the space of governmental intervention for the ethnographer.

While I have focused in this chapter on the space of empire to consider the powerful operation of governmental programs, these programs were not limited to Dutch engagement in the colonies. The mutability of such grammars of difference can be seen in how they surface across the space of empire, defining/ applying to problematic categories in the colonies and metropole alike. Colonial civilizing discourse was based on hierarchical notions of race, class, and civilization or culture, all of which drew on paternalistic language to make sense of the white man's burden in the colonies. Traces of this civilizing discourse can be observed in the policies formulated by the national elites targeting the "internal dangers" posed by European rural or proletarian populations around the turn of the twentieth century (Gouda and Clancy-Smith 1998:12; Stoler 1995:82).

Frequent targets of governmental intervention, lower classed and impoverished Dutch, French, and English were often described using vocabulary I have discussed thus far in the overseas colonies. Thorne's (1997) work, which traces the work of British Evangelical missions overseas and in northern English industrial regions, draws attention to the common sense use of

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racial descriptions of poor and working class English as "heathens" and "uncivilized." Colonna's (1997) study of French educational policy underscores the long history of treating peasants and language minorities – in Brittany, Flanders and the Basque region – as equally backward and uncivilized as Algerian pupils (cf. McDonald 1989). For French administrators

> those "citadels" constituted real missionary regions for the school. Those peasants in whom "there was no trace of the French language," who "have barely been grazed by the civilization of the French language," had to be assimilated, first by disseminating the French language with French teachers: "Frenchmen are needed to make the Bretons French, they won't do it by themselves." (Colonna 1997:348; cf. McDonald 1989)

The connections between classed difference and notions of civilized conduct are also clear in the Dutch experimental *asowoningen* (from *asociaal + woningen*, anti-social housing) that were established between the early nineteenth century until the Second World War in cities such as Amsterdam, Den Haag, and Utrecht (Steyaert and van Lanen 2011:36-37). Using the grammar of Dutch sociality (being *sociaal* or *asociaal*), these projects segregated poor people identified as 'unsocialized' (*onmaatschapplijken*) or 'inadmissible' (*ontoelaatbare gezinnen*, inadmissible families) into self-contained neighbourhoods. The target population for these what can only be referred to as 'ghettos', were people whom the housing associations identified as in need of isolation until such time as they learned Dutch norms and values (Steyaert and van Lanen 2011:36).

As these instances allude, governmental programs developed and covered the entire space of empire to conduct the conduct of populations through the education of affective habits, aspirations and beliefs (Li 2007a; Stoler 2009). This is clear in how civilizing missions' discursive practice settled not only in the faraway colonies, but in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe to similarly produce acceptable images of otherwise unpalatable subjects, legitimate

differences in power, and frame certain members of the population as targets in need of guidance or discipline (cf. Gouda and Clancy-Smith 1998:8, 10; Thorne 1997; Mosse 1985; McClintock 1995; McDonald 1989). The intervention of experts sought to transform the conduct of the population to its own benefit through corrective adjustments, monitoring and administration of delimited subgroups, such as the poor (Li 2007a:276). Yet, these interventions impacted the population at large by advising the so-called 'dangerous classes' on proper social conduct as citizens. Through the problematization of certain behaviours, beliefs and attitudes, the emerging processes of government targeted the entire Dutch population, recruiting non-state actors to the task of directing and intervening in social processes that set the conditions for people to do as they ought as *sociaal* members of the (national) community (Li 2007a:275).

Building on these foundational processes of problematization, my ethnography explores some of the ways that governmental programs developed through the colonial experience have been reassembled in the contemporary Netherlands. Tracing these programs and the messy, contested, and nonetheless powerful operation of governmentality grounds my exploration of the tensions and contradictions around "good" citizenship practice revealed through my research. I am particularly concerned with how the thought objects and processes pertaining to social difference and national boundary maintenance have been rearticulated, and continue to direct the conduct of people and institutional processes in response to immigration and settlement in the Netherlands.

In the next chapters, I address the effects of how the powerful "common sense" ways of understanding Dutchness and difference developed during the experience of empire recede and resurface in the contemporary grammar of alterity and processes of nation building. Through my examination of policy developments, key events and processes, and interactions with my

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research participants I examine how culture is problematized anew as waves of culturally diverse newcomers – especially those from the former colonies and other 'non-Western' countries – have settled in the Netherlands and adopted Dutch citizenship. These ways of understanding difference are also entangled with how research participants, policy makers, politicians, and media commenters express a Dutch national cultural ethic through contemporary attitudes to local expressions of sociality, labour, and active participation. Throughout my analysis, the experiences and views of my research participants and others in Dutch society underscore the social fact that not all

> processes and interactions, histories, solidarities and attachments, [can] be reconfigured according to plan. To examine those processes, that excess, we need to attend to the particularities of conjunctures—specific times, places and sets of relations—the terrain of ethnography. (Li 2007a:277)

In following these expressions of governmentality, competing voices are engaged in the everyday drawing of boundaries that define, include and exclude particular people and practices from the nation-state.

4. "What do you mean by *allochtoon*?" Everyday grammars of difference

While there are many different ways of speaking about people in the Netherlands considered culturally distinct from 'native' Dutch, the word *allochtoon* (allochthon, plural *allochtonen*) has become an anchor term in the contemporary Dutch grammar of difference (cf. Cooper and Stoler 1997:3). This term became part of everyday speech after it was first introduced by Dutch policy makers in 1989 (*Allochtonenbeleid*, Allochthons Policy). It has since taken on a life of its own as it has been adopted across Dutch society, pulling in notions of difference that have grown from the experience of empire. As a word now used in everyday discussions – by media commentators and research participants, as well as academics and politicians – the label *allochtoon* communicates a significant amount about what characteristics, behaviours, values and attitudes might be seen as not Dutch. This term has become an un/easy part of the language of the everyday in Dutch and Dutch society (cf. Geschiere 2009), both benignly employed and regularly contested, even by the same individuals. Yet, for all that this word conveys in public and policy spheres, the concept of allochthony remains exceptionally vague. As several scholars have noted, this fuzziness and flexibility is precisely what makes the language of autochthony a powerful technique employed to differentiate between supposedly 'true' insiders and outsiders (cf. Geschiere 2009; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Ceuppens 2006).

In this chapter, I examine how this language has been discursively mobilized in Amsterdam and across the Netherlands as part of programs to direct and improve the welfare of the Dutch population (cf. Li 2007b:264). These programs respond to what has been considered a new problem facing the Netherlands (and indeed many other Western European countries) since

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the Second World War and the collapse of European empires: the migration and settlement of waves of 'non-Western' immigrants from the former colonies and elsewhere in the global South. I begin this chapter with a selective overview of these processes and the attitudes of 'native' Dutch toward twentieth century migration and settlement in the Netherlands. I then discuss the language of autochthony and its adoption by Dutch scholars, policy makers and the wider public as a way of defining not only new "problem groups" in Dutch society, but of conveying often unspoken criteria of cultural difference. The introduction and spread of the term *allochtoon* in the Dutch grammar of difference, like other key terms in "vocabularies of rule," is especially important and interesting to track ethnographically. As Dean reminds us, language constitutes

> an integral component within ways of doing things; … language shapes what are taken to be problem areas of social and political life and how they might be addressed. … [W]e should not underestimate the role of language in constructing worlds, problems and persons as governable entities. (2010:79)

In examining the language of autochthony in this particular context, this chapter attends to the ways in which certain people and behaviours become targets for governmental intervention, as well as how attempts to redirect the conduct of the population are variously consented to and contested. I underscore how my research participants, especially the Dutch language coaches, challenge the cultural and racial underpinnings of the term and deep connections to criteria for belonging in the neighbourhood, city and nation.

Unanticipated effects: postcolonial and late-twentieth century migration to the Netherlands

The events of the Second World War and the independence of the Dutch East Indies[1] (and other colonies) that followed produced wide-reaching effects in the Netherlands in how

social difference was experienced and managed. In addition to confronting the loss of this empire and the changed nature of the Dutch fatherland in post-War Europe, the postcolonial period marked a reversal of migration flows and settlement patterns from the (former-)colonies and elsewhere for which the Dutch and other Western European nation-states were unprepared. As Willems writes in 2003, "the Dutch nation in the 1950s and 1960s, and still today, considered itself unfit for immigrants, and instead actively encouraged emigration" (35). During and after the war, living conditions in the Netherlands worsened,[2] further contributing to the sense that the Netherlands was unfit for immigrants, "overcrowded and faced the prospect of permanent unemployment" (van Dalen and Henkens 2007:41). This sentiment was borne out by the difficulties of post-War rebuilding as well as overpopulation, rising unemployment, and a housing shortage. The negative opinion of the Dutch toward immigration also drew on the long history of colonialism, and the morally and politically charged understanding of social difference that developed across the space of empire. This is clear in the experience of many of the 300,000 Dutch nationals (people of Dutch origin, or of Dutch-Indonesian descent) who had 'repatriated' from the Indonesian archipelago to the Netherlands. Upon their arrival, they encountered such deep hostility in 'their fatherland' that they continued on to settle in other countries: Canada, the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:40; Smith 2003:13; Willems 2003:45).

The immigrants that began to arrive in the Netherlands during the post-War years were seen by the Dutch as signalling a distinct, frequently unwelcome change from the previous patterns of migration and settlement across Europe (Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007; Lechner 2007; cf. Silverstein 2005; Gilroy 1987; Beriss 2004; Bunzl 2004; Wikan 2002). People holding 'European' status in the former Dutch East Indies were not the only groups who migrated to the

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Netherlands as a result of decolonization, as the case of Moluccan soldiers underscores.[3] In the decades following the Second World War, new dynamics prompted migration from across the remaining parts of the Kingdom to Europe, and from elsewhere. A central factor here was the recovering economy, which demanded an influx of labourers ahead of policies in place to deal with them, or later, their families (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:54).

Many (former) colonial minorities – such as the Surinamese – traded on their citizenship or legal recognition within the empire to seek work in the metropole during the 1950s. This was often through 'guest worker' migration schemes to temporarily solve European labour shortages (Pettigrew 1998:79; cf. Smith 2003:10; Beriss 2004). Dutch policy makers hoped that increased migration by Surinamese would meet the needs of economic growth. Surinamese were favoured at this point because as Dutch citizens of the overseas Kingdom (until 1975) they were considered culturally and linguistically compatible with 'native' Dutch (Pettigrew 1998:79; Lucassen and Penninx 1997:42; Buruma 2006; cf. Oostindie 1990; Van Lier 1971). Indeed, since the late eighteenth century many well-to-do Surinamese had routinely sought professional education in the Netherlands. Although early twentieth century Surinamese migration to the Netherlands was characterized by "shocking ignorance and by 'benevolent curiosity'" on the part of 'native' Dutch, the Surinamese were generally not unwelcome. For many 'native' Dutch it appeared that migrants' "skin colour didn't matter much as long as their conduct lived up to Dutch standards;" an expectation that middle-class Surinamese routinely met (Oostindie 1990:238). By the 1990s, Surinamese formed one of the four largest 'minority' or 'ethnic' groups in the country (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:45). In spite of this influx of new labourers, it soon became clear that recruits from elsewhere would also be required to make up the shortfall.

While the Netherlands (like other Western European states) had at first recruited

temporary workers from within Europe and their former colonies, by the mid-1960s Turkey,

Morocco and Tunisia became the main sources for temporary labourers (Lucassen and Penninx

1997:54; Pettigrew 1998:79; cf. Brubaker 1992; Rietsteig 1994; Beriss 2002). However, the

1973 global oil crisis brought an abrupt end to economic prosperity and growth, revealing the

flaws in the temporary "guest worker" schemes. This period spotlighted how foreign these

labourers and their families were considered by the Dutch, especially compared to earlier

Surinamese or Dutch East Indies migrants. Guest workers from the European Community (in

spite of no longer needing work visas to reside in any other EC country) were drawn home by

their own nation-states' improving economies. Turkish and Moroccan guest workers (who came

mainly from harder hit rural regions) preferred to stay and to bring their families to live with

them in the Netherlands (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:59). Family reunification (unrestricted in

the Netherlands until 1981) peaked among these groups in 1992, making them the second and

third largest immigrant populations after the Surinamese (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:61).

Accepted on a supposedly temporary basis, these and similar groups had become permanent and

marginalized figures across various Western European nation-states (cf. Mandel 2008; Bunzl

2004; Brubaker 1992).

     This experience with migration occurred alongside another that has had lasting

repercussions. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s asylum seekers were willingly embraced by

Western European governments and national populations alike (Martiniello and Rea 1999:167).

Yet, by the mid-1980s the numbers of asylum seekers in the European Economic Community

countries rapidly increased from 65,000 (in 1983) to 289,000 (1989), with 700,000 applications

received in 1992 (Pettigrew 1998:81), contributing to a drastic shift in public opinion among

EEC citizens: rather than a humanitarian obligation, asylum became seen primarily as "a

disguised form of economic immigration" (Martiniello and Rea 1999:168). The Dutch backlog in

processing asylum applications lasted for years, leaving huge numbers of asylum seekers

awaiting a decision without access to employment or education, including Dutch language

training.[4]

While economic concerns have been an important factor motivating policy approaches

and popular sentiments that discouraged the permanent settlement of newcomers, concerns about

the place of immigrants in the Netherlands extend far beyond the economic. For many of these

migrant groups, their arrival in the Netherlands had always been considered by the Dutch

government as temporary. It was never the government's intention that these foreign workers or

asylum seekers be incorporated into the nation; many other European nation-states, like the

Netherlands, actively excluded such labour migrants and their families from national civic

enculturation processes (e.g. state education for national citizens) (Mandel 2008; Brubaker

1992). Echoing anxieties from the colonies only decades before, the differences embodied by

these post-War migrants – in terms of culture, language, religion, race – were widely considered

incompatible with Dutch, or even European styles of living. Unlike the European (seasonal or

skilled) labour migrants and (religious or political) refugees from centuries past, these

newcomers were considered foreign in ways that their predecessors never had been. These

differences were exacerbated in the Dutch context as the arrival of these diverse newcomers

coincided with the deep shift from a staunchly Christian society characterized by conservatism

and deference to authority, to one considered embracing of progressive ideals (cf. Vuisje 2000;

van Dam 2011).[5] The national values cultivated through the experiences of *verzuiling*

(pillarization) – particularly the Dutch orientation to tolerance, personal autonomy and

permissiveness – were redirected toward the secular values and practices of: freedom of speech,

the acceptance of homosexuality, gender equality, the tolerance of soft-drug use, prostitution, and legal provisions for abortion and euthanasia (Sunier and van Ginkel 2006:109; cf. Vuijsje 2000). The arrival of guest workers and their families after the 1960s from countries considered by the Dutch to be socially conservative, and often Muslim, began to challenge these new Dutch notions of tolerance.

At least since the late 1990s, concerns among the Dutch about unemployment, youth criminality, gendered violence, and welfare dependency largely came to centre on 'non-Western' immigrants – especially former labour migrants who overstayed their visas, transitioning into permanent residents and new Dutch citizens (Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007; Scheffer 2000). Policy developed to target these issues initially sought class-based interventions, without acknowledging the unique structural barriers faced by many of these newcomers. Many 'native' Dutch began to take issue with what they saw as a preoccupation with "political correctness" rather than tackling these issues head on by addressing the inadequacy of civic enculturation policies aimed at new immigrants. Public discourse on social problems began then to focus on language and educational deficits among 'non-Western' immigrants and their descendants, viewed as intensifying differences with mainstream Dutch society (Vuisje 2000; cf. Stoler 1995; Colonna 1997; Wildenthal 1997). Many of the issues that have arisen in the Dutch context reflect similar convergences occurring across the broader context of the supranational European Union (cf. Mandel 2008; Bunzl 2004; Beriss 2004; Wikan 2002). These experiences importantly reflect the powerful discursive categories of difference and Dutchness or Europeanness developed during centuries of imperialism.

The language of autochthony: newcomers, new problems, and technical language

Growing anxieties around immigration were spurred by an absence of procedures to integrate newcomers as productive members of European national societies. In the post-War, postcolonial Netherlands, domestic social and political pressure produced policy aimed at the 'resocializing and integration' of people from Indonesia, who were considered internal migrants. These policy interventions included attention to issues of housing, social counselling and spiritual guidance. However, the supposedly temporary guest workers who came in the 1960s and after were not eligible for similar integration initiatives. Policies for guest workers and their families – conceived as enabling integration 'while retaining their own identity' – explicitly precluded national integration and sought to facilitate their return to the country of origin (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:143; cf. Van Lier 1971:193).[6] Pulling from colonial techniques of management, these migrants were explicitly problematized by government as 'not Dutch' (cf. Li 2007a). This lack of integration policy was increasingly felt as many Western European nation-states made fundamental changes to their citizenship laws during the 1980s. Some of these changes included making citizenship acquisition easier for newcomers and their descendants, reducing the residency period required before eligible for citizenship, and increased tolerance for the holding of multiple citizenships (Çinar 1994:62). In spite of such changes to citizenship law across many EEC states, there was no comparable development of social or economic integration policy. Where these migrants were eligible for integration programs, they were still often integrated as foreigners, that is, they were socialized as outsiders living temporarily in the European national society.

The framing of migration practices through policy language is important in understanding

how (non-Western, postcolonial) difference was conceived in the Netherlands and other European countries. From the guest worker period until the early 1990s, policy makers and politicians in the Netherlands talked about recent immigrants and their descendants through the language of ethnic minorities (*ethnisch minderheden*). Rather than implying all who were not of Dutch heritage, in the *Minderhedennota* (Ethnic Minorities Policy, 1983) 'ethnic minorities' were specific groups of newcomers and their descendants considered "non-Western" who were targeted for policy intervention: former colonial subjects (e.g. the Moluccans, Surinamese, Antilleans); guest workers and their families (especially those from Turkey or Morocco); refugees and asylum seekers (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:150).

The perceived need for policy intervention among 'ethnic minorities' stemmed from various factors, including discrimination in Dutch society, which contributed to the relatively disadvantaged situation of "non-Western" minorities compared to the 'native' Dutch majority or "Western" immigrants. As a category that linked ethnic or national origins with success in Dutch society, 'ethnic minorities' in the Netherlands were more frequently marginalized, faced higher rates of unemployment, lower educational achievement, and higher rates of crime and welfare dependency than 'native' Dutch citizens. As the language of these policy categories was taken up in mainstream Dutch society, the term "ethnic minority" took on additional layers of meaning derived from earlier notions of cultural, religious, linguistic, as well as ethnic or racial difference.

In light of political and public discourse associated with the term 'ethnic minority', policy makers were concerned that those who were identified as ethnic minorities were becoming irreversibly marginalized and viewed as problem groups, unable to act as "active" citizen-subjects (cf. Ong 2006; Muehlebach 2012). The discursive shift from 'ethnic minority' to the now common 'allochthon' (*allochtoon*) has been identified as beginning with the publication of

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the *Wetenschappelijk Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid*'s (*WRR*, Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy) *Allochtonenbeleid* (literally, "Allochthons Policy," 1989, but translated by policy makers into English as "Immigrant Policy"). In this document, the authors shifted from what they felt had become the discriminatory language of ethnic minorities (stigmatizing certain ethnic or racialized identifiers), to the new, "uncontaminated" terminology of allochthony.[7] In the English summary of the original report, the authors state that "the Council [*WRR*] believes that the government tends to view these groups too much in the light of welfare categories instead of providing them with opportunities to stand on their own feet" (WRR 1990:9). As a step toward remedying these problems, the authors sought to introduce both a new scope for policy intervention and a new term for those it served, *allochtonen* (allochthons). In this way, the category of *allochtoon* was intended as a new way of thinking about and managing subgroups of the Dutch population.

In the broadest sense, autochthony can be understood as a way of making claims to the soil, to naturalized origins (including original settlement) in ways that are reminiscent of indigeneity. Autochthony is at once a problematic and powerful concept, deriving both of these properties from its flexibility and openness. While the terminology and discourse of autochthony has been common among French and Dutch scholars for quite some time,[8] the increasing resonance of this language among English language scholars owes thanks to anthropologists (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Geschiere and Jackson 2006; Ceuppens 2006; Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005). This is perhaps especially the case with Peter Geschiere, whose seminal text, *The Perils of Belonging* (2009), explores the proliferation of this discourse across (mainly Francophone) Africa, and increasingly in (Dutch-speaking) Western Europe. Comparing the works and insights of scholars studying autochthony within and across these contexts

underscores how this language becomes a powerful instrument in drawing lines between insider and outsider status, precisely due to its amorphous and easily shifting nature.

With its historical connections to "the soil," the language of autochthony today continues to appeal to notions of community. The question of community and its safeguarding against potentially destructive outsiders has taken on a renewed salience in relation to how people experience contemporary processes of globalization. Geschiere suggests that the increasing reliance on the discourse of autochthony is due to its very emptiness and plasticity: "autochthony's Other can be constantly redefined, entailing new boundary marking for the group concerned" (2009:28). As a naturalizing discourse which "makes obvious" the distinctions between autochthons and Others (allochthons), the language of autochthony is easily incorporated into nation- and other community-building projects. This designation can then be used to deny or contest the claims of people framed as newcomers to various resources, from land or social welfare benefits to the rights of citizenship.

The entanglement of multiple and shifting signifiers within the conceptualization and use of the language of autochthony has important implications for understanding the ways in which Dutchness or integration have been conceived by those with whom I worked. The critique levelled by Ceuppens underscores this concern. She indicates that

> autochthony relies on sharp distinctions between "us" and "them" that are relational insofar as neither identity is ever fixed; "outsiders" can be those who compete in any region with the "first" inhabitants over control of resources, a political class that allows this to happen, and/or an intellectual class blinded by "political correctness" that refuses to acknowledge the problem. Using culture ... in order to (re)classify "locals" and "aliens," citizens as noncitizens, and vice versa, autochthony can draw upon existing ethnic categories or set up cultural differences within ethnic groups. (Ceuppens 2006:150)

In the "Allochthons Policy," *allochtonen* were defined as "generally speaking, people whose

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parents came from elsewhere to establish themselves in the Netherlands, and their descendants to the third generation, insofar as the latter still wish to present themselves as foreign/ non-indigenous [*allochtoon*]" (WRR 1989:10; my translation). Elsewhere in the report, this definition is expanded to refer simply to anyone "of non-Dutch origin," implying ethnic heritage (WRR 1989:15; my translation).

Despite the policy authors' attempt to 'emancipate' those newly framed as *allochtonen* from the negative association with welfare categories, negative associations (with aspects of cultural, classed, religious, racial, and linguistic difference) were in many ways carried from the *Minderhedennota* (1983) forward into the *Allochtonenbeleid* (1989). As a socially situated policy category, 'minorities' (*minderheden*) were redefined as "allochthonous groups in a disadvantaged situation [*achterstandssituatie*];[9] periodically which groups can be considered minorities must be reassessed" (WRR 1989:10; my translation). In the *Allochtonenbeleid*, the designation of a person or group as a minority hinges more on the barriers to their social participation and economic success in mainstream Dutch society than being necessarily related to ethnicity. However, the most marginalized members of Dutch society remain those with a recent (family) history of immigration, particularly from non-Western countries. The introduction of autochthony into the everyday grammar of alterity strengthens processes of cultural racism that were earlier evident in colonial policy, especially when defining the legal, social and political boundaries around Dutch status. This is visible in how deep connections between (negative forms of) culturalized difference and newcomers surface and recede in the everyday use of the language of autochthony by 'native' Dutch in the media, politics, in policy and academic circles, and among average Dutch citizens like my research participants.

The problematization of the Dutch concept of the *allochtoon* has been affected by

processes of the culturalization of citizenship: "the search for a more pregnant formulation of the cultural consensus that forms the basis of citizenship and must be subscribed to by new citizens as proof of their 'integration'" (Geschiere 2009:24-25; cf. Tonkens et al. 2008; Duyvendak 2011; Verkaaik 2009; Schinkel 2010; Ghorashi and van Tilberg 2006). The language of autochthony has become common in everyday speech during a time when a revised and romanticized version of the historical character of Dutchness has taken root. This image of the Dutch people, praised by populist Right politician Pim Fortuyn, has become typical of current discussions: "[n]ew accounts of Dutch identity focus on the unity and likemindedness of the nation, and show little or no interest in the often centuries-old tradition of regional and religious disputes" (Hurenkamp et al. 2011:210). At the heart of this new vision of Dutch culture, is an image of social progressiveness especially with regard to supporting gender equality, sexual freedom, freedom of speech, personal autonomy and responsibility (cf. Vuijsje 2000). The values and behaviours that are now understood to characterize the Dutch are contrasted by those of the culturally, racially, religiously, and linguistically diverse newcomers who have settled in the Netherlands since the end of the Second World War. This image of a cultural divide has profoundly shaped the use of the term *allochtoon* in daily discourse.

Tracking the language of autochthony in everyday speech

Having found the word *allochtonen* ubiquitous in its use in Dutch policy documents, in academic work, and in the media, I assumed it to be the standard or accepted term to talk about ethnic minorities and 'non-Western' immigrants in the Netherlands. In casual English language conversations, most ('native' Dutch) people I met and spoke with about my research would

speak about immigrants, or Moroccans and Turks, or Muslims when talking about the questions that interested me. When I made it known to those I spoke with that I was learning Dutch and knew the term *allochtoon*, I found that they would often then begin to use this term with me to describe the same "problem" groups. In similar conversations I had in Dutch, people spoke about these groups as *allochtonen*, Moroccans (*Marokanen*), Turks (*Turken*) or Muslims (*moslems*), but also, as *buitenlanders* (foreigners) or *vreemdelingen* (strangers or foreigners). Nonetheless, I was aware that not everyone agreed with the use of this language, especially the words *allochtonen* (allochthons) and *autochtonen* (autochthons, used to describe 'native' Dutch). These discrepancies and differences in opinion are exactly what made tracking the language of difference used during my fieldwork in Amsterdam intriguing.

The word *allochtoon*, in particular, shifted meaning depending on who used it and in what context. Scientific and governmental bodies (e.g. *Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*, *CBS*, Central Bureau for Statistics; *Wetenschappelijk Raad voor Regeringbeleid*, *WRR*, Scientific Council for Governmental Policy) drew on the *Allochtonenbeleid* definition, employing *allochtoon* to delineate a particular policy or demographic category within the Dutch population Meanwhile, the ways in which the word was used in the media and by my informants was much less sharply defined, often had negative connotations, and described a much narrower group of people: specifically, non-Western immigrants and their descendants, especially people with Turkish or Moroccan backgrounds. The term *allochtoon* was used to describe these people, regardless of their citizenship status. In many ways, the different meanings attributed to the term *allochtoon* reflect the everyday slippages between legal and social status categories in the Dutch East Indies, e.g. the use of legal terms such as 'European' and 'Indo' (Pattynama 1998:100), in combination with colloquial terms like *blijvers* (literally, stayers), *verindische* (Indianized), or

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mixed-blood (*mengbloeden*; Eurasian) (Stoler 1997:222). In the same way that someone with 'European' status in the East Indies might be socially denied this status as *verindische* or *mengbloeden*, many 'non-native' Dutch citizens are frequently referred to as *allochtonen*. Alongside the policy designation (indicating that the citizen is not of Dutch ethnicity), the label *allochtoon* variously conveys layers of cultural, racial, or linguistic difference or incompatibility with 'native' Dutch, discursively positioning the allochthonous citizen as outside or on the margins of the national community.

On the other hand, those considered 'native' Dutch are people who, similar to Mackey's (1999) self-identified *"Canadian-*Canadians*,"* are colloquially considered Dutch by heritage or ethnicity in addition to the legal status of being Dutch nationals. Commentators and informants talked about these people as undifferentiated *Nederlanders* (Dutch), or if pressed, as *gewoone Nederlanders* (just Dutch, regular Dutch), sometimes as *echte Nederlanders* (real Dutch), or perhaps by using the official terminology from the *CBS* or *WRR* as *autochtone Nederlanders* (autochthonous Dutch). This is markedly different from how citizens framed as non-Western *allochtonen* were consistently discussed, for example, as Kenyan, Turkish-Dutch, or even Dutch Moroccans, in the news, by politicians, and by informants. On the other hand, 'native' Dutch identify and are identified primarily as Dutch, or perhaps from a particular city (Amsterdam) or province (North Holland, Brabant) within the Netherlands.

In my work as a volunteer English language coach with the Native Speaker Project, I worked in what was commonly called a '*zwarte school*' (black school) by my informants, the media, and authors of policy and research documents. At the secondary level, these schools likely taught students in the lowest academic stream (*VMBO*).[10] As I observed, the students in my classrooms and who flooded the hallways between classes, were from a variety of different

ethnic and national backgrounds but predominantly Turkish, Moroccan, as well as Surinamese, and markedly not "white" or 'native' Dutch; in other words, these students were commonly referred to as *allochtonen*. In conversations with informants, in the news, and in the census figures collected by the City of Amsterdam and national institutions (e.g. *CBS*), these schools were associated with lower than average educational achievement, as well as with behavioural problems among the students – outcomes which often implied a lack of integration (cf. Colonna 1997; Stoler 1995). In navigating the use of the term *allochtoon*, I had come to have a sense that it had a racialized inflection, in addition to relating notions of classed, linguistic and religious difference. I was therefore surprised during conversations with many informants throughout my fieldwork – from fellow academics to language coaching volunteers, and many others I spoke with about my research – at how differently they conceived of and used the word *allochtoon*. In drawing on the academic and policy definitions, in addition to my own observations of the term's use, I was corrected on more than one occasion for my (mis)use of the term. This was especially the case when I had described people with Surinamese heritage as *allochtonen*, lumping this group in with others that government bodies considered in need of policy intervention.

"Surinamese are a special case," I was told on several occasions. "They're not *allochtonen*." Or, "They're not like other *allochtonen*." More often than not, this was stated as if the reasons governing this distinction were obvious. The most frequently given qualification for this difference was that Surinam was a Dutch territory until 1975 and that because of this history, these immigrants arrived in the Netherlands already speaking Dutch. Surinamese shared in Dutch history and language through the experience of empire (Van Lier 1971; Oostindie 1990). Their cultural similarity to 'native' Dutch allowed the Surinamese to quickly integrate into the Dutch mainstream. Unlike people of Moroccan (or to a lesser degree Turkish) heritage, at the national

level

> the Surinamese are no longer a 'problem'. They always speak Dutch, excel at
> soccer, and by and large have been moving steadily into the middle class. ...
> [T]hey are not universally welcomed, but are still recognized as an exotic yet
> integral part of the national culture. (Buruma 2006:20-21)

More importantly, Surinamese were not thought to create the kinds of social problems as other immigrants (i.e. Turks, Moroccans or other North Africans) arriving during the same period.

The ongoing impact of well established 'cultural' associations with difference are observable in the ways that these differences are omitted or glossed in conversations about belonging in the Netherlands today. This is perhaps most clearly evidenced in discussions posed by 'native' Dutch citizens and politicians that routinely throw the national loyalty of immigrants and their descendants into question. In cases of multiple citizenship, the nature of non-Western Dutch citizens' national loyalty can become headline news,[11] as is clear from the fracas in recent years around Dutch members of parliament who hold dual citizenship. A notable case occurred in 2007, when populist Right politician Geert Wilders (*PVV*, Freedom Party) questioned the loyalties of two *PvdA* (Labour) cabinet members, Ahmed Aboutaleb and Nebahat Albayrak.[12] He demanded that both members of parliament renounce their non-Dutch citizenship or government post. Wilders publicly stated that his objections had nothing to do with their Islamic background, rather, "If Mr. Aboutaleb had blonde hair and a Swedish passport, [he] would have said exactly the same" (Volkskrant.nl 2010; my translation). Although Wilders' general behaviour and statements clearly give the lie to his words declaring that his views have nothing to do with questions of race or religion,[13] the incident does point to how certain citizens may nonetheless have their claims to belonging in the nation-state easily questioned.

The reactions to Aboutaleb and Albayrak's dual nationalities are contrasted by the

difference in media and political attention when, during October 2010, it came to light that the newly elected State Secretary for Health, Welfare and Sport, Marlies Veldhuijzen van Zanten-Hyllner (*CDA*, Christian Democrat) held both Dutch and Swedish citizenships, having been born in Göteborg. Prime Minister Mark Rutte (*VVD*, free-market Liberals) and Maxime Verhagen (*CDA* leader) both had expressed a wish to minimize the number of dual citizenship cases among their cabinet members. However, unlike Wilders, they felt that Veldhuijzen's dual nationalities posed no problems for the government (NOS 2010).

These examples of immigrants' and dual citizens' national loyalties coming into question (or not) speak to how certain markers of difference (e.g. religious belief or family migration history) allow some individuals to be more easily singled out and have the legitimacy of their citizenship called into question. In the Dutch context, these differences are formulated and flagged through the use of the powerful discourse of autochthony which has implications for moral calculations of belonging and considerations of "good" citizenship practice.

When I returned to Amsterdam in 2011, I made a point of asking many of the Dutch people with whom I regularly spoke about what words they habitually used or read to describe immigrants and their descendants living in the Netherlands. Consistently, the response was *allochtoon*. It was the "normal word" and most people I asked had not given much thought to their use of the term. As part of the commonplace grammar of difference, the language of autochthony appeared to be part of a constellation of *saviors* that had made certain concepts of alterity "easy to think," even when the words themselves remain unspoken (Foucault 1991:103; Stoler 2011:129-130). When I asked about using other terms instead, such as *nieuwkomer* (newcomer) or *Nieuwe Nederlander* (New Dutch), they were dismissed as strange terms that no one uses. These assertions about the normality of the term *allochtoon* were supported by all that I

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had read or heard from Dutch media sources, as well as politics, policy documents, and frequently, in Dutch scholarship. Even so, the definition of this common sense terminology seemed to be far less stable, as various signifiers surfaced and receded in importance depending on the context. Many people who participated in my research commented on how they felt uncomfortable with the language commonly employed to frame discussions of cultural difference. The tensions and shifts in meaning as autochthony moves from Dutch policy discourse to widespread use in Dutch society draws our attention as critical scholars to "the range of parties involved in attempts to regulate the conditions under which lives are lived" (Li 2007a:276).

Un/easy to think: everyday critiques and slippages in the language of autochthony

The slipperiness of the Dutch language of autochthony, particularly the term *allochtoon* (allochthon), has been discussed by many people in the Netherlands: among my own research participants, advocacy and integration organizations, scholars (from whom the policy advisers borrowed the term), policy makers, politicians, and media commentators. Many of the reasons for this critique have been summarized by the (Dutch-language) Antwerp-based, Belgian newspaper *De Morgen*, which in September 2012 ran an editorial piece explaining why the paper would no longer be using the word *allochtoon*. Among the reasons given for the term's discontinuation were: that it was discriminatory, creating impassable divides between 'us' and 'them'; that it was excessively vague; that it was limiting; and it lacked nuance (Verschelden, 9 September 2012). *De Morgen*'s critiques resonate with Stoler's insights into how

[r]acial formations distribute specific sentiments among social kinds, assign who

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are made into subjects of pity and whose cultural competencies and capital are deemed inadequate to make political claims. As such, they demand that we ask who and what are made into "problems," how certain narratives are made "easy to think," and what "common sense" such formulations have fostered and continue to serve. (2011:130)

When sections from this opinion piece were republished online in the quality Dutch publications *de Volkskrant* and *Trouw*, they received many different responses from readers. These included a broad range of reactions including: agreement that a new, more nuanced and less negative term was needed to discuss the problems facing ethnic minorities; concerns for the tyranny of political correctness; predictions that whatever new term replaced *allochtoon* would eventually succumb to the same negative associations that currently plagued it; that *allochtonen* should just come up with a new term for naming themselves if that is what they really wanted. I encountered a similar range of discussions on the use of this term among my interlocutors.

Most of those I encountered throughout my fieldwork in Amsterdam unreflectively used the language of autochthony to talk about Dutch and immigrants of non-Western heritage. It is therefore significant that volunteers and others whose work addressed, at least in part, questions of immigrant integration or community building were frequently more critical of the language used to describe people and social issues supposedly connected to sociocultural difference. Language coaches in particular rearticulated, rejected, or reconciled the commonly unspoken, shifting and uneven boundaries (for instance along the lines of race and religion) drawn between citizen and stranger that are deployed through the language of autochthony.

A volunteer for several different initiatives, I met José through her work as a language coach and volunteer coordinator with *Gilde Amsterdam*'s *SamenSpraak*. I asked José whether, in her opinion, *allochtonen* could really become Dutch (*echt Nederlanders worden*).[14] "Well, yes. Certainly, of course!" I found José's matter of fact response interesting. I noted my observations

about Dutch newspapers' tendency to name subjects as Turkish or Moroccan, but that the same appeared not to be true for those considered 'native' Dutch. "Precisely!" exclaimed José. "Yeah, very dumb. I am also irritated by that."

> I find it ridiculous. They are Dutch. Dutch! Where does that formal distinction come from? The formal separation between— the newspaper must respect the formal citizenship. Otherwise that's a value judgement. And the newspaper is not about value judgements. Do you understand what I mean? Yes, value judgement.

Switching from Dutch into English to make sure that I fully understood her point, José continued.

> An opinion of values. It's always in the negative. "A Somali who clocked that old lady." Yeah? There's never been told, "That Dutchman that stole 750,000 bikes." ... Or who "killed his wife." "That Dutchman." Yeah? Never said. Always in the negative way when it's concerning the other person. The not-Dutch person.

This negative way of talking about people commonly called *allochtonen* emerged clearly in the news and other media, as well as political rhetoric, as José pointed out. But it was also visible in many less explicit ways. The ways in which these differences were articulated, in what contexts, and by whom referenced and informed notions of citizenship among differently situated subjects.

As a white, Dutch-speaking Belgian woman living in Rotterdam, Sophie described herself as technically an outsider, an *allochtoon*. Sophie was not a voluntary language coach, but when we met she was working with an employment-oriented integration program for immigrant women. Sophie was one of the first people I had met who really expressed a problem with the Dutch language of social difference. Speaking in English, she described the use of the term *allochtoon* among the Dutch as strange and unnecessarily adversarial:

> The negative connotation is really a bit too— It's, yeah, it's a strange division.

Except I don't really understand the purpose as well. Just to divide the population or to...? ... And now they're gonna change it to *Nieuwe Nederlanders*. So, I thought, it's still— No, they're not new! They're just Dutch.

Throughout our discussion about her work, it was clear that Sophie found the word *allochtoon* problematic. As our talk turned to questions about the Dutch identity, she commented that during a training exercise her clients – immigrant women attempting to transition into the mainstream workforce – "thought it was very interesting to talk about *allochtoon* and *autochtoon*." She had observed different meanings attributed to these terms in everyday discussions versus in policy documents. "The one in the *Van Dale*, the dictionary," she said, "was also more about the social connotations, and like how people use the word, the term. They also said that it's for people, um—" She briefly hesitated,

Like black people more, or people that who don't have white skin. Like literally, almost literally in there. ... And then the other explanation was the one that the *Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*, they were the ones who created the definition. ... The real one. Or, the intentional one.

This distinction between the intended use of the terminology and the ways in which it has taken on certain meanings and assumptions in its popular usage was troubling to Sophie. In spite of what the *CBS* might have to say, some people, it seems, are not really considered *allochtonen*. Sophie underscored this as she continued, "And, like I also say, 'I am *allochtoon* as well.' And people start to laugh sometimes and I say 'Yeah. But it's true.' They're just laughing because I am white." As she continued to draw out the problematic assumptions she saw in the term she brought up the question of the Dutch monarchy, who are "also most of them *allochtoon*." If this is the case, Sophie questioned why the label *allochtoon* has in her view taken on such a negative, even discriminatory tone.

Margriet, a 'native' Dutch woman, echoed Sophie's sentiments during our interview. She worked as a volunteer coordinator for one of the institutions in the network of care facilities that ran the nursing home where I volunteered. We met over tea on the café patio at her institution. While her job had practically nothing to do with immigrant integration, one of her mandates was to help bring the local community together with the assisted living complex where she worked. This included initiatives such as organizing a celebration with Turkish and Moroccan food to bring the centre's neighbours and residents together. Facilitating the voluntary participation of the centre's neighbours had been essential in pulling this successful event together. In our interview[15] she expressed her thoughts on the problems with the current language of autochthony: "I don't like the words *allochtonen, autochtonen*. I don't think that's right." I related how as a native English speaker, I personally found the terminology quite strange. "No, no. It's very stupid. It's very narrow-minded." I was surprised by Margriet's emotional response. "It means that you are locked in your own things," she continued. "You don't open your mind for other people. … Everybody who lives here is just native. You can be a born native, or you can be an incoming native." While Sophie had expressed her opinion that the new term, *Nieuwe Nederlanders*, was still problematic and divisive, Margriet welcomed it as a step in the right direction: "It's better. It's not the same. It," she paused thoughtfully, "gives a new feeling."

The dissatisfaction or uneasiness with the language used to describe social difference in the Netherlands also emerged in my discussion about who volunteers as Dutch language coaches with Casper. Casper was in his early sixties, and worked as a volunteer coordinator for *Gilde Amsterdam*'s language coaching program, *SamenSpraak* when I met him in 2011. "Most [volunteers] are older than fifty," said Casper, "are well educated. The majority are women. And not *allochtoon*. We never have *allochtonen* as supervisors or teachers [*begeleiders*]," said Casper

thoughtfully. "But what do you mean by *allochtonen*? Also someone who comes from Surinam? Or..." This was a difficult question, particularly because of the many different understandings of the term I had come across among the different people I had spoken with or observed. I responded noncommittally by pointing out the strangeness of the term. "Yes it is as a strange word," agreed Casper. I continued, giving an open-ended definition of the term incorporating opinions from other research participants. I noted how some people used the term *allochtone* (allochthonous) to describe people from Surinam or Indonesia, but not from Canada or America. Casper seemed to agree with this general definition, and dropped the discussion of who is *allochtone*. He then said, slowly enunciating the word autochthonous (*autochtone*), "It is actually just autochthonous Dutch." Coming back to his original concern, I again asked Casper whether or not the *SamenSpraak* has had Surinamese or *allochtone* volunteers as language coaches. "Yeah," Casper replied, "maybe a couple. I have in my experience a Surinamese woman, but *very* few. We have I believe *one* person from England. And they lived here a very long time. But further than that no, hey. It is *minimal*. Minimal."

The ways in which the language of autochthony was used by people I encountered in the field was interesting for the ways its boundaries were drawn and redrawn by different people in relation to how "good" citizenship practice was articulated. Like Sophie and Margriet, José's comments also took issue with the negative tone given to the language of social difference in the Netherlands, especially when fomented by politicians who stood to gain from deepening social anxieties and frictions. When we first met, in early 2010, the economic crisis of 2008 was still reverberating through the Netherlands, with segments of the evening news and morning papers daily devoted to further negative repercussions. José felt that "the certainty of having a good life" was fading for many people in the Netherlands. This, she felt, helped create fear for many people

across Dutch society.

> And the fear, that is exploited by the politicians. The politicians themselves are not scared. No. That's true. They always have a good income. But they exploit the fear of those who maybe do not have a good income. Or those who have uncertainty about it. I find it highly objectionable. This is naturally not universal, but I find it universally objectionable. And in the Netherlands this is rather strong. It comes of course, from the one crisis and the other crisis, the fifth crisis and the tenth crisis! That strengthens it. And that fear fuels the friction between groups in society. Then you look for the scapegoat. ... And the stranger or foreigner [*vreemdeling*] is always the one who has done it.

As many research participants noted, such rhetoric was clearest among the anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim populist Right in Dutch politics. These parties, notably Geert Wilders' *PVV* (*Partij Voor Vrijheid*; Freedom Party) and Rita Verdonk's less popular *Trots op Nederland* (Proud of the Netherlands), had failed to make much headway in Amsterdam. José attributed this to Amsterdam's relatively stable economy, as well as "the longer tradition of immigration in Amsterdam." Even if this aspect was, as José said, "not so serious in Amsterdam" as elsewhere in the Netherlands, the negative tone articulated in relation to the "other person" was palpable. It subtly emerged in all of the benign ways that social difference is demarcated from 'Dutchness'. Modes of perception and practices of calculation developed during colonialism resurface in these discussions, but in ways that redirect and rearticulate how cultural difference is understood as a problem to be acted upon in the contemporary context.

Intricacies of governmental resistance and consent

In contrast to the pervasiveness of the language of autochthony in the spheres of everyday life in Amsterdam, I was surprised to realize when reviewing my interview transcripts that

language coaches only used the term *allochtoon* when critiquing the term, or in direct response to my own use of it. Instead of using the "normal" language of autochthony to describe the volunteers and clients participating in language coaching projects these organizations had developed and actively employed a whole array of terms to speak about their participants. This is especially noteworthy when one considers that the vast majority of language coaches are 'native' Dutch, where language learners are newcomers to the language, if not city or country.

The *SamenSpraak* (Speaking Together) program of *Gilde Amsterdam* (Guild Amsterdam) described their volunteers as *taalcoaches* (language coaches) and their Dutch-language learners as *anderstaligers* (other language speakers) or *anderstalige stadgenoten* (other language speaking townsmen). *Mixen in Mokum* (Mixing in Mokum) used the terms *oud Amsterdammer* and *nieuwe Amsterdammer* (old and new Amsterdammers, respectively), and called the people in these speaking partnerships *maatjes* (buddies). The *Amsterdam Buurvrouwen Contact* (*ABC*, Amsterdam Neighbourhood Women Contact) used the feminine term for neighbour, *buurvrouw*, to talk about the people they bring together in their women-only teaching and speaking partnerships. Similarly, the neighbourhood-based *SamenSpraak Oost* (Speaking Together East) talked about bringing together *buurtbewoners* (neighbourhood residents) of different cultures. In each of these programs, the language used to name participants is intentionally inclusive. While referencing participants' roles in the partnership, this vocabulary situates both partners as members of the city or neighbourhood they share.

The volunteer language coaches and coordinators who participated in my research tended to eschew the language of autochthony and terms for non-Western newcomers and their descendants in ways that marked them as outsiders in Amsterdam and the Netherlands. While language coaches to varying degrees resisted this terminology and the associated grammar of

difference in which it is used, the power of governmentality in shaping knowledge and discourse remained clear in our discussions about contemporary social problems in the Netherlands. It arose in how certain groups were demarcated from mainstream Dutch society, whether because of differences in customs, habits or culture. For instance, Bart gave an example of how "those people," non-Western newcomers, behave in an anti-social manner and remain socially-isolated from mainstream Dutch society: "Those people don't live here. They're all— All of them have satellites— I have one too, but not for Turkish or Moroccan television. But they live in Turkey or Morocco at home, with their television." Susanne (a language coach in her mid-twenties) talked about the school she had taught at in a predominantly 'native' Dutch populated town as a "white school." José and another language coach, Gerrit, both mentioned the problems with criminality associated second-generation Moroccan youth by referring to the perpetrators in a general way as *Morokaanse klootzakken* and the famous *kutmarokkantjes*.[16] While these kinds of terms are used in a much more targeted way than the broadly encompassing language of autochthony, they nonetheless point to how governmental rationale has made particular 'problem groups' and ways of speaking of difference easy to think (cf. Eramian 2014).

Ethnographically, these expressions are understood as part of the much broader practices that render fields technical for governmental intervention and to direct affective sentiment circulating in relation to practices of citizenship and nation-building (cf. Stoler 2009). How and when particular language or ways of defining target groups for intervention is accommodated, compromised, resisted or refused is important in flagging individual agency in response to the powerful programs of governmentality. The ways in which practices are conducted through, around or against a governmental program points the ethnographer to the ways in which power operates through social relationships. As such, these everyday practices of language use

underscore the ways in which governmental programs, even when highly successful, are subject to critique (Li 2007a).

In the next chapter, I place the expressions and experiences of my research participants about difference and Dutchness in the broader context of Amsterdam and the Netherlands. "Configuring the new 'savage slot': effects of immigration in the Netherlands" further addresses some of the ways that the grammar of difference developed during empire has been reassembled in the contemporary Netherlands. Echoing ways of marking and making meaning around difference in colonies, current discussions about belonging in the Netherlands use the language of cultural difference and compatibility, as through the language of autochthony. While race is little mentioned or even acknowledged in these conversations, the deep connections between racialized and cultural difference continue to matter in how the national community is defined and its borders policed in the everyday by a variety of actors.

5. Configuring the new "savage slot": Effects of immigration in the Netherlands

As I have shown in the previous chapter, ways of distinguishing social difference in the Netherlands today draw on and reshape older ways of thinking about and managing social difference. The ways that the language of autochthony is used underscores how problematization does not operate in a linear manner, but is replete with contradictions and tensions, as well as threads of continuity as governmental programs evolve over time. In this way, the understanding of 'culture' as a "common sense" way of defining the colonial Dutch or European self has been refashioned in the present day Netherlands, becoming a key concept through which life in the Dutch national community is lived (Dean 2010:12). As legal and morally-charged categories, contemporary Dutch distinctions between 'Western' and 'non-Western' cultures continue to draw upon (rather than simply reproduce) colonial categories of class, language, religion, social behaviours, affective associations, as well as aspects of race and national origin (cf. Stoler 1995; Bosma 2012:201; Blakely 1993). These patterns are echoed across Europe (and elsewhere in the West) as "uncivilized" or "dangerous" populations from the former colonies and elsewhere have settled in and adopted the citizenship of European nation-states (Bosma 2012:201; Grillo 1985; Schiffauer 2004; Beriss 2004; Stoler 1997; Wikan 2002). Cultural norms, values, and behaviours – including language use and ability – are used to question or problematize, assess, extend authority over, and direct the conduct of the self and others in contemporary Dutch society (Dean 2010:18).

In this chapter, I trace some of the ways in which immigrants are placed in what Silverstein (2005) has discussed as the new "savage slot," a site of otherness that conflates and rearticulates multiple processes and terms of social exclusion through the language of culture (cf.

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Beriss 2004). I build upon the analysis of difference through the concept of autochthony addressed in Chapter 4 by tracing some key discussions of difference and Dutchness that emerged from the media and ethnographic description. I employ these ethnographic moments as a lens through which to analyze cultural racism as a powerful discursive technique in contemporary expressions of governmentality. This requires attention to the ways in which grammars of difference and Dutchness recognizable from the colonial regime are rearticulated in the contemporary context. This chapter flags how even when such formations are unspoken or unrecognized, they may continue to impact how fields of vision and affect are marshalled to generate understandings of certain subjects as differently situated in (and in relation to) Dutch society, with particular or limited capacities and cultural competencies. Throughout this chapter, I am concerned with drawing connections between the colonial categories of difference traced in Chapter 3 and "who and what are made into 'problems,' how certain narratives are made 'easy to think,' and what 'common sense' such formulations have fostered and continue to serve" in the Netherlands today (Stoler 2011:130; cf. Stoler 2009).

I begin this analysis by examining how contemporary concepts of cultural difference have created an environment which enabled the growth of a populist Right presence in the Netherlands, and across Western Europe. While the xenophobic and pointedly anti-Islam rhetoric of this new political force is contested by many in Dutch society, I show how the ways that these politicians have framed the immigrant or *allochtoon* problem have had wide-reaching impacts for everyday conceptions of difference and Dutchness. As I have shown in relation to the language of autochthony in Chapter 4, understandings of the boundaries of Dutchness are contested and rearticulated by people like my research participants in their everyday lives. However, these boundaries are nonetheless deeply embedded in "common sense" modes of

perception and practices of calculation that draw on a grammar of alterity with roots in the colonial experience. Stoler's work on "colonial aphasia" (2011; cf. Helsloot 2012) provides insight into the current state of affairs in the Netherlands, where racial and cultural difference operate in tandem as powerful, yet unspoken, criteria in judging who belongs to the Dutch national community. Using the now annual controversy around the black-faced figure of *Zwarte Piet* (Black Peter) in the winter children's holiday as a case-study, I conclude this chapter by exploring how issues of race and (cultural) racism have become an important tension in contemporary Dutch identity politics and mark a point of fracture in the assemblage that coheres around citizenship practice.

In defense of Dutchness: the national threat of "culturalized" difference

The ways in which the Dutch grammar of alterity has been rearticulated and reassembled has not only made certain 'cultural' differences "easy to think," it has also made powerful connections between contemporary processes and categories and their colonial genealogies difficult or impossible to recognize for some (cf. Stoler 2011). Recent innovations in late twentieth century policy and its language (i.e. the introduction of *allochtoon*) have done little to dispel the older structural problems associated with notions of difference that obscure essential categories, such as race, through notions of culture. Importantly, these experiences in the Dutch context reflect widespread processes through which migrants in contemporary Europe, New World settler societies, and elsewhere have become the site *par excellence* for national anxieties concerning internal and external threats (Silverstein 2005:366; cf. Geschiere 2009). The shift from the overt racial hierarchies of the early colonial period to 'cultural racism' has often

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occurred in contexts where race is no longer officially recognized by the state, or is reconfigured in relation to a broader notion of cultural difference that may even critique biological concepts of race. The power of this strategy is observable in how "race remains salient in the everyday lives of immigrants in Europe, as an inescapable social fact whose vitality and volatility only appear to be increasing" (Silverstein 2005:364-365; cf. Foucault, 1990:139; Bunzl 2005b; Willinsky 1999; Jhally 1996). Gilroy indicates that unlike racisms of the past, cultural racism has grown "just as intractable and fundamental as the natural hierarchies they have partly replaced, but they have acquired extra moral credibility and additional political authority by being closer to respectable and realistic cultural nationalism" (2004:156-157). The subtlety of this form of systemic discrimination means that it is often unremarkable or unnoticed by the dominant group, in this case white or 'native' Dutch.

The contemporary appeal to "culture" and the threatening possibility of encountering "cultural incommensurability" among 'non-Western' newcomers – or *allochtonen* – has become normalized in mainstream discussions in Dutch politics at all levels, within the media, among citizens like my interlocutors. Aspects of wide ranging "cultural" difference can become moving targets in the highly contextual process of appealing to a "flexible cultural divide" as a way of "[distinguishing] between people who are allegedly capable of functioning in our culture and those who are allegedly not" (Bosma 2012:201; cf. Stoler 1995). This is clear in how the highly flexible language of autochthony operates as a generalizable grammar of alterity in the Foucauldian sense of racial "coding": rather than being limited to the language used in any specific historical or cultural context, such a grammar provides "an 'instrumental space, at once discursive and political' in which each group could infuse a shared vocabulary with different political meanings" (Stoler 1995:72; cf. Geschiere 2009; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001;

Geschiere and Jackson 2006; Ceuppens 2006; Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005). Taken-for-granted or common sense understandings of difference in turn become powerful factors in the nation-building project and moral conceptions of appropriate citizenship practice (Geschiere 2009:28; Bosma 2012; Stoler 2011). These hegemonic culturalized forms become crucial to how belonging is negotiated and recognized at the level of the state and in the everyday, as in Amsterdam (cf. Ong 1996:738).

The new populist Right in the Netherlands – and similar parties or movements in other states of the European Union – has also profited from being able to mobilize cultural difference in service of their political agendas. Fears prompted by a growing 'non-Western' minority presence in the Netherlands, and the move to defend Dutch culture from cultural Others echo similar sentiments and actions across Europe, where appeals to uphold the nation, its traditions and the rights of its first comers (autochthons) are increasingly normalized. Where ('non-Western') migrants have become the key focus of these national anxieties, in the minds of many across Western Europe such fears have often been more particularly embodied by Muslim newcomers (Silverstein 2005:366; cf. Geschiere 2009). Islamophobic and anti-Islamic rhetoric has come to represent "simultaneously a discourse about religion and a racialized discourse about culture" (Glick Schiller 2005:529) that has easily absorbed and reshaped older colonial notions of culturalized difference. Across Western Europe, Islam is widely viewed as the religion of an oppressive, intolerant, and "backwards" culture originating outside of the field of civilized, European conduct (Ong 1996:738; Silverstein 2005; Bunzl 2004, 2005; Wikan 2002; Pratt Ewing 2008; Mandel 2008; cf. Gouda and Smith-Clancy 1998; Kuitenbrouwer 1991). This discourse has entailed the dual processes of stereotyping all Muslims as beholden to cultural and religious norms that deviate from those of the (similarly homogenized) 'West', and making Islam

a significant touchstone in debates on integration (cf. Verkaaik 2009; Bunzl 2004, 2005; Silverstein 2005; Glick Schiller 2005).

In discussions on current affairs programs, in magazines, reader commentary on Internet news and social media, as well as through conversations with my research participants, I have observed fears about 'non-Western' newcomers to include everything from: a rolling back of free speech rights; changing statutory holidays from Christian or national civic celebrations to those of other religious groups (such as Muslims, Hindus or Jews); restricting laws with regard to euthanasia or abortion; outlawing homosexuality; unequal rights for women, gendered segregation, or even (in a more sensational instance) requiring all women to wear *hijab*. In these expressions, Islam especially has been reified as a culture that clashes with and threatens to erode the liberal, democratic cultures of 'Western' nation-states. The scrutiny of Muslims in particular has been strengthened by news of gendered violence (such as honour killings or female genital mutilation) as well as high-profile incidents of violence by Islamic extremists (cf. Wikan 2002; Pratt Ewing 2008). These have included the 2001 terrorist strikes in the United States, transit bombings in Spain (2004) and the United Kingdom (2005), as well as the murders of Pim Fortuyn (2002), Theo Van Gogh (2004), and death threats against Ayan Hirsi Ali (cf. Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007:3-4). Van Gogh's murder by a young Moroccan Dutch man who had turned to radical Islam was a particularly important catalyst for recent debate.[1] Unlike international incidents, the murder of this high-profile Dutch public figure "fuelled perceptions of a schism between immigrant Muslims and the 'native Dutch' over basic democratic values such as freedom of speech and the position of women in Muslim communities" (Vasta 2007:714; cf. Hajer and Uitermark 2008; Stengs 2009; Prins 2002).

Reactions to these fears by European governments have been varied and wide-reaching.

One need only think of the ban on minarets in Switzerland, the laws prohibiting French Muslim women from wearing religious headscarves in public places, or panic over "honour killings" and "forced marriages" in Norway and Germany (Wikan 2002; Pratt Ewing 2008). An interesting Dutch example was observable in the 2011 uproar created by the *Partij voor de Dieren* (*PvdD*, Party for the Animals) which sought to, and eventually passed (116 to 30) a law in Dutch Parliament outlawing the practice of ritually slaughtered, i.e. *halal*, meat. Most 'native' Dutch commentators in the media and in Parliament explicitly framed this form of slaughter as an aspect of (foreign) culture;[2] specifically, it was framed as an aspect that was not in keeping with the mainstream Dutch esteem for animal welfare. The leader of the *PvdD*, Marianne Thieme, has been quoted as saying: "In our country, animal welfare is such a big issue that we think freedom of religion ends where human or animal suffering begins. ... If freedom of religion causes harm to anybody, human, or animal, then freedom of religion must be restricted" (Najibullah 2011). These are some of the more controversial examples that circulate, with many less sensational instances revealed in the study of public and policy discourse. Such expressions and instances expose powerful tensions and sociopolitical structures that shape contemporary identity politics in the Netherlands.

While these views and expressions are common today, they have only gained significant traction across Europe since the 1980s and 1990s, as the far Right capitalized upon these constellations of nationalist sentiments.[3] In Austria, such views took hold during the mid-1990s when the Freedom Party shifted from a tradition of Jew-bashing to capitalize on alarm over increasing numbers of African, Asian, and Muslim immigrants who were framed as undermining not only the Austrian national/ ethnic community, but Europe itself (Bunzl 2005a:506). Likewise, neonationalists in France (particularly Le Pen and the *Front National*) "seized upon

the left's call for recognition of 'la droit à la différence,' and had made it their own battle cry. Immigrants, blacks, Jews, and the others they detested as 'unfrench' indeed had a right to their cultural differences," but in their own countries (Lebovics 2004:132). In the Netherlands, it was only during the early 1990s that Frits Bolkestein (leader of the mainstream right-of-centre liberals, *VVD*), was able to raise the spectre of the negative effects of non-Western migrants on Dutch society in mainstream politics. Drawing strong connections to a perceived fundamental incompatibility between Islam (the religion of the majority of recent 'non-Western' migrants) and what he described as Western values and achievements, Bolkestein too appealed to these nationalist fears (Ghoreshi and van Tilberg 2006:63; cf. Entzinger 2006:125; Penninx 2006:248; Pettigrew 1998:95). These groups' relative successes managed to shift the dialogue of mainstream parties on immigration farther to the Right, even when neonationalist groups failed to translate their impact into votes (Pettigrew 1998:95-96; cf. Holmes 2000; van der Valk 2003).

As the far and populist Right gained traction for their views across Europe, the Dutch government enacted the *Wet Inbugering Nieuwkomers* (Civic Integration of Newcomers Act) in 1998. This law required all new immigrants wishing to settle in the Netherlands and acquire Dutch citizenship to undergo 'civic integration' (*inburgering*) training, which had a heavy emphasis on learning the Dutch language. Those exempt from undertaking *inburgering* courses are citizens of EU or European Economic Area countries. Minors who complete Dutch public education are also exempt from undergoing these courses and exams. Such courses require the completion of 500 hours of language training (A2 level[4] of Dutch proficiency) and 100 hours of social orientation training. This emphasis on language and social training is strongly reminiscent of educational policies that sought to ensure cultural suitability and orientation of 'Europeans' and other subjects in the colonies vis-à-vis the Netherlands (Stoler 1995; Van Lier 1971:192-193,

221). Upon successfully passing a number of oral, aural and written tests,[5] contemporary newcomers become eligible to apply for Dutch citizenship. Since 2006, the law governing 'civic integration' has been replaced with two new, more demanding acts: Civic Integration Abroad Act (*Wet Inburgering Buitenland*), and the Civic Integration Act (*Wet Inburgering*).[6]

As Björnson (2007) has shown, the common and anticipated *inburgeraar* (*inburgering* student) is the 'non-Western' *allochtoon*. This target population is frequently perceived by politicians, scholars, policy makers, and regular citizens like my informants, to have life experiences, values, norms and practices very different from mainstream Dutch society, or even from the generalized "Western society" (especially as projected onto the space of the European Union). Of these targeted individuals, the *inburgering* project is even more specifically directed to the civil enculturation of "traditional women of Muslim origin," also termed "migrant women" by some of my interlocutors. In the Dutch context, this especially implies women of Moroccan or Turkish descent. These are people whom the *inburgering* policy architects Entzinger and Van der Zwaan argued might not otherwise have access to language and host-society orientation training. According to one of the government's social policy advisory boards, the *inburgering* course's goals should be to help "immigrants develop a sense of individual responsibility." This should derive from "a core curriculum that includes knowledge of the Dutch language, society and culture and knowledge of democratic values" (Council for Social Development (RMO) 2003, quoted in Entzinger 2004b:11).

While many in Dutch society agreed that these policy interventions were a step in the right direction, there remained grave concerns about the place and role of immigrants in Dutch society. These ideas about non-Western newcomers' threatening difference resurfaced in early 2000, in an op-ed in a national daily newspaper that has come to be considered a turning point in

the Dutch context by Dutch academics, politicians, and within the public forum of the media. In *"Het multiculturele drama"* (The Multicultural Drama),[7] Paul Scheffer invoked the commonly drawn line between 'Western' and 'non-Western' immigrants or *allochtonen*, echoing Bolkestein's lament of the formation of an 'ethnic underclass' (cf. Ghoreshi and van Tilburg 2006:64; Entzinger 2003:78). Scheffer wrote that while immigrants from 'Western' societies have proven entirely unproblematic for Dutch society, 'non-Western' newcomers had fallen behind the standards of the Dutch majority, causing numerous and increasingly serious problems (Scheffer 2000). This widely read and controversial article was seen as expressing what many had come to view as common, if unspoken, knowledge:

> Whomever can see all the available information comes to the same alarming conclusion: unemployment, poverty, school dropout and criminality grow among ethnic minorities. And the outlook for them in general is not good, regardless of individual success stories. There are an enormous number of people who have fallen behind and are without chances, who will increasingly burden Dutch society. (Scheffer 2000; my translation)

Scheffer's piece was not only a condemnation of the then current state of national affairs, but also a call to consider how things had come to this point, what could be done to begin to remedy this situation, and how to keep it from worsening. For newcomers, 'civic integration' legislation (1998) marked an important policy intervention. Yet, Scheffer's concerns for integration also encompassed those now second and third generations of children from 'non-Western' immigrant backgrounds, particularly *allochtone* (allochthonous) Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan descent. Alongside his allusions to the problems that 'non-Western' immigrants' culture poses for their integration into Dutch society, Scheffer also called for 'native' Dutch to consider the role of their own cultural heritage in finding a solution to the multicultural drama: "Let us begin," he implored, "to take the Dutch language, culture and history much more

seriously" (Scheffer 2000; my translation). As a leftist publicist and prominent former member of the Labour Party (*PvdA*), Scheffer opened the floodgates regarding speaking of these issues in public. Yet it was Pim Fortuyn who first succeeded in mainstreaming these 'populist' concerns, ensuring them a central place on the agendas of all of the major political parties in the Netherlands (Margry 2007:125).

Strongly nationalist, Fortuyn's unique brand of politics echoed tactics and rhetoric proven successful by neonationalist figures and groups that had much earlier gained ground elsewhere in Europe. Significantly, Fortuyn's message to potential voters also echoed the "common sense" ways of thinking about differences in the former spaces of empire. Drawing on notions of "culture" rather than race or other aspects of social difference, the charismatic Fortuyn argued that Muslims' and other non-Western newcomers' "backward" and "intolerant" cultures posed a serious threat to the Dutch values and way of life. He formulated these arguments not in relation to revamped colonial anxieties over 'miscegenation' and loss or degradation of middle-class ideals, but with great concern for the future of the Dutch liberal values. I consistently heard people rank democracy, equality and tolerance (e.g. of gender, sexuality, religion), free speech, personal autonomy, permissiveness, and inclusion as key Dutch values that should be upheld across society (cf. Vuijsje 2000; Duyvendak 2011; Sunier and van Ginkel 2006:111; Margry 2007:126; Prins 2002; Lechner 2008:76; Cohen 2011:10). For Fortuyn, further immigration (particularly of 'non-Western' migrants) was not be tolerated, and those who had already gained citizenship in the Netherlands must be (linguistically and culturally) assimilated as quickly as possible. He was vocal in expressing his fears that Dutchness itself was under threat from the erosive powers of multiculturalism and cultural relativism (Sunier & van Ginkel 2006:115; Margry 2007:125). In ways that were unheard of in the past, Fortuyn gave expression to anti-

immigrant, and especially anti-Islam views that were not only acceptable but supported by a wide number of Dutch voters. Through Fortuyn, the threatening incompatibility of Islam with Dutch society and European civilization earlier argued by colonial scholars, administrators, and Christian missionaries was revived, redirected, and took on a new sense of urgency (Gouda and Smith-Clancy 1998:5; Kuitenbrouwer 1991:117; cf. Colonna 1997; Conklin 1998).

Since Fortuyn,[8] other figures and parties have taken up similar far Right views couched in populist terms hinting at the potential for moral panic. The *Partij Voor Vrijheid* (*PVV*, Freedom Party) led by Geert Wilders has since become a central player in Dutch politics – although the increase in populist Right rhetoric has been largely rejected by voters in Amsterdam.[9] What is more important are the ways in which these politicians have shifted mainstream discussion of immigration, social difference and Dutchness to the Right, using Islam as a potent symbol of these dangers.

Practicing/ critiquing the everyday "common sense" of social difference

Unlike instances of violence, hostility and blatant discrimination – for example, distinct calls from populist Right figures demanding the cultural assimilation of "backwards" immigrants – it can be much more difficult to recognize how inequality and prejudice are routinely perpetuated through a grammar of difference (Pettigrew 1998). These cultural assumptions and expectations nonetheless support hegemonic social relations by shaping more subtle ideas about morally acceptable engagement in social, economic and political spheres (Foucault 1990; Stoler 2011). Through ongoing processes of governmentality, populations internalize ways of thinking and being in their social worlds as "common sense." In the Netherlands (as in other Western

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countries), poverty is racialized and culturalized through association with 'non-Western' immigrants. Racialized citizens are discursively denied full membership in the polity as legitimate contributors to shaping Dutch tradition and culture. 'Non-western' *allochtonen* become specific targets in need of assistance, education, and even discipline. These governmental effects are visible not only among policy makers and sensationalist politicians, but also in the ways in which other socially-situated subjects frame certain members of the population as outside of the mainstream or national community.

Significantly, the rise to prominence of Islam as a key marker of social difference and distance has occurred in the absence of discussions of racism and connected forms of structural inequality in the Netherlands. This includes a dearth of scholarship on this topic in the Dutch context. The association of multiple, powerful categories of social difference within the flexible and dynamic notion of "culture" has been an important factor – but not the only factor – accounting for silence on these issues. While this silence is in part due to how few scholars beyond the Netherlands learn the Dutch language, scholars like the American Allison Blakely also underscore how topics such as imperialism and racism "are not ones which Dutch scholars have been comfortable" (1993:xix). Writing two decades after Blakley, Bosma points out how former colonial powers like "the Dutch habitually remain silent about the untidy things they dig up from their past" (Bosma 2012:197).

Taken together, these powerfully engrained symbolic, cultural, and historical conditions and processes undergird the life worlds even of people who describe an inclusive view of immigrant integration and citizenship practice, and the organizations and institutions through which such views are practised and expressed. The ways in which the actions and views of people like my primary research participants variously resonate with and contradict dominant

ideas of Dutch cultural practice (ideas about norms, behaviours, expectations, etiquette, values) reveals the power of the will to govern. Where some Dutch people of colour are often viewed as acting in ways incompatible with Dutch values, others continue to be denied full membership in Dutch society even when they explicitly appeal to key Dutch values and appear to meet social expectations for behaviour. In the remainder of this chapter, I ethnographically trace the "discursive fact" of cultural racism in contemporary Dutch society. In these descriptions, what may be less important than the words spoken is that these differences are spoken about. As Stoler remarks, "[i]n the landscape of racialized sentiments, the word race need not be spoken" (Stoler 2011:129) to operate as a powerful marker in identity politics.

Regardless of the citizenship status of the person or group in question, banal descriptions and experiences of neighbourhood spaces, or opinions about educational and labour practices reveal how fundamental, if unspoken, distinctions developed during colonialism have remained to everyday understandings of contemporary social issues. Through the following ethnographic descriptions, I show some of the insidious ways that governmentality has made certain categories "easy to think" or "common sense" in the Dutch context (Stoler 2011). I examine this not only through language coaches' experiences and opinions, but in the controversy around the Dutch winter children's holiday (*Sinterklaas*) which has raised important questions about the relationship between racialized difference and full membership in Dutch society.

I found that in many conversations I had or observed throughout my fieldwork and in the Dutch news and popular media, many 'native' Dutch were critical of newcomers' cultural practices and beliefs. Naming people's cultural, ethnic or national backgrounds was a common way of marking differences, and indirectly pointing to social problems associated with these differences. At the same time, my research participants, especially those volunteering as

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language coaches, were often vocal in their dismissal of discriminatory or divisive practices or beliefs. The views voiced by the populist Right were particularly censured by these individuals. In a study of governmentality, it is therefore important to address how alongside protests and refusals, these informants are nonetheless entangled in these processes in subtle, even unconscious ways.

Several language coaches and other informants used the racially-charged terms "white" and "black" to describe social or cultural distinctions commonly expressed through the language of autochthony. These distinctions between black and white Dutch also emerged in how the school in Amsterdam West where I volunteered as an English teacher for the Native Speaker Project was commonly referred to as a *zwarte school*, literally a "black school." The term *zwarte school* was used by my informants, in the media, government statistics and policy to describe schools where the majority of the pupils were *allochtonen*. At the secondary level, these schools likely taught students in the lowest academic stream (*VMBO*). Some schools were even considered "too black," as when figures reported by the City of Amsterdam compared the demographic composition of schools to that of the neighbourhoods in which they were located and found that the student body did not reflect the local population (City of Amsterdam, Research and Statistics 2010:2; cf. Lindeman et al. 2011). These figures highlight the phenomenon of "white flight" (*wittevlucht*) within the school system, where 'native' Dutch parents opt to send their children to schools outside of their neighbourhood rather than to the local institution.

Discussions about "white flight" from such neighbourhoods in popular magazines, news, and television programs underscore the slippery and shifting connections made between multiple constructions of "culturalized" difference. For instance, the television program *Rondom 10*

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(Round About 10) aired an episode entitled *Vreemd in eigen land* (Strange in your own country)[10] that spotlighted the movement of 'native' Dutch from "too black" (*te zwarte*) neighbourhoods or schools (cf. Lindeman et al. 2011:55). The majority of the panel participants were 'native' Dutch residents of so-called "problem neighbourhoods" (*achterstandswijken*, literally "backwards neighbourhoods") in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, and Den Haag. Panellists expressed a range of views from no longer feeling comfortable in their neighbourhoods to embracing the cultural diversity that comes with living in a contemporary urban space. In these discussions, divergent notions of "Dutch culture" rose to the surface, as did panellists' expectations of how to live together in their neighbourhoods and cities. These conversations highlighted how certain behaviours, cultural symbols, norms and values became flexible points of contention in how different groups of 'native' Dutch felt at home in particular social spaces. Throughout the television program, and evident in my interviews and experiences, not knowing Dutch (that is, not being able to communicate) signalled a variety of uncomfortable 'cultural' differences that were sometimes thought to threaten the social cohesion of the neighbourhood, city or nation. The logic informing these processes of cultural racism is part of the same genealogy of difference making and management that emerged from the colonial experience. The rationale that makes and has made these understandings of difference easy to think, simultaneously contributes to the processes that erase the obvious connections between 'cultural' differences and racism in contemporary Dutch society and Dutch nation-building projects (Stoler 2011). The difficulty in recognizing these deeply embedded connections is exemplified in the ways that people may both actively contest racially exclusionary notions of Dutch citizenship practice and nonetheless employ "common sense" categories of difference and Dutchness.

A language coaching volunteer in his sixties, Bart had lived in Amsterdam his entire life, but had moved between different city districts. When he was a child he had lived in the western part of Amsterdam. "You know Amsterdam a little bit?" he asked me in English, while finding a map of the city. "In my youth I lived in the West. And this part of Amsterdam," he said pointing to what is known as the Nieuw-West (New West), "didn't exist. It was built from 1950 on. Predominantly, people who lived here came from Friesland. Immigrants. *Dutch* immigrants. And I lived here in this region." Bart traced out the Bos en Lommer neighbourhood district on the map. "It was middle-class. My father was a teacher, and that was the region. And now it's all Moroccan and Turkish." As our conversation later turned to the rising support for populist Right politicians like Geert Wilders and the feelings of national identity crisis they stimulate, the significance of the demographic changes across the city resurfaced. Bart explained,

> Well, what I recognize myself is that you can feel unease with people you don't understand at all. Not the language, not heritage, customs. It gives some paranoia, or— Yeah. And a feeling when there are too much— I don't live in Amsterdam West, but when you live there and subsequently *all* neighbours become Turkish and Moroccan whom you don't understand, that's not fine.

For many 'native' Dutch, such as those living in working-class neighbourhoods, their discomfort in the presence of 'non-Western' Dutch seemed to stem, as Bart alluded, from the creation of unrecognizable spaces from which they feel excluded (cf. Duyvendak 2011). As I observed not only in conversation with research participants like Bart, but in casual conversations with other 'native' Dutch, in media (e.g. the *Rondom 10* episode), and among politicians and scholars, these spaces are not uncomfortable because of racial tensions, but because of the cultural difference and distance of newcomers from 'native' Dutch. This has observably been the case for those living in Bos en Lommer and elsewhere in Amsterdam's more

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affordable neighbourhoods, such as in the Nieuw-West or Amsterdam Noord. This was clear in

the experiences of Ilse,[11] a life-long resident of the historic working-class neighbourhood,

Amsterdam Noord. Ilse had seen many demographic changes as more 'non-Western' newcomers

settled in this more affordable part of the city. During our interview just a few weeks before the

2010 federal elections, Ilse explained that

> A lot of people are living here who are Turkish or Moroccan, but they hang onto
> their own culture. So there's a lot of women still dressed like the Islamic way, and
> well they have cultural differences. And I don't know if you have followed the
> elections lately, I think a lot of people are a bit fed up with the cultural difference
> who are imposing in our lives, in our cultural things.

Opinion polls at the time of our interview showed that Amsterdam Noord was one of two

neighbourhood districts in the city where the populist *PVV* actually garnered significant

support.[12] Echoing the rhetoric of the populist Right, Ilse, like many other 'native' Dutch I heard

speak about integration issues in the Netherlands, was quick to connect the problems of cultural

difference with Islam, the religion of the majority of 'non-Western' newcomers.

> So, for instance, some people say Islamic schools need to be closed. Because,
> well, how can they ever be integrated in our cultural life and things, if they still
> keep following the Islamic education and Islamic languages. They never can
> integrate here. I think that is really difficult. I think those schools need to be
> closed, because well else those kids will never really become Dutch, but they
> can't go to their own country because the cultural differences are too great. They
> are too different. … They end up in-between, and they can't follow because the
> parents say, well, girls need to be virgin before marriage, and they should marry
> with a nephew or another family member from original country, and that's why
> also we have more [honour violence]. … There's no solution. Because they will
> keep hanging on to their culture and we will hang on to our culture. But well, it
> changes slowly, of course. (Ilse)

This view of the challenges 'non-Western' newcomers pose to Dutch society and culture

were broadly shared, even in neighbourhoods in Amsterdam where the populist Right did not

make significant in-roads. These everyday experiences draw attention to the ongoing tensions of colonial categories of difference in the contemporary Netherlands. While often unacknowledged, the mutable cultural criteria for belonging remain saturated with what Gilroy has called "race-coded common sense" (2004:158; cf. Eramian 2014). Such criteria play an important role in the processes of subject-ification whereby citizens are discursively talked into being though a powerful grammar of difference that defines, includes and excludes particular behaviours, values, beliefs and practices (Hurenkamp et al. 2011:211; Ong 1996:738; Cooper and Stoler 1997:7).

These kinds of negative opinions or experiences with regard to 'non-Western' Dutch were regularly commented on by my other informants and observed in Dutch media throughout my time in the field and after. Fears and concerns about these neighbours were especially directed toward youth of Moroccan descent. The image of these youth as criminal and disruptive of Dutch society emerged in numerous ways throughout my fieldwork: I observed many complaints about the *asociaal* (anti-social) or *lastig* (nuisance) behaviour of these youth ranging from insults hurled in the streets, to the thuggish, criminal behaviour. These were the youth that my interlocutors had without hesitation called "*Marokkaanse klootzakken*" or "*kutmarokkantjes.*" Such complaints were deeply connected to the failure of certain 'non-Western' newcomers to integrate into Dutch society, behaving as a result in ways that were not *sociaal* or did not help to build society. Gerrit,[13] a language coaching volunteer in his seventies, talked about the many recent break-ins in his street in the Jordaan (bordering on Amsterdam West) when I asked him about how Amsterdam has changed in recent years.

> Yes, it has become less enjoyable, comfortable [*gezellig*]. Absolutely. In
> particular due to the famous *kutmarokkantje*. Do you not know the
> *kutmarokkantjes*? The young guys− These guys, they harass people with insults,

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commit robberies, and such. You know. In the last couple of years, two or four businesses have been broken into. … And it is always the Moroccan youth. Turkish youth you really don't have so much trouble from.

It was a small group of Moroccan youth who my flatmate Mena rebuked outside of our house one afternoon. We lived in the neighbourhood known as *De Wallen*, or The Red Light District. As I was locking up my bicycle opposite our house, Mena waited for me outside our door (adjacent to the ground floor business, a sex shop). While I fumbled with my lock, Mena started shouting at a group of six Moroccan youth, probably about fifteen years old. "You terrible kid!" she shouted at one of them in Dutch as they walked past. "What makes you think you can say that?!" When I had asked her what happened, Mena said that as they walked past her they had called her a whore. Mena explained it was quite common that these youth yelled such insults at white, non-Muslim women. She usually encountered these reactions outside of the Centre where more of these youth lived, and not as one might think so close to our home in the Red Light. When I asked her why she thought these kids were different than their 'native' Dutch peers, her impression was that it was because of the religious and cultural teachings these youth received, especially with regard to women.

The ways in which the associations between morality and particular minority groups are "common sense" has also been visible in the organization of the national observance of *Dodenherdenking* (Remembrance of the War Dead) and *Bevrijdingsdag* (Liberation Day) on 4 and 5 May. In an interview with Carolien,[14] a young woman who worked for *Het Nationaal Comite 4 en 5 Mei* (The National Committee for May 4th and 5th), she talked about how the committee wanted to ensure that all Dutch, including 'non-Western' Dutch participated in these national events. While Carolien observed that many 'non-Western' Dutch already do come out to celebrate on 5 May at the festivals, some local committees have tried different strategies to

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encourage greater involvement from this demographic. One festival decided to program specific music that they felt would attract more 'non-Western' Dutch to the event. This initiative was quickly shut down by the police who felt that it would, as Carolien said, "trigger a group of young criminals to come and cause crime."

Similarly, Clarisa[15] related several stories where she had observed or experienced clashes between 'native' Dutch 'non-Western' Dutch in her neighbourhood, especially where the non-'natives' behaved in shockingly *asociaal* ways. Clarisa held Mexican citizenship, but had grown up in the United States and recently married a 'native' Dutch man. When we met she said she had begun to feel at home in Amsterdam, living in a culturally diverse neighbourhood near the Amstel Station. In spite of this, Clarisa pointed to specific problems with some of her Muslim neighbours. For instance, she told me about how as a woman with darker skin she felt that Muslims in the neighbourhood assumed that she was also Muslim. She often encountered insults from these neighbours because she did not veil herself. In another example, Clarisa related how one December day she and her husband came across their neighbour, and elderly 'native' Dutch woman, her coat covered with mud and clearly upset. When Clarisa's husband asked the woman what had happened, she said that she had gone to the store where some (non-Western Dutch) youth called her names. When the woman responded to them, they attacked her, yelling "How does it feel for your country to be taken over by us?!"

In 2010 I began reading about a wave of attacks on gay men in Amsterdam. Judith Schuyf was interviewed by the *Nederlandse Omroep Stichting* (*NOS*; Netherlands Broadcasting Foundation) for her research on national police figures from early 2008. She pointedly commented on the widespread impressions that the perpetrators were these Moroccan youth, and the reality suggested by police reports: "The press has written much on the ethnicity of the

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perpetrators. ... It gives the impression that most perpetrators of gay violence would be from ethnic minorities. The figures are not clear about this" (NOS 2010b; my translation). In spite of the reality that perpetrators of anti-gay violence in the Netherlands are both 'native' and 'non-Western' Dutch, the impression the public has of the situation is that anti-gay violence is primarily an immigrant or minority issue.[16]

Informants' perceptions of minority Dutch citizens' behaviour, attitudes, and place in Dutch society drew on many different, often overlapping threads of difference that have become "common sense" through the language of "culture." What is important to recognize here ethnographically are the ways in which race remains unspoken in all of these complaints about difference. While notions of racialized difference clearly continue to mark people as potential Others, all of these discussions point explicitly to cultural difference, cultural incompatibility, or cultural barriers to integration into mainstream Dutch society. These narratives and the discourses through which they are cultivated and normalized continue to reflect and support the overarching structures though which belonging in the nation-state is conceived and managed. As with distinguishing between 'Dutch' or 'Europeans' and natives or Indos in the East Indies, in the Netherlands today shifting notions of linguistic ability, religious affiliation, norms about gender and sexuality, socioeconomic class, and racialized difference still impact how the boundaries of national community are defined. These blatant and banal experiences and expressions support the governmental processes and structures through which non-'native' citizens (those commonly referred to as 'non-Western' or *allochtonen*) become unrecognizable simply as Dutch. Indeed, many 'non-Western' Dutch have often expressed that in spite of their status as Dutch citizens, they feel they are not treated as full members of Dutch society, or as having legitimate voices in discussions of Dutch tradition and cultural practice. One site in which

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these tensions have become highly visible in recent years is through the growing controversy around the practice of ritualized black-face in the figure of *Zwarte Piet* (Black Pete) in the popular Dutch winter children's holiday, *Sinterklaas* (Saint Nicolas).

Raw nerves in Dutch society: tensions around race, tradition, and belonging

Race and racism continue to matter in Dutch society, but remain difficult to speak by many 'native' Dutch (Stoler 2011). Instead, the language of culture – whose genealogy includes a powerful racial logic – has been central to ways of thinking and speaking about difference in the Dutch grammar of alterity. Since the 1960s, and with growing intensity since 2011, the silence around race and racism in Dutch society appears to be breaking. Surprisingly for many 'native' Dutch, the winter holiday season has become a focal point for these discussions. A growing number of increasingly vocal Dutch antiracism activists have drawn attention the figure of *Zwarte Piet* as a remnant of the brutal colonial past and no longer in keeping with contemporary Dutch values and society. This holiday and its traditions, so highly valued among 'native' Dutch, mark a site at which multiple processes and discourses of belonging coalesce. It is a site that reveals affective sentiment as a powerful technology of government, as these debates have occurred in a deeply emotional register (Stoler 2009). It is a site through which expressions of national identity confront the lived realities of cultural, religious, racial and other forms of diversity in the Netherlands today, and reveal the ways in which certain aspects of these processes remain unthinkable for some. As the taken-for-granted traditions of this celebration generate frictions between members of Dutch society, and make national and international headlines, contradictions and tensions around how the Dutch national community is and should

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be imagined rise to the surface (Anderson 1991; Billig 1995). Probing the tensions of the annual *Zwarte Piet* discussion underscores how racialized notions, like religious and other differences, remain aligned with powerful, historically grounded ideas about Dutch culture, belonging, and citizenship deeply rooted in the colonial past (cf. Bal 2002; Ong 1996; Stoler 1995; Stoler 2011).

Rather than celebrating Christmas as the main winter holiday, the Dutch celebrate *Sinterklaas* (St. Nicolas) and *Pakjesavond* (Presents Evening, 5 December) on the eve of Saint Nicolas' Day. In the contemporary Netherlands,[17] the holiday season begins in mid-November with the fanfare of a parade through the canals and streets of a coastal town. Each year, a different town is chosen to host the highly orchestrated official arrival parade (*Intocht*) of Saint Nicolas. The patron saint of children and Amsterdam, *Sinterklaas* is enthusiastically welcomed from Spain each year on his iconic steamboat with his white horse, presents for the good children whose names are kept in a great book, and his many 'helpers' or servants called *Zwarte Piet*. After this initial, nationally-televised event, the festive season continues with smaller, local arrival parades throughout towns in the Netherlands, as well as the broadcasting of many programs (for children and adults alike) featuring the holiday figures. Over the course of the following weeks, the presence of the saint and his black-faced companions is ubiquitous.

For many Dutch, this is a joyful time of year for consuming festive treats, gift-giving, and enjoying the magic of the season. Although it has its roots in the Christian tradition, since at least the early twentieth century it has been viewed primarily as a children's holiday and a Dutch national tradition (Helsloot 2001). As I observed during my time volunteering with the Native Speaker Project and attending the 2009 *Intocht*, many non-Christian (including Jews and Muslims) and other non-'native' Dutch children celebrate alongside their 'native' Dutch peers (cf. Frank 1986[1947]). The significance of the Saint's Day festival as part of Dutch national

tradition is also visible in gestures by governmental, research, and not-for-profit bodies to recognize the holiday. A month before the saint was due to arrive in 2010, the Dutch Centre for Folk Culture (*Nederlands Centrum voor Volkskunde)* published a new book on traditions naming the *Sinterklaas* celebration as the "most important" Dutch tradition (RNW News Desk 2010). During 2013, the *Sint Nicolaasgenootschap* (Saint Nicolas Society) applied to have the *Sinterklaas* holiday officially recognized by UNESCO as part of the "intangible cultural heritage" of the Dutch people (Posthumus 2013).[18]

When I was first told about the holiday and its figures by my 'native' Dutch informants, I found that the basic explanations I received were part of how the holiday was now commonly explained to children: the blackness of *Zwarte Piet* was attributed to soot from his going down chimneys to deliver presents. I found that the explanation I was given was just one of the origin stories for the popular holiday characters, but it was now the dominant narrative in how the holiday, its characters and traditions were celebrated. The silly, often buffoonish character of *Zwarte Piet* is typically portrayed skipping about in a colourful costume (reminiscent of sixteenth century Spanish livery), with large, gold hoop earrings, a curly black wig, face covered in black or more likely brown paint, and red lips (see figures 5.1 and 5.2). The contemporary figure is the complex outcome of centuries of ritual tradition, which includes overlapping meanings derived through Dutch engagement with difference both in and beyond the Netherlands.[19] For those familiar with the American history of racism, the commonplace *Zwarte Piet* imagery strongly resonates with that of explicitly racist minstrel shows popularized in the late nineteenth century (cf. Riggs 1989). These processes in Europe may differ from the experiences of race in the American context, but they also resonate with these struggles and tensions in important ways.

In both American and Dutch contexts, powerful racial stereotypes and caricatures have served as techniques of regularization and control that maintained white hegemony and continue to impact racial notions and relationships today (cf. Foucault 1990, 1991; Stoler 1995). Developed through popular entertainment – minstrelsy in the US, *Zwarte Piet* and other symbols in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe[20] – such imagery was more than simple amusement for whites. In the American context, it is clear that these images were potent political tools that disempowered and dehumanized African Americans, while supporting and justifying institutions and structures of inequality and violence against blacks (cf. Cohen 2011). These deeply-rooted, normalized images have also impacted how racialized subjects are positioned in the webs of power linked to American national- and civil-society (Smedley 1999; Willinsky 1999; cf. Ong 1996).

Unlike the American context, the Netherlands "offers a good example of a society where for centuries there was little actual presence of people of color in the metropole, but which then suddenly has had to contend with their arrival" (Blakely 1993:xv; cf. Oostindie 1990). Even so, the Dutch history of colonialism is deeply entwined with encounters with difference, including the transatlantic slave trade, the plantation colony of Surinam that relied on slave labour, and popular support of the Boer cause in South Africa that laid the foundations for apartheid (Oostindie 2012). Yet, rather than immediately conjuring this brutal history, the imagery and symbolism encapsulated by the black-faced character was most often considered by my informants as benign, "innocent," and certainly not (intended as) discriminatory. In making sense of this remarkable disassociation, Stoler (2011) draws our attention to how in the postcolonial context, some things are in fact unable to be remarked upon, to be recognized. Colonial categories, grammars of alterity, and processes are unexamined, unconfronted in contemporary

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European societies (and elsewhere) not simply because they are uncomfortable dimensions of a past that would rather be forgotten. Instead, it is because of "colonial aphasia" that such connections to the past cannot be thought: the haunting presence of the colonial past is subject to "a dismembering, a difficulty speaking, a difficulty generating a vocabulary that associates appropriate words and concepts with appropriate things" (Stoler 2011:125).

The figure of *Zwarte Piet*, his place in the celebration and in Dutch society, offers a striking example of colonial aphasia's impact on questions of belonging in the Netherlands. The contemporary portrayal of *Zwarte Piet* is an example of the ways in which new elements may be joined to existing assemblages, and may rework "existing elements for new purposes and transpos[e] the meanings of key terms" (Li 2007b:284-5). While a blackened figure has long been a staple in the *Sinterklaas* celebration (Blakely 1993), the figure of *Zwarte Piet* as practiced today is an outgrowth of systemic ways of thinking about racial difference that developed during the experience of empire. At the same time, terms explicitly referencing racialized difference have receded from everyday usage and ways of thinking about difference by the Dutch. Instead, 'problem' groups and practices are discussed in culturalized terms (e.g. *allochtonen*). Yet, race remains a problematic category in the everyday grammar of difference, used by many in Dutch society to flag the potential for cultural difference or distance from the Dutch progressive "moral majority" (Duyvendak 2004:10).

Zwarte Piet is a character that many choose to portray in their local and private celebrations of the holiday. As issues of skin colour became more politicized in the Dutch public sphere after the 1960s, *Zwarte Piet* began to be seen as a problematic part of this tradition, prompting changes to how the character was performed (Helsloot 2009:255). According to Helsloot, [21] *Zwarte Piet* now speaks Dutch well, but in the recent past he was known to be rather

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dumb, submissive, and routinely mumbled broken Dutch, often with a Surinamese accent (2009:261). Similarly less prominent today is the portrayal of *Zwarte Piet* as a sort of bogeyman, who threatened naughty children with a birch switch, and who might even kidnap the worst behaved, taking them back to Spain in his burlap sack (Bal 2002:217-218). Today, the good-natured *Zwarte Piet*en[22] are more likely to hand children a fistful of candy than brandish a switch. In spite of changes to diminish the racial caricature in the official portrayal of the Head Pete character during the national *Intocht* (as an intelligent and efficient manager) (Helsloot 2009:265-266), the older, more clownish character remains widely performed: in local and private celebrations, on the daily children's television special and other media, and certainly during the *Intocht*.

I repeatedly witnessed (in news articles, television journals, social media, and among some of my interlocutors) many 'native' Dutch ardently reject readings of the holiday that questioned the appropriateness of this ritualized black-face performance. In contrast to the widely espoused views dissociating *Zwarte Piet* from racialized blackness, Helsloot shows that these genealogical connections are decidedly present in the portrayal of the contemporary figure. Alongside claims tying the saint's companion to older pagan traditions around the winter solstice (cf. Blakely 1993), the invention of the *Zwarte Piet* character in the current tradition bears direct ties to the darker aspects of the Dutch colonial past beginning with his unambiguous portrayal as racially black in Jan Schenkman's picture book dating from 1850, *Sint Nikolaas en zijn knecht* (Saint Nicolas and his servant) (Helsloot 2008:95; cf. Helsloot 2009:251-252). At this time, a black servant was a sign of status befitting the portrayal of the saint (cf. Oostindie 1990:232-233). Nearly a century after this first instance, Surinamese sailors were recruited to play the part of *Zwarte Piet* in the inaugural national *Intocht* held in Amsterdam in 1934. It has only been

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much more recently that *Piet*'s blackness has been reinterpreted to have more benign or "politically correct" origins, distanced (even divorced) from race politics; it is not entirely clear how this dissociation occurred. What is clear is that this figure has become a focal point for recent discussions about race, cultural racism, and systemic discrimination across Dutch society.

In scholarly literature as well as in my experience in the field, it became clear that the supposedly festive and joyful holiday season could become a "hell" for some members of Dutch society (Helsloot 2009:250). Throughout my research, I noted the recurring stories of black Dutch children and adults who have routinely experienced racially-charged micro-aggressions as they are approached in the street, at work or school with calls of "*Zwarte Piet!*" (cf. Essed 1991). One of my interlocutors was a black British woman who had married a Dutch man and raised her children in Amsterdam. When she had first lived in the Netherlands she viewed the *Sinterklaas* holiday as a strange aspect of Dutch culture, but one with which she personally had no qualms. It was not until her Dutch-born children came home from school, upset at being teased with calls of "*Zwarte Piet*" by their classmates that she came down against the holiday, refusing to celebrate it. I heard similar stories from others with whom I spoke about the holiday over the course of my fieldwork, as well as in news and social media before and after my time in the field. While this remains an annual problem during the celebration, Dutch people of colour experience other challenges to their place in the Netherlands throughout the year. This discrimination may have been worse before the main waves of Surinamese migration in the 1960s and 1970s, but a 2014 article referencing the *Zwarte Piet* debate in the national *Trouw* (28 June) highlights the ongoing realities of contemporary racism in Dutch society. This experience of racism is exacerbated by most instances being hard to pinpoint, as *Trouw* journalist Jeannine Julen notes: "It is hidden in expressions such as: 'What good Dutch you speak.' Or: 'Yes, you were born in the Netherlands.

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But where are you really from?"' (Julen 2014; my translation). The subtle, persistent inequality present in the everyday is exposed in the "common sense" ways of talking about difference, but vividly erupts in the uncomfortable discussions around *Zwarte Piet*.

Since the late 1960s, waves of protest against the continued portrayal of *Zwarte Piet* in the holiday have been grounded in an understanding of the phenomenon as an expression of structural discrimination stemming from the brutal history of Dutch colonialism and slavery. In 1968, a 'native' Dutch woman, M.C. Grünbauer, suggested changes to the normalized, racist contours of *Zwarte Piet* (Helsloot 2009:253). Holiday traditions are important ways in which society teaches and reinforces norms and expectations for social behaviour (cf. Etzioni 2001; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Bal 2002). Through the adoption of white-faced *Pieten* in place of the traditional black-faced figures, Grünbauer felt that parents and Dutch society could begin to counter the "unjust" and essentializing message embodied by the holiday character (Helsloot 2009:253). Critiques of the figures, especially in Amsterdam, strengthened throughout the 1970s and 1980s as the Surinamese presence grew across the Netherlands.

However, these protests remained relatively isolated with little impact on the opinions and practices of wider Dutch society. Many pointed to the master-slave dynamic between *Zwarte Piet* and the saint, and connected these historical relationships to present day conflict and discrimination increasingly expressed in racial or ethnic terms (Helsloot 2009:255-6). Even when antiracism activists drew what (to a North American audience) appear to be clear parallels between the use of black-face in the American minstrelsy and Dutch *Sinterklaas* traditions (cf. CBC 2013), the connections between *Zwarte Piet* and processes of racism have been frequently (and often vehemently) denied by 'native' Dutch. In spite of the progressive social views held among the moral majority, I nonetheless heard and read sometimes bewildered or impassioned

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defences of *Zwarte Piet* and his continued place within the tradition (cf. Bal 2002; Helsloot 2009). For many 'native' Dutch (and some Dutch people of colour), the obvious connections between charges of racism and blackface in the US context are simply incomprehensible or something to be dismissed when levelled at the beloved figure of *Zwarte Piet* (Stoler 2011:125; cf. Helsloot 2012). The inability to recognize these connections has been an important factor in the widespread controversy that has developed around the holiday character during the early twenty-first century.

Unlike their forebears, more recent campaigns against *Zwarte Piet* have primarily sought to create public discussion and dialogue over the figure and his place in contemporary Dutch society. These antiracism movements have had a wide reach through their combined use of the Internet (e.g. websites, social media platforms such as Tumblr, Facebook, Twitter) and more traditional campaign strategies, such as protest marches and postering. In late November 2009, I came across posters plastered across waste bins in a public square in a Rotterdam shopping area that explicitly challenged the popular, benign narratives about the holiday (see figures 5.3 and 5.4). Working under the name *Stereopiet*, artist Philipp Abbass[23] used provocative imagery to challenge his audience to critically consider the representations of the traditional holiday figures, underscoring the disconnect between the contemporary origins discourse and popular representation of the holiday figures. During the summer of 2011, another public antiracism campaign began to generate momentum. Quinsy Gario, a performance poet, playwright, radio host, and activist began the "*Zwarte Piet is Racisme*" (Black Pete is Racism) campaign by stencilling shirts with the movement's slogan in parks and at public events. The message was supported and spread by the use of online social media (e.g. FaceBook, Tumblr) and real time events leading up to the annual *Intocht* on 12 November 2011, in Dordrecht. Like Abbass' work

two years before, these protestors sought to unsettle and inspire meaningful public dialogue to create change in Dutch society.

The momentum and reach of the *Zwarte Piet is Racisme* campaign[24] continues to reverberate in Dutch society (and internationally) as part of the now annual "*Zwarte Piet discussie*" (Black Pete discussion) (cf. AT5.nl 2011; Posthumus 2013; CBC 2013; Grunberg 2013). Groups have also begun filing formal, legal appeals against *Zwarte Piet* on the basis of discrimination. For instance, on 4 July 2014 a court in Amsterdam ruled that the practice of black-face in the portrayal of *Zwarte Piet* was considered discriminatory, and in violation of the private lives of black Dutch based on article 8 of the European Treaty for the Rights of Man (NU.nl and Jisca Cohen 2014). An academic and antiracism activist, Patricia Schor discussed how while this ruling was historic, it also reveals the ongoing tensions around racial grammars in Dutch society. The ruling

> does not recognise that racism is more than a matter of hurt feelings on the part of racialised and marginalised groups, in this case the Black Dutch. Still, this is a major victory for those who endured in a very long struggle. Furthermore it might serve as a precedent to the festivities outside Amsterdam as well. The court has signalled to the Dutch white establishment that Black people, who are otherwise deemed and treated as second category citizens, do have rights. However obvious it might seem, it is a novelty to the majority of Dutch society. (Frank 2014)

The other side of this discussion has been the storm of protest, predominantly among the white, 'native' Dutch majority who ardently reject accusations of racism in the holiday, and feel that these campaigns are a threat to Dutch culture and tradition. Such anxieties clearly resonate with Fortuyn's warnings about the erosive effect of multiculturalism for 'native' Dutch culture and society. These fears also echo the concerns of the colonial administration, especially in the in the East Indies. Historically, Dutch cultural values and practices were considered under threat of

degradation of loss through contact and mixing with the native Indies population, and a reorientation of affective sentiments of Dutch in the colony away from the Dutch 'fatherland' (Stoler 1995, 2009). In the contemporary Netherlands, the critiques of this holiday tradition are often received by 'native' Dutch as attacks on Dutch culture, pandering to newcomers to the detriment of Dutch national tradition. The tensions that are revealed in this context expose the powerful and persistent structural dimensions of racism and other forms of inequality, the links between ideology and how such processes are experienced in everyday life (Essed 1991:2).

Among those I spoke with about *Zwarte Piet* I found that many had ambiguous or conflicted feelings about whether his blackness was problematic. For example, during one of my first meetings with Noel[25] in 2009 (a student studying history at the *Universiteit van Amsterdam*), he had asked me with a laugh, "How do you like our racist Black Peters?" I was then struck, when a year after I left the field (March 2011), I received rather hurt remarks from him in response to a conference paper where I critiqued the blackness of *Zwarte Piet* as an issue of racism and banal nationalism bearing traces to the Dutch colonial past. After some discussion back and forth, Noel considered why he was so upset by my paper:

> There are certain elements [of the holiday] that are a bit racist and part of a darker past of our history but it's also part of our culture by now. …
> But I was talking about why it really bothered me: You're attacking one of my happiest child memories (I mean, c'mon! Presents and *pepernoten* [ginger nuts]!). I really didn't like that. And the fact that stuff for me that are so normal, for you are so strange. I'm a bit scared to read your paper when it's finished. These are things I actually don't want to know. I don't want to see things I consider normal because they are part of my culture as something strange.

In many of the discussions I have been part of or saw in the Dutch (and increasingly international) media, these concerns straddle a line between acknowledging racism in the holiday and eliminating an emotionally-meaningful and culturally valued Dutch tradition. Still others I

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encountered clearly expressed the connections between racism, colonialism, and contemporary nationalism in the celebration of what is widely regarded as an innocent holiday (cf. Bal 2002). These uncomfortable tensions undoubtedly inform Helsloot's observation that "*Zwarte Piet* represents a raw nerve in Dutch society" (2008:93; my translation).

Culturalized criteria for belonging

The ethnographic moments detailed in this chapter explore some of the ways in which the grammar of alterity developed during colonialism is unevenly woven through ways of thinking about belonging in the Dutch national community today. While the problems that emerged during the experience of empire have not been carried wholesale into the present moment, these systemic modes of perception and ways of knowing – what Foucault terms *savoirs* – are identifiable throughout my ethnography. These practices represent some of the "awkward continuities" (Dean 2010:57) between past governmental programs and how certain subjects, their behaviours, competencies, affective sentiments, and beliefs are marked as 'problems' for the Dutch national community, and demand particular 'solutions'.

The wide spectrum of different readings of *Zwarte Piet* and his role in the contemporary holiday, for instance, speaks to how the processes of problematization are messy in practice, as governmental rationality is engaged, critiqued, and reconciled by actors in their daily lives. These dis/connections are visible in the many more subtle, day to day experiences that Dutch people of colour – *allochtonen* – encounter in contradiction to their legal status as Dutch citizens. This messiness is clear in the disjuncture between criteria for social belonging or access to citizenship, and how some citizens struggle for recognition as legitimate and full members of

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Dutch society, as contributors in shaping Dutch culture (Helsloot 2002:60).

The ethnographic insights provided here are part of a much larger and ongoing set of processes and discussions about the changing nature of difference and Dutchness, different domains of knowledge – what can be known, spoken or thought – and the ways in which boundaries of belonging in Dutch society come to be differently configured by diverse, socially-situated subjects (Stoler 2011; Li 2007a:275). In framing the discussions around *Zwarte Piet*, 'native' Dutch draw on the same discursive frameworks that have allowed the populist Right to become a powerful voice in the Netherlands since the early 2000s. Echoing fears voiced by Scheffer in *Het multiculturele drama* (2000) and others in Dutch society, 'native' Dutch are victims whose culture needs to be defended (especially against 'non-Western' newcomers), and in which the Dutch should take pride. It is precisely because these antiracism activists protest the holiday figure through an expression of their cultural competency and place as members of Dutch society that the discussions around *Zwarte Piet* bring focus to the wider, more subtle processes of Dutch nation-building in which colonial categories like race continue to matter. Such categories, however, are impacted by, reconfigured and rearticulated in relation to other powerful discourses and processes.

In the following chapter, "Activating citizens: Neoliberal governmentality and the rise of voluntarism," I explore the ways in which neoliberal governmental rationale has been grafted onto the existing regime of "good" citizenship practice. While this chapter may appear to be a departure from the discussions of linguistic, cultural and racial calculations discussed here and in relation to the language of autochthony, the role and self-image of the Dutch as a civilizing force and *gidsland* (guiding nation) to the rest of the world has also had important repercussions for how moral and affective sentiments are tied today to social service provision, voluntary labour,

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and notions of "active" and *sociaal* participation in Dutch society. As I have done for questions of race, culture and language, in the next chapter I trace some of the key threads through which an array of discourses, objectives, and regulatory regimes have redirected Dutch moral and cultural frameworks to align with the desires, habits, aspirations and beliefs associated with neoliberal "active" citizenship practice (Li 2007a:275). While certain practices may be rejected, others are consented to or accommodated, showing the power of governmental projects to direct people to act in particular ways via their own self-interest (Li 2007a:275). The ways in which the ethic of voluntarism has become embedded in commonly shared ideas of "active" citizenship illustrates how governmental power is not the purview of a monolithic state. Rather, it operates through an assemblage of socially-situated subjects, objectives, knowledges, discourses, institutions, etc. that must resonate in relation to a specific technical field: "good" citizenship practice.

Figure 5.1 *Zwarte Piet* (Black Pete)   Figure 5.2 *Zwarte Pieten* (Black Peters)

Photos by author: Schiedam, the Netherlands, 14 November 2009

Figure 5.3 Stereopiet's poster for *Zwarte Piet*   Figure 5.4 Stereopiet's poster for *Sinterklaas*
(Black Pete)   (St. Nicolas)

(www.stereopiet.nl)
Photos by author: Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 29 November 2009

In Abbass' image of *Zwarte Piet* (5.3), the white model with soot on his face and hands removes his tunic to reveal a variation of the lyric of a popular holiday song. Across the model's torso is written "*zwarte van roet*" (black from soot). In the traditional song *Zwarte Piet* sings that his intentions toward children are good, even though he may be "*zwarte als roet*" (black as soot).

6. Activating citizens: Neoliberal governmentality and the rise of voluntarism

As the tensions and divergent readings of *Zwarte Piet*'s 'blackness' reveal, many differently positioned subjects are involved in the assemblage of processes, relations and practices that regulate the conditions of life (cf. Dean 2010; Li 2007b). These actors and institutions variously pull from existing modes of perception, practices of calculation, vocabularies, forms of judgement, authority, etc., even as new practices, meanings, and ways of knowing are adopted or negotiated by the agents of the assemblage (Li 2007a:276). The case of *Zwarte Piet* shows the messiness of processes of problematization, and what happens when "[f]uzziness, adjustment and compromise" are possibly no longer able to redirect, correct, or hold an assemblage together (Li 2007b:279). In this chapter, I examine the ways in which contemporary understandings of voluntarism and neoliberal "active" citizenship practice represent "awkward continuities" (Dean 2010:57) with the past. The successful grafting of elements of neoliberal governmentality onto existing regimes of practices in the Netherlands is the result of self-correction and reassemblage in relation to particular processes, events, and *savoirs*. The affective and moral connections that research participants, policy makers, scholars and politicians draw between labour, charity, and community can be traced genealogically to notions of the Dutch as an historically 'civilizing' influence and 'guiding nation' to the rest of the world (Kuitenbrouwer 1991:322; cf. McClintock 1995; Smedley 1999; Thorne 1997; Comaroff 1997; Chakrabarty 1997; Conklin 1998; Colonna 1997; Wildenthal 1997). In addition to the "common sense" categories of difference and Dutchness developed through empire, the deeply moralized connections between historical practices of religious charity, socioeconomic status, and labour are important for making sense of the notions and experiences of

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contemporary Dutch citizenship practice that have been expressed by my research participants. Mapping the genealogical connections between voluntary labour and morally and culturally attuned citizenship practices draws attention to the ways in which liberal governmentality developed in the Netherlands, and has been transfigured and reassembled through processes of neoliberalism (Holmer Nadesan 2008:7-8; Dean 2010:10-11, 65).

This chapter opens with a discussion of the long history of religious mission and charity among the Dutch, and how these practices and attendant ways of knowing contributed to the nature and ethic of "social uplift" as a part of how this (national) community was imagined (Anderson 1991). These practices are intimately entangled with the role that remunerative labour played and continues to play in "educating desires and configuring habits, aspirations and beliefs" (Li 2007a:275) of citizens. As I show, the relationships developed historically between labour, "social uplift" in the form of (religious mission and) charity, and citizenship practice resonate with the ways in which volunteers, as "active" and "good" citizens are called upon today to fill the gaps in social service provision and relieve the burden of others on the state.

On the ground, the impact of neoliberal logics have had profound effects on the ways in which citizens are called upon to remedy the problems of Dutch society (Tonkens 2006), including the now pressing problem of (non-Western) immigrant integration. Volunteer Dutch language coaches work in the capacity of front-line citizenship educators for newcomers, drawing together traditions of social uplift and care, neighbourhood- and nation-building, and notions of citizenship practice that require members of Dutch society to participate in particularly "productive" or "active" ways, reflecting neoliberal logics. Yet, as I show in the concluding section of this chapter, the contemporary discourses around "activating" Dutch citizens, "social cohesion" and "integration" nonetheless reflect long-standing notions of cultural

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difference and distance that single out 'non-Western' newcomers and *allochtonen* as in need of targeted intervention and discipline.

"Social uplift": religious charity and liberal governmentality in the Netherlands

Through monitoring and identifying a specific set of relations to be directed and improved, 'native' Dutch of lower socioeconomic status have long been framed as posing potential dangers for the rest of Dutch society. Reflecting administrative anxieties over the intersectional, essentialist categories of difference developed in the colonies (e.g. the threat posed by white, and impoverished *verindische* in the East Indies), the moral degeneracy of working class Dutch in the Netherlands was also described using the language of racial degeneracy (Stoler 2009; cf. Thorne 1997; Colonna 1997; McClintock 1995). Understood as threatening to degrade, even ruin, Dutch civilization as embodied by middle class (*burgerlijk*) society in the Netherlands, around the turn of the twentieth century the poor 'at home' (sometimes framed as *asociaal*, antisocial or unsocialized) became targets in need of governmental intervention.[1]

In the struggle for the moral and social 'uplift' of the lower classes in the Netherlands, religious institutions played a key role. This was especially notable during the *verzuiling* (pillarization) period beginning in the late nineteenth century, which resulted in the effective segregation of people belonging to the different consociational pillars across all aspects of social life in the Netherlands well into the 1960s. Under *verzuiling*, the Dutch churches and religious leaders were given authority by the emerging liberal state over important social welfare issues, such as the family, education, charity, social housing, and hospitals (James and Schrauwers

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2003; Lijphart 1968). Protestants, Catholics, secular Liberals and Socialists all lived virtually separate lives through voluntary social segregation along these lines. In the provision of these important social services, the middle-class within each pillar was called upon by their elites to "uplift" the working classes through moral reform, accomplished (just as in the colonies) especially through childcare and education (Stoler 1997:201). This is also visible in the establishment of denominational labour unions (to counter the secular union movement), and how religious leaders further organized the working class through their provision of education and poverty relief (James and Schrauwers 2003:57). In this way, government was rendered both internal and external to the state "by limiting the scope of activities viewed as within the state's competence" and redistributing them in the private spheres of everyday life (Holmer Nadesan 2008:23). Through these calls and ways of organizing, the lines between the 'governed' and 'governors' were blurred, as socially-situated actors occupied intersecting positions of power in Dutch society (Dean 2010:38; Li 2007a:276).

This dynamic importantly shaped the ways in which the Dutch state assumed and transformed the function of 'pastoral' power to suit the program goals of the developing liberal(-welfare) state. Bringing populations under the paternalistic guidance of religious institutions, pastoral power addressed both individual and community from the cradle to the grave, seeking to assure the salvation of the soul. The transformation of this form of power, as it was assumed by the liberal state and its institutions, was vital to the legitimization of the state and its extension of governmental forms of social control into the 'private sphere' of the population. This was accomplished in part through appearing to limit the role of the state; by calling upon the work of public institutions and private benefactors the state was in fact able to "'act at a distance' upon the desires and social practices of citizens" (Holmer Nadesan 2008:27). In the context of Dutch

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liberal governmentality, the officials of pastoral power included not only religious leaders, but also those working through the myriad institutions of the various pillars, religious and secular organizations such as schools, police, welfare societies, and private benefactors. These officials legitimated the program of the modern state, and extended its power "to ensure national prosperity and social welfare … into the intimacies of everyday life decentering liberal operations of government" (Holmer Nadesan 2008:24). The distinct influence of *verzuiling* promoted the establishment of a "conservative-corporatist" welfare state in the Netherlands, where state services and social security were provided through a hybrid mixture of providers both public (state) and private ("corporatist" institutions, including religious organizations) (Knijn 1998:85). While social services were frequently provided by the institutions of the various pillars, funding nonetheless came from the state for services that were available to all citizens.

The shift from sovereign forms of power to liberal technologies of government built upon historical forms of socialization and morality, including the provision of religious charity. As the Protestant Diaconate of Amsterdam (*Protestantse Diaconie Amsterdam*, formerly the Diaconate of the Reformed Church, *Diaconie van de Hervormde Gemeente*) indicates, they have given charity to Amsterdam residents since 1578: providing "housing for orphans, widowers, widows, elderly and sick, and they gave money, bread, peat, oil, soup and beer to the poor. This is the Diaconate's centuries' old tradition of helping where there is no helper" (Protestantse Diaconie Amsterdam 2012; my translation). All Dutch Christian churches share in this tradition of giving charity and support to those in need, both within the reach of their parishes in the Netherlands and through worldwide missions. This ideal of Christian charity and stewardship continues to be the wellspring that sustains the contemporary social and economic outreach of these religious institutions and their members. While aid for the poor and vulnerable members of Dutch society

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remains a focus of these organizations' charity, the ways in which recipients are helped, as well as the character of these groups and individuals, has shifted and broadened over the past four centuries. This much is clear from the Evangelical Lutheran Diaconate of Amsterdam's description of their charitable projects:

> We support projects with and for people who are homeless, refugees, addicts, excluded. Especially in Amsterdam, but also all over the world. Our faith inspires us in this. Key words in our work are community involvement, charity, sustainability and justice. We try to make these words concrete. We do this from the Lutheran community and together with you. (Diaconie Evangelisch-Lutherse Gemeente Amsterdam 2012; my translation)

Similar messages are given voice by other churches and religious organizations in Amsterdam and elsewhere in the Netherlands, which directly controlled and organized social services and provisions for most of the twentieth century.

The shifts in Dutch social values away from religious authority during the latter half of the twentieth century (especially during the 1960s) have by no means lead to these religious organizations' erasure from social support work in the Netherlands. These shifts are acknowledged by many of these organizations themselves, for instance in the mission statements of some of the charitable foundations sponsoring different language coaching projects in Amsterdam.[2] Today, religious groups often provide funding and voluntary support to independently organized projects and programs with similar goals, such as in support of the elderly or disabled. An example of this is clear in the financial and organizational support of the *KNR* (*Konferentie Nederlandse Religieuzen*, Dutch Religious Conference) in their charitable work. This Catholic group indicated that the members' and organization's religious faith

> does not mean that we only give money for 'faithful' projects. Many of 'our' projects have nothing to do with the church. It means that we look for projects

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that we identify with religious inspiration. Simply said: PIN [*Projecten in Nederland*, Projects in the Netherlands] pays for projects that could be religious. (KNR 2012; my translation)

Importantly, religious and secular organizations alike have framed a new population in the Netherlands as in need of charity and emancipation from their socially marginalized position in Dutch society and from within their own communities: 'non-Western' newcomers and their descendants.

While traditional voluntary or charitable organizations or societies (those organized around religion, but also politics or labour) have seen their membership fall off since the 1960s, new organizations (e.g. environmental, animal or human rights, sports and consumer groups) see growing support. Secular foundations and named trusts – such as the royal *Oranje Fonds* (Orange Foundation) [3] – reflect the changing conditions for social behaviour and categories of belonging in the Netherlands (Devilee 2005:35). Frequently, these funding bodies' mission statements and promotional materials echo the recent goals and attitudes set out by the government with regard to volunteering and building a *sociaal* (socially oriented) civil society full of self-reliant citizens (cf. Tonkens 2006).

Whose responsibility? neoliberal developments in state service provision

In recent decades, the Netherlands – as well as many European Union countries, the USA, Canada – has experienced a trend away from a strong welfare state tradition toward the incorporation of more market principles in the provision of social service (cf. Ong 2006; Lechner 2008; Muehlebach 2012; Erickson 2012; Hemment 2012; Milligan and Conradson 2006). The Dutch "conservative-corporatist" welfare tradition described by Knijn (1998) has shifted ever

farther toward a neoliberal corporatist framework in which the state places increasing responsibility for the funding and provision of welfare and social services on non-state actors, from traditional welfare providers to private organizations, lower levels of government, and individual citizens. For the Dutch, these changes have come to reflect a shift "from protecting labor to promoting work, from social support to social inclusion, from guaranteeing universal entitlements to selective targeting of deserving groups" (Lechner 2008:197). In terms of government policy, the understanding of social cohesion as something produced through shared values and civic duties among citizens was championed over the long-held idea of social cohesion that turned on shared rights and obligations within the welfare state (cf. Holmer Nadesan 2008:31).

These policy shifts occurred in highly moralized spaces that affect the role of the state, notions of citizenship, society and social relations formed under the welfare state model and expressed through liberal governmentalities (cf. Muehlebach 2012). By the 1990s, these transformations reoriented the Dutch government's stance regarding citizenship. The government now sought to "foster active citizenship, to prevent exclusion from full participation, and to promote responsibility by all groups in civil society" (Lechner 2008:201). This shift has been discussed by scholars such as Ong as part of the processes of neoliberalism; that is, as an expression of governmentality drawing on market principles, and hinging on notions of "individual active freedom" (Ong 2006:13; cf. Holmer Nadesan 2008:29-30). In the context of the "shrinking" welfare state, Ong explains that

> neoliberal logic requires populations to be free, self-managing, and self-enterprising individuals in different spheres of everyday life – health, education, bureaucracy, the professions, and so on. The neoliberal subject is therefore not a citizen with claims on the state but a self-enterprising citizen-subject who is obligated to become an "entrepreneur of himself or herself" (Ong 2006:14).

The incorporation of neoliberal market rationale has important implications for the ways in which these technologies of government circulate and spread across the social system. These technologies, with their market-defined categories of risk and opportunity, extend their reach beyond economic spaces, across geographical and cultural borders, permeating and inflecting "common sense" in all areas of social life (Holmer Nadesan 2008:211).

It is important to consider that while aspects of this logic have been adopted by many governments in recent decades, the processes by which neoliberal logics take root is informed by the particular histories of individual nation-states (cf. Hemment 2012; Ong 2006; Muehlebach 2012; Tsing 2005; Li 2007b). The ways in which these logics unfold in the Dutch context have been shaped by many factors, including: the country's distinct history of social service provision, voluntarism, and charity through the tradition of *verzuiling*; the impact of social policy developments and the role of the welfare state; as well as the meaning attributed to different forms of labour. An important circumstance that influenced the Dutch incorporation of neoliberal governmental rationality was the crisis of the welfare state during the 1980s. As Lechner indicates, the early 1980s was for the Dutch "a bleak period in which [economic] growth languished, unemployment rose to over 10%, and welfare costs spiralled out of control" (2008:183). In part, the implosion of the Dutch welfare state by the 1990s and the subsequent movement towards neoliberal forms of governance was the result of one of its own mechanisms: the liberal, but poorly managed and monitored labour disability laws enacted in 1966 (*WAO*, *Wet op de arbeidsongeschiktheidsverzekering*; Law on Disability Insurance). According to Lechner (2008:186), with workers, employers, doctors, insurance boards, and even government administrators in the Social Insurance Council taking advantage of the generous payouts and

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"fuzzy standards for disability" outlined by the system, the welfare state was widely considered as heading toward fiscal ruin by 1993 when the Buurmeyer Commission reported on the decades of *WAO* abuses. The *WAO* scandal was therefore a decisive spur toward revising the Dutch welfare commons, where individuals would be required to take on more responsibility for their own well-being and that of the welfare system (Lechner 2008:186-206).

Following the case of elder care (home and residential care) is particularly useful, as it was marked by the Dutch government as a test case in the movement towards a new hybrid structure of service provision since the end of the Second World War, one Knijn (1998) calls a "mixed economy of care." Elder care, like other social services such as education and welfare, "first evolved from a service provided by denominational organizations into a regular state-governed provision during the postwar years" (1998:88). In the case of elder care, however, budget reductions during the 1970s sparked both a centralization and de-professionalization of care services, and finally a retrenchment of those services by the state throughout the 1980s. By the 1990s, there was a clear trend toward reliance on market principles in the service sector, with, for example, approximately half of all elderly dependents cared for "on an informal basis by relatives, partners and volunteers" (Knijn 1998:97). Changes to the General Law on Specific Sickness Costs (1968; *Algemene Wet Bijzondere Ziektekosten*, *AWBZ*) in 2003, and the introduction of a new law (*Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning*, *Wmo*, Social Support Act, 2007) shifted all responsibility for the provision of these services to the municipalities, who in turn, have often leaned heavily on the market in their service delivery. According to a report from the City of Amsterdam, this new law (*Wmo*) shifts the responsibility onto the municipalities not only to care for people with physical or mental disabilities, but to promote their active participation in social life (Lindeman et al. 2011:fn 22, p 49). In Amsterdam, these

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responsibilities have been further decentralized as responsibility for the provision of some of these healthcare services are downshifted onto the individual city boroughs.

Although this has been a general trend regarding the provision of all types of social services in the Netherlands, it is important to note that these developments have not been uniform in how they affect the provision of these different services. The strong professional organizations in fields of education and medical care have prevented the deskilling of these services in the same ways experienced by the elder care sector (e.g. at home or nursing home care) (Knijn 1998:98-100). Even so, responsibility for providing specific services has been selectively downshifted to regional or local governments, which increasingly rely on private companies, non-governmental or non-profit organizations, as well as volunteers (cf. Milligan and Conradson 2006:1). Another such example is in the field of education.

While primary and secondary education remains the responsibility of the state, since 1996 the Adult and Vocational Education Act (*WEB*, *Wet educatie en beroepsonderwijs*) has shifted responsibility for the provision of adult education to the municipalities (Dutch Ministry for Education, Culture and Science 2012:218). This has meant that the first 'civic integration' (*inburgering*) program for adult immigrants established in 1998 (*Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers*, Civic Integration of Newcomers Act) has been subject to these new, decentralized strategies for service provision. Although the guidelines and regulations for these 'civic integration' courses were developed at the federal level, the provision of this service immediately devolved onto municipalities and has been delivered through Regional Centres for Vocational Training (*ROC*, *regionaal opleidingencentrum*). These educational centres receive funding from both the federal and municipal levels, but are independent organizations that are contracted by municipal governments to provide these courses (Dutch Ministry for Education, Culture and Science

2012:114). This shift has also contributed to the service gap identified by the voluntary organizations at heart of this ethnography that developed free Dutch language coaching services for newcomers. The withdrawal of the state in this area of social service provision and others has been important in the related rise and support for voluntarism in the Netherlands, and the connections drawn between voluntarism and moral citizenship practice. By tracing the rise of voluntarism in the Netherlands, it is clear that the incorporation of neoliberal governmentality continues to "operate, as far as possible, *through* rather than against the desires and interests of their target population" (Li 2007b:269).

The rise of voluntarism

Voluntary labour has long been connected to notions of moral behaviour. In the Netherlands, and across many different national contexts this has often had strong religious undertones. Dutch religious organizations, whether the charitable wing of a parish or an independent foundation with a religious orientation, have been a fixture in the landscape of voluntary work for centuries. As Bekkers has noted, religious individuals in many different countries (e.g. the Netherlands, Canada, the USA, Belgium) continue to be "more likely to participate in voluntary associations, as members, volunteers, or donors" than those who do not identify as religious (2011:3). Moreover, religious organizations continue to be important financial supporters of voluntary projects across the country, even though many of the volunteers involved do not necessarily identify as religious. As Muehlebach has observed, some Italian volunteers used discourses tied to the Catholic church in explaining their work, drawing on the language of sacrifice and religious virtue (Muehlebach 2011:68). This included voluntarism as

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"an expression of the spirit of gifting," "personal," "free," and "spontaneous" (Muehlebach 2011:66). Yet, extending beyond this specific context, there is a widely shared belief that voluntarism is a morally-inflected form of relational labour. What is more, not all unpaid labour is considered voluntary work or attributed the same moral value (Muehlebach 2012).[4] Although understood as qualitatively different than paid work, voluntary labour reflects the role and affective sentiments connected to remunerative labour as a technology of government (Li 2007a:275).

The moral implications connected to voluntarism have also long been connected to notions of civil society, liberal democracy and evolving notions of "active" citizenship practice (Kidd 2002:330; cf. Putnam 1995; Parsons 2006:232-233; Milligan and Conradson 2006). These connections have been strengthened and transformed during the latter half of the twentieth century as the welfare state has been subject to global shifts toward market principles and neoliberal reforms. These changes, particularly the increasing impact of neoliberal governmentality, have affected the meanings of civil society and citizenship practice. While citizenship has always been a formal status communicating belonging within the polity, be this the city-state (as in seventeenth century Amsterdam), the nation-state (the modern country of the Netherlands), or a supranational body (such as today's European Union), it has also always been steeped in often unspoken culturalized ideas of legitimate bodies and behaviours (cf. Mosse 1985; Stoler 1995; Cattelino 2004; Beriss 2004; Bunzl 2004, 2005; Mackey 1999; Mandel 2008). While these conditions of belonging are varied and dynamic they also operate within certain discourses of citizenship practice, which are in turn connected to broader political and economic processes. In contemporary liberal democracies, the values of individualism, freedom and progress that are normalized and prized by the mechanisms of neoliberalism have also come to

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be seen as synonymous with Western culture, as in the Netherlands. The regulatory aspect of neoliberalism has affected the norms and expectations with regard to moral and cultural standards of citizenship practice (Ong 1996:739).

Voluntarism has gained renewed interest as a mode of "good" citizenship practice among scholars, policy makers, and politicians in the Netherlands and elsewhere since the mid-1990s. This trend has been influenced by the work of Putnam (1995), who has argued for strong connections between community participation (which produces forms of 'bonding' social engagement, such as through voluntarism) and the health of civic society (*maatschappelijk middenveld*) (cf. Dekker 1999; de Hart 2005; Hurenkamp et al. 2006; Hurenkamp et al. 2011). With such strong moral implications, it is important to consider how voluntarism has been defined. A number of different measures have been taken on the question of voluntarism in the Netherlands by different social research organizations, such as the national *Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau* and the *Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek* (respectively, *SCP*, Netherlands Institute for Social Research, and *CBS*, Central Bureau for Statistics). Dekker and de Hart (2009) show that the discrepancies in different figures on participation in voluntary work emerge from the ambiguity of 'volunteer work' in the literature, and questions posed in the surveys from which this data comes (cf. Milligan and Conradson 2006:3).[5] Most surveys focus on performing voluntary work for organizations (through formal membership in a club or association), whereas other questions ask about general, or occasional volunteering (such as for a school, or residential care facility). Still other survey questions may ask about providing informal help and care, such as cooking or shopping for a sick neighbour or relative. During my research, participants usually described voluntarism by discussing their formal connections to organizations through/ for which they worked (such as *SamenSpraak*, or the organization through which I was introduced to

them). These were frequently the types of unpaid labour considered in the social science literature, by governments, and my informants as "formal" or "real" volunteer work. Yet, some participants responded to my questions by describing less formal unpaid work, such as with their church, at their children's schools or clubs, or caring for elderly relatives. For others, involvement in these less formal types of unpaid labour – sometimes alluded to as acts of being a good neighbour or caring relative, an active church-goer or involved parent – was not considered voluntarism, and was only mentioned after more direct questioning on my part during our interview.

It is clear that the people surveyed by the aforementioned research institutes, the researchers conducting the surveys, and my own research participants have many different associations with the concept of voluntary work. For the purposes of this dissertation, I conceive of voluntary work as a form of unpaid labour[6] in line with the most common descriptions that have emerged from my research participants and the organizations through which volunteer work is formally organized. My research focuses on formal volunteering. This does not include informal care activities, such as parenting or caring for ill relatives or neighbours, unless those activities have been mediated by an independent project or institution, such as a parent-teacher association or nursing home. While all of these activities, for example, are generally considered as socially valuable, not all are (considered by my informants or in the literature as) "voluntary work" (cf. Muehlebach 2012). This is in line with how the Volunteer Centre in Amsterdam (*Vrijwilligers Centrale Amsterdam*) describes voluntary work as

> unpaid work that you do with a social organization, an organization that is not commercial. That is foundations, associations, neighbourhood initiatives and institutions. You contribute as a volunteer to a societal goal that is important to you, such as a cleaner environment, the welfare of refugees, a film festival in the neighbourhood. (VCA.nu 2012; my translation)

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It is precisely the moral implications connected to voluntarism, which are in turn tied to morally-charged notions of citizenship that makes defining voluntarism in relation to other forms of (unpaid) labour, important.

Public, state-funded education is considered key to the process of civil enculturation for most members of Dutch society and for migrant youth (cf. Schiffauer et al. 2004). It is perhaps unsurprising then, that efforts to build a culture of voluntarism in the Netherlands are nowhere clearer than in the establishment and support by the government of 'service learning', that is, volunteer work among high school students as a way of stimulating civic participation (Maatschappelijke Stage 2012). This move on the part of the Dutch government is reflected in the implementation of similar requirements for high school or post-secondary students in many different Western countries, such as Canada.[7] The view of these states is that voluntary work and cultivating an ethic of voluntarism among youth helps to build and reinforce positive values and behaviours within the (national) civil society (cf. Putnam 1995; Sander and Putnam 2010).[8] During the 2008-2009 school year, this approach to civic enculturation was further stimulated through a pilot project which included twenty different regions across the Netherlands. In Amsterdam, thirty-five schools (some 3500 students) participated in this pilot, which required students to give at least thirty hours of their time to volunteering (Maatschappelijke Stage 2009:10). This program was originally set out by the federal government in 2007 under the motto "*Samen leven kun je leren*" (roughly, living together can be learned). The intention of the government was to educate students through informal, unpaid work experiences (the *maatschappelijke stage*, or social internship) to better participate in the formation of a "socially cohesive society" (OCW 2007:24, 29).[9]

Throughout the year and beyond the parameters of youth service learning, recruitment of

volunteers in the Netherlands is facilitated by a number of regional online volunteer centres. In Amsterdam the comprehensive website *Vrijwilligers Centrale Amsterdam* (Volunteer Centre Amsterdam, *VCA*, www.vca.nu), compiles information for volunteers, businesses, organizations, the government, and schools in order to facilitate the connection between potential volunteers and voluntary positions.[10] These initiatives and organizations are supported by a wide variety of funders. For instance, the royal *Oranje Fonds* is now a major source of funding for programs that strive to improve and build social infrastructure and activities in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In keeping with the outlook of the government, social cohesion at the neighbourhood level (especially with an eye to considerations of cultural and linguistic diversity), "active" citizenship and civic participation in Dutch society are explicit goals of this organization (Oranje Fonds 2012a). The foundation invests in some 1500 organizations and projects on an annual basis, most of which are driven by volunteers (Oranje Fonds 2012b).[11]

Voluntarism has received further financial and social support from all levels of government in the Netherlands as well as from the European Union. An example of this was the 2011 European Year of Volunteering (European Commission 2011). The stated goals of this EU initiative were to facilitate and improve the quality of volunteering through easier access to opportunities, improved training for volunteers, and to formally recognize the social and civic value of volunteering within the EU. This supranational focus on volunteering for the year 2011 was also taken up at the national and local levels in the Netherlands. The City of Amsterdam (*Gemeente Amsterdam*) launched their own campaign in April 2011, with a new website (www.amsterdam.nl/vrijwillig) and the motto, "*Vrijwilligerswerk, goed voor jou, goed voor de stad*" (Volunteer work, good for you, good for the city). Through this campaign the city's goal was to encourage and facilitate voluntary work across all sectors in a number of ways. As the

director of *Gilde Amsterdam* discussed with me during our interview, this included additional funds for special volunteer projects,[12] and organizing monthly platforms for the thematic showcasing of voluntary work in the city.[13] These government supported efforts and special initiatives underscore the increasingly prominent role of voluntarism in providing services that might otherwise come under the purview of the state. In addition, the connections between citizenship, morality, and service made by the state are overtly expressed. This is clear, for instance, in the motto of the campaign sponsored by the Amsterdam municipality.

These connections between voluntarism and moral citizenship practice are also expressed by voluntary organizations, as is clear in the media used to promote volunteering by groups such as *Gilde Amsterdam* and the *VCA*. Such groups share in the explicit message that volunteering is a valued task that contributes to social cohesion through positive engagements between members of society. Moreover, it is a task that everyone can (or should) take up, as is clear in the promotional slogan on the *VCA* website: "*Want in ieder mens schuilt een vrijwilliger!*" (Because a volunteer hides in everyone!). The website's volunteer stories and experiences section features narratives that support this call to action, with volunteers from all different backgrounds, age groups, and with many different interests and reasons for involvement. For instance, originally from Peru, Zenovia Tijleman Calderon, 61, explains that she had lived in the Netherlands for 28 years, and worked with two women in the Slotervaart neighbourhood through the *Vriendendiensten Amsterdam* (Friends Services Amsterdam). Her story speaks to many of the thoughts expressed on the website, regardless of area of volunteer participation:

> I do voluntary work because I think it's nice, I do something for others and I find pleasure in it myself. You meet all sorts of people, with different backgrounds, ideas, cultures. You discover that people are very different than they come across in the first instance, you get to know people, how they live their lives. (VCA.nu 2011b; my translation)

While policy directives or funding groups may speak about "active citizenship" and "social cohesion," volunteers are more likely to discuss their involvement and outcomes of their work in less formal terms as Zenovia's comments show. Significantly, volunteers' less formal expressions about voluntarism both resonate with and rearticulate how voluntary work is framed by government and diverse funding bodies. This includes volunteers' ideas about the positive contributions voluntarism can provide for the neighbourhood or community, for the target groups involved, and for individual volunteers. In interviews and informal discussions with volunteers during my fieldwork in Amsterdam, I often heard their experiences and goals spoken of in terms of creating productive or friendly connections between neighbours, fellow citizens, as well as newcomers, of giving back to the community, sharing or learning new skills, or simply having a good feeling from helping others (cf. Muehlebach 2012; Stoler 2009). In resonating with both neoliberal rationale and older culturalized conceptions of moral citizenship practice, connections expressed between volunteers' motivations, affective sentiments, and voluntary labour facilitate consent by these actors to the conditions of government (Li 2007b:269).

Expressing "active" citizenship

Although often discussed by volunteers as personally motivated in some way, these affective sentiments and goals align with the neoliberal expression of the responsibilities and "active" behaviours expected of the citizen by the state as social service provision is restructured. In the current political and economic climate in Europe and elsewhere, "good" citizenship has been described by scholars and policy makers as "active" citizenship. This notion of activity is

presented in opposition to ideas of passivity and entitlement that are now negatively connected to the welfare state (cf. Kidd 2002; Walzer in Cattelino 2004; Holmer Nadesan 2008). Just as the role of the state in service provision has been reshaped by neoliberal logics during the end of the twentieth century, so has the citizen's relationship to the state. While "passive citizenship" is conceptualized as a mode of citizenship that forefronts access to and exercise of one's rights (Cattelino 2004:119), "active" citizenship practice reflects the notion that the "worthy" citizen is someone who decreases their burden on the (welfare) state (Erickson 2012:167). Given the downshifting of social services by the state onto lower levels of government, non-governmental organizations, and individuals, voluntarism has become synonymous with "active" participation in civil society (Milligan and Fyfe 2005:418; cf. Tonkens 2006). Thus, voluntarism has been attributed significant meaning in recent years in relation to this question of the "worthy" or "good" citizen. Through the linkages between notions of citizenship and the growing role of volunteers in social service provision, voluntarism can be understood "as an exercise in statecraft that is as much directed at the volunteers themselves as the people they ostensibly assist" (Hemment 2012:534; cf. Dean 2010:38). Where volunteers may conceptualize their labour as a "gift," their behaviours and expressions nonetheless neatly align with the neoliberal extension of economics "to cover all aspects of human behavior pertaining to citizenship" (Ong 1996:739).

Although the entanglements between citizenship, voluntarism and morality settle differently across different societies and are strongly influenced by local, historical contexts (Muehlebach 2012), there are a number of experiences and attitudes that are held to varying degrees in common. One central commonality is found in the role of labour, which is widely seen as key in the process of moulding individuals into "proper," that is, "active" citizens (Erickson 2012:170; cf. Stoler 1997; Gouda and Clancy-Smith 1998; Kalb 1997). The

significance of labour in morally-attuned citizenship practice is distinctly shown in Muehlebach's (2012) work. In an industrial region of Italy, the shift from liberal governmentality expressed by Fordist modes of labour to post-Fordist, neoliberal models produced widespread and often permanent unemployment, especially among older workers. Powerful connections between labour, morality, and citizenship practice lead many of Muehlebach's research participants to experience the denial of their capacity to labour as discursive disenfranchisement from the national community. In response to this moral dilemma, these research participants' engaged in processes that revalued voluntary labour participation as a moral expression of citizenship, claimed through their contribution to the (local and) national community. In filling the gaps in an elder-care sector left desperate after the withdrawal of the state, volunteers drew on a Roman Catholic religious ethic to rearticulate older connections between labour, rights, and obligations to the community through a renewed practice of "active" citizenship. In this case and in many other contexts, this notion of "activity" or "participation" hinges on ideas of what constitutes productive or socially useful work, which centres on remunerative work, but also encompasses voluntarism.

Voluntarism is a valued form of labour because it is considered to produce and reaffirm social relations in civil society. Unlike waged labour, voluntarism is conceptualized by governments, policy makers and citizens alike as distinct from both state and market (Muehlebach 2012; Erickson 2012; cf. Milligan and Conradson 2006) and is widely thought to: stimulate social cohesion, solidarity or stability; constitute an expression of compassion or care between fellow citizens; promote "civic-mindedness," individual and co-responsibility (especially where that concerns decreasing the burden on the state); instill a sense of belonging through "active" participation in society (Dekker and de Hart 2009; Bekkers 2005, 2009;

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Cattelino 2004; Erickson 2012; Hemment 2012; Kidd 2002; Milligan and Fyfe 2005; Muehlebach 2011, 2012; Welty Peachey et al. 2011; Putnam 1995). I repeatedly heard and observed such expressions among my research participants, in Dutch policy and scholarly documents, and promotional and organizational materials from voluntary projects with which I worked. Through cultivating a culture of voluntarism, the Dutch government draws on these affectively charged understandings of voluntary labour to "activate" its citizens, engaging them in the overarching project of stimulating social cohesion and integration in civil society (cf. Parsons 2006; Milligan and Fyfe 2005; Roes 2008:32). In the intersections between government goals and the conduct of volunteers, we observe some of the ways in which regimes of government "elicit, promote, facilitate, foster and attribute various capacities, qualities and statuses to particular agents" (Dean 2010:43-44). Volunteers become particular citizens-subjects because they identify with and experience themselves through particular ways of knowing and judging, moral and cultural qualities, and statuses (Dean 2010:44).

More than just expressing private virtue or notions of social solidarity, neoliberal interventions into the welfare state have rendered voluntarism as "a moral, civic, and state-sponsored duty" (Erickson 2012:170). This duty, as many ethnographers have suggested, may fall heaviest on the shoulders of those members of society that have come to be considered (by government bodies, policy makers, scholars, and regular citizens) as passive, as dependant on or even draining of state and social resources. These so-called "passive" citizens are not actively employed in the labour force or in education (Muehlebach 2012; Erickson 2012; Hemmet 2012). When members of this population (such as the unemployed, youth, and retirees) participate as volunteers, voluntarism can take on a redemptive quality. As Muehlebach has discussed, voluntary labour "offers so-called dependent populations a form of public recognition in a

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society that views them as a burden, and a means to purchase some sort of continued social belonging" (Muehlebach 2012:139; cf. Parsons 2006). However, among individuals who are already considered "active" participants in society – such as those still in school, or gainfully employed, especially those living middle- or upper-class lifestyles – voluntarism is conceptualized as a moral surplus to waged labour, a commendable and valued engagement in the public sphere of civil society (Erickson 2012:170).

Activating citizens

In thus framing voluntarism as a route to "good" citizenship practice, this type of labour becomes implicated in how the morally and socially charged calculations of "who and what constitutes a proper citizen" (Cattelino 2004:117) are conceptualized and deployed by a wide range of social actors. In situating voluntarism as part of a program of governmentality, this form of labour also helps to render the members of Dutch society as part of a technical field for governmental intervention. The practice of voluntarism helps to distribute and direct the affective sentiments toward the local and national community (cf. Stoler 2009). Voluntarism becomes an ideal expression of good citizenship practice in a context where various levels of Dutch government have increasingly pushed an agenda of support for citizenship through a broad approach to social integration, as in the (2007) *Integration Memorandum 2007–2011* (VROM 2007). The full title of this document clearly speaks to how citizenship has become a cultural obligation of the "responsible" or "active" citizen: *Integration Memorandum 2007–2011. Make sure you're part of it!* (*Integratienota 2007–2011. Zorg dat je erbij hoort!*). Included alongside support for voluntarism, the government also outlined efforts to reduce educational

disadvantages for students, improve "problem neighbourhoods," and speed the integration of

immigrants (Roes 2008:32). Through its focus on civic 'integration' (*integratie*) in a broad sense,

the government claims to concentrate "in its citizenship policy on all citizens of our country. It

addresses people not on the basis of their being different but on their active participation in and

shared responsibility for society" (VROM 2007:98; quoted in Schinkel 2010:273-274).

In this document, the entangled threads of culturalized and neoliberal discourse

underlying contemporary citizenship practice in the Netherlands come to the fore. As the

government addresses all Dutch citizens in their conduct, it becomes clear that it actually targets

specific populations and relationships for improvement. Perceptions about important differences

between 'native' Dutch (*autochtoon*) and '*allochtoon*' Dutch citizens continue to inform how

subgroups are subject to more directed interventions on behalf of the whole population. The

cultural difference of *allochtonen* and their need for additional direction is clearly implied by the

government in another passage from the memorandum:

> Just as is expected from autochthones, allochthones are expected to do their best
> to conquer [*sic*] a place in society by learning the language, having and finishing
> education, gain income and take responsibility in raising their children. It is also
> about curiosity with respect to the ways of Dutch society and the life-world of
> [autochthonous] co-citizens, especially where Dutch culture and history are
> concerned. By participating in society it becomes possible to increasingly identify
> with these. (VROM 2007:98; quoted in and translated by Schinkel 2010:274, his
> insertion)

Similar appeals to "increasing public morality and the establishment of civilizing

offensives" (Tonkens 2006:6; my translation) have also come from politicians across the political

spectrum sitting in the Dutch parliament, on provincial and local city councils, scholars

(associated with federal and independent research bodies, in academia), as well as through

various non-profit initiatives. Tonkens has noted that through the proliferation of such projects,

"[p]ositive norms such as respect, tolerance, decency, culture or civilization [*beschaving*] and uplift [*verheffing*] have rung in our ears" (Tonkens 2006:6; my translation). These initiatives bear clear connections to the historical self-image of the Dutch as a moral (religious and cultural) civilizing force, or *gisdland* (guiding nation), that was explicit during the experience of empire and ways in which the early Dutch nation was imagined (Kuitenbrouwer 1991; cf. Anderson 1991). Appeals to promote civil behaviour and uplift in contemporary Dutch cities are viewed by scholars as a reaction to perceived questions of "social cohesion" brought on by "too much" diversity from new, especially 'non-Western' Dutch citizens (Hurenkamp et al. 2011:210). For example, the Den Haag, Gouda, and Rotterdam city councils have all published rules and pamphlets promoting their "good citizenship" initiatives. Such civilizing offenses connect neoliberal rationality to the cultural norms and values of the contemporary Dutch mainstream, what Duyvendak (2004:10) has called progressive "moral majority."

The concern for cultivating "active" citizen-subjects and the connections between these neoliberal sentiments and Dutch cultural practice is more explicit in the 'civic integration' (*inburgering*) policy targeting adult newcomers. While eligibility for citizenship now appears to be the main outcome of passing these examinations, the *inburgering* policy was originally developed with the intention of facilitating newcomers' economic integration. While Björnson (2007) deemed this aim an utter failure,[14] the revised goals for *inburgering* have not erased the underlying connections between worthy citizenship practice and self-reliance that is tied to moral practices associated with labour (cf. Entzinger 2004b; Ong 1996). Whether intended specifically to produce self-reliant workers or generally to mould morally-attuned citizen-subjects, what is clear is that *inburgering* was always intended to "qualify immigrants for independent and autonomous functioning in their new environment" (Entzinger 2004b:22).

In the more demanding revised 'civic integration' laws (2006), the anxiety over mitigating the perceived cultural differences of especially 'non-Western' newcomers through their formal integration – including their orientation toward "active" civic participation – became even more explicit. In learning Dutch and in preparation for the *inburgering* test, students are given a very specific, distinctly cultural rendering of what it means to be Dutch and to live well in Dutch society that hinges on the norms and values of the progressive "moral majority." This pre-arrival cultural orientation program was established to help potential immigrants (e.g. non-EU spouses and fiancées) "develop a sense of individual responsibility" through "knowledge of the Dutch language, society and culture and knowledge of democratic values" (Council for Social Development (*RMO*) 2003, quoted in Entzinger 2004b:11; Björnson 2007:65). As with the 'civic integration' courses immigrants must undertake upon their arrival in the Netherlands, the intention of the various tests and training introduced in 2006 is the education of self-reliant citizens who decrease or eliminate their burden on the state.

Part of this responsibility also extends to newcomers' ability to cover the costs associated with *inburgering*, including that of learning the language.[15] These expenses have made free or low-cost, volunteer-run Dutch language coaching services an important part of the landscape of immigrant integration in Amsterdam, and across the Netherlands. As a way of extending the reach of government into the private lives of the population, voluntary language coaching projects are especially interesting. Against the backdrop of retreating social service provision as market principles erode the Dutch welfare state (Knijn 1998; cf. Ong 2006; Muehlebach 2012), volunteers have become influential non-state actors. Volunteers are positioned by the state and other actors in Dutch society as occupying an increasingly important place in how the nation-state configures and promotes "good" citizenship practice. Alongside helping newcomers learn

to speak Dutch, language coaches also teach newcomers their ideas about how to live together well in Dutch society. Amsterdam's language coaching projects and their volunteers therefore provide a unique window to consider how "[b]ecoming a citizen depends on how one is constituted as a subject who exercises or submits to power relations" (Ong 1996:738). Language coaching volunteers' and other research participants' perspectives underscore how dominant conceptions of citizenship and belonging in the neighbourhood and nation are variously reinforced and challenged at the level of the everyday. The informal practices of volunteer language coaches reveal the gaps between these governmental programs and their realization. Through the tensions, contradictions, and instances of consent revealed in these ethnographic moments, I discuss how citizenship practice operates through "a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies" of the will to govern (Foucault 1990:100).

In the following chapters, my ethnography continues to trace the deep connections made between language learning, cultural behaviour, and highly moralized conceptions of citizenship. Ethnography has much to offer studies of governmentality precisely because the "relation of power to its others is not simply a contest of ideas—it is embodied in practices" (Li 2007:279). Chapter 7, "Citizenship as practice: volunteer ethics and Dutch sociality," explores how language coaches conceptualize and engage citizenship as a practice in their everyday lives. In particular, I explore these understandings of citizenship as they are expressed in relation to local ideas of sociality, of being *sociaal*. As revealed through research participants' perspectives, government policy, and non-governmental organizations' initiatives to promote voluntarism in Amsterdam, neoliberal rationale promoting "active" citizenship practice has become "easy to think" in relation to local Dutch notions of sociality, of being *sociaal*.

7. Citizenship as practice: volunteer ethics and Dutch sociality

The cultural ethic communicated through voluntarism and related forms of civic or social engagement is now a powerful way through which citizenship practice and community belonging have been framed and expressed in the Netherlands and elsewhere. Volunteers frequently work with projects or organizations that are now tasked with filling the gaps in social service provision left by the receding welfare state (Muehlebach 2012; Hemment 2012; Erickson 2012). While the very real need for their labour in these service areas may be acknowledged by volunteers, they often discuss other reasons motivating their involvement in particular initiatives and organizations. In Italy, Meuhlebach (2012) draws connections between volunteers' Catholic faith or leftist political commitments to their national and local communities. In the Netherlands religious belief may be important (Bekkers 2011), but concerns for building social cohesion and a "more liveable" city or neighbourhood may be more important for individual volunteers. Volunteers I spoke with, or whose stories appeared through resources like the *Vrijwilligers Central Amsterdam* (Volunteer Centre Amsterdam) website, talked about motivations such as: personal enjoyment from the work they do; the social relationships they build through their labour; the positive outcomes of their involvement for individuals, the community or goal they serve; or their personal interest in supporting a specific cause or campaign. Whatever their motivations, volunteers are considered "active" citizens, "embody[ing] what both liberals and conservatives applaud: self-reliance and socially oriented civic participation" (Hurenkamp et al. 2011:212; cf. Milligan and Fyfe 2005:418; Tonkens 2006; Ong 1996, 2006).

This chapter explores how my research participants and others in Dutch society consent to, reaffirm, and contest the connections drawn between morality, sociality, and neoliberal

articulations of citizenship practice through their voluntarism in Amsterdam. The ways in which these connections are articulated is often subtle, and is connected to a complex web of lived experiences, observations, practices, and affective sentiments. The operation of power at a distance is clear in how voluntarism becomes an expression of consent to the conditions of government and the "exercise in statecraft that is as much directed at the volunteers themselves as the people they ostensibly assist" (Hemment 2012:534; cf. Dean 2010:38).

Finding the right register to speak about Dutch citizenship

In spite of recurring and well-known discussions about the meaning of citizenship in the news,[1] I found that most 'native' Dutch people I spoke with had not really given much thought to what their own citizenship meant to them. This has been the case even among those who work closely with new citizens and immigrants, as do volunteer language coaches. When I asked people what citizenship or being Dutch meant, I frequently encountered two types of responses. Clear in these responses was the long history of conceptualizing the nation as the site of affective sentiment, whereas the state and sentiment are thought to be distinct. Citizenship was connected to rights and obligations, the rule of law. People talked about the freedoms accorded to Dutch citizens, such as ease of international travel, freedom of speech, a strong democratic tradition,[2] the right to sexual or gendered self-expression, and liberal legal provisions regarding euthanasia, abortion, prostitution or soft drug-use. Alternatively, people responded to ideas of Dutchness with joking responses, rhyming off as many stereotypical cultural images as possible, or by pointing to emotionally-meaningful traditions or phenomena. While these two veins of response seemed distinct, they were very much entangled. As Stoler has discussed, since the colonial era it

has been the state's responsibility to direct and harness affect to serve the interests of the public good (2009:71). The powerful connections between state, nation and affect became clear in discussions over the place of minority cultural practices and beliefs brought to the Netherlands by new citizens in an overarching Dutch national culture based on norms and values of the 'native' Dutch progressive moral majority.

The taking stock of Dutch traits and tropes that I encountered during my year in the field through various media in the Netherlands highlighted the question of Dutch (national) identity as one of broad appeal and concern. For example, in my first few weeks in the Netherlands, I stumbled across a 1999 publication in a second-hand shop: a book entitled *Typische Nederlands: Vademecum van de Nederlandse identiteit* (Typically Dutch: Guide to Dutch identity). The book does not promise the reader a "grand schema" on Dutch identity. Rather, it presents an alphabetical list – from *aardappeleters* (potato eaters) to *Zwarte Piet* (Black Peter) – of items and experiences considered "typically Dutch" by the Dutch themselves (Vuisje and van der Lans 1999:8-9). That books[3] presenting 'Dutchness' to readers in the Netherlands and foreign audiences exist is significant in itself. Yet, concerns for defining (and defending) a Dutch national identity or character have taken other forms since the early 2000s. The emergence of a populist Right in the Netherlands around this time benefited from (and stirred) these anxieties about Dutch national identity. Politicians like Pim Fortuyn gained a significant voice on the national stage by appealing to concerns about the cultural difference of non-Western newcomers and the potential erosion of distinctly Dutch values and character (cf. Sunier and van Ginkel 2006). Reflecting on public education policy, the Dutch Education Council identified a number of problem areas, especially in relation to social 'integration' issues among Dutch youth. In response to these concerns, the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science commissioned

a committee to develop a Dutch history canon in mid-2005 (van Oostrom 2007:18). Yet, these concerns over Dutch identity seemed to reach a crisis point for many in Dutch society when the Argentinian-born crown princess of the Netherlands gave a short speech as she presented the *WRR*'s report, *Identificatie met Nederland* (Identification with the Netherlands) to the government in 2007.

Having lived in the Netherlands for seven years as a dual Dutch and Argentinian citizen, Princess Máxima commented on her own experience in trying to understand the public debates over Dutch identity and what she referred to as the "national psyche" (*mentaliteit*). The report, which advised the government on dual citizenship and the question of national loyalty, stated that "in recent years the concept of national identity has been dealt with too simply" (NRC.nl 2007; my translation). Máxima agreed with this conclusion, stating that "one Dutch identity" does not exist. In her speech, the crown princess related a discussion she had had with her father-in-law, the German-born Prince Claus:

> To the question of how it felt to be Dutch, he answered: "I do not know. I feel myself to be a world citizen, European, Dutch." Those words I will never forget. The Netherlands is a large window with open curtains, but also a privacy fence. The Netherlands is one cookie with your coffee, but also an enormous sense of hospitality and warmth. (Trouw.nl 2007; my translation)

While Máxima's intent was to convey that "the Netherlands is too multifaceted to fit into a cliché," many politicians took issue with her statement. Populist Right politician Geert Wilders fobbed her speech off as "well-intended politically correct claptrap" (NRC.nl 2007; my translation), whereas more mainstream politicians felt that although the princess had a right to her opinions, a Dutch identity certainly does exist. A member of parliament for the *CDA* (Christian Democrats) commented, citing the Royal House as illustrative of his point: "Naturally

there is pluralism, but we have a collective history and national symbols that unite the Dutch" (NRC.nl 2007; my translation).

The impact of this speech and the "crisis of identity" it signalled continued to resonate across Dutch society during my research in 2009. The national newspaper *De Volkskrant* began publishing a popular column, *"Encyclopedie van Nederland"* (Encyclopaedia of the Netherlands), dedicated to showcasing things considered typically Dutch.[4] Running weekly from 2009, the early articles opened with explicit reference to Princess Máxima's 2007 comments on Dutch identity. In our interview in early 2010, José agreed with the princess on the Dutch identity crisis. José was retired and spent some of her time volunteering for *Gilde Amsterdam* and other initiatives in the city. She had spent her adult life in Amsterdam, was active in her neighbourhood, and was a self-proclaimed busybody. "And *now*," José laughed as she read down my list of questions during our interview, "we come to the identity crisis! What in the world is my identity?! I have asked Máxima and she doesn't know either." She laughed warmly at this joke. "Hey, that is true," she said alluding to the well-known controversy.

> What is my identity? My god! What is yours? Now, everyone has their own identity; does that mean then that there is a Dutch identity? No. There are the identities of seventeen million Dutch people. There are seventeen million identities here. And the one is stronger and the other is weaker. *The* Dutch identity doesn't exist, cannot exist. How in god's name could you define it?

In spite of the many clichés that invariably sprung to mind when I talked to people about what it meant to be Dutch, the discussion usually ended on a similar note to José's, asking how something like national identity, or any identity, might be defined. It appeared to be much easier for people to talk about their ideas of when and how someone might belong as member of society, than to talk about an abstract concept like national identity. This came out clearly not

only in my informants' discussions, but also in the "troubling" speech of Máxima. Rather than focusing on ideas of what she called a "Dutch mentality," Máxima had encouraged the government and Dutch citizens to look to the feelings that bonded people to the country and to one another. "This is very simple," stated the princess. "Learn to understand one another through a shared interest, for example a sports club or the neighbourhood. This is good because you will not focus on the differences between people, but on a shared goal" (NOS 2007; my translation). Among my informants, participation in Dutch society – as through paid or voluntary work – was also viewed as the key to connecting with one's neighbours and fellow citizens, to making a place for oneself. This appeal for people to come together around a shared goal neatly reflects Li's (2007b) discussion of how the successes of assemblages are unstable, operating through the agency of their actors, in relation to material content and enunciations. Critiques must be contained through compromise and adjusting techniques. Máxima's subsequent discursive appeal to elements of Dutch sociality – such as sentiments undergirding the *poldermodel* of governance, where the "interested parties come together and jointly work out solutions to benefit the collective" (Martineau 2006:38) – enables these critiques to be absorbed, and compromises reached among the assemblage.

Shared interests: citizenship as practice

Bart was a 'native' Dutch man in his sixties who volunteered with *Gilde Amsterdam*'s language coaching projects. He had been born and lived almost his entire life in Amsterdam. When we met he had been retired for some years from his job in the medical profession. Although retired, he continued to be active in his field, lending his expertise as a volunteer to

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different projects related to his former profession, in addition to his work with *Gilde Amsterdam*. I met with Bart through our connection to *Gilde Amsterdam*'s Dutch language coaching programs in which we both participated, he as a coach and I as a non-native speaker.

Bart offered to conduct our interview in English, a language in which he was fluent. He responded to my query about the meaning of citizenship vaguely, not unlike many other research participants. "You know," he said relatively early during our interview, "it's a very difficult question. No, the question isn't difficult, but the answer. Well, you have the strictly legal side of course, but that's not what you mean, I think." Like many others with whom I had spoken, the conversation turned to trying to pin down what could be considered "Dutch," or what he felt was important to emphasize in relation to such a question, such as aspects of social values and historical achievements of which he was proud. Bart commented on the strong civil society and republican tradition of the Dutch, especially in Amsterdam. While Bart was resistant to definitions of "Dutchness," he felt that being a Dutch citizen nonetheless had something to do with making claims to this history and cultural tradition.

In our interview, Bart had pointed to a distinction in how he understood the meaning of his citizenship, which was reflective of many of the other discussions I had with research participants on this topic. He highlighted the formal aspects of citizenship, as well as the substantive side: the personal meanings, ideas and behaviours attributed to citizenship as lived experience. Many other informants expressed similar ideas in their discussions of what citizenship meant to them. For instance, Gerrit, a 'native' Dutch language coach in his 70s, said: "Well, citizenship is a formality. Nationality is a formality. And citizenship is that you have something to do with the society. In my opinion." While he did not elaborate on how citizenship was connected to society, José had much to say on this point.

Citizenship is actually a completely, totally different thing [than Dutchness]. You have a passport citizen, a juridicial understanding of Dutchness— I am Dutch because I have a Dutch passport. Thus, I am a Dutch citizen. But, a citizen means for me also that I am active in the society in a more formal manner than what— this manner, living. I mean: I go vote. And I pay taxes. And I expect something from my government, but I support my government too. It has to do with the social contract, I will say. ... You can better form an active society, and everyone becomes better because of that.

"And in that vein I think you are also a citizen. As a part of," José switched from Dutch into English briefly "'*civil society*' shall I say." To be a citizen is to be part of this civil society for José, and this is something that she viewed as the same across different national contexts. As she said, "So if you are a part of a society then you also build it. I happen to be Dutch. But, yes, it would be the same if I lived in France or Germany. The same in England."

The day after we met, I received an email from José. Reflecting on our interview, she had given the question of what citizenship meant to her more thought and felt that it was important to add to what she had told me during our interview. What she had described about the citizen in relation to civil society she called the "state citizen." The state citizen, she repeated, was someone who is a

resident of a country with a passport from that country, and who upholds the laws and the most important norms. The citizen pays their taxes, but will also vote and is concerned to have a dialogue with the government – and the government must also listen to the citizen. The core meanings for me regarding the state-citizen are: freedom, equality, fundamental rights, and law and order.

What her message added to the meaning of citizenship that we discussed the day before was her idea of the citizen as a "culturalized" and moral category, as an ethic and engagement with others in society, rather than simply a formal relationship with the machinery of the state. José wrote:

The other side of citizenship I discussed less in our interview, also because that part is implicit in the answers and came out in some of the other questions. That part can be called the "good citizen." That is a person who to the best of their ability participates in the social and economic life. She wants to trust her fellow citizens, and finds a good upbringing, education and living environment important. He is mindful of his own behaviour and that of others in the public domain. The core meanings here are: solidarity, respect and ethics, including the idea that you treat others in the same manner that you would like to be treated.

This notion of the "good citizen" was, as José herself noted about our conversations, something that seemed to be implicit in many of my informants' ideas on social participation in and integration into Dutch society. This participation, an expression of the processes of "subject-ification" described by Ong (1996:737), was articulated in many different ways. It was seen by informants as to do with behaviours that were considered positive or productive in society, such as having (legal) employment, pursuing education, being active in your children's education, or participating in voluntary work. It was also tied to having good social relationships with the people you came into contact with on a regular basis, such as neighbours. Most of my informants, who were active or had past experience as volunteers for a number of different organizations or activities, considered volunteer work as a way of productively engaging in society, of being a "good citizen" or "good neighbour," of being *sociaal*.

Being *sociaal*: communicating Dutch sociality

Behaving in a *sociaal* way is foundational to local conceptions of living together well in Dutch society. Encompassing positive or productive social and societal (*maatschappelijk*) norms, practices and relationships, *sociaal* behaviour is part of the "easy to think" grammar of difference; it is an expression of the rituals and rules of governmentality, where individuals and

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populations come to conduct their conduct in the interests of the community (cf. Cooper and Stoler 1997; Stoler 2011; Ong 1996; Li 2007a). Several common idioms expressed the importance of conformity, or not intruding on others via the practice of *sociaal* behaviour. For instance, over the course of my fieldwork I often heard informants respond to my questions about the meaning of being Dutch or fitting into Dutch society by saying that it had to do with "just being normal, because that's crazy enough" (*doe maar gewoon, dan doe je gek genoeg*), or not "sticking your head above the field" (*je kop boven het maaiveld steken*). The idea of *asociaal* ("not social" or "anti-social") behaviour emerged at the turn of the twentieth century in relation to "unacceptable" or "socially backward" families; that is, largely in relation to classed concerns for hygiene, parenting, and household practices strongly related to poverty (De Regt 1982). In the current context, the obligations of Dutch sociality are extended from the local community of one's neighbours to the national community and the welfare state. Behaving in an *asociaal* manner describes socially disruptive actions and attitudes, threats to the social body: such behaviours are considered selfish or overly individualistic, an inconvenience or bother to others, or they may block the ability to communicate between members of civil society (Martineau 2006:298-299). People often described *asociaal* behaviour to me as things considered *lastig* (usually translated as "nuisances") such as the behaviour of *hangjongeren* (hang-around youth), or inconsiderately noisy neighbours. Seriously *asociaal* behaviour is draining on civil society or the state (e.g. petty crime or vandalism, welfare fraud). My experiences living in the Netherlands illustrated to me that being *sociaal* is also about notions of fairness and reciprocity in relation to others, from a party of family and friends, to the city or neighbourhood in which one lives, or the state.

When I first arrived in the Netherlands in the summer of 2009, a street-side billboard in

Utrecht caught my interest. Pictured on the poster (figure 7.1) was a bus-shelter in Amsterdam, where a 'native' Dutch youth wearing a hooded sweater and headphones lounged on the small bench, with his large bag occupying the remaining seat. Standing next to the bench and apparently unseen by the youth is a heavily pregnant white woman, carrying both her shopping and a small child in a winter coat. This poster was part of a media campaign against *onbewust asociaal* (unknowingly anti-social) behaviours organized by SIRE. This campaign sought to make the Netherlands a more *sociaal* place by reminding people to keep others in mind as they went about their daily lives, e.g. picking up after their dogs, offering elderly people or mothers seats on public transit, refraining from spitting in public or littering. In everyday life, *sociaal* behaviour is part of how people, like my informants, talked about living together well.

This idea that many newcomers to Dutch society were socially isolated from Dutch society, in part due to their inability to converse in Dutch or hold down employment, was prevalent among my research participants. Moreover, this social isolation or marginalization was considered by those I spoke with as breeding *asociaal* behaviours among these groups. These discussions drew, often in subtle ways, on a discussion of cultural competency that allow certain differences to be "easy to think" and marked newcomers as targets for policy intervention by the state (cf. Stoler 1995:82-83). When I returned to the field in May 2011, I spoke with Sterre and her friend Chloe about my research.[5] Both of these women were 'native' Dutch, in their late twenties, and well-educated. Sterre was pursuing graduate studies, whereas Chloe was practising family medicine. I had recently met Chloe and she had asked about my research, which led into a discussion of Chloe's experiences and opinions about integration among immigrants. She focused on what she felt was the prevalence of *asociaal* behaviour among those commonly called *allochtonen*.

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Chloe said that her time during university had changed her ideas about *allochtonen* for the worse. She had lived in a neighbourhood that she described as "not the best;" located one neighbourhood over from the "notoriously bad" neighbourhood in that city, a so-called "problem neighbourhood." Such neighbourhoods were known for their residents' problems with unemployment, criminality, and often, isolation from mainstream/ 'native' Dutch society. Usually, these were among the poorest neighbourhoods in a city and were largely inhabited by non-Western immigrants and their descendants. Sterre pointed out that this experience has negatively impacted Chloe's ideas. For Chloe, the thing that she most noticed and was bothered by was when *allochtonen* "just take. They want *everything* from you," she said. What made this behaviour and attitude grate, was that she also observed that "they don't give anything back," or do anything to, in a way, earn the right to take, like working people do. Although she had first seen this during her university years, she continued to see it now through her work as a medical professional, where she came into contact with many different people. Chloe and Sterre echoed the opinions of many with whom I had spoken when they agreed that you should contribute to the group or system (here, the welfare state) to the best of your ability, and then it is acceptable to take out of that same system. But, commented Chloe, these men—and "it *is* mostly men," she assured me, "because you never see the women"—"just take, take, take," and then "you see them standing around on street corners all day smoking and drinking coffee and not working." It was implied in this conversation and many others I witnessed over my fieldwork, that non-Western women, also behaved in an *asociaal* manner. Through their isolation from mainstream Dutch society these women did not (have the chance to) participate as "active" or "good" citizens. In large part because they cannot speak or understand Dutch (as language coaching projects like the women-only *ABC* allude), these women pose an extra burden on the state, not even being able to

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act as "active" parents helping their children through their education.

The extent of these concerns and their unintended consequences was evident in several different discussions with informants, such as Ilse, a 'native' Dutch woman in her thirties whom I met through her voluntary work at the nursing home where we both volunteered. During our interview, Ilse discussed what she felt was the wider impact of the failure of newcomers to learn the local language. In the context of this discussion, I told her about the Native Speaker Project I volunteered with as an English language coach. This program recruited English-speaking volunteers to hold an extra hour of conversational English with "at risk" students in their first year of secondary school. The project was situated in what were commonly referred to as *zwarte scholen* (black schools), where the majority of the pupils were *allochtonen*. The coordinators of the program advised new volunteers during the orientation session that many of the students struggled not only with English, but also with Dutch. Other Native Speaker Project volunteers mentioned that their students seemed to speak Dutch in their classrooms, but spoke other languages at home. This was considered a common problem by many people with whom I spoke, and a sign of inadequate integration and participation in Dutch society. In speaking with Ilse, I mentioned how even though my students' parents were from places such as Morocco, Turkey or Surinam my students all seemed to speak Dutch in the classroom. "I don't really hear them speaking anything else except Dutch." While Ilse had been nodding in agreement throughout my description of the classroom, at this point, she interjected: "Except at home." This exception was something that I had heard described by several informants, and something I had yet to ask the students with whom I worked. Ilse elaborated on this point:

> Most of the time they speak Dutch in school. And at home they speak their own
> language. And it's really common that these kids are coming in with their parents
> if they have a, we say '10 minutes conversation' with the teacher. Because the

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parents don't understand the Dutch. And the kids have to translate. For the teacher and the parents. And if the teacher says, "Well, this is that," and the kids don't really always tell the translation right to their parents. But some of these kids also need to translate if the parents go to the doctor. Or the hospital. And well, I think it's really tough for those kids to have [to do] those translations.

That children of immigrants were burdened with having to translate (including in difficult or very personal situations) for their parents due to their superior command of the Dutch language was a common sentiment I observed among informants, as well as in the media. It also served as an example of the extent that not learning Dutch impacted one's ability to navigate Dutch society as a responsible and self-sufficient citizen.

These types of *asociaal* behaviour made my informants visibly annoyed, if not angered. It had even emerged as the topic of a contentious national debate during my fieldwork, as Geert Wilders (*PVV*, Freedom Party) pushed the Dutch parliament to produce an audit on the question of whether *allochtonen* cost the country more than they contributed (Rijlaarsdam and Staal 2009). While costs for *inburgering* courses and education would be made available, the government coalition, then lead by Prime Minister Balkenende (*CDA*, Christian Democrats), refused to produce the report demanded by the *PVV*. Minister for Integration, Eberhard van der Laan (*PvdA*, Labour) responded to Wilders' request, saying that the government does not keep information pertaining to specific groups in Dutch society, and further: "We are not interested in what an individual costs, whether a Friesian, an Amsterdammer, a senior citizen or someone with blue eyes" (NU.nl 2009; my translation).[6]

Van der Laan's response pointedly takes issue with the xenophobic and racist undertones expressed by members of the Dutch populist Right in their provocation of grounds for "worthy" citizenship. Even so, citizens and newcomers who are generally considered *allochtonen* have indeed become targets for governmental intervention, as is clear in the 2007 memorandum,

Integration Memorandum 2007–2011. Make sure you're part of it! (*Integratienota 2007–2011. Zorg dat je erbij hoort!*) discussed in the previous chapter (VROM 2007). This is clear not only in how integration policy has targeted these marginalized groups (Entzinger 2004b; Björnson 2007), but also for how they have been framed as clients for social initiatives supported by religious organizations, charitable trusts, and voluntary projects (cf. Diaconie Evangelisch-Lutherse Gemeente Amsterdam 2012; Protestantse Diaconie Amsterdam 2012; VCA.nu 2011a, 2011b; Devilee 2005; Tonkens 2006). In addition to programs like Dutch language coaching that aim to help newcomers integrate through language, the online Amsterdam volunteer resource, *VCA*, developed an initiative to stimulate voluntarism specifically among *allochtone* Amsterdammers. In 2007 the *Duizend en één Kracht* (Thousand and one Strength) project was launched to encourage and facilitate the participation of *allochtone* women in volunteering and further in the city. The program was extended to include *allochtone* men in 2011. The program's information page pitches voluntary work to *allochtonen* under the slogan, "*Vrijwilligerswerk helpt je verder!*" (Volunteering helps you go farther!). It describes voluntary work as "a nice way to practice speaking Dutch, to help build your portfolio for your 'civic integration' course, and to get work experience. At the end of the *inburgering* course volunteering is especially good for going a step further" (VCA.nu 2011a:1; my translation). Thus, newcomers may not only benefit from the work of volunteers providing social services, but are encouraged and stimulated to become "active" citizens through also contributing their own labour to voluntary causes in Dutch society.

Directing and improving: the role of voluntarism in contemporary citizenship practice

The connections that are "easy to think" between being *sociaal*, voluntary labour, and "active" citizenship practice are made not only be people like my research participants, but are explicit in the initiatives and projects of charitable organizations (i.e. the royal *Oranje Fonds*, campaigns like the annual *NL Doet*, NL Does, and *Vrijwilligers Central Amsterdam*, Volunteer Centre Amsterdam) and governments at various levels (i.e. the 2007 memorandum and establishment of 'service learning' for secondary students, and the 2011 European Year of Voluntarism). These connections are especially clear when voluntary work provides social services that help to facilitate potentially *asociaal* groups' integration as active participants in mainstream society. This is the case with Dutch language coaches, who help integrate newcomers through teaching valuable Dutch language skills and social etiquette.

Echoing the attitudes of voluntary, charitable or government organizations and initiatives, many of my informants who worked as volunteers discussed how their work was useful, even necessary, to making Dutch society a better place in which to live. This was clear in my interviews with two 'native' Dutch women, Ilse and Anna,[7] who volunteered at a nursing home. While they chose to volunteer at the home due to personal connections (the home was the residence of a loved one), they also found their work personally fulfilling and saw their voluntary participation as filling a significant labour gap in the home. They felt that their volunteer work helped to provide a better quality of life for the home's residents, since those tasks no longer needed to be done by staff. Ilse first became involved with the home after her father moved into their care facility:

Well I thought, you can see people need volunteer work because the nurses can't

handle it. So, every morning, they deliver the people in the dining room and I start making breakfast for them and if the nurses have to do that also then it would be too much. So, they need spare hands to help. ... My mother does the same, on a different day and different floor, but the same work. ... I see it's needed here.

Anna, an elderly Dutch woman, had been a volunteer for many years at her church. She explained that she worked there "together with ten other women and we visit older people. ... I have volunteered for the church for 45 years. ... That is very good work, rewarding work." At the time we met (spring 2010) she had recently begun volunteering at the nursing home. Her husband's illness then required a higher level of care than she could provide, and he was eventually moved into the nursing home. It was after this change that she began volunteering at the home. Anna confided that she started working at the home so that she "did not fall into a deep hole." While her work at the home was needed, it was also a way of keeping busy: "So, I thought 'Hello, *do* [something].' Whatever I *can* do, I can *do*. Then I have no time to worry [over my husband's health]."

While volunteering at this particular nursing home made sense for these women due to their personal connections to the home and their observations that their help was needed, myriad volunteering opportunities exist in Amsterdam to suit diverse interests and motivations. With so many opportunities to participate in volunteer work, it is important to consider some of the motivations for choosing to become a language coach. Anouk[8] told me about how she found many different opportunities for volunteer work online: "I saw helping in a nursing home, or helping out— But I was like, 'Nice, but... it reminds me of my work,' because I work with older people. I was like, 'Nah, I want to do something else.'" After thinking about what kinds of work she might be interested in, she decided that teaching, such as teaching Dutch to foreigners, really appealed to her. Anouk described her interest in helping *allochtone* women to learn Dutch, which

she hoped would allow them to better participate in Dutch society, to help build a "bridge" between their culture and life in Amsterdam and mainstream Dutch society.

In the discussions of Anouk and other language coaching volunteers, the Dutch language itself emerged as a tool of Dutch sociality and "good" citizenship practice. Like Anouk, many other language coaches' motivational narratives evoked their ideas of how volunteering in this way is an important contribution that helps people live together well in contemporary Dutch society. Casper, a 'native' Dutch man in his sixties and volunteer for *Gilde Amsterdam*, told me about how he first became involved with the *SamenSpraak* program:

> I read the advertisement then, where they called for volunteers to help with language. And I found it nice to do ... because I enjoy language. And I think it's nice for people that I guide, that I teach. The Dutch language is really important to find a job, or to integrate into society. So, I think that yes, that is important for someone— If you want to stay in the Netherlands, and you want to work and live here then it is important that you can speak the language well. And if I can help with that, yes, I think that is enjoyable. I find that useful.

Other volunteer language coaches also talked about how these particular voluntary activities appealed to their personal interests as well as to addressing a problem they saw in Dutch society with the social isolation of immigrants. Susanne talked about how she was interested in learning more about newcomers to Dutch society, and getting a better understanding of how they live in Dutch society.

> I thought, I wanted to do something for somebody else, and then you know, we used to talk about the huge problems we have with the foreigners. I thought, I just want to know what kind of people come here, and what they do, and how they live. ... I just went to the website of the *Vluchtelingenwerk* [refugee centre], and I thought, "Well, I'm going to try this."

These sorts of motivations among volunteer language coaches seem to be born out in the

observations of José in her capacity as volunteer coordinator at *Gilde Amsterdam*, and in arranging partnerships between volunteer coaches and language learners. She noted the different motivations shared by most people who show an interest in becoming a volunteer language coach.

> Well, everyone [who volunteers for *SamenSpraak*] thinks that language is important. Everyone also thinks it's important to help outsiders that are new in the society. And they do not all have to think that foreigners are sweet and nice, but they have to manage. Yeah, you have people coming who also find other people interesting. That also has something to do with it. But this is also something that naturally occurs; that you are not averse toward other people. ... That describes my colleagues, and in any case the language coaches, the people that really do it. And now I am at the office of *Gilde*: It is a sort of interconnecting, the non-native speaker and the language coach, from all the language coaches I am sure that this is the most important motivation; the sort of 'language' *plus* 'helping strangers', so that they are no longer strangers.

Most of the volunteers I spoke with felt that speaking Dutch would help newcomers to participate in Dutch society, to get out of their homes and to communicate with people beyond their own ethnic group. Anouk elaborated on how she felt that her volunteering as a language coach helped to form a social bridge between 'native' and new Dutch. In talking about her experiences with the *ABC* program she said, "Well, I really like it. Because I really like the connection I have with my participant. And I learn their values and how they live. And I think it's interesting for them also to hear what I do and how I live."

For many of my interlocutors, it appears that fluency was less important than building competency and the confidence to speak Dutch with others. This was a problem that particularly affected migrant women, who were seen by my research participants (as well as policy makers, social researchers, and language coaching organizations) as the most isolated from the Dutch mainstream. My research participants shared a feeling that these women had very different life

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experiences and motivations than other participants in language coaching programs. This is exemplified in the discussion I had with Anouk. The *ABC* program spoke to Anouk's interest in teaching, but also appealed to her concern for helping *allochtone* women:

> When I was younger, when I was a student, I used to give students— guide them in their homework. And I really liked that. Being, you know, some kind of teacher or coach. So I was like, "Ah, maybe I can teach Dutch to foreign people." Because I think that may help them to, you know, also have Dutch friends, and not focus only on their own people. So, I like the idea of teaching, and I like the idea of specifically helping women, because well, I have an idea that most of the time they have to— They are inside the house, with maybe more problems connecting with the Dutch community because they're so, in such a— Well, I'm generalizing of course. But there are women that are like that. They're very limited to their possibilities to, you know, have a bike and go out, so you know. So, I'm like maybe I can, you know, narrow that gap. Bridge.

Similarly, José felt that communication, in this case through knowledge of the Dutch language, was a skill that she could help newcomers to acquire. José had described languages as among her hobbies, and felt that being able to help others through her love of language really was a gift. It helped not only newcomers themselves, but also in making Amsterdam and the Netherlands a better place for everyone. This was also evident in the words of a language coaching project leader connected to a *Vluchtelingenwerk* (refugee network) located in the east of the Netherlands. She felt that

> The great majority of people who immigrate to the Netherlands experience Dutch culture as cold and distant. Dutch people are not open to chatting with strangers and are, in contrast with other cultures, not as hospitable. This is for Dutch people a normal way of getting along with each other. But foreigners very often come to the conclusion that the Dutch want nothing to do with them/ discriminate. Projects like the Language Coaching Project provide safety and support contacts between both parties. There are many Dutch who want to get to know them and get in touch with our target group [of language students]. The fact that they do it on a volunteer basis speaks to their interest and good will. ... The participants and language coaches become "ambassadors," who promote understanding and tolerance of others within their own networks. The Language Coaching Project is

about much more than only language. (van de Graaf 2012:13; my translation)

These remarks followed on the heels of a national three-year initiative (2008-2011) to establish language coaching programs in the larger cities across the Netherlands. The project was organized by *Gilde SamenSpraak* (the umbrella organization under which the *Gilde* language coaching projects, such as *Gilde Amsterdam*'s *SamenSpraak*, operate), *Humanitas* (a charitable organization lending support to socially-oriented voluntary projects across the Netherlands), the Dutch Red Cross, the *Landelijk Netwerk Thuislesorganisaties* (National Network of Home Lesson Organizations, which provides support specifically for voluntary language coaching projects), and *VluchtelingenWerk Nederland* (the national refugee network organization). Arising from the previous *Het begint met taal* (It begins with language) campaign organized by the national *Gilde Nederland* organization, this initiative's goal was to establish 20,000 language coaching couples over the course of the three years. The slogan of this campaign is telling of the attitudes cultivated around such projects: *De Nederlandse taal verbindt ons allemaal* (The Dutch language connects us all).

In the spaces and relationships I examined, voluntarism proved to be a powerful technique for forging alignments across an assemblage that coheres around citizenship (Li 2007b:265). Voluntarism has likewise proven highly successful in this context as a way to render particular problems technical for governmental intervention. The success of this governmental program, as I have shown, has occurred at a specific time and place, and has been dependent on a constellation of conditions that includes infrastructure, ways of knowing, and distribution of affective sentiment among the population (cf. Li 2007a:276). Through the ways in which notions of "active" citizenship practice have been connected to an ethic of voluntarism, governmental rationale has effectively defined a set of social relationships though which a problem and

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intervention can be launched to direct and improve the population in its own best interests. For instance, concerns over the health of Dutch civil society have been approached through the promotion of voluntarism.

Importantly, although the successes of this governmental program imply the consent of volunteers to an expression of the will to govern, this does not mean these actors are stripped of their agency. Rather, my research participants are socially-situated subjects in a complex field of power relations in which agency is, as Li indicates drawing on the work of Deluze and Guattari, diffuse and rhizomatic (2007b:265). The ways in which the elements of an assemblage cohere is not linear, but is played out in a mutual and reciprocal manner across the assemblage as its various elements exercise their agency in relation to these shifting, even ambiguous alignments. While these social actors may be drawn together as elements of an assemblage through their conduct and desires with regard to "active" citizenship practice, they may also reject elements or require adjustments as the shape of the assemblage changes – such as in its goals, discursive techniques, or "angle of vision" (Li 2007b:265). This chapter has explored some of the ways in which people like my research participants make sense of citizenship, less as a status than as a practice. In their everyday lives, connections to their neighbourhoods, city, and the nation-state are meaningfully expressed through norms, behaviours and attitudes that reflect culturally significant ideas about sociality – ideas that are now "easy to think" through language and practices associated with the neoliberal ethic of "active" citizenship (Ong 2006:14). In thinking through the 'problems' posed by the marginalized, culturally diverse (especially 'non-Western' or Muslim) population of immigrants and *allochtonen* in Dutch society, research participants flag communication as a key technique for teaching these groups the technology of "good" citizenship.

In the next chapter, I focus on how my research participants' understandings of citizenship as practice impact different actors' expectations for immigrants' integration into Dutch society. As it does historically through colonial calculations of 'Dutchness', the Dutch language represents an important thread of continuity between the conceptions of integration articulated by the federal *inburgering* policy and language coaching volunteers and their organizations. Following this thread ethnographically, through the web of entangled discourses, modes of calculation, disciplinary techniques, human capacities, and affective sentiments draws attention to the important ways that my research participants consent to, reconcile, and challenge programs of government in their everyday lives (Li 2007b:279-284). In particular, Chapter 8 explores how through an articulation of "good" citizenship practice that privileges practices resonant with neoliberal rationale, language coaches downplay and contest calculations of Dutch citizenship that continue to draw on exclusionary discourses of cultural difference.

Figure 7.1: *Onbewust asociaal*: SIRE campaign

Photo by author. July 2009, Utrecht.

8. On the front lines of citizenship education

As with the language of autochthony, ethnographically tracing notions of 'integration' has been key to understanding how people make sense of social difference, and the processes undergirding efforts to mould newcomers into moral citizen-subjects in Dutch society. In this context, learning to speak Dutch has almost become synonymous with notions of newcomer integration. With the establishment of 'civic integration' (*inburgering*) legislation in 1998, the federal government had developed an important measure through which it could direct and assess newcomers' integration into Dutch society. Successful completion of these courses and associated tests have been in turn used to justify immigrants' access to Dutch citizenship. Although these examinations require newcomers to undertake social orientation training with regard to the most important aspects of Dutch history and cultural norms, the main emphasis has been on Dutch language training. The high value placed on the relationship between Dutch language competency and integration has not been limited to federal policy advisors, but is shown to resonate with politicians, media commenters, scholars, and in the public among citizens such as my interlocutors. This shared valuation echoes the importance of the Dutch language historically as a way of speaking about and judging which colonial subjects, as in the East Indies, might be considered 'European' or 'Dutch' in a legal and cultural sense. As such, knowledge of the Dutch language signifies a key thread of continuity linking historical ways in which membership in the national community was problematized and how contemporary elements are engaged through an assemblage that coheres around citizenship practice.

Dutch language facility is a skill that is not necessarily seen by individuals like my research participants, policy makers, media commenters, politicians, and even scholars as being – now and historically – highly politicized. Rather, language competence is described by my

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interlocutors as a matter of common sense that should be exercised by those wishing to make claims to resources and identification with the nation-state. Learning to speak Dutch is seen as enabling many other forms of valued social participation as "active" members of Dutch society, such as holding a job, completing an education, or volunteering. Through the acquisition of Dutch language skills, the newcomer is configured as part of the population at large that is rendered technical through the technology of government, the assemblage of diverse institutions, discourses, ways of measuring, and applications of moral authority (cf. Li 2007b:264). Communication – enabled through Dutch language acquisition – renders the newcomer to do as they ought: to reduce their burden on the state, becoming self-sufficient and responsible for their own well-being (and that of fellow citizens) in the various spheres of everyday life. Moreover, "common sense" ways of understanding moral and cultural participation in Dutch society underscore how communication enables the newcomer to freely choose to do as they ought by following what must be in their own self-interest (cf. Li 2007a:275; Ong 1999, 2006; Muehlebach 2012). Thus, Dutch language learning *qua* integration is revealed as an important technique in teaching the technology of government, a skill by which newcomers' connection to and position in the nation-state can be measured, evaluated, directed and improved. Through an analysis of the notion of 'integration', this chapter examines the impact of neoliberal governmentality on the everyday practice, conception, and expression of Dutch national culture by differently situated social actors. This vision of newcomer integration strongly resonates with how voluntarism and related ethics of participation have become valued as an expression of "good" citizenship practice among 'native' Dutch. It also reveals the complex connections drawn between belonging, individual behaviour, and an ethic of social participation.

What does it mean to integrate?

There was a general consensus among almost everyone with whom I spoke, echoed by media commentators, academics, politicians and policy makers, that the Netherlands had done a poor job of integrating newcomers into Dutch society, especially since the arrival of non-Western guest workers during the 1960s and 1970s. Moreover, what was widely discussed as a failure on the part of the government during these earlier decades was viewed by my informants and others in Dutch society as having produced a number of serious social problems among ethnic minority groups who arrived in the Netherlands during this period. Informants, media commentators, politicians, policy makers and academics habitually framed the higher rates of unemployment, dependence on the welfare state, criminality, lower educational achievement, and isolation from mainstream ('native') Dutch on the part of immigrants as creating problems for social cohesion within Dutch society, especially between *allochtone* and 'native' Dutch citizens. These outcomes had generated a widespread feeling across Dutch society that immigrant integration policies' failure to adequately integrate newcomers to the Netherlands had, in fact, failed Dutch society at large.

The greatest of these policy mistakes was often flagged by informants as granting Dutch citizenship to people who did not learn how to live in Dutch society, which at the very least requires basic competency in the Dutch language. This was the concern at the heart of Paul Scheffer's controversial op-ed, "*Het Multiculturele Drama*" (The Multicultural Drama; in the national newspaper, *NRC Handelsblad*), published in 2000. Many people with whom I spoke (including Dutch scholars) considered this piece as a watershed moment that brought such questions into the open and up for debate in the Netherlands. Scheffer wrote about his concerns

that the government's failure to adequately integrate the waves of newcomers since the 1970s into the social and economic life of the country has produced many social problems, specifically with employment, educational achievement, and criminality. By the time I conducted my fieldwork, the expression of such sentiments regarding immigrant integration and the negative effects of this failure seemed to be regularly expressed in the media, by politicians, and by my research participants.

The 'civic integration' legislation implemented by the Dutch government was intended to bridge the gap and remedy the policy "mistakes" of the past with regard to immigrant integration. By emphasizing knowledge of Dutch and through the attempts to evaluate basic knowledge about living in Dutch society the 'civic integration' tests were the government's answer to the dilemma of immigrant integration. With its goal of readying newcomers to take up Dutch citizenship and participate in Dutch society, the Dutch 'civic integration' policy has drawn powerful connections between notions of social or cultural integration and citizenship. These connections have been reiterated by many different people in Dutch society.

Yet, during our interview when I had asked Bart whether or not citizenship could be considered the same as being culturally integrated, he balked. "No, no. Not at all. These are very complicated words in these days you know." In talking about how complicated ideas of integration and citizenship have become, Bart implicitly referenced a number of broader discussions that had been occurring in Dutch society on these topics. During our interview and in interviews and discussions with other informants some of these considerations came to the fore. Since the early 2000s, the rise of the populist Right in the Netherlands and the mainstreaming of their xenophobic and anti-Islam rhetoric and agenda was frequently commented upon. Many people also referenced the anxieties expressed by politicians, media commentators and policy

makers about the place of newcomers in Dutch society. Several discussions brought up the meaning of "integration" in relation to immigrants and ethnic minorities in Dutch society, including how to go about integrating immigrants, and questioning at what point someone might in fact be considered integrated. The question of citizenship and the meaning of "Dutchness" or Dutch national culture was also part of the social landscape Bart referred to as complicating concepts of integration and citizenship in the Netherlands.

Although my informants favourably considered the acquisition and testing of skills through *inburgering*, notably knowledge of the Dutch language, there was a general feeling that passing these 'civic integration' tests was not equivalent to really being integrated into Dutch society; 'civic integration' (*inburgering*) and integration (*integratie*) were viewed as qualitatively different. José, a 'native' Dutch language coach commented, "I am an official citizen. Yes, now," she broke into a laugh. "My neighbour across the street is also an official citizen, and he's there farming, and sawing, and carpentering, and making me crazy!" She laughed again, "I wish that he was less integrated! But he is just provincial Dutch,[1] so—"

> But in any case, I do not know what it means to say: 'civicly integrated'
> [*ingeburgered zijn*]. I do know what it is to say someone is integrated
> [*geintegreerd*]. To 'civicly integrate' [*inburger*] is an etiquette. You get a sticker
> on your forehead: naturalized [*ingeburgered*]. *So what?* Integration, you see,
> integration is about seeing how you behave. And that has nothing to do with
> 'civic integration'. 'Civic integration' is very flattened, very arbitrary criteria too.
> I have looked over the questions from such an exam. I really don't understand
> them. Really. That is one of the reasons that I say, "I am not 'civicly integrated'."
> I would never pass the exams.

When I spoke with language coaches about *inburgering*, I found that many were like José: quite critical of aspects of this course, particularly as they related to the question of social integration. While most applauded the language component, many felt that the test on Dutch

culture that declared the immigrant sufficiently integrated and thus eligible to apply for

citizenship bordered on absurd. Some of this disapprobation may have stemmed from the

different ideas about these tests as well as the "practice tests" circulating in the media. For

instance, in 2005 the topic of *inburgering* was presented as a television event, broadcast as *De

Nationale Inburgering Test* (The National Civic Integration Test). The program was produced by

Teleac (*Televisie Academie*, Television Academy), one of the educational radio and television

programmers, and broadcast on the public channel, *Nederland 1*. The one and a half hour live

broadcast presented a test based on the federally mandated *Kennis Nederlandse Samenleving*

(Knowledge of Dutch Society) test that 'civic integration' students (*inburgeraars*) must pass in

order to qualify for citizenship. The stated goal of the program was to acquaint 'native' Dutch

people with the things that those applying for Dutch citizenship must know, and asked for viewer

feedback on the content presented.[2]

Some of the questions asked in this televised quiz did closely adhere to those of the

official *inburgering* test (e.g. on the topics of social services and laws, and some on social

etiquette). Meanwhile, other questions on social behaviour as well as Dutch traditions reflected

the kinds of things that my informants viewed as less pertinent to judging one's integration into

Dutch society. After reading the list of questions that *inburgeraars* may be asked in their final

exam, José had formed some opinions about the *inburgering* process. She stated, "I think that

[the tests] are in themselves good. Oh, yes, the course is also rather strange. Look. I think that the

language aspects are required. But whether I now need to know what a "*buurtbakkie*" is?!"

Puzzled by this term, José explained, "It's the little thing that you have at the Albert Heijn

[grocery store] that you put between your groceries and the groceries of someone else. *That* is a

buurtbakkie." José continued, "I didn't know that either. Very Dutch! No...

That is one of the questions that is on the 'civic integration' course exams. ...
Look, there are some things that are very clearly culturally inspired. For example,
the acceptance of gays. The acceptance of equal rights for women. How you raise
your children. The death penalty or not. You have those sorts of things. I think
that is important.

"But," José laughed heartily, "what a *buurtbakkie* is? Good grief!"

Another problem that was pointed out by one of my research participants in relation to
these quizzes (and by extension in the *inburgering* exams and courses) was that often, multiple
answers seemed correct, or at least reflective of people's actual behaviour or attitudes. One
informant, a 'native' Dutch woman in her thirties, commented that there was a question about
what to do if your neighbours had a baby. The possible answers, she said, were to give flowers or
a present, to give a card, or to do nothing. In her opinion, any of those answers could have been
acceptable, but only one was the correct test answer. What, she wondered, did this mean for the
larger question of the social integration of immigrants?

What seemed to trouble my informants more than the content of these exams was the
underlying idea that integration into Dutch society was determined by one's ability to pass a test.
Although most agreed that the granting of Dutch citizenship to newcomers should require some
sort of integration process, and that there were indeed good things about the *inburgering*
program and policy, the tests were inadequate to judge whether someone was really integrated
into Dutch society. Similarly, in my discussion with Bart, he felt that there was a problem with
saying that integration and *inburgering* were the same thing. "The difficulty for me too," he said,
"is when you say something is typical Dutch. You almost say that for integration you must learn
this or that, or imitate. And I don't want to." It was the idea of pinning down a set of values or
ideas or behaviours to form a single notion of Dutchness that Bart objected to throughout his

discussion with me. He related it to his childhood experiences during the *verzuiling* period, and further to the movement (supported by the government) to make an official Dutch history canon and museum (which he felt was "nonsense"). Bart explained,

> Civilization is developing and, yes, what is Dutch today is no more Dutch tomorrow. That was it yesterday. I thought as a child, there were fights between Catholics and Protestants, neighbours or streets of people, children. It's unthinkable in these days, but it's not long ago. My mother didn't want— I'm from Protestant heritage. ... I'm an atheist now. But my mother didn't want to buy in shops owned by Catholics or Catholic organizations. Some brands. You didn't do that!

Bart laughed. "But it's ridiculous nowadays. Ridiculous." Implicit in my conversation with Bart and many other informants was the idea that culture was dynamic. Being a good citizen or neighbour should be judged more by how one acts in relation to other members of society (being *sociaal*) than remembering a potentially arbitrary catalogue of things framed as "typically Dutch."

"Seeing how you behave": everyday practices of "good" citizenship

As I learned throughout my fieldwork, the ways in which informants talked about citizenship and belonging in Dutch society in the context of everyday life was often subtly connected to their conceptions of how newcomers navigate Dutch social norms, values and behaviours. In my interview with Bart, the complexity behind understandings of citizenship and social or cultural integration emerged as he spoke of Dutch citizenship, of being Dutch, as a thickly layered concept incorporating daily experience, behaviour, attachment, as well as legal status.

> I know personally *allochtonen* who are Dutch. *Ja.* We have neighbours here from Croatia. Friends. ... Yes, they are *vluchtelingen*, fugitives, refugees. Were. From 1992, or something. Yes, and fully integrated here. Learned Dutch very quickly. She is a psychologist and he is a technician. They both have work here. Are they Dutch? *Ja*, they have Dutch passports. They speak Dutch. They have a daughter in school here around the corner. They have a double feeling, of course, but I don't object to people having two or more passports. And their home country in their heart. Why not? Aboutaleb, who has two passports[3]— many people opposed that, but Moroccan is special case because you cannot abolish your Moroccan passport. It's impossible. But when he— I don't find he would be obliged to stay with only one passport. It's so normal now. ... It's so normal now to— like you!— to live and study and work everywhere.

This nuanced image of citizenship as practice both contrasts and reflects that held by others in Dutch society, from policy makers to politicians.

All of my informants, whether language coaching volunteers or not, shared Bart's ideas about the importance of learning Dutch as the basis for other important modes of social participation (e.g. employment, education). Throughout my discussions with her, José emphasized the importance of communication to living well and participating in Dutch society, especially for people who choose to settle in the Netherlands from elsewhere. At the most basic level José talked about communication as the ability to speak with and understand one another. Although José spoke English fluently, she encouraged me to conduct our interview in Dutch, only occasionally switching into English to ensure I fully understood her meaning. In discussing what she described as the "social aspects" (which she opposed to the strictly legal aspects) of citizenship, José felt that

> There, the language comes out very strongly. If you live here, and you want to continue to live here, and you want to be part of society in a social [*maatschappelijke*] way, then you *must* know the language. And you don't have to know it very well, but you must be able to express yourself well. You don't need to be able to speak or write Dutch academically or attractively, but you do need to just be able to ask for an endive in a shop. And you should be able to have a chat

with your neighbours. I think that's very important. Period.

Observable among other language coaches and projects, these social connections were equally as important and could only be built through communication. According to one coordinator for the neighbourhood-oriented *SamenSpraak Oost* group,[4] the ideal outcome for Dutch language learners in their program was simply:

> learning to speak better Dutch and especially to dare to speak it: becoming more self-assured in speaking Dutch. A side effect of this is contact with a Dutch neighbour and through this contact learning about the neighbourhood, local habits and ways things are done.

The importance of language coaching partnerships in helping newcomers understand the kinds of banal expectations for social etiquette expected of them as Dutch citizens is echoed in a comment of Bart's, that "when learning the language, you automatically pick up many Dutch things." In our discussion, Anouk further illustrated these connections between "active" participation in Dutch society and language learning. The role of the language coach appears here as someone who can guide and help improve newcomers' relationships in and with mainstream Dutch society.

> I have something to add, actually. Because I also tried to activate [my participant] more, because she's so limited to her house. I called, you have these meeting houses [*buurthuizen*, community centres] for *allochtonen*, for both women and men, but also for women, like courses they can follow. So Dutch language, but also sewing and some creative arts. Stuff like that. And then it's also encouraged to talk Dutch. So I introduced her to this house. ... And now she goes there twice a week to this *buurthuis*. ... And she really likes it. She also receives Dutch language there now. (Anouk)

Besides the ability to speak with others and make oneself understood, another important outcome of learning to speak Dutch was flagged by research participants as conveying meaning

across cultural differences. This deeper understanding of communication was implicit throughout my discussions with informants. The importance placed on language learning as a tool of communication and social integration was an important motivation for José's participation as a language coach. After telling me how important it is to "just be able to ask for an endive in a shop," and to "be able to have a chat with your neighbours," she continued:

> And that is a main reason why I am busy with *SamenSpraak*. I want to help the people who live here to have that within their reach. And there is, in the past there was nothing for all the immigrants who came here. One thing that the government reacted to very poorly was the language aspect. The government can ask of its citizens that they act in a social [*sociaal*] manner. That doesn't mean— Because the government has nothing to do with what I do in private. But there is a great deal that is not private. In public, in contact with others you must be able to make yourself clear. You must make yourself understandable. The government may ask that of you. So, I find that, indeed, the government made grave mistakes regarding that. That all the people that came here were not just obligated to learn Dutch.

When I raised the issue of how potential citizens must currently pass the *inburgering* (civic integration) courses established by the federal government, José responded that this requirement was still quite new, especially the language component of these courses.

Language as key to "good" citizenship

Many of my informants commented that the lag in establishing such mandatory language courses for newcomers is what has created so many problems for Dutch society since the 1960s and 1970s. Prior to the legislation of mandatory *inburgering* and Dutch language courses (1998), some private courses were on offer but the waiting lists were very long (Entzinger 2004b:7; Björnson 2007:78, n15). Two years after language certification became mandatory for newcomers (especially those pursuing citizenship), there were approximately 20,000 students

participating in such courses. Meanwhile, the waiting lists for Dutch as a second language courses across the Netherlands were still over 10,000 names long.

The initial *Gilde Amsterdam* volunteer language coaching program (1999) and most of those that followed were seen as complementary or secondary to formal lessons. In my interview with the director of *Gilde Amsterdam*, she described the program's origins as "not completely related to *inburgering*. It was started as a need for people coming from other countries, trying to speak Dutch." The *Gilde* program was launched as a volunteer initiative, independent of the government, although it now receives funding from various levels of government. The language coaching initiative grew out of the organization's mission to make the city of Amsterdam a better place for everyone to live through voluntarism.

It was firmly established in the minds of my research participants, as well as in mainstream political and policy discussions that many of the present problems traced to immigration are deeply entangled in past policy that failed to require immigrants to learn Dutch. This line of argumentation hinges on language as a learned skill and tool to integration. It was a view reflected among all of the language coaches I spoke with, on their organizations' websites, as well as the title of a small book published to celebrate a decade of voluntary language coaching projects in the Netherlands: *Taal als sleutel: 10 jaar Gilde SamenSpraak* (Language as key: 10 years of the Guild Speaking Together program) (van der Ven and Weggemans 2009).

That the contemporary problems associated with (non-Western) immigrants and their descendants was due to their social and economic marginalization, which was compounded by their Dutch language deficit was generally opposed to the contentions of the populist Right. In their understanding of the current situation vis-à-vis newcomers, the populist Right maintained that the failure of immigrants to integrate into Dutch society was due to the incommensurability

of their "culture" (usually meaning Islam) with that of the liberal and tolerant Dutch. This fundamental difference of opinion emerged very clearly during my discussions with José. "But, here is now a huge problem with the past generation," said José, as she elaborated on the failures of the Dutch government's lack of integration policy. "All those Moroccan bastards [*Morokaanse klootzakken*]." José noticed me flinch slightly. "Yes, really just criminals."

> The issue is now to make it safe. They don't have a cultural problem. They have a social problem. They couldn't finish school because their language was not good enough. So, they could not follow a training course for a job. They do not have any work and that's why they start to deal drugs; to earn money in a normal manner, because they do want money. So, they do it in a wrong way. But that is for the most part due to their lack of education. It is really not a cultural problem.

The perspective that *allochtone* youth – Dutch citizens – were disadvantaged in the labour market because of linguistic deficiencies was widespread among my informants, and has connections to the trajectory of educational policy. The consensus among most people I spoke with and visible among policy makers was that earlier Dutch policies of educating the children of guest workers in "their own language" (*Onderwijs in Eigen Taal en Cultuur*, *OETC*; Education in Minority Language and Culture) had effectively prevented integration for many ethnic minority groups throughout the 1970s and 1980s (Björnson 2007:67-68; cf. Van Lier 1971:193).[5] This policy was repealed during the neoliberal shift of the early 1990s, as Third Way policy regimes took root across Europe including in the Netherlands. Through the lens of the new approach which sought to "to produce the individualized, self-regulating, late-modern citizen" (Björnson 2007:66), policy makers asserted that *allochtone* students' inadequate understanding of Dutch left them unable to succeed in the workforce and in Dutch society more generally (Björnson 2007:67-69).

These policy failures were echoed in how research participants and other 'native' Dutch

viewed the Dutch language in relation to the perceived effects of immigration in Dutch society (cf. Scheffer 2000). Susanne and I spoke in English at a café near her home in Utrecht. Susanne was a 'native' Dutch woman in her late twenties. When we met she was pursuing her graduate studies, and had been a language coaching volunteer for over a year. Before she began her studies, she had worked as a high school teacher in a region in the north of the Netherlands with a predominantly 'native' Dutch, that is, white population.[6] "Dutch people tend to speak about foreigners—" Susanne began, "Like some of the people are like: 'It's a problem. It's a huge problem.' 'They do not even speak Dutch,' and 'what are they doing here?' 'They didn't have work.' Stuff like that." Susanne began volunteering as a Dutch language coach through an organization for refugees because of these sorts of comments she read circulating in the newspapers at the time. She wanted to know more about the experiences and lives of the people that were thought to cause so many problems for Dutch society. She had gotten in touch with the *Vluchtelingenwerk* (Refugee network) in Utrecht, and had been partnered with a woman in her mid-fifties whose family had come from Chechnya a decade before.

> Well, for me it's really interesting to see like what their life was about, what they're doing here. How did they *try* to manage. Because sometimes it's trying to manage. ... They also learn from us. So our culture, stuff they do not know about. And they keep in their own circle. Like they all stay with people who spoke Russian, so I was like the only Dutch people they knew. Well, the woman knew, because the children went to school and that's different. She only knew me. (Susanne)

Susanne commented that integration into Dutch society is often much easier for children than their parents. Since these children are now enrolled in the Dutch educational system, they learn to speak Dutch and are exposed to many aspects of Dutch society that their immigrant parents might not have learned about or experienced. Susanne commented, "Well I think it's easier for

children who come and go to school, to meet other Dutch people. It's a lot easier. And then it's

okay. But for the other people it's hard, I think."

That the descendants of immigrants were frequently better integrated than their parents

was mentioned by other informants as well. Having grown up in the Netherlands they were more

likely to speak Dutch well, and therefore considered able to better participate in Dutch society.

Noting the "costs of immigration" debate introduced by Wilders that focused on the place of

non-Western guest workers in Dutch society, Bart commented about the children of newcomers.

> You heard of course, the discussion about did they cost more or bring more
> economic profit for us. And this is an undecided question. But the children of
> those people, in general, are doing well. Just like Dutch people. And sometimes
> better.

While it might be easier for children to pick up the language and succeed in Dutch

society than for their parents, adults' poor Dutch language skills were nonetheless thought to

potentially hamper their children's chances of success. Even though Bart felt that some

immigrant and non-Western Dutch youth were doing very well, he still connected immigrants'

poor Dutch language skills to the creation of social problems from an early age. Like José's

comments about those "Moroccan bastards," Bart did not see this problem as rooted in culture.

Rather, Bart located these problems in specific newcomers' failure to act as "free, self-managing,

and self-enterprising individuals in different spheres of everyday life" (Ong 2006:14).

> When you hear or see, for instance, young Moroccan people for instance, that's
> yeah— You think, what do the parents do to influence their children? And we
> know that parents from Moroccan or Turkish children don't like contact with the
> schools from their children. Like Dutch people do. It's important to be there, to be
> in contact with the teachers and the school. And to do, to do the things for *feests*
> [parties] or *voorlezen*. What's *voorlezen*? I don't know. To read for children in
> schools. For children, especially for children from Moroccan and Turkish people
> who know not enough Dutch when they start at school, that's very important to

do. But you can't ask it of their parents, of course. I've, from my private standpoint, I find it— I don't understand why all those many immigrants didn't learn Dutch. But we wanted the less educated people from Morocco. Or the industry wanted. And the other side is that it's no wonder that they didn't learn Dutch. But I can't imagine when I'm an immigrant in another country that I don't learn the language. (Bart)

Bart's frustration with the failure of many non-Western immigrants to learn Dutch over the preceding decades was present in the discussions of many of my research participants. Part of the frustration expressed by my participants at the problems faced by Dutch society stemming from the marginalized position of many immigrants and their descendants was connected to their ideas about a difference of ethics around citizenship and social participation (cf. Scheffer 2000). For many of my interlocutors, it seemed obvious that communication enabled or limited participation in many aspects of social and civic life in the Netherlands. The first step in newcomers' practice of active citizenship in Dutch society therefore becomes acquiring the foundational skills that allow one to overcome one's dependency on the state, and instead act as a responsible and "self-enterprising citizen-subject" (Ong 2006:14). However, alongside these discussions of an ethic of participation, many pointed to how the failures of both past policy and individual immigrants to learn Dutch left immigrants trying to manage rather than succeeding.

In this chapter, I have examined how what people ought to do, and judgements about who has the capacity to meet these expectations are differently articulated by myriad agents in Dutch society, from volunteer language coaches to other research participants, in policy, through the media, and by (populist) politicians. Where members of the Dutch populist Right, for example, blame newcomers' failure to integrate on their "backwards" cultures (meaning Islam), language coaching volunteers dismissed cultural explanations in favour of structural issues (i.e. poor educational policy, lack of integration policy, few affordable or free language courses). Even

where language coaches saw cultural norms playing a role in hindering language learning and social integration (i.e. for migrant women), they advocated structural solutions, such as legal requirements to complete language training or government and civil society supports for accessible services, such as volunteer-run language coaching projects. In spite of these different approaches to the question of newcomer integration, language competence, as a way to condition people to do as they ought, is a key thread that runs through these multiple considerations of integration and citizenship. For the language coaches with whom I spoke, judgements about whether someone is integrated into Dutch or Amsterdamse society should consider citizenship as a practice, as an expression of *sociaal* behaviour, etiquette, and attitudes. Participating in ways that contribute to building the community – as through employment, education, engaged parenting, or voluntarism – are valued as "good" citizenship practices. Importantly, these practices resonate with a neoliberal rationale of "active" participation. In considering integration in this way, these language coaching volunteers contribute to how citizenship practice and integration are problematized by critiquing both the 'flattened' criteria of government *inburgering* tests, as well as the cultural essentialism promoted by the populist Right in their calculations of "worthy" citizens.

Extending from language coaches' understandings of meaningful citizenship practice and notions of integration, I have shown how the Dutch language has become a key technique in teaching the technology of government among newcomers (Dean 2010:269-270). As many research participants have discussed, communication – the ability to be understood both in a literal sense and across cultural differences – is necessary to have a chat with your neighbours, ask for specific items in a shop, receive medical attention, speak with your children's teachers, to work, and understand the law of the land. In short, communication is understood as a cornerstone

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in the foundation of the contemporary *sociaal* society. In the following chapter, I explore some of the tensions in the complex relationships identified between communication and morally and culturally attuned citizenship practice through the realities of communicating in English in Amsterdam. In examining the exception to the rule that English speakers present, the effects of the "awkward continuities" around racial, religious, classed, and other 'cultural' differences that many of my participants reject or contest come to the fore.

9. Exceptions to the rule in the Dutch language of integration

As "*the* key technology of the Dutch state's integration program" (Björnson 2007:65), the Dutch language is a central symbol of sociality in the context of increasingly culturally diverse neighbourhoods in Amsterdam and across the Netherlands. Speaking Dutch in the public sphere is understood by many 'native' Dutch as an expression of commitment to Dutch society on the part of non-Western Dutch citizens and newcomers. Operating in an affective register, the presence of the Dutch language is one way of demarcating public space as part of the national community and open to Dutch forms of sociality. Speaking Dutch allows citizens not only to literally understand one another, but also signals the possibility for cross-cultural communication and understanding between Dutch religious and cultural minorities and the 'native' Dutch progressive moral majority.

In ways similar to how Foucault has analyzed sexuality, throughout my dissertation I have addressed how language is situated as a "dense transfer point for relations of power," and has become a key technique of governmentality "capable of serving as a point of support, as a linchpin, for the most varied strategies" (1990:103) in the cultivation of the "good" or "active" citizen. Language choice in Amsterdam and elsewhere in the Netherlands has become an integral mode of perceiving who belongs in Dutch society. It has come to signify a wide array of habits, beliefs, and norms in relation to "good" forms of social participation and "active" citizenship practice. For many 'native' Dutch, whether a newcomer speaks Dutch in the public sphere or "their own language" is a potent sign of their conduct in and relationship with mainstream Dutch society. While speaking Turkish, for example, may be considered a symptom of an individual's lack of integration or cultural distance from the moral majority, and create *asociaal* (anti- or un-

social) public spaces for 'native' Dutch, this is not the case for all foreign languages in Amsterdam. Through the opinions of research participants, as well as my experiences in Amsterdam and elsewhere in the Netherlands, I show how the English language operates as an exception to the rule that all newcomers must learn Dutch in order to participate as "active" or "good" citizens. In doing so, this chapter illustrates one way in which various discursive threads configuring contemporary citizenship practice interweave powerful "ideologies of racial difference with liberal conceptions of citizenship … in popular notions about who deserves to belong in implicit terms of productivity and consumption" (Ong 1996:739).

The unique status of the English language as a second *lingua franca*, especially in Amsterdam, draws to the fore a number of assumptions about the socioeconomic class, citizenship and/or visa status of the English speaker in these spaces. The assumptions about the relationships that English-speaking foreigners have with labour, culturally progressive norms and values, historical experiences, and morally-attuned citizenship practice underscores the impact of what Dutch scholars have discussed as the "culturalization of citizenship" and its connections to neoliberal "active" citizenship practice. Finally, the very different understandings of language used by non-Dutch speakers call attention to the ways in which historical processes of problematization – including the development of racial or civilizational difference – continue to play a role in calculations of belonging in the Netherlands today. The English language is shown to be the exception that proves the rule of Dutch citizenship, highlighting the role of language as a key strategy in identifying and rendering technical areas for intervention, in teaching the technology of government, and assessing consent to governmental programs.

More than just communication: *sociaal* **spaces and making sense of difference**

On my last evening during my year of fieldwork in Amsterdam, in early August 2010, I visited a café in my neighbourhood with a 'native' Dutch friend, Noel. On this quiet Monday night, there were a couple of Dutch patrons chatting away at one of the long wooden tables, a couple more at the bar, the enormous orange café cat, the bartender, my friend and I. As Noel and I sat at a little table by the door, our conversation switched between English and Dutch, which had become our habit, especially during my last months in Amsterdam. As the evening wore on, the crowd thinned even further, and we began to chat with the bartender, an elderly 'native' Dutch man. While we had been making occasional small chat with him in Dutch throughout the evening, we eventually began on the topic of learning to speak Dutch.

"It's difficult, hè?" commented our bartender. That Dutch was a difficult language to learn was a sentiment that I had often heard from Dutch people I spoke with over the course of the year. This impression among Dutch people I had met made it all the more interesting to me, given the importance most people and policy makers placed on its role in the civic and social integration of newcomers (cf. Björnson 2007; Vasta 2007; Entzinger 2004a).

"Yes," I agreed, speaking in Dutch. "But what is more difficult is that if you speak English no one in Amsterdam will speak Dutch with you. It is very difficult to practice. I studied a three-week intensive course when I first came to Amsterdam. Now I find it not so difficult to read, but the hardest thing is to practice speaking." As I recounted my story about learning the language in Dutch, the bartender asked me how long I had been living in the Netherlands. He was surprised that I had learned Dutch so well for having only been in the Netherlands for a year. "There are people who have lived in the Netherlands for forty years," he confided, both of us

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knowing full-well the people he meant, "who don't speak Dutch as well as you."

This was a conversation I had had many times over the course of my fieldwork. More than anything else, this script about learning (or failing to learn) Dutch reinforced the position of the Dutch language as a touchstone for discussing not only issues surrounding immigration and integration, but also other tensions, such as around culture, race, class, or religion that play into notions of participation and "active" citizenship in Dutch society. Language use in cities and neighbourhoods across the Netherlands has come to signal spaces where 'native' Dutch may feel at home in the national community, or excluded by newcomers (cf. Duyvendak 2011). These feelings of exclusion have been connected to ideas of a "crisis of Dutch identity" (still reverberating through Dutch politics during my time in the field), as well as resentment toward the government for its policy failures and non-Dutch speaking newcomers who despite their Dutch citizenship status are not seen as active or productive contributors to Dutch society.

Many people in the Netherlands speak more than one language. Even in the lowest stream of the Dutch education system (*VMBO*), students learn English, French, and German. Many of my informants spoke multiple languages, as was especially the case among language coaches who often cited language as a hobby or special interest. Among the language coaches and other 'native' Dutch I spoke with, commonly understood languages included: English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, as well as Papiamentu. According to a Eurobarometer poll conducted in 2005, in addition to Dutch, 91% of Dutch citizens reported knowing at least one other language well enough to carry on a conversation (Eurobarometer 2006:9).[1] This is much higher than the EU25 average, where 56% of EU citizens claim to speak a foreign language well enough for conversation. In spite of the general breadth of language skills among 'native' Dutch, the non-European languages spoken by non-Western *allochtonen* were not commonly

understood. As such, when languages like Turkish, Arabic or Berber were spoken or used in public spaces, they effectively created and marked spaces that 'native' Dutch might avoid or feel uncomfortable in.

The power of language to shape social space is clear in Bart's discussion of a grocery shop in his neighbourhood. "There's a shop here, around the corner, from Turkish people," Bart commented. "It took a long time before we entered the shop."

> There was a Dutch dairy shop and a vegetable shop owned by a Dutchman, who were better. That's true. But those shops are closed, and he, and the Turkish one remains. Well it's not typical in the sense that they sell stuff typical for Turkish people because there are not so much here. This is a white street.

When I asked Bart why it took him so long to venture into this shop, he paused briefly, thoughtfully, before saying, "True. Yeah. There is something strange— You don't know if they speak the language, the Dutch, for all products. They don't have some typical Dutch vegetables. For instance." What is a typical Dutch vegetable, I asked. "*Bloemkool*." "Oh. A cauliflower," I laughed. Smiling, Bart countered, "Which we don't eat every week, but just for example."

As Bart alluded to in his story of the Turkish shop, how language shapes social landscapes is incorporated into the grammar of difference. For many of the people with whom I discussed questions of integration and belonging, it was the Dutch language that was seen as key to accessing Dutch society in a *sociaal* manner, particularly for non-Western immigrants. This was, perhaps, especially the case for people connected to the language coaching programs. However, this idea was in my experience widespread among the many 'native' Dutch with whom I spoke in Amsterdam. Learning Dutch was considered by my informants to demonstrate a commitment to Dutch society. The connections between language, education, positive participation and belonging in Dutch society were commonly made in discussions I had with

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language coaches and the programs through which they volunteered.

Later in my discussion with Bart, his comments again outlined the powerful connections and tensions around his ideas and impressions of being a "good" citizen and the *asociaal* spaces created by the presence of immigrants who did not speak Dutch.

> Well, what I recognize myself is that you can feel unease with people you don't understand at all. Not the language, not heritage, customs. It gives some paranoia, or—And a feeling when there are too much— I don't live in Amsterdam West, but when you live there and subsequently *all* neighbours become Turkish and Moroccan whom you don't understand, that's not fine. But then about ten or twenty years ago, they said, "People stink," because they were different. That's what you don't hear anymore.

In Bart's experience, the ways in which Amsterdammers and other 'native' Dutch have reacted to the cultural differences of their neighbours and changing neighbourhoods has shifted over time. While he no longer reads in the newspapers the same sorts of objections against non-Western immigrants that were common twenty years ago, he continues to observe significant tensions between these groups of newcomers and long-resident 'native' Dutch in Amsterdam and elsewhere. In these discussions, communication, especially through the Dutch language is viewed as key to moulding newcomers into moral citizen-subjects (cf. Ong 2006). Not speaking Dutch appears to have the effect of amplifying other categories of difference, making cultural practices or beliefs feel even more foreign, unacceptable, or threatening to 'native' Dutch. These ideas have become an important part of how Dutch citizenship practice has been problematized, and how this has been expressed and evaluated through the contemporary grammar of difference.

Although Bart does not agree with the many negative opinions he hears about non-Western Dutch, he feels that he understands how such sentiments have become rooted in the discourse that populist Right-wing politicians, like Fortuyn and Wilders, capitalize upon.

Disliking immigrants, Bart said, has become "for some people ... like an occupation.

> I can understand. Foreigners in Amsterdam. But they didn't learn Dutch. They only knew each other. Yeah. Where it all comes from...? Well, another source is of course that most of the first generation foreign labourers who came here are without work since a long time. And they live from our social security. And that makes people jealous. And I agree that people who imported foreign labour didn't think about that. They didn't realize. They didn't see the consequences. And you know, government and industry thought, "Well, we take those people temporarily and they go home again." But they imported their brides, family. And they get rights here. Social security rights. (Bart)

Echoing sentiments expressed by other informants, in the media, among politicians, and policy makers, Bart clearly linked a Dutch language deficit with burdening the welfare state. Another important thread that emerges from this discussion is the way in which language coaches' understandings of citizenship are impacted by both established 'culturalist' discourses and more recent neoliberal disciplinary mechanisms. The motivations behind newcomers' decision and efforts to learn Dutch become important for gauging their orientation to the expectations of Dutch citizenship practice.

Communicating "active" citizenship through language choice(s)

As discussed in the previous chapter, learning to communicate through the Dutch language was seen by my interlocutors as building the foundation for all other avenues of "active," morally-attuned participation in Dutch society. Even seeking out a language coaching program was viewed by my informants as an expression of the types of "active" citizenship practice that language could facilitate. This was clear in José's explanation of the motivations of language learners with the *SamenSpraak*.

> There are two major groups that undertake it. One group is relatively young, somewhere between twenty-five and forty-five. They work here, they live here. They want to stay here and they want to study, to raise their children. Work. They are often very motivated. They come to us, because it is something that they want for themselves.

The other group of participants were described by José as "oldcomers." These were

> people who have been here for a very long time, and have really done nothing about language. That is often older Moroccan and Turkish women. They have come to a point in their lives. Their children are out the door. They have really nothing more to do and they must now 'civicly integrate'. That is very difficult for us. They are just now beginning to follow the 'civic integration' courses. And they have great problems with it. Living here there are people fifty or sixty years old. They have almost never spoken Dutch, certainly not the women. And they learn that they also never will. Because they are too old to learn languages. They have also never had the motivation to do it. And now, suddenly, they must. This is very difficult.

José considered all of these language learners to practice aspects of what she would later describe to me as "good" citizenship, practices that worked to build society: studying, working, raising their children. These socially-oriented activities taken up by the first group of language learning participants that José described, underscore how motivations for learning Dutch align with the values of "good" citizenship practice. On the other hand, it was clear that José felt that the latter group's ability to learn the language and the volunteer language coaches' ability to help them succeed was hindered by their coming to this task so late in life. José's censure toward this group's past non-participation in Dutch society was more sharply expressed by Bart: "And at *SamenSpraak* we meet of course with many, especially women, who are here, who lived here for thirty, forty years. And have their first course of Dutch in these days. Terrible." It is only now, after their children have grown and the city has begun to stimulate language learning through free or affordable options, that Bart said that these women have finally begun to learn Dutch. It

was clear from discussions with other language coaches that the kinds of free voluntary programs that they participated in were viewed as key in the contemporary landscape of immigrant integration in Amsterdam for how they put "active" or "good" citizenship practices within the reach of these citizens and newcomers.

Many volunteers often expressed the hope that through learning to speak Dutch their speaking partners would learn more about the society in which they lived. For instance, as José elaborated, many of the older female language students she and other language coaches had worked with would

> never really get the hang of the language, but they are suddenly very outwardly focused. Listen; they carry the burdens of the world on their backs. But they discover the world where they have lived for thirty years. And we help them do that. It is always about the language, naturally. But it is also about where you really live. How is it here, and have you— do you have the self-confidence to move out of that place [of social isolation]. That mostly happens.

According to my research participants, Dutch integration policy makers, and politicians, moving out of that place of social isolation, discovering and participating in Dutch society is made possible by learning the Dutch language. Learning to speak Dutch is discussed by these informants as synonymous with learning how to communicate in and with Dutch society, and therefore becomes key to active societal participation and ultimately with the practice of "good" citizenship. It is in the context of the discourse of "active" citizenship that English language fluency has emerged as a remarkable exception to the rule that the Dutch language is key to integration in Dutch society.

Code-switching: English in Amsterdam

Throughout my fieldwork, I observed the widespread acceptance of English as a *lingua franca* in Amsterdam, as well as elsewhere in the Netherlands. I was able to speak English with nearly everyone. In fact, as I later learned was the case in many cities in the Netherlands, when people noticed my accent (hesitancy, or confusion) they almost automatically code-switched into English. Interviews and conversations with people employed at the international corporations located in Amsterdam revealed that English was often the day to day language of operation and business within these organizations. Many important government reports are also published in English, or include an English-language summary (cf. Dekker 1999; Dekker and de Hart 2009; Roes 2008). In my experiences with academic reading groups through research clusters at the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* and the *Meertens Instituut* (Meertens Institute), the presence of even one non-Dutch speaker would be enough for participants to agree to shift the discussion into English. The materials we read in preparation for these meetings were always presented in English. Most graduate studies programs in the Netherlands are taught in English. Proposals first introduced in 1990 to change the official language of university instruction across the Netherlands to English argued that, especially in the sciences, universities needed to operate in English to compete internationally for students (Hagers 2009). Nearly two decades later, in 2009, this proposition had firmly taken root; for instance, at "the University of Amsterdam... 105 of the 170 master's are given in English. Dutch has been all but banished there" (Hagers 2009). While the use of English might be anticipated in these internationally-oriented spaces, the prevalence of the language extended much further.

In 2008 there was a debate among the Amsterdam city council over a proposal to make

English the second official language of the city. The measure was forwarded by Jan Paternotte (*D66*, Democrats 66) as a way to show Amsterdam was a true "world city," to make it a more attractive place for tourists and for international businesses (Het Parool 2008). He noted that while English was undoubtedly the second language of the city in terms of usage, residents were required to deal with city hall only in Dutch. While budget costs were a deciding factor in the rejection of this proposal, others, such as Carlien Boelhouwer (*SP*, *Socialistische Partij*, Socialist Party), told the Amsterdam daily *Het Parool* that she considered the proposal "Ridiculous. Why not Moroccan or Turkish [as Amsterdam's second language]? Expats can also learn a bit of Dutch" (2008; my translation). In the end, the motion was defeated by a majority. Labour party (*PvdA*) member Daniël Roos, was quoted as saying that, "In my opinion, the city is already English enough. ... It would be too much hassle if English became the official second language. Then everything would have to be done in two languages. That is a bit ridiculous" (Het Parool 2008; my translation). In spite of the defeat of this proposal, I observed that many government services are *de facto* available in English. Even where information on service websites is not completely available in English, most civil servants speak fluent English. The city's official website (http://www.amsterdam.nl/), has an English-language sister-site (http://www.iamsterdam.com/) that, in addition to providing tourism information, also provides detailed information on living and working in the city similar to the Dutch site. Thus, even as these proposals with regard to English were ultimately dashed, the prevalence of the English language in Amsterdam, across the Netherlands more generally, and indeed within the context of the European Union cannot be argued.

The Eurobarometer poll cited earlier shows that English is the most widely spoken language (after one's mother tongue) in 19 of the 29 EU countries polled (including Romania

and Turkey). In the Netherlands, 87% of those polled listed English as a language they knew well enough to carry on a conversation, whereas the average across EU citizens for conversational (or higher) knowledge of English stands at 38% (Eurobarometer 2006:12, 13).[2] Conversational (if not professional) knowledge of the English language is a valued and widespread skill among the Dutch. Not only common across professional and internationally-oriented spheres, English-language media is also prominent in daily life. Foreign television programs, film, music, and print media from North America, the United Kingdom, and Australia are widely available via foreign as well as domestic television channels, radio stations, cinema, newsstands, and the Internet.[3] Even Dutch language media appears to use more and more 'Anglicisms' – English language turns of phrase or words – in its regular content.[4] The popularity and prevalence of the English language in Amsterdam makes it a *sociaal* language, or at least not an *asociaal* one.

An exception to the rule

Some of my informants commented on the special status of English in the Netherlands, often alluding to the consequences it had for integration. A young man in his twenties when we first met, Nadir had moved to the Netherlands with his family from Iran when he was thirteen. For Nadir, the first two years of school in the country were spent learning Dutch, though he was already fluent in English and Farsi. Upon graduating from high school (*HAVO*) Nadir qualified for Dutch citizenship, which he chose to adopt. He had volunteered overseas during his gap year after high school, but was not volunteering as he completed his post-secondary education. On the topic of language learning, Nadir noted that the situation in the Netherlands was very different

than in other countries in Europe, such as Germany where an uncle of his lives.

> I think in countries like Germany, as an immigrant you *have* to actually, at the moment you get into the country you have to know the language because everything is in German. I mean, *everybody* speaks German. And the ads, the TV commercials, the programs, the movies, everything is dubbed. Everything is in German, so you kind of feel forced to know German. Otherwise, you kind of like can't participate in the community. But here, like, everybody speaks English. Some people speak German and French. So there is no need, actually, to learn Dutch. You can get along with speaking English.

Nadir's personal experiences with English in the Netherlands were echoed in my daily experiences in Amsterdam, as well as in the opinions of Anouk, a 'native' Dutch language coaching volunteer in her late-twenties. Notably, for Anouk, while the Dutch language was an important tool for immigrant integration, it was actually a broader understanding of communication that made active social participation possible.

> Well, if you cannot speak English, then it's a problem if you don't speak Dutch either. So either you have to speak English, then I think it's no problem, because everyone speaks English. ... But either you speak English or Dutch. It doesn't matter. But if you, well, if you only speak your own language then it's very hard to communicate. So then, I think it's pretty necessary to at least learn the basics, to order stuff in the grocery shop and stuff. But if you really want to mingle, and have friends, then you have to learn English or Dutch. (Anouk)

Whether one decided to communicate in English or Dutch, was for Nadir and Anouk less important than the fact of communication. As Nadir said, "It doesn't have to be that you speak Dutch, I mean, if you know English. There has to be a common language where you can communicate with each other." Being able to communicate enabled not only the ability to participate in Dutch society, but the possibility for dialogue between members of Dutch society, especially across cultural divides.

I think that everyone should participate in the community. Either it's working, either it's going to school, and respecting the values of that country, and respecting its freedom. And it doesn't have to be that you do the same things what Dutch people do, and spend the time at the places where they go, but it's more like respecting each other's opinions. And it has to be from both sides. I mean, when you are in a country and you kind of, like, try to integrate with them, by speaking their language and *learning* about their culture. It's gonna have to be like, from two sides, that they also try to understand where you're coming from and why you're acting the way you're acting. So, I think that integration is like a two-way street. Yeah. It's a two-way street. (Nadir)

This broader notion of communication and the positive social relationships that extend from it was implicit in many of the interviews I undertook with Dutch language coaches. What was also implicit in the conversations I observed about the connections between communication and active citizenship practice was the assumption that English speakers did not need to be taught about expectations for living in Dutch society. In contrast with the strong opinions that non-Western immigrants must learn Dutch, most informants felt such language and social training was generally unnecessary for English-speaking "expats." English speakers were assumed to be already 'integrated' enough, to already exhibit a close enough cultural fit with the Dutch, in spite of regularly speaking little or no Dutch.

The term "expat" or "expatriate" is colloquially used to describe Western immigrants or migrant labourers, for instance from the EU, Canada or Australia. The term weaves together notions of socioeconomic class, citizenship status and practice, as well as cultural fit – which often, but not always, subsumed ideas of racial, religious, or 'civilizational' similarity to the 'native' Dutch. Expats are usually highly skilled labourers, students in post-secondary institutions, or their families. Often, these individuals only stay in the Netherlands temporarily, such as the length of a work contract or degree. The prevalence of English in their spheres of work and socializing, coupled with their short stay in the country was considered by my

informants as a key reason why these individuals did not and need not learn Dutch. These commonly shared views about English-speaking expats represent quite a departure from the frustration Bart expressed when he commented, "I can't imagine when I'm an immigrant in another country that I don't learn the language."

The potential for creating *sociaal* spaces and relationships is certainly part of what makes English an exception to the rule that all newcomers must learn Dutch. Yet, this is only one aspect of how the language is situated in a whole constellation of experiences and ways of knowing. This complex of *savoirs* draws in practices of calculation, forms of judgement, modes of perception, and historically-informed techniques of governmentality to render English (as in the context of Amsterdam) as a symbol of shared cultural capacities and experiences that the non-Western languages spoken by *allochtonen* simply do not signify.

The extent of the English exception – and what it communicated – became clear as I reflected on my own privileged position in the Netherlands as an "expat" in comparison to, for instance, my students in the Native Speaker Project. This privilege and the cultural fit it conveyed was reflected by my reasons for being in Amsterdam (conducting research for my doctoral degree in Canada), as well as by my own work as a volunteer. In addition to these activities, my desire and efforts to learn Dutch were considered favourably by most Dutch people I met. From the reactions I habitually received from my interlocutors, these efforts were considered especially favourable because my knowledge of English and my short stay in the country seemed to make such an endeavour unnecessary. For my interlocutors, my learning Dutch demonstrated my interest and commitment to learning about and participating in Dutch society, even though I was only planning to live there for a year. Thus, my English fluency was already seen to communicate positive social traits about my life experiences, norms, values,

behaviours, attitudes, and decorum that were akin to their own.[5]

This assumption of cultural fit or similarity was also communicated to my interlocutors by my body. Indeed, as a young white woman, living in a student house in the centre of Amsterdam, I found that I often passed for Dutch in most short interactions. This is supported by an incident with a woman who worked in the shop below my house, someone whom I greeted nearly every day. She thought I was Dutch until we actually had occasion to speak at length eight months into my year in the field. A heavy rain had damaged some goods in her shop as the ceiling had given way during the downpour due to a problem with the flat above. Catching me off-guard as I unlocked my bike across the street, she was surprised to find that I asked her to repeat her question. She switched immediately into English, saying "Oh, I thought you were Dutch!" When Dutch people realized I was not 'native' Dutch, they consistently assumed that I was an expat and would speak English. This was born out daily in my experience, and those of others I met, such as Bridget. I had met Bridget in my intensive Dutch language class when I first arrived in Amsterdam during August 2009. She was a white Australian woman in her mid-twenties, who was working on her Master's degree at the *Universiteit van Amsterdam*. She was learning Dutch, in part, so she could better communicate with her 'native' Dutch partner's parents, who did not speak English. As was my experience, Bridget was often frustrated by the inability to practice speaking Dutch in public in Amsterdam because whether at a grocer's stall, in a café, or elsewhere people automatically replied in English to our questions or orders posed in Dutch.

The English exception also came to bear on the question of who was considered an *allochtoon* in everyday discourse. Fluency in English often signalled visa status and labour participation in the Netherlands as an expat. These connections often appeared to alter the impact

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of assumptions drawn from racial or religious difference that have been important in situating non-Western migrants in relation to the 'native' Dutch moral majority, and signalling who is in need of citizenship education. Jean, originally from Ghana, had come to Amsterdam several years before I met him. My flatmates and I paid Jean twenty euros a week to clean our flat. He spoke French fluently and English better than some Dutch people I had met. Jean's situation was rather typical of recent non-Western immigrants who were the target of 'civic integration' legislation. When I knew him, Jean was learning Dutch, which he found very difficult, in order to secure Dutch citizenship. While he told me that he would have liked to move back to Africa, there were no opportunities to earn enough and have a good life there. He wanted Dutch citizenship since it would allow him to stay in the Netherlands, and give him much more political and economic security than his work visas. We always spoke in English, and it was clear that Jean was able to get by in Amsterdam speaking English and French. Jean's experience contrasted with that of Charles, whom I met through our voluntary work with the English-language coaching project in a school in Amsterdam West, the Native Speaker Project. The only black Native Speaker Project volunteer with whom I worked, Charles was by far the most popular volunteer among the students in my classrooms. He was originally from Nigeria but came to the Netherlands via the United Kingdom. When we met he was working as a highly skilled migrant for a large international company in Amsterdam. He decided to participate as a volunteer with the Native Speaker Project through his company's corporate social responsibility initiative. Charles' respected position as a highly-skilled worker in an international business, his English language skills, and his voluntary work marked him as an expat among the Dutch and other expats we met through the Native Speaker Project. Had Charles arrived in Amsterdam as a low-skilled labourer, he would certainly have been considered an *allochtoon* rather than expat, and

been required to undertake 'civic integration' training like Jean. The contrasting experiences of these men also call attention to the ways in which English is not always an exception to the rule, but is used to flag other often unspoken markers in a complex field of social difference.

In many ways the constellation of signifiers signalling belonging discussed in this chapter – which variously draw on language use and ability, cultural fit or similarity, orientation to labour, education or parenting – echoes how Stoler discusses colonial processes whereby "[r]acial membership was as much about the cultivation of culturally trained moral virtues and character as it was about the hue of the skin" (Stoler 2009:64; cf. Oostindie 1990:238). The ways in which these signifiers assemble and support a complex of *savoirs* connected to culturally and morally attuned citizenship practice in the Netherlands is part of a non-linear and problematic genealogy. The shifting and slippery markers of difference engaged in the contemporary context underscore how powerful and complex a technique, practice of calculation, and mode informing perception language has become in the technical field of citizenship practice. Understanding the clustering and interweaving of the discourses around social difference in the Netherlands help to make sense of the ways in which ideas of cultural fit – flagged in the everyday by language use and ability – have been able to gain such traction in relation to Dutch ideas of "active" citizenship practice.

In the ways in which practices around language use operate, my ethnography points to how the working of government is uneven as it targets a population that is always in motion. This has been shown throughout this dissertation in relation to some of the many key terms in the contemporary grammar of difference. The messiness of how government attempts to direct and correct the conduct of the population surfaced repeatedly in how different actors identified groups and individuals as "good," "active" or "worthy" citizens. The nuanced differences

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between the ways in which people negotiated the criteria for belonging in the local and national community, the seeming contradictions and tensions connecting interwoven discourses of citizenship and belonging, elucidate how governmental interventions and their reception are part of a set of processes and relations that government engages. Discourses, such as those engaging language, are shown through my ethnographic observations to be

> tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy. (Foucault 1990:101-102)

The vast array of markers of difference that emerge in the practices that form in, around, and through governmental programs point to the ways in which the governmental programs can exceed their scope, producing powerful unintended effects and generating points of tension or contradiction for how the national community is imagined and experienced in the everyday.

Speaking of belonging: conclusions for the study of citizenship practice

I have used citizenship practice as a lens through which to explore what it means to be 'Dutch' in contemporary Amsterdam, and more broadly in the Netherlands. From a theoretical perspective informed by governmentality, I have traced some of the ways in which these questions have been considered and framed by Dutch policy makers and politicians, by scholars, media commentators, and in the everyday through the experiences, opinions and actions of my 'native' Dutch interlocutors. In following the intricacies of how citizenship is conceptualized and enacted as a practice, my research participants articulated an understanding of belonging that resonates from the neighbourhood to the nation, and arguably beyond. This understanding of citizenship emerged from a context that is (over)determined by myriad factors: current and historical events, intimate and "imagined" encounters with people, places, and ideas both near and far, and ways of knowing that draw on an array of strategies and techniques. While the image of "good" citizenship practice articulated by Amsterdam's voluntary Dutch language coaches in my ethnography by no means provides a definitive answer to what it means to be Dutch or to integrate into Dutch society, it does illuminate important tensions and issues on this point that resonate across wider Dutch society.

In this dissertation, I have made the case for locating this ethnographic exploration of governmentality at the unique point of entry offered by studying voluntary Dutch language coaches and their projects in Amsterdam. These research participants are situated at a point of confluence that brings into view the relationships between, and lived experience of contemporary processes of nation-building, the impact of recent migration patterns and growing cultural diversity, as well as new market-oriented approaches to the meaning and practice of citizenship.

For many, including scholars and populist politicians, these recent developments – such as the impact(s) of globalization in the Netherlands – are seen to threaten the role and integrity of the nation-state as the quintessential organizing force for social, political, and economic life, and key site of identity politics (cf. Appadurai 1996, 2006). Yet, building upon the growing anthropological literature addressing the nation, I have argued that these and other shifts and new dynamics present rich sites through which anthropologists may continue to examine how national cultural boundaries are built, imagined, and continue to matter in the everyday experiences of socially-situated subjects (cf. McDonald 1989:308).

The strength of ethnography is to show how local understandings and practices exist in relationship to the broader social and political processes that shape lives at the level of daily experience. Located at a point of convergence across these negotiated, contested, and invented (national) cultural boundaries, I use citizenship as a lens to examine many interesting points of tension and "common sense" in my exploration of how questions of citizenship practice, belonging, and Dutchness have been problematized across Amsterdam, and the Netherlands. Citizenship serves as a valuable point of entry to trace government's "attempt to direct conduct and intervene in social processes to produce desired outcomes and avert undesired ones" (Li 2007b:264). The ways in which citizens are called upon by state actors to regulate the conditions of life, as through their "active" involvement as volunteers in civil society, draws attention to how citizenship, as a key mode of making claims to the nation-state, operates as "a discursive practice in the sense that citizens actually talk citizenship into being – by defining, including, and excluding certain people and practices" (Hurenkamp et al. 2011:211). Directing this lens to the experiences and opinions of language coaching volunteers offers important insights into broader processes of nation-building.

As an anthropologist studying citizenship, many people – including colleagues in Canada and the Netherlands – assumed that I would study the experiences of immigrants (cf. Ghorashi and van Tilberg 2006; Mosher 2006; Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001; Beriss 2004; Ong 1999, 2006). Contrary to these assumptions, in conducting this research I chose to focus on the experiences and viewpoints of those considered 'gatekeepers' to the national community. This choice has yielded new insights for questions of citizenship, nation-building, and belonging. In working with informal, volunteer-driven integration projects, I have shown some of the complexities of how governmentality operates in everyday life, extending its reach to target the entire population through the work of non-state actors: volunteer Dutch language coaches. I have discussed some of the ways in which these volunteers consent to, (re)articulate, and challenge contemporary notions of "good" Dutch citizenship practice. As national 'gatekeepers', volunteer language coaches help to set and disseminate the conditions of the question: what is it that newcomers are being asked to integrate into?

Another contribution of my ethnography is that it offers a study of governmentality in the context of the Dutch nation-state. In contemporary European and Western states, the disciplining of the individual body emerges in various forms: "the optimization of its capabilities, the exhortation of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls" (Foucault 1990:139). This has been clearly observed in formal processes of citizenship education, for instance, through universal and mandatory education for minors, or in mandating adult immigrants to undertake and prove themselves through 'civic integration' training (Schiffauer et al 2004; Björnson 2007; Entzinger 2004a). A study of formal integration practices provides an important analysis of how these disciplinary processes are envisioned by the state, and their reception in practice by those they target. An

ethnographic approach to these institutions and processes has been taken in Marnie Björnson's (2007) work with the *inburgering* programs, their teachers and students, Oskaar Verkaaik's (2010) study of citizenship ceremonies in the Netherlands, and in the cross-national study of 'civil enculturation' in public schools undertaken by Schiffauer et al. (2004). These studies provide important insights into what happens in the gaps between how these processes of educating citizens are considered by those conducting them, and those they target. Yet, the disciplinary techniques used in these institutions, such as language learning, are also deployed as techniques for shaping the conditions for conduct of the Dutch population at large. These disciplinary techniques are part of specific governmental interventions that have much broader reach, as I have shown through my ethnography of informal integration projects that depend on the voluntary labour of non-state actors.

Beyond the particular spaces of the language classroom or 'civic integration' testing, it is the people in the spheres of everyday life – including neighbours and fellow townspeople like language coaching volunteers – who articulate the conditions for newcomers' participation in the community. Language coaches answer the question of what it means to participate, to integrate and belong in Dutch society mainly through their benign, everyday encounters with newcomers, as the speaking partners meet to practice speaking the Dutch language. Language coaching sessions and the topics discussed occur at the discretion of the partners, often in the homes of one partner or in an otherwise agreed upon location, such as in the partners' shared neighbourhood. Through these informal meetings, language coaches and their organizations strive to create a trusting and open space where the non-native speaker can feel comfortable, and increasingly confident, in expressing themselves in Dutch. While the main goal of these projects is to help newcomers learn the language, as Bart importantly noted, "when learning the language, you

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automatically pick up many Dutch things." These many Dutch things include powerful expectations for social behaviour and etiquette, ways of acting in an *sociaal* manner, including ideas about how to participate in Dutch society as morally- and culturally-attuned citizen-subjects.

The expectations expressed by language coaches resonate in many ways with the criteria for language and social-orientation training that newcomers must meet in order to be eligible for Dutch citizenship status – even as my research participants took issue with aspects of these same 'civic integration' programs, policy language, and their effects on the role and place of these newcomers in Dutch society. Unlike civil servants or teachers employed in state schools or to teach 'civic integration' courses, volunteer language coaches are non-state actors situated at a convergence point for multiple processes and programs pertaining to citizenship practice. As non-state actors, they are not subject to the same kinds of state supervised requirements to deliver a program as those studied by Björnson, Verkaaik, or Schiffauer (et al). Volunteer language coaches are free to convey their personal ideas about citizenship, social etiquette, and behaviours to those with whom they act as front line citizenship educators. These non-state actors are highly effective in imparting powerful expectations for "good" citizenship practice by bringing their services as language coaches into the private spheres of these target groups. Significantly, language coaches indicate that these criteria for belonging and cultivating "good" forms of participation and social relationships in Dutch society are important for judging the citizenship practice of *all* Dutch citizens.

In taking a theoretical approach to citizenship practice informed by governmentality, it has been necessary to trace the genealogy of some of the key discursive threads that powerfully inform ideas of difference and Dutchness today. As Dean has discussed, a Foucauldian

genealogical approach seeks to trace the processes of problematization, to make strange the present and the very things that are "common sense" and "easy to think" (2010:56-62; cf. Stoler 2011). By locating and analyzing the "awkward continuities" with the past, the task of genealogy is not to reconstruct lost worlds, but to "attempt to discern which of these problematizations indicate the lines of fracture and transformation and which indicate a consolidation of regimes of government" (Dean 2010:56; cf. Li 2007b). I have therefore provided a detailed analysis of how governmental programs, and some of their key organizing techniques have made certain relationships "thinkable" or "common sense," as they rendered fields technical for governmental intervention.

Especially as articulated through the idiom of the Dutch language, calculations of cultural fit or distance from the Dutch represent an important, enduring element in the Dutch grammar of difference from the mercantile and imperial era to the time of my field research. Through this web of powerful signifiers and processes, religion, race/ ethnicity, sexuality and gender, civilization, ideas of education/ upbringing, and affective sentiment have come to be thought through the language of cultural commensurability. The essentialist categories developed through the experience of empire reverberate through the ways in which cultural racism impacts policy, politics, and the experience of the everyday in the twenty-first century Netherlands. The language of culture is also observable in the ways in which neoliberal rationale has settled in the Netherlands, building upon established structures and moral expectations connected to the Dutch as a 'guiding nation', social service provision, and labour. By engaging and redirecting these elements of the assemblage, neoliberal restructuring has been an important factor in the rise of voluntarism as a vaunted form of "active" citizenship practice in the Netherlands. The reworking of existing ways of knowing, forms of judgement and human capacities through neoliberal

rationale has effectively extended the reach of and consent to the will to govern among 'non-state' actors. In tracing these programs and some of their effects, it is clear that government is powerful but not totalizing; the continued success of government relies on an heterogeneous assemblage, including an array of differently situated subjects.

In following these genealogies of citizenship practice as a boundary site for national culture in the Netherlands, it becomes clear that volunteers are as much subject to the processes of governmentality as the newcomers with whom they work as front line citizenship educators (Hemment 2012:534; Dean 2010:38). The ways in which voluntarism has been implicated in contemporary ideas of neoliberal "active" citizenship draws attention to an important entry point for thinking about citizenship practice as part of governmental interventions to direct the wellbeing of the population at large. The ethic of civic and social engagement cultivated through a culture of "active" citizenship, as through the state promotion and support of voluntarism, has been important for defining the boundaries of Dutch national cultural practice. Yet, how Dutchness comes to be considered and experienced in the everyday does not unfold neatly, or according to plan. In my work, I have explored what happens in the gap between the governmental program and its realization in the everyday "practices that form in, around, through or against the plan" (Li 2007a:279). Attending to the banal subject-making processes that occur through the politics of the everyday points to the ways in which the discontinuous, fragmentary nature of state governmentality can be conducted or interrupted by the very non-state actors called upon to enculturate newcomers in their adaptation to the norms, expectations, and behaviours of "good" Dutch citizens. The methodological choice to focus on voluntary language coaches draws out these connections, and points to how immigrant integration is part of a comprehensive program of governmentality where citizenship practice is a key technical field.

The challenges that language coaches issue to elements and competing practices of governmental programs around citizenship are ethnographically important because they operate through, not outside of these structures of power relations. Language coaches' critiques of the federally-mandated 'civic integration' program, the exclusionary language of autochthony, and the populist Right discussions about defending Dutch culture and tradition expose some of the ways in which these complexly situated agents challenge discursive terms and governmental processes that have become "easy to think." For people across the Dutch political spectrum, legal status has emerged as less important for making claims to belonging in the Netherlands than aspects of culture – that is, norms and values, behaviours, decorum, traditions and cultural symbols – associated with Dutchness. While voiced very differently, this is as clear in the ways that Dutch language coaches talked about integration as being about "seeing how you behave," as it is in the populist Right's disparagement of the "backwards culture" of 'non-Western' and Muslim Dutch.

My research has revealed some of the interesting interconnections and processes that impact ideas about belonging in the context of local and national communities, raising questions about how similar processes have shaped the experience and expression of citizenship in other contexts. For instance, the withdrawal of state services and growing reliance of social service provision by non-governmental organizations, private institutions, and volunteers is a pattern that is far from being isolated to the Netherlands (cf. Muehlebach 2012; Hemment 2012; Erickson 2012). While the impact of neoliberal restructuring has unevenly affected different nation-states, the growing interconnections in many countries between citizenship education and voluntarism may point to novel avenues for the study of the changing meanings and experiences of citizenship, civic enculturation, and nation-building beyond the Netherlands. As in the Dutch

context, different levels of government in Canada have been similarly concerned about building or renewing a culture of civic engagement. This is clear in the incorporation by many school boards of 'social internships' or 'service learning' (like the Dutch *maatshcappelijke stage*) that require secondary students to complete a number of voluntary work hours to fulfill their curriculum requirements. It also surfaces in the demand for volunteer-run non-governmental initiatives. Two such programs operating in Toronto include mentoring programs to help skilled immigrants succeed in their integration into the Canadian job market (one example is arranged by the Toronto Regional Immigrant Employment Council), or literacy programs that frequently work with newcomers, even when these groups are not specifically targeted (e.g. the Toronto Public Library's Reading to Leading youth literacy program). Comparative research may provide insights into the role and organization of volunteer-based and civil society groups in informal immigrant integration in Canadian or other contexts. Such a comparison in Canada may be especially interesting considering the changing policy around immigration and citizenship acquisition, which places increasing emphasis on knowledge of official national languages.

A second interesting point of entry for future study is to examine the experiences of newcomer-clients participating in the kinds of voluntary projects at the heart of my ethnography. Many studies have already provided important insights into the views of newcomers in multiple contexts, including the Netherlands, but many of these have done so through the lens of formal integration projects. For instance, the works of Björnson (2007), Verkaaik (2010), and Schiffauer et al. (2004) have addressed similar questions through the viewpoints of newcomers, the subjects of state integration initiatives and 'civil enculturation' processes. Insights into the ways in which integration and citizenship practice differ in the lived experience of language coaching volunteers from the goals and definitions outlined by state actors and programs prompts the

question of how these issues are understood from the perspective of language-learners participating in these voluntary projects. Often *inburgeraars* ('civic integration' students) and language learning clients of voluntary coaching projects are the same target group. While Björnson's work has shown *inburgeraars* to be rather cynical of the goals of state 'civic integration', it is not yet clear how the language students of voluntary coaching projects perceive their coaches' views about "good" citizenship practice. How do these language learning partners understand the role of these voluntary projects in their lives? What do they take away from these partnerships in terms of the particular rendering of important cultural norms, values, and behaviours conveyed by their coaches? In what ways do the views of Dutch society and participation expressed by volunteer language coaches resonate (or not) with their own goals and strategies for living in Amsterdam, or the Netherlands? Further, is there a difference in the ways in which these programs are experienced and used by clients with 'Western' and 'non-Western' backgrounds, and what do these constructs mean, how and in what ways do they emerge in the configuration of difference?

Through my ethnography, the many tensions and contradictions between competing and intertwined discursive threads about the meaning and experience of belonging and "good" Dutch citizenship practice already suggest some of the ways in which nationalism is being contested and reconfigured in the early twenty-first century. These challenges reverberate across Western (European) societies, especially as the 'cultural' diversity of national populations grows through international migration and settlement (cf. Beriss 2004; Mandel 2008). From a perspective informed by governmentality, the processes and relationships of power undergirding nation-building in Western societies appear to not have substantially changed in spite of recent upheavals and concerns over national identity. My ethnography suggests that what has changed

are the elements of the assemblage that direct "the goal to be accomplished, together with the rationale that makes it thinkable, and the associated techniques and strategies" (Li 2007a:279). Where explicitly racial, religious or linguistic markers were, in the colonies, vital to calculations of who was 'Dutch' ('European') or 'native', these strategies and techniques of boundary-making and nation-building have been subject to adjustment and compromise as conditions in the polity have changed. Current discussions framing *allochtonen* as targets for Dutch policy intervention reveal that colonially-informed discourses continue to matter even as they have been reworked for new purposes (cf. Stoler 2011). Thus, the divergent and even opposing worldviews and expressions of citizenship articulated by language coaches and the populist Right each draw on a long and complex history that has shaped the nature of the Dutch nation-building project, as well as the conceptualization and management of social difference (cf. Anderson 1991; Cooper and Stoler 1997).

It remains to be seen how these current calculations for belonging and notions of "good" citizenship practice will affect broader processes of Dutch nation-building in the coming years. What is clear is that the ways that practices and people are defined as Dutch or not is emerging as an important question for debate in ways that have not been discussed in the past. This is especially visible in the wake of the "*Zwarte Piet* discussion" which has brought strong national and international attention to the intersections between racial difference and full membership in Dutch society. Is belonging really about being *sociaal* or seeing "how you behave" in Dutch society through the adoption and expression of Dutch etiquette, values, and norms? Or is belonging still tied to essentialist categories such as race or religion, putting the recognition of full membership in Dutch society perpetually out of reach of a growing number of Dutch citizens? Reflecting some of the ways that Dutch language coaching volunteers speak about what

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it means to be a "good" citizen, new voices – particularly those of young, Dutch people of colour – are raising questions about the powerful, "common sense" sentiments and practices around belonging in Dutch society. These dissenting voices pose new challenges for the assemblage that coheres around Dutch citizenship practices. It will be interesting to learn more about how these critiques may become as normalized and internalized among the Dutch progressive moral majority as those of the once marginalized voices of the populist (far) Right (cf. Li 2007b:279).

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Introduction

1   In the Netherlands, a special Professor (*bijzonder hoogleraar*) is a post paid by external funders, rather than the university. In the case of the *bijzonder hoogleraar Actief Burgerschap* (special Professor of Active Citizenship), this research chair is supported by a number of organizations through the *Stichting Actief Burgerschap* (Active Citizenship Foundation), which in turn is "funded by the VSBfonds, Aedes association of housing corporations, the healthcare facility Cordaan, Gamma Dienstverlening (Gamma Foundation Services), and the housing associations Mitros, Stadgenoot and Rentree" (Stichting Actief Burgerschap 2009; my translation).

2   The call to exercise deliberation is tied to the idea of "deliberative democracy" (Tonkens 2006:13). This approach values consensus building through informed consultation between involved parties, here, members of civil society.

3   The notion of being *sociaal* is rooted historically in the experiences of: the *waterschap* (water societies); the *poldermodel* of building political consensus through negotiation; and the particular expression of social tolerance bred by *verzuiling* (pillarization). The oldest democratic institutions in the Netherlands, *waterschappen* brought together land and building owners within a *polder* (the area of land reclaimed from the water) to care for this precariously positioned land and keep the water at bay through a grassroots approach to administration. The *waterschap* model is considered the precursor to the contemporary *poldermodel* of governance, where the "interested parties come together and jointly work out solutions to benefit the collective" (Martineau 2006:38).

4   Personal communication 30 October 2009.

5   Over the course of my research, language has emerged as key to making sense of these questions – not only the Dutch language, but how language is used in everyday speech to mark or challenge social boundaries between national or local insider and foreigner. For this reason, throughout this dissertation I indicate people who identify or are identified as Dutch by heritage as "'native' Dutch," rather than simply as "Dutch." While I draw the word 'native' from ongoing discussions of social belonging in mainstream Dutch society, as observed among my informants, scholarship on such questions, and popular culture (via news, television, internet, popular magazines, public events), I do so conscious of its political charge. In describing these Dutch people, many of whom are my primary research participants, as well as figures in the media, politicians and others as 'native' Dutch, I intend to flag and trouble the (frequently banal) processes of social difference making and belonging in the contemporary Netherlands (cf. Stoler 2011).

Chapter 1

1   In reality there are of course many more nuanced gradations of belonging on this scale. For instance, permanent residents, or denizens granted partial rights as in the case of the EU lie somewhere in between being full citizens and foreigners in the host country.

2   Dagmar Soennecken, personal communication, 14 September 2015.

Chapter 2

[1] This program began in 2007 and ended when *Hart voor Amsterdam* shut its doors 1 October 2011. *Hart voor Amsterdam* closed when long-time director Daphne Grimmelikhuijse left for a new position (Mug Magazine 2011). It appears that the Native Speaker Project continued independently of *Hart voor Amsterdam* in at least one of the schools in which it was previously established, funded through the not-for-profit Amsterdam Cares organization. A volunteer with the Native Speaker Project at this remaining program (personal communication, 22 February 2012) indicated that there were plans in the works on the part of Amsterdam Cares to expand this successful program into other schools during the 2012-2013 school year.

[2] Although I had greatly improved in terms of my written and spoken Dutch, I still had the help of a 'native' Dutch contact in correcting my writing. All of the recruitment messages and some of the further communication was proof read by Mena, my flatmate. This may have given José an inflated sense of my language skills.

[3] Two of these programs also provided basic lessons including writing help for marginalized learners who might not have access to regular language classes. These projects were a women-only organization and the Amsterdam regional branch of the Dutch Council for Refugees. Their target population included people who may be unable to afford or attend regular classes, including undocumented migrants or asylum seekers.

[4] Although titled *Handbook for Language partners of Mixen in Mokum* (*Handboek Voor Taalmaatjes van Mixen in Mokum*), this is not a large document. Printed on five, single-sided pages of 8.5 x 11 inch paper, this document contains information to orient volunteers to the project and the task of language coaching. Following the cover page containing the organization's information, the first two pages describe the *Mixen in Mokum* program and frame the participants. The last two pages are devoted to rules and tips for coaching, ideas for activities and topics to promote conversation, and a list of further resources. This handbook was complemented by a 52-page booklet of index-sized cards, the *strippenboekje*.

[5] The volunteer who conducted this initial interview with me at *SamenSpraak* explained that many of the people who sought out language coaching help at the *Gilde* were non-Western immigrants, and many only wished to speak with someone of their same gender. The importance of feeling comfortable with one's partner was emphasized across all of these programs, and by the end of my meeting it was clear that were either my partner or I unsatisfied with the match, we would be able to ask the *Gilde* for a new partner.

[6] By 2007 nearly 20% of the population was not 'native' Dutch, and of this group approximately 10.6% of the population was of "non-Western" origin (Roes 2008:13). Among the "non-Western" group, about two-thirds traced their heritage to "Turkey, Morocco, Surinam (each accounting for around 2% of the population) and the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba (just under 1% of the population)" (Roes 2008:13). In the city of Amsterdam, these numbers are even higher, as nearly half of the Amsterdamse population is now considered to be of 'non-Western' heritage – of this group 28.5% are themselves immigrants (Gemeente Amsterdam 2010). The most common non-'native' groups by 'ethnic origin' are Surinamese and Moroccans. Each group makes up approximately 9% of Amsterdam's residents (Gemeente Amsterdam 2010).

[7] This coordinator, Casper, José (both quoted below) and I communicated in Dutch.

[8] Recruitment of new volunteers is done on an on-going basis, and occurs through a number of different methods including: press releases to Amsterdam-wide or neighbourhood

newspapers, poster campaigns, word of mouth (especially as suggested by teachers of formal language education classes), information sessions and public events, information on the organizations' respective websites, as well as through the central volunteering and language coaching websites (*Vrijwilligers Centrale Amsterdam*, Volunteer Centre Amsterdam, www.vca.nu; *Taalcoachwijzer Amsterdam*, Language coach compass, http://www.taalcoachwijzer.nl). These recruitment methods are intended to reach a broad population.

[9] Houben-van Harten and te Riele provide the following figures for 2010 in Amsterdam (corrected for age and gender): 'native' Dutch 48.0%, 'non-native' Dutch or migrants with Western heritage 38.1%, 'non-native' Dutch or migrants with non-Western heritage 28.5% (2011:10).

[10] In 2009, the national umbrella organization Stichting Gilde Nederland (Foundation Guild Netherlands) ran SamenSpraak programs in more than 65 different locations across the Netherlands (van der Ven and Weggemans 2009:7).

[11] A report from *Gilde Amsterdam* (2010:10-11) provides the nationality/ national origin of the main groups of non-native speaking participants. These over three hundred participants represent 88 different nationalities from all over the world. During 2010, the most commonly represented countries were Morocco and Turkey (26 participants each), followed by: Brazil (18), China (15), Egypt (12), England (11), and Ghana (8). Of these, the majority (67%) were women. Approximately half of all non-native speaking participants were highly educated, and only 8 male and 19 female participants during this year had a low level of education.

[12] Some of these externally partnered initiatives include the "Language Lounge" and "School's Cool" programs. The Language Lounge program, partnered with the Regional Centre for Vocational Training (*ROC*), helps students ages 14 to 18 with presentation skills in Dutch, as well as helping with language development for exams. The School's Cool initiative similarly aims for adult volunteers to help students, but from elementary through to high school.

[13] The *Mozeshuis* organization closed its doors in March 2014 after forty-five years of service in Amsterdam. An article on the organization's homepage indicates that the closure was in large part due to growing financial constraints since city funding was halved in 2010 (Mozeshuis 2014).

[14] In practice, language coaches at *Gilde Amsterdam* and *Mixen in Mokum*, do often help their partners in tasks that they find difficult to navigate, such as dealing with officials and forms. The focus in these programs is on speaking.

[15] The name marked the city of Amsterdam as a relative safe-haven for Jewish people and other (especially wealthy) migrants since the sixteenth-century. During this early period, Jews were widely discriminated against across Europe. Although Amsterdam was no exception, with sanctions that strictly limited the employment of Jews in the city to certain industries, these were discriminatory yet bearable conditions for many when compared to neighbouring cities' and states' active pogroms and other overtly sanctioned acts of violence (Lucassen and Penninx 1997).

[16] It was this early economic, political, and cultural dominance of the province of Holland in the Netherlands and in the overseas territories (e.g. the Dutch East Indies), that accounts for the confusion in English where "Holland" and "the Netherlands" are treated as synonyms. My use of the terms "Holland" and "the Netherlands" follows the Dutch usage, indicating the province(s) and country, respectively.

The historical eminence and authority of the provinces of Holland (North and South) in the governing of the united country is important, but should not be equated with homogeneity across the Netherlands. Historical regional differences still exist and are felt quite strongly by contemporary Dutch people (Bossenbroek 1996; Kalb 1997; James and Schrauwers 2003).

[17] The development and spread of *Algemene Beschaafd Nederlands* (Standard Dutch) – where the North Holland city of Haarlem is taken to be the 'neutral' or 'purest' accent in Standard Dutch – in combination with increased literacy through mandatory schooling, and the growing reach of mass media, served to diminish regional differences. Even the implementation of standard time, based on Amsterdam's location, spoke to a particular sense of national unity with Amsterdam as the official point of reference for the entire nation (Bossenbroek 1996:19).

[18] Bart and I spoke in English during our interview.

[19] In the language most Dutch people I spoke with would employ, nearly half of Amsterdam's population is now considered *allochtone* (allochthonous). This policy terminology denotes someone who not Dutch in terms of ethnicity, but in doing so ties ideas of ethnic-heritage to the rights of the first comer or 'native'. This language and informants' responses to it are discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this dissertation.

[20] At this time, ultra-modern plans for a traffic corridor, parking garage and series of office blocks were being pushed forward by the City. These redevelopment plans were intended to rejuvenate the lagging post-war economy in this district, and the city more generally. Dating from the fifteenth century, and until the Second World War when its residents were deported under the Nazi occupation, the Nieuwmarkt was main Jewish quarter in the city. As one of the oldest neighbourhoods in Amsterdam, many citizens viewed the area as a symbolic political battleground.

[21] As mayors in the Netherlands are federally appointed rather than elected, their role is to rise above political and social division. Cohen, then a professor at *Maastricht Universiteit* (Maastricht University), was chosen as the best man for this job in Amsterdam in 2001.

[22] Cohen's mixture of soft and hard approaches to tackling issues of criminality in Amsterdam have been ridiculed as "drinking tea" and "coddling" the city's *allochtone* residents by opponents like Wilders, in spite of their effectiveness (Luyendijk and Berkhout 2010). Similarly, Cohen's response to the emotions and tensions which erupted in Amsterdam following the 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City portray a practical and level-headed approach to the perceived problems of the city's cultural diversity: "Islam is here to stay, in this country, in this city. ...We have to deal with Islam as a fact, not whether we like it. So the real question is how to get on with each other" (Simons 2005).

[23] This terminology is drawn from the sources of these figures, which use 'ethnicity' as a category for differences among the population. 'Ethnicity' here is linked to 'nationality' (citizenship status), producing numbers of 'Turks by nationality' and 'Turks by ethnicity' rather than 'Kurds' or other identifications that might have more currency among the population being listed.

[24] These continuities are discussed in greater detail the chapter "Activating citizens: Neoliberal governmentality and the rise of voluntarism."

Chapter 3

[25] These centuries-old historical differences along the lines of religious and political belief map relatively easily onto regional geography in the Netherlands even today. The north and west

of the country, although predominantly Protestant, has also been historically religiously mixed. Since the 1960s, people living in this region, which includes Amsterdam and the other large western cities (Rotterdam, Utrecht, Den Haag) have increasingly subscribed to secularism. From the southwest to the northeast of the Netherlands lies a mostly homogenous Protestant middle-zone, including the Dutch (orthodox Calvinist) Bible-belt. The regions to the south and east of the middle-zone, below the great rivers and bordering Belgium, remain the politically and economically peripheral Roman Catholic regions (Kalb 1997:1).

[26] The Inquisition of Jews in Spain and Portugal in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, brought many Jews, Roman Catholic converts and their descendants (accused by the ruling bodies of Spain and Portugal of 'cryptojudaism') to the Netherlands during the early 1600s (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:34-35). At the end of the seventeenth century, fifty to sixty thousand French Huguenots sought refuge from Catholic France in the Protestant Netherlands as well (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:33).

[27] Holland was home to five of the six cities where the *Verenigde Oostindische Compangie* (*VOC*; Dutch East Indies Company) had offices: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Hoorn, Enkhuizen, and Delft. (There was also one office in Middleburg, in the coastal province of Zeeland. VOC Kenniscentrum - KITLV 2013).

[28] This was not necessarily the experience for other European nation-states, as the case of France illustrates: The relationship between linguistic minorities, such as Bretons, and the French majority shows that language was a key marker for nation-building in Europe, adding another layer in the estimation of who was worthy of citizenship (Colonna 1997; McDonald 1989).

[29] In the case of Surinam, plantation owners and government policy only sought the conversion of the vast slave population to Christianity after the abolition of slavery in 1863 (Oostindie and Paasman 1998:354; Van Lier 1971:191-192). However, as early as the 1740s, the adoption of Christianity was understood to have a "whitening" effect for free creoles in the Caribbean colonies (Oostindie 1990:234).

[30] As Thorne (1997) discusses in her work, the language of racial degeneracy became linked with problems associated with poverty in England during the late eighteenth century. For evangelical missions, the 'heathen races' at home were in as dire need of Christian mission as those in the colonies.

[31] In Surinam, the abolition of slavery in 1863 had major repercussions on how the colony was governed that reflect and differed from the practices and anxieties over Dutch culture in the East Indies. Unlike the East Indies, Surinam had never been considered an "overseas settlement," and as Van Lier (1971) explains, with the exception of an early wave of Sephardic Jewish settlers, there was a negligible white/ European presence in the plantation colony. After emancipation, the Dutch government and Administration of Surinam became concerned with maintaining the colony's character as culturally Dutch. The new population of free blacks had been granted citizenship without adequate knowledge of Dutch or a Western education, which these governing bodies sought to remedy through "means of Western education in order to preserve the Dutch character of the territory" (Van Lier 1971:191). By 1876, Western style, Dutch language education became compulsory for children 7 to 12 years old and a clear assimilationist policy was established that included conversion of slaves to Christianity and eradication of African customs (Van Lier 1971:191-192). It was in this context that increasing numbers of Surinamese, first members of the creole elite but followed by those in the larger black population, pursued professional education in the Netherlands as a

way to climb the social hierarchy in Surinam, which was still very much undergirded by a racial hierarchy (Oostindie 1990:235-236). While the "Dutch language and culture community" (Van Lier 1971:193) envisioned by these assimilationist policies enabled well-educated and higher-class Surinamese to mostly meet Dutch expectations for behaviour and cultural norms in the Netherlands, racial difference nonetheless continued to mark Surinamese as 'strangers' to Dutch society into the twentieth century (Oostindie 1990:238).

[32] The Japanese, whose powerful empire was an important trading partner for the Dutch, were accorded the legal status of 'European'.

[33] The problematization of Dutch cultural forms (including behaviour, etiquette, language choice, religious practice) that underlay these legal distinctions also affected the reception of the small numbers of elite and educational Surinamese migrants to the Netherlands prior to the 1960s (Oostindie 1990). As Oostindie suggests, for 'native' Dutch "skin colour didn't matter much as long as [migrants'] conduct lived up to Dutch standards" Oostindie 1990:238).

[34] Across Dutch society and among nationalist supporters of charitable organizations established to promote the Boer cause, the development of these Boer republics was viewed as a last chance for the establishment of Dutch/ Hollandsche influence in world history, and a way to keep Dutch culture, language and race alive. These campaigns were motivated by the worries of the Dutch in the Netherlands that they were in danger of being absorbed by larger European neighbours (Bossenbroek 1996:245-246; Kuitenbrouwer 1991:193). Kuyper's influence in this cause was foundational in spreading the theological nationalism of the Dutch churches in the Boer-dominated territories. Ultimately, is was through these religious techniques of control that apartheid (in Dutch, literally 'apart-ness') began (James and Schrauwers 2003:53).

[35] These blocs or pillars emerged over the course of the nineteenth century in response to a number of different concerns over the place of differing religious and political ideologies in the operation of the Dutch state. Following the changes to the Constitution of 1848, religious communities (other than Protestants) were able to organize, and religious groups – Catholics and orthodox Protestants – formed strong voices in regional and local political spheres. As Lijphart indicates, during the heyday of *verzuiling* (1878 to 1917) the leaders of these pillars cooperated in the spirit of accommodation with particular attention paid to the relationship between church and state (especially of importance in the matter of education), the franchise, and labour (Lijphart 1968:104). These pillars received state funds to establish religious schools and universities alongside secular institutions. Newspapers and other media were oriented to specific pillars, as well as the later radio and television stations (the latter operating predominantly along state-controlled, denominational lines into the 1970s) (Bossenbroek 1996; Lechner 2008:209-211). Political parties, labour unions and other trade associations were likewise established along denominational lines (cf. Kalb 1996).

Chapter 4

[1] Following the surrender of Japan at the end of the Second World War and the end of its occupation of the Dutch East Indies, Indonesian nationalists declared their independence from colonial rule on August 17, 1945. This began a war of decolonization that only ended when the Dutch government officially acknowledged Indonesia's independence in 1949 (Pattynama 1998:106).

This was exemplified by the extreme cases of the Hunger Winter – *Hongerwinter*, the famine in the German-occupied northern Netherlands (1944-45) that killed some 18,000 people – and the North Sea Flood in 1953 (*Watersnoodramp*, flood disaster) that severely affected Zeeland province (as well as parts of South Holland and North Brabant) killing over a thousand people, displacing tens of thousands, and destroying dwellings and farmland across the region.

3 An early notable wave of 'non-Western' migrants were the Calvinist Christian Moluccan soldiers who had served in the Royal Dutch East Indies Army (*KNIL, Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Lege*r). Having fought for Dutch interests during the Japanese occupation and against Indonesian nationalists following the war, decommissioned soldiers and their families (approximately 12,500 people) were permitted to come to the Netherlands on a strictly temporary basis in 1951, as the terms of an independent South Moluccas was negotiated with newly independent Indonesia (Pettigrew 1998:79; Lucassen and Penninx 1997:42). Remaining on the social periphery in the Netherlands for decades, many became dependent on the Dutch welfare system (Pettigrew 1998:79), and increasingly frustrated about their situation in the Netherlands. These frustrations culminated in several terrorist attacks during the 1970s, which catalysed discussion around this group and pushed questions of immigrants' place in Dutch society onto the political agenda (Scholten and Holzhacker 2009:88).

4 After years of waiting for a decision, some applicants denied asylum were not actually deported. The crisis of asylum fed into a crisis of illegal immigration in the Netherlands and across the EEC (Penninx 2006:249; Lucassen and Penninx 1997:85). It was only in the mid-1980s that the EEC and individual member states implemented policy to severely restrict the number of asylum applications by narrowing the criteria and tightening the procedures for making asylum claims (Martiniello and Rea 1999:166; Pettigrew 1998:81; Andeweg and Irwin 2002:39).

5 The consociational pillars (*zuilen*) that organized Dutch society along the lines of religion and class affiliations dominated social, political, and economic life during the early twentieth century. Yet, during the 1960s Dutch culture underwent many profound changes, most notable being the widespread shift away from religious affiliation (cf. Vuijsje 2000). Figures from the 1899 census showed that just 2 percent of the Dutch population did not have a religious affiliation. By 2002, this had drastically changed: 65 percent of the Dutch population no longer identified as religious (Bekkers 2002:8).

6 For a number of years during the late 1970s and into the 1980s, the children of these workers were subject to a policy of education in their own language and culture (*OETC, Onderwijs in Eigen Taal en Cultuur*), isolating them further from mainstream Dutch society (Lucassen and Penninx 1997:150). This to a certain extent mirrored what was happening in other Western European states (cf. Rietsteig 1994, Grillo 1985). The *OETC* policy explicitly reflected educational and integration policy directed at Indies migrants to Surinam during the late nineteenth-century. These policies were also repealed when these migrants were shown to be permanent settlers in the colony (Van Lier 1971:193).

7 The term *allochtoon* (allochthon) finds its counterpoint in *autochtoon* (autochthon), which means "sprung from the earth" (from the Greek *autos* 'self' + *khtōn* 'soil, earth').

8 Although how this language has been employed has been the subject of some contention, particularly among Francophones, as Geschiere attests (2009:19-20).

9 While *achterstand* can be translated as "disadvantaged," as in *achterstandssituatie*, it can also appear as another form of lack or lag, as in the concept of *taalachterstand* (language deficit).

In other situations, *achterstand* is translated literally as "backward." Björnson has translated *achterstand* in her work as "structural marginalization" (2007:68).

[10] *VMBO (voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs)* or lower vocational professional education, is the lowest of the three academic streams in the Dutch secondary education system. Students in this stream enter the job market directly upon graduation, although they can study to enter one of the other streams, and pursue higher education. The Dutch secondary educational system is composed of three main streams: *VMBO*, *HAVO (hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs)* higher general continued education, and *VWO (voorbereidend wetenschappelijk onderwijs)*, preparatory scientific education, which prepares students for direct entry to university.

[11] An analogous example from Canada occurred when dual Canadian-Lebanese citizens caught up in the violent conflict sparked between Israel and Hezbollah during the summer of 2006. In this highly politicized and racialized context, Citizenship and Immigration Minister Monte Solberg's comments that "Canadians want to know that citizenship means something, that we are not just a port in the storm" (CBC 2007:1), brought the true loyalties of these Canadian citizens abroad into question.

[12] Aboutaleb was then a federal cabinet minister, and later was appointed as mayor of Rotterdam. Aboutaleb holds both Dutch and Moroccan citizenship. Albayrak held Dutch and Turkish citizenships.

[13] In relation to this specific case, Wilders called on parliament to pass a motion prohibiting dual nationality among cabinet members (which was unanimously rejected by all other members of parliament, Volkskrant.nl 2007). After Aboutaleb left federal politics and was appointed mayor of Rotterdam, Wilders contested his appointment with statements such as: "A Moroccan as the mayor of the second city of the Netherlands is just as crazy as a Dutchman as mayor of Mecca." He also stated that Aboutaleb had much better become mayor of Rabat in Morocco, since Rotterdam would become, "with him in the position ... Rabat on the Maas [river]. We might as well get an imam to be archbishop. Ridiculous." (Volkskrant.nl 2008; my translation)

[14] José and I spoke mostly in Dutch.

[15] Margriet chose to conduct our interview in English, saying that it would be good practice for her since she did not have the opportunity to speak the language very often. Casper, quoted below, spoke with me in Dutch,

[16] In an affective register, these expletives could be translated as "Moroccan bastards" and "fucking little Moroccans," respectively.

Chapter 5

[1] Van Gogh had been cycling through Amsterdam on his way to finish the final edits on a film dedicated to the late Fortuyn when he was shot repeatedly, had his throat slit, and a note was stabbed into his corpse containing further death threats to a number of prominent Dutch politicians, including Hirsi Ali (Hajer and Uitermark 2008:1). Van Gogh's murder has also served to solidify the "image of the delinquent Moroccan [which] now dominates, more or less explicitly, many political discussions about criminality, multiculturalism and religion" (Uitermark et al. 2005:634).

[2] The Dutch (orthodox) Jewish community was also affected by this proposal in their practices surrounding kosher meat. This aspect of the debate raised a number of tensions in relation to

religious communities in the Netherlands, especially given the fraught history of Jews in the Netherlands and in relation to the aftermath of the Second World War. However, the likely effects on the Jewish community were overshadowed in the media coverage by the focus on Muslim *halal* practices.

3   Far right parties were elected or gained significant support during this time in Germany (Republicans), the United Kingdom (British National Party), Switzerland (Swiss Democrats, formerly 'National Action'), France (Front National), and in the northern, Flemish-speaking region of Belgium (Flemish Block) (Koopmans et al. 2005:180; 203).

4   The Council of Europe's "Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, Teaching, Assessment" designates six different levels of proficiency: Basic User (A1 and A2), Independent User (B1 and B2), and Proficient User (C1 and C2). The A2 level required in preparation for the Dutch civic integration exam stipulates that students:

> Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need. (Council of Europe 2012)

5   The *inburgeraar* is also required to assemble a portfolio of twenty "proofs" to determine whether the student can use and understand Dutch in practical situations they are likely to encounter, such as registering with the local city council, speaking with a child's teacher, meeting a doctor, paying bills or dealing with one's bank (DUO 2012b). This may include meetings endorsed by an authority figure, such as a teacher, doctor, or civil servant; a formal assessment during four "practical situations;" or a combination of ten portfolio proofs and two formal assessment examples.

6   The first law requires people wishing to immigrate to the Netherlands (targeting those who seek to do so via family reunification) to acquire a residency permit and undertake a version of the 'civic integration' course and exam prior to arrival. The 2006 Civic Integration Act required 'oldcomers' (previously exempt) as well as 'newcomers' between the ages of 16 and 65 without Dutch or EU citizenship to undergo this training. This law was effectively extended to encompass certain, 'problematic' groups of previously naturalized citizens (e.g. former guest workers), such as "those who receive welfare benefits, or those that practise a religious profession" (Vink 2007:347; (cf. Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007:19). These individuals are now required to successfully fulfil this duty within five years or face fines.

7   Many academics were critical of this piece, noting that by this time, policy had already moved away from being or aiming to be 'multicultural'. Detractors also claimed that Scheffer stereotyped all immigrants (including some that had lived in the Netherlands for generations) as Muslim fundamentalists who rejected liberal democracy. Just as Scheffer ignored the realities of the diversity among immigrants, framing them as a homogenous group, he also failed to acknowledge real progress of members within this population in terms employment and education outcomes (Entzinger 2006:128-129).

8   Two weeks before the 2002 federal elections where his new party was expected to – and did – win numerous seats, Fortuyn was murdered as he left an interview in the media park in

Hilversum. Although Fortuyn was murdered by a 'native' Dutch man, part of the killer's motivation stemmed from an idea of defending the weak and marginalized in Dutch society, i.e. Muslims. The party foundered without its charismatic leader and has since dissolved.

[9] The *PVV* decided against running any candidates in the 2010 municipal elections in Amsterdam. During the 2010 federal election, the *PVV* received 9.4% of the total vote within Amsterdam (up from 4.5% during the 2006 elections). Elsewhere, the *PVV* made significant inroads in Den Haag (19%), and gained the most seats of any party in Almere (21% of the vote). At the federal level, the *PVV* became the third largest party in parliament and a necessary partner in governing (Kiesraad 2013).

[10] This program brought a panel of 'native', that is "white" Dutch together to discuss issues of *allochtonen* integration at the neighbourhood level: white flight, criminality, neighbourhood nuisances (*overlast*), racism, and, as suggested by the episode title, feelings of being turned into a stranger in your own neighbourhood and country. This program was broadcast on the public station *Nederland 2*, but produced by the Christian network *NCRV*. It originally broadcast live from *Felix Meritis* in Amsterdam, on 31 October, 2009.

I owe many thanks to Irene Stengs of the *Meertens Instituut* in Amsterdam for her explanation of the nuances of this discussion.

[11] Ilse and I met through her work as a volunteer at a nursing home. She chose to speak with me in English.

[12] In Amsterdam Noord the *PVV* won 21.6% of the vote in 2010 (up from 9.4%). The city district of Nieuw-West the support for the populist Right party rose from 7.4% in 2006 to 15.3% in 2010. City-wide, the support for Geert Wilders' party remained below 10% (Gemeente Amsterdam, Dienst Onderzoek en Statistiek, 2010b:7-9). Ilse told me during our interview that while an online 'vote compass' indicated that her beliefs most aligned with the *PVV*, she did not plan to give the party her support.

[13] Gerrit and I spoke in Dutch.

[14] Carolien and I spoke in English. She expressed at the start of our interview that these were her personal views and experiences, and did not represent those of the Committee.

[15] Clarisa and I spoke in English. She was still in the process of finalizing her permanent residency visa when we met in 2010, but had been living in the Netherlands for some months. Clarisa was learning Dutch independently, and was volunteering in the elder care sector while she was still ineligible to pursue employment.

[16] According to the *NOS* (2010b) article, in early 2008, 86% of perpetrators nationally were either 'native' Dutch or of unknown ethnic/ national background. Figures from research conducted by the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* on anti-gay violence in Amsterdam showed that perpetrators were evenly 'native' Dutch and Dutch from Moroccan heritage (each group committed about 36% of these attacks). However, the smallness of the Moroccan-Dutch population in Amsterdam (16% of the city's population) compared to the 'native' Dutch population (39%), was used by commenters to point to an overrepresentation of Moroccans committing anti-gay violence (NOS 2010b).

[17] This holiday has been celebrated in the Netherlands at least since the fourteenth century, as city records from 1360 in Dordrecht "describe a church-sanctioned St. Nicolas celebration for the children" (Blakely 1993:40). Similar records from across what has since become the Netherlands suggest that the *Sinterklaas* holiday was widely celebrated as a children's holiday at least since this period, withstanding Calvinist attempts to eradicate the popular (Catholic) Saint's Day festival during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Blakely 1993:43-44).

18 The society applied to the *Het Nederlands Centrum voor Volkscultuur en Immaterieel Erfgoed* (The Netherlands' Centre for Folk Culture and Intangible Heritage), under the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which the Dutch ratified in 2012. Citing the "*Zwarte Piet* problem" the adjudicators chose not to give such privileged status to the holiday at this time.

19 In portraying these figures, many people would use soot or ashes to darken their faces, and many wore chains with which the saint controlled them. In the Netherlands, Belgium, the early German states and in Switzerland these dark companions to the saint played the role of bogeyman to scare and discipline children. Across these regions, the origins of the character are traced to pagan tradition, and the Germanic/ Norse god Odin. As Christianity overtook the Netherlands, the darkened character was frequently associated with the devil. For example, in the Catholic south of the Netherlands, the saint's companion had many different names, often also names for the devil.

20 Similar, enduring tropes of racialized otherness in the Netherland include the *Gaper* or Moor's head in heraldry and decoration, and the "Smoking Moor" (Blakely 1993).

21 John Helsloot, an ethnologist at the *Meertens Instituut* (Meertens Institute) in Amsterdam, is renowned as an expert on Dutch festival and ritual, with his earliest published work on the *Sinterklaas* celebration dating to the mid-1990s. Helsloot's extensive research on the celebration became increasingly critical of the role and place of *Zwarte Piet* in the holiday during the early 2000s.This critique was clear in his 2002 publication in *Skript Historisch Tijdschrift* (the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* student journal in history). Rather than rejecting the changes proposed by antiracism activists out of hand, Helsloot indicates that in his personal opinion, these developments should be celebrated as part of Dutch culture.

22 In 1934, an extensive survey of Dutch cultural heritage indicated that the various regional specificities of the celebration had given way to a dominant set of symbols strongly influenced by the tradition in the Holland provinces. One of the most notable of these was the country-wide acceptance of *Zwarte Piet* as the companion of the saint, supplanting a diverse coterie of other characters (cf. Helsloot 2001:112; Blakely 1993:45) Since the standardization of the *Zwarte Piet* character in the holiday, all of the saint's 'helpers' have shared the name *Piet*. It was only in 2004 that the national broadcaster began presenting these characters as individuals, albeit distinguished by their primary tasks, such as the Transportation Pete or Packing Pete.

23 This project was Abbass' final exam at the *Koninklijke Academie van Beeldende Kunsten* (Royal Academy of Art) in Den Haag. Abbass' pseudonym is an anagram of *stereotiep* (stereotype) (Personal Communication, 8 Dec 2009). His posters displayed the web address to his project (which has since migrated to different social media platforms): www.stereopiet.nl

24 The campaign gained more notice after the events during the *Intocht*.Standing alongside the parade route wearing their stencilled shirts, members of the group answered the questions of passersby about their slogan and campaign. The police demanded that the group leave, and in confrontation with the police Gario questioned: "Why must I leave, what have I done? Don't I have a right to free speech?" (AT5 2011; my translation). The police cited the demonstration as a public disturbance, and after refusing to leave, Gario was arrested. A bystander captured the excessive force used in Gario's arrest on YouTube, with the title *Mishandeling??? Sinterklaas Intocht Dordrecht* [Abuse??? Saint Nicolas' Arrival in Dordrecht] (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-Wf89f0I0M&feature=youtu.be). The success of this campaign in creating discussion has made Gario a prominent target for pro-*Piet* ire.

This conversation and the following text was in English.

Chapter 6

1   This is clear in the extreme example of the *asowoningen* (anti-social housing) mentioned in Chapter 3. Scholarly research on the historical *asowoningen* has shown that this social experiment was deemed a complete failure in terms of creating "ladders out of impoverishment." Instead isolated housing created social apartheid, and acted more like "slides" deeper into misery and anti-social behaviour (Steyaert and van Lanen 2011:36).

2   Some of these include the *Stichting RCOAK* (*Roomsch Catholijk Oude Armen Kantoor*, Roman Catholic Old Poor Foundation), the *Diaconie Evangelisch-Lutherse Gemeente Amsterdam* (Evangelical Lutheran Diaconate of Amsterdam), the *Protestantse Diaconie Amsterdam* (Protestant Diaconate of Amsterdam), and the *KNR*, (*Konferentie Nederlandse Religieuzen*, Dutch Religious Conference).

3   This foundation was established in 2002 by then Crown-Prince Willem-Alexander and his wife Máxima, incorporating under its banner the older *Juliana Welzijn Fonds* (Juliana Welfare Trust) established in 1948.This foundation's funding predominantly comes from revenue generated by national lottery programs, such as the *BankGiro Loterij*, or the *Nationale Postcode Loterij*.

4   Interestingly, this includes the devaluation of informal care activities exchanged between families, friends, and other "survival networks" that are especially important for lower-income groups (Erickson 2012; Muehlebach 2012).

5   Dekker and de Hart are the editors of the fifth and final study in a multi-year *SCP*-funded project on voluntarism, *Vrijwilligerswerk in meervoud. Civil society en vrijwilligerswerk 5* (Voluntary work: a diversity of forms. Civil society and voluntary work 5). Dekker and de Hart take their figures from a combination of different questionnaires, noting that the ways in which questions about volunteering are asked will play a role in the final figures (2009:280). This may account for why Lindeman et al (2011) remark that Amsterdam has a lower than national average participation rate in formal voluntary work (33%). However, they note that Amsterdam also reports a higher than average rate of informal help, with about half of the population reporting that they were engaged in this kind of unpaid labour.

6   Although voluntary work is unpaid, the Dutch government does allow for some monetary compensation to be given to volunteers. This compensation is minimal, and may cover the costs incurred while volunteering, e.g. the cost of transit to and from the place of volunteer work. In addition, some institutions require that volunteers be insured in order to work. This was the case when I volunteered with a residential care facility for the elderly. The *Cordaan* organization, which ran the nursing home, paid for the costs of my insurance.

7   For instance, in the Canadian province of Ontario high school students are required to complete a mandatory 40 hours of "community involvement activities" in order to graduate (Schwarz 2011; cf. Sander and Putnam 2010).

8   In the Netherlands, this strategy may have also been a response seeking to counter a trend of lower levels of youth involvement in voluntary work. Bekkers (2002:3) shows that in 1985 31% of the Dutch under-30 population was involved in voluntary work, compared to just 18% in 2000.

9   This aspect of the curriculum was expanded and implemented across the country during the 2011-2012 school year. All high school students in the Netherlands are required to conduct a

number of voluntary service learning hours, depending on their level of study. For those in the highest academic streams (*VWO*), this commitment is 72 hours; for those in the middle (*HAVO*) and lower (*VMBO*) academic streams, the number of hours required is 60 and 48, respectively (Vrijwilligers Centrale Amsterdam 2012).

[10] The website features a volunteer job bank for use by volunteers as well as organizations seeking volunteers. In addition to the job bank, the website also provides frequently updated news on volunteering in Amsterdam, as well as stories and experiences shared by current and past volunteers that provide context and encouragement to those considering involvement in voluntary work.

[11] *NL Doet* (NL Does) is a national organization for voluntary work supported by the *Oranje Fonds*. The major initiative of *NL Doet* is the organization of two annual national volunteer days of action to promote voluntarism in the Netherlands as an integral part of society, and to encourage more citizens to consider volunteering on a regular basis. Volunteers participating in these days of action come from all levels of Dutch society: from Dutch celebrities and members of the royal family (including the monarch), to regular Dutch people of all ages, sociocultural and economic backgrounds (Oranje Fonds 2011, NL Doet 2012).

[12] For *Gilde Amsterdam* this included some extra funding from the municipal council department responsible for *inburgering* (*Dienst Werk en Inkomen*, Work and Income). With this money the organization was able to support the recruitment of an extra 100 speaking partnerships (200 people) for the year, at a cost of €150 for each couple. The director of *Gilde Amsterdam* also noted that a further 100 couples and other aspects of this campaign were supported by funds from a partnership with the aforementioned *RCOAK*.

[13] With the theme for June 2011, language coaching and mentoring, *Gilde Amsterdam*, along with the support of their corporate partners and the *VCA*, staged events throughout the month to showcase volunteering opportunities and ongoing programs in this vein. One notable event was the *Vrijwilligerskoppelfestival* (Volunteer-couples festival) on 22 June. Volunteer language coaches (for non-native speakers), mentors (for university or college students), and interested individuals were invited to attend the festival with or without their partners. The event featured free food, a concert with some well-known performers (including the popular Dutch rapper of Moroccan descent, Ali B.), and a space for informal chatting, connecting with others, and recording short videos of their experiences (on the *babbelbank*, or chatting sofa). Drawing more than 300 visitors, the goal was to publicize the language coaching and mentoring programs that were ongoing in the city, to encourage others to become involved, and to show current participants that their work was appreciated. The event was publicized in a number of ways, for example on the *VCA* website, on the city's volunteer site, as well as through emails sent to current participants. *Gilde Amsterdam* received funds to create a short video advertisement for the event, which was also featured on the *VCA* website.

[14] While good Dutch language skills are necessary to navigate the mainstream job market in the Netherlands (assuming one is not a highly skilled, English-speaking migrant), other factors also inhibit *inburgeraars* and other *allochtonen* from finding employment. This includes things such as a lack of appropriate skills training on the part of the applicant, as well as discriminatory hiring practices on the part of Dutch employers (cf. Ghorashi and van Tilberg 2006).

[15] Since the inception of the *inburgering* courses funding for the program has been partially provided by the federal government. Students were able to apply for loans or bursaries, and to recoup some or all of the costs upon successful completion of the exams (DUO 2012; Het

begint met taal 2012). On 1 January 2014 the federal department for Work and Income stopped financing for the *inburgering* courses, and any program funding now comes from the municipalities (Ministrie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid 2013:3). For immigrants granted their residence permit after 1 January 2013, the government eliminated access to the reimbursements previously available upon completion of their courses and exams. Financial aid is now only available through the *Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs* (*DUO*, Service for implementing education in the Dutch Ministry for Culture, Education, and Science) in the form of loans. These loans are only available for those unable to cover the costs incurred while undertaking civic integration courses and tests (DUO 2013).

Chapter 7

1 Some of these incidents were raised by my interlocutors. An example of which is a 2007 controversy over the dual nationality of two federal cabinet ministers discussed in Chapter 5.
2 For example, Bart discussed what he called a strong republican tradition, especially in Amsterdam, as something in which he took particular pride.
3 I was also directed to other popular books that catalog 'typical' Dutch traits by some of my informants. These include the humorous observations on Dutch culture and language use: *The Undutchables. An observation of the Netherlands: its culture and its inhabitants* (2006[1989]), written in English and directed to an international audience of 'expats', but well-received by Dutch readers and critics (including at the reputable papers *Het Parool* and *NRC Handelsblad*); the bilingual *I always get my sin: het bizarre Engels van Nederlanders* [the bizarre English of the Dutch] (2012) which pokes fun at how Dutch turns of phrase do not always translate into English; and the popular Dutch-language *Taal is zeg maar mijn ding* [Language is really my thing] (2012[2009]) where Paulien Cornelisse comments on some of the foibles of the Dutch through typical expressions and practices.
4 Later entries typically showcased two or three items, expressions or phenomena considered typically Dutch, not unlike the *Typische Nederlands* book that had been published a decade earlier. An example from the tenth part of this weekly series, published 5 June 2010 discussed the Dutch soccer team in anticipation of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, as well as celebrating "*Hollandse Nieuwe*," the first catch of the season of Dutch herring.
5 Sterre, Chloe and I mostly spoke in English. Neither of these women were language coaches, but Chloe was an active volunteer in a life-saving society.
6 Wilders then commissioned the research institute Nyfer to produce a study, *Budgettaire effecten van immigratie van niet-westerse allochtonen* (Bugetary effect of the immigration of non-Western allochthons). This study, whose full results were published in May 2010, concluded that non-Western immigrants cost the Netherlands some €7.2 million annually (NRC.nl 2010).
7 Anna and I spoke in Dutch.
8 Anouk chose to conduct our interview in English. Casper, quoted below, spoke with me in Dutch.

Chapter 8

1 José's exact words were "*Maar hij is gewoon Nederlander van een boer, dus*—" I have translated it here to give a better sense of her meaning for the English reader.

²   It is unclear whether anything was done with viewer feedback from this television program. Rather, I speculate that it was produced and broadcast in order to raise public debate and discussion on a serious issue, the process of *inburgering*, among the wider Dutch population. This program was later followed by the production of similar Dutch television quiz events on controversial issues; dramatized reality-format programs whose production aimed to bring awareness to particular issues and move them (back) onto the national political agenda. A 2007 program, *De Grote Donorshow* (The Big Donor Show), sought to highlight the shortage of organ donations in the Netherlands. Contestants (three patients on real organ donation waiting lists) "competed" for a kidney from an actress posing for the program as a terminally ill woman. Viewers were invited to text the program from their mobile phones to help the "donor" choose who should get her kidney. It was only revealed to the audience at the end of the program that the event was staged to publicize the social issue of organ donation. Similarly, a program broadcast in 2011, *Weg Van Nederland* (Out of the Netherlands) sought to underscore the plight of some 11,500 (many years' resident) asylum seekers whose applications had failed and expected to be deported. The contestants were themselves failed asylum seekers, who answered trivia questions on Dutch history and culture – highlighting their level of social integration in the Netherlands – to win €4000 toward covering the costs of their deportation. Similar to *De Nationale Inburgering Test* program, viewers were invited to answer the quiz questions online, in competition for a vacation to the Dutch Caribbean island of Curaçao.

³   The 2007 controversy over Dutch Labour politician Ahmed Aboutaleb's dual citizenship is discussed in greater detail Chapter 4.

⁴   Correspondence with *SamenSpraak Oost* was in Dutch.

⁵   The intention of this policy had been for "ethnic minority children ... to develop a positive self-concept through the attention to their own language and culture, with a view to improving their educational opportunities in Dutch society" (Rijschroeff et al. 2005:424). The logic behind this policy shifted from a belief that these children would eventually return to their "mother country" when their parents' visas expired, to the belief that having a strong foundation in one's mother tongue would facilitate these students' learning of Dutch. Problems in the implementation of the policy often effectively isolated these children even further from mainstream Dutch society.

It is worth noting that this policy echoes educational policy instituted for British and Dutch East Indies indentured labourers in the colony of Surinam at the end of the nineteenth century. In this context, the policy to educate in language of the supposedly temporary migrants, rather than in Dutch, was repealed when it became clear that these groups had settled permanently on Dutch soil (Van Lier 1971:193).

⁶   She had described her workplace as "a white school, but there was one Arabic" student in her class.

Chapter 9

¹   After English, German was the next most commonly known language (70% of those polled), followed by French (27%) (Eurobarometer 2006:13). Another interesting figure from this study indicated that 75% of those polled in the Netherlands felt that they were able to hold a conversation in at least two foreign languages (Eurobarometer 2006:9).

[2] Only in Sweden (89%) and Malta (88%) was English more widely understood than in the Netherlands (Eurobarometer 2006:9).

[3] In cinemas, other foreign language films were also shown in their original language with subtitles rather than being dubbed, which was common in Germany and France.

[4] Not everyone agrees with the use of English in Dutch media, as is clear from the concern expressed in October 2010 by the ombudsman for the national Dutch daily newspaper, *NRC Handelsblad*. Gerrit, a retired teacher in his seventies and a language coach at *SamenSpraak*, who spoke multiple languages himself (including English) shared in the concerns of the *NRC* ombudsman. During our interview it was clear that he was critical of what he saw as the increasing prevalence of English in Dutch society. Gerrit saw the creeping of this language into Dutch media, daily life, and conversation as a "poor work": "English, I find that appalling. ... The language. There is more and more English used in everyday society."

[5] Additionally, as a Canadian most people had some knowledge about my country, and shared positive opinions about it. Often these good feelings were connected to the liberation efforts of Canadian soldiers during the Second World War. Many people had relatives living in Canada, or had visited themselves.