

# **‘Power and justice appear hard to reconcile’<sup>1</sup>**

The ‘grammar of difference’ in the travel writing of Dutch first wave feminist Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck

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<sup>1</sup> Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland: Afrikaansche Reisbrieven*, (Haarlem, 1912), 36.

## **Abstract**

This thesis focusses on the 'grammar of difference' in the travel writing by Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck (1876-1956). Wijnaendts was one of the leading women in the Dutch suffrage movement during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and an outspoken feminist. In 1911 she traveled with her husband through the African continent, visiting many different colonies on their way. In the 1912-1913 they made a similar trip to the West Indies. Wijnaendts wrote about her travels to these colonial destinations and had her writing published in the newspaper and later in book form. These two books, *Uit het Zonneland: Afrikaansche Reisbrieven* (1912) and *Drie Maanden in de West* (1913), are the primary sources on which this research is based.

The research applies two theoretical frameworks: the theory of 'grammar of difference' by Catherine Hall and the theory of 'othering' by Edward Said. Furthermore the research will apply the methods of discursive analysis and newspaper analysis. This thesis is made up of three parts. The first will focus on the history behind the Dutch first wave feminism and colonialism, as well as the theory of 'double othering'. The second part focusses on Wijnaendts critique on colonial systems and how her critique relates to the Dutch ethical policy. The last part looks into her ideas on feminist issues and how she applies these ideas in a colonial context.

## Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Historiographical overview</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<i>Female travel writing</i> .....	9
<i>Dutch colonialism</i> .....	12
<i>Dutch first wave feminism</i> .....	13
<b>Theoretical framework and methodology</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<i>Theoretical framework</i> .....	16
Grammar of difference .....	16
Othering .....	17
<i>Methodology</i> .....	18
Discursive analysis .....	18
Newspaper analysis .....	19
<b>Chapter 1 – Dutch first wave feminism, colonialism and the theory of ‘double othering’</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<i>First Feminist Wave</i> .....	20
<i>Dutch colonialism and the ethical politics</i> .....	22
‘ <i>Double othering</i> ’ .....	24
Male ‘othering’ of the female .....	24
Female colonizers versus the colonial ‘other’ .....	25
Difference between colonial subjects .....	27
<b>Chapter 2 – critique on colonial systems</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<i>Pro-colonial ideas</i> .....	31
<i>Anti-colonial tendencies and pacifism</i> .....	33
<b>Chapter 3 – Dutch feminism on colonial situations</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<i>Suffrage and emancipation</i> .....	39
<i>Prostitution, ‘white slavery’ and sexual morality</i> .....	41
Prostitution and ‘white slavery’ .....	42
Sexual morality .....	44
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>51</b>
<i>Archival sources</i> .....	51
<i>Newspaper sources</i> .....	51
<i>Printed Sources</i> .....	51
<i>Secondary literature</i> .....	51

## Introduction

The year 2019 marks an important year for celebrating Dutch feminist heritage as it is exactly one hundred years ago that women in the Netherlands received active voting rights. This anniversary sparked a renewed and nationwide interest in the Dutch suffrage movement that led to this legislative victory. From books being published, such as *De hoogste tijd: Een eeuw vrouwenkiesrecht* (2019) by Monique Leyenaar, Jantine Oldersma and Kees Niemöller, to the creation of new exhibitions about the women and men<sup>2</sup> who fought for all Dutch women to have this basic human right. But what is often overlooked when talking about these women and men, who brought the first feminist wave to the Netherlands, are put in the spotlight is that they were not just feminists. They were also Dutch citizens, which inherently meant they were part of a colonial system.

The first feminist wave coincides with the height of imperialism. As authors like Sara Mills point out, the period 1850-1930 can be seen as the height of imperialism.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, the first feminist wave took place in the Netherlands just as in the rest of Europe, with the period between 1890 and 1920 marking the high point of the first feminist wave with the battle for women's voting rights. Of course it must be said that not every feminist or person involved in the Dutch suffrage movement at this time was equally engaged in the colonial system to the same extent. Yet there were plenty of Dutchmen, and also Dutch feminists who actually left the metropole to visit either the Dutch colonies in both the East and West Indies or colonial territories of other empires, such as Rhodesia or German East Africa. The women, whose travel writing will be researched for this thesis, personify the overlap, or maybe even, clash between these two seemingly different historical events. This thesis will therefore focus on gender and colonialism in Dutch female travel writing from the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. More specifically it will look at the grammar of difference found in these texts to see how the colonial system is reflected in the language they used.

This research will be based on the travel writing of Esther Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck. She travelled to several colonial territories around the globe during the first feminist wave. Esther Welmoet Dyserinck (1876-1956), or often referred to as Welmoet

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<sup>2</sup> The suffragist movement did not just consist of women. For instance, the more neutral Nederlandsche Bond voor Vrouwenkiesrecht allowed men to join their association and even take place on the board, in contrast to their more progressive counterpart the Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht.

<sup>3</sup> Sara Mills, *Discourse of Difference: An analysis of women's travel writing and colonialism*, (London, 1991), 1.

Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, was a notable Dutch feminist during the first feminist wave and played a significant role in the Dutch women's suffrage movement. She was a member of the Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht and a board member of the The Hague division. In 1907 she left the Vereeniging to start her own suffrage association, the *Nederlandsche Bond voor Vrouwenkiesrecht*, which also allowed men to join.<sup>4</sup> In 1911 she traveled through the African continent with her husband Cornelis Johannes Wijnaendts Francken and in the winter of 1912-1913 they travelled to the West Indies. Her travel writing was initially published in the Dutch newspaper *Algemeen Handelsblad* and soon after her travels were published in book form: *Uit het Zonneland: Afrikaansche reisbrieven* in 1912 and *Drie maanden in de West* in 1913.

There are many reasons why woman's travel writing, and more specifically Wijnaendts' writing, makes for a very interesting and useful source and should be researched. One of the Wijnaendts' work should be researched is because she was an active participant of feminist debates and the feminist in the Netherlands during the late nineteenth and twentieth century. She had an outspoken opinion on many topics which were part of this larger women's issue (*het vrouwenvraagstuk*) and she played an important role in the Dutch suffrage movement. As a feminist and a woman knowledgeable on many different topics relating to the women's issue she was very much aware of the different ways in which women were second class citizens to men. At the same time, as a Dutch citizen she was part of the Dutch colonial system and as a traveler encountered and experienced the workings of different colonial systems during her travels. This makes her a great example of a historical subject on the verge of two different yet overlapping systems, in this case the patriarchal system in the Netherlands and the colonial system in the overseas territories.

Yet, relatively little research exists on the work of Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken, especially when compared to the amount of research on her contemporary Aletta Jacobs. A lack or loss of source material might justify this underrepresentation, but that is not the case for Wijnaendts. Much of her work is still available to this day through a multitude of media. For instance, a large and mostly digitalized archive of her life and work can be found at Atria,

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<sup>4</sup> Fia Dieteren, *Dyserinck, Esther Welmoet, Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon van Nederland*, 17 august 2018, <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/vrouwenlexicon/lemmata/data/Diiserinck>, 27 June 2019.

Institute on gender equality and women's history in Amsterdam.<sup>5</sup> Due to proper preservation of her work it is possible to recreate her point of view various feminist topics. Additionally, documentation of her travel writing has stood the test of time as well, making it possible to research sources material on colonial topics side by side with the material on feminist topics. By researching Wijnaendts' travel writing, this thesis will add new source material to the existing historiography, as her writing has never been used for research before.

The main question this thesis will try to answer is how the colonial system took shape in female writing through the use of 'grammar of difference', and in which ways the two systems Wijnaents moved in – the colonial system and the gendered system of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – overlapped, clashed and influenced each other in their work. In this thesis I want to show that, even though Wijnaendts was an feminists and played an important role in the suffrage movement, she is also part of a colonial system and uses the specific language structures that come with it. I will try to prove this for instance through recurring patterns and tropes, such as the 'lazy native' or 'uncivilized' societies in need of western civilization.

To answer this main question the research is divided into three chapters. The first chapter will look into how the colonial travel writing of these women reflected the fact that they were themselves second-class citizens in a male-centered society and therefore the 'other' to the male standard, and how at the same time these women portrayed the colonies as the 'other' compared to their Western standard. Since this research is placed within both a feminist and colonial sphere this chapter will also provide short contexts to the first feminist wave and the Dutch ethical policy, as well as to the life of Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken.

Even though women have for a long time been marginalized in colonial history they were physically present within the colonies. More importantly women like Wijnaendts had opinions about the colonial system and the politics behind them. When looking at the oppression of white women in the metropole one might expect these women to show sympathy towards the oppressed population in the colonies and aversion to colonial practices. But is this a realistic expectation from someone who herself was an inherent part of the colonial system? The central question in the second chapter is therefore in which ways did

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<sup>5</sup> Annette Mevis, 'Archief Esther Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck', *Atria, kennisinstituut voor emancipatie en vrouwengeschiedenis*, (2006) <https://atria.nl/bibliotheek-archief/collectie/archief/IIAV00000204/#d2e5440>, 10 august 2019.

Wijnaendts show support or rather aversion towards colonial practices? Where here ideas on colonialism in line with the Dutch ethical policy?

The final chapter will focus more on specific feminist ideas Wijnaendts expressed. She was a very active and opinionated feminist, and spoke and wrote about topics such as suffrage, sexual morality and 'white slavery'. But her interests on these topics were not contained within the Dutch borders. She discussed these topics in her travel writing as well, making it possible to compare her ideas situations in the metropole and the colonies. The question which this chapter tries to answer is how her opinions on the emancipation of Dutch women interacted with the opinions they expressed on similar colonial subjects. Did her ideas apply to both the white and non-white women in the colonies?

The topic of travel writing, let alone colonialism and gender, is not a recent one within historical research. There are many different researches done on these topics and from many different angles and approaches. This thesis will apply already existing theories and analyses put forward by authors from different fields of study to back up its analyses of the travel writing, but also to show instances where Wijnaendts' writing deviates from these theories and arguments. Much of the secondary literature consulted in this thesis can be placed within one of the following three fields: Female travel writing, Dutch colonialism and the first feminist wave. These three fields and important researches within them will be discussed in further detail in the section on historiographical overview.

To strengthen the analyses in this thesis with a theoretical framework two theories will be applied: the theory of 'grammar of difference' and the theory of 'othering'. The theory of 'grammar of difference' has seen some recent resurgence, as authors such as Gloria Wekker Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk have used it in their recent publications from 2016.<sup>6</sup> The version of this theory that will be applied in this thesis is by Catherine Hall as explained in her article 'Men and Their Histories: Civilizing Subjects' from 2001.<sup>7</sup> The second theory applied is that of 'othering'. This theory was first introduced by Edward Said in 1978 as a theoretical frame for the patronizing representation of Orient by the white European.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Gloria Wekker, *White innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*, (Durham, 2016). Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'Grammar of Difference? The Dutch Colonial State, Labour Policies, and Social Norms on Work and Gender, c.1800–1940', *IRSH* 61 (2016), 137–164.

<sup>7</sup> Catherine Hall, 'Men and Their Histories: Civilizing Subjects', *History Workshop Journal*, 52 (2001) 49–66.

<sup>8</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York, 1978). For this research the 2003 edition was used.

In order to research historical sources one first has to understand the methods that need to be applied for different sources. The different sources which this research will be based on are books, newspaper articles and magazine articles. In order to research these sources for 'grammar of difference' discursive analysis has to be applied. At the same time, sources like newspaper articles require a different form of analysis than books, requiring the researcher to apply newspaper analysis as one of its methods.



## Historiographical overview

As mentioned in the introduction, this research will apply findings from researches from three different fields of study: female travel writing, Dutch colonialism and first wave feminism. In order to understand the context of this research there needs to be an understanding of the historiographical context within which it is based. This section will highlight some of the important researchers and their work within these fields and whose work will play an important role within this research.

### Female travel writing

Before diving into the field of female travel writing it should be noted that there is an even larger field of research on travel writing in general. One of the most influential works in this field is the book *Imperial Eyes* (1992) by Mary Louise Pratt. It covers the history of travel writing from the eighteenth century all the way to contemporary sources of travel writing. Yet, for the study of female travel writing it is rather of little use. The majority of the book ignores women as possible writers of travel literature, only to acknowledge the existence of these female authors in the end by claiming that women rarely produced these sources.<sup>9</sup> Since then, and even before the publication of her work, authors have proven this idea to be false.

One of most important books on female travel writing is Sara Mills' *Discourses of Difference* (1991). As noted by Sara Mills, it was not until the acceptance of colonial discourse as a legitimate field of research in the 1970s that travel writing came to be considered a worthy source of academic research.<sup>10</sup> Yet, most research of female travel writing was published during the 1990's, both internationally and in the Netherlands. Mills, who is an Emeritus Professor in Linguistics at Sheffield Hallam University, has published work on feminist linguistics, mainly sexism and gender and more recently on politeness.<sup>11</sup>

It is hard to find a research on this topic that does not at one point or another refer back to this book. This very complete and comprehensive study uses the theory of discourse of difference, so similar to the approach in this research. The book is for a significant part dedicated to theories on gender and especially on colonialism, explaining in depth how they

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<sup>9</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, (London, 1992), 213.

<sup>10</sup> Mills, *Discourse of Difference*, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Center for Intercultural Dialogue, 'Sara Mills Researcher Profile', 10 January 2015, <https://centerforinterculturaldialogue.org/2015/01/10/sara-mills-researcher-profile/>, 3 August 2019.

can be applied to gender based research. As mentioned earlier, theories by Said and also Foucault cannot simply be copied and applied to gender based research. The initial authors of these theories often sidelined the presence of and sources produced by women.<sup>12</sup> Mills' book provides the reader with clear explanations of the shortcomings of such theories and adds an extensive analysis of how they still can be applied to research on gender.

Important differences to be noted between Mills' book and this research are her theoretical focus on Foucault and her use of more international sources from multiple authors. This thesis will take a slightly different theoretical route and focus sources by one Dutch author. Also, her research is not specifically focused feminist authors, but has a broader focus on female writers in general.

Another work of importance within this field is Alison Blunt's book *Travel, Gender and Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa* (1994). Blunt focused her research on one particular woman, but also focusses on the role women played in the histories of geography. In this way it is not so much focusing on women's role in colonialism. Blunt notices a recurring tendency in historiography on female travel writing where 'these approaches isolate and often celebrate individual "heroic" women rather than question constructions of gender in both the metaphorically colonial context of patriarchal inequality and the more literal places and spaces of colonization.'<sup>13</sup> This study tries to follow Blunt's lines in steering clear of such approaches. Another observations in Blunt's book is how women, both white but even more so non-white women, are largely marginalized in colonial historiography. Sources by women are rarely taken into account, Pratt's book makes a good example, silencing them in the process. Even when they are taken into account as being present within colonial systems they are hardly ever seen as colonizers and almost exclusively as colonized.<sup>14</sup>

Blunt does a good job at signaling the multitude of possibilities sources like female travel writing can provide for historical research. On top of that her work provides a great example of an entire research can based on the work of a single author. Many others have incorporated sources by different travel writers into their research, which of course has its own advantages and possibilities. Yet, including sources from multiple authors might

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<sup>12</sup> Mills, *Discourse of Difference*, 13.

<sup>13</sup> Alison Blunt, *Travel, Gender and Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa*, (1994) 5-6.

<sup>14</sup> Blunt, *Travel, Gender and Imperialism*, 27.

(unconsciously) give off the idea that sources by female writers will not provide enough material for research.

For research on female colonial travel writing both Mills' and Blunt's work offer the reader an excellent and well-rounded historiographical basis. Even though both books were published in the 1990's they still offer relevant and applicable theories and methods for current day research. One downside to Blunt's book is that it can at times be overflowing with references to other works, overwhelming the reader. It can be hard to follow Blunt through all these references, to keep track of all the different pro's and con's attached to them and to understand Blunt's own position within it. Mills does a better job at showcasing other relevant work in this field and positioning herself within it.

The historiography on female travel writing is not solely limited to English sources, Mineke Bosch shows in her article 'Colonial Dimensions of Dutch Women's Suffrage: Aletta Jacobs's Travel Letters from Africa and Asia, 1911–1912'.<sup>15</sup> Her article is solely focusing on Jacobs' travel writing which makes sense for Bosch, since she is also responsible for writing the biography of the most well-known Dutch first wave feminist.<sup>16</sup> Bosch, who is a Professor of Modern History at the University of Groningen, specializes in the history of science and scientific biography; the history of political culture and citizenship; women's and gender history; history of international women's movements; and (auto)biography and life writing.<sup>17</sup>

Even though Bosch only focusing on Jacobs' work without comparing it to that of other feminists, she provides a great example of the possibilities this type of research can offer. Just like Blunt, Bosch gives a great example of the possibility and versatility of a source from just one author. Unlike other authors such as Harriet Feinberg, Bosch does not single out Aletta's travels to one particular country, but compares her accounts on different countries, cultures and people with each other. Also, she is one of the few who actually points out that someone like Aletta was a feminist, but also part of the Dutch empire and therefore of the colonial system and cross-references these two narratives.

Most secondary literature was written in the 1990's. Especially female travel writing seemed to be a hot topic. But after the turn of the century this interest has seemed to slow

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<sup>15</sup> Mineke Bosch, 'Colonial Dimensions of Dutch Women's Suffrage: Aletta Jacobs's Travel Letters from Africa and Asia, 1911–1912', *Journal of Women's History*, 11, 2 (1999), 8-28.

<sup>16</sup> Mineke Bosch, *Aletta Jacobs 1854-1929: Een onwrikbaar geloof in rechtvaardigheid*, (Amsterdam, 2005).

<sup>17</sup> Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 'prof. dr. C.W. (Mineke) Bosch', 27 July 2019, <https://www.rug.nl/staff/mineke.bosch/>, 3 August 2019.

down, leaving many sources unused and unresearched like Wijnaendts' writing. These 'hidden' sources provide great possibilities for future research and broadening the historiography of this topic.

### Dutch colonialism

When discussing the historiography of Dutch colonialism, the Ann Laura Stoler should definitely be included into the discussion. Stoler is of course a very important author in the field of gender and colonial history, especially on Dutch history, and one can hardly ignore her work on these topics. In her article 'Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Colonial Cultures' (1989) Stoler provides the reader with a great analysis of the sexual relations that existed during the colonial period between the metropole and the colony and how these relations formed and dominated ideas on race, power and morality.

Stoler gives a well-rounded and very useful analysis of these relations between metropole and colony and provides a good example of how gender and colonialism are never two completely separate spheres. Looking back at the earlier mentioned critique by Blunt this article by Stoler presents a great example of how women and gender can be incorporated into colonial historiography. As Blunt noted, women are almost always excluded from the role of colonizer, but Stoler puts forwards a strong argument for white women's direct and indirect effects on colonial systems. The article addresses the position on women of colour within the colonial system, for instance as concubine, and position of white women within this system.

However, the article hardly uses any sources by women. When looking at the extensive list of sources Stoler uses in this article, only two sources produced by two French women can be found. It discusses this history of gender and colonialism from a primarily male point of view. Still, this article provides a good and useful arguments on how white women were oppressing colonial subjects, but at the same time were oppressed by their male counterpart themselves as the voices of European women had little resonance until their opinion lined up with racial and class politics.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ann Laura Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in 20th-Century Colonial Cultures', *American Ethnologist*, 16, 4 (1989), 634-660, 641.

The article by Hans Pols on psychological knowledge in colonial context does not take the same cultural historiographical approach as most of the other literature discussed here. Yet, the article's psychological view point offers a great insight into the existence and use of colonial discourse. It digs deeper into the psychological theories on the nature of the 'native mind' and their function in the debate on the nature and direction of colonial policy in the former Dutch East Indies.<sup>19</sup> Even though this article does not take the aspect of gender into account when discussing colonial policy and practice like the other authors, it provides great arguments on the psychological basis of colonial grammar and a strong analysis on the implementation of this grammar and the effects it had on Dutch colonial societies.

In 1995, Frances Gouda published the popular and much cited book *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* on Dutch colonialism and the ethical policy.<sup>20</sup> It is a vast study which incorporates many aspects of Dutch colonialism, from education and gender in the colonies to the representation of Dutch colonialism towards other European colonial superpowers. The wide scope of aspects of Dutch colonialism discussed in this book makes it very applicable to a wide range of studies on Dutch colonialism. But it also opens the door to criticism as others criticize Gouda for casting her net too broadly.<sup>21</sup>

This thesis will consult all three of these studies, as they all put forward very interesting and useful analyses and notions on Dutch colonialism. At the same time this thesis will add to the corpus of colonial historiography a female centered perspective as the main sources used are often produced by a male author.

### Dutch first wave feminism

The history of Dutch first wave feminism is of course an important aspect when discussing the works of a feminist from this era. General knowledge on this movement is to be expected, mainly focusing on the suffrage movement and Aletta Jacobs, now that women's voting rights in the Netherlands have reached their hundredth-year anniversary. Yet, few are informed on

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<sup>19</sup> Hans Pols, 'Psychological Knowledge in a Colonial Context: Theories of the Nature of the "Native Mind" in the Former Dutch East Indies', *History of Psychology*, 10, 2 (2007), 111-131, 112.

<sup>20</sup> Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942*, (Amsterdam, 1995).

<sup>21</sup> Danilyn Rutherford, 'Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942. Frances Gouda Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995. 304 pp.', *American Anthropologist*, 99, 3 (1997), 670.

the character of the Dutch suffrage movement, let alone on many of the other debates that were held during and shaped this feminist wave.

In 2009 Mieke Aerts published an article on the character of the Dutch suffrage movement and its relations with its British counterpart.<sup>22</sup> Aerts gives a great background to the Dutch suffrage movement and relates it back to the ties between the Dutch and British suffragettes and how influences between the two movements can be traced back. This article is a recommendation to anyone interested in the history of first wave feminism in the Netherlands as it goes beyond the basics of this movement. It provides a strong analysis of the different ideas and opinions found within the Dutch feminist movement and how they intersected or clashed, ultimately shaping the landscape of the first feminist wave. To bring her analysis to life, Aerts provides the reader with clear examples of discussions held between the movement's participants.

She managed to give a short but excellent analysis of the character of the women's suffrage movement in the Netherlands and its relation to similar movements in other countries, and Wijnaendts role within it. This thesis will add to this historiography more insight on the relation Wijnaendts, as a suffragist, had with suffrage movements in colonial territories.

In her article, "'White Slaves' In A Colonial Nation: The Dutch Campaign Against The Traffic In Women In The Early Twentieth Century' (2005), Petra de Vries highlights one of the many debates held during the feminist wave. De Vries provides a great essay on the 'white slave' debate in the Netherlands. She doesn't just focus on accounts of white slavery, but also explains how this concept was created and how it became a meaningful political concept.<sup>23</sup> The topic of white slavery was especially important to Wijnaendts Francken, so a research into its political background and usage provides a great base for the third chapter of this thesis.

Even though the focus is on the Dutch debate on 'white slavery' she puts the Dutch campaign in a more international perspective, showing that the debate wasn't just held within Dutch borders, but stretched all over the continent. Feminists and abolitionists from different countries took inspiration and ideas from one another. Instead of focusing solely on women

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<sup>22</sup> Mieke Aerts, "'Hollandsche vecht-suffragettes'?: Een kwestie uit de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse feminisme', *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, 124, 4 (2009), 599–617.

<sup>23</sup> Petra de Vries, "'White Slaves' In A Colonial Nation: The Dutch Campaign Against The Traffic In Women In The Early Twentieth Century', *Social & Legal Studies*, 14, 1 (2005), 39-60, 42.

when analyzing this debate, De Vries includes both male and female participants' roles within it. This way she is able to add in the difference between men and women when it came to campaigning as well as to men and women's' general place within society.

One aspect which could have been put forward more clearly in this article is that of the 'colonial nation'. De Vries does involve the colonial aspect in the beginning of her article. Yet, the majority of the text is focused on the debate and following legislative actions within Dutch or European borders, making the reader sometimes wonder how the colonial character of the Dutch empire influenced certain parts of the debate. In this thesis notion of 'white slavery' will be taken outside of these borders and placed within colonial territories to show the scope of this debate and to show how the debate took shape in these areas.

## Theoretical framework and methodology

### Theoretical framework

#### Grammar of difference

Recently, the theory of 'Grammar of Difference' has seen a resurgence in colonial and postcolonial research. Elise Van Nederveen Meerkerk uses the theory of 'grammar of difference' in an article from 2016 for instance. Van Nederveen Meerkerk derived it from *Tension of Empire* by Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper.<sup>24</sup> Gloria Wekker also applied this theory in her book *White Innocence* from 2016, although in a less direct manner than Van Nederveen Meerkerk. She too based her approach on Stoler's theory, although from a different work.<sup>25</sup>

The theory of 'grammar of difference' can be traced back to the 1990's, when Stoler used in her own work as well as in the book *Tensions of Empire* which she co-wrote with Frederick Cooper. Yet, this thesis will mainly focus on the theory of 'grammar of difference' as explained by Catherine Hall. Hall provides a very clear and usable definition for 'grammar of difference'. According to her it should be explained as: 'the multiple differences associated with the hierarchies of class, of race and of gender, always articulated through relations of power.'<sup>26</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk uses this idea in her case study to convey the point of inherent differences between Indonesian and Dutch women. It was thought of as 'natural' for Indonesian women to perform hard labour, while in the Netherlands the idea was that women should stay away from hard labour. It was seen as traditional that Indonesian women performed hard physical labour and they were a source of cheap labour as well, so the Dutch financially benefitted from women doing hard labour.<sup>27</sup> As mentioned, Wekker doesn't explicitly use the term 'grammar of difference'. Instead, she formulates it as 'racial grammar'. This is categorized as a deep structure of inequality.<sup>28</sup>

The theory of 'grammar of difference' is a very useful one for historical research. Grammar is a structured way of rules and understanding which you have to follow. Applying

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<sup>24</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'Grammar of Difference?', 137-138.

<sup>25</sup> For her take on 'grammar of difference', Wekker cites Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Duke University Press, 1995).

<sup>26</sup> Hall, 'Men and Their Histories', 50.

<sup>27</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'Grammar of Difference?', 160.

<sup>28</sup> Wekker, *White Innocence*, 39.



grammar in this cultural way shows how people within a certain society or system follow rules and structure to define relationships, hierarchies, roles, etc. Just like learning a language as a child, you pick up the rules of the structure you are in. This structure becomes very natural when passed on to next generations. When you hear your parents, or grandparents, use a racial slur, it can become natural and normal to use. Otherwise, when a society has a certain view on the 'other' this as well can be passed down and expresses itself in the sources analysed, especially text sources. In this way historians can use this theory as a framework for analysing discourse. In this thesis it will be used to analyse the travel writing of Wijnaendts Francken for recurring patterns of both racial and gendered differences as she is both part of a male-dominated and colonial society.

### Othering

The second theory that will be applied in this essay is that of 'othering' by Edward Said. Said puts forward this theory of the 'other' in his book *Orientalism*, which was first published in 1978 and republished with an 'Afterword' in 1995 and a 'Preface' in 2003.<sup>29</sup> Right at the start of the book Said explains how the Orient is the place of 'its deepest and most recurring images of the 'other' and continues on the relationship between the Orient and the West:

'In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, personality, experience. Yet none of this Orient is merely imaginative. The Orient is an integral part of European *material* civilization and culture. Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles.'<sup>30</sup>

The contrasting image represents itself in anything that is in opposition to Western ideals and the characteristics they valued, such as the 'other' being uncivilized, uneducated or non-white. These motifs are recurring throughout the sources.

For this essay, I want to apply Said's idea of a man-made Orient by the West not just to Asian locations visited by these women, but also to African and South-American locations visited by them, because these places are as much portrayed and used by these Western women as 'other' in their narrative as the Orient described by Said.

Another important notion Said puts forward is that these 'others' had no say in the matter: 'The Orient was Orientalized not only because it was discovered to be 'Oriental' in all

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<sup>29</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, (London, 2003).

<sup>30</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, 1-2.

those ways considered commonplace by an average nineteenth-century European, but also because it could be – that is, submitted to being – *made* Oriental.’<sup>31</sup> The people and cultures described in these sources rarely had a voice; they were and spoken for and represented by these Western women, because these women had the power to do so due to their position in the colonial hierarchy.

Said’s theory of ‘othering’ is not without flaws. As Alison Blunt notes in her book, although citing women novelists throughout his account, Said neglects the significance of constructions of gender for both authorship and imperialism.<sup>32</sup> ‘Othering’ cannot simply be seen as a one dimensional operation based on race. This would imply that for instance white men and women would form one homogenous group while the women at this time didn’t even have the same rights as men. This essay will also take gender into account as another dimension to ‘othering’ where women were othered by the men in their society. Adding this second dimension, a double form of ‘othering’ is implied where Wijnaendts as a woman is othered by her male peers while at the same time ‘othering’ colonial subjects in her writing. This idea of ‘double othering’ will be explained in more detail in chapter one.

## Methodology

### Discursive analysis

One of the methodologies I want to apply to my thesis research is discourse analysis. Since I want to research the ‘grammar of difference’ of female colonial travel writing, I will have to analyse the discursive background of the language used in the texts. This essay will follow Du Gay’s definition of ‘discourse’ wherein ‘the term refers both to the production of knowledge through language and representation and the way that knowledge is institutionalized, shaping social practices and setting new practices into play.’<sup>33</sup>

All sources researched in this thesis and their authors are set in a certain age, location and culture. They express the mindset of the context, but more importantly they express the power relations at play in that particular time and space. Since this essay is focusing on expressions of colonialism the focus will be on language which fits into the colonial discourse. For instance, I will look at how these Dutch women described locals, what words they used when talking about them, how language of hierarchy and power is implemented in their

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<sup>31</sup> Ibidem, 5-6.

<sup>32</sup> Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism*, 27.

<sup>33</sup> Paul du Gay, *Consumption and Identity at Work*, (London, 1996), 43.

writing. In the end it is not one single word that forms a discourse, but a continued pattern of words and structures used in colonial settings.

#### Newspaper analysis

One type of source I will be using for research in this essay is newspaper articles. I will use newspapers for my analysis of the works of Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, or rather for analysis of reviews of her work. There are several newspapers, from the *Algemeen Dagblad* to the *Provinciale Overijsselsche en Zwolsche Courant*, that published reviews or advertised her books. These newspapers can show how she as a writer and her work was perceived by (mainly male) 'others'. It can show whether the mostly male reviewers respected her and her work or if they marginalized it because of her gender and her being the 'other' in the eyes of her male peers. Besides newspaper reviews there are also reviews available from more 'scientific' journals. One review is from the journal *De Aarde en haar volken*. This journal was published between 1865 and 1940. It was mainly the illustrations in the form of engravings - in later editions photos - that had to draw in the readers. The magazine appeared in separate weekly and monthly episodes that could be bundled per year. The articles about the exotic world their own country defined the world view of generations of readers.<sup>34</sup>

In her book *Evaluation in Media Discourse: Analysis of Newspaper Corpus* (2006), Monika Bednarek discusses the premises of using newspapers as sources. Media language is complex in terms of its socio-economic and communicative context and the analysis of media language demands methodological decisions in three areas: genre, outlets and outputs.<sup>35</sup> For genre this study will focus published reviews and for outlets it will focus on newspapers and magazines. The output focusses on reviews published close to the publication of her writing in the newspapers and in book form, so focused on output in the years 1912, 1913 and 1914.

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<sup>34</sup> Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 'De Aarde en haar volken', 15 January 2019, <https://www.kb.nl/themas/tijdschriften/de-aarde-en-haar-volken>, 15 January 2019.

<sup>35</sup> Monika Bednarek, *Evaluation in Media Discourse: Analysis of Newspaper Corpus*, (London, 2006) 5.

## Chapter 1 – Dutch first wave feminism, colonialism and the theory of ‘double othering’

Before diving into Wijnaendts ideas on the women’s issue, colonialism and the women’s issue in the colonies one first has to understand what lies at the basis of these subject. Therefore, this chapter will be of a more introductory nature. The question this chapter will provide and answer to is: This first chapter will look into the question of how Wijnaendts’ colonial travel writing reflected the fact that she herself was a second-class citizens in a male-centered society and therefore the ‘other’ to the male standard, and how at the same time these women portrayed the colonies as the ‘other’ compared to their Western standard.

This chapter will provide a short introduction into the profile of Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken, Dutch first wave feminism and her role within it. Secondly, it will stipulate the basics of Dutch colonialism and the characteristics of the ethical policy. Lastly, this chapter will elaborate on the idea of ‘double othering’ to better understand Wijnaendts’ position as a female in a patriarchal society. At the same time it will also dive into her role as colonizer, someone who others the colonized subject and uses her grammar to convey this ‘othering’ to her audience. These three subjects will form the backdrop of the topics discussed throughout the rest of the essay.

### First Feminist Wave

The first feminist wave in the Netherlands is often periodized from around 1870 to 1920.<sup>36</sup> Women and women's organizations such as the Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht (VVK) (1894) committed themselves to the emancipation of women. Acquiring women's suffrage, paid work and gaining admission to (university) education were some of the main point they fought for. Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken was one of these women and played an important role in scaping the Dutch feminist and suffrage landscape.

Esther Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck was born on 7 February 1876 in Den Helder. In 1897, at the age of 21, she married publicist C.J. Wijnaendts Francken. The marriage was far from perfect. The two had very different ideas on feminist standpoints, him being rather opposed to feminism, and there were struggles on the home front as well. In a letter she sent her good friend Elizabeth van Dorp in 1912 she describes these struggles between

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<sup>36</sup> Marianne Braun, *De prijs van de liefde: de eerste feministische golf, het huwelijksrecht en de vaderlandse geschiedenis*, (Amsterdam, 1992), 12.

them and how she struggled to be under her husband's legal and financial guardianship.<sup>37</sup> It wasn't until 1956 that Corry Tendeloo managed to get the Dutch government to abolish the legal disability (*handelsonbekwaamheid*) of married women. Therefore, women like Wijnaendts, after marriage, were automatically placed under guardianship of their husband. Even though the marriage was not what she had hoped it to be the couple often traveled, just two examples of those being their travels through the African continent in 1911 and the West Indies in the winter of 1912-1913. Eventually, the marriage would not last and they divorced in 1916.

Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken might be best known for her suffrage work, but she was not just a one-trick-pony. She was involved in and was knowledgeable on many different debates and fields of study, and she vocalized her own opinion on these different topics as well through a variety of outlets. She had books and articles in both newspapers and magazines published. Wijnaendts work even crossed the border as she had articles published in German, French and even Swedish newspapers and magazines.<sup>38</sup> The topics she wrote about varied from law and politics to healthcare and education. As expected, most of her work has in one way or another ties to feminism and women's suffrage.

Her resume is no less impressive than her bibliography and provides a good idea of the range of her interests and her knowledge. She attended the *Academie van Beeldende Kunsten* in Rotterdam and the University of Zurich and attended classes in Jena and at the Sorbonne in Paris.<sup>39</sup> She was also politically active as member and board member of the Vrijzinnig Democratische Bond (VDB). Wijnaendts is one of the initiator of the Association for the Prevention of Usury and board member of the Committee for Medical Examination before Marriage.<sup>40</sup> These are just some examples from the long list that makes up her resume, showing her significant contribution to Dutch society.

Before starting her own suffrage organization, Wijnaendts became a member of the VVK in 1899. She made quite a name for herself as chairwomen of the The Hague

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<sup>37</sup> Archief Elisabeth Carolina van Dorp, inv.nr 368, collectie Internationaal Archief voor de Vrouwenbeweging (IAV) in Atria, kennisinstituut voor emancipatie en vrouwengeschiedenis.

<sup>38</sup> Archief Esther Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, inv.nr 88, collectie Internationaal Archief voor de Vrouwenbeweging (IAV) in Atria, kennisinstituut voor emancipatie en vrouwengeschiedenis.

<sup>39</sup> Even though she attended many different and prestigious institutions, it is not clear whether or to which degree Wijnaendts finished her studies at these institutions.

<sup>40</sup> Anette Mevis, 'Curriculum vitae Esther Welmoet Francken-Dyserinck (1879-1956)', *Atria*, 18 January 2014, <https://atria.nl/nieuws-publicaties/feminisme/bekende-feministen/curriculum-vitae-esther-welmoet-francken-dyserinck/>, 13 August 2019.

department.<sup>41</sup> By 1903 she had already been a direct competitor of Aletta Jacobs for the presidency of the VVK, and thereafter relations between them had gradually deteriorated. In 1906, Wijnaendts, now with a group of associates, made another attempt at presidency, but without success.<sup>42</sup> Unsatisfied by the course of the VVK she ended her membership and, together with likeminded, started the Nederlandsche Bond voor Vrouwenkiesrecht (NBVK) in 1907.

One of the explanations for this rift in the Dutch suffrage movement can be found with the British suffragettes. According to Mieke Aerts, the violent characteristics of the British suffragettes was appalling to the more moderate suffragists like Wijnaendts. They wanted to obtain suffrage through legal ways, adding that these violent suffragette actions countered the characteristics of Dutch feminism.<sup>43</sup> The invitation extended by the VVK to have a notorious suffragette speak at a meeting was naturally not at all appreciated.<sup>44</sup> Wijnaendts and her associates reassured that there was little direct connection between 'the revolutionary action of some women in England' and 'the discord within the Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht', but also wanted to highlight the way in which the different views on feminism within the VVK were explained on the basis of the ties to the British suffragettes. Still, there was a difference. In England the suffragettes were openly 'violent' and revolutionary. The so-called radical Dutch feminists who sympathized with the suffragettes only showed that they were prepared for all sorts of extreme actions in due course.<sup>45</sup>

#### Dutch colonialism and the ethical politics

Before continuing with the analyses of her writing, there first has to and understand of the practices and policies of the Dutch empire of which Wijnaendts was a part of. Understanding the history and character of a colonial system will give a better understanding of the grammar applied within it.

The Dutch colonial system cannot be compared one on one to the British, French and German systems. As Frances Gouda describes, the Dutch international position was a rather

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<sup>41</sup> Annette Mevis, 'De flamboyante Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck', 12 January 2016, <https://atria.nl/nieuws-publicaties/feminisme/bekende-feministen/de-flamboyante-welmoet-wijnaendts-francken-dyserinck/>, 10 August 2019.

<sup>42</sup> Mieke Aerts, "'Hollandsche vecht-suffragettes"?', 608.

<sup>43</sup> Ibidem, 608-609.

<sup>44</sup> Ibidem, 606.

<sup>45</sup> Ibidem, 609.

‘schizophrenic’ one: ‘In Asia the nation could flaunt its prestige as a “colonial heavy-weight,” while in the European metropole its stature represented that of a puny “light-weight”.’<sup>46</sup> At this time the Netherlands constituted a country of marginal political and military significance within Europe. While the other empires could rule their colonial territory by imposing their rule through brutal force, the had to rely on a high-minded, ethical administration inspired by the highest principles.<sup>47</sup>

While the Dutch colonial system saw great revenues between 1850 and 1900 made possible in part by the implementation of the cultivation system (*cultuurstelsel*), this same policy came under attack from the 1880’s onward from socialists, Christians and liberals. They wanted the existing policy, which was focused on exploitation and monetary gain, to be replaced by one guided by moral responsibility and stewardship. The colonizer had to take up its paternal duty and guide the colonies towards increased welfare and independence. They had to reimburse the colonies for the profits they made from them in the second half of the nineteenth century by investing them in the colonies for the benefit of the inhabitants.<sup>48</sup>

According to Hans Pols there were several key measures and ideals advocated by the supporters of the ethical policy such as: raising the living standards of the colonized peoples by providing education and health care, developing a viable infrastructure, improving the economic conditions in the colonies and instituting political decentralization.<sup>49</sup> These key measures can be seen as the pillars on which the ethical policy was built. The colonizer had to bring western civilization to these backward regions through these measures.

Even though this ethical policy mainly applied to the colonial situation in southeast Asia, its character seeped through into the metropole. As Gouda notes: ‘The colonial domain in southeast Asia loomed larger than life in the collective *mentalité* of the Dutch nation: [...] it “saturated” the whole being of the mother country.’<sup>50</sup> Because of this mentality being ‘saturated’ into the metropole, the ideas of the ethical policy will also be placed next to Wijnaendts ideas on colonialism, even though she did not write about the Dutch territory in southeast Asia. That this mentality seeped through into the rest of the Dutch empire, also including territories outside of southeast Asia, is very clear in Wijnaendts’ writing. Several of

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<sup>46</sup> Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 23.

<sup>47</sup> Pols, ‘Psychological Knowledge in a Colonial Context’, 113.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, 113-114.

<sup>50</sup> Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 23.

the key measures and ideals discussed above can be found throughout her writing as will be pointed out throughout this essay.

### 'Double othering'

As mentioned earlier on, when researching to relation between gender and colonialism one has to take into account that there are multiple forms of 'othering' at play with a colonial society. The most commonly used form is the one where a western, white European 'others' a non-white Oriental, as formulated by Said in *Orientalism*. But I argue that 'othering' can also be applied by a white European male to differentiate himself from his female counterpart, just as it can be applied by a white European female to 'other' herself from a non-white colonized person. Even within this last form of 'othering' there is not just one clear cut 'other', but many different gradations of the 'other'.

### Male 'othering' of the female

In this thesis, there are several forms of 'othering'. The most used one being the 'othering' from the metropole towards the colonies, or, in the case of this thesis from the white Dutch traveler visiting colonized territories towards the people they encounter there. Another type of 'othering', and the type which is less in line with Said's original connotation of the word, is the 'othering' from male towards female. In the context of this thesis it consists of the 'othering' by white European males towards white European females. Even though these women had their whiteness and Europeanness in common with their male counterpart, they were still seen as second class citizens, even if they were from the upper classes of society. They didn't have the same rights as their male counterparts, such as voting rights, and lost even more of their rights after getting married and becoming legally disabled by law.<sup>51</sup>

Women during the first feminist wave in the Netherlands weren't just second class citizens by law, but also by social conventions. They were judged by a different standard on how they were supposed to act and think. As Sara Mills already noted in her research, it can be argued on some levels that women's writing seems to consist of similar elements to men's, but their writing was still judged and categorized differently. This difference was not just based

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<sup>51</sup> In the Netherlands, women did not obtain the active right to vote until 1919, after Henri Marchant introduced the initiative law for the introduction of women's suffrage. On top of that, women in the Netherlands were deemed legally disabled after getting married. This law wasn't changed until January 1957, as a result of the Tendeloo motion passing the Lower House in 1956.



on textual distinctions. Female writers had to negotiate a series of discursive pressures on production and reception in very different ways to male writers.<sup>52</sup> One example of this is the judgement Wijnaendts received on her writing, as 'she would not stick to fleeting travel impressions'. The author of this review was, like other reviewers as he mentions, not amused by her opinions on social phenomena in the colonies as she was 'not authorized to do so'.<sup>53</sup> Another review criticizes her for her opinion that the Boers in South Africa supposedly lacked personal courage. Not only was lack of courage a very non-Dutch trait, the author could not grasp how a woman dared to make such comments.<sup>54</sup> Yet, men were not the only ones judging women by a different standard, Wijnaendts did it herself as well. In *Uit het Zonneland* she comments on the character of the Boer daughters, judging them to be very lazy as they think labour is beneath them. Housewives would be just as bad as they did not do any work around the house.<sup>55</sup> These are all very clear examples of the idea that women's place and duty is set within the private sphere of the household and that they should take responsibility in this part of society, and men's place is set within the public sphere of politics.<sup>56</sup> Women should not overstep their boundaries and cross over to the public sphere of (colonial) politics.

#### Female colonizers versus the colonial 'other'

At first, feminism and colonialism do not seem to be that similar. Colonialism is related to the oppression of marginalized groups, while feminism is related to the emancipation of a marginalized group. Antoinette Burton argues that feminism is actually similar to imperialism, as it was structured around the idea of moral responsibility. 'Feminism and female reform ideology virtually dictated the existence of dependent clients on whom to confer aid, comfort, and (hopefully) the status of having been saved.'<sup>57</sup> This notion shows similarities to the ethical policy of Dutch colonialism, where the idea is that the colonizer has the duty to aid and save the uncivilized native. One important point to note is that 'othering' was used to reassert the racial and class markers of 'Europeanness', in the process emphasizing transnational racial

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<sup>52</sup> Mills, *Discourses of Difference*, 5.

<sup>53</sup> *De West: Nieuwsblad uit en voor Suriname*, 'Drie maanden in de West', 13 January 1914, 1.

<sup>54</sup> *Provinciale Overijsselsche en Zwolsche Courant*, 'Schaduw uit het Zonneland', 30 January 1913, 5.

<sup>55</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 39.

<sup>56</sup> Adriana Cavarero, 'Equality and sexual difference: amnesia in political thought', in Gisela Bock, Susan James, *Beyond Equality and Difference: Citizenship, Feminist Politics and Female Subjectivity*, (London, 2005), 28-42, 28-29.

<sup>57</sup> Antoinette Burton, 'The White Woman's Burden: British Feminists and The Indian Woman, 1865-1915', *Women's Studies Int. Forum*, 13, 4 (1990), 295-308, 296.

commonalities despite any national differences. It is not the Dutch who are superior here but the white Europeans as a '*homo europeus* of superior health, wealth and intelligence' as Stoler puts it.<sup>58</sup>

One way through which the 'grammar of difference' applied in Wijnaendts writing will be analyzed is by looking at recurring tropes and patterns. As Hans Pols notes, colonial societies were held in place by ideologies that made racial and ethnic inequalities appear as natural, justified and desirable. These inequalities were implemented through linguistic differences (which this thesis will mainly focus on), spatial arrangements and colonial conventions backed by legal and military forces, and financial and technological differences.<sup>59</sup> These linguistic differences often manifest themselves in recurring patterns or tropes within the colonial grammar. Pols uses the example of the Dutch colonizers 'describing the Eastern mind as childish, suggestible, emotional rather than rational, sensual, and lazy'.<sup>60</sup> Similar tropes can be found in Wijnaendts' writing. The following tropes are some examples to highlight the most common ones applied by Wijnaendts.

The first example is the trope of the native as primitive and childlike. Wijnaendts described black Africans as 'a people in an almost primal state still, with minimal clothing, blunt, stupid faces, and the blackest conceivable skin color.'<sup>61</sup> Later on she describes the black population in the West Indies as a 'childlike happy population' (*kinderlijk vroolijk volkje*).<sup>62</sup> She basically describes them to be the polar opposite of the white European. According to Pols, this trope can be traced back to the popularization of evolutionary theories. These theories equated primitivism with childhood and infantility, and therefore primitive populations ought to be treated as children.<sup>63</sup> Frances Gouda explains how Dutch colonial residents in the East Indies incorporated the new reasoning of biological evolution and crafted metaphors about the childlike nature or 'lesser development' of Indonesians.<sup>64</sup> These metaphors are the same ones applied by Wijnaendts. She uses the rhetoric of 'lesser developed' and childlike colonized population in order to justify the Dutch colonial paternal presence as they have the duty to raise them.

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<sup>58</sup> Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable', 645.

<sup>59</sup> Pols, 'Psychological Knowledge in a Colonial Context', 111.

<sup>60</sup> Ibidem, 112.

<sup>61</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 213.

<sup>62</sup> Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Drie maanden in de West, (Haarlem, 1913)*, 25.

<sup>63</sup> Pols, 'Psychological Knowledge in a Colonial Context', 116.

<sup>64</sup> Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 121.

The second trope is that of the uneducated native. Quite often, Wijnaendts is surprised by the level of intelligence of the colonized population she encounters. It is mainly the black population whose intelligence she is surprised by, both in Africa as in the West Indies. In Mozambique she recalls how 'on average it is actually a particularly intelligent race which, among others, speaks and understands English rather well.'<sup>65</sup>Wijnaendts is again very much surprised when she is given a tour through a botanical garden by a black tour guide who knew all the Latin and English names of the trees and plants in the garden. <sup>66</sup> As mentioned before, providing education was one of the key measures of the ethical policy in order to raise the uncivilized native.

The final trope I want to discuss is that of the native as lazy. In *Drie maanden in de West* she refers to a system applied by one of the hotels the couple stays at. She describes the system as being designed to save the staff extra work, and because of this the system must undoubtedly be designed by a black man 'in a weak moment where he mistakenly actually put any energy towards thinking'.<sup>67</sup> Wijnaendts continues how she notices every day the 'repulsive laziness (*weerzinwekkende luiheid*) of the population as she never sees them working, but only sitting around their houses. She uses the word 'population' (*bevolking*) here, which is rather ambiguous since colonial populations are rarely made up of one homogenous group. Wijnaendts herself differentiated between different groups, different kinds of colonial subjects, she encountered during her travels. Further down the passage it becomes clear that not all of the population is equally as lazy. The trope of laziness is applied by Wijnaendts mostly to the black population, while she viewed 'coolies and coloured descendants of Portuguese Jews' as less lazy and as groups who would actually work.<sup>68</sup> This last trope also provides a perfect example of how there is not just one binary colonial grammar at play in these sources.

Difference between colonial subjects.

Even though colonial structures are often thought of as binary (generally worded as colonizer versus colonized), these sources show that there are multiple relations at play: i.e. difference between black Africans and Indians in Africa or the difference between the Creole population in Surinam and '*koelies*' working on the plantations. According to Hans Pols all ethnic groups

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<sup>65</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 136.

<sup>66</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Drie Maanden in de West*, 21.

<sup>67</sup> Ibidem, 47.

<sup>68</sup> Ibidem.

of the globe could be classified with respect to the stage of development they had achieved, compared to Europe as the ultimate level of civilization.<sup>69</sup>

In Natal Wijnaendts is confronted with a group of Indian servants who are 'more civilized and better at their work, but also way less reliable than the kaffir.'<sup>70</sup> Just as in the previous example, she differentiates on work ethic, but adds critique on the moral character of the 'other'. Indians are characterized as more civilized, and in this way closer to Europeans in hierarchy. However, they are also stereotyped as more unreliable than native Africans.

Differing ideas on racial characteristics were not just based on whether someone was Javanese, Indian or a 'kaffir', but also on the purity of one's race. Wijnaendts expressed on multiple occasions for instance how a 'pure' African was better than someone of mixed ancestry, or 'half cast'.<sup>71</sup> This complies with Stoker's idea on 'fear of "racial degeneracy"'.<sup>72</sup> Sexual relations between people of different races compromised the racial hierarchy as the offspring it might produce are straddling the division of ruler and ruled, threatening to blur the colonial divide.<sup>73</sup> Natives of pure descent formed a clear category, but those of mixed descent caused confusion in the racial hierarchy. In order to combat racial degeneration European rule pushed away from racial ambiguity and towards upgrading, homogenizing and clarifying the delineation of European standards.<sup>74</sup>

As shows above, Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken was a very active feminist and suffragist. Even though it was only shortly discussed here, her resume and bibliography illustrate the scope of her interests and knowledge. This also gives a good representation of part of the subjects she covers in her travel writing. However, it does not indicate yet her ideas on colonialism and different colonial systems, but this will be shown in the next chapters.

Even though these are just a few of the many examples available in these sources, they show how language and the grammar of a certain system of society are an inherent part of 'othering'. Different tropes are used to legitimize colonialism and to convince that European presence in the colonies benefits the less-civilized native. Dutch ethical polity reinforces these

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<sup>69</sup> Pols, 'Psychological Knowledge in a Colonial Context', 115.

<sup>70</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 20.

<sup>71</sup> Ibidem, 42.

<sup>72</sup> Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable', 636.

<sup>73</sup> Ibidem, 638.

<sup>74</sup> Ibidem, 644.

negative stereotypes by enforcing key measures that would supposedly counter the counter or help the bad and backwards characteristics of the colonized.

## Chapter 2 – critique on colonial systems

Some recurring ideas about women's travel writing either stemming from historiography or from (male) peers of female writers seem to be that (1) women rarely travelled, let alone wrote about it<sup>75</sup> and (2) that when they wrote about it, it was expected to be within limits of what was considered feminine, as discussed in the reviews in the previous chapter. But women's, or even more so feminist, involvement in colonial politics is actually not that much of a surprise as feminism and imperialism share some important characteristics following the argument of Antoinette Burton discussed in the previous chapter. She continues that

'Most female reformers of the period believed that the guarantor of social progress, *the agent of civilization*, was woman herself, and they adhered to a rather clinical view of their sex as the vessel of a better – which was to say, more civilized – society. [...] But once again, feminists deliberately cultivated the civilizing responsibility as their own modern womanly burden because it affirmed an emancipated role for them in the imperial nation.'<sup>76</sup>

In light of this it is no surprise that women like Wijnaendts had her own opinion on colonial systems.

From the standpoint of emancipation one might expect feminist to oppose colonialism since it meant the oppression of marginalized groups. But what should not be forgotten is that, besides being a feminist, Wijnaendts was also raised in a colonial society and was therefore an inherent part of it. That she had her own opinions on colonial politics might not be surprising given her political interests, but it still leaves the question in which ways she showed support or aversion towards colonial practices? Where Wijnaendts' ideas on colonialism in line with the Dutch ethical policy? In order to answer this question this chapter is split up in two parts of analysis: one on Wijnaendts' pro-colonial expressions and one on her anti-colonial expressions. Throughout, her expressions will be linked back to the key measures of the Dutch ethical policy, but also criticism from other parties to see whether it fit into what she was expected to express as a woman.

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<sup>75</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, (London, 1992). Pratt only spends a few pages in her entire book on women's travel writing, saying that 'the masculine heroic discourse of discovery is not readily available to women, which may be the reason why there exists so very little European women's exploration writing at all.' In this very sentence she dismisses a vast corpus of writing that does actually exist on women traveling outside of their home country. She goes on to say that Mary Kingsley's *Travels in West Africa* is probably the most extensive instance that does exist. Just by comparing page counts, Aletta Jacobs' *Reisbrieven uit Afrika en Azië* (715 pages) equals the work of Mary Kingsley (743 pages).

<sup>76</sup> Burton, 'The White Woman's Burden', 296.

## Pro-colonial ideas

Colonialism was more often than not explained good thing, as it brought civilization, education and healthcare to the colonized territories, something that was not present in these regions before the arrival of the Europeans. Wijnaendts expresses her admiration for instance for how colonizers have managed to turn 'absolute savages into a somewhat civilized population' in Uganda.<sup>77</sup> And Wijnaendts argues that the colonized population liked being raised in the image of the white European as 'acting, as whites do, is a mighty concept to [a black man].'<sup>78</sup>

When visiting this British colonies, Wijnaendts is often impressed with the work of Cecil Rhodes and the impact he had on colonialism. Even though she often expresses how impressed she is, Wijnaendts' opinion on Rhodes differs throughout the text. There are times when she expresses admiration for what has accomplished in Africa. Other times she criticizes him and his work. For instance she blames Rhodes and wealthy women for the diamond mining in the region which would have led to the Boer War.<sup>79</sup> When coming across a statue of Rhodes in Cape Town, Wijnaendts explains how her 'admiration for the mighty thought and wrought of one person, and an instinctive aversion' fought inside her mind for priority, and how Rhodes' less than ethical approach formed an indelible blemish on his reputation.<sup>80</sup>

In concluding her opinion on Rhodes, Wijnaendts admits that she would prefer a less tolerant opinion of him, but cannot convince herself that it would have been better if this men.<sup>81</sup> Her critique on Rhodes has clear similarities to the internal criticism on the Dutch colonial system before the implementation of the ethical policy. Policies based on exploitation and monetary gain had to be replaced with one guided by moral responsibility and stewardship.<sup>82</sup> However, the civilization Rhodes brought to this region was prioritized by Wijnaendts over his exploitative actions.

During her travels Wijnaendts also visits the Gordon-college in Sudan. She admires the institution and hopes that the mostly Sudanese students of the college will be civilized and, in their turn, will be civilizing their own community back home. Those colonized and educated by the British should be very happy with what the British brought them. The British expect them see this education as a good deed by the colonizer and expect it will gain their loyalty.

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<sup>77</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 191.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibidem*, 177.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*, 35.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibidem*, 102.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibidem*, 114.

<sup>82</sup> Pols, 'Psychological Knowledge in a Colonial Context', 113.

Wijnaendts also sees the positive aspects of educating these Sudanese boys. They will learn the English language, English morals and civilization, and hopefully bring it back further into the colony with them.<sup>83</sup> A similar argument is put forward by Gouda on the education of Javanese girls as Dutch progressives expected that the education of higher-class Javanese girls would naturally ‘trickle down’ to poor women in the hinterland.<sup>84</sup>

In the end, there is no better system than the Dutch one. Wijnaendts tends to write most of her letters from a more generalizing European view point instead of a Dutch one, referring to Europe or Europeans to indicate the ‘civilized West’ to which she belongs versus any other colonized and less civilized ‘other’. Also, many of her accounts are on other colonial systems besides just the Dutch one, often praising other colonial superpowers, such as the British, on what they have accomplished in their colonies. But from time to time she does take a rather nationalistic turn in her letters from her West Indies adventure when she arrives in the Dutch colony of Surinam.

Upon visiting the country herself she is rather surprised by how pleasant she finds the place to be. She starts telling about her own experience of Surinam by saying she once again ‘set foot upon Dutch soil’, stressing how Surinam is part of the Dutch empire. She continues by explaining how she immediately noticed the ‘greater civilization, the more calm and civilized behaviour of the population and how they would never bother the white people’. Thinking back about what she encountered in the other colonial territories in the West Indies she is proud of the way the Dutch organized their colony. In the other colonies she viewed the local population as ‘chocolate misdeeds’ (*chocolade-wangedrochten*) or ‘dressed apes’, using one of the tropes discussed in the first chapter to create this subhuman ‘other’. She continues describing how her positive perception of other colonies passed once she arrived in Surinam, viewing the local population as equally human as anyone else.<sup>85</sup> So in this case, just because

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<sup>83</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 271.

<sup>84</sup> Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 76.

<sup>85</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Drie Maanden in de West*, 111. ‘*De malle opdirkerij van de Engelsche kolonies ziet men nergens, en de continueele ergeenis, die ik daar voelde voor de bevolking die geen menschen liken maar chocolade-wangedrochten, aangekleede apen, is hier volkomen geweken en heeft plaats gemaakt voor de normale opvatting, dat men tegenover een ander ras staat, waarvan echter geen breedere kloof ons scheidt, dan dat ze een veel kortere cultuur achter zich hebben, overigens menschen zijn zo goed als anderen.*’ The complete quote in Dutch shows even better her loathing towards other races, but magically, when she finds herself on Dutch soil in a Dutch colony, these other races are a lot more like white people and are seen as almost equal, ‘almost’ being the keyword here since non-white people could never be equal to white people.



it concerns a population colonized by the Dutch, the Surinamese population moves way up the hierarchal ladder.

When solely reading her travel writing with little prior knowledge of her involvement in the Dutch suffrage movement this nationalistic turn can rather come as a surprise as it is not in line with previous accounts. Still, as Mieke Aerts described in her article, Wijnaendts' ideas are more along the lines of the national community than on international exchange. She was among those participants in the Dutch suffrage movement condemning the violent style of the British suffragettes and disqualifying opponents for their 'non-Dutch' and more 'foreign' ideas and practices.<sup>86</sup>

#### Anti-colonial tendencies and pacifism

Even though Wijnaendts often seems to be in favour of colonial rule and policy, there are instances to be found where she either criticizes certain colonial systems on the execution of colonial rule, or she criticizes the oppressive nature of colonialism. The idea of undermining the colony, aka the nation, aka the idea of superiority.

Halfway through the letters from her travels through the West Indies, Wijnaendts provides her readers with a short conclusion of her encounters during her travels through the West Indies. Wijnaendts makes the conclusion that she thinks it is a shame that the West Indies are inhabited by such a small white population and that – except from a hygienic point of view – it is such an incredibly backward region.<sup>87</sup> This idea is very much in line an argument made by Stoler which was discussed in the previous chapter. In order to solidify colonial power European rule pushed away from native customs and practices and towards metropolitan norms.<sup>88</sup> However, within one page she abandons this notion saying how the Europeanization of the black population keeps on being such a disappointment to the tourists there. She regrets the absence of pure indigenous cultures, something even de Asian and African regions of the earth poses, causing the West Indies to be this in-between thing which is hardly attractive.<sup>89</sup>

Wijnaendts doesn't often criticize colonization, or rather the injustice against colonized people, but some accounts can, most often out of the blue, be found throughout

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<sup>86</sup> Aerts, "'Hollandsche vecht-suffragettes'?", 614.

<sup>87</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Drie Maanden in de West*, 105.

<sup>88</sup> Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable', 644.

<sup>89</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Drie Maanden in de West*, 106.

her writing. She often compares the British and German systems, interchanging references to her encounters with both systems. It is clear she much prefers the British system over the German one. She criticizes the German colonialism on two different subjects: infrastructure and healthcare. Again, two of the key measures of the Dutch ethical policy.

Wijnaendts judges the German colonial territories to be rather behind on development compared to the British territories, since the British had a much better railway infrastructure built over the previous few decades. She sees this as key to properly develop a colony as it opens doors to economic development. 'Opening up the country' is part of the duty of the colonizer and Germany is not fulfilling this duty.<sup>90</sup>

Another example of critique on German colonialism is when she and her husband visit a German run hospital in German East Africa (D.O.A.). Here she recounts how she saw a German doctor (*Oberstabsarzt*) snarling at a Goanese who came looking for medical help. In this example Wijnaendts criticizes the German colonizer for not taking care of the colonized, as is central to the ethical policy. On top of that she shames the German colonizer for being less civilized than the colonized as he loses his temper and yells at the patient. This challenges the status quo of the colonizer as civilized supreme being at the top of the hierarchy. According to Wijnaendts, this is an example of the 'wound' in German colonial politics.<sup>91</sup> These examples clearly show that what Wijnaendts criticizes in the German system aligns very much with the ethical politics of Dutch colonialism. The idea of 'caring' for the colonial subject takes high priority in her travel writing and when this is lacking the system is deemed as 'wounded' or as undermining the higher civilized status of the white European.

Mieke Aerts notes most feminists have wanted to understand themselves from the outset as part of a global movement.<sup>92</sup> The feminist movement in the Netherlands was not one closed off from the rest of the world. The members of the associations were very much aware of the ideas and practices of for instance their British sisters. The same can be said here about Wijnaendts analyses of other colonial systems. She has informed herself on the workings of these different systems and compares their workings with each other and to the Dutch system, judging which practices and ideas she deems the most effective and seem to be most in line with the ethical policy. But historians have noted also how, within these

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<sup>90</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 181.

<sup>91</sup> Ibidem, 168.

<sup>92</sup> Aerts, "'Hollandsche vecht-suffragettes', 599-617.

international comparisons, one nationalistic feminism was used as a benchmark. Aerst notes how this phenomenon is in line with Benedict Anderson's ideas on imagined communities. A nation only exists because of the existence of the international and vice versa. International comparisons shape the national identity.<sup>93</sup> This is also clear that Wijnaendts uses the guidelines of the Dutch ethical policy as a benchmark for criticizing colonial practice.

There are also examples to be found that support the argument that Wijnaendts was in fact against the colonizing of other societies and the oppression of minority groups. In one instance, Wijnaendts contemplates on female voting rights in South Africa, meaning that (white) women there would also get an official political voice in the colonial system. A popular belief was that female influence in politics would lead to peace.<sup>94</sup> Wijnaendts wasn't convinced by this notion. She asks her readers the question whether women were not in fact equally, if not more, susceptible to the contagious whim that comes with every war seen as British female nationalists during the Second Boer War were even more horrible than the men.<sup>95</sup>

She fears that this new voting right would make the women power hungry and would eventually lead to these women abusing their power to commit injustice against this weaker colonized group, just like the injustice committed against women by men. 'Power and justice appear hard to reconcile.'<sup>96</sup> This example is important, because it is one of the few times where she speaks out against the cruelties committed by the colonizing power against the colonized, even though still referring a 'weaker other'. Additionally, here she does differentiate between men and women, but sees men and women as both colonizers who would go down the same path and would be influenced by the same hunger for power over weaker groups.

In this example, Wijnaendts' ideas on women, colonialism and the war and injustice that was part of colonialism align with the more general idea that women at this time were supposed to be pacifist, against all forms of violence and should bring peace all around, like

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<sup>93</sup> Ibidem, 600-601.

<sup>94</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 34. In her African travel letters, Wijnaendts refers back to speeches given by Aletta Jacobs and Cary Chapman Catt in Bloemfontein earlier on where Jacobs mentioned that 'when women have voting rights, there will be peace.'

<sup>95</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 35.

<sup>96</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 36.

others were preaching. War and violence was considered to be a male trait.<sup>97</sup> Wijnaendts criticizes the attraction and infectiousness of (colonial) war and violence in colonial society. This critique on violence is also very much in line with the views the NBVK presented. As mentioned earlier on, the NBVK was not on board with the more violent approach of the British suffragettes and in 1913 the board wrote an open letter to the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). They publicly protested the violent measures taken by the WSPU and its members, adding that they considered their means and principles wrong, and to the greatest extent harmful to the case of women's suffrage.<sup>98</sup> At the same time she undermines the colonial system by criticizing the status quo of a higher colonizing power subjugating a 'weaker colonized other', and by attacking the idea of how civilized the colonizer actually is.

One of the biggest threats for the metropole that came from colonialism was that of 'racial deterioration'. As Stoler argues:

'Metropolitan critics were particularly disdainful of such domestic arrangements [concubinage] on moral grounds [...] But perhaps most important, the tensions between concubinage as a confirmation and compromise of racial hierarchy was realized in the progeny that it produced, "mixed bloods," poor "indos," and abandoned "métis" children who straddled the division of ruler and ruled threatened to blur the colonial divide.'<sup>99</sup>

*Metissage* (interracial unions) represented the important threat to racial purity and cultural identity in all its forms.<sup>100</sup>

One clear example of this observation outlined by Stoler can be found in Wijnaendts *Uit het Zonneland*. First she mentions a quote from a South African government official about sexual morality and mixed race children and how it was a problem of the cities. The (white) farming population had exceptional moral standards and among them bastard children were a rarity. Bastards from black fathers or mothers were mainly found in the big cities. She follows this quote by saying how she has not seen a mixed race child yet in both South Africa which was a significant change from her experience in the Netherlands. 'A difference with the hundreds of half casts in our own country. But ... the distance between a European and a kaffir seems to me infinitely greater than between the former and a Javanese, Malay or

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<sup>97</sup> Jill Liddington, *The Road to Greenham Common: Feminism and Anti-militarism in Britain Since 1820*, (Syracuse, 1989), 87-88.

<sup>98</sup> Aerts, "'Hollandsche vecht-suffragettes'?", 612.

<sup>99</sup> Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable', 638.

<sup>100</sup> Ibidem, 647.

Japanese.<sup>101</sup> This passage again shows a clear idea about racial hierarchy. The European is placed at the top, followed in this comparison by East-Asians, placing 'kaffirs' or native Africans all the way at the bottom, the furthest removed from the civilized European. Even though she criticizes mixed race offspring from Dutch and Asian parents in her own country, mixed race children from white and black descent are even harder to fathom in her mind since the gap between these two groups was regarded as even bigger. As Stoler argues, inclusion or exclusion required regulating the sexual, conjugal and domestic life of *both* Europeans in the colonies and their colonized subject.<sup>102</sup> In order to fight this threat the conception of children of mixed descent had to be stopped.

As illustrated in this chapter, the ideas and criticisms Wijnaendts expresses on colonialism are often in line with the ideas propagated under the Dutch ethical policy. It often refers to the colonizers duty to raise the colonized population through multiple measures. She criticizes those colonial systems which are not operating in line with the ethical policy of Dutch colonialism. Most of her critique seems to be aimed at the German system as she criticizes their attempts at bringing infrastructure and healthcare to the colonies. As white civilized colonizer one should be able to provide the colonized with a perfect example of what they should aspire to become. Instead, the Germans are showing poor behavior for a white, civilized European and on top of that they are not paying their dues for years of exploitation as they are not raising the colonized as they should.

Still, Wijnaendts seems to be an avid supporter of colonialism and the civilization it has brought, or can bring, to the colonies. She often expresses how impressed she is at everything the colonizers have been able to accomplish, civilizing primitive savages. Even those she criticizes for their exploitation of native populations for monetary gain, like Rhodes, eventually receive her stamp of approval as their civilizing missions are more important than the damage they have done.

Throughout her writing there is little sympathy to be found for the oppressed 'other'. Wijnaendts often remarks how she thinks that colonialism has brought good things to the colonized, such as civilization in the forms of healthcare and education. Yet, some accounts of sympathy can be found as Wijnaendts does plead against oppression of weaker groups in

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<sup>101</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 42.

<sup>102</sup> Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable', 635.

society. Her plight against this oppression is quite similar to feminist calls against male oppression.

Even though her anti-colonial sentiments were sometimes based on sympathies for the oppressed state of the colonized, it could also stem from the desire to protect the European hold on colonial territory and the white Europeanness from 'racial degradation'. A rise in the numbers of mixed-race children was something she dreaded. These children would blur the lines between black and white, threatening the hegemony of white Europeans. Racial purity provided clearer distinctions between races.

## Chapter 3 – Dutch feminism on colonial situations

Large parts of historiography overlook women's role in colonial history as it is often focused on sources by male authors. Alison Blunt uses an example by Abena Busia to illustrate how for instance African males are very much present in western sources, as they are often portrayed as the reverse of their European counterpart. African women, according to Busia, find no counterpart, but only erasure. Blunt notices how this account of Busia plays into the idea that women could only be colonized and never be the colonizer, and how she ignores female writers of colonial literature like many others have done.<sup>103</sup>

As a Dutch feminist, Wijnaendts had an interest in many topics concerning women's daily lives in the Netherlands. From the female duty to the plight of single mothers, she spoke and wrote openly about her opinion on these matters. She didn't leave this interests at home during her travels, but implemented them into her travel writing. In this way her writing can provide insights into aspects of the colonies which aren't present in literature by male authors and give a presence to colonized women in colonial literature. Moreover, her writing on women's issues in the colonies can be compared to her work on Dutch women's issues to see whether her ideas on Dutch (or Western/white) women's issues also apply to women's issues in the colonies.

This chapter explores how Wijnaendts' ideas on women's issues in the Netherlands corresponded to the ideas she expressed on similar subjects and situations in the colonies. How did Wijnaendts' ideas on Dutch feminist issues with the opinions she expressed on similar issues in the colonies. Did her ideas apply to both the white and non-white women in the colonies? The topic of women's suffrage is often portrayed as being the only point of discussion during the first feminist wave, but there was a multitude of topics being debated. This chapter will therefore be divided by subtopics which these women debated about during the first feminist wave, such as suffrage and emancipation, sexual morality and white slavery.

### Suffrage and emancipation

The first chapter of this thesis already gave an overview of Wijnaendts work as a suffragist in the Netherlands, but the women's suffrage movement was not just limited to the European continent. There were suffrage movements all over the world as illustrated by Aletta Jacobs in

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<sup>103</sup> Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism*, 27.

her travel writing from her endeavors to propagate suffrage. The previous chapter already shortly mentioned some of her ideas on voting rights for white women and its effects on colonialism in the colonies, but she also expressed ideas more specifically on the suffrage movement in the colonies.

Wijnaendts' account of her visit to Johannesburg is rather dominated by the subject of suffrage. The passage discusses what the women in Johannesburg have already managed to accomplish, like active city council voting rights, but also the organization of large meetings and other suffrage activities. She goes on to mention the critique they received from a local paper ('mopperblaadje') *The Growler* which expressed its concerns about how, within a quarter century, a woman would be chief justice and stating that women should whine as long as they are not part of a harem. Wijnaendts added the hilarious reactions from women during the next costumed ball, where one shows up in a judge-costume with the text 'the Growler's Dream 1922 and another one came dressed in a Turkisch costume, making it look like she fled a harem.<sup>104</sup>

When talking about the women's suffrage movement in the countries she visits, Wijnaendts is always talking about the white women within this movement. Voting rights for non-white women, or the non-white population in general, is something she barely mentions. One of the very few examples can be found in *Drie maanden in de West*. Wijnaendts discussed the possibilities of voting rights for the colonized as well. As discussed in the previous chapter, politicians supporting the ethical policy advocated political decentralization in the colonies. They argued that government decentralization stimulated progress and economic developments and would give inhabitants of the colonies a greater voice in their own affairs.<sup>105</sup> This is one of the points of the ethical policy from which Wijnaendts deviates. When visiting Barbados, Wijnaendts contemplates the possibility of (more) political autonomy for colonial territories in this region and voting rights for the black population (of Barbados): 'I cannot imagine anything more detrimental.'<sup>106</sup> She is literally saying she couldn't think of anything more disastrous than giving the black population the right to vote. The white colonizer brought democracy (as part of the European culture) to these areas and now the native population is emancipating itself, asking for equal rights. This emancipation is

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<sup>104</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 45-46.

<sup>105</sup> Pols, 'Psychological Knowledge in a Colonial Context', 113-114.

<sup>106</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Drie Maanden in de West*, 45.



threatening white supremacy and this is therefore being dismissed.<sup>107</sup> Colonialism in the West Indies had led to the union of certain colonial territories to gain a (political) voice, threatening the separation from the metropole and threatening to sever the colonial hold of Europe on these territories.

As Wijnaendts was very much impressed with the achievements of the (white) suffrage movement in South Africa, she very much pressed against the idea of people of colour obtaining voting rights, resulting in political emancipation. Just like Jacobs, Wijnaendts wanted the suffrage movements to grow in the colonies, but only the movements that fought for white women's suffrage. As Bosch notes: 'Jacobs, as did most feminist contemporaries, contested the exclusion of white women within the context of Western democracies, not the process and principle of exclusion on the basis of "nature".'<sup>108</sup> This is coherent with Wijnaendts' writing on suffrage. She visits the suffrage movement of the white elite in South Africa and is impressed by their hard work, but when talking about any form of suffrage for people of colour she argues against it. In her eyes it could only end disastrous.

#### Prostitution, 'white slavery' and sexual morality

A topic that should not be overlooked when addressing the relation between gender and colonialism is the sexual aspect of these two spheres. There are many different angles to this particular topic, from prostitution and concubinage to the dominant sexual morality of a society. Stoler puts forward the notion that

'Probably no subject is discussed more than sex in colonial literature and no subject more frequently invoked to foster the racist stereotypes of European society.[...] with a sustained European presence in colonized territories, sexual prescriptions by class, race and gender became increasingly central to the politics of rule and subject to new forms of scrutiny by colonial states.'<sup>109</sup>

Yet, Stoler does not specify in her argument whether she is referring to all colonial literature or just to literature produced by men. Mills' work is contrasting Stoler's argument when it comes specifically to literature by female authors saying that in women's writing

'[...] this representation of the colonised country as a safe place for women to travel may have developed from precisely the problem of women writers describing sexual matters; it would

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<sup>107</sup> Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable', 641-642.

<sup>108</sup> Bosch, 'Colonial Dimensions of Dutch Women's Suffrage', 27.

<sup>109</sup> Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable', 635.

have been considered improper for a woman writer even to allude to sexual matters This is a notable silence in texts.’<sup>110</sup>

Wijnaendts’ writing, both on subjects in the metropole and the colonies, breaks with this notion and because of that this source provides an inside view of female perceptions on sexual relations in a colonial perspective.

#### Prostitution and ‘white slavery’

The image of ‘white slavery’ often brings up the nineteenth century paintings depicting white women sold as slaves or as part of a harem in a middle eastern setting. Yet, the ‘white slave’ was very much a part European society and of Dutch debates. As an important figure in the Dutch abolitionist movement, Wijnaendts wrote and spoke on many different occasions on this topic in the Netherlands. But she also took the campaign against the ‘white slave’ with her on her travels.

In his article ‘Sexual hygiene: Dutch reflections on the adolescent body in the early twentieth century’ John Exalto explains how the moral panic during the 1910’s and 1920’s, resulting from the discovery of the adolescent, had its roots in the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the prostitution-abolitionist movement flourished. Within this movement many feminists and conservative Protestants were each other’s allies, since both resisted regulation on prostitution and the accompanying medial control.<sup>111</sup> In her article on ‘white slavery’, De Vries notes how from the 1880’s on there was already a lot of turmoil surrounding the topic of white slavery in Europe, but the campaigns and debates, led by the Dutch abolitionists, grew even larger in the wake of all this turmoil in the period between 1900 and World War I.<sup>112</sup>

The movement started out mainly focusing on combatting prostitution as a central and hotly debated question was whether or not the state should regulate prostitution in order to combat venereal disease.<sup>113</sup> Prostitutes were frequently moved from one place to another, creating an inhuman system of trading. This idea of ‘trade’ in bonded women was modeled on the idea of black slavery. The social purity movement also took over the terminology of ‘abolitionism’ as it spread to the European continent. Especially for female abolitionists,

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<sup>110</sup> Mills, *Discourses of Difference*, 22.

<sup>111</sup> John Exalto, ‘Sexual hygiene: Dutch reflections on the adolescent body in the early twentieth century’, *History of Education*, 48, 4 (2019), 516-528, 521.

<sup>112</sup> De Vries, “‘White Slaves’ in a Colonial Nation”, 40.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibidem*, 43.

prostitution formed the bottom line of sexual danger and no woman should be subjected to that, not even if it keeps another woman safe from the same danger.<sup>114</sup>

The topics of prostitution and more specifically 'white slavery' were rather important to Wijnaendts, both in Dutch and in international context. For instance, she warns the women of the Transvaal region in South Africa for imminent danger: 'De in de Kaapkolonie bestaande "reglementeering" heeft n.l. kans door de geheele Unie te worden aangenomen, waarmee de markt voor den blanke-slavinnenhandel weer belangrijk zou worden uitgebreid.'<sup>115</sup> As brought forward by De Vries, it is important to note that the idea of 'white slavery' was 'a historical construct, born out of a particular interpretation of sexual danger in a specific social and historical context' and that it was a very meaningful political concept to apply.<sup>116</sup> In this example, Wijnaendts is specifically talking about white female enslavement instead of general female enslavement; the white woman specifically is in sexual danger. The idea of the 'white slave' is used here as a political tool to block regulations from the Kape Colony to the rest of the Union decriminalizing brothels. Wijnaendts protested this decriminalization, as the abolitionist movement saw a connection between brothels and the 'white slave trade'.<sup>117</sup>

Wijnaendts talked to local women about this threat and received mixed responses. Some women noted how before the criminalization it wasn't safe for women to cross the street and how after criminalization 'several French girls – *trafficked* women – were released'. Others commented on how abolitionism curbed their own freedom, because white man were now going after 'kaffir women' (*kaffervrouwen*), whom in turn would seek their revenge by attacking white women. Wijnaendts wants these women to realize that they are not allowed to turn their 'less privileged, perhaps more frivolous gender equals into merchandise' for the sake of their own safety.<sup>118</sup> Even though they might be 'less privileged and more frivolous', these French girls were still European and white and therefore closer to the 'us' in this narrative (the white colonizer) than to the 'other' (the non-white colonized). The white woman's body was a mark of western civilization and enslaving a white woman as a prostitute signified racialized sexual threats to 'our women' and possibly even to the colonial nation.<sup>119</sup> This

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<sup>114</sup> Ibidem, 44.

<sup>115</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 51.

<sup>116</sup> De Vries, "'White Slaves' in a Colonial Nation", 41.

<sup>117</sup> Ibidem, 52.

<sup>118</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 51.

<sup>119</sup> De Vries, "'White Slaves' in a Colonial Nation", 55-56.

example is also very much in line with Wijnaendts ideas on female slavery and prostitution in the Netherlands. As De Vries remarked, Wijnaendts was very strong in her opinion that ‘if one wanted prostitution in order to make the streets safe for other women, “we do not want this safety if it is brought with the slavery of our sisters”’.<sup>120</sup> Yet, whereas Wijnaendts is very much concerned with sexual threats against white women, she does not seem to be that concerned about the threat formed by white men towards the *kaffervrouwen*. In this instance she prioritizes the abolition of ‘white slavery’ over the threat towards *kaffervrouwen* and the resulting kaffir attacks.

In her description of British East-Africa Wijnaendts returns to the subject of slavery. This time, she compares the double moral in place where a European can no longer hold a slave, but a black man is free to buy himself a female slave from a complaint from a South African (white) woman.<sup>121</sup> This practice is similar to one described by De Vries. She refers in her article to the work and ideas on white slavery and prostitution of evangelical Protestant philanthropist Ottho Gerhard Heldring, who opened the first Protestant rescue home in the Netherlands in 1848. According to De Vries, Heldring clearly modelled his idea of slavery of the white prostitute on black slavery. These ideas later inspired the language and interpretations of the social purity movement of the 1870s and thereafter.<sup>122</sup>

#### Sexual morality

Mieneke Bosch already noticed in her research of Jacob’s travel writing how two different forms of observation could be found in source material like the ones used here:

‘Except for stereotyping in the form of developmental hierarchy, which in part reflects a recourse to recapitulation theory, Jacobs’ text shows two more well-known observations dealing with “other races.” The first is an obsession with purity versus mixed descent or culture, which connects racial segregation to discourses of sexual morality. The second concerns racial stereotyping in terms of gender or gender confusion.’<sup>123</sup>

The first observation made by Bosch here is of importance for this part of the thesis since the idea of and preference towards purity is a recurring topic in these travel narratives, as well as the idea of interracial sexual relationships. Again, Stoler’s argument that inclusion or exclusion required regulating all colonial relations, both sexual and domestic, of both Europeans in the

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<sup>120</sup> Ibidem, 44.

<sup>121</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 217.

<sup>122</sup> De Vries, “White Slaves” in a Colonial Nation’, 44.

<sup>123</sup> Bosch, ‘Colonial Dimensions of Dutch Women’s Suffrage’, 18.

colonies and their colonized subject.<sup>124</sup> ‘This moral rearmament of the European community and reassertion of its cultural identity charged was needed to reinforce European hegemony over the colonized ‘other’.<sup>125</sup>

Often in cases of sexual relations between a colonizer and colonized the colonizer is taken into protection or is seen as the victim, while the colonized is seen as the perpetrator. There is the fear of white women being endangered sexually by non-white men in the colonies.<sup>126</sup> De Vries also notes how the Dutch portrayed non-white colonial women as “‘dirty”, “‘lazy”, “‘gambling” and “‘untrustworthy” concubine[s]’ who endangered the Dutch soldiers instead of these women being the victim of colonial power. Blaming white men for abusing colonized women would mean to question colonial rule. At the same time white ‘innocent’ women had no sexual agency.<sup>127</sup> In both cases the white men and women are not to blame, the non-white colonized is.

One example of Wijnaendts portraying black women as sexually deviant and promiscuous can be found in her *Drie maanden in de West*. She describes the practices of black women in Surinam, criticizing their relations with men of their own age or younger. She continues by noting how if their ‘husband’<sup>128</sup> does not meet their expectation they can easily enter into a new marriage. This ‘continuous promiscuity’ would signify an inferior race according to Wijnaendts.<sup>129</sup> What makes this an important example of sexually blaming and shaming the colonized is that it is rather the opposite of some ideals expressed by Wijnaendts on Dutch or European marital reform. She came out in support of the ‘companionate marriage’, an idea by Ben Lindsey popularized in the late 1920’s. As John Exalto explains the companionate marriage is a concept of a trial marriage where men and women can test whether married life is suited for them and whether they are suited for each other. Within the trial marriage third person sexual relations were not forbidden, although monogamy was preferred, and if the marriage turned out to be unsatisfactory it could be unceremoniously

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<sup>124</sup> Stoler, ‘Making Empire Respectable’, 635.

<sup>125</sup> Ibidem, 642.

<sup>126</sup> Ibidem, 641.

<sup>127</sup> De Vries, “‘White Slaves” in a Colonial Nation”, 49.

<sup>128</sup> Wijnaendts herself uses quotation marks for the word husband (echtgenoot), explaining they are often not married by law.

<sup>129</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Drie Maanden in de West*, 140-141.

dissolved.<sup>130</sup> Wijnaendts herself followed in Lindsey's footsteps and cowrote the book *Kameraadschapshuwelijk: Pro en contra* in 1933.

Even though there are many examples to back up De Vries' notion that white 'innocent' women had no sexual agency, Wijnaendts' writing actually provides an example of an exception to this idea. She goes on to criticize the white female colonizer in her immoral sexual advances towards her 'kaffir employee'. As the 'Black Peril' was seen as an ever growing threat during the 1920s and 1930s, different initiatives, such as investigations as to whether African female domestic servants would be safer to employ than men, were set up in efforts to protect the white female from the supposed sexual threat men of color formed.<sup>131</sup> Wijnaendts goes in the opposite direction, framing white women as those who should know better and the coloured men as the innocent, childlike ones. Wijnaendts brings up the idea 'If women ruled the world there would be peace' and rejects that notion, saying that the white women in South Africa are just as bad if not worse than men, because they employ 'kaffirs'. 'Women who have power are just as likely to commit acts of injustice towards the lesser sex as many men would do towards women.'<sup>132</sup> When these women are attacked by their servants they blame the servant. According to Wijnaendts these 'kaffirs' cannot be blamed for attacking these women, as they are just 'undeveloped children's souls in men's bodies'. She blames the women for their behavior as their actions and dress would be too suggestive.

As Stoler argues, instruments to promote white solidarity and curb sexual transgressions by colonized men towards white women sometimes worked against these very women. Legal punishments for instance were put in place to punish coloured men for sexual assault, but white women were frequently blamed for provoking sexual desires in the first place.<sup>133</sup> This is exactly what Wijnaendts does here. By blaming these women, Wijnaendts adds to the defense of community and morality. But most importantly she adds to the defense of white male power as blaming either party affirms the vulnerability of white women and the sexual threat posed by native men, limiting the liberties of both.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Exalto, 'Sexual hygiene', 524.

<sup>131</sup> Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable', 641.

<sup>132</sup> Wijnaendts Francken-Dyserinck, *Uit het Zonneland*, 35-36.

<sup>133</sup> Stoler, 'Making Empire Respectable', 642.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibidem*, 642.

As De Vries notes, it is important to realize that Wijnaendts was socially far removed from the women she spoke about. In the Netherlands, the abolitionists viewed prostitutes to be victims with no agency, without a voice to speak up in this movement.<sup>135</sup> The same is applicable to most women in the colonies Wijnaendts refers to, with the exception of the women of the suffrage movement in South Africa. They were, like Wijnaendts, white women with an advantageous position in society, making it possible for them to speak up for their rights.

To answer the question as to whether her ideas on Dutch and colonial women's issues can be seen as the same the answer has to be: not really. There is a definite overlap in the subjects. Many of the topics she wrote and spoke about in the Netherlands have found their way into her travel writing. Still, she does not regard colonized women to be the same as Dutch women. There will always be a gap between these groups and there will always be a hierarchy in place. In Wijnaendts terms, fighting for women's rights does not mean fighting for every woman's rights.

One thing that can be said for her writing on women's issues is that it does give the female colonized subject a presence, even though it is not a big presence. The female colonized subject is no longer ignored in her writing, as is often the case with sources by male authors. Still, this presence must not be mistaken with giving these women an actual voice. This presence is very much a biased one, subject to Wijnaendts perception of these women. Even though she wants to spread the feminist word in the colonies, her words are only meant for white women. The danger of 'white slavery' only applies to her white sisters, leaving her non-white sisters susceptible to this danger.

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<sup>135</sup> De Vries, "'White Slaves' in a Colonial Nation", 44-45.

## Conclusion

This research has shown the many sides and possibilities to travel writing as a historical source. Due to her rather flamboyant and outspoken nature, Welmoet Wijnaendts Francken did not shy away from discussing any topic she ran into. Eventually this resulted into the long list of publications, from articles on legislation to books on motherhood. It also resulted in two books worth of travel writing, providing readers a closer look into colonialism from a feminist stand point. As pointed out in the beginning, Wijnaendts was not just part of a feminist wave, but as a Dutch citizen she was also part of a colonial system. Since these two spheres were inherent parts of her life, these spheres should be researched in relation to each other.

When researching relations between gender and colonialism and applying the theory of 'othering' there needs to be an understanding that there can be multiple 'others'. She was very much othered by her male critics. On account of her writing, but also on accounts of her criticism of colonialism. At the same time she othered herself and other women on account of being a female. On many subjects she longed and looked for (more) equality between man and women, but she still maintained the idea that there were inherent differences between the two. In this way, the inequalities between men and women were kept in place. At the same time that women like Wijnaendts were being othered by their male counterparts, they themselves were also 'othering' a colonial 'other'. In a system dominated by the ideas of racial hierarchies, grammar is used to signify the 'other', but also to create characteristics on which the distance towards the 'other' was based. As shown throughout this thesis, Wijnaendts used different recurring tropes to signify the non-white, non-European 'other' to her readers and to distance herself from them. A third notion that should be understood when using the theory of 'othering' is that there is no binary 'colonial versus colonized'. The colonized is made up of all the different people under colonial oppression. Just because Javanese, Creole and Indians can all be categorized as colonized does not mean that they hold the same place on the hierarchal ladder.

There is definitely an argument to be made for characterizing Wijnaendts as a model Dutch colonial citizen. There are examples in her writing to be found that fit into the role of Dutch colonizer by propagating the ideals of the ethical policy, which also closely relate to characteristics of first wave feminism. The ideals of the ethical policy, such as civilization through education and healthcare, are recurring themes in her writing. She supports



colonialism that meets the ideals of the ethical policy, but criticizes colonialism when it does not meet these policies or if only driven by exploitation and monetary gains.

But there are plenty of examples to be found where Wijnaendts deviates from that role. There are times where she criticizes colonialism and oppression on the colonized, and therefor undermines white supremacy and the European right to colonize. She argues that in some cases the presence of the colonizer has done more damage than good to the native population while the colonizer has the task of raising, educating and civilizing them. This critique undermines the validity of European presence in the colonies. In some instances she is called out on her criticism of colonialism by male reviewers. They call her out, because she is overstepping her boundaries as a women. She is participating in a debate on colonial politics, which is in the public sphere, and criticizing men who are above her in hierarchy.

As for her standpoints on feminist issues, there is a definite overlap between her work on these issues in the Netherlands and in the colonies. She discusses the same topic in her travel writing as she in her other work, such as suffrage, 'white slavery' and sexual morality. But her travel writing adds, or rather omits, the presence of non-white women. When discussing suffrage in the colonies, she only wants white women to obtain the right to vote. When going over the possibilities of black inhabitants of the West Indies obtaining the right to vote, and inherently being more politically emancipated, she quickly turns this idea down. The same can be said for her work on 'white slavery'. As the term already implies, this movement tries to protect white women from sexual danger. White women are seen as a group of sisters that needs to protect each other, but women of colour are left to fend for themselves.

Still, there can be found some examples throughout her writing where Wijnaendts shows sympathy for the colonized people. For instance she pleads for better treatment of the weaker groups in colonial territory, of those bent under white male supremacy, debating that these groups are under the same oppression as women in the 'Western civilized world'.

But this sympathy for these groups of colonized people based on white male oppression should not be mistaken for equality between them and white women in. There was still a large and important gap between them. White women, although oppressed by a patriarchal society, were still civilized people high up on the racial ladder. The non-white population of these colonial societies were seen as groups who needed protection and civilization, because they themselves were too lazy, childlike, etc. Grammar like this was used

to remind the reader that there was always an inherent difference between the author and her subject even though they might share a similar oppressed faith.

One of the side notes that has to be made on the analyses in this research is that due to the research being in English the source material had to be translated as well. The danger of translating source material, especially when applying discourse analysis, of course being the loss of meaning, or more specifically the loss of discourse, in translation. I have tried to translate phrases to my best ability to a suitable English substitute and where this was not possible I tried to explain the usage and context of certain words. Still, translations and context cannot not make up for all lose.

Another choice made in this research was that, even though these two sources provided a lot of material for this research, it still only focused on the grammar of one author. Choosing to focus on the work of only one person certainly has advantages, especially when the size of the research is limited. To add other source material by another feminist might, in the case of this thesis, not do justice to either one of the authors, as it meant that the analyses of both authors' work would end up more superficial. Yet, adding the source material from another feminist would allow for the possibility of researching commonalities and deviations within the feminist movement on colonial topics. As more and more sources like these are disclosed, and the age of digitalization and digital humanities opens doors to many different possibilities for discourse analysis, future research could focus on a more comparative analysis of travel writing by Dutch feminists. The travel writing by Wijnaendts and Jacobs are not the only examples of Dutch female travel writing. There are many more sources like the ones discussed here, written by Dutch female authors during the age of colonialism, which have not yet been researched. These sources carry within them the possibility for historians to recreate the female voice within the colonial system. But it is the task of the historian to let these voices speak.

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