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Title

Circumventing Openness: Creating New Senses of Dutchness

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1g62t1wx>

Journal

TRANSIT, 1(1)

Author

Hoving, Isabel

Publication Date

2004-09-16

DOI

10.5070/T711009695

Peer reviewed

1. Dutchness: Openness and Tolerance

Time and again, people who come to the Netherlands are struck by the excessive openness of the Dutch landscape and the Dutch people. The hero in a semi-autobiographical novel by an Iranian in exile sighs:

I had to get accustomed ... Thus, I had to get accustomed to the dominant colour green. A cow in the mist was new to me. Those bare legs, bellies, breasts, buttocks and the language were all things to which I had to get accustomed (Kader Abdolah 1997: 13).¹

But not only people bare themselves. The renowned Dutch landscape, with its wide skies and flat meadows, is seen as open to the point of being transparent (Hoving 2003). Nothing stays hidden in such a space. Migrants and visitors often remark that Dutch people boast of having created this territory themselves; they live in a transparent space that they think they know and control completely.

Openness, a strong belief in visibility and directness, the need for, and the belief in control and regulation—these are a few of the characteristics that come up in such representations of the Dutch. They suggest a realist, rational and sober culture, where there is great acceptance of things that would remain hidden elsewhere. This very month, October 2004, a survey showed that the Dutch still see soberness and common sense as the main national characteristics, while they characterize their own individual identity as primarily tolerant. Dutch migrants defined themselves in the same way, only slightly disagreeing with regard to their soberness.²

The Dutch tradition of tolerance has long been an inspiration to other European countries in search of an effective migration policy, perhaps especially to Germany, with which the Netherlands shares kindred problems in their transition to a multicultural society; however, in contrast with Germany, the Netherlands has known an integration policy since the beginning of the nineteen eighties. In 1994 the Dutch government praised its own migration policy as exemplary; it was regarded as highly successful, and in advance of other European nations (Böcker and Tränhård 2003: 3). One of the main causes of the success of the migration policy was believed to be its tolerance of cultural difference—and this structural respect for cultural identity might be deemed the main element lacking in the German management of migration.

Ten years later, however, the Dutch success is seriously questioned, the debate about migration and multiculturalisation has soured, and there is ample reason to (re)consider the nature and effects of this renowned Dutch tolerance for cultural difference. I will therefore use the rest of my time to unravel the rather baffling knot of national values and characteristics, in which tolerance is made to mean opposite things, with the help of conservationists and migrant writers. I will then be able to offer you an opinion on what lessons a multiculturalising Germany could learn from the Dutch emphasis on tolerance and cultural difference—if any.

2. Comparing Migration Policies in Germany and the Netherlands

Let me first make a few remarks about the results of the Dutch integration policy. Up until 2001, most of the autochthonous Dutch certainly believed that it was a success. The break came with two events which occurred in 2001 and 2002: first, 9/11, and second, the rise and shocking murder of Pim Fortuyn, a flamboyant, right-wing politician, who had been

questioning the multicultural society in unusually sharp, populist terms the year before. The reaction to the murder was without precedent. Overnight, a whole nation seemed to change its opinion about the successes of the Dutch policy of migration and multiculturalisation. The new consensus among white people seemed to be that the much-praised policy of the eighties, that is “integration while retaining one’s cultural identity,” had encouraged migrants to stay within their own communities, unemployed, taking recourse to criminal and anti-social activities, clinging to their cultural values, which now appeared deadly dangerous.

At second sight, the change is not really surprising. The positive evaluations of the Dutch policy were often based on a consideration of the formal legal status of migrants only, neglecting other aspects. As in France and England, it has been relatively easy to obtain national status and equality before the law in the Netherlands—especially when compared to Germany. In addition, the Dutch anti-discrimination laws are strong, and minorities were granted more cultural group rights than anywhere else in Europe. These three characteristics all compared favourably to German policies, especially those before 2000 (Koopmans 2003:46). A critical assessment of other indications of the success of migrant integration, however, should also take their position on the labour market into account. Detailed comparative studies and discussions between researchers lead one to conclude that, in this respect, the position of migrants has long been worse in the Netherlands than in Germany (Böcker and Tränhardt, Koopmans).³

The Dutch tolerance for cultural difference, which had been the hallmark of its integration policy until the end of the eighties, appeared to fail as a motor for integration. So did the policy that followed in the nineties, which replaced the respect for cultural identity with the pursuit of diversity, but which entailed a comparable reification of cultural identity.⁴

3. Tolerance Revisited

Let us have a closer look at this Dutch tolerance, which is at the heart of the Dutch integration policy. Where does it come from? What has it done, and what does it do now, within the multicultural society? Can it function as a strong motor for integration?

From its beginnings as a republic onwards, the Dutch nation has chosen a strategy of non-intervention to regulate the differences between its large minorities. This strategy is built on the Dutch plea for freedom of conscience and religion, which, in the sixteenth century, was directed towards the Spanish occupier, Philip II. Because the religious minorities grew large enough to prevent marginalization during the centuries that followed, and none developed into the dominant minority, the government of the Dutch *consociation* (as Lijphart calls it) allowed its minorities to create its own institutions. At the turn of the nineteenth century, a further step was taken: all citizens were granted formal civil rights. This did not mean that their religious identities were acknowledged, but that the differences between their religious and political ideologies were regulated in a pillar-like structure, where each pillar was granted full sovereignty.

Dutch sociologist van Ginkel concludes that (from 1780, 1790 onwards) Dutch national identity did not come into being “through state intervention, by the repression of national differences”, but by the “networking and ‘consensual practices’ [...] of the political-cultural elites who emphasised and institutionalised differences” (van Ginkel 1999:33, Frijhoff 1996). That is why one could say tolerance is not a consistent Dutch *value*, but it exists, first and foremost, as an institutionalised structure.

Since the sixteenth century, many debates and studies have been dedicated to this renowned Dutch tolerance (Gijswijt).⁵ During the course of the twentieth century the ambivalences within the concept received more and more critical attention (Rogier 1965, Bovenkerk 1976, Kossmann, 1984, van Doorn 1985, Dubbelman and Tanja 1987, see

Gijswijt 16-24). At the beginning of the twenty-first century, in the harsher debates in the wake of 2002, one is struck by a curious consensus in the right-wing and left-wing critiques of the concept. Right-wing speakers, the so-called “new-realists,” analyse Dutch tolerance as a national silence about the severe problems of migration and as the cowardly, politically correct *evasion* of difference, instead of an *openness* to difference (see, e.g., Scheffer, Schoo). More progressive comments offer a comparable analysis. Dutch sociologist Hondius argues that the *passive form of tolerance* dominant in the Netherlands and known as “gedogen”, which means “to put up with, to tolerate a practice one disagrees with, or which is against the law,” is close to the *passive form of intolerance, evasion*—according to Peter Rose one of the most widespread forms of discrimination (Hondius, referring to Peter Rose). Another sociologist, Wouters, emphasises that the strategy of evasion in general is a Dutch characteristic. Both strategies, tolerance and evasion, are considered to be based on the radical differentiation between self and other, and they both testify to a strong sense of superiority, from which stems the authority to tolerate or evade others.⁶ The two groups, however, differ in their opinions about the remedy. The new-realists propose *active intolerance* as a remedy: the re-affirmation of Dutch national identity, assimilation, and exclusion of those who do not conform (Scheffer, Vuijsje, zie Prins 2004: 37). One is reminded of the recent speech by European statesman Bolkestein at the von Humboldt University in Berlin, praising the celebration of a German *Leitkultur* as a remedy. Their statements are made in the name of that other strong Dutch tradition—openness, freedom of speech, and clarity. Their opponents, however, often opt for a strategy of *active tolerance*—the path of negotiation and interaction.

Active tolerance—acceptance after active argumentation

Passive tolerance—putting up with, overlooking

Passive intolerance—evasion, ignoring, keeping off

Active intolerance—exclusion, elimination

(Hondius 1999:9)

Traditionally the Dutch seem to have only two main strategies at their disposal to deal with a variety of social, economic, political, and other differences: the passive forms of tolerance and intolerance.⁷ A short example may help to understand these Dutch ways of dealing with difference. It concerns a very curious debate that took place in April of this year. A government-supported environmental foundation, a conceptual agency, found that migrants seldom visit the Dutch forests for leisure. After consulting a few migrants, the foundation decided to create a forest, in which, contrary to Dutch habit, people were allowed to stray from the paths, pick fruits and nuts, etc. In this way the project would escape the logic of exclusion that structures Dutch forests: the exclusion of culture (and people) from the domain of the natural, and the exclusion of migrants. A first reaction was a neutral report in a populist newspaper (*De Telegraaf*), which coined the word “smulbos” (yum-yum forest). In the wake of that article, an unexpectedly large number of people appeared to read the project in a completely different way than was intended. It was immediately read as an *ethnic* (or, by that Dutch synonym, *cultural*) project. In an extended exercise in new-realist openness, people protested that tax money was once again wasted on a ridiculous project that favoured migrants above the autochthonous population. White people routinely assumed that the migrant’s culture incited migrants to enjoy nature in a *culturally specific* way that would be irreconcilable to that of natives. The binary oppositions “them/us,” “body/mind,” “smell and taste/look” and “primitive/modern” were re-installed.⁸ The supposed effort at creating cultural diversity within the Dutch landscape was met with aggressive protest, and with an actively intolerant plea for exclusionary homogeneity.

One of the other projects of the unhappy inventor of this project seems, at first sight, its complete counterpart. This project, the Empty Spot, comes down to the fact that its director dispossessed a piece of the Netherlands. By twining an impenetrable thorny hedge, he closed off an area from the Dutch landscape otherwise governed by endless series of rules and prescriptions. There was no other way to formally liberate a piece of Dutch landscape: “For a tree it is impossible not to be owned by someone” (Volkskrant July 28, 2004).

The second case, however poetic it is, does not represent a form of tolerance that is completely different from the first case. The effort to remove a piece of nature from the Dutch landscape completely testifies to a comparable unwillingness to deal with difference. Instead of thinking through the complexities of what a non-destructive interaction between human beings and a partly natural, partly cultural landscape would look like, the imaginative inventor opts for radical differentiation. In this he follows the first Dutch strategy of representing difference as absolute. “Inclusion, purification, branching off, exclusion—these are tenacious tendencies within Dutch culture,” as sociologist Gowricharn comments, with sarcasm (1998: 103).

It appears that Dutch history doesn’t offer many solutions to the very real need to acknowledge differences. The tenacious habit, of which one already finds examples in the nineteenth century, of understanding all differences (in personal conduct, in art) as defined by a minority *culture* and therefore as absolute and unchangeable, is not very effective. It leads to evasion, and the institutionalisation of difference.

4. Against Tolerance: Three Proposals for a Multicultural Nation

Several renowned Dutch migrant writers question this reification of cultural difference. At the same time, they question two other assumptions: 1) that Dutch tolerance has created an open, egalitarian society, and 2) that integration is therefore predicated on the knowledge and adoption of the Dutch cultural history and values. In response they open up a new discursive space in which issues of difference, openness, tolerance and knowledge play completely different roles. Thus, they create new possibilities of belonging within a nation at odds with its own plurality.

1. Kader Abdolah

The quote with which I started my talk was taken from *The Journey of the Empty Bottles* (1997), the first novel of Iranian writer Kader Abdolah, who, in meticulous, sparse, almost transparent prose, narrates the story of an Iranian refugee, Bolfazl, who tries to relate to the excessively open and permissive Dutch society in which he has landed. His closest acquaintance is his neighbour René, a gay, jobless painter, whom he one day spies lying naked in his inadequately fenced back garden. In Bolfazl’s effort to find a place in a society, which, in spite of its nakedness, doesn’t offer many opportunities for socializing, he decides to let René be his guide and mediator. “René was like a bead in a string of beads that has been broken” (51).

When Bolfazl understands that René is suffering severe psychological problems, and that he has always been a stranger to society, like he himself is now, he begins to see René as his double. “Me? I went there to see everything. To track the process. To find out how it could go when one is exiled” (59).⁹ A curious game of voyeurism, imitation and doubling ensues. “When I saw that René could no longer adequately remember his past, that he no longer knew that I was Bolfazl, I suddenly realized that I could no longer summon up that scent [of his past, IH] either” (74).¹⁰ No more than Bolfazl’s, René’s life is structured as a stable plot, energized by a strong desire. René’s desire for men, far from being the

acknowledgement or fulfilment of his identity, is ultimately empty, as it is the expression of his exclusion. A happy solution in the form of a steady relationship is unthinkable. It would therefore be a mistake to suppose that Bolfazl models his identity on René's, the refugee does not seek identity or agency. What he seeks is understanding—not of Dutch society, but of exile, an experience that is also at the heart of Dutch society. "I had to look properly, listen well, and remember everything. One day I would be able to explain what it means to be exiled" (91).¹¹

Without surrendering to the logic of the Dutch multicultural nation, with its demand to take on a recognizable, fixed cultural identity, Bolfazl seeks to adopt the logic of the flight, as he calls it, and he recognizes this same logic in the life of some of the Dutch. Bolfazl's creates meaning by creating a multiple referential network, in which Dutch events are understood by comparing them with Persian stories, and vice versa, while knowing full well that all those stories and insights are partial and provisional, partly true, and partly fictional. "I am looking for a correspondence between events [...] To be honest, I do not really trust my own memories anymore. I invent those stories myself" (55).¹² "For an exile, fantasy and reality are intermingled" (108).¹³ This semiotics is based on the index rather than the symbol. From this radically *comparative* perspective, transparency, directness, control and realism are irrelevant concepts. "Stories have their own laws. One is not able to change the course of stories" (106).¹⁴ Meaning is produced in the overlapping and mingling of stories. Abdolah offers an intimate, even erotic relational semiotics, in which meaning can only be produced by the intimate interrelations with people who will perhaps, unwittingly, unveil part of a meaning they do not possess and which cannot be anticipated. Remarkably, it is the proverbial Dutch openness of women and gay men that make this interaction possible.

Abdolah builds the story of his hero upon the Dutch characteristics of openness, though he refuses the realism and the notions of independent identity that come with it, and the related notion of tolerance which depends on a sense of hierarchy. Abdolah's semiotics does not lead to an insight into cultural difference. His story is about the very phenomenon of difference itself (of being excluded, of being in-between), and as he narrates from the very location of difference, it cannot be frustrated by Dutch absolutist definitions of difference as either presence or absence.

2. Ellen Ombre

Surinamese-Dutch writer Ellen Ombre also questions the assumption that the problems of integration will be solved if migrants learn about Dutch culture, its history and its values. Not unlike Abdolah's perception of knowledge as the product of interaction, Ombre argues that the multiplicity of Dutch culture makes it impossible to be known from the dominant perspective only.

In a collection of stories from 2000, *Valse verlangens (False/Vicious Desires)* Ombre questions the possibility of knowing in a more fundamental way. She focuses on the Dutch perception of the easy, open verbal exchange as a means to share and produce knowledge – a perception only seemingly close to her own.

They spoke as if they exhaled, effortlessly. We are made out of words, but I fall short. To converse is an art form. In that sense, I have not learnt how to speak, not about "the" this and "the" that. Not by birth (14).¹⁵

The pleasure I had imagined to take from my education failed to materialize. Knowledge seemed to be restrained. One did nothing but but talk. About one's own

feelings and those of others. [...] My supervisor, a bald creep with hairy hands, judged my language too posh (30).¹⁶

Openness is here unmasked as a specific rhetorical skill, in which Surinamese people have not always been trained. They are therefore excluded from public debates and the production of knowledge. The rhetorical tradition of openness is also highly evasive—within different institutions and social circles, different modes of speech are demanded or dismissed as not open enough, a practice that effectively silences and excludes those on the outside.

But the Dutch speech habits are also inadequate in addressing this reality. This is not just because the Dutch do not know their own colonial history, but also because they do not address the meaning of the hidden perversities in their present—perversities which continue earlier colonial practices of abuse. The stories of this collection all address the present-day versions of the destructive colonial desires that have been analysed by many, from Frantz Fanon to Laura Ann Stoler and Robert Young. In one story, a Dutch paedophile, a member of progressive multiculturalist circles, takes it completely for granted that his Surinamese female acquaintance sympathizes with his sexual obsession for an Asian child.

Thus, Ombre offers a devastating critique of the Dutch values of tolerance and openness, as re-articulated within its permissive society. Because issues of race, colonization and slavery remain the as of yet unreflected heritage of the Dutch multicultural society, they become nothing but a strategy to maintain exploitative power hierarchies, and to silence all critical counter-discourses. Finally, the tenacious Dutch habit to reduce all sexual and relational conflicts to cultural difference makes it impossible to address these complex issues of power and exploitation. Ombre attacks this habit in very explicit ways:

“Your problem [relational problems within an interracial marriage] should really be reduced to the difference in cultures.” [...]

“You are just saying something,” Humphrey said. He felt duped by this false observation.

“Cultural difference can lead to serious relational problems.”

He reminded Humphrey of Marlon Brando in *Apocalypse Now* (126).¹⁷

Instead of assuming that cultural differences are the root of the conflicts of present-day Dutch society, Ombre focuses on political differences. Knowledge of Dutch cultural habits and values will not bring the knowledge of these political differences any closer.

3. Hafid Bouazza

Where will this literary unmasking of Dutch practices of tolerance and openness lead us? One possible answer lies within the sardonic, energetic, irresistibly irreverent work of Hafid Bouazza, the much praised language virtuoso, a Dutch writer of Moroccan descent, who abhors being categorized as such. Bouazza’s topics are (sexual) openness and the mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion. Quite in contrast to Ellen Ombre’s distrust of desire and openness, he imagines the erotic aspects of the loss of boundaries and differentiations fondly. In the mesmerizing descriptions of his last two novels, he pictures the multicultural summer parks of the Dutch capital Amsterdam – not as yumyum-forests to feast on, but as gardens of sexual delight. Not unlike San Francisco, these parks are brimming with sensuality and intercultural confusion. For Bouazza sexuality is the domain in which intercultural differences are fought.

Mamette assured him that there would not be a wide cultural gap between them, as she *understood* him and his culture, but the nature of the insurmountable problem did not appear to be cultural, but sexual—in the widest sense of the word (164).¹⁸

Whereas, for Abdollah, the fragmentation of identity is partly dangerous, it can also lead to an intense eroticism, which, in turn, encourages semiosis. Bouazza's language emphasises the sexual pleasure present in the anxiety of fragmentation and dissolution. In his own writing, this sexual pleasure can no longer be differentiated from the poetic pleasure to be taken from his intense, sensual language play. For Bouazza sexual difference rather than cultural difference lies at the heart of multiculturalisation.

If the Dutch preoccupation with difference testifies to a well-researched anxiety about the falling apart of the nation ('The Netherlands Is An Open Door,' Scheffer), then these authors point at a different position: migrants and natives share both the anxiety about, an informed critical distrust of, *and* a desire for openness.

This desired openness has nothing to do with a tolerance that is founded on an ingrained sense of superiority—that is a notion they unmask, reject or declare irrelevant. Nor do these authors celebrate the exclusionary rhetorical traditions that go by the name of openness. Their desire for openness cannot be answered by acknowledging a diversity that reifies cultural difference; however, they do ask for the acknowledgement of the mechanisms of exclusions at work on many levels and within many domains within Dutch society. That, I will argue in the last part of my talk, is no easy task.

5. Culture Is Not the Answer

Tolerance may be seen as the main value of Dutch national culture, but, as it is a strategy of institutionalisation rather than a consistent value, it does not lead to a shared practice of openness to difference which would stimulate multiculturalisation and creolisation. The prohibition on discrimination, imposed by law, receives a different form within every specific domain and institution, with its own "fine-meshed constructions of symbolic boundaries, [and, IH] processes of in- and exclusion" (as van Ginkel 306, has it). A national policy is simply too large-scaled to effectuate the desired changes towards integration and diversity in all those cultural contexts, which do not make up one homogeneous national culture (Van Ginkel 306).

When we look at the strategies adopted by young Dutch migrants, as we did in our research of Dutch everyday culture, we see that they do not merely try to find a place in society by emphasising their ethnic cultural identity. In this, they resemble the migrant writers I have discussed. In reaction to an identitarian discourse that tries to categorize and situate young migrants in ways they find confining, they take recourse in a variety of strategies of identification.¹⁹

Whether these counter-strategies of identification, which evade the regulating mechanisms of cultural tolerance and integration, will be acknowledged and result in a strong counter-discourse, depends on whether these voices will be heard in public and political debates. In this it seems that Germany is ahead of the Netherlands; migrants are represented to a much larger extent in trade unions and works councils.²⁰

Let that be my conclusion. Within the Netherlands, the notion of tolerance implies that the acknowledgement of cultural rights is the main key to integration. But in a nation with a tenacious tradition of reducing power differences to cultural differences, and a tradition of regulating cultural difference into a segregated structure with its own unspoken hierarchies, the celebration of cultural identity will not bring a change towards a really plural

society. Perhaps this is the lesson Germany can learn from the Dutch case: not to follow in our footsteps in this regard.

For the sake of us all, I hope there will be many more debates comparable to the one during this conference. As for my own society, I can only hope that migrant voices, literary or other, may be heard, so that they can help to free a space for new discourses of difference.

Notes

¹ Ik moest wennen ... Ook moest ik aan die overheersende kleur groen wennen. Een koe in de mist was nieuw voor mij. Aan die blote benen, buiken, borsten, billen en aan de taal moest ik wennen.

² Moreover, the Dutch think the rest of Europe should adopt this Dutch value as well. The values of tolerance, love of freedom, and soberness have been mentioned again and again by the architects of Dutch national identity, such as Siegenbeek in the early nineteenth century and Potgieter and Bakhuizen van den Brink towards the 1840s, and Huizinga and Romein in the 1930s and 1940s.

³ During the economic boom in the Netherlands at the end of the nineties, the unemployment of migrants was still three times as high as that of the autochthonous population, whereas now, during an economic crisis, in Germany their unemployment is only twice as high as that of the autochthonous population (Koopmans 2003). Around the turn of the century, 35% of the Turkish pupils in the Netherlands left secondary school without a certificate, compared to 21-23% in Germany (boys-girls).

⁴ This doesn't mean, however, that the multicultural society has irrevocably failed. The official governmental reports on multiculturalisation (Verwey-Jonker, WRR 2002, Report 2004) argue that many migrants have done well for themselves. They also argued that this was in spite of, rather than with the help of, Dutch migration policy, which has been incoherent and rather unsuccessful, especially in the social and cultural domain. A study by Duyvené de Wit and Ruud Koopmans suggests that Dutch migrants tend to identify more strongly with their new nation than the German migrants do (Duyvené de Wit and Koopmans 2001).

⁵ The first great debates were a reaction to the violent religious intolerance of the Spanish occupiers in the sixteenth and seventeenth century; in the twentieth century the new debates were reacting to the holocaust.

⁶ In the case of "gedogen," the acknowledgement is arbitrary; offenders can be prosecuted whenever the law finds it necessary to do so, without having to motivate the prosecution of the one and not the other. *Gedogen* leads to inequality before the law.

⁷ The impulse to institutionalise difference is a way to deal with a variety of differences which are, reductively, interpreted as absolute differences in culture, which is, in fact, a form of passive tolerance; secondly, the tendency to deny difference and refuse to deal with it and look the other way, is a passive form of intolerance. Seeing the difference as mere deprivation or backwardness can also be understood as a form of evasion (see Koenis 74).

⁸ Some migrants also felt discriminated against and insulted by the project ("I am not an ape," a Cape Verdian politician said).

⁹ Ik? Ik ging om alles te zien. Het proces te volgen. Om erachter te komen hoe het zou kunnen verlopen als je verbannen bent. (59)

¹⁰ Toen ik zag dat René zich zijn verleden niet goed meer herinnerde en dat hij niet meer wist dat ik Bolfazl was, besepte ik ineens dat ik ook die geur niet meer kon terugroepen.

¹¹ Ik moest goed kijken, goed luisteren en alles onthouden. Ik zou ooit kunnen vertellen wat verbannen zijn betekent.

¹² ... ik zoek een overeenkomst tussen gebeurtenissen [...] Eerlijk gezegd vertrouw ik mijn herinneringen niet meer zo. Ik verzin al die verhalen zelf.

¹³ Fantasie en werkelijkheid lopen door elkaar bij een banneling.

¹⁴ Verhalen hebben hun eigen wetten. Men is niet in staat om de loop van de verhalen te veranderen.

¹⁵ Zij praatten alsof ze lucht uitbliezen, moeiteloos. We hangen van woorden aan elkaar, maar ik schiet tekort. Converseren is een kunst. Ik heb in die zin niet leren praten, niet over "de" dit en "de" dat. Van huis uit niet.

¹⁶ Het plezier dat ik me van de opleiding had voorgesteld, bleef uit. Kennis leek aan banden te worden gelegd. Men deed daar niets anders dan praten. Over eigen en elkaars gevoelens. [...] Mijn scriptiebegeleider, een kale creep met haar op zijn handen, vond mijn taal te hoogdravend.

¹⁷ "Jullie probleem moet werkelijk worden teruggebracht tot het cultuurverschil!"

"U zegt maar wat," zei Humphrey. [...] Hij voelde zich de dupe van die valse waarneming. [...]

"Cultuurverschillen kunnen tot ernstige relationele problemen leiden."

Hij deed Humphrey denken aan Marlon Brando in *Apocalypse Now*.

¹⁸ Mamette stelde hem gerust dat er geen culturele kloof tussen hen zou gapen, omdat zij hem en zijn cultuur *begreep*, maar het onoverkomelijke probleem bleek niet cultureel van aard, maar seksueel, in de ruimste zin van het woord.

¹⁹ Some may define themselves variously as town dweller (Amsterdammer instead of Dutch), as Muslim, as professional; some may lie about their ethnic identity, sometimes by way of play, sometimes in order to escape discrimination, some may refuse to define their mixed descent; they will often identify with professional or political role models (see also Prins), or with a certain music scène.

²⁰ The sense of being represented within the domain of politics, and therefore of enjoying “a shared engagement with the political society,” may be a more important factor for one’s sense of being included in society than shared cultural values, as Bhikhu Parekh argues in a Dutch migrant journal (2003:10).

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