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A Case of Mistaken Identity? *Suikerlords* and Ladies, *Tempo Doeloe* and the Dutch Colonial Communities in Nineteenth Century Java

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ABSTRACT: *The issue of acculturation is an important one in the history and historiography of Dutch colonialism in the Indies. In so far as there is any substantial orthodoxy, it is that the orientalisation of Java's Dutch communities had become very marked by the late seventeenth century and remained so for the next two hundred years. It was only with the changed global circumstances of the late colonial era, c. 1880 onwards, that Western modes began to assert themselves effectively against those of the East. In turn, the profound acculturation prior to that date of the Dutch colonial communities in the Indies, and in Java in particular, came to be associated with the notion of a* Tempo Doeloe *[lit: 'time past'], which provided a salient contrast to the markers of a subsequent, late-colonial 'modernity'.*

This paper questions some of the basic assumptions of this orthodoxy, from a postcolonial standpoint that challenges its inherent colonial-era binaries. The nineteenth century family histories of a number of men and women — Suikerlords *[Sugar Lords] and their Ladies — from the elite strata of Dutch colonial society in the Indies demonstrates that the cultural and social nexus between The Netherlands and the Indies throughout the nineteenth century was a good deal more intimate, and colonial identity significantly more ambivalent, than enduring stereotypes might allow.*

Introduction: Dutch Colonial Identity

Dutch colonial identity in the erstwhile Netherlands Indies (present day Indonesia) presented a literally different face to that of its Anglo-Saxon counterparts elsewhere in Southeast Asia. It was brown face as much as a white one. The majority of the Indies Dutch, in the nineteenth as in the twentieth century, were people who had been born in Java or in the other, lesser colonial settlements that formed in the archipelago from the early seventeenth century onward. Expatriates or *totoks* (the 'born elsewhere') remained a minority presence. Over a period of several centuries, the colonial communities extended social and legal acceptance to many individuals of mixed ethnicity, people who elsewhere in colonial Asia came increasingly to be delineated as 'Eurasians' and, as such, placed outside the pale of (polite) European society. Whilst by the end of the nineteenth century, Java had a

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substantial underclass of Eurasian *Indos*, whose place in colonial state and society became a matter for considerable public debate (e.g. Stoler, 1991, 1992), individuals of openly 'mixed' ethnicity were to be found at all levels of Dutch colonial society, including its very highest. The colonial Dutch were not necessarily less racist than their counterparts elsewhere in Asia, but the boundaries of 'race' were drawn differently. So too were the cultural boundaries between East and West, which, as shall see, were prone to be misunderstood.

Within this context, the issue of acculturation has always been an important one in the history and historiography of Dutch colonialism in the Indies. In so far as there is any substantial orthodoxy, it is that the acculturation of Java's Dutch communities had become very marked by the late seventeenth century and remained so for the next two hundred years. These communities took on not just the skin pigmentation of their Asian neighbours, but also many of their social practices and cultural assumptions. Surrounded by a numerically overwhelming but politically subordinate Indonesian society of very diverse but nonetheless Asian ethnicity, and separated from Europe by a long, arduous and expensive sea-voyage, they had drawn heavily on oriental models for their social and cultural inspiration. (Re-) assertion of the 'European' norm, in the context of closure of the gap between colony and metropole, only began to take effect in the changed global circumstances of the late colonial era, c. 1880 onwards. Prior to that date, the factor of distance led to the social isolation and cultural autonomy of European colonial communities that were 'pervasively Indies and anything but Dutch'.[1] Readings of this kind have underscored notions of the mestizo character of 'Dutch' colonial society in the Indies of *Tempo Doeloe.* They have highlighted the 'irregular' relationships formed with Eurasian or 'native' women by the bulk of newly-arrived European men,[2] and emphasised, in tandem with this, the place in colonial society of the *nyai* or 'native' housekeeper-concubine. In so doing, they have drawn particular attention to the 'pre-bourgeois', 'quasi-feudal' nature of colonial family life.[3]

There is indeed substance in this reading, but it also suffers from serious flaws. Above all, problems arise from its continued allegiance to binaries dating from the late colonial era — an allegiance that stems from an incomplete penetration of the narratives in which *Indisch* Society, along with *Tempo Doeloe*, became embedded, and from an associated failure to assess them in terms other than those derived from imaginative literature or from a selective reading of public discourse. Crucially, it has perpetuated notions of the 'distance from Europe' and the exotic character of Java's nineteenth colonial society, while locating it within a deeply problematic binary of metropole and periphery. Instead of being posited as alternatives, 'mestizo' and 'metropolitan' were characteristics which frequently fused within one and the same individual and within the social practice and cultural understandings of colonial society at large. The truth of this proposition becomes clear once reference is made to the family histories of members of the Dutch colonial elite of the period who were associated with the sugar industry as owners or managers. I am not brash enough, of course, to deny the acculturated and 'Orientalised' dimensions of the colonial communities concerned. My contention, however, is that in exag-

gerated form these characteristics give rise to a serious obstacle to historical understanding of colonial identity.

Orientalising a Colonial Community

On the face of it, of course, the image of an 'Orientalised' Dutch colonial society that this paper seeks to problematise had a substantial foundation in contemporary observation. From the early nineteenth century onward, new arrivals from Europe and North America found Java's Dutch colonial community contradictory to their expectations of a 'European' settlement. Most immediately, outward appearances were apt to disturb and bewilder. 'He who steps on shore for the first time in Netherlands India, feels himself to be in another world', cautioned one Dutch visitor in the 1860s, for 'although among my fellow countrymen, I found myself encircled by peculiarly clad people, many of darker hue' (Gevers Deynoot, 1864, p. 28). British and North American travellers, rare birds of passage until the twentieth century, were often frankly derisive. One of them recorded his encounter with

> Dutch fashionables walking about quite in a state of dishabille, loose pyjamas, or night-drawers, flap about their legs like sails courting the breeze … (D'Almeida, 1864, p. 1).

Another registered her shock at the 'undress parade' that met her eyes on the verandas of one of Batavia's best hotels, and recoiled from the sight of

> the bare ankled women clad only in native sarong … and a white dressing jacket [who] … rocked and stared as if we were the unusual spectacle, and not they. (Scidmore, 1897, pp. 25–26)

Once past outward appearances, moreover, the new arrival had to contend, *inter alia*, with a cuisine ostensibly dominated by the *Rijsttafel*, described by one singularly unappreciative Anglo-Australian traveller in the1870s in terms of 'a chow-chow of rice, fish and curry', to which was added

> sausage meat, potatoes, chopped-up anchovies and small seasonings … a soup plate full of this nastiness, yellowed over with curry-powder, is the staple of the Dutch Tiffin. (Hingston, 1879, p. 171)

Nor were the social assumptions of the society in which they found themselves necessarily more comforting. The plethora of household slaves encountered until the 1850s in the Batavia mansions of the Dutch colonial elite, for example, fitted awkwardly with the sensibilities of at least some European newcomers (e.g., Epp, 1841, pp. 31–32).

These and the many similar depictions of an 'Orientalised' society played an influential part in subsequent colonial narratives that began to evolve toward the end of the nineteenth century and reached their fluorescence in the years immediately preceding the Second World War. The term *Indisch* or Indo-European, in particular, had a key role in discourse focussed on the notion of a *Tempo Doeloe*, literally a 'time past', within whose parameters such Indo-European associations were both celebrated and, simultaneously, safely

consigned to an earlier, superceded era of colonial settlement. *Indisch* was a term with a long history in colonial Java and was never linked to a precise time frame. Nonetheless, it took on new connotations in the late colonial era, among them the implication of 'old fashioned'. *Tempo Doeloe*, while certainly in use at an earlier date, came into its own in the 1920s and 1930s — and has continued in vogue ever since as a widely accepted, albeit ambivalent, rendering of the ethos of a colonial past that came to end with the 'modernity' imposed on the Indies from the late nineteenth century onward by better communications, large-scale capital investment and the arrival of greatly increased numbers of '*totok*' or expatriate Europeans, who found work in the colony's expanded plantation industries, in commerce, in government and in the military.

The Dutch Empire in the Indies came to an end in the 1940s, as a result of Japanese occupation during the Second World War and subsequent Nationalist revolution. Despite the end of empire, or even (perhaps) *because* of it, the concept of an erstwhile *Indisch* colonial society, separated from its metropolis by a cultural divide as well as physical distance, remained not only intact but took on a new life. A generalised nostalgia for empire was predated, in this particular case, by a more specific determination of the 'repatriated' Indies Dutch to memorialise their own past in ways that celebrated its Indo-European characteristics, and hence established their particular identity within the broader Dutch community in which they found themselves re-located. In consequence, *Tempo Doeloe* came most fully into its own from the early 1960s onward, celebrated particularly in literary and photographic texts as both an epoch and as a frame of reference for a 'World We Have Lost'.

Nonetheless, the starting point for narratives that sought to distinguish a 'modern', twentieth century phase of Dutch colonial society in the Indies from its antecedents was the particular politics of ethnicity and race that flourished in the Indies from around the end of the nineteenth century onward. Grounded in heavily reductionist notions of 'East' and 'West' and a reification of 'the European' and the 'Asiatic', it was a politics that had many dimensions. Most interesting from the present perspective, however, was the mythologising of earlier stages of the European colonial presence in the Indies in terms that conflated the 'bad old days' of over-familiarity with oriental modes with the 'good old days' when the going was easy. In seeking to define the markers of a modern, late colonial European identity, a key point of reference became the notionally contrasting characteristics of an earlier phase of Dutch settlement. *Tempo Doeloe* and the notion of an earlier *Indisch* society became caught up in what Ann Laura Stoler has argued (1991, p. 74) were a series of late colonial 'formulations to secure European rule' — formulations that simultaneously 'pushed in two directions'. In essence, as Stoler identifies them, such formulations were predicated on a series of binaries:

> On the one hand, away from ambiguous racial genres and open domestic arrangements, and on the other hand, toward an upgrading, homo-genisation and clearer delineation of European standards; away from miscegenation toward white endogamy; away from concubinage toward family formation and legal marriage; away from, as in the case

of the Indies, mestizo customs and toward metropolitan norms. (Stoler, 1991, p. 74)

Unexceptionally perhaps, binaries such as these became crucial to certain aspects of the late colonial production of knowledge, much of it of a profoundly Manichean character. The problem, however, is the extent to which they have remained influential since colonialism's own demise, thereby throwing up many obstacles to the historian of colonial society who seeks to clarify the material realm of Java's nineteenth century Dutch communities *vis-à-vis* their own and subsequent discursive practices.

A crucial point relates to *Tempo Doeloe's* exaggerated emphasis on the notionally 'quasi-Asiatic', mestizo character of colonial society in the Indies prior to the late nineteenth century. It is an emphasis that has a particular bearing on issues of 'domesticity' and family life, where the purported dichotomy between 'mestizo customs' and 'metropolitan norms' substantially fails to do justice to the multiple, rather than quasi-Oriental, identities of *Indisch* people. Although the '*Tempo Doeloe*' reading of nineteenth century colonial society certainly accords due weight to the family (e.g. Beekman, 1996, p. 342;Van den Bergh: passim), it fails to grasp its implication for a critique of the colony-metropole binary. Family did not simply bind together '*Indisch* society' — it also bound that society to the Dutch metropolis. Moreover, '*Tempo Doeloe*' likewise fails to take adequate cognition of the bourgeois character of the domestic arrangements of nineteenth century Indies people. On a more specific level, a virtual 'cult of the *nyai*' has been allowed to crowd out the extent to which the 'closed domestic arrangement' of marriage formed the basis of family fortunes.

Indeed, the notion of *Domesticating the Empire* — the title taken by a recent book of essays on gender issues and colonialism c. 1900 onwards (Clancy-Smith and Gouda, 1996) — as a *late colonial development* would have deeply puzzled the Dutch colonial denizens of nineteenth century Java, many of whom thought — quite rightly — that they themselves lived in circumstances of well regulated domesticity. The notion of a *Tempo Doeloe*, dominated by the unregulated lusts of European male patriarchy may have held true for the 'up-country' plantations of mountain Java and the settlements in the 'Outer Islands', both of which were still in the pioneering phase of colonialism in the second half of the century. In the settled colonial communities of lowland Java, however, family life was regulated by many of the same (or similar) values and institutions that prevailed among the middle classes of the contemporary Netherlands.

Domesticity in Colony and Metropole

By the mid-nineteenth century, Java's colonial sugar factories were scattered widely across the better-populated and cultivated parts of the island's eastern and central lowland districts. It is the life stories of some European owners of the dozen or so such factories, located mid-way along the north coast, in the adjoining Residencies of Pekalongan and Tegal, that furnish the

basis for what follows. They were counted — and counted themselves — among the elite of Dutch colonial society in the Indies. Whilst this may have conferred a certain degree of distinctiveness, many aspects of their way of life appear to have been mirrored in that of the wider community of this part of provincial Java, particularly their preference for married family life. In the mid-century Residency of Pekalongan (similar data for Tegal have yet to be located), the colonial community comprised 292 adults designated as Europeans — meaning that they were either 'full-blood' Europeans or the recognised offspring of ethnically mixed parentage. There was a preponderance — but only a slight one — of males, and there were 195 European children, all but two of whom were Indies-born, a demographic profile that suggests the likelihood of established domesticity based on family life. The assumption is that most if not all of the women classified as European (the overwhelming majority of whom (84%) were Indies-born) found their partners among the similarly classified men, around half of whom had been born elsewhere, predominantly though not exclusively in the Netherlands.[4]

Against this brief background we can now turn to some of the *Suikerlords* and their families who ran the industry in this part of Java, particularly those connected with the group of five factories located in Tegal Residency, in the lowlands immediately to the south of the town of Tegal itself. Three of the factories concerned, those at Adiwerna, Doekoewringin and Kemanglen, were built close together, the latter two within a kilometre of each other. Two other factories, Djatibarang and Pangka were effectively part of the same community, no more than an hour or so ride away, across easily traversed country. With the exception of Pangka, these factories were all established in the early 1840s, when the two Dutchmen who owned them — Otto Carel Holmberg de Beckfelt (1794–1857) and Theodore Lucassen (1792–1854) — took up their concessions to manufacture sugar on contract to the Indies Government.

Family ties and lifestyles ostensibly placed both men unambiguously within the parameters of *Tempo Doeloe*. Both were twice married: Holmberg's first wife, Henriette Smissaert (1802–32), whom he had married within a few months of his arrival in Java in 1817, although not colonial-born, had spent virtually her entire life in the colony. Lucassen's first wife, Josine Holmberg de Beckfelt (1805–32), was the Indies born daughter of Holmberg's elder brother Nicolas, a retired Naval officer who had made a career in government service in the colony. Though born and bred in the Netherlands, both men entered the sugar industry after having already spent the better part of their lives in the Indies. Holmberg had been first a military officer and subsequently a *Resident* in the Colonial Service, and as such one of the couple of dozen highest-ranking Dutch officials in provincial Java. Lucassen had an exclusively military career and had retired as Chief of Staff of the Netherlands Indies Army.[5]

In terms of their physical surroundings, moreover, Holmberg and Lucassen lived in a manner thoroughly redolent of *Tempo Doeloe*. They built substantial houses for themselves in the vicinity of their factories, described as 'Indo-European palaces' by one admiring mid-century visitor (Buddingh, 1859, Vol. 1, p. 148). The Lucassen mansion, in particular, was singled out by a less friendly contemporary, who wondered where the labour and materials had

come from, as 'one of the most splendid dwelling houses' in Java.[6] No doubt (though there is an absence of direct information on the score), life within these 'palaces' would have been run on lines with which Lucassen and Holmberg had been familiar since their arrival in Java shortly after the colony had been restored to the Dutch in 1816. *Inter alia*, this would have meant having several score of servants and household slaves — in the 1820s, one elite mansion in Batavia was run by as many as fifty of the latter (Vreede-De Steurs, 1996, p. 76). When Holmberg had been an Indies Government *Resident*, in the days before he became a sugar manufacturer, he appears at one time to have commandeered half the rice-harvest of two whole villages to feed his retainers in house, garden and stables.[7] There is no reason to suppose that the social assumptions that underlay such patterns of *Tempo Doeloe* behaviour would have changed radically over the years.

Already a widower in his mid-thirties, Holmberg may be presumed to have had a series of 'irregular' relations with Eurasian or Indonesian women during his remaining years in the Indies, a probability that was reinforced by the fact that in his final years of retirement in Europe he evidently had something of the reputation of an elderly rue, keeping company with a young woman a third of his age (Kortenhorst, 1969, pp. 88–9). It seems entirely appropriate then that posterity should have bestowed on Holmberg the sobriquet of Indies *Nabob*, the wealthy repatriate who cut such a figure in the streets of The Hague or in the better class of European watering place from the 1850s onward. In a nicely Orientalising fashion, as Singh (1998, p. 10) has reminded us, *Nabob* was a word that carried with it an imputation of luxury and decadence, an image of the *Suikerlord* with which a subsequent, more 'modern' generation of sugar owners had to contend — and which it was to disown.[8]

On closer inspection, however, the unambiguous narrative of the *Indisch* colonial community exemplified by Lucassen, Holmberg and their households, begins to unravel. Holmberg himself appears to have been an altogether less sumptuous figure than *Indisch* legend would have him be: the young woman of his old age was a coachman's daughter and percipient enough to take him to the altar — ensuring that he left her the two houses in The Hague which, by the time of his death, may have been the full sum of his remaining fortune. Even more to the point was the fact of Holmberg and Lucassen's dual identities as figures at once metropolitan *and* colonial. Both men, for example, had and maintained extensive family ties in the Netherlands as well as Java. Indeed, Lucassen's second wife (his first had died in 1832) was the Dutch born Susanna Antoinette Pietermaat, the daughter of a long-serving Indies official who ended his days in 1848 as Resident of Surabaya, Java's 'second city'. As such, she enhanced Lucassen's 'connections' in Java — but also cemented his ties in the Netherlands. This 'metropolitan' aspect of the couple's identity was underlined when they returned permanently to Holland early in the 1850s.

As for Holmberg, though he was in his early twenties when he arrived in Java in 1817, he was already socially formed. He 'went out' to the Indies as officer in the Hussars with a substantial metropolitan circle of acquaintance behind him, gained either in his own youthful days as a page to Louis Napoleon, or stemming from his father's position in the household administra-

tion of the last Dutch *Stadhouder* (Willem V), father of the Dutch King Willem I (who reigned 1815–40). These were connections that he evidently maintained and put to good use. They enabled him to survive a serious official rebuke during his days as Resident in Pekalongan in the late 1820s, subsequently enjoy transfer to a 'better' Residency,[9] and to secure elevation to the Dutch peerage as *Jonkheer* Holmbergde Beckfelt some ten years after that. His own aristocratic position in The Netherlands was further cemented in1840, with the marriage of his eldest daughter Clara (b. Java, 1820) to *Jonkheer* Ludolph van Bronkhorst, private secretary to the Prince of Orange, heir to the Dutch throne. In the same year, these same connections brought him a potentially lucrative concession to manufacture sugar on contract to the Indies Government, a concession granted after direct Royal intervention in The Hague.[10]

In line with his dual identity, Holmberg's young children went (with their mother) to Holland at the end of the 1820s and remained there for the following decade. Holmberg himself joined them in 1838, only returning to Java in 1841, sugar contract in hand. In Tegal, where he proceeded to use the forced labour of the peasantry of the surrounding villages to build his house and factories, Holmberg was very far from being alone. His immediate neighbour was Lucassen, whose first wife had been Holmberg's niece, and who was similarly installed — despite decrying the 'wilderness' in which he found himself and boasting of his 'pioneering' credentials — in two adjoining factories and their attendant mansion. Both men had returned to Java with their immediate families and other associated kith and kin. They formed, together with their existing, extensive connections in Batavia and elsewhere in the colony, part of a tightly knit 'bourgeois' community characterised (on a formal level at least) by a well regulated and 'closed' domesticity. Familial inclusion (and exclusion) was as much a key social principal among these strata of the colonial Dutch as it was among their metropolitan counterparts.[11]

Marital domesticity and 'regular' family life was clearly to the fore among people like this, to an extent that gainsays some of the more fanciful notions of a *Tempo Doeloe* dominated by 'open' relationships and concubinage. Indeed, the institution of marriage played as crucial a role in sustaining and promoting family fortunes within the Dutch colonial communities of mid-nineteenth century Java as it did in metropolitan Holland and in Western European societies in general. Lucassen's first wife, Josine, had died in 1832, having borne him four surviving children. With Susanna, his second wife, he had seven more. Children of both marriages were domiciled in the family mansion in Tegal. Daughter Carlotta (1828–1906), for example, married Gerhardus Johannes Netscher (1822–77) there in 1847: as a resident son-in-law, his qualifications in managing steam-operated equipment, which is what appears to have brought him to Java in the first place, made him a useful addition to a managerial team which operated factories that utilised some of the most advanced, imported sugar manufacturing machinery to be found in the colony. Both Lucassen and Holmberg had invested heavily in steam-heated sugar 'boiling' equipment made by the leading French firm of De Rosne et Cail,[12] thereby displaying a taste for innovation that squared ill with their ostensibly *Tempo Doeloe* or *Indisch* personas.

Lucassen, his wife, various children and in-laws were only one part of the family menage in mid-nineteenth century Tegal: it also comprised members of the Hoevenaar family, relatives through marriage to Susanna Lucassen, who had accompanied Lucassen and his party on their return to Java in 1841. The key to their presence — mother, son, step-father and half sister arrived together — was the expertise in manufacturing sugar of the son, Hubertus Paulus Hoevenaar (1814–86), who had worked previously both in the beet sugar industry around Arras in northern France, and in one of Java's earliest 'modern' sugar factories.[13] Holmberg, however, appears to have stolen a march on his old friend: it was one of *his* daughters, Anna Catherina Marciana, who married young Hoevenaar and hence secured for her father's factories (he later took them over) the services of a man who came to be known as one of the best sugar makers in Java. Melanie Hoevenaar — Paulus' step-sister — tightened the connection further when, in 1850, she married Willem Jacob van Rijck (1827–98), who subsequently became *administrateur* of one of his brother-in-law's sugar factories and later still the owner of the nearby (and associated) Pangka sugar factory. Van Rijck evidently believed in keeping things in the family. When Melanie died (in 1881) he promptly married her niece.[14]

What we are dealing with here are mutually bolstering networks of family and kin that were typical of both colony *and* metropolis. Not so easy to see in the colonial setting, on the present evidence, is the nature of the religious community which in mid-nineteenth century Holland undoubtedly formed the third element which bound together middle class society. In Java, formal Church worship was largely precluded outside a few big urban centres by the absence of Church buildings and clergy. Neither was to be found in this part of Java in the 1840s, though the European community in Pekalongan was pressing for the building of a Church and the installation of a clergyman. In his stead, a preacher came from Batavia twice a year to celebrate Holy Communion and, presumably, to carry out baptisms (Van Hoevell, 1849, Vol. 1, pp. 90–94). To concentrate on the absence of formal Church worship, however, is to overlook the prevalence in nineteenth century protestant Christianity of family devotions — of family prayer that brought together the household for Christian worship within the four walls of the home. We presently lack direct evidence, but it is hard to conceive that such families, with joint histories in Java *and* the Netherlands, would simply have dropped their religious observances once they arrived in the colony.

People like this were no strangers to Java — but no strangers to Europe either. Multiple identities were prevalent. Van Rijck, for example, the owner of the Pangka factory, had been born in Java of similarly Java-born parents, and was presumably no 'full blood'. He married a woman born and bred in the Netherlands, and if she had a role as 'cultural broker' — the stereotypical role for women in *Tempo Doeloe*— was that of familiarising her husband with the ways of her European homeland, for Van Rijck himself was no straightforwardly *Indisch* figure. His factory prospered and he died in the South of France in 1898, having been domiciled in Paris for at least a decade and half previously. The family history of Arnoudina Ringeling (1792–1854), his first wife's mother — and mother of the sugar manufacturer Hubertus Hoevenaar

— offered even greater testimony to the blurred and complex borders between colony and metropolis. She had forbears who were buried in Amsterdam's Westerkerk, and she married in that city. But the Ringelings were also a family with extensive colonial connections, though in the West Indies rather than the East, as plantation owners in Curacao.[15] In short, such families as these were both colonial *and* metropolitan.

The point was underscored when the younger Hoevenaar — the successful sugar maker — took his family back to 're-settle' in the Netherlands in the middle of the 1860s. He and his wife and four daughters would have made the journey, as well-to-do members of the Dutch community in the Indies, by way of the so-called Overland Mail, which, from the late 1840s onward, had made it possible to travel on regular steamer sailings connecting 'the East' with Western Europe — via the Red Sea and connecting services at Alexandria — some twenty years or more before the much vaunted opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. A journey that had previously taken between three and five months could now be accomplished with certainty in a little over six weeks (Junghuhn, 1851, pp. 4–14; Gevers Deynoot, 1862, pp. 1–25). But even before the institution of the Mail, its future passengers, the likes of the Lucassen, the Holmbergs and the Hoevenaars, were already exemplars of the essentially cosmopolitan nature of the upper echelons of *Indisch* society. Such people did not need to be 'reminded' at the end of the nineteenth century of their 'European' roots: they had never forgotten them, or, to be more precise, had long existed within a milieu in which colony and metropolis merged into one.

Conclusion

This paper argues a case for the multiple identities of the nineteenth century Indies Dutch, people who have been too often characterised as 'orientalised' and acculturated to a degree that necessitated their re-Europeanisation at the century's end. Instead, it maintains that throughout the nineteenth century a 'European' *and* an 'Indies' identity characterised members of (at least) the upper social strata of the Dutch colonial population. Social and cultural links with Holland remained much stronger than has often been suggested, with implications not only for colonial constructions of European identity but for metropolitan ones as well. Specifically, it argues for *multiple* rather than specifically 'colonial' identity of the upper echelons of Dutch society in Java, and for the importance — *pace* ideas of the erotic and exotic — of 'bourgeois' social practices and cultural mores in sustaining family fortunes on the colonial 'periphery'. It is a scenario, in short, that underlines the awkward fit between a growing re-evaluation of Java's colonial communities and much of what still passes for an understanding of the colonial past.

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Notes

1. The phrase is from Beekman, 1996, p. 328. Specifically, it applies to the 'company period' of colonial history (ended c. 1808), but it is clear from Beekman's subsequent discussion that he regards it as still applicable to the 'planter' element in Java's colonial communities until late into the nineteenth century — or beyond.
2. Taylor (1996, p. 229) boldly remarks that 'almost the entire history of the Dutch in the Indies prior to 1870 is the history of men and their relationships with local [i.e. 'Asian'] women'.
3. The complete historiography concerned is, of course, altogether more heterodox than this synopsis might imply. Some of the literature in the Dutch language, in particular, is heavily nuanced and by no means universally conformant with the paradigm proposed here (e.g. Willems *et al.*, 1997; Willems (ed.), 1992; Van Doorn, 1994). That paradigm, nonetheless, is a highly influential one, especially in the English language — and hence globally circulating — literature that has evolved over the last couple of decades (e.g. Beekman, 1996; Gouda, 1993, 1995; Taylor, 1983). In essaying this critique, I owe a considerable debt to the work-in-progress of Dr Ulbe Bosma (IISH Amsterdam), while here in Adelaide, Dominic Stefanson has struggled valiantly with my often intractable prose. Its faults, however, categorically remain my own.
4. These figures derive from lists in the *Politiek Verslag Pekalongan* 1855, *Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Arsip Pekalongan*. I would like to thank Dr Arthur van Schaik for making them available to me.
5. On the Holmberg and Lucassen families, see *Nederlands Adelsboek*, 12 (1914): 342–45; 40 (1942): 594–97 and 93 (1995): 368–75; *De Nederlandsche Leeuw*, 50 (1932): 300–307 and 33 (1915): 242–44; *Nederlands Patriciaat*, 5 (1914): 269–77; 21 (1933/4): 249–261 and 53 (1967): 168–78. On both men's involvement in the sugar industry, see Leidelmeijer, 1997, pp. 155–70. I am indebted to Dr Leidelmeijer for her generosity in allowing me to consult her work prior to its publication.
6. G. Umbgrove to Governor General Netherlands India 3.5.1859/1872/2 in Exh. 20.10. 1859/17. *Algemeen Rijksarchief*, The Hague (hereafter ARA) *Archief Kolonien.*
7. See the report of the Indies' Procureur Generaal, 29.2.1828, cited *in Indies Besluit (Buiten Rade)* 21.4.1828/4. ARA *Archief Kolonien*.
8. This Anglo-Dutch coinage appeared as the title of an apologia for the owners of the Java sugar industry, published in the crisis years of the 1880s. See Hudig 1886.
9. See *Inds. Besluit (Buiten Rade)* 21.4.1828/17 *ARA Archief Kolonien.* For Holmberg's subsequent transfer to the Preanger, see *Inds. Besluit (Buiten Rade)* 20.6.1828/9 & 10, *ARA Archief Kolonien*.
10. Fasseur's chapter (1992, pp. 185–206) on 'Sugar and Scandal' — first penned in 1975 — remains obligatory reading on the whole subject of mid-nineteenth century proprietorship. The details of how Holmberg obtained his sugar contract are to be found in Exh. 24.6.1840/19; 6.7.1840/20 and 16.7.1840/5 *ARA Archief Kolonien.*

11. The extensive history of family connection among the Indies Dutch elites, administrative, commercial and 'planter' has long been recognised. See in particular the brief but seminal comments in Van Niel, 1964, pp. 224–30; Fasseur, 1996; Willems *et al*., 1997.
12. On Netcher's qualifications and career, see *'Stamboek NI Ambtenaren', Lett H, ARA Archief Kolonien.*
13. On the Hoevenaar family, see (in addition to the references to Holmberg de Beckfelt cited above) *De Nederlandsche Leeuw* 32 (1914) pp. 230–34 and 41 (1923), pp. 300, 360–61.
14. On Van Rijck, see *De Nederlandsche Leeuw*, 29 (1911) p. 312 and *De Indische Navorscher*, 5 (8 August) 1939. His wife died in Paris, and for information that Van Rijk himself was living there in the late nineteenth century, *see 'Nota … concept consignatie contract Pangka … 24.12.1884'*, in *Dossiers … Cultuurzaken ARA Archief NHM 3687.*
15. On Arnoudina Ringeling's antecedents, see *De Nederlandsche Leeuw*, 32 (1914), pp. 231, 35, (1917), pp. 62–63, 43, (1925), pp. 124–26, 53, (1940), p. 93.

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