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Maria Lidia Mattos Valdivia

Through the Window, an intimate scene: everyday stories of women in 20th-century colonial Netherlands

Dissertação de Mestrado

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Advisor: Prof. James Casas Klausen

Rio de Janeiro
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Prof. James Casas Klausen
Advisor
Instituto de Relações Internacionais – PUC-Rio

Prof. Paula Orrico Sandrin
Instituto de Relações Internacionais – Puc-Rio

Prof. Samson Okoth Opondo
Vassar College

Dr. Paulo Henrique de Oliveira Chamon
Independent Researcher

Rio de Janeiro, February the 29th, 2024

Maria Lidia Mattos Valdivia

Graduated in International Relations from Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) in 2021.

To my parents, Cleo and Mario
And to all of those who paved the way.

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This dissertation emerged from a desire to tell stories about things that I felt informed my being in the world. I wrote these words mostly isolated in my room, in a kind of (in)voluntary self-containment. But I cannot say that these words are solely mine. Despite my proclivity to isolation, many hands have held mine and made it possible for these stories to be told. In many ways, this dissertation is both a confession and a love letter.

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Abstract

Valdivia, Maria Lidia Mattos; Klausen, James Casas (Advisor). **Through the Window, an intimate scene: everyday stories of women in 20th-century colonial Netherlands**. Rio de Janeiro, 2024. 212p. Dissertação de Mestrado – Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

This dissertation aims to explore the complex network of practices, relations and imaginaries that underwrote the intimate and the everyday lives of women in colonial Netherlands during the first half of the 20th-century. This period was marked by intense development in the cities, rural exodus and migration from/to/within the colonies, changes in housing patterns, and policies regulating family and female life. Although the Dutch colonial empire was a center of capital flows during colonialism, its participation in these dynamics of violence and asymmetry remains underexplored and unaccounted for in contemporary political discussions. In contrast, this dissertation attempts to bring forth other modes of seeing and narrating the Dutch colonial archive by observing multiple networks of power embedded in diverse and correlated processes of representation and narration of dynamics surrounding female intimacy in social, racial, sexual and gendered dimensions. The central argument is these power relations brought forth imaginaries, fantasies, affective relations, as well as disciplinary and regulatory practices producing the limits of female intimacy through the "colonial encounter" between the colonies (particularly Indonesia and Suriname) and metropole. The theoretical support for this project is situated within aesthetic, post-strutucural and post-colonial engagements in IR, particularly through the work of Michel Foucault and Homi Bhabha. The analysis is conducted by a triple process of archival review of documents, reports and photographs about these women; of archival contrapuntal reading (as proposed by Edward Said) and critical fabulation (as proposed by Saidiya Hartman). With these engagements, I hope to contribute to new modes of interacting with the colonial archive, thus providing a complex understanding of the international in the context of female intimate life.

Keywords

Resumo

Valdivia, Maria Lidia Mattos; Klausen, James Casas. **Através da Janela, uma cena íntima: histórias cotidianas de mulheres na Holanda colonial do século XX**. Rio de Janeiro, 2024. 212p. Dissertação de Mestrado – Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

Esta dissertação pretende explorar a complexa rede de práticas, relações e imaginários que sustentavam a vida íntima e cotidiana das mulheres na Holanda colonial durante a primeira metade do século XX. Esse período foi marcado por um intenso desenvolvimento nas cidades, êxodo rural e migração de/para/entre as colônias, mudanças nos padrões de moradia e políticas que regulavam a família e a vida feminina. Embora o império colonial holandês tenha sido um centro de fluxos de capital durante o colonialismo, sua participação nessas dinâmicas de violência e assimetria permanece pouco explorada e não contemplada nas discussões políticas contemporâneas. Em contraste, esta dissertação busca mobilizar outros modos de ver e narrar o arquivo colonial holandês, observando múltiplas redes de poder incorporadas em processos diversos e correlacionados de representação e narração da dinâmica que envolve a intimidade feminina em dimensões sociais, raciais, sexuais e de gênero. O argumento central é que essas relações de poder trouxeram à tona imaginários, fantasias, relações afetivas, bem como práticas disciplinares e regulatórias que produziram os limites da intimidade feminina por meio do "encontro colonial" entre as colônias (especialmente Indonésia e Suriname) e a metrópole. O suporte teórico para esse projeto está situado em engajamentos estéticos, pós-estruturais e pós-coloniais em RI, particularmente por meio do trabalho de Michel Foucault e Homi Bhabha. A análise é conduzida por um processo triplo de revisão de arquivos de documentos, relatórios e fotografias sobre essas mulheres; de leitura contrapuntal de arquivos (conforme proposto por Edward Said) e de fabulação crítica (conforme proposto por Saidiya Hartman). Com esses engajamentos, espero contribuir para novos modos de interação com o arquivo colonial, proporcionando assim uma compreensão complexa do internacional no contexto da vida íntima feminina.

Palavras-chave

Colonialismo; Intimidade; Raça; Gênero; Política Visual; Revisão de arquivos.

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List of Abreviations

ARP – *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij* (Anti-Revolutionary Party)

BB – *Bureau Binnenlandse Bestuur* (Interior Governance Bureau)

CDA – *Christen-Democratisch Appèl* (Christian Democratic Appeal Party)

EEA – European Economic Area

IR – International Relations

KITLV – *Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* (The Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies)

KNIL – *Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch Leger* (Royal Netherlands-East Indies Army)

KNSM – *Koninklijke Nederlandse Stoomboot-Maatschappij* (Royal Netherlands Steamship Company)

KPM – *Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij* (Royal Packet Navigation Company)

KSMV – *Koloniale School Voor Meisjes en Vrouwen* (Colonial School for Girls and Women)

MULO – *Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs* (Extended Primary Education)

NMVB – *Vereniging Nederlandsche Modevakbond* (Dutch Fashion Union)

PID – *Politieke Inlichtingendienst* (Political Intelligence Service)

STOVIA – *School Tot Opleiding Van Inland- sche Artsen*(School for the Training of Native Doctors)

VOC – *Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (Dutch East India Company)

WIC – *Westindische Compagnie* (Dutch West India Company)

So I am scouring maps of all kinds, the way
that some fictions do, discursively, elliptically,
trying to locate their own transferred selves.

Dionne Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging.*

1
Through the Window, an opening

If I am asked to identify the origin of the selves I have become, without hesitation I describe the various libraries in which the girl I no longer recognize, the girl I have long since left behind, the girl I discarded and rejected, found sanctuary — Hazel Carby, *Imperial Intimacies: A Tale of Two Islands.*

In a split second, the camera's shutter draws three dividing lines: in time (between a before and an after), in space (between who/what is in front of the camera and who/what is behind it), and in the body politic (between those who possess and operate such devices and appropriate and accumulate their product and those whose countenance, resources, or labor are extracted) — Ariella Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism.*

To have one's belonging lodged in a metaphor is voluptuous intrigue; to inhabit a trope; to be a kind of fiction. To live in the Black Diaspora is I think to live as a fiction — a creation of empires, and also self-creation. It is to be a being living inside and outside of herself. It is to apprehend the sign one makes yet to be unable to escape it except in radiant moments of ordinariness made like art — Dionne Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging.*

How does one begin to tell stories about stories?

That is the question that compelled me to write this dissertation. As a child who grew up devouring books, I remember daydreaming about being a fiction writer — assembling entire worlds, envisioning distant futures, recovering pasts, and reimagining their trajectory. I used to fill entire school notebooks with the "novels" I wrote as a 10-year-old, who aspired to make a living by constructing characters from will and conveying their emotions from my own. Throughout the years, the dream of being a writer appeared to have slowly dwindled the more adulthood was near — when faced with the ever-growing weight of the responsibilities and demands of being alive in this

world, I started to feel like the uncertainty of creativity would get in the way of making a living. Therefore, during college, I attended classes, took tests, wrote final papers, read classical authors, and forced the childish dream of being a fiction writer to fade into the background, as I did not feel it would ever have a place in academia. Notwithstanding, the dream I thought I had left behind continued to make itself known in my peripheral vision.

The desire to tell stories pointed to a more fundamental recognition of my becoming in the world. After my godfather passed away from cancer when I was 10 years old, my family began to live in a suspended temporality marked by a "before" and its "aftermath" — I was transformed into the reoccurring listener of a wistful ballad about the "glory days" of family reunions, cookouts, parties, trips. As if I was the one-person audience in a generational theatrical ensemble, I was presented with images of what was and could no longer be: my grandmother, who passed away when I was one, and my uncles sitting at a table, dramatically shouting while playing a round of *truco*[1]; the makeshift wooden swing under the mango tree from my mother's childhood home in the countryside. When my great-uncles and aunties told me about their young tales, how they met their spouses, the hardships they had to endure being black in Brazil, and the places they used to go that no longer existed, I hung onto every word with the kind of breathlessness of someone being pushed to "the brink of remembering" (Brand, 2022, p. 17), finding solace in the confines of a memory that is bound to fade away. In a sense, these family members seemed like fictional characters to me, inhabiting a past world that I was not entirely part of. I browsed through family albums that had long been collecting dust on the top shelf of my mother's wardrobe, I found her old journals and read them obsessively. I could never quite put into words this ever-growing hunger for the past.

During one of the lectures I attended at the International Political Sociology Winter School during my Master's program, Professor Rob Walker discussed the process of critiquing the dominant bases of the discipline of International Relations (IR) and posing good research questions — he asked: *"What connects your intellect with your belly?"* What compels us to write (or to wish to write, or to be afraid of putting thoughts into words)? Do we seek to retrieve what was discarded, remember what was forgotten, and reveal what was hidden? Do we wish to transform the other-worldliness of the unknown familiar to us? Do we look for versions of ourselves in the traces left behind by others? If hunger is a cavity at the center of my body, then locating the site of injury, tracing the edge of the jagged wound, and recollecting the inaugural

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[1]Truco is a popular card game in Brazil.

moment of hurt appear as a mode towards a path of healing.[2]

In "Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging", the poet Dionne Brand (2022, p. 18) describes a memory of her childhood when she asked her grandfather if he knew where their ancestors came from, which he tried to remember for weeks but never managed to do so. She claims both of them began living in that site of mutual disappointment, where a "small space opened in [her]". But this space, which transfigured through time and gained new contours, new textures, and new shadows, was more than simply a fissure in the relationship between a hopeful child (then a woman) and her (then estranged) grandfather. It was, more profoundly, "a rupture in history, a rupture in the quality of being. It was also a physical rupture, a rupture of geography" (ibid, p. 19). So if I had to explain what came first in the journey of writing this dissertation, I would attempt to describe, however unsatisfied by the insufficiency of words, the *feeling of inhabiting this site of rupture*.

It seems as though, then, a dissertation about how to tell stories about stories begins with the attempt to tell a story about myself. But the attempt is predicated on an intimate endeavor of *seeking* and *forging* connections with others also living in a site of rupture, living and being in *fiction*. While I have, almost frantically, read, watched and heard about the "grand narratives" that inform of the existence of racialized people, and racialized women in particular, today — colonization, enslavement, deprivation, inequality, sexual and institutional violence, to name a few —, the cavity remained (and perhaps deepened). In these accounts, past generations of women become digits in imperial ledgers, numbers of profit or debt in plantation registers, and statistics of violence and loss (of partners, children, homes, jobs). The majority of the accessible official records about colonized people, and women specifically, reproduces the colonizing logic of abstraction and depersonalization in which the death represented by these figures becomes "simply part of the workings of the trade" (Brown, 2009, p. 1238). There is little that is human in these narratives that can be immediately rescued, reconfigured and transformed into a life. As a result, and much like Brand (2022), I saw myself continuously disappointed and frustrated. Instead of perpetuating these "grand narratives", my desire for the stories of the women of the past was much more anecdotal — I wanted to pull back the curtain and *see glimpses of their lives*. Like the stories my family told me, I wanted to visualize the various ways in which

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[2]I cannot help but think about Moses Sumney's song "Me in 20 Years" (2020), in which he longingly sings: "I wonder how I'll sleep at night/ With a cavity by my side/ And nothing left to hold but pride, will I/ Hold out for more time?" Likewise, the preface to the Brazilian edition of Dionne Brand's "A Map to the Door of No Return" (2022), written by Tatiana Nascimento — discussed below — reads: "a diaspora é um lugar no meio do peito" (diaspora is a place in the center of the chest, in loose translation).

they moved through colonial spaces, how they made lives out of fiction, and how they inhabited metaphors. In other words, through the act of "entering more profoundly into [their] lives and worlds" (Pandian; McLean, 2017, p. 8), I hoped to arrive at an "international theme" (Bhabha, 1992, p. 146).

In this endeavor, I found myself displaced through various spatio-temporalities until my pursuit for stories of past lives that bleed into the present led me to the 20th-century colonial Netherlands. My first encounter with the Netherlands, in a disciplinary sense, resulted in the completion of my undergraduate final paper about Dutch window prostitution.[3] I was initially drawn to this topic out of an innocent fascination with the Dutch Parliament's official narratives on the regulation of sex work — the promise of protection of women, of sexual emancipation, and the recognition of sex work as a *de facto* job. The fascination dissolved each time I looked more intensely at the cracks. The so-called "emancipated prostitutes"[4] from the European Economic Area (EEA), encouraged to migrate to the Netherlands and become entrepreneurs, were the most vulnerable to trafficking and sexual violence within the very logic of regulated prostitution. This finding proved to be contrary to the dominant narrative disseminated, even indirectly, that racialized women from the Global South were either victims of international trafficking or accomplices in international smuggling *par excellence*[5]. In my commitment to knowing more, finding origins, and seeking beginnings, I traveled to the 20th-century wishing to observe the formation of the window prostitution displays we know today.[6] At first, I only found myself frustrated by the scant literature on the topic, mostly centered around the period of legalization onwards (Outshoorn, 2004; 2005). However, the further I probed and questioned Dutch historiography — and the more I opened myself to see things "out of place" (Furtado, 2021) —, the more enraptured I became. What emerged from this engagement was a

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[3]My final paper was entitled "Corpos visíveis e invisíveis da prostituição de vitrine: um estudo sobre os enquadramentos do fenômeno da migração feminina pela indústria sexual holandesa" ("Visible and invisible bodies of window prostitution: a study on the framing of the phenomenon of female migration by the Dutch sex industry") (2021).

[4]Translation of the Dutch term "mondige prostituée" used by Justice Minister Frits Korthals Altes (1982-1989) which, according to Joyce Outshoorn (2004, p. 188), is equivalent to "the emancipated and assertive prostitute who identifies as a sex worker, in contrast to the exploited victim of forced prostitution".

[5]A 2008 report by the Dutch National Police Agency pointed to the existence of a network of organized crime managed by three suspects (who were of Turkish origin, a fact that was used to reiterate a discourse that positioned racialized men as dangerous) that managed pimps, bodyguards and other accomplices to carry out severe violence against women in regulated prostitution — from coerced cosmetic surgery to forced abortion (Hout; Laan, 2008, p. 32; Outshoorn, 2012, p. 239)

[6]In chapter 3, I turn a scrutinizing gaze towards the very grammar I use here to describe my relationship with the women in the archive as subjects to be found and as subjects who are able to reveal the origins/secrets of power.

collection of colonial scenes.

The discipline of International Relations (IR) has been the setting of intense processes of epistemological revision to denounce the omissions and historical violence of traditional narratives concerning the colonial brutality perpetrated by the European metropoles and the asymmetrical relations that resulted from it (Grovogui, 2006; Krishna, 2006; Barkawi, 2016; Hobson, 2012; Kapoor, 2020). However, scant literature has turned this inquisitive gaze towards the Dutch State and its participation in the transatlantic slave trade. While there is recognition of the economic and material gains that the Dutch empire achieved during colonialism and imperialism, discussions about the violent consequences of this participation are incipient and fragile (Neocleous, 2014). Likewise, despite the array of rich contributions from a multitude of disciplinary standpoints that provide transversal and plural modes for engaging with the topic at hand, which are mostly situated in the fields of Anthropology, Literature, History, and Political Science (Stoler, 2010; Stoler 2009; Wekker, 2016; Locher-Scholten, 2000; Gouda, 2002; Gouda, 1997; Hoefte, 2014; Essed; Hovig, 2014; Koekkoek; Richard; Weststeijn, 2019), the apparent silence of IR in the topic remains undisturbed.

Between the 17th and 20th centuries, the Netherlands accumulated and maintained numerous colonies in various parts of the world — Indonesia, Suriname, Guyana, parts of Malaysia, northeastern Brazil, parts of the U.S. (such as present-day New York), part of South Africa, Sri Lanka, parts of India, etc. The accumulation of territories, creation of corporations, intensification of market transactions, capture and use of resources, and implementation of coercive forms of labor were fundamental for its accumulation of capital. Such was this accumulation that the Netherlands was described as one of the "pioneers of capitalism" (Prak; Zanden, 2022). However, on occasions when Dutch participation in imperial and colonial dynamics is brought up in the dominant discourse in the Netherlands, it is accompanied by a series of justifications that remove the responsibility of the Dutch empire — and later the State — from practices of racial domination: such as narratives that African people were active participants in their enslavement and that such institution was initiated in Africa and only later incorporated Europeans; such as the idea that the Dutch are less morally reprehensible (than the British or the French, for instance) because they participated more in the transportation of enslaved people than in the actual enslavement practices (on the plantation); as well as the claim that Dutch colonizers treated enslaved people (and later their colonized subjects) well (Nimako; Adbou; Willemsen, 2014, p. 35).

My engagement in the present dissertation, therefore, stems from the

recognition of the "impossibility of reconstituting the past free from the disfigurements of present concerns" (Hartman, 2022b, p. 14). I seek to "interrupt the traditional account, revise historical chronology, cast doubt on the progressive arc and telos of narrative, and blast open the time of [colonialism]" (ibid., p. XXXV) by offering a counter-reading — a contrapuntal reading (Said, 1993), which I will describe further — of the *archive of IR* and the *archive of colonial Netherlands* to observe the quotidian experiences of women. This objective also stems from a refusal to perpetuate narratives of horror and violence practiced by the Dutch empire, by, instead, presenting scenes in which quotidian encounters of women with the intimate encroachment of colonial power illuminate the multiple ways in which they were inscribed in a complex and, often, contradictory network of practices, relations and imaginaries. Furthermore, these networks underwrote forms of seeing gendered, racial, familial, spatial and institutional relations. In other words, this dissertation seeks to ruminate on the "site of rupture" that informs how experiences of women of being and living "in fiction" were (re)produced within apparatuses and technologies of power that emerged from the colonial encounter (Pratt, 1992; Inayatullah, Blaney, 2004) and sought to narrate and represent them in various ways.

In order to observe the circulation of these colonial visual-discursive practices, I work with a broader conception of what constitutes the Netherlands as "a historically and socially contingent package of ideas and ideals rather than as a geographically specific location" (Shephard; Sjoberg, 2012, p. 7) to discuss stories brought forth from the "colonial encounter" (Pratt, 1992; Inayatullah, Blaney, 2004), specifically through the relation between the metropole and the Dutch West (Suriname) and East (Indonesia) Indies as the main colonial territories of the Dutch empire. Moreover, in line with the criticism posed by Gloria Wekker (2016, p. 26) in regard to analyses of Dutch colonialism that foreground the Dutch East Indies to the detriment of the Dutch West Indies, this dissertation attempts to observe how both colonies were the simultaneous targets of various colonial policies and interventions, as well as sites of circulation of colonial discourses. The choice to discuss the 20th-century is in tandem with this spatial arrangement — it was a period marked by intense urban development, both in the colonies and the metropole; increased influx of migrants from rural areas to the urban cities, particularly due to changes in the labor landscape in the aftermath of the abolition of slavery in Indonesia (1860) and Suriname (1863); and changes in housing patterns and deployment of policies to regulate the intimate family life, in general, and female (sexual) intimacy, in particular.

With this engagement, I propose to go beyond contemporary feminist

discussions about the intimate experiences of women in the Netherlands — which, from my experience, are mostly centered around debates on the legalization of sex work and female sexuality (Outshoorn, 2004; Aalbers; Sabat, 2012; Marchand; Reid; Berents, 1998) — by articulating the relationship between gender, race, *intimacy* and *lived experiences* through a colonial lens. Therefore, I depart from an understanding of intimacy that encompasses practices and spaces traditionally seen as private and personal (sexuality, the family, and the home space), as well as modes of relationality constituted by a wide range of sensory and interpersonal experiences; stories of connection, kinship, desire, and affinity (to people, objects, places, etc); and the networks of power that underlie them (ibid.) (Pratt; Rosner, 2012, p. 12). Particularly, theoretical articulations of intimacy highlight the centrality of the materiality of the body (its gestures, its relationships, its anatomy) as a site of subjection within multiple networks of power. With this, I intend to show the pervasive character of colonialism in the production of colonial female subjectivities and in the creation of multiple imaginaries about these women, producing countless ways of witnessing and inhabiting their bodies.

In what follows, I briefly situate the theoretical foundations for the development of this dissertation in the next section and offer the analytic of the Window as a mode for articulating technologies of colonial visual politics. Then, I discuss the analytical strategies that support this endeavor as modes for working with, against, and beyond the constraints of the archive. Finally, I briefly situate the discussions carried out in each chapter.

1.1
Encountering the archive: colonial visual politics

Perhaps the main reason my daydream of being a (fiction) writer had ebbed during adulthood was that, during my undergraduate program, nothing equivalent to the stories that plagued me ever consistently appeared in the literature and the subsequent discussions of what was considered the legitimate study of international politics.[7] The "connection of my intellect with my belly" which animated my desire to tell stories about colonized women, therefore, emerged in the recognition of a narrativization problem in the field of IR, a problem of "storytelling", *a problem in the archive(s).*

In this context, Siba Grovogui (2006, p. 6-7), conceives IR's disciplinary

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[7]This might be a partial telling of events. When I *actively* scouted for it, when I breached the confines of the mandatory credits and the universe of my department, or when I pursued classes with individual professors whom I knew shared my predicament, I found solace in transdisciplinary discussions of topics that were important to me.

archive as the particular ways empirical data is arranged and organized, which results in specific modes of producing (or not) knowledge about the international. To him, therefore, "the disciplinary memories" that compose the disciplinary archive, (re)produce Western political rationality and authority because they are constructed to be "comprehensive views of international reality", but are still founded in "dubious recollections", "contestable classifications" and "and less than transparent understandings" of international politics (ibid).

Within this disciplinary landscape, I found myself at multiple sites of contestation. Several authors from various "lineages of thought" (Guillaume; Huysmans, 2018) endeavored to address the violence, omission and neglect constitutive and reproduced by the disciplinary archive (even while not outright using the word "archive" to describe it). Some authors have scrutinized the grammar, imaginaries and periodizations employed by the dominant epistemology that overstate the experiences of the West and obscure other forms of seeing, knowing and being in the world, particularly in relation to stories of colonization and the experiences of women (Grovogui, 2006; Krishna, 2006; Barkawi, 2016; Spivak, 1994 [1988]; Chakrabarty, 2000; Quijano, 2005; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Grosfoguel, 2016; Chowdhry; Nair, 2004; Enloe, 2014). Others have dwelled in epistemological alternatives to the problem by operating through a reorientation that provides a distinct way of conceiving the political (as opposed to disciplinary "grand narratives"), and a deepening of subjects, forms of knowledge and practices circumscribed to these relations (particularly the attention to the quotidian, the mundane, the prosaic, the ordinary, the personal, the common, the banal, and so), which is particularly present in feminist and sociological theoretical engagements (Nyman, 2021; Guillaume; Huysmans, 2018; Hartman 2021; Enloe, 2014). Likewise, authors have engaged with the affective dimensions of our political experiences to evidence how power relations are inscribed within a confusing and contradictory network of desires, fantasies, fears, and anxieties that delineate the production of international disciplinary knowledge (Stoler, 2010; Ahmed, 2014; Jaggar, 1989; Kinnvall, 2018; Cohn, 1987).

In other words, emerging from multiple entry points, there is a shared sentiment about the incompleteness, dubious framing, and murky coloring of the picture being painted by the discipline's dominant "regimes of truth" (Foucault, 2008 [1978-79]). To this end, authors employ a vast vocabulary to describe the *"problem of the International"* as the problem of "narrating", "representing", "framing", "portraying", "recounting", and "viewing" *difference* (Inayatullah; Blaney, 2004) — be it racial, cultural, sexual, spatial, temporal and

so forth. In this context, Instead of viewing the disciplinary archive as a grave-
yard from where no new life can emerge, I invite us to take upon Grovogui's
(2006) call for *pluralizing the archive of IR*. If the dominant narrative is a
particular *organization, interpretation, recollection, classification*, and *memo-
rialization* of the empirical, then there is a vastness of archival possibilities
that has been traditionally unaccounted for.

I have been using visual grammar and metaphors to describe my ob-
jectives in this dissertation and my relationship with the archive because my
theoretical and analytical engagements are located within aesthetic concerns
in IR. Briefly situating the theoretical foundations of this work, I take "visual
politics" (or visuality) to mean the multiple operations of power subscribed to
the ability to create "primary markers" (Bleiker, 2018) that prescribe certain
ways of seeing, concealing and transfiguring imaginaries about something or
someone. I draw from Roland Bleiker's (2018, p. 2) account, in the context of
the "aesthetic turn" in International Relations, and the growing attention to
what images (modes of representation, in general) and visual artifacts tell us
about the world, how we live in the world, and how we see the world. Above
all, these aesthetic and visual concerns highlight the recognition of images and
visual artifacts as "political forces in themselves [...], [t]hey often shape pol-
itics as much as they depict it." (ibid., p. 3). In other words, visuality is an
instrument of power.

In this way, I intend to demonstrate how the circulation of imaginaries,
signs, visual artifacts, and images produces particular ways of representing the
intimate lives and daily practices of women in the Dutch colonial archives,
based on a scopic game that positions them "as absence and presence, artist
and model, agitator and adherent, fiction and fact" (Copeland, 2010, p. 481).
The ability of these women to occupy multiple contradictory positions in the
colonial imaginaries constructed about them is possible because visuality is
always captured by discourse in attempts to interpret it (Bhabha, 1994; Hall,
2017; Fanon, 2008 [1952], Butler, 2004; Butler, 2006). Though interpreted
through discourse, visuality is always excessive in the face of our attempts to
definitively fix its meaning. Despite the impossibility of fixing meaning, we still
try to attribute meaning to images based on the discursive economy in which
we are inserted. Therefore, visuality is entangled in memories and experiences
of contact (Ahmed, 2014) that provide it with intelligibility, which, in turn,
allow for the attribution of meaning through the relationship with other visual
networks (of images and imaginaries) (Bleiker, 2018). In other words, "[t]here
are inevitably power relationships involved in this nexus between visuality,
society and politics" (ibid, 2018, p. 16).

After locating a cavity in the Dutch colonial archives, the second movement resulting from such theoretical and methodological concerns is formulating an analytic — a common thread — to visualize the colonial modes of representation and quotidian experiences these women were inscribed to in the 20th-century Netherlands and, simultaneously, circumvent dominant narratives through other modes of seeing the archive. To this end, I mobilize the work of Christina Sharpe (2016). When discussing the countless processes of subjectivization of black people during the afterlife of slavery (Hartman, 2022b), Sharpe (2016) uses the visual and orthographic metaphor of the *wake (wake work)*, which carries multiple meanings: it refers to "the keeping watch with the dead, the path of a ship, a consequence of something, in the line of flight and/or sight, awakening, and consciousness" (ibid., p. 17-18). All these images also describe the quotidian forms of inhabiting black life: the "afterlife of slavery" as the continuum of the structural "hold of slavery" into the present (Hartman, 2022b), the slave ship, the basement, the Middle Passage, in/visible racial violence and the possibilities of self-creation.

Inspired by Sharpe's (2016) proposal, I develop an analytical principle that connects the visual and discursive domains, to observe the circulation of technologies of power subscribed to dynamics of visuality and representation within the colonial discourse (Bhabha, 1994). In this sense, I seek to extend, distort, and reorient the visuality and discourses of female intimacy in colonial Netherlands by taking the *concept of the Window* as an organizing principle, going beyond the image of the prostitution window that developed at the time and guided white European sexuality.

The definitions of "Window" are multiple: it refers to an opening in the wall, an entrance; it is equivalent to *an opening that allows light to enter; it is also a frame that obstructs an opening and the circulation of light or air*; it is an object that *allows one to see what is inside*; in typography, it is *a space left blank due to a flaw in printing or to be filled later*; in geology, it is a *fissure in the soil caused by erosion*; it refers to a *hole or tear, especially in clothing; finally, it is equivalent to an interval of time* (Priberam, 2008-2021). This analytic allows me to observe the politics of visuality at play in the daily lives of these women: the ambivalent practices of concealment, violence, revelation, transformation, and narrativization in the (in)ability to represent the Other. Moreover, the analytic of the Window tells us something about how to conceive of these ongoing power relations — power is constituted not only as something that restricts but as something that produces (Foucault, 1978). These women's quotidian experiences of processes of racialization, sexualization and genderization within the colonial discourse

(Bhabha, 1994) not only involve daily dynamics of violence but also the creation of attachments, affections, identifications and desires (Abu-Lughod, 1990; Stoler, 2010; Brown, 2009; Mahmood, 2006).

1.2
Analytical strategies: contrapuntal reading, critical fabulation and intimate narration

As per the discussion carried out in the previous section, I set out to access the empirical archives on these women in an attempt to pluralize the archives of the discipline. In other words, since the Dutch state suppresses and neglects its practices of colonial violence (Wekker, 2016), I seek to offer a careful reading of its colonial archives in order to extend their narrative boundaries and provide a contrapuntal reading (Said, 1993) that scrutinizes the perceived naturality, objectivity and neutrality of the dominant narratives.

Contrapuntal reading, as developed by Edward Said (1993), consists of a method that seeks to "interpret together experiences that are discrepant, each with its particular agenda and pace of development, its own internal formations, its internal coherence and system of external relations, all of them coexisting and interacting with each other" (Said, 1993, p. 32). In other words, it is part of an attempt to articulate the shared stories of colonizers and colonized, in order to tension the dominant perspectives on European modernity as self-contained and self-generated, since its development is implicated in "the already existing historical connections between parts of the world" (Bhambra, 2016, p. 336).

With contrapuntal reading, Said (1993) offers a method for thinking about these relationships simultaneously, from a place of "exile" — an internal perspective that takes into account the cultural dynamics from which the subject originates and, at the same time, an external perspective that emerges from the attention to the cultural dynamics of the place in which the subject takes refuge in (Said, 1984; Bilgin, 2020). In other words, this analytical movement proposes a transversal displacement between the internal and external standpoints of the archive — taking into account the logic and internal structure of the narratives that constitute it and, at the same time, making a counterpoint from an external site of critique that "examines the problematic seductiveness of the work's capacity to guide its audience's responses" while critically situating the text "within a wider field of imaginative possibilities" (Wilson, 1994, p. 266). In line with Dionne Brand's perspective, contrapuntal reading positions the subjects who make up the archive (and the researcher herself) as beings who "live inside and outside themselves" (Brand, 2022, p.

33). As subjects who are observed and observe, who are narrated and narrate.

In this way, I set out to intimately interact with the quotidian and intimate lives of women in the Dutch colonial archive to offer a set of accounts that contrasts spatialities, temporalities and traditional imaginaries about their social, sexual, and familial relationships to highlight the co-constitutive nature of these stories. The focus on observing multiple scenes rather than a linear and/or chronological approach is therefore an attempt to simultaneously juxtapose and connect these relationships visually, geographically, historically and discursively. In the words of Saidiya Hartman:

> The effort to "brush history against the grain" requires excavating at the margins of monumental history for the ruins of the dismembered past to be retrieved and turning to forms of knowledge and practice not generally considered legitimate objects of historical inquiry or adequate sources for history-making (Hartman, 2022b, p. 12).

I intend to interpret these archives to "illuminate the practice of everyday life" of these women and to "investigate the construction of the subject and social relations contained in these documents" (ibid, p. 13). While I focus on images as my objects of analysis (photographs, paintings, drawings, illustrations and so on), I still attempt to engage with the archive on broader terms — letters, official colonial documents, reports, excerpts from newspapers, institutional records, etc. conduct my archival searches on platforms that have digitized sources and on secondary sources that have worked with Dutch colonial archives — such as the Dutch National Archives;[8] the National Archives of Suriname;[9] *Stiching Surinaams Museum*;[10] *Zeeuws Archief*;[11] the digital collections of Leiden University Libraries (particularly the Southeast Asian Caribbean Images collection);[12] The Indo Project;[13] the International Institute of Social History (IISH);[14] the Delpher platform;[15] *Brabants Historisch Informatie Centrum*;[16] and the Amsterdam City Archives.[17]

When accessing these archives, what do we do in the face of the silence and violence they provide? What do we do when the archives do not make

[8]See: https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en
[9]See: https://nationaalarchief.sr
[10]See: https://www.surinaamsmuseum.net/
[11]See: https://www.zeeuwsarchief.nl/en/research-our-collections/
[12]See: https://socrates.leidenuniv.nl/
[13]See: https://theindoproject.org/
[14]See: https://iisg.amsterdam/en
[15]See: https://www.delpher.nl/
[16]See: https://www.bhic.nl/onderzoeken/stamboom
[17]See: https://archief.amsterdam/

it possible to reconstruct these lives apart from the violence that constituted them? It is in this context that Saidiya Hartman develops the method of "critical fabulation" (2008). This method consists of distorting, misrepresenting and dismembering the official narrative of the archives by providing a counter-reading that strains the visual and discursive limits of these documents. It is a quest to engage productively with the silences and gaps that the archive presents by attempting "to tell an impossible story and to amplify the impossibility of its telling" (Hartman, 2008, p. 11).

Critical fabulation is a method that establishes an intimate relationship and a productive interruption between the empirical/social (archive) and the literary/philosophical (theory) (Kazanjian, 2016, p. 143). In other words, based on a careful theoretical foundation derived from secondary sources that provide epistemological paths for dealing with the theme of this dissertation, I critically imagine and speculate about the experiences of these women through the archives. My aim is not to offer a complete account of these lives, but to present scenes that provide a glimpse of the possibility of their existence *within* and *beyond* the limits imposed by the archive. An existence that is marked by the violence of the colonial encounter and its processes of racialization and sexualization/genderization, but is not reducible to it. I intend to critically fabulate about the quotidian and intimate dimension of these women's lives as a way not only of pluralizing the Dutch colonial archive and showing the political importance of the mundane, but of highlighting how these women were also actively theorizing about their realities, articulating an ordinary existence beyond the confines of metaphors. Thus, my analytical strategies constitute a dual movement of working *along* (Stoler, 2009; Stoler 2010) and *against* (Hartman, 2022b; 2021) the colonial archive to theorize about the imaginaries being produced in the dominant discourses (and the realities they narrate), as well as to provide counter-modes of telling these stories.

Furthermore, critical fabulation also blurs the boundaries between fiction and fact by requiring the researcher to be both a character and the author of stories — creating dialogues, filling in silences, and talking to ghosts. I argue that this movement, which creates spaces of simultaneous im/possibility, is productive not only because it delegates the authorship of narratives of international politics to marginalized subjects (both author-researchers, especially black people, and colonized subject-characters), but because it extends and strains the limits of the legitimate imaginaries of Western knowledge production. Finally, this analytical strategy also affects the way I write. The reader might have already noticed that I am quite personal in some moments. Like Hartman (2022a), I articulate an "intimate narrative" by *putting myself* in the

text and allowing myself to become undone by the text. Along with my impetus in foregoing linearity and chronology to create points of connection and distance between colonial practices and discourses, my presence in the text is also part of this endeavor — the points of connection and distancing between myself and the discussion I put forth are indicative of the ways in which my *personal* archive intermingles with the *Dutch colonial archive*, and the *present that I speak from* interrupts and is interrupted by the colonial past. Once I allow myself to be affected by the empirical, I let go of the idea that academically valid knowledge must be constructed in a neutral, objective, rational way and, above all, separate from the discursive position of the researcher.

1.3
Structure of Dissertation

The organization of this dissertation follows two principles: the first, is a commitment to form to navigate between dense theoretical sections and detailed analytical scenes. On the one hand, the following chapters follow the same basic structure — similarly to the beginning of this chapter that accompanied my journey into reflecting on the topics of this dissertation, the introduction of the following chapters also follows my journey to the Netherlands, (now as a tourist) and the reflections that emerged from it; then, I offer theoretical sections discussing the disciplinary engagements at hand; and finally, analytical sections that display facets of the previous theoretical discussion. On the other hand, there is a process of discontinuity, since I am committed to discussing scenes that are non-linear, non-chronological, and within various spatialities — thus, I am equally interested in exploring multiple narrative textures, rhythms, and genres.

Each chapter is dedicated to a particular *visual colonial technology* and its resulting practices, mechanisms, relations, and so on. It is important to note, however, that while I am isolating each technology to a corresponding chapter for theoretical and organizational purposes, they manifest in tandem in various ways. Likewise, the choice of particular technologies does not account for all the manifestations of colonial visual politics, and it is not intended to exhaust the discussion. The way I engage with what constitutes a *"technology"* of visual colonial politics borrows from Michel Foucault's (2012 [1975]; 1978; 2008 [1978-79]) articulation of the term to comprehend the ways in which power works productively upon the forces of the body (to produce affective relations, desires, subjectivity, spatialities and so on).[18] In this context, **Chapter 2** is

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[18]For a comprehensive discussion on the various ways in which Foucault articulated the concept of "technology" throughout his career, see: Michael C. Behrent (2013) Foucault

dedicated to a discussion of the Window as a *spatiotemporal colonial visual technology*. The main argument of this chapter is that colonial discursive practices of difference-making between the colonizer Self and the colonizer Other are predicated on a visual politics that (re)produces colonized subjects as belonging to other "spaces" and "temporalities" in relation to the colonizer. Furthermore, this process of difference-making at the heart of the colonial discourse (Bhabha, 1994) works to inscribe difference intimately upon the *body* of the Other (its gestures, its clothing). However, through the analytic of the Window, I argue these representational practices do not signify the absolute domination of the colonized Other, but a continuous struggle to "fix" identity. This chapter proposes two additional engagements: (1) to situate my theoretical engagements within larger scholarly debates about the "anatomy" of colonialism (particularly in post/decolonial engagements), to highlight how visuality functions as a fundamental modality of colonial power; (2) to offer a collection of scenes that, beyond showcasing how both European and colonized women were inscribed within these spatiotemporal representational practices, contribute to discussions of the development of Dutch colonialism in the field.

Chapter 3 focuses on a discussion of the Window as a secretive colonial visual technology. I was introduced to the concept of secrecy through the work of Michel Foucault (1978), but the theoretical discussion on the topic extended beyond his writings to encompass scholars working within colonial contexts (Childs, 2015; El-Haj, 2023). My main argument is that secrecy works as a vehicle for the asymmetrical dissemination of knowledge and access to knowledge production within colonial contexts. In other words, the colonial discursive articulation of secrecy (either through the surveillance of colonized subjects who hide something or through the production of confidential official information within the administrative apparatus) is less concerned with the *information* of the secret than with the *function* of secrecy — which is the production of subjectivity (knowing or unknowing subjects, subjects to be known by others). In this context, I observe the production of two related kinds of secret: (1) confidential information within the administrative apparatus; (2) secrecy performed by European and colonized women in quotidian encounters. Within this landscape, I highlight the centrality of the intimacy and the home space for colonial policy (as the sites where secrets are seen to reside), which generate colonial anxieties about the family, sexuality, reproduction, racial purity and so on.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to a discussion of the Window as a *disciplinary*

colonial visual technology. Again, this chapter engages heavily with the work of Michel Foucault (2012 [1975]; 1978, 2008 [1978-79]), but proposes to work with, against and beyond his theoretical engagements, particularly in the face of post-colonial criticisms about his European framework. With these theoretical revisions in mind, the main argument of this chapter is that disciplinary norms are inhabited in a multitude of ways and, against Foucault (2012 [1978]) the asymmetrical distribution of punishment in colonial contexts (re)produces the body of the colonized as both a *site of physical injury* (torture) and a *subject of discipline.* Furthermore, this chapter offers two theoretical discussions with the intent to deepening our understanding on the relationship between discipline, social norms of conduct and the matter of resistance — first, a conversation between the Panopticon (Foucault, 2012 [1978]) and the Window, to highlight the latter as predicated on different perspectives on visuality (which, in turn, make for different manifestations of power relations); second, a discussion on modes of conceiving the topic of resistance, in order to productively engage with the colonial site of ambivalence without ascribing it as inherently transgressive. Additionally, I offer a collection of scenes to observe the ways in which norms are inhabited in various contexts (namely, in education, in the workforce and the medical institution). With these scenes, I also wish to contribute to discussions about the processes of autonomy and independence of Suriname and Indonesia in the aftermath of the Second World War. Finally, in **Chapter 5**, I offer a recapitulation of the previous arguments and a conclusion.

2
Making a display out of bodies[1]

What are the images that immediately flood our senses when we evoke the "terrible spectacle" (Hartman, 2022b) of colonialism? Does the abhorrent character of the practices carried out during this "spectral world of horrors" (Mbembe, 2016, p. 131) — in which "death was simply part of the workings of the trade" (Brown, 2009, p. 1238) — even register in a specific collective imaginary in a way to interpret them as "terrible spectacles" at all? More profoundly, are we only conscious of one's oppression by the hands of colonial violence when it is presented to us through the grammar of the *spectacle*? When I boarded the eleven-hour flight taking me from Guarulhos Airport to Schiphol in Amsterdam, the grammar of spectacle was, uncontrollably, pressing against me. It kept eating away at me — the idea that I was flying over the same sea where my ancestors were forcibly taken to enslavement in the Americas. I imagined, then, that some of them could very well have been trafficked and transported by the Dutch to the Northeast of Brazil, then migrated or escaped to Rio de Janeiro and finally to São Paulo, where my great-grandparents settled. Immersed in the feverish turmoil of the spectacle, I could not help but think about J. M. W. Turner's painting "The Slave Ship (Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying)"[2] (1840) — it appeared as a nightmarish mosaic of fiery red and royal blue amongst the murky waters; the ship as a memory in the distance while the peril of the slaves is only visible by their hands above water, slowly sinking, helplessly dying. For a long time, I pictured this inaugural moment presented by Turner's painting as my becoming in the world as a daughter of diaspora — the cacophony of sounds seeping into the

[1]The title of this chapter takes inspiration from Michel Foucault's The History of Sexuality, Volume 1 (1978), in which he describes 17th century European culture around sexuality to be quite open, constituting a period when "bodies 'made a display of themselves'" (p. 3), which then took new contours with 18th and 19th century development of multiple discourses on sexuality. In tandem with Ann Laura Stoler's intervention regarding Foucauldian engagements on European sexuality from Indo-European Dutch colonial perspective, with this title, I am also proposing a reorientation of the study of the technologies and devices of sexuality through the contact between colony and metropole. Therefore, I intend to demonstrate how, from the colonial encounter, a period in which Europeans (specifically Dutch) made a display out of other bodies, particularly that of racialized people, began to emerge.

[2]The painting is available in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston's (MFA) digital collection: https://collections.mfa.org/objects/31102/slave-ship-slavers-throwing-overboard-the-dead-and-dying-t

present, an everlasting ghostly echo of the wailing, the cries and the silences of the ones who survived in the hold of the ship on the way to the Americas.

This is one in a sea of a seemingly endless supply of images of extreme violence committed against racialized people, those of which we may conjure amidst discussions of colonialism and slavery. In this context, the spectacle constitutes a "primary marker" (Bleiker, 2018) in which the brutality of colonialism can be understood. These spectacle scenes of violence are constructed as the wood from which intelligibility is carved. Thus, if one becomes enraptured in the whirlwind of such spectacular scenes, other images might go amiss — *why should one think about everyday life in the 20th-century, after slavery was abolished and many colonies were lost, when these spectacular scenes call to us?* This chapter, therefore, is an attempt at pushing back against what I will call the "grammar of the spectacle" — which is composed by a collection of what, in the field of International Relations (IR), Cynthia Enloe calls (1996) "Major Events" — and, simultaneously, the uncomfortable silence of the archive — which is marked precisely by a refusal or neglectfulness to recognize other relations, temporalities and subjectivities as fundamental parts of the continuum of colonialism — or the "afterlife of slavery" (Hartman, 2022), which this dissertation intends to observe.

This chapter attempts to move beyond the grammar of the spectacle — from spectator to witness. It is a prelude of sorts to the following chapters of this dissertation. Firstly, I am interested in providing a mode for pluralizing both the disciplinary (Grovogui, 2006) and the cultural (Said, 1993; Wekker, 2016) archive by offering ways of interpreting and viewing Dutch colonialism that are not within the simplifying logic of the spectacle. In this way, I develop the *analytic* of the *"Window"* as a mode for intimately engaging with the colonial archive and colonial relations of power through visual politics. I argue that, in order to comprehend the Window as an analytic into quotidian and intimate encounters of women in 20th-century colonial Netherlands, first we have to follow its traces, pull its roots. We must observe how our immediate past and our present are both informed by forms of representing the Other, of ascribing difference, of forging truth in the most mundane, quotidian and intimate ways. Instead of seeking a beginning, a starting point where all emerging things become explainable and knowable, I instead offer multiple scenes that provide a handful of "stories of contact" (Ahmed, 2014) in which forms of seeing and being seen emerge.

2.1
Spectating and witnessing the Dutch colonial archive: conversations between past, present and future

In *"Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America"*, Saidiya Hartman (2022b, p. 1) carefully examines the deployment of the grammar of the "terrible spectacle" and the "horrible exhibition" of slavery as the "inaugural moment in the formation of the enslaved. [...] [T]he terrible spectacle dramatizes the origins of the subject and demonstrates that to be a slave is to be under the brutal power and authority of another". Thus, in contemporary political and institutional debates about race, violence, exclusion and politics, the spectacle is often evoked as a response to systemic and continuous silence.

As foregrounded by Sankaran Krishna (2006), the discipline of IR is predicated on combined strategies of containment and abstraction, in which traditional disciplinary efforts at establishing core theoretical engagements are supported by a "fetishization of abstraction" that effectively depoliticizes, a-historicizes and effaces the centrality of the violence of slavery and dispossession to the development of the international state system and the very discipline of IR (ibid, p. 401). In this sense, Krishna claims there is a *"racial amnesia"* that circumvents discussions of race and racism since it occludes them from the purview of the discipline, as they do not fit putative conceptions of what constitutes traditional international political concerns (ibid). Most importantly, the disciplinary desire to epistemologically move away from "historical descriptiveness" in favor of a conception of "intellectual rigor" that is measured against the natural sciences (the analysis of observable truths found in reality) omits the importance of the "Question of Race" to both early and current articulations of IR (Krishna, 2006).

In the context of Dutch colonialism, the silence is particularly poignant. On one hand, there is severe disciplinary underexploration of the Netherlands as an imperial power that heavily took part in (and *pioneered*) building certain technologies and practices within the colonial apparatus in development during the 16th and 17th-centuries. In other words, despite growing contemporary scholarship denouncing the systemic omissions and the historical violence constitutive of the traditional IR literature regarding the colonial brutality perpetrated by European powers and its subsequent asymmetrical relations (Grovogui, 2006; Krishna, 2006; Barkawi, 2016), there is limited literature within the field that turns this inquisitive look at the Dutch Republic (1579-1795) and, after that, the Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815-1830) and finally

the Netherlands in its current political configuration.

In the field of IR, there is a prevalence of analyses of what is discursively constructed as a *Major Imperial Power* (the British, the French, the Spanish and the Portuguese) and *Minor Imperial Powers*, such as the Dutch are not as intensely discussed. It is worth noting that the institutional location of these theoretical clusters may play a vital part in how scholars in the field approach critique — the school of thought of Subaltern Studies (Spivak, 1994 [1988]; Chakrabarty, 2000), the group Modernity/Coloniality (Quijano, 2005; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Grosfoguel, 2016) and the sub-field of African-American Studies (or Africana Studies) (Du Bois, 2019 [1903]; Spillers, 1987) are a few examples of notorious research clusters that observe relations of coloniality and its consequences within the framework of the Major Powers.[3]

On the other hand, the Dutch "cultural archive" (Said, 1993; Wekker, 2016) is organized in a way to support and disseminate particular self-representations of Dutch culture and history to the detriment of other modes of retelling, remembering and *representing* the past and, consequently, the present. Most notably, according to Dutch-Surinamese scholar Gloria Wekker (2016, p. 2), dominant self-images portray the Netherlands as "a small, but just, ethical nation; color-blind, thus free of racism; as being inherently on the moral and ethical high ground, thus a guiding light to other folks and nations". This discursive self-narration is further supported by visual markers that position the Netherlands internationally: it houses the International Court of Justice in The Hague; it is one of the largest trading and financial centers of Europe; the prostitution windows displayed in the *Red-Light Districts* mark it as one of the first states to legalize prostitution; it underscores the importance of supporting and maintaining the rights of the LGBT+ population, through various domestic and immigration policies.

Despite these idyllic images and positive spatiotemporal self-constructions, I was not to be swayed by the self-indulgent telos of progressive neoliberalism (Fraser, 2019). Before arriving in the Netherlands, I read about it almost obsessively. I knew that contemporary terms such as *allochtonen* ("those who came from elsewhere") and *autochtonen* ("those who are from here") are deployed to guide the limits of how citizenship is collectively conceived, whereby it is automatically granted (or simply unquestioned) to white

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[3]To be certain, there are various writers who have brilliantly read colonial archives contrapuntally and worked with the concept of intimacy, which is what I attempt to do here. Ann Laura Stoler's work is a fundamental source of inspiration and knowledge for this dissertation, since she is observing colonial practices in the Dutch East Indies (2010; 2009), but other authors who engage with similar tasks from other locations (particularly in regard to the Major Colonial Powers I mentioned) provide rich contributions for the debate: Hazel Carby's Imperial Intimacies: A tale of two Islands (2019) is one such example.

people, and people of color, despite being born and raised in the Netherlands, are continuously considered outsiders (Wekker, 2016; Essed & Hoving, 2014). I knew that discussions on alterity and difference are further prevented and obstructed because uttering the terms "race" and "racism" instead of their more elusive counterpart "ethnicity" is seen as a portrayal of disbelief in the principle of equality (Essed; Hoving, 2014). I knew the terms that were (and may still be) used in regard to people of color, particularly those who are descendants of Dutch colonies — such as "Negress" (*negerinnen*) to refer to black women (Essed; Hoving, 2014); native or inlander (*inlandsche*) to pejoratively refer to Indonesian population (Stoler, 2010); half-blood (*"halfbloedje"*, *"hybride"* or *"bastaard"*) to situate children born from interracial relationships within the scientific discourse of blood-mixing (Hartman, 2021). I knew the "realist approach" of the sexually progressive parliamentary discourse, particularly regarding the legalization of sex work, was not to be trusted — as it was supported by a racialized dichotomy between emancipated sex workers and victims/criminals of human trafficking (Outshoorn, 2012). I knew the emphasis on the protection of LGBT+ rights was directly connected to a rise in anti-Muslim rhetoric, particularly in regard to immigration policy (Puar, 2017; Wekker, 2016; Butler, 2009). I knew Dutch self-representations in the context of colonialism within the language of "imperialism" did not *stick* (like the British Empire, for example) because Dutch exceptionalism relies on a spatial and temporal distancing between practices "at home and abroad" (Koekkoek et al., 2019, p. 12), which allows for the effective claim the Dutch simply had a "commercial mindset" (ibid, p. 4) and "just counted" (Wekker, 201; Koekkoek et al., 2019) or "just traded", thus effacing and negating the violence of colonization.

I knew that, for many, the Dutch East India Company (*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, or VOC) was the country's pride and joy, transforming the Netherlands into an "Empire of Riches" — as evidenced by the comment made by the Christian Democratic Appeal Party's (CDA) Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende (2002-2010), during an address in 2006 in the Dutch House of Representatives, in which he stated that the recovery of the Dutch economy required the "VOC mentality, going abroad, dynamics!" (Koekkoek et al., 2019, p. 2). I knew the Dutch West India Company (*Westindische Compagnie*, or WIC) had trafficked approximately 554,336 people from the African continent (Slave Voyages, n/d). I knew the flows of trafficking — from the Netherlands to the Gold Coast, to Barbice, to Suriname, to Brazil, to Sint Eustatius, to Curaçao, to Bonaire, to Aruba, to Saba and to New Amsterdam; from the Netherlands to South Africa, to Bengal, to Sri Lanka, to Malacca, to

Batavia, to Borneo, to Sulawesi and to the Banda Islands.

When I arrived in Amsterdam, I was prepared to catch glimpses of what I understood as irredeemable truths, as things that were easily "bound to appear" (Copeland, 2013) if I stared hard enough. Despite all that came to be known, I, too, encountered silence. When the silence of the archive pushes back against us, we may evoke the grammar of the spectacle as a form of creating a counter-history, an attempt at retelling events negated or forgotten. In this sense, the grammar of the spectacle works as a powerful visual and discursive mechanism, as it rests upon a particular spatiotemporal articulation of the political. In order to point out the deployment of violence, we may make claims that are often spectacular in character: when numbers are downplayed, we overemphasize them; when violence is denied, we describe it in minute detail; when bodies are hidden from view, we *display* them. The spectacle adorns itself as a thing to be watched, as it requires us to conjure an image that we feel captures the "idioms of power" (Hartman, 2022b) in colonialism most precisely. It demands of us a selection of particular political events with exceptional attention to scale and intensity. That is, the spectacle has to be monumental, towering, grand; it also has to be disruptive, intense, overwhelming, and all-consuming. It should forcibly extract from us a distinct, clear and powerful emotional response — awe, repulse, terror.

Following Hagar Kotef's (2019) exploration of subjectivities and subject positions constituted by an exercise of violence against the Other, the question we should ask ourselves is whether the grammar of the spectacle is an effective conveyor of suffering that reveals unacknowledged violence in a way to generate self-reflection and political change. To this point, both Kotef (2019) and Hartman (2022b) are skeptical of the spectacle because it may work to *normalize violence and display the colonized body as a permanent and immutable vessel for dominance to be exerted*. While spectacular narratives might tell us *some* things about the inner workings of colonial power, they present a fundamental political and aesthetic problem: that of representing the Other, for they often rely on a *fixing* of positioning, of *identity*; they rely on a simplification of *space* and *time*, of *visuality*, of *discourse* — and, ultimately, of power. These spectacular narratives reproduce and reinforce existing colonial "scopic regimes" (Copeland, 2010) that cast a pornographic gaze (Mulvey, 1975) toward the battered, violated, colonized body, as it positions us as "voyeurs fascinated with and repelled by exhibitions of terror and suffering" (Hartman, 2022b, p. 2). In other words, these narratives might not appropriately tell us about the ways in which colonial *difference* is articulated through a range of diffuse and ambivalent practices and discourses

that construct a "polymorphous and perverse collusion between racism and sexism as a *mixed economy*" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 69, emphasis in original).

2.2
Intimate (over)sights, lingering gazes: conceptualizing the Window as a spatiotemporal colonial visual technology[4]

There is an extensive transdisciplinary scholarship preoccupied with comprehending the anatomy of colonialism — its supporting limbs, its arteries, its movements — and I will go over a few in order to situate visual politics as one of these "idioms of power" (Hartman, 2022b). European processes of territorial expansion, dispossession of land from colonies and the accumulation of capital towards a global market brought forth distinct ways for engaging with time and space. Colonialism marks the *beginning* of modernity where "the Atlantic gradually became the epicenter of a new concatenation of worlds, the locus of a new planetary consciousness" (Mbembe, 2017, p. 13). This emerging planetary consciousness was made possible by a wide range of *colonial technologies* that exerted power in various ways. I will briefly highlight three of them (the separation is done mostly to build my argumentation, not as an indication these technologies were not imbricated).

(1) Technologies of difference-making, which created classifications, measurements and knowledge of/about humanity. The "contact zone" between colonizer and colonized subjects (Pratt, 1992; Wekker, 2016; Inayatullah; Blaney, 2004) characterizes the ways in which colonialism is fabricated in the *intersection* between distinct and previously separated spaces and forms of living and being in the world. In this sense, the invention of *race* worked as a "foundational category" (Mbembe, 2017) that codified differences between Self and Other and acted as the discursive mechanism for emerging practices of social classification and segregation based on a spatiotemporal divide between Europe and the rest of the world (Lugones, 2007). The "colonial contact zone" (Inayatullah; Blaney, 2004) brought forth the notion of a "New World" to be discovered and ascribed within European systems of knowledge and interpretation. Thus, subjects, spaces, and practices in Africa and the Indies (West and East) became something to be made sense of. Both colonized and colonizer

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[4]Nicholas Mirzoeff (2011, p. 10) deploys the concept of "oversight" in regard to visuality to discuss "the visualized techniques of [the colonial slave plantation's] authority" embodied by the overseer, who acted as "the surrogate of the monarch's" in the plantation. My combined deployment of both the concept of "oversight" and "overseer", also situates my perspective of colonial visual politics within surveillance and supervisory techniques (as per Marzoeff), but does so by ascribing these practices to ambivalent and contradictory representational discourses and imaginaries that were always threatened to unveil, as I will argue in the present section.

subjects and spaces were ascribed into discursive regimes of truth (Foucault, 1978) and "spectrums of humanity" of which whiteness was positioned at the end of the evolutionary chain. Additionally, as Maria Lugones (2007, p. 190) points out, technologies of difference-making based on Eurocentric and linear notions of human progress were further supported by the institution of a "modern/colonial gender system" whereby gender was organized based on "biological dimorphism, heterosexualism, and patriarchy" and racialized people in general — but women in particular — were "sexed" but not "gendered", since they were not considered to be *human*, like white people. In other words, the "denial of coevalness" of the Other, or "allochronism", understood as the "persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse" (Fabian, 1983, p. 31), can be understood in the colonial context as the overlapping of geographical difference with temporal difference — in which racialized subjects became intelligible to the degree they could perform whiteness and achieve European modernization (Helliwell; Hindess, 2013).

(2) Technologies of production, which inscribed subject positions in the developing world capitalist economy. Triangular forms of capital accumulation incorporated these racialized subjects into the emerging world economy through a process of "historical re-identification" with new "geocultural identities" (Quijano, 2005, p. 121). In other words, native communities indigenous to colonial-occupied lands became homogenized within the "Indian" racial category, which then was associated with particular types of labor; the "Black"/"Negro" racial category was ascribed to African people being trafficked to enslavement in the colonies; an emerging "mixed", "Creole" or *"mestizo"* racial category for children born out of "concubinage" with racialized women attested both to an uncertain class of people and an emerging racialized elite (Quijano, 2005; Mbembe, 2017). Emerging subjectivities were then incorporated into new forms of labor and new spaces and practices created for the accumulation of capital: the "plantation complex" (Mirzoeff, 2011) became a manageable institution for capital accumulation, whereby chattel slavery brought forth a new division of labor, ascribed difference into the fabric of time and carved it into the body of the Other. Additionally, the institution of a modern/colonial gender system not only controlled the relations of *reproduction* based on the "color line" (Du Bois, 2019 [1903]), but also "encompasse[d] the subordination of females in every aspect of life" (Lugones, 2007, p. 196).

(3) Technologies of discipline, social governing and law-making. As a consequence, an array of "supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles" sustained and

propelled these new articulations of power (Said, 2003, p. 2). Along with the plantation system, other institutions were also created or developed, such as manufacturers, banks and financial companies, insurance companies, and accounting companies, which required the creation of new subjects with specialized knowledge. Likewise, the relation between these spatial and temporal configurations was supported by a range of domestic and international laws, policies and practices that regulated the relationship between body and property — the notion of the enslaved body *as* property (Hartman, 2022b) and the allocation of bodies in domestic spaces, such as the delegation of white women to the private/domestic sphere (Pateman, 1988) — in emerging urban spaces, which was fundamental for the development of European Nation-States (Mbembe, 2017). Even in the context of the abolition of slavery in the 18th-century, or after the events that unfolded during the 19th and 20th-centuries — when many imperial European powers lost colonies (such as the case of the Dutch after the French invasion) and processes of decolonization occurred —, apparatuses for the "codification of difference" (Quijano, 2005), although gained new contours, remained at play: the Constitution of the United States' Reconstruction era (particularly in regard to the 13th amendment); Jim Crow laws and segregation and apartheid in South Africa are a few examples in which "procedures of differentiation, classification, and hierarchization aimed at exclusion, expulsion, and even eradication have been reinvigorated everywhere" (Mbembe, 2017. p. 24).

These practices are part of a complex visual political economy ascribed to ambiguous and ambivalent affective dynamics that were fundamental to the very exercise of power. To quote Saidiya Hartman (2022b, p. 9, my emphasis), "[t]he exercise of power is inseparable from its display [and] *[r]epresenting* power was essential to wielding it". The authors I drew from in the previous paragraphs, through varying degrees, seem to hint towards a visual character of power that permeates these colonial technologies: Quijano (2005, p. 117) suggests that race has its origins in references to phenotypical differences between colonizers and colonized; Mbembe (2017, p. 32) argues that race is a form of "primal representation" and a "site of appearances", therefore it is not only "a result of an optical effect [and] part of the world of senses. It is also a way of anchoring and affirming power"; furthermore, Hindess and Helliwell (2013, p. 71), through the work of Johannes Fabian (1983), claim anthropological practice and discourse reflect pervasive views from the Enlightenment period in Western societies, in which the "temporal has always been subordinated to the visual-spatial" whereby "the contemporary Other is transmuted into our past/primitive ancestor".

What I wish to explore in the present section is how *Visuality*, as a fundamental technology of colonial power, permeates a multitude of colonial practices and supports the ways in which spatiotemporal difference is codified. Nicholas Mirzoeff (2011, p. 3), for example, departs from a similar visual engagement, in which he situates the concept of Visuality within early 19th-century practices of "visualizing history", characterized by processes formed through a set of relations of "information, imagination and insight" to provide a particular depiction of "physical and psychic space". Thus, he defines Visuality as a discursive practice in which the "self-authorizing of authority" of the visualizer — in this case, the Western gaze — continuously forges particular modes of visualization that are then considered to be normal, natural and true, while simultaneously negating specific groups of people (particularly the enslaved) "the right to look". In particular, Mirzoeff elaborates on what he calls the "Complex of Visuality" to highlight how coloniality (Quijano, 2005) and its claim to authority articulate various forms of "classifying, separating and aestheticizing together" worlds that can be "both visualized and inhabited" (Mirzoeff, 2011, p. 5).

While Mirzoeff's (2011) engagements provide productive modes for theorizing visual politics within the context of colonialism, and, most importantly, allow for a decolonial genealogy that underscores how "the relation between slavery and the present [is] open, unfinished" (Hartman, 2022b, p. xxix), I will depart from his perspective of Visuality and aesthetic as necessarily a medium for the dissemination of authority and maintenance of the status-quo (Mirzoeff, 2011, p. xv) in favor of other "lineages of thought" (Guillaume, Huysmans, 2018). I am engaging with both the concepts of "Visuality" and "aesthetic" more broadly. Following Roland Bleiker (2001; 2018), I situate my theoretical aesthetic endeavors as, primarily, a political struggle of *representation*. In other words, I am concerned with observing how "representative practices themselves have come to constitute and shape political practices" (Bleiker, 2001, p. 510). In this sense, I understand visual politics (or Visuality) as constituted by the relationship between signs that come to acquire meaning through relations of power ascribed in the capacity of a set of particular interpretations becoming accepted, disseminated and considered normal. Thus, I wish to underscore how the experience of viewing the Other is always threatened by "the return of the look" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 81). In other words, I understand Visuality as a permanent site of struggle between visual and discursive regimes of truth (Foucault, 1978) and counter modes of "looking" (Mirzoeff, 2011) — or, as I mentioned in the previous section, a dispute between *spectators* (predicated in the visuality of the "spectacle" of the Other) and *witnesses* (predicated in a

visuality centered around relationality and the encounter of gazes).

Following Christina Sharpe's (2016) articulation of the multiple forms of engaging with the experiences of Blackness through the visual-orthographic metaphor of the *"wake"*, I propose the concept of the *"Window"* as an aesthetic mode for thinking through and articulating various technologies of colonial visual power and, particularly in the context of this chapter, its manipulation of space and time. Firstly, I want to explore the Window as a form of visualization of colonial practices through *spatiotemporal affective modes of understanding politics*. Secondly, I want to propose *the Window as a mode for viewing subjection and power through an intimate lens.*

The Window is a "means of observing and learning about something" (Cambridge, n/d). Amongst its many meanings, it is simultaneously a noun that indicates an interval of time and "an opportunity for action" (ibid) and a space left blank to be occupied in the future. Therefore, I am not only evoking the notion of the Window as both a physical and fictional[5] object that allows for something to be visualized, but, primarily, as a form of politically engaging with transversal spatiotemporal imaginaries. The Window displaces traditional conceptions of political inquiry to other modes of comprehending the spatiotemporal dynamics of the political since it operates as a *nominalist device* that breaks with scalar levels (local, regional, global) and dichotomies (high politics/low politics), as it affirms other political dynamics and highlights the transversality of power relations (Guillaume; Huysmans, 2018; Basaran, et al., 2017). Following Xavier Guillaume and Jef Huysmans and their articulation of the concept of the "everyday" (2018), I argue that the Window proposes an epistemological reorientation toward the notion of *abundance of political life*. That is, instead of viewing politics as practiced or experienced by the elites, previously obscured actors, practices and spaces deemed ordinary become sites where politics occurs. Likewise, it highlights how fluxes and flows of what is traditionally inscribed to the scope of the international (flows of goods, capital, and so on) are actually bound up in "the commonness of life is full of controversies, stratifications, disputes, compromises, appropriations, asymmetries, and so on" (Guillaume, Huysmans, 2018, p. 283). It also means a consideration of other modes of conceiving the relationship between politics and *time*, as it highlights how fleeting, brief, transient moments are politically significant and "can paradoxically be simultaneously fleeting and durable" (ibid, p. 287).

Thus, the Window attests to the limits of the home, the interplay between here and there, as well as incites and conducts flows when open or uncovered

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[5]As when one says "the eyes are the windows to the soul".

— opening the curtains and being caught in the curious gazes of strangers, while also being a subject that observes. It is the porthole where European colonial crew members observed the coastline and the spaces left blank in colonial travel journals when one was unsure as to how to describe the racial and sexual Other. It is how the racialized body — its shapes and its gestures — brought forth both terror and pleasure in the most imperceptible of ways. In other words, the Window fabricates an intimate scene and, simultaneously, allows for the circulation of intimacy. *To watch something on display is a deeply intimate experience.* While the contact between the colonizer Self and the colonized Other is marked by asymmetry and violence, the colonial apparatus should not be simply understood as an omnipotent and omnipresent force capable of the absolute mimetic domination of the Other. In other words, "Great Narratives" and "Major Events" (Enloe, 1996), as well as the silences of the epistemic and cultural archive (Krishna, 2006; Wekker, 2016) — hence, the spectacle — conceal the "improvisational dimensions of [the] colonial encounter" (Pratt, 1992, p. 7), where colonial practice is formulated through "sustained currents of anxious labor that paper trails could not contain" (Stoler, 2009, p. 19). As Ann Laura Stoler (2009, p. 13) notes of late 19th and early 20th-century colonial archives in Indonesia, the administrative fears involved "the threat of European treason, communist influence, Indo-European revolt, revolution in Europe, and state concerns over the political potential of outraged "parental feelings". Likewise, she points out that, simultaneous to effective and widely disseminated colonial practices, there were also "failed projects, delusional imaginings, equivocal explanations of unanticipated outbursts of distrust directed toward a state apparatus on which European comforts would so precariously depend" (ibid, p. 21). Therefore, what I wish to underscore is how the reproduction of colonialism required the everyday portrayal or display of difference in the *littlest of gestures.*

The act of representing is always an *attempt* that is haunted by its own unraveling. Images and visual artifacts are always simultaneously *excessive* and *lacking* in meaning — they can be interpreted, pieced together, or pulled apart in a multitude of ways (Bleiker, 2018). Therefore, I argue that the "optical effect of race" (Mbembe, 2017) is inscribed within *discursive regimes of truth* (Foucault, 1978) that allow for the *emergence of the Other* as an intelligible subject within relations of power. Thus, the "contact zone" (Wekker, 2016) is a realm in which the Other comes to be known as an intelligible subject within discursive systems of meaning and the Self becomes a subject in relation to the Other. In other words, I am pointing out the inextricability between "scopic regimes" (Copeland, 2010) and "discursive systems" (Foucault, 1978)

that attribute meaning to *a body in display.*

Such theoretical engagement follows Michel Foucault's "History of Sexuality, Vol. 1" (1978). In this book, Foucault provides an overview of discursive transformations from 17th-century European sexual discourse — which involved an openness about the sexual body and its practices — to 18th and 19th-century societies and its proliferation of discourses about sexuality concerning its development as something in need of administration, instead of purely prohibition or judgment. This novel "economy of discourses" about sex brought forth a *range of technologies and tactics* — "examinations, interrogations, and experiments" (ibid., p. 55) — as modes for *knowing* and *producing truth* about the body. The relationship between technologies and tactics of power and the proliferation of discourses on sexuality created *new subjectivities, authorized and unauthorized discourses and speakers*, and, relatedly, *new institutions and spaces* where the topic of sexuality was meant to be discussed and studied: the relationship between medicine and "nervous disorders"; psychiatry and "sexual deviancy"; criminal justice and the criminalization of sexual offenses; the school and anxieties related to child sexuality (ibid., p. 30-31). Here, the subject of abnormal sexuality is taxonomized: he/she becomes a kind of perverse subject in relation to the normative heterosexual couple. The body became a thing to confess the truth or to have the truth wrangled from it by specialists. Power, therefore, was to be exercised in proximity — watching the body, questioning its movement, inspecting its anatomy. Thus, we see the development of a machinery for both the power and the pleasure of observing one's body and escaping from the gaze of another.

Ann Laura Stoler (2010) provides a critical intervention to Foucault when she points out how his chronology encompasses a specific deviant sexual subject and marginalizes the racialized character of the production of sexual discourses and abnormal/monstrous sexuality. The processes of regulating European bourgeois sexuality are inseparable from the racial thought developed in the colonies and, above all, from the contact between the colony and the metropole. That is, the European identities observed by Foucault, produced by discourses that established parameters and standards for European citizenship, were permeated by colonial anxieties about race. Deviancy, therefore, is not only represented in aberrant sexuality, but also in aberrant race, which mobilizes a series of other symbols that are also inferiorized and/or pathologized. The subjectivization through processes of racialization and sexualization, therefore, is the result of a cognitive and affective process of inscribing language under the surface of the body (and its attributes) which, based on biological or cultural discourse, is momentarily naturalized as a fixed identity. Colonial memory, the

racial "past", therefore, would be routinely inscribed under the surface of the body in the search to establish a narrative origin about this past, since it is always "constructed in part by through memory, desire, fantasy and myth" (Hall, 2017, p. 130). At the same time, discourses fabricating racial differences also required attention to the micro: the inside of the body, its genes, its chromosomes, and its bone structure.

When interpreting images (and here I am including the *visuality* of the body), we perform a kind of translation from the non-verbal to the verbal. In this process, something may be lost, misinterpreted, simplified, or generalized. That is, although visuality and language do not operate independently of each other, since language provides ways of interpreting images, some scholars in the field of Visual Studies point to the "self-active nature" of visuality that prevents it from being "completely controlled" (Elkins, 2013, p. 59). This double status of excessiveness/lack requires representational discourses to be incessantly and anxiously repeated to "secure a momentary point of identification" that allows for the Other to be recognized within discursive systems of meaning (Bhabha, 1994, p. 69).

The *Window*, therefore, is characterized by the interstitial space left between the signifier and the signified. To quote Roland Bleiker (2001, p. 512) the Window refers to an aesthetic approach that "embark[s] on a direct political encounter, for [it] engage[s] the gap that inevitably opens up between a form of representation and the object it seeks to represent". The Window is precisely the "contact zone" (Wekker, 2016; Inayatullah; Blaney, 2004; Pratt, 1992) in which one is both a knowable (thus representable) and an unknowable subject. In other words, the Window signifies the moment in which bodies *meet* and come to be known in relation to each other — it is composed of "the contact between bodies that are already shaped by past histories of contact" (Ahmed, 2014, p. 165). Said "interstitial space", therefore, is both a realm of *relations* and a site of *subjection*; it shapes and is shaped by material spaces and physical touch, and also by collective imaginaries, signs, sounds, smells and feelings. This "interstitial space" where bodies and stories come to be known is, therefore, where the *intimate* can be accessed. It is the underbelly of the colonial authority and its archive — the innermost place, both untouched and tainted, where subjects are formed through an amalgamation of conflicting affections, desires and practices.

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In this section, I discussed the contributions that post/decolonial scholarship offers for comprehending visual politics as a fundamental part of the

"anatomy of colonialism". I did so by locating three (transversal) technologies of colonial power discussed in this literature: (1) technologies of difference-making, involving the development of practices for classifying subjects within a spatiotemporal divide as a result of the colonial contact; (2) technologies of production, involving the creation of subjectivities inscribed in the colonial spatiotemporal divide, which then assigned subject positions in the developing capitalist economy; (3) technologies of discipline, social governing and law-making, involving the creation of a vast array of imperial and capitalist institutions and specialized knowledge. In this context, my main argument was that Visuality (visual politics) is an integral part of the circulation of colonial discourses and practices, as it creates representational modes for viewing the Other. Furthermore, I argued that the concept of the Window is developed as an analytic to observe the multiple circulations of these spatiotemporal colonial modes of representation, some of which will be addressed in the following section.

2.3
Of fact and fiction: monstrous beasts, fugitive bodies and entertaining creatures

In the present section, I put forward observations of a collection of scenes that serve as a genealogical mode for visualizing the various forms race and sexuality were ascribed onto the body of the Other, which are a few (but not all) "contact stories" (Ahmed, 2014) behind 20th-century colonial Netherlands — the focus of the following chapters of this dissertation. At the same time, I attempt to situate these "scopic regimes" (Copeland, 2010) within the historical and political articulation of Dutch colonialism, as a way to contribute discussion of colonialism in the field. In the present section, I observe the following: travel journals; forms of colonial mapping; clothing (or lack thereof) of the racial and sexual Other; the domestication of difference by the Dutch elite; and connections between art, science and colonial forms of entertainment rooted in racial difference.

2.3.1
An account of the Other and the Elsewhere[6]

[6]The title of this subsection is inspired in Michel-Rolph Trouillot's "North Atlantic Universals" (2002), in which he argues that the imaginative character of modernity is predicated in a construction of an "Other" and an "Elswhere" in relation to the modern subject and the developed space.

Perhaps the earliest depictions of colonized peoples and spaces by the Dutch can be found in colonial voyage journals (*reys-geschrift*)[7] or *itinerarios*, which serve as detailed forms of documentation of the lengthy journey from the metropole to the Indies. In these accounts, we become privy to every moment concerning the quotidian routines performed on the ship: observing the cloudiness or the clearness of the sky, checking the direction of the wind, noting the temperature changes, incessantly counting and recounting the number of provisions being transported, the state of the crew. Likewise, they provided detailed descriptions of the land, the mightiness and strangeness of its animals, the sweetness of its fruits, the abundance of its resources, and, especially, the customs, clothing and society of its native population. The knowledge produced by these combined practices of bookkeeping and journaling is mediated by the authors' prose, who were usually the skippers (*schipper*) of the ships. The tones and textures of the accounts, therefore, are not simply the result of a written description of what is being seen during the voyage and afterward, in the colonies, but constitutive of "scopic regimes" (Copeland, 2010) that *produce what is being seen.*

The *genesis* for the establishment of the Dutch East India Company in 1602 is commonly attributed to such forms of documentation. Cornelius de Houtman, a Dutch merchant, led a fleet of four ships from 1595 to 1597 to what is considered the first Dutch expedition to Southeast Asia, specifically Bantam (present-day Baten in Indonesia) (Bloembergen; Eickhoff, 2015). Commanding the fleet, him and his crew were able to cross the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean by relying on Jan Huyghen van Linschoten's *Itinerario*, published in 1595 and composed of a detailed combination of both official and informal Spanish and Portuguese "secret sources", as Linschoten had been the archbishop's secretary in Goa[8] (Utrecht University, s/d). Like most voyage journals, the first and third volumes of the Itinerario (with the second containing most of the maps) attempt to portray the sights in the Indies to the best of the author's ability. While some voyage journals written during the period were lost, many of those that survived became official archives of the colonial enterprise and, simultaneously, widely disseminated by the European societies they were part of. People "at home" were eager to know what had been lurking in the shadows of the wilderness, so when Linschoten (1596, p. 10), described the indigenous people of Madagascar as creatures who "live like beasts, without knowledge

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[7]There are various words to describe the colonial practice of documenting the travels from the Netherlands to the Indies. I have also encountered the term "scheepsdagboek" and "scheepsjournaal", but decided to utilize "reys-geschrift" in line with the authors I am drawing from in this section.

[8]Goa was the Portuguese State of India, founded in 1505.

either of God or of his laws" who "eat man's flesh", who are "not to be trusted nor believed, because they have no religion nor faith", the people at home were pleased.[9]

Linschoten's *Itinerario* attested to the monopoly the Iberian Union had over the "New World", most specifically of the Portuguese dominion over India. In this context, Cornelius de Houtman's successful arrival in the East Indies was a victory concerning the Eighty-Years War (1568-1648) being waged against the Spanish and marked the "start" of the Dutch imperial enterprise (Bloembergen; Eickhoff, 2015, p. 140). Despite traditional narratives, there was nothing particularly exceptional about the Dutch East India Company — perhaps the fact the Netherlands was a Republic[10] in the middle of various monarchies, which made it possible for discursive constructions of Dutch colonial engagements as a "protection against tyranny worldwide" (Weststeijn, 2019, p. 37). In other words, oppositional lines were being traced between Dutch republicanism and its humanist discourse of liberty, rights, and ethics, and the oppressive domination of imperial monarchies (ibid, p. 38). Likewise, narratives underscoring the innovative character of the creation of both VOC (1602) and WIC (1621) as "chartered commercial companies for the efficiency of long-distance trade alone" disseminated the notion that these companies were divorced from the States-General's authority and, instead, were simply a result of the merging and centralizing of various private corporations with an interest in commercial trade in Asia (VOC) and the Atlantic (WIC) (Antunes, 2019, p. 21).

The reality these narratives put forward, consequently, is that these companies were purely private institutions, pioneers of the joint-stock market — for ownership was determined in terms of transferred company shares to other markets through "buying, selling and mortgaging" (ibid, p. 21) —, which was spread as modernizing force of financial centers across Europe. The very charters of these companies tell us a different story. Following Cátia Antunes' (2019, p. 20) analysis, what these charters assemble are "mechanisms devised by the States General, the sovereign collective body of the Dutch Republic, for the specific purpose of deploying empire". The establishment of the VOC — and later the WIC — charter promoted what Julia Adams (2005) calls the *"familial state"*, in which a select group of people is chosen to represent the sovereign interests of the emerging Dutch State through these companies and, thus, is provided with a collection of bestowed privileges in trading and

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[9]The volumes of the Itinerario were written in Dutch and translated into old English in 1598 by John Wolfe. I am adapting the grammar to current English.

[10]The Dutch Republic was composed of seven Northern Provinces with overlapping decentralized authority.

tax exemption for the expansion of colonial markets overseas. The State-General's authority in the charters also manifests in the ways in which it influences geographical "trading priorities": it sets a protectionist policy to secure its influence in domestic trading markets; it prioritizes the compulsory redistribution of profits among the company's colonial chambers; it includes "provisions for governance" of newly acquired colonies as a mode for building an empire — which involved a clear description of "military, juridical and religious jurisdiction" established in the colonies in the name of the States-General (Antunes, 2019, p. 22-26). Furthermore, the reason many scholars who are critical of traditional narratives describe the authority of the Netherlands empire as a "Company-State" is precisely because the separation between the two entities was often blurry.

With the rapid development of the VOC in the East Indies, the establishment of Batavia (present day Jarkarta) as its administrative headquarters in 1619 and the creation of the WIC to dispute Spanish and Portuguese influence in the West Indies (especially in Northeastern Brazil), the practice of journaling as a method of colonial documentation became mandatory (particularly in large colonial ships) and composed, among other forms of documenting, the official archives of the WIC and the VOC. Each colonial encounter provided with a more detailed inscription of race, as the fundamental category of "primal representation" (Mbembe, 2017), into the body of the colonized Other.

Another such account can be found in Willem IJsbrantsz Bontekoe's *"De gedenkwaardige beschrijving van de reis naar Oost-Indië van schipper Willem IJsbrandtsz"* (The memorable description of the voyage to the East Indies by skipper Willem IJsbrandtsz, 1618-1625). Bontekoe the son of a ship skipper and part of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), was sent on a voyage to Java in 1618. His voyage journal became widely popular in the subsequent centuries after being published — so much so that it became the inspiration for Johan Fabricius' 1924 children's book *De scheepsjongens van Bontekoe* (Bontekoe's Cabin Boys), and even was depicted in film by director Steven de Jong in 2007. The introduction to the 1989 edition of the journal reads as follows:

> Previous generations have often suggested that Bontekoe was
> too gentle with "the people" and did not have enough wind in
> his sails. A 19th century "boys of Jan de Witt" mentality that
> was foreign to him. Patriotic feelings are not to be found with
> Bontekoe. He is a Dutchman in the service of the V.O.C. and[11]
> never uses the word "Holland". Nor do we ever encounter racist
> traits. Bontekoe describes what he observes, that these people
> in warm countries are black and walk naked. But for him they
> are still people, without question (Bontekoe; Nijgh, 1989, p. 7)

The notoriety of Bontekoe's account comes from the quasi-surrealist character of his journey: him and his crew left Texel on the *Hoorn* on December 28th 1618, then made their way across the Atlantic to the Cape of Good Hope (part of present-day South Africa) and continued to sail in the Indian Ocean towards Java. In November 1619 the brandy that was stored on the ship caught fire whilst being pumped and caused the ship to explode in "one hundred thousand pieces" with 199 men on board (Bontekoe; Nijgh, 1989 p. 29). Bontekoe and a few other crew members managed to survive and were rescued by another ship, they sailed without a compass but managed to find land near Sumatra. After finding an island and coconuts to eat, the crew was approached by the inhabitants of the land, those of whom Bontekoe was sure had "planned to kill [them] all, as would later become clear" (ibid, p. 41). Unsure if the Dutch crew had any weapons (which they had all lost in the shipwreck), the natives retreated. The next morning, the natives returned and spoke in Malay with three of the crew members, who offered to exchange provisions. After the meal, the crew decided that Bontekoe was to sail the river along with four men in a canoe to reach the village and get as many provisions as possible to continue the journey.

Upon returning to the other side of the river, Bontekoe was met with the image of the natives conversing and "it seemed that one wanted [him] to go away (Bontekoe; Nijgh, 1989, p. 46). Bontekoe describes pretending to "act tough" and grabbing a few men by the arm to push the natives to sail away. He claims "they looked as *terrifying as forest devils*, but they obeyed and two of them got into the canoe with [him]" (ibid, my emphasis). In the canoe he sat "like *a sheep between two wolves*, dying a thousand deaths of fear" (ibid, my emphasis). Halfway through the journey, the natives started to talk amongst themselves, and Bontekoe became sure they were plotting his murder. He then started to pray for the help of God to allow him to survive, and claimed he

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[11]An explanation of the phrase can be found in: https://encurtador.com.br/yzBO9

heard an inner voice ordering him to sing — which caused the natives to start laughing "so hard that [he] could see into the back of their throats", assuring Bontekoe he was not going to be killed at the moment (ibid). However, in the next morning, his suspicions were proven true when approximately 300 men appeared with the intent to kill the remainder of his crew. Nonetheless, the crew had already been warned of this possible attack and managed to escape these creatures who *"looked like devils in flesh"* (ibid, p. 50, my emphasis).

Bontekoe's portrayal of the indigenous people of Indonesia directly contradicts Nijgh's (1989) initial claim that we "never encounter racist traits" in his accounts. The idea that he is simply "describing what he observes" is precisely the moment in which the body of the Other is subjected to the colonial gaze (Clancy-Smith; Gouda, 1998) and the European experience of the colonized body is taken as an absolute fact, the result of object knowledge. As Kaila Adia Story (2010, p. 24) contends, through these narratives, the body of the Other was seen as a text that could be read while the Europeans were considered its readers. Furthermore, the gaze cast upon the native Indonesians was part of optical regimes that constructed Black subjects as "animal presence", figures without soul who are "staggering through life, confusing becoming-human and becoming-animal, and all along "unconscious of their universality" (Mbembe, 2017, p. 12). The terms "Black" (*Zwarte*) and "Indian" (*Indisch*) were often used interchangeably to describe both native populations from the African continent and people of Southeast Asia during the beginning of Dutch colonization. The "color line" (Du Bois, 2019 [1903]) was drawn whereby the Blackness was evoked to describe everything that was in opposition, and inferior, to whiteness. Religion further supported the colonial discourse by inscribing race within modes of visualization of sinfulness (Mirzoeff, 2011) — the biblical story of Ham[12] was the justification for the enslavement of "the cursed Black" (which was also used to describe the devilishness of the indigenous people of Indonesia and the Americas), thus considered "biblical evidence" that African people were "predestined to slavery" (Sint Nicolaas, 2021a, p. 32).

A colonial obsession with the nakedness of the racial Other started to emerge, as both the production and the salvation of the souls of heathens relied on what Philippa Levine (2008, p. 191) calls the "three c's": "Christianity, civilization, and clothing". Describing the nakedness (and not the nudity, which I will explain further) of the Other in detail was a recurring theme of most voyage journals, which served to cement notions of savagery, proximity to

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[12]Part of the Book of Genesis, in which the son of Ham (Canaan) is cursed by Noah, for Ham saw the nakedness of his father while drunk.

nature and lack of civilization and culture. Following Philippa Levine (2008, p. 190) "what constitutes a state of unclothedness is fluid and unstable— a historical problem, a problem of spatially and of temporality". A letter sent from Isaack De Rasières in 1628, the Secretary of New Netherland as appointed by the WIC, to Samuel Blommaer who was director of the WIC at the time tells us the following:

> They are very fond of a game they call Senneca, played with some round rushes, similar to the Spanish feather-grass, which they understand how to shuffle and deal as though they were playing with cards; and they win from each other all that they possess, even to the lappet with which they cover their private parts, and so they separate from each other quite naked. They are very much addicted to promiscuous intercourse. Their clothing is [so simple as to leave the body] almost naked (Rasières, 1909 [1628], p. 106).

Of the women in particular, Rasières notes all sorts of things that make them especially "lascivious", even the fish they eat (ibid, p. 106). This assessment is echoed across other accounts in the book in which Rasiéres' letters are documented, part of a published collection of voyage journals of merchants, reverends, or newly appointed WIC officials who traveled to the developing New Netherland. Another such account in the collection can be found in the Johaness Megapolensis' (1909 [1644]) voyage journal as a young preacher in New Netherland, in which he claims native women are "exceedingly addicted to whoring; they will lie with a man for the value of one, two, or three schillings,[13] and our Dutchmen run after them very much" (ibid., p. 173). Through varying degrees, the accounts in the collection provide similar modes for visualizing racialized people in the colonies, which were then disseminated in the metropole: devilish-looking creatures, promiscuously naked or scantily covered by pieces of cloth or animal skin, often unwilling to work and "hav[ing] so much witchcraft, divination, sorcery and wicked arts, that they can hardly be held in by any bands or locks" (Rasières (1909 [1628], p. 126); "thievish and treacherous as they are tall; and in cruelty they are altogether inhuman, more than barbarous" — sometimes "far exceeding the Africans" (ibid) and other times not as devilish.

The publishing process of these written accounts was usually accompanied by an assortment of imagetic depictions of the land and the natives. Most

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[13]As Jameson (1910) notes, a Dutch schilling was the equivalent of 12 American cents.

times, colonial officials newly appointed to office in the colonies would also be the ones mapping the territory and providing drawings to their superiors in Europe. J. Franklin Jameson (1910), director of the Department of Historical Research in the Carnegie Institution of Washington and editor of the volume *"Narratives of New Netherland: 1609-1664"* from which I am retrieving most of these accounts, points how to the inaccuracies present in various cartographic engagements of the period: the sizing of bodies of water was often exaggerated; islands were depicted in a distorted manner; sea channels were shown flowing elsewhere. A similar occurrence, and perhaps the most glaring, example, was noted in Theodor de Bry's *Grand Voyages* (1590), considered to be the earliest depiction of Native Americas from the present-day Florida region by a European (Florida Memory, n/d). In de Bry's book, some engravings were noticeably altered: mountains were included in a region they did not belong to and items not indigenous to Florida were added as depictions of Timucuan ceremonial objects (ibid).

In the case of the maps included in *"Narratives of the New Netherland"*, Jameson concludes they were actually prepared when the cartographers were in Holland, which caused them to rely on memory and inaccurately depict the topography of the colony (Jameson, 1910, p. XXI). In de Bry's case, he relied on third-party accounts of men who were in contact with various indigenous populations of the Americas for the construction of the book — therefore, the images presented in the books are his altered sketches from the voyagers' original ones (Florida Memory, n/d). As for Bontekoe, it is crucial to note that a major part of his voyage journal was lost in the shipwreck. Likewise, the printed version of his voyages, which were printed twenty years after his return, diverge from the manuscripts produced during his service in the Dutch East Indies — Nijgh notes that in the published version, "the skipper apparently added all kinds of concealed details" (1989, p. 6). What I want to highlight with these scenes is that the dominant archive reveals itself as an *imaginative* enterprise, relying on a prescriptive grammar of visual abnormality whereby racial, cultural and sexual difference is exaggerated and, simultaneously, discursively produced as an objective truth. *What does it even mean to look like the devil in flesh?*

2.3.2
Visualizing intimate planetary flows

The "familial state" (Adams, 2005), whereby a select group of the Dutch elite was chosen to represent the interests of the States-General in the Indies,

is one such example. Although the *Heeren XVI* (or "Lords Seventeen", VOC's board of shareholders) and the *Heeren XIX* (or "Lords Nineteen", WIC's board of shareholders) acted institutionally by defining trading policies and specific responsibilities within the members of each company's chamber, the familial character of both trading companies not only indicates a relation of proximity between the internal governmental organization of the Republic and its external relations in the colonies (the very notion of Company-State), but, most importantly, that colonialism was a *family business.* That is, the members of the board of shareholders of these companies were, most often than not, also part of the municipal councils pertaining to their company's chambers (Odegard, 2022, p. 12). The officers who were appointed to occupy positions within the hierarchy of these companies, therefore, were usually members of these and other affluent families in the Dutch elite or their family friends. According to Erik Odegard (2022, p. 10), "institutional and personal worlds connected and reinforced each other [through] factionalism, patronage, patrimonialism, friendship and interest aggregation in the Dutch Republic and its charted companies". Such relationships were all the more evident observing the ways in which the Dutch represented its acquired colonies. A scene that I would like to highlight to develop this point and my subsequent arguments is brought forth by another cartographic representation, this time of the colony of Suriname (Figure 2.1).

The artwork is currently stored in the National Museum of the Netherlands' (*Rijksmuseum*) permanent collection and was purchased in 1966, almost a century after the museum was built. I must refrain from simply calling it a map, as I feel it does not entirely encapsulate the representational work that it was created to perform. According to Valika Smeulders (2019a, p. 201-204), the piece was authored by Alexander de Lavaux, who was both an officer in service of the WIC in Suriname and a land surveyor, intended as a gift for the members of Suriname's administrative chamber. The colonial history of Suriname involves successive occupations from the British, the French, and the Dutch — being conquered by the Dutch Republic in 1667 until its formal Independence in 1975. As Eveline Sint Nicolaas (2019a, p. 36) notes, the colony of Suriname did not generate the profit the Dutch expected, so it was sold to the Society of Suriname in 1683, which was a joint venture between the WIC, the city of Amsterdam and the Van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck family with its own charter serving as the constitution of the colony (Sint Nicolaas, 2019b, p. 89).

The artwork was the centerpiece to the colonial project of establishing, securing and *displaying* familial ownership. Which is most evident considering

Figure 2.1: Silk map of Suriname by Alexander de Lavaux (1737), Rijksmuseum

the majority of the piece does not even pertain to the map of the colony
— instead it is composed of an elaborate border containing the family coat
of arms of each of the eleven directors and the secretary of the Society of
Suriname in front of illustrations of vine leaves and flowers; as well as the coat
of arms of the Society of Suriname at the center of the bottom half of the
artwork, which is composed by a combination of the coat of arms of the city
of Amsterdam, of the Dutch West India Company and of the Sommelsdijck
family, as well as a depiction of the indigenous people of Suriname (left) and
of the African people brought over to the plantations (right) (Smoulders,
2019a, p. 201). A considerable portion of the map itself is covered by the
names and functionalities of the "great, honorable gentlemen" that oversaw
the administration of Suriname, as well as the locations, names of the owners
and number of enslaved people of approximately 400 plantations, which were
called "gardens" in the VOC archives (Sint Nicolaas, 2019a).

Furthermore, the artwork is part of what Elizabeth Sutton (2015, p.
2) calls "cartographical propaganda", whereby the States-General and both
East and West colonial companies produced, commissioned, and disseminated
various "coastal charts, ground plans, city profiles, and vignettes depicting

American [and Asian] colonies and West African forts" to encourage merchants, colonists, and investors to take part in the empire-building effort. It only took enough gilders for an investment in the shares of the chartered companies, the same way it only took circumscribing the newly acquired piece of land on the ground with marking posts to establish familial possession in the colonies for generations to come (Sint Nicolaas, 2019b, 89). In the colonial family business, the same family could own various plantations, occupy multiple job posts within the colonial administrative hierarchy and, depending on its influence, make sure its members reached positions of seniority within the company (Smeulders; Lambrechts, 2019b, p. 245). At the same time, these family colonists in possession of land and enslaved people had a duty to bring back to the metropole "the treasures of the colonies" and make sure the Dutch "spread its empire wherever the Sun is shining" (Weststeijn, 2019, p. 47). In Suriname in particular, this was manifest in mandatory stipulations put forth in the charter of the Society of Suriname whereby all materials produced in the colonies (raw or semifinished) were to be directed "back home" and, simultaneously, all products necessary to the maintenance of quotidian colonial routines were to be imported solely from the Netherlands (Sint Nicolaas, 2019b, p. 90). The familial empire, therefore, consisted of more than purely the Dutch elite, but instead incorporated a wide range of actors into a network of colonial planetary flows of people, products and forms of knowledge.

From the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, slavery was deemed utterly necessary for the building of empire, considering Dutch people alone were unable and unwilling to carry out heavy physical labor, particularly in the tropical climate of the colonies (Archangel, 2019, p. 77). For maritime slave trafficking to be possible, an assortment of personnel was necessary: be it the personnel responsible for building ships; be it the skippers and crew with specific knowledge of long-distance sailing (and the study of voyage journals that made this knowledge accessible); be it the chain of sellers, brokers and buyers that made it possible both the incorporation into and the unprecedented intensification of local slave markets. Furthermore, the construction of Batavia as the administrative headquarters of VOC in the East Indies was carried on the shoulders of enslaved laborers — trafficked from Bengal, Madagascar, Arakan or the islands surrounding Java (Holtrop, 2019a, p. 169). The city's construction involved the arduous and continuous excavation of canals, which was also necessary for establishing the sugar cane plantation system in the West Indies (Sint Nicolaas, 2019b. p. 90). In both cases, the body of the enslaved carried the mark of the extensive network of colonial familial possession — whether by being repeatedly branded with the name of the trafficking

company during transportation and, later, the name of the buyer; or whether by producing materials that carried the traces of bodily harm done by extensive work and corporeal punishment practiced in name of the Republic (Hartman, 2021).

The colonial system of violence, dispossession, and capital accumulation was further supported by a wide range of professionals who benefited from slavery "at home" without ever visiting the colonies and/or directly participating in the flows of human trafficking, such as the merchants and the companies transporting and buying the raw materials produced in the plantations (Sint Nicolaas, 2019c, p. 113). The same could be said about the Zeelander companies that produced machetes transported to Suriname to harvest sugar cane (ibid, 2019b, p. 90). Or the hands of the workers of timber companies that harvested trees, processed wood to build footstocks that constrained the movement of enslaved people in Brazil. Which is also true for the networks of iron manufacturers that produced chains and shackles that tied together enslaved Bengali in Batavia and enslaved Africans in Suriname. Which was also the case for the companies that produced bells that signaled the start of a labor day in plantations in Suriname, Cape of Good Hope, Sumatra and Demerara (Sint Nicolaas; Smeulders, 2019) When families in the metropole set food at the table — sprinkling meat and pie with nutmeg or sugaring their coffee — did they ever wonder about the journey these items took to get there? When European women examined silk, wool and cotton textiles in local cloth shops, were they aware of the hands that picked them in the colonies — of their cuts and bruises and the echoes of their unison singing? Did they know their silversmiths and goldsmiths employed colonized people who carefully and arduously handcrafted their jewelry boxes? Or of the Creole artisans who authored the paintings hanging on their walls?

The familial empire led to more indiscernible and inconspicuous forms of alterity-making amidst prominent practices of colonial violence, which were anxiously repeated in the smallest of instances. One such example is the politics of naming enslaved people both in the East and the West, which carried traces of spatiotemporal difference-making: they were stripped of their birth names and renamed with a toponym indicating the place they were brought from — the last name Elmina or Mina for enslaved people trafficked from the Elmina Castle in the Gold Coast (Archangel, 2019) or the last name Van Bengalen for enslaved people trafficked from the Bengal region (Holtrop, 2019a, p. 149). The first name would usually be a common European name, or, perhaps, a symbol for something else — Luck (*Geluk*) or Fortune (*Fortuijn*) or an indication of the month the enslaved was bought (*Januarij, Juli, Maart*) (Sint Nicolaas,

2019a, p. 44; Holtrop, 2019a, p. 151).

With the intensification of the flows of capital accumulation and the establishment of administrative headquarters of the Company-State outside of Europe, many Dutchmen were tasked with making another home out of the colonial territory. Although plantation owners entrusted their overseers with the responsibility of ensuring "slave codes" were followed and punishment was administered, the maintenance of the familial state required, most of all, proximity. In other words, racial and sexual difference was reproduced through intimate practices of difference-making borne from the reproduction of alterity through "forced and uncomfortable encounters between two subjectivities equally defined by the experience of life 'out of place'" (Furtado, 2021, p. 1). Henrique Tavares Furtado, therefore, provides other modes for thinking about segregation and spatial difference-making by underscoring how these forms of colonial violence were inscribed in the complex interplay between inside and outside, necessity and replaceability. In these encounters, the *nakedness* of the Other, which inscribed the body within the visual grammar of slavery and social stratification, was manifested in the lack of shoes and/or in clothes specifically designed for slaves, usually with blue and white stripes (particularly in West Africa, Batavia and Brazil) (Anderson; Kehoe, 2023) (Figure 2.2). Similarly, cheap plain textiles, such as white Guinea cloth, were associated with enslaved women and children — these textiles were part of visual and discursive regimes of truth and difference-making whereby the association of slavery and inferiority with particular textures and patterns were disseminated across Europe and animated the trading flows of/between WOC and WIC across the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean (ibid).

The establishment of forms of domestic slavery as an integral part of the maintenance of both the East and the West Indies promoted "forced and uncomfortable encounters" (Furtado, 2021) where these simultaneously clothed and naked people — both devilish and docile, treacherous and foolish, dangerous yet easily controlled — were the ones tasked with cooking and serving food, cleaning and tending to the master's quarters, carrying and/or raising the master's children. The enslaved was privy to the master's secrets, and was the object of the master's affection. Ambiguously, throughout the years some enslaved people would come to be considered as part of the *family* — the death of their masters carried the promise of freedom, as it was customary that European men left manumission of their enslaved servants written in their wills, whatever *freedom* would have meant. Many waited for generations. Furthermore, the co-constitution of processes of racialization and sexualization in a "mixed economy" (Bhabha, 1994) produced affections that

Figure 2.2: Woman with child and food cover, Anonymous author (c. 1675 - c. 1725), Rijksmuseum.

pervaded and informed "proprietorial notions of the self" (Hartman, 2022b, p. 6). As Julia Adams (2005, p. 4) notes, the form of governance of the Company-State was founded in an "institutional nexus fusing a set of elite patriarchal families with a merchant capitalist class and a locally grounded patrimonial state". This patriarchal character is evident in VOC colonial policies prohibiting the displacement of European women to Java, in order to encourage Dutchmen to take local women as brides and prevent them from returning to the metropole (Stoler, 2010). Likewise, enslaved women were freed in order to marry European men and carry out the *familial romance* (Hartman, 2021; Vergès, 1999) *of the Company-State.* These women raised *Indo* children who were socially praised for acculturation — evident in portraits where Indo women, for example, were adorned with native jewelry inside a European-style home (Smeulders; Lambrechts, 2019b). However, while Indo men were taken to the metropole to carry out their studies, the women usually remained in the colony. In both instances, still, these Indo-European families, and manumitted enslaved people, could themselves establish plantations. Likewise,

while enslaved women bore the physical mark of slavery to be passed on through generations, European women were the inheritors of slavery through familial property— these women would go on to write manuals on how to administer the plantation system, how to punish the enslaved, and how to make profit.

Finally, Lavaux's silk map also reveals a multitude of scenes that are hard to capture, for they speak of colonial lines of fugue. Amidst the documentation of the plantations in Suriname, Lavaux's artwork also depicts colonial struggles with Surinamese Maroon communities, which were described as "villages of runaway rebel slaves" (Smeulders, 2019a, p. 205). Perhaps the most evident account is put forth by the Okasani community, which are matrilineal Maroon societies in which the women are responsible for providing and securing food for the group in case of an attack from the colonists or the enslaved people ordered by them (Smeulders, 2019a, p. 197). As Valika Smeulders (2019a, p. 199) argues, DNA testing of rice varieties produced in Suriname have proven how Maroon women would bring over rice from Africa braided into their hair — which they would share with one another to sustain their communities in fugue from the colonists in the West Indies. Lavaux's quotidian struggle with enslaved people who escaped bondage to create or seek shelter in Maroon communities on the outskirts of the colonies was echoed throughout the territories that composed Dutch Western colonial possessions. These "rebel slaves" who refused to be domesticated and incorporated into the familial state threatened the maintenance of order by escaping in groups, year after year, possibly encouraging other enslaved people to follow suit. The domestication of the abject Other in the confines of the master's home required continuous everyday practices of docilization, which were always haunted by the ghostly reminder of the beastly character of the colonized contained within his or her sinful flesh. Particularly in the context of the French Revolution, when Napoleon invaded the Netherlands and established the Batavian Republic (1795-1806), even the most revolutionary and abolitionist of Europeans were terrified of retribution. The Haitian Revolution was a constant and fearful reminder of what could be — of the various slave revolts that had happened in the last few years; of how it took over a year for WIC military personnel to arrive in Barbice and seize back control of the island after a slave uprising that caused all the white residents to flee (Smeulders; Lambrechts, 2019b, p. 248); that the year of the establishment of the Constitutional Reform and the general elections of 1848 was tainted by slave uprisings in Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten and Saba, in which all the enslaved fled and, without choice, the colonists had to come in terms with the fact they were now in the midst of

free people (Smeulders, 2019b, p. 266).

The Netherlands was one of the last countries to abolish slavery, after a few colonies had been lost since the French invasion and the royal refuge with the British — the abolition was formally introduced to the Dutch East Indies in 1860 and, three years later, it was also proclaimed in the Dutch West Indies. For many colonists, abolitionism would provide a means to maintain the colonial enterprise — whereby the formally enslaved would participate in the familial effort of securing property and capital accumulation (Smeulders; Lambrechts, 2019b, p. 249). The formal end of chattel slavery did not mean the end of exploitation, however — and it encouraged new planetary flows of indentured workers from India to Suriname, from China to Indonesia, and it provided financial compensation for the plantation owners.

2.3.3
Art, science and colonial pastimes

The archives repeatedly told me there was no such thing as slavery in the Dutch Republic. According to Eveline Sint Nicolaas (2019a, p. 31) the period in which both VOC and WIC were founded was marked by the official outlawing of slavery in the metropole — efforts to save white Christians whose ships were captured during West African pirate raids from the violent claws of slavery supported the creation of "slave funds". Thus, another set of words were used to describe what transpired in the metropole, like "servant". *Still, what do we make of people bought from trafficking slave-ports in North Africa, Bengal and Java and taken as servants to Holland?* According to the law, setting foot in the Netherlands was synonymous with freedom, if freedom was to be part of the securement of colonial property — these people could rent homes, attend pubs with white people, buy fabric in cloth-shops that did not have to be blue and white striped.

Bringing servants into the Netherlands was often justified under the guise it was for the benefit of women and children (Smeulders; Lambrechts, 2019a). It did not matter if the companies' board of shareholders and/or senior employees were aware of these movements or not, when the Company-State structure allowed for and benefited from, even indirectly, the private dealings of their employees. These racialized people in the Netherlands could occupy various positions: servants, entertainers, soldiers, musicians, sailors. In order to develop my arguments in the present, and final, section of this chapter, I highlight two scenes: first, the relationship between white women and racialized servants; second, racial entertainment and curiosity through art and scientific racism.

Sander Gilman (2010) explores the collusion between scientific racism and artistic modes of representation in Victorian Europe, particularly through the portrayal of the black body. She underscores how the marginal presence of a black servant in a painting where white people took center stage, particularly of a black woman, was "an icon for deviant sexuality in general, almost always, however, paired with a white figure of the opposite sex" (ibid., p. 16). In other words, the mere glimpse of blackness signified the potential corruption of the white female body, a sign of illicit or sinful sexuality. If we depart from a Kantian or Hegelian perspective of aesthetics as a concern with the beautiful and the visually pleasing, the white female body was posited at the end of the spectrum of humanity and blackness in the opposite far end. Such discourse was utilized and developed further during 18th and 19th-century scientific racism, when the body became a conveyor of truth about development and modernity and, most important, degeneracy and disease. While the portrayal of black children next to white women still carried over the hypersexualized view of blackness (Gilman, 2010, p. 16), I first wish to highlight how the presence of a black servant (a Moor) was also a mode for displaying other things, particularly a form of *aestheticization of Otherness*, in which Blackness is conceived as a site of both "occupied suffering and enjoyment" (Hartman, 2022b, p. 29).

The doll house above (Figure 2.3) was commissioned by Petronella Oortman (1656-1716), a former widower and later the wife of Johannes Brandt, a silk merchant of Amsterdam. The 2.5-meter ensemble is composed by "tortoiseshell and tin marquetry on oak core", with drawers above its eight supporting legs (Rijksmuseum, n/d). While most of the original dolls are missing, among the items still preserved are the pieces of furniture of all the rooms, such as the China in the kitchen and the miniature artworks hanging in the walls. Dollhouse collecting was a pastime reserved to the elite, since the commission of a piece such as Oortman's could cost the value of an actual house (Smeulders; Lambrechts, 2019a). This was most evident by the fact the original disposition of the house with its dolls was painted by Jacob Appel in 1710 to preserve the author's vision.

The dollhouse depicts with exceptional accuracy what the Dutch elite found to be an ideal home. Observing the artwork, currently exposed in the National Museum of the Netherlands (Rijksmuseum), we become towering giants who are able to cast an overreaching gaze upon all corners of what Dutch elite women hoped to be their home life. In this sense, through the Window we become acquainted to intimate routines of the Dutch household (both lived and imaginary). These routines are intensified when the image shrinks in size — when all the secrets seem to be simultaneously in display,

Figure 2.3: Dolls' house of Petronella Oortman, anonymous, (c. 1686 - c. 1710), Rijksmuseum.

how delicate it all seems in miniature. Looking through these Windows and seeing ghosts. In the "reception room" a figure was carefully placed — it was so small that I missed it the first time I witnessed Appel's painting in person, until the audio guide I had purchased in the reception told me of the story of the dollhouse, and of his presence (Figure 2.4).

Standing next to the chairs posited against the walls on the right side of the room, we see a black child, fully dressed with European-style clothing, embellished with blue and gold and appearing to be holding a tray, attesting to his servant status. The fact that Oortman deliberately included him in the dollhouse, nevermind in the "most prestigious room" (Smeulders; Lambrechts, 2019a, p. 129), attests to the aestheticization of slavery as a visual politics of luxury and prestige. While he might have not been *officially* deemed a slave, the backdrop his doll is posited against provides evidence of how difference is domesticated and made as a clamor of wealth — the tropical painting on the walls, reminiscent of the Dutch colonial possessions; the artwork on the right end corner; the *spittoons*,[14] also carrying a tropical theme (which are in the

[14]Objects made to deposit one's saliva, usually when chewing tobacco.

Figure 2.4: Detail of reception room in Jacob Appel's rendition of the dollhouse, 1710., Rijksmuseum.

original dollhouse but not the painting). But the child (or a man infantilized through the depiction of a child) is also part of the evidence, as displayed by the collar around his neck.

The motif of nakedness in opposition to nudity is again present. According to Philippa Levine (2008, p. 191), "to be naked was to be both ashamed and shamed". Although difficult to strictly define, nakedness was a fundamental part of scopic colonial regimes (Copeland, 2010) that narrated the perceived primitiveness and backwardness of the colonized through the embarrassment of being constructed as a *lacking subject* — with the lack manifested through not wearing clothes. In opposition, nudity carried a *tasteful, elegant* and *inviting aesthetic* (in the Kantian or Hegelian sense) tone. As Levine puts it: "lacking history, lacking shame, lacking clothes, the native epitomized the absence of civilization, just as the nude of Victorian art epitomized an ideal of pure femininity — both timeless constructs mired in nostalgia for an imagined past" (ibid, p. 196). The child in the dollhouse was clothed, but, in some ways, the collar grasping his neck made him naked. He was still subjected to the colonial authority of another, represented by the figures of the white couple, tasked to serve his white Lady — the collar around his neck, which would likely contain the family crest of his masters, was the item both *containing* and *displaying* his perceived inherent animalistic nature. At the same time the collar was the mark of domination (much like the process of branding the skin of the slave before and after transportation), and it was also inscribed within networks of conflicting connections and affections, in which the Lady of the House owned

servants, but would also become the godmother to the servants' children.

Oortman's dollhouse collection was part of what one would call a "Cabinet of Curiosities", which were rooms devoted to the collection of various scientific, anthropological, archeological, botanical objects, as well as antiques. As Daniel Margocsy (2014, p. 3) notes, these cabinets were, first and foremost, "sites of knowledge production in the early modern Netherlands", which were practiced at home due to the lack of Scientific Societies in the Dutch Republic. In other words, knowledge production was formed within the confines of the home and, therefore, privatized, since the dissemination of scientific knowledge, medicinal practices and historical research were also inscribed within the networks of capital accumulation of the familial state.

As we have seen in the previous section with Foucault (1978), the 18th and 19th-centuries saw the proliferation of discourses on sexuality within the grammar of science and medicine. While Foucault describes modes for producing truth about the pathological body within scopic and discursive regimes for viewing and narrating the interplay between perversion and normalcy, Sander Gilman (2010) underscores the centrality of the Black female body to the development of discourses in which white pathology could be measured against, as degeneration was inscribed, observed and dissected through the body of the Other and then described as natural and factual. Perhaps the most notorious example is of Sarah Bartman[15] — or *"Venus Hottentot"*, as she would be called all throughout Europe. *Hottentot* was the pejorative term borne from the colonial encounter between the Dutch and the peoples of the Khoikhoi tribes of Southern Africa, which translates to "stammerer" as per the Dutch perception of the Khoisan language. Bartman was considered to possess an anomaly of design, a physical ill manifested in the abnormal size of her rear — a condition that came to be called steatopygia. She was paraded all around Europe as "a collection of sexual parts" (Gilman, 2010, p. 17-18) that brought forth great curiosity and pleasure — although her buttocks took center stage, there were also a network of discussions about the size of her labia minoria (Gilman, 2010). Audiences were willing to pay and eager to spectate the grotesque character of her genitalia, be her dead or alive. In the scale of perversions of the flesh, the Black female body was the master signifier.

The development of scientific racism also brought forth a widespread interest with providing measurements, quantification and forms of standardization as a way to connect "physical differences to social differences, and to fix both social and individual identities onto bodies", such as colonial anthropometric studies (Mak; Bultman, 2019, p. 65). With the invention of the

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[15]There are many forms her name has been written, I decided to use the English version.

Figure 2.5: Portrait of a young half-naked Indonesian woman lying with a fruit basket in a setting, anonymous (c. 1895 - c. 1905), Rijksmuseum.

daguerreotype as a mode for 'perfectly capturing' the likeness of someone, a concern with the nakedness of the Other gained new contours. In the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th-century, colonial excursions were made to colonized or previously colonized territory to study the body of the Other in relation to the Self. Anthropometric photograph became a way to provide a catalog of difference, inscribing the body into governing systems and producing modes of accessing its identity. These new modes for producing knowledge about the body were simultaneous to the development of Bertillonage (as a system of judicial anthropology focusing on measuring criminality) and archiving technologies, were applied not only to racialized people, but to European criminals and white women, which were all seen as "lagging behind in an earlier evolutionary stage, making it theoretically interesting to compare them" (ibid, p. 67). This was particularly the case with white prostitutes, which were also seen as pathological and connections were made with interpretations of Blackness and criminality — they were seen as fat "like prisoners" and the proportions of their body, particularly their "peculiar plumpness" were considered primitive and dangerous (Wills, 2010, p. 21). Such scientific engagements should not be purely seen as cold and sterile, for they were also animated by desires and pleasures of knowing and seeing the naked body of the other —

for instance, part of such spectrum of beauty and humanity were Javanese "odalisques", in which the pornographic gaze (Mulvey, 1975) was cast against the exotic body of the Other (Figure 2.5). Although we can assume these women were directed by the photographer to stare "seductively" at the camera to invite the viewer into an exotic scene, the hardness in her eyes and the seriousness in her expression, create an ambiguous scene.

When I visited the Rijksmuseum and witnessed most of the artworks I am discussing in this chapter, I did not know that, in 1883, the International Colonial and Export Exhibition was held in an unoccupied area behind the museum (present day Museumplein square), which was in construction at the time. The exhibition attracted approximately a million people from all over the world, as it was the first international colonial exhibition to be held at the time (JDP Econ, s/d). From May to October of that year, items historically produced or harvested through systems of bondage were put on display: tobacco, rubber, fine China containing artworks with colonial landscapes. Each ticket cost 50 cents, which around 39 nations and colonies paid to participate — medals and diplomas of honors were distributed to the nations that could best display their colonial prowess (ibid). Amongst the colonial items being displayed were *racialized people* (Figure 2.6). The gaze of the Other who is photographed and *looks back* (Bhabha, 1994) — of half-clothed men and women, forced to pose and be looked at — attests to the interstitial place of representational practices looked from the Window. As Roland Barthes (1980, p. 59) says of pornography — "the body shows itself" to the spectator, but still "does not give itself, there is no generosity in it".

Figure 2.6: Group portrait of six Surinamese women and a child, at the Colonial Exhibition, Amsterdam 1883, Friedrich Carel Hisgen, (1883-1884), Rijksmuseum.

3
The secret endeavor

> Is it not with the aim of inciting people to speak of sex that it is made to mirror, at the outer limit of every actual discourse, something akin to a secret whose discovery is imperative, a thing abusively reduced to silence, and at the same time difficult and necessary, dangerous and precious to divulge? — Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality (Volume 1)*

> If colonialism takes power in the name of history, it repeatedly exercises its authority through the figures of farce — Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture.*

After reading Saidiya Hartman's *"Venus in Two Acts"* (2008), I became obsessed with looking for Venus everywhere. Even before having a clear picture of what I wanted to explore in this dissertation, I was being haunted by glimpses of Venus. She was always roaming in the back of my mind; sitting in a chair in my bedroom when I lay awake at night; peering over my shoulder with everything I read. In this article, which presented a reflection on the construction of the seventh-chapter of her book "Lose your Mother: a Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Trade" (2021 [2007]), Hartman is met with the silence of the archive of transatlantic slavery after finding traces of two girls on board the *Recovery*, who were tortured, publicly humiliated, and brutally murdered by the ship's captain, John Kimber. The archival mention of these two deaths is scant — during the cross-examination of one of the witnesses during Kimber's indictment, a surgeon present in the ship testified having seen the captain torture a "Negro girl" for several days, and later, murder her. He also provided a mere mention of another girl who died at the hands of the captain, *a girl named Venus*, who had "pox" and whom the surgeon did not know what became of her (ibid., 2008, p. 7-8). The archive then tells us of the victorious moment the captain was acquitted of both murders, and these deaths were never to be mentioned again.

This is my second time writing about this scene in Hartman's article.[1] I have searched for Venuses across time and space as a mode for both providing a counter-reading of official archives and signaling women as subjects interpellated by multiple articulations of power who were, through various forms, theorizing about their own modes of living. Still, Venus remains a mysterious figure in history — her "ubiquitous presence" appears time and time again through "various incarnations" (Hartman, 2008). In some instances, Venus comes to us as an ideal — the ideal beauty, the ideal manifestation of femininity, the ideal race, as depicted by various famous European painters.[2] Other times, we observe the pivotal moment she plunges into darkness — when she becomes a concubine, a whore, a prostitute. We remain there to see the shape and the movements of her wretched body — when she is found in "the barracoon, the hollow of the slave ship, the pest-house, the brothel, the cage, the surgeon's laboratory, the prison, the cane-field, the kitchen, the master's bedroom" (Hartman, 2008, p. 1). The less I was able to know about these Venuses whom I considered to be women "allocated in metaphors" (Brand, 2022), the greater my anguish for finding them became. I desperately wanted to find them because I thought they were hidden. Like a secret.

As Brazilian anthropologist Luiz Mott (1985, p. 105) notes, there is an "almost total absence of documents that deal with or refer to the female sex". Instead, he argues, the archives are filled with both official and unofficial documents "invariably signed by men" (ibid). Similarly, Antoinette Burton (2010, p. vii, my emphasis) follows this line of argumentation by claiming women's "comparative lack of archival trace [functions] to secure them in the *sightlines of history*". The language employed in much feminist archival research seems to point us in this direction: the archive is understood as a terrain to be excavated, which would then *reveal, uncover,* and *unearth* women as subjects to be found.[3] The archival search for women transfigures into a

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[1]I have written about Hartman's depiction of Venus in a forthcoming article discussing the silence of the Brazilian archive of slavery in the context of existing documents of/about Esperança Garcia, an enslaved woman who was posthumously recognized as the first lawyer of the state of Piauí (OAB Piauí, 2017).

[2]Sandro Botticelli's *"The birth of Venus"* (c. 1485); Titian's *"Venus Rising from the Sea ('Venus Anadyomene')"* (c. 1520); and Édouard Manet's *"Olympia"* (1863) are a few examples.

[3]The language used in the essays that compose the book "Contesting archives: finding women in the sources (2010) that the foreword by Antoinette Burton is part of deploy some of the terms I mentioned to describe the position of women as subjects of archival research (finding, locating, recovering, uncovering, revealing and so on). Likewise, Saidiya Hartman (2008) seems to be driven by a similar endeavor in her quest for Venus, and the frustration with not finding her is what prompts the reflections in the piece I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. The use of this language reminded me of the presentation of a dissertation project in which one colleague was discussing the excavation of IR's political archive to find subaltern women when a professor asked, *"Do these women even want to be*

quest for History's hidden secret — their fugitive presence in official documents should provide fragments of what is inside the *heart* of the imperial power (Burton, 2010).[4]

Viewing the fleeting presence of women as the key to the chest, the secret presented itself to me as something I thought I already knew. When I walked through the canals in Amsterdam, amidst a thousand unsuspecting tourists, I remember thinking that since I already knew the secret, it would reveal itself to me everywhere. On a Tuesday afternoon, I walked further out of Dam Square and followed straight through Rokin Street, packed with people. As I became just another figure in the multitude of tourists, I inwardly, and presumptuously, saw myself as someone who was deeply aware of something most there were not. I visited the Museum of the Canals on Herengrach Street and thought about the colonial planetary flows that made the canals' ingenious construction possible. I scrutinized the wealth displayed in the artworks at the Rijksmuseum. I lingered through a public commotion when a tourist took a picture of a sex worker sitting inside a window.

There is great joy in believing no one knows the secret but oneself. One may even feel a certain taste of power in picturing oneself as the person to decide whether the secret is shared. However, I still was not convinced. Was the secret simply revealed by the presence of Venus? Could certain "incarnations" of Venus announce something wholly different — not a clarification of the secret, but its further obscuring? Could the appearance of a woman act as the coverage for the hiding of another? To think the secret was only mine was a foolish endeavor — to indiscriminately believe the presence of women would instantly show me the answers I had been seeking was to further feed into the myth.

I, then, started to view the secret through a different lens. When I visited the Oude Kerk in Oudekerksplein Street, I was fascinated by its history — it was Amsterdam's oldest building, housed in the same neighborhood as the *Red-Light District*, the many prostitution windows and cannabis cafés the city was known for. Before going to Amsterdam, I was under the impression the

found?". I remember that question, although not directed at me, shook me to my core. I started to ask myself, "Do I view what I am doing as a quest for some grand revelation of truth by putting the responsibility of its clarification on the shoulders of other women?", "Am I treating my research as saving lost women from obscurement?". I am still unsure of the reply, but this dissertation emerges from an attempt to follow what Anjali Arondekar (2009, p. 1) calls a "different kind of archival romance": "[t]he critical challenge is to imagine a practice of archival reading that incites relationships between the seductions of recovery and the occlusions such retrieval mandates".

[4]I am using History with a capital H to refer to the discipline that is legitimated to study and narrate the past, which, in the context of Western epistemology, allows for a particular chronology, linearity and narration that occludes various experiences — especially those of colonized people.

Gothic church would stick like a sore thumb in the middle of the baroque-style architecture and the "progressive" nature of the district's commercial buildings. Inside, most parts of the Church were hollow. It had survived two fires and was the target of prosecution by the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church during the Reformation period when iconoclasm brought forth the successive destruction of Roman Catholic statues, altars, images and artifacts (Oude Kerk, n/d). Several other catholic functions were pushed into hiding. When the Calvinists took over the authority of the Oude Kerk, its function as a public place for the encounter between merchants and citizens ceased to exist.[5] Furthermore, the Church was transformed into a home for the storage and production of the city's archives – which is the case for Amsterdam's marriage licenses (*ibid*). So when I entered the Church Warden's Office and was instantly faced with a wall with a wooden board containing generations of the wardens' families' coats of arms, I quickly realized I was in one of the many homes of the *familial state* (Adams, 2005).[6] The main pavilion of the Church was a graveyard hidden in plain sight, where around 60,000 people were buried below my feet (Oude Kerk, n/d). Among them, were artisans, musicians, merchants, explorers, admirals, skippers, national heroes and rioters, apprentices' masters, mayors, colonial directors, brewers and ministers. Less notably so, their wives and daughters, childless widows, artists' muses, and forever unmarried elderly women.[7] Laying to (un)rest among them was Jacob Beeldsnyder, in the only grave belonging to an enslaved man found there so far (Oude Kerk, n/d). A great deal of money was involved in securing a tombstone inside the Church, never mind in its most "sought-after" burial chambers. Common folk were buried outside the Church.

I began viewing the Empire-building effort as a *secretive politics*, in which women took part and filled many roles. The Oude Kerk is one of many locations where the entanglement between notions of the public and the private, the international and the intimate, manifest: it is both a public institution that historically profited from colonialism and the practices of both

[5]The text written by the members of the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church on the choir screen is one example of this: "The misuse, gradually brought into God's church, was here again undone in the year seventy-eight." (Oude Kerk, n/d).

[6] An image of the wooden board of the Church Warden's family coat of arms can be viewed in: https://www.amsterdamsights.com/attractions/img/ok-05.jpg

[7]To gain information about the people buried in the Oude Kerk, I consulted the database *Graven op Internet* ("Digging on the internet"), a project that aims to "make available the collected knowledge about the graves in the Oude Kerk" (Graven op Internet, n/d). While many graves provide information about the people buried in the Church, the most detailed information is usually about the deceased men. There is less information available about the women in particular — although with a few exceptions, such as the grave of Rembrandt's wife Saskia Van Uylenburgh and other famous women. The website can be visited in the following: https://www.gravenopinternet.nl/

Dutch trading companies for its expansion and maintenance (Oude Kerk, n/d); and, simultaneously, an institution where family members were grieved and honored, where confessions were heard and where couples' marriages began. In other words, the Oude Kerk could be seen as one example of what Lauren Berlant (1997) calls the "Intimate Public Sphere" — it houses bodies below its surface and a whole network of (un)known stories in which national progress and familial intimacies intertwine.[8]

The elusive existence of Venuses in the archives marks their presence as a "kind of never-actualized record" onto which I found myself projecting a fantasy (Gilliand; Caswell, 2016, p. 56) — of an uncovered secret, of irrefutable evidence, of belated archival justice. The silence of the archive regarding women, and more expressively of racialized women, looms over any and every encounter — every page, every signature, every photograph. It animates the paradoxical position archival researchers might find themselves in: attempting to "tell an impossible story and to amplify the impossibility of its telling" (Hartman, 2008, p. 11). Despite knowing that I was projecting many hopes and dreams into the archive, — not just the desire to know The Truth, but, most importantly, that said knowledge would somehow bring me a sense of completion and fulfillment to compensate for the fact that my own genealogy would remain unknown — I continued to believe, as Anjali Arondekar (2009, p. 1), that *"the archive still promises"*.

Consequently, this chapter is an attempt at working both *along* (Stoler, 2009) and *against* (Hartman, 2022a; 2022b) the archival grain. To this end, like in the previous chapter, I engage with multiple spatialities and temporalities in a non-linear and non-chronological way (particularly in the analytical section). The organization of the present chapter proceeds as follows: in the next section, I discuss modes of theorization of secrecy as fundamental to the production of knowledge practices in the colonial discourse. To carry out theoretical explorations of the practice of secrecy, I draw from authors working within a

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[8]It is important to mention I am transposing Berlant's concept of the "Intimate Public Sphere" from its specific spatiotemporal articulations that allow it to function as a diagnosis for a particular contemporary political moment in the U.S. sociopolitical landscape. While Berlant mobilizes the concept to comprehend U.S. contemporary political discourses centered around the family as the locus of political activity (which is where my re-articulation of the concept lies as well), she is also theorizing about the circulation of political discourses within an American nationalist/patriotic framework, in the context of contemporary political concerns (about family, sexuality, gender and so on) and in a mass-consumption society, which gets lost in translation with my transposition of the concept. In this context, Edward Said's (1983) articulation of the concept of "traveling theory" is helpful to understand this process of re-articulation — he argues that the journey of theories and ideas from one place to another "necessarily involves processes of representation and institutionalization different from those at the point of origin". (ibid, p. 226). One of the stages of this transference process is the transformation of the idea or theory "by its new uses, its new position in a new time and place" (ibid, p. 227), which, as I said, brings forth new potentialities and limitations.

colonial landscape (Childs, 2015; El-Haj, 2023) to complement a Foucauldian engagement of such power relations (Foucault, 1978). This theoretical section is further supported by an exploration of practices of institutional secrecy and practices of secrecy articulated by women in everyday colonial encounters. The third section aims to analyze colonial practices of secrecy within the "polymorphous and perverse collusion between racism and sexism as a *mixed economy*" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 69, emphasis in original): first, I situate the political landscape of colonial discursive practices centered around the family and the position of women and the home space; then I discuss various scenes of secrecy in three contexts — (1) the connections between citizenship, the family and race; (2) discursive practices on sexual degeneration; (3) the role of white women as overseers of imperial policies.

3.1
(Un)disclosed intimacies: conceptualizing the Window as a secretive colonial visual technology

According to Geraldine Pratt and Victoria Rossner (2012, p. 6-7) the word intimate "invokes a cluster of related ideas: privacy, familiarity, love, sex, informality, and personal connection". The intimate speaks on the creation of spaces that are shaped by entanglements of affects — desire, love, passion —, molding the contact between bodies (Ahmed, 2014). Thus, the anatomy of the intimate is commonly associated with spaces that are concealed from the outside world: the home; the bedroom; the couple's bed. These are considered spaces where a light touch is magnified, where whispers and promises of love find their sacred place, where the marital act is sanctified; and where one no longer needs to pretend. Likewise, *intimacy* is a word that "suggests something hidden away from the larger world, apparent only to the one or few on the inside. It refers to that which is walled off from the public sphere, from governance and regulation, from oversight" (Pratt; Rossner, 2012, p. 6-7). Like the secret, *intimacy* is understood to be involved in concealment, protection, and deceit — the innermost part of oneself that is carefully revealed to another. *To intimate*, therefore, is to provide pieces of oneself to another, to "communicate delicately and indirectly", to give a "hint"; and to reveal through details that might be overlooked (Merriam-Webster, n/d). To reveal a secret is to disclose personal details about someone's life, to share a form of knowledge mastered by only a few, to confide and to confess. The seemingly paradoxical nature of the secret, therefore, manifests as something that appears

to be *widely shared* and continues to be *deeply hidden.*[9]

The analytic of the *Window* provides a mode for visualizing and theoretically engaging with various manifestations of the secret within networks of colonial power. The visual of staring through the window already produces a scene of secrecy — pulling the curtain and being privy to a furtive touch; eavesdropping on an intimate conversation; partially seeing what should not be seen. At the same time, criminal activity and modes of surveillance are also understood through a visual-discursive apparatus of secrecy — the conflation of criminality with the underground (under the table, off the cuff) and the notion of espionage as being "undercover" are such examples. In other words, the *Window* ascribes *secrecy* as part of technologies of the visual politics of what Saidiya Hartman (2022) calls "the ruses of power" — how the colonial power both *defines* and *transgresses* the limits of the law; the ways it (over)determines the realm of *punishment* and *reward*; how it constructs otherness as both *dangerous* and *indispensable*; its looming presence at every existing corner despite the promise of *privacy, autonomy* and *agency.* In other words, instead of viewing the relationship between *secrecy* and *intimacy* as being at odds with the institutions and practices (and institutional practices) that support and (re)produce colonialism, I encourage us to understand them as *fundamental* to the very exercise of power.

According to Greg L. Childs (2015, p. 38), the *practice* of secrecy has a fundamental political function within the social landscape of colonial relations. Looking through Brazilian colonial archives in the context of the Tailors' Conspiracy (*Conjuração Baiana*, 1798-1799) — when several bulletins announcing an oncoming revolution, objecting to slavery and criticizing economical inequalities were discovered —, Childs (2015) is less concerned with unearthing the *contents* of the secret than with comprehending the *function* of secrecy as a vehicle for the proliferation and multiplication of the colonial discourse in ever-changing material and historical conditions (Bhabha, 1994). He argues that the archives about the investigations surrounding the Tailor's Conspiracy were "animated by the specter of torture", in which the inconclusiveness about whether the police force and the judiciary were participants in a plot to hide the association of *white* conspirators potentially led to the forceful extraction of guilty confessions from black suspects through torture (ibid, p. 42). For Childs, the ubiquity of violence defines the silences of/in the archive. In other words, the multiplication of secrecy constructs the archive: not only the *revolutionaries* were *conspirators*, but the colonial officials were also plotting

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[9]I say "seemingly paradoxical" because the "hidden nature" of the secret, as I discuss further, proves to be discursively constructed as such. In other words, we can observe a "secrecy-effect" in the proliferation of discourses that are known, but narrated as hidden.

a secret of their own (the production of black confessions through violence as a mode for swiftly and effectively solving the case and evolving their careers). As Childs himself puts it:

> It is this particular juxtaposition of desire and fear that is foundational to the archive, but it also reveals the discursive limits of domination. Thus, the judges' desire to have suspects tell the truth—to break down and reveal their transgressions against the regime—belied a concern that without the acquisition of such truths their drive for absolute power would stall out and be revealed for what it was: a desire that could never be achieved (Childs, 2015, p. 45).

It does not matter if these men were truly guilty of treason, of inciting rebellion, or of conspiring to murder. The grammar of secrecy and confidentiality precludes any further digging into the past. The quest for secrecy, therefore, is not concerned with *finding* but, instead, with *producing* the truth. Any minor gesture is cause for suspicion, any hesitation legitimates a guilty verdict. Any refusal to disclose information becomes a secret, and every secret is now *The Secret* — which everyone is aware of but nobody truly knows. That is to say, The Secret functions as a *placeholder* for the exercise of colonial authority through the asymmetrical distribution and access to knowledge and knowledge production. The secret is caught up in the struggle to *narrate* and to *represent*. Nadia Abu El-Haj (2023) seems to point in the same direction when discussing the secrecy surrounding Israeli archives about the Nakba — the struggle for the Palestinian "permission to narrate" (Said, 1984) their violent dispossession is marked by efforts to tell communal stories against the oppressive force of a History defined by a particular organization of the archive. She observes, for example, how the Israeli state has revoked documents previously accessible from the public domain and simultaneously reinscribed declassified archives into the realm of institutional confidentiality (El-Haj, 2023, p. 253).

The practices of governmental secrecy are part of systematic attempts at preserving Israeli's imperial authority by weaponizing the archive to forge evidence for the violence constitutive of its State. In this sense, those who are granted access to the archival vault are the ones discursively constructed as "reliable witnesses" (ibid) to narrate what is inside. And again, as Joseph Masco (2014, p. 122) notes, "the object of secrecy—its information—is often less important than the organizational approach to managing it. Meaning, in other words, is made in the social practice of secrecy, not in its informational content."

What Childs (2015), El-Haj (2023) and Masco (2014) argue is that the secret is always both known and unknown. In the context of the Nakba, for example, El-Haj (2023) mentions not only that classified documents were previously accessible but that, even after they were reclassified, the dispute was not about whether the Nakba did or did not happen, but about how it was narrated and, most importantly, how the *Israeli state* made itself to be legitimate provider of the truth. As Gilliland and Caswell contend, for as long as public access to the archive is withheld and the *nature of the secret* remains a topic of speculation, "the records as imagined or anticipated can inspire all sorts of narratives, suppositions, aspirations, longings, fears and distrust that, as [Maryanne] Dever notes, become 'forces that shape archives'" (Dever 2010, p. 164 apud Gilliland; Caswell, 2016, p. 54-55).

Furthermore, the discursive function of the secret has been theorized by Michel Foucault (1978) in the context of the multiplication of European discourses about sex and sexuality in the 18th and 19th-centuries. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Foucault (1978) observed not a generalized silence in the matter of sex, but a *proliferation* of discourses about sexuality through the production of, *spaces, subjectivities* and *institutions*, legitimated to discuss it. The body became a thing to *confess* the truth — the *secret*:

> Doubtless the secret does not reside in that basic reality in relation to which all the incitements to speak of sex are situated — whether they try to force the secret, or whether in some obscure way they reinforce it by the manner in which they speak of it. It is a question rather of a theme that forms part of the very mechanics of these incitements: a way of giving shape to the requirement to speak about the matter, a fable that is indispensable to the endlessly proliferating economy of the discourse on sex. What is peculiar to modern societies, in fact, is not that they consigned sex to a shadow existence, but that they dedicated themselves to speaking of it ad infiitum, while exploiting it as the secret. (Foucault, 1978, p. 35).

Much like Foucault's conception of power, secrecy serves a *productive* function within the economy of discourse — instead of being an impediment to its proliferation, the secret is the *drive* that animates a network of passions and anxieties concerned with producing truth about the body. Thus, a network of institutions of secrecy is inscribed within the economy of the colonial discourse — i.e. the judicial, the psychiatric, the familial —, in which *agents, spaces* and *practices* of secrecy are produced. To borrow from Lauren Berlant (1997, p. 1)

again, colonial modes of secrecy foreground the creation and maintenance of the "Intimate Public Sphere", which is characterized as a "process of collapsing the political and the personal into a world of public intimacy". Berlant discusses the development of the Intimate Public Sphere in the context of the post-Reaganist United States, marked by a crisis of citizenship due to the socioeconomic impossibility of achieving the "American Dream", coupled with the perception that the average (white) citizen has lost rights and now desires national reintegration. Such discourse animated a conservative political articulation to "privatize citizenship" through the *conflation of familial* prosperity with *national* fortune (Berlant, 1997, p. 4). In other words, the *traditional family sphere* became the site where social membership should be enacted, where rights were to be protected (particularly of the children and fetuses) and where the national prosperity would generate upward social mobility towards achieving the American Dream. Although Berlant (1997) is discussing a recent phenomenon in the American political landscape, I propose a transposition[10] of the concept of the Intimate Public Sphere to the political colonial experience of the Dutch Empire.

A concern with the intimate was at the heart of the empire-building enterprise. This was manifest in welfare policies aimed at developing both the metropole and the colonies through the joint management of public health, public education, migration, agriculture and the familial space. As Ann Laura Stoler (2010, p. X) describes, the (re)production of knowledge about "the carnal, the domestic and the intimate mattered to [the] colonial governing apparatus", particularly in the context of developing notions of Dutch citizenship founded on uncertain and slippery categories such as race, sexuality and class — which led to modes of intimate surveillance, practices of bodily education, assimilation and segregation. In other words, discursive practices surrounding secrecy simultaneously *produce* subjectivity (both knowing and unknowing subjects), modes of *subjection* (subjects to be (un)known by others, and under which circumstances) and *affect* (the will to know and/or to hide).

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I have sketched so far a few theoretical engagements that allow for a deeper understanding of the function of secrecy within the discursive networks of the colonial administration. The main objective of this section was to develop a theorization of secrecy as a vehicle for asymmetrical proliferation and access to knowledge and knowledge production as part of the colonial discourse. In the two following subsections, I expand on the colonial discursive practices

[10]See note 8

surrounding secrecy on two accounts: (1) first, I explore the production of the colonial archive by colonial officials and the ways in which secrecy supported the entanglement between practices that are both "public" and "private"; (2) second, I mobilize feminist scholarship to discuss the ways both European and racialized women practiced secrecy as a form of negotiation of their colonial subjectivities.

3.1.1
The colonial vault: secrecy, fantasy and disavowal

The archives routinely produced to and from The Hague bore the mark of confidentiality through visual modes of obstruction of knowledge — like forms of classification of secrecy (where a document would be called *"geheim"* and available to only a few), or the ways in which these secret documents were labeled (with a letter from A to Z accompanying a number to be used throughout the year, plus the abbreviations of the institutions discussing the topic).[11] Thus, the archives reveal the stratification within the very colonial practice, where information was withheld from Dutch officials from their superiors. However, as Ann Laura Stoler (2009, p. 11) notes, despite the various "secretive codes" that allowed for the creation of networks of practices of (un)seeing and (un)knowing within the very colonial administration, the "designation of secret was an administrative label", where many matters were "not secret at all", and where the lines between what was considered "official" and "unofficial" information were often blurred — for example, many civil servants also wrote in newspapers and would often publicly discuss matters considered confidential. Stoler (2009), in particular, is looking at colonial administrative practice *before* the Indonesian archives of the Ministry of the Colonies were made public in 1918, but in 1951 Suriname, for instance, the ambivalence surrounding secrecy was still at play: a letter from the former-Government Secretary in Paramaribo to the current administration regarding the confidentiality of civil servants provides a complaint about how, despite having been informed several times, the colonial officials continued to disclose confidential information to third-party entities against the oath made in the name of the National Service (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag. NL-HaNA_2.10.18_183_0009).

Bureaucracy was marked by social, racial, and sexual anxieties and un-

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[11]On this topic, not only there were particular "primary marker[s]" (Bleiker, 2018) that visually signaled secrecy, but also there were other documents that served as summaries for authorized personnel to navigate the official secretive archive, and the only people who could read them had to know its secretive codes.

certainties about the future, particularly the future to be made in the colonies. Interminable and relentless administrative reporting (with a requirement for the production of evidence of claims) became mandatory, following an official decree from the Governor-General in 1869 (Stoler, 2009, p. 11). For example, perusing the National Archives of the Netherlands, we find secret mail reports (*mailrapporten*) about the news being published in the "native press" (Malay-Chinese) (1917) explaining in minute detail the reported news: whether they were pro or against the colonial government; the words being used to describe the natives; the threat of Chinese nationalism (especially concerning the education of children in Dutch-Chinese schools), and so on (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, NL-HaNA_2.10.36.06_4_0001). The same can be said about concerns with the native Javanese population (in both the East and West Indies), which prompted the creation of the Political Intelligence Service (*Politieke Inlichtingendienst*, or PID) in the East Indies in 1916 to act as a secret intelligence institution tasked with monitoring threats of Javanese political dissent (Limpach, 2023). Coupled with the infinite necessity to provide information about any potential secret *from the Other*, we also find various files showcasing the desperate search for the maintenance of colonial *order, discipline and control* — evident, for example, in the establishment of the Historical Bureau (later reorganized to be the Statistics Department) and Geographical Department in Batavia, tasked with the incessant (re)production of maps, atlases, drawings and photographs of *colonial possessions* (East and West Indies and Africa), buildings, railroads, trading posts, and rivers (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, [1702] 1814-1963).

What is worth noting about both the *mailrapporten* supplying detailed information about the Other and the archival modes of topographical evidence is how they come into being at the intersection between notions of the public and the private. As Pamela Pattynam notes (2015, p. 140), "the majority of the Indies photographic collections in Dutch museums are linked to colonial expansion and technocratic modernisation". Moreover, she notes that the archival juxtaposition between topographical "public images" depicting the colonial industrial development and candid and imperfect snapshots of the home life served to build a visual collection showcasing the apparent success of the developmental project deployed in the Indies.

For example, the various depictions of colonial topography compiled for the Ministry of the Colonies by the departments previously mentioned are described as Dutch *"residences"*, signaling the centrality of the home space in Dutch colonial policy and archival practice. Likewise, amidst these geographical images, two sets of photographs were stored: first, a photograph

of a Dutch family sitting in front of their home, with an Indonesian woman and child sitting by the front steps (Figure 3.1); second, a light printing proof photo of an Indonesian woman and a (presumably) Indo-European child (Figure 3.2). The text in the top portion of both documents reads: *"Attached to missive, Department of War VII° Division, September 1875"*.[12]

What do we make of these photographs? When the Statistics Department was created in Buitenzorg (Java) in 1837, the head of the General Secretariat at the time, Johan Pieter Cornets, encouraged citizens to provide "building materials" to the Bureau in exchange for financial compensation through advertisements in newspapers (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, [1702] 1814-1963). We can assume the Department put out an advertisement seeking civilian contributions showcasing the status of the Dutch population in the Indies. Is it possible the Dutchmen depicted in the photograph wanted to display their participation in the Family of Man (McClintock, 1995), using the image as evidence of their contribution to the empire-building effort? The composition of the photograph tells us a few things about the production of familial evidence as a mode of (re)producing the colonial authority in the colonies — the *face* of the empire-building endeavor was the Dutch *man*; the children were to carry out their father's imperial legacy (through the generational maintenance and expansion of familial possession, such as the *house* they were posing against); the success of the empire depended on the domestication of *Otherness*, evidenced by the two figures of the Javanese sitting in the front steps of the house. Was this photograph accepted as evidence of the success of the Dutch "colonial craft" in the Indies?

Much like the way the *secret* functions as a *placeholder* for various colonial discursive engagements that were often contradictory in practice (the simultaneous requirement to tell and to hide; the supposed privacy of the institutional secret against the publicness of their retelling in the newspapers), the limits of what constituted evidence were also hard to place — the official archive was constructed from a multitude of "conflicting assessments, extraneous detail, anecdote, and local know-how", which, according to Ann Laura Stoler (2009, p. 11), highlights the ambivalence of negotiating certainty (the requirement to produce *evidence* of the truth) in a context of unpredictability concerning the everyday. As a mode for dealing with encounters with difference under perceived social duress, both the colonial governmental institutions and press (which would often be composed of overlapping personnel) would (re)produce a telling of events based on new interpretations of the existing

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[12]There is no official transcription for the text in the National Archives. The official text (from my understanding) reads as follows: *"Behoort bij missive Departement van Oorlog VII° Afdeeling ctot. September 1875 N°"*.

Figure 3.1: Photographic evidence of the residence of a Dutch family in the Dutch East Indies (c. 1875), National Archive of the Netherlands.

archive — which is the argument put forth by Nadia Abu El-Haj (2023) I discussed previously. In other words:

> Documents honed in the pursuit of prior issues could be requisitioned to write new histories, could be reclassified for new initiatives, could be renewed to fortify security measures against what were perceived as new assaults on imperial sovereignty and its moralizing claims (Stoler, 2009, p. 3).

To further enrich the current sociological discussion about secrecy, I now provide a psychoanalytical standpoint. At first glance, this engagement might seem at odds with the arguments I have been building so far, particularly through the work of Michel Foucault (1978) considering his criticism of psychoanalysis.[13] Still, many authors have attempted to conciliate socio-economic

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[13]Foucault's criticism is directed to the individualizing and essentialist character of various epistemological engagements in psychoanalysis; as well as the normalizing ethos of much of such theoretical articulations, particularly in relation to sexuality; and, most notably, the insistence on the Repressive Hypothesis as a foundation for many of its epistemological approaches to power (Foucault, 1978; Foucault, 2006; Allen, 2018).

and historical approaches with a psychoanalytical episteme (McClintock, 1995; Hall, 2017; Bhabha, 1994; Butler, 1997; Stoler, 2010; Gonzalez, 1984, Fanon, 2021). For example, Anne McClintock's "Imperial Leather" (1995, p. 8) offers a commentary on the "disciplinary quarantine of psychoanalysis from history [as] germane to imperial modernity itself". McClintock (1995) is focused on observing the connections between imperial notions of "family, sexuality and fantasy" — which are commonly disciplinarily associated with the area of psychoanalysis — and the locus of sociopolitical inquiry, such as "labor, money and market" (ibid).[14]

I am engaging with psychoanalysis to point out how the precariousness of the positions the colonial discourse assigns to both the colonizer and the colonized *taints*[15] the archive. Through the repeatability of the stereotype as a mode of apprehending and representing the Other within the colonial discourse, the colonizer momentarily designates a "point of identification" for the oppositional identities of both Self and Other (Bhabha, 1994, p. 69). However, the possibility of unraveling looms over the colonial encounter and its subsequent narration in the archives. That is, despite such discursive opposition between Self and Other, — the interplay between presence and absence, proximity and distance, excessiveness and lack — the impossibility of secur-

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[14]Another example of such engagement can be found in Judith Butler's seminal book "*The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*" (1997), in which she attempts to bridge the gap between social theory and psychoanalysis and provide a theory of subjection/subjectivization through a rejection of the separation between the political and the psychic, developing the Foucauldian conception of power as productive of desires, affections and so on. Finally, a third engagement can be found in Stuart Hall's "*The Fateful Triangle*" (2017), where he draws on Foucauldian theory of regimes of truth (power-knowledge-difference) to develop a conception of race as a sliding signifier between notions of biological difference, on one side, and cultural difference, on the other. What is worth noting here — which I briefly mentioned in the previous chapter when discussing the Window as a spatiotemporal visual technology — is how race is constructed through "memory, desire, fantasy and myth" (Hall, 2017. p. 130). That is, through the interplay between signs that come to acquire meaning within collective imaginings and through affective histories of contact (Ahmed, 2014).

[15]Here I wish to underscore the impressions, grooves and fingerprints left in the supposedly rational and impersonal Dutch colonial archive. Ann Laura Stoler's (2009) concept *watermarks* departs from a similar engagement and seeks to highlight how the archive is a site where such secretive practices, affections and imaginings linger. She describes the "watermarks in colonial history" as the "signatures of a history that neither can be scraped off nor removed without destroying the paper" (ibid., p. 8). Another such engagement is developed in "Blood, Flaw, Taint, Degeneration: The case of Sarah Gertrude Millin", where J. M. Coetzee (1980, p. 42) explores the work of South-African writer Sarah Gertrude Millin and the ways in which her notions of race are constituted "not [as] a hotchpotch of colonial prejudices but the reflection of respectable scientific and historical thought". In particular, through her work, Coetzee explores the grammar of degeneration, as part of evolutional theories of scientific racism, that mobilize visual markers connecting sexual deviancy and racial anxiety, especially through the visuality of blood (tainted blood, impure blood, mixed blood and so on). A taint becomes a mark of the "legacy of evil that is passed on to succeeding generations (ibid, p. 80). A discussion on degeneration, in particular, will be articulated in Section 3.2.2.

ing a point for the representation of the Other still threatens the colonizer's quest for self-identification. Such self-identification, which refers to the search for *wholeness, totality*, and *integrity* can be described by the Lacanian conception of *fantasy*, whereby the subject is ontologically constituted by a split between the conscious and unconscious that is marked by a *lack* of "cohesive identity" and/or inherent essence (Mandelbaum, 2020, p. 51). The subject, then, finds him/herself having to incessantly attempt to fulfill this ontological void through repeated processes of identification, which are always incomplete and never bring total enjoyment (*jouissance*) (Hook, 2022).

Drawing from Lacanian psychoanalysis, Moran M. Mandelbaum (2020) develops the concept of the "nation/state fantasy" as a mode for theorizing the ways the nation has come to signify the ideal organization of political communities. In this context, Mandelbaum (2020, p. 40-41) observes a discursive congruence that signals a continuity between institutional (laws and customs), social (a homogeneous race and/or culture), spatial (a defined bounded territory) and temporal (shared developmental political projects) characteristics, that define the subjects of a shared nation. Transporting such engagements to the context of Dutch colonialism, particularly Dutch settlers in the colonies and the development of an ideal of Dutch nationhood, the*fantasy of Dutchness*— which encompasses notions of morality, restraint, modesty, decency, exceptionality and so on (Soerabaijasch handelsblad, Nov 12, 1901, p. 1) — serves as an attempt at forming a cohesive identity in the face of continuous encounters with both the alterity and the similarity of the Other.

The necessity to uphold the ideal of *whiteness* and/or *Europeaness* as the basis of the imperial colonial identity is paramount for the maintenance of the colonial project. However, the colonizer is still painfully aware of the impossibility of achieving the national fantasy, of fixing identity once and for all (Memmi, 1974). Most importantly, the colonizer is aware that his position of superiority in relation to the colonized (and the "mixed-blood" citizens of the colonies) can be questioned, disputed and, ultimately, revoked. In this context, secrecy is caught up in what many authors would call *disavowal* (Hook, 2022; Gonzalez, 1984; El-Haj, 2023; Fletcher, 2018): it highlights the ways things have come to be known but remain *unacknowledged* (El-Haj, 2023); how "something is denied even as it remains conspicuously evident" (Hook, 2017, p. 5); how one can claim issues are being fixed and threats are being dealt with, whilst knowing very well the measures being taken are insufficient (Fletcher, 2018). In other words, disavowal signals the dissemination of discursive modes of simultaneously knowing and unknowing — that is, although the *fantasy* of national congruence is unachievable, it continues to be routinely (re)enacted.

Figure 3.2: Photograph of Indonesian women and (presumably) (Indo)European child (c. 1875), National Archive of the Netherlands.

Despite the discursive function of secrecy in multiplying the colonial discourse through the asymmetrical distribution and access to modes of (un)knowing and (un)seeing, the microscopic attention to the family in colonial policy could not prevent the formation of attachments that threatened the very fantasy of colonial integrity. As Ann Laura Stoler (2009, p. 2) argues, "affections and attachments—familial and otherwise—were often impervious to the meddling priorities of a supposedly "rational" and reasoned state". In particular, women and children were the sources of profound colonial anxieties about the maintenance of the colonial authority and the (re)production of the fantasy of national future — according to the colonial discourses that equated whiteness with Dutchness, a moral middle-class and the practice of the Christian faith. Thus, the place and the bodies of women in colonial society, as well as that of children, animated much of the colonial administrative debate and policy under the rubric of the protection and development of the family. Some of which I discuss in the next section.

3.1.2
Echoes from the rooms of the house

The present section aims to discuss the practice of colonial secrecy within theoretical feminist engagements (particularly its post/decolonial and

Figure 3.3: Family photo of De Greve family and visitors being served by a housemaid, Willem Van de Poll (1955), National Archive of the Netherlands.

diasporic iterations) (Collins, 2000; Collins 1986; hooks, 2015; Carneiro, 2003) to offer a counterpoint to secrecy produced by the colonial authority. The practice of secrecy is part of struggles related to the (re)production and maintenance of discursive "regimes of truth" (Foucault, 1978). Therefore, I would like to offer a theoretical contribution to, as Anne McClintock argues (2005, p. 24), "the historically different but persistent ways in which women served as the boundary markers of imperialism, the ambiguous mediators of what appeared to be — at least superficially — the predominantly male agon of empire". With this in mind, I now situate two related forms of secrecy produced by women in colonial contexts: (1) European women articulating secrecy as a mode for negotiating their position within the colonial household; (2) Colonized women inhabiting colonial boundaries between knowing and unknowing and producing knowledge through their lived experience.

The "cult of domesticity", as McClintock (1995, p. 5, my emphasis) argues, "was a crucial, if *concealed*, dimension of male as well as female

identities". The separation of public and private was consciously produced and later effaced — the familial institution had to be continuously fabricated by the colonial authority simultaneously as a (a-political) *natural* and *separate* realm from the (political) public sphere and as a space absolutely necessary to be intervened for the maintenance of the colonial enterprise. The colonial authority's various modes of constant intervention in the home space and other Intimate Public institutions (like the Church, the school, middle-class social clubs, and so on) were part of an imperial effort to produce "domesticated bodies" to uphold patriotic European values and, consequently, continuously reenact racial/cultural stereotypes (Bhabha, 1994) as (either biological or cultural) *natural* distinctions.

An influential feminist literature has successively questioned various facets of the "cult of domesticity" (McClintock, 1995): whether by scrutinizing the a-historicization within the very separation between the public and the private realm (Enloe, 2014; Boyd, 1997; Gavinson, 1992; Ortner, 1974); whether by locating the oppression of women at the heart of the capitalist dynamic by pointing to the relationship between housework and the reproduction of the labor force (Rubin, 1997; Casalanti; Bailey, 1991; Beloso, 2021); whether by questioning the social contract as the legitimation of patriarchal *right* over women (Pateman, 1988). These authors befittingly point to the ways Marxist theory has neglected gender and sexuality as fundamental to the reproduction of capitalism, and, concomitantly, how the field of Political Science has neglected the gendered ways the social contract articulates freedom and domination. However, the unwavering focus on how (predominantly white) women are excluded from (but are ultimately necessary to) the construction of civil society seems to foreclose how these same women may consciously uphold racial hierarchies as a mechanism to negotiate their position within "gender-specific and sexual sanctions and prohibitions" (Stoler, 2010, p. 42). Accordingly, authors interested in the entanglements of sex/gender and race in the making of empire have ruminated on assertions that European women in the colonies exercised more "racist behavior" than their male counterparts, which is based on the distinct colonial experiences of European women as both as *subjected to* and *subjects of* imperial power (Stoler, 2010; McClintock, 1995; hooks, 2015).[16] Therefore, the "marital domination" — or the "conjugal right" of men over women — (Pateman, 1988) which assigned to European women the identities

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[16]As bell hooks notes in *"Ain't I a Woman"* (2015, p. 169): "To black women the issue is not whether white women are more or less racist than white men, but that they are racist". I bring the discussion of the racism exercised by white women not because I am interested in providing with a measurement of the intensity of their racism in comparison to their male counterparts, but because the very discourse that foregrounds this possibly says something about the position of these women within structures that perpetuate racism.

of wife and daughter in the Intimate Public Sphere, also allowed for transiency in their encounters with colonized women and men. As McClintock (1995, p. 6) notes: "[a]s such, white women were not the hapless onlookers of empire but were ambiguously complicit both as colonizers and colonized, privileged and restricted, acted upon and acting".

In their — conscious or unconscious — attempts at maintaining the Dutch colonial fantasy, these women utilized secrecy to develop modes of (un)knowing and (un)seeing in their everyday encounters with difference, particularly within their own homes. Colonial household manuals written by European women to other European women just arriving in the colonies (or planning their travels), for example, functioned as a way to *produce* specialized knowledge about "the Other and the Elsewhere" (Trouillot, 2002) and to further reproduce imperial authority. Thus, the position of the (European) wife, in particular, should not be purely interpreted as the result of absolute subjection of (male) imperial power against their women.[17] Instead, I invite us to think about how colonial subjectivities (wife, mother, daughter, but also the notion of morality, whiteness and Dutchness) were shifting, unstable and ambiguous categories continuously and anxiously negotiated.

Relatedly, the argument that *women* (as a discrete and homogeneous group) have been historically relegated to the private realm (specifically the home space), prohibited from working outside and tasked with birthing and raising the *nation's children*, does not account for the women who were, in opposition, defined by the labor they performed *outside* their own homes. In this context, I turn to Black feminist criticism of much of mainstream feminist theory[18] that fails to account for how gender has come to be interpreted within systems of racial power that positioned women in various roles within the developing imperial and capitalist system (Wekker, 2016; hooks, 2015; Collins, 2004; Davis, 1981). These authors have continuously pointed to the co-constitution between racial and gendered imperial practices, which foregrounded different experiences of both *subjectivity* and *subjection* of (colonized) racialized women — be it through their historical experience with forms of slavery, servitude and,

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[17]This is particularly poignant when contrasted to Gayle Rubin's (1997) discussion of women's locus of oppression in the capitalist economy. She discusses a "historical and moral element which determines that a "wife" is among the necessities of a work, that women rather than men do housework and that capitalism is heir to a long tradition in which women do not inherit, in which women do not lead, and in which women do not talk to god" (ibid, p. 31). As I discuss further in the section from the intervention of black feminist authors, I believe more nuance is warranted when working through gendered subjectivities that are also part of imperial relations of power.

[18]I am using the notion of "mainstream feminist theory" as an umbrella term for what Chandra Tapalde Mohanty (2003, p. 17-18) calls "Western feminism", which encompasses theoretical engagements "resulting from the implicit assumption of' 'the West' (in all its complexities and contradictions) as the primary referent in theory and praxis".

most evidently, with working inside middle-class European homes under the authority of white women (which is true for both racialized men and women); be it through historically working outside their own home space in factories, plantations and street markets; be it through composing distinct *cultural* and *familial organizations* that did not fall under the imperial model (polygamy, living with various relatives, having all members of the family working, having women supporting the household, and so on).

In this context, I turn to Patricia Hill Collins' (1986) conception of Afro-American women as *"outsiders within"*. According to Collins (1986), the sociopolitical modes of marginality historically experienced by black women have created a network of concurrent processes of inclusion — which can be violent, conditional and partial — and exclusion in institutions, spaces and practices. As a result, the "outsider within" status has granted black women the capacity to skillfully observe and theorize about the power dynamics of the "self, [the] family, and society" (ibid, p. 14). The opening sentences of her article are of particular importance to our current discussion:

> Afro-American women have long been privy to some of the most intimate secrets of white society. Countless numbers of Black women have ridden buses to their white "families," where they not only cooked, cleaned, and executed other domestic duties, but where they also nurtured their "other" children, shrewdly offered guidance to their employers, and frequently, became honorary members of their white "families." These women have seen white elites, both actual and aspiring, from perspectives largely obscured from their Black spouses and from these groups themselves (Collins, 1986, p. 14).

Although Collins is discussing the status of "outsider within" in the specific context of U.S. racial relations, I would like to extend her discussion to the landscape of Dutch colonialism in the 20th-century to highlight the ways in which colonized racialized women have inhabited interstitial spaces constituted by both publicness and privateness, inclusion and exclusion, necessity and replaceability, similarity and difference.[19] Therefore, while the systematic marginalization of colonized racialized women cultivates various violent

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[19]Here, much like note 8, I am transposing the concept of "outsiders within" from its contextual particularities to the Dutch colonial landscape. The traveling of this theory (Said, 1983), like in Berlant's (1997) case, also brings forth potentialities and limitations. The concept of "outsiders within" is inscribed within the particular sociopolitical landscape of racial segregation, racial tensions, labor and gendered relations in the U.S. The original articulation of the concept is further inscribed within the development of Black feminist theory in the U.S., which is not the reality of colonized women in Indonesia and might also

sociopolitical dynamics, it also provides avenues for "creative expression" in which these women utilize their standpoint as a form of counter-knowledge production, some of which I discuss further.

3.2
An (un)speakable thing (un)spoken[20]

The abolition of slavery and the change in the legal status of colonized from former enslaved to free people brought forth a "plantation crisis" in Suriname — although slave owners received compensation for every manumitted enslaved, it was impossible to maintain Suriname as a large-scale agriculture colony without high-intensity labor (Hoefte, 2014). To this end, Dutch colonial institutions in the East, the West, and the metropole developed migration policies directed to providing plantation owners with laborers from outside the West Indies — colonial agreements were struck with British India, providing Suriname with Hindustani contract workers; likewise, arrangements were made between the East and West Dutch colonial administrations to send Javanese contract workers to Paramaribo; and finally, the same practices were deployed to send Chinese laborers to Suriname.

These immigration registers compose the "kind of never-actualized record[s]" (Gilliand; Caswell, 2016, p. 56) with stories of the displacement of colonized families. We follow their paths when arriving in Paramaribo, learn the names of their employers, read explanatory notes about the places they worked, as well as the date of termination of their contracts. Likewise, we even become privy to the composition of their bodies — "a scar on a right shoulder blade"; a "pigm spot on both collarbones"; skin "slightly pockmarked" (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, 1890-1930a, b, c).

The microscopic attention to every detail concerning the emerging multicultural Surinamese society was entangled with the colonial fantasy of nation-

articulate distinct demands than the Caribbean, Latin-American and Surinamese feminisms (despite possible similarities). Patricia Hill Collins (2017) has discussed this process of "traveling theory" (Said, 1983) with the development of the concept of "intersectionality" divorced from its Black feminists origins and inscribed within academia. See: COLLINS, Patricia Hill. Se perdeu na tradução? Feminismo negro, interseccionalidade e política emancipatória. Paragrafo. Jan/Jun, 2017, v. 5, no1, p. 6-17. (I could only find the Portuguese translation of this publication).

[20] The title of this section is inspired by Toni Morrison's "Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature" (1989). Morrison claims that "in spite of its implicit and explicit acknowledgment, "race" is still a virtually unspeakable thing" (ibid, p. 126). I intend to explore the connections between race, gender, class, and religion in Dutch colonial modes of citizenship as all, inevitably (both conscious or unconsciously) caught up in secrecy: which create modes of obscurity, hiding and neglect that are, ultimately, still widely known and reproduced.

hood, the incessant necessity to provide information and produce evidence, and the administrative enforcement of colonial-sponsored forms of citizenship — a "polymorphous and perverse collusion between racism and sexism as a *mixed economy*" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 69, emphasis in original) sustained the emergence of urban spaces in both the colonies (Batavia and Paramaribo, most notably) and the metropole, the exploitation of resources through mining and oil companies and factories, the development of communities and housing districts through "stratified ethnic enclaves" (Hoefte, 2014, p. 15), a division of labor based on racial and gendered stereotypes (particularly of immigrants).

News about the deployment of the Ethical Policy (*Ethische Politiek, 1901-1942*) in the East Indies traveled from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean and were incessantly discussed in Dutch colonial administrative chambers and newspapers. While the Ethical Policy was officially deployed by Alexander Willem Frederik Idenburg as a member of the House of Representatives in 1901 (and a year later as the Minister of the Colonies) and later maintained in by his successors, it had already been a topic of discussion in previous decades — as Jan Breman (2023, p. 65-67) notes, political debates surrounding the establishment of an Ethical Policy in the East Indies had been animated by anti-revolutionary Christian political parties (namely the *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij*, or ARP, founded by Prime Minister Abraham Kuyper), who championed the necessity to "morally uplift the colonial population", as well as abolitionists and socialists, who for decades denounced the abuse of power suffered by the Javanese. A package of policies aimed at developing the East Indies through the improvement of infrastructure, amelioration of labor conditions, political participation and access to education and health (especially to Javanese women and girls) was first proposed by Prime Minister Kuyper during the creation of the ARP in 1879 and then deployed by Indenburg when he was elected for Parliament (ibid, p. 67; Stoler, 2010; Locher-Scholten, 2000).

Therefore, the end of the 19th-century and the beginning of the 20th-century served as a landscape for intense discussions about labor wages, the abuse practiced against coolies[21] and the threat of Indonesian revolution from Java surfacing in Paramaribo. Furthermore, Surinamese and Antillean newspapers were deeply concerned about the morality of the population in the West Indies, as Suriname was seen as The Netherlands' "problem child" (Hoefte, 2014, p. 59) — the "plantation crisis" denounced by plantation owners since before the official abolition of slavery was part of a general sentiment that the colony was in decline, as it did not produce exclusive raw materials

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[21]According to Jan Breman, "coolie" was the name used to refer to an "Asian laborer, nearly always of Javanese origin, contracted for a period of three years to work for an expatriate employer in the Outer Islands of colonial Indonesia." (Breman, 2002, p. 333).

compared to the other colonies in the Caribbean and caused the metropole to spend more than it gained through its production (ibid). Along with the economic deficit, colonial politicians such as Idenburg believed the Surinamese population did not "seem to be distinguished by elevating virtues and qualities" (Breman, 2023, p. 75). The newspapers reported children born out-of-wedlock year after year, various instances of violence committed against Javanese families, the precariousness of housing in Paramaribo, and so on. In this context, although the Ethical Policy was never formally deployed in the West Indies, it still inspired the actions of the Ministry of the Colonies and the Governors in the Caribbean — that point is clearer when we consider how the careers of colonial politicians and administrators were usually composed by flows of service from The Hague to Batavia and Suriname, as well as to companies fundamental to the colonial expansion, such as the Royal Packet Navigation Company[22] (*Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij*, KPM).[23] Thus, many journalists and writers of newspapers in the West Indies praised the Ethical Policy deployed in the Dutch East Indies and urged for a similar policy in the Caribbean (De West: nieuwsblad uit en voor Suriname, Sept 7, 1911, p. 2). In other words, as Breman (2023, p. 75) puts it: "[l]ack of decisiveness and the will to achieve the stated goal of the Ethical Policy were not only applicable to the Minister of the Colonies but were a disposition that permeated almost the entire administrative apparatus".

The administrative discourses supporting the Ethical Policy put forth the notion the Netherlands had a "debt of honor" and a "moral duty as a Christian power" to the Javanese population of the East Indies (Breman, 2023, p. 65). According to Elsbeth Locher-Scholten (2000, p. 16) the Ethical Policy was the result of "technical and economic changes as well as a new psychological mix of both Western superiority and social concerns resulted in a renewed sense of a 'civilising mission' and a more active colonial policy". The basis for the administrative practices carried out by the policy, therefore, was a paternalistic discourse that the Western world should guide its "brown brothers" toward development and civilization, as they would not be able to get there on their

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[22]The Royal Packet Navigation Company (*Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij*, KPM) was a Dutch shipping company created in 1891 that acted as a mode of transportation of both passengers and cargo between the islands of the Dutch East Indies. After the independence of Indonesia, it was partially nationalized.

[23]Willem Frederik Idenburg is one such case, in which he was first a member of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army (KNIL) (1889–1890), soon after took a seat at the House of Representatives in The Netherlands (1901-1902), became Minister of the Colonies (1903-1905) and after became Governor of Suriname (1905-1909). The examples of the flows amongst the colonial administration personnel are not exhaustive. Like the case for Idenburg, both his predecessor and successor were also part of similar planetary flows. These brief examples showcase the maintenance of the "famial state" (Adams, 2005) which was in vogue since the establishment of the colonies in the 17th-century.

own. In other words, as argued by Locher-Scholten (2000, p. 87), the Ethical policy was constituted at the intersection between a developmental colonial policy and the evolutionary theories of the 19th-century (which considered colonized people to compose varying degrees of rationality and evolution), all the while utilizing the rhetoric of the *family* as its driving force.

The imperial fantasy of nationhood further supported the deployment of the Ethical Policy as a mode for the disavowal of colonial violence. The terms used by Jan Breman (2023) to describe such administrative practices are particularly relevant in the context of our previous discussion on secrecy: he claims the Ethical Policy was used to *mask* or *cover* underlying issues of oppression or exploitation practiced by the Dutch imperial enterprise; that the policy was "instrumentalized as *camouflage, concealing* the perpetuation of the colonial intent – enforcement of Dutch rule, including extensive exploitation of land and people" (ibid, pg 64-65, my emphasis); that the "soft side of the overseas presence" that constituted the first couple of decades of the implementation of the policy "had been nothing more than a *façade*" (ibid., p. 90, my emphasis); lastly, the pointed out how the practices of the ARP were guided by an intent of evangelization, which was successively discussed through both official and private correspondence between Kuyper and Idenburg (ibid, p. 84).

In other words, Breman (2023) seems to be pointing out the ways in which the Ethical Policy was established through various practices of colonial secrecy that were contradictory and insufficient in practice — for example, the colonial discourse of "unity and diversity" (Breman, 2023, p. 86) was articulated through developmental practices that further aggravated ethnic stratification in the educational, laboring and sociopolitical realms (such as the separation of children's schools based on ethnicity), as well as successive wars engaged against the growing anti-colonial movement (such as the Aceh War) (Lochen-Scholten, 2000). Similarly, the "Christian moral duty" the Dutch empire had toward its colonial subjects acted as coverage for the further exploitation of the land (ibid). Likewise, the discourse in favor of more political access to the Javanese was disseminated by the colonial administration, all the while incessantly monitoring, reporting and repressing the native press to the latest degree. Finally, the deployment of the narrative of the "Family of Man" (McClintock, 1995) as a mode for supporting the emergence of a policing state with its citizens acting as intimate overseers of empire (particularly the European wife).

Within the landscape of the Ethical Policy deployed in the East Indies, I wish to underscore the multiple networks of discursive practices of secrecy

from The Hague to Paramaribo and Batavia — while official policies differed because of economic, cultural and sociopolitical distinctions between life in the East and West (i.e. the notion the East Indies were the Dutch prize while the West Indies were its "problem child"), it is worth navigating the *colonial planetary flows* inscribed in Dutch discursive imperial practices in both of its "possessions". In the following subsections, I further discuss the practice of secrecy in the Intimate Public Sphere of the Dutch empire articulated within the injunction of race and sex/gender in the following ways: (1) the politics of racial citizenship; (2) the connections of the "health" of the home space and the "health" of empire through discourses of racial contamination and sexual degeneracy; (3) secretive modes of "overseeing" the empire through/within the intimacies of the home space.

3.2.1
(In)Admissible families, (il)legitimate futures

Figure 3.4: Family photograph of European men with Indonesian women and Indo-European children Anonymous author (c. 1900), Leiden University Libraries Digital Collections.

According to Gloria Wekker (2016, p. 6), one paradox constitutive of Dutch contemporary society is a disidentification with migrants as part of its genealogy, despite being composed by a population with significant migrant

ancestry. In particular, Dutch nativism reproduces an idea of nationhood, whereby the usage of the term "*autochtonen*" to attribute Dutch citizenship is a result of the conflation between Dutchness and whiteness. More profoundly, contemporary notions of Dutch citizenship are part of the "imperial debris" (Stoler, 2010; 2016) of Dutch colonialism, marked by successive attempts to establish a national identity based not only on the "color line" (Du Bois, 2019 [1903]), but on the expectations of what should be the "*ideal Dutch citizen*", which was undercrossed by co-constitutive notions of class mobility, religion, race and sexual morality. Thus, contemporary forms of disidentification with the migrants that historically constituted Dutch society — most notably, Muslim Indonesian and Afro-Surinamese communities — emerge from an attempt at maintaining the colonial fantasy of wholeness, which is not an outright *denial* but a *form of disavowal* of the "clandestine arrangements" (Hartman, 2022a) that *haunt* the constitution and maintenance of the Dutch national fantasy.

The photograph above (Figure 3.4) sets the tone of the intimate scenes I discuss in the present subsection — the children's faces are blurred; the men have their backs turned to the camera; the gaze staring back at us, secretly knowingly, is all but one: the Javanese woman in the right corner. The image, therefore, is one of many family portraits of empire. We should not be too quick to interpret, however, such a family portrait as a scene of *marriage* — in actuality, the "familial romance" (Hartman, 2021; Vergès, 1999) of colonialism produced quotidian scenes of sexual and familial intimacy in which the legal attribution of marriage was ascribed through shifting positionalities within the realm of property, class hierarchy, religious morality and race.

The (re)production of the ideal family in the imperial context — the normative husband and wife; the educated children; the patriotic and sanctified practice of marital sex and the productive household — was engraved within the horizon of criminality and sexual deviancy. The discussion presented by Sophie Rose and Elisabeth Heijmans (2021) is of great importance in this regard. The authors observe how Dutch colonial legislative practices in the context of transgressive sexual behavior (pre- and extra-marital heterosexual sex, in particular) were centered around two major "narratives of crime" put forth by both the VOC and the WIC administrations: (1) narratives of impropriety, centered around the policing of "sexual relationships that posed a practical problem for authorities", such as children born out of wedlock in need of social relief (ibid, p. 319) — this form of criminality was supported by Christian codes of conduct (particularly of chastity; (2) narratives centered around the notion of betrayal, inscribed in a more rigorous

economy of punishment for their disruptive potential of the social order — as the authors argue: "to cheat on one's spouse was not just to form an unsanctioned relationship, but to break a sacred bond, that of marriage, in the process" (ibid).

These colonial legislation practices were supported and inspired by matrimonial juridical norms in the metropole, which also prescribed notions of both impropriety and betrayal — according to the authors, their modes of punishment were underscored by gendered and classed forms of social belonging, against which adulterous women suffered most deeply (ibid). However, the stipulation of laws to regulate marriage in the colonies was developed within the carnality of the colonial encounter, which prescribed administrative practices controlling and regulating sexuality as constitutive of imperial attempts at maintaining (and fixing) racial boundaries (Stoler, 2010). For example, In the beginning of Dutch colonization in both East and West Indies, the colonial practice of concubinage did not result in the institutional and legal recognition of a lawful Christian union between European men and colonized women. In order to promote the swift development of the Dutch Empire, the relationship between lower-rank European men in service of both the VOC (most notably) and the WIC and local women was, in many ways, facilitated as a mode for preventing the return to the Netherlands by rooting their sexual and romantic desires (Stoler, 2010; Locher-Scholten, 2000).[24]

While some authors point out, particularly in the Southeast Asian colonial context, a certain degree of "openness" in interracial/inter-ethnic sexual relations in the colonies in the 17th-century — due to the notion Indonesian women were less demanding and cheaper to maintain, that the "mixed-blood" offspring was better suited to live and work in the colonies (Pattynam, 2015, p. 135) — these affiliations were still underscored by a racial economy of sexual deviation and punishment. On the one hand, Dutchmen in service of the VOC in the Dutch East Indies were institutionally obligated to be unmarried and remain unmarried for a number of years — this policy was established and enforced based on the rank and position within the hierarchy of the company (Stoler, 2010, p. 51-52). In this context, the "familial romance" (Hartman, 2021; Vergès, 1999) of colonialism was enacted through quotidian encounters between white men and their female slaves, maids, housekeepers, domestic servants, and so on (true for both the VOC and the WIC contexts).

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[24]Which is not to say European women did not travel to the West Indies to marry European men in service of the VOC. Ann Laura Stoler (2010, p. 47) notes the "importation" of European women in 1622. However, in order to cut these traveling expenses and according to the belief European women were ill-suited to life in the colonies at this time, unions with local women characterized the overwhelming majority of heterosexual colonial relationships in Indonesia (Locher-Scholten, 2000; Pattynam, 2015).

These women performed the daily chores of the household: cleaning, cooking, caretaking, sexually satisfying their European "husbands" and owners in a context in which the practice of marital rape and rape against a native and an enslaved person were foreclosed. On the other hand, and through varying degrees, these men were also expected to uphold the ideal of Dutchness, which involved male honor and prestige, Christian morality, sexual restraint and the performance of whiteness. Colonial legal ordinances, therefore, were deployed to police and regulate deviations from such models.

Despite these corporeal and social forms of sexual policing, according to Ann Twinam (2022, p. 7) "[f]or more than twenty years demographers and historians have designated the eighteenth century as the century of illegitimacy". In this context, Rose and Heijmans' (2021) analysis echoes Foucault's (1978) discussion about how the 18th and 19th-centuries were marked by discursive articulations around sex as something to be *managed* instead of simply *repressed*. The management of colonial sexuality was the cornerstone of Dutch imperial policy, particularly because it was predicated on attempts at securing citizenship — marriage was permissible in colonial contexts if Indonesian women were to be converted to Christianity and speak Dutch (Locher-Scholten, 2000); similarly, enslaved women in the Dutch West Indies could gain their manumission by becoming brides to plantation owners (Premo, 2005). Colonial legislation reproduced and updated Dutch Ordinances to the context of the Indies, whereby women were granted Dutch *citizenship* through marriage. In this context, colonial civil servants and plantation owners had not only the rights over their housemaids bodies (their sex and labor), but also their *offspring*, since they were the only ones who could legally *recognize* Dutch parenthood (Locher-Scholten, 2000; Stoler, 2010).

Granting citizenship through the conditional character of paternal recognition reproduced the perpetuity of the secret — although the fact that European men had many children with racialized women was well *known* both in the realm of lawmaking of the colonial administration and in its everyday social encounters, it remained up to the fathers to *acknowledge (recognize)* these children as theirs. In other words, the silences of the archive reflect a history of disavowed parenthood in which the name of the father was "an unspeakable thing unspoken" (Morisson, 1989) and the mark of the mother "determined [the children's] destiny" (Hartman, 2021, p. 102). The colonial civil status registry in the National Archives of Suriname shows us as much: countless documents where the father's name is filled by a blank space in children's birth certificates; where it may be, instead, populated by a "witness statement" of someone who can inform the secrets of the children's paternity

or maternity (National Archives of Suriname, n/d).[25]

Colonial citizenship was defined by a racial politics of parenthood entangled with other unstable social categories such as gender, class and religion. Centuries of "carnal conversations" (*vleesche-lijke conversatie*) (Rose; Heijmans, 2021, p. 319) between European men and colonized racialized women brought forth distinct geographical subjectivities to be managed and disciplined by the colonial empire — namely, the Indo-Europeans (*Indo*) of the East Indies and the Creole (*Mulatto*) population of the West Indies. These groups blurred the boundaries between the native population of the colonies and their white counterparts. The "mixed-blood" population that had been granted recognition by their fathers was expected to participate in the empire-building effort and pursue the fantasy of Dutch nationhood. As Locher-Scholten (2000, p. 38) argues, the Civil Ordinance of 1892 posed even further restriction on the enactment of citizenship, whereby Dutchness was solely attributed through the principle of *Jus sanguinis* and not *Jus Solis* — greatly affecting colonized subjects born in the Netherlands and the native and formerly enslaved population of both East and West Indies who were granted the negative status of non-Dutch-subjects (although the native and colonized elites were granted limited rights and considered to be subjects-with-citizens-rights, but not citizens like the Dutch) (ibid).

Thus, both racialized and European women were, in distinct ways, caught in "proprietorial notions of the self" (Hartman, 2022b, p. 6) — policies centered around granting women their individual citizenship would be discussed by the Dutch colonial administration during the 1950s, so until then women articulated transitory modes of subjectivity within the colonial society by acquiring citizenship through marriage and motherhood recognized by the father (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, NL-HaNA_2.10.26_1950_0001). As Locher-Schoten (2000), Ann Laura Stoler (2010) and Pamela Pattynam (2015) argue, some Indonesian women and their subsequent Indo-European daughters articulated their subaltern position in conjunction with the labor performed in the home and their *familial relations to the State* (through their husbands or fathers) to "enhance their economic and political standing" and gain forms of prestige within their own families and communities (Stoler, 2010, p. 49). Similarly, the archive reveals similar social modes of political articulation performed by racialized women in the West Indies. The first preserved photograph of Suriname is a paramount example: we see a newlywed couple, Johannes Ellis

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[25]The civil registry of the National Archives of Suriname holds records from the 19th-century and the first decade of the 20th-century. There are 63,239 records, in which 63,153 provide information about the mother and 17,461 provide information about the father of children born in Suriname during this period.

Figure 3.5: Portrait of Johan Ellis and Maria Louise de Hart, J.L. Riker (possibly), (c. 1846), Rijksmuseum.

and his wife Maria Louisa de Hart, dressed in the most luxurious gowns of the period. What is striking is how both are part of the creole Surinamese elite: Ellis was born in Ghana and de Hart is an Afro-Surinamese woman. According to Mattie Boom (2014) the family would go on to produce offspring that maintained their rule over plantations and also send their sons to study in the metropole (Figure 3.5). These visual modes of representation contained in the archive, however, do not offer glimpses of all the women left in the brothels, the barracoons, the kitchens, and so forth.

Although these colonized women continuously negotiated their position within the colonial society, they were aware their membership was conditional. The deployment of the Ethical Policy in the East Indies and the subsequent discourses it generated across other Dutch colonial possessions (as well as the territories of other empires), marked the microscopic attention to the *family* in the Intimate Public Sphere (Berlant, 1997) as the locus of moral practice — having acquired Dutch citizenship through marriage, colonized

women and their subsequent "mixed-blood" daughters were expected to uphold morality by performing monogamy and Christianity, as well as being educated and serviceable (but not politically active) towards the community (Locher-Scholten, 2000, p. 38). More profoundly, failure to upkeep the Dutch colonial fantasy of nationhood threatened the very fabric of Dutch imperial authority in the Indies.

Figure 3.6: Studio portrait of Van der Velden family, Wa Fong (c. 1900), Leiden University Libraries Digital Collections.

With the invention of the daguerreotype in the 1840s and the subsequent development of less-costly and less time-consuming practices of photography, family portraits became one of the modes of presenting evidence of the

development of empire within the context of the Ethical Policy (both in the East and the West Indies). I wish to highlight the usage of studio family portraits as another mode for attempting to fulfill the national fantasy through the hypervisibility of a desirable colonial "archetype." Figure 3.6 is one such example. While there are no markings and no written text in the back or the bottom of the portrait to indicate how the photograph has come into being except for the name of the daughter of the family recorded in the archives (Johanna van der Velden), the photographer might provide us with tools to speculate. According to information recorded in the Southeast Asian & Caribbean Image bank of the KITLV (Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, or Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde) archives of Leiden University, the photograph was taken by a person named Wa Fong in Bandung. As Liesbeth Ouwehand (2017, p. 318) notes, the East Indies were home to multiple Chinese photo studios, which offered an affordable alternative to their European counterparts that were only accessible to the elites. Furthermore, these Chinese *toekang portret*[26] reproduced the Dutch "photographic aesthetic" through the usage of similar portrait styles, backdrops, and props (ibid). We can assume, therefore, that the Van der Velden family portrait showcases how lower-level colonial officials (who could not afford European studios) performed Dutchness — these colonial lower-rank officials negotiated their position within the colonial society by showcasing whiteness not just through the color of their skin but also the family's attire, the domestication of his *njai*[27], and so on.

These lower-level colonial officials and their "mixed-blood" families were targets of colonial scrutiny and intimate imperial surveillance. At the turn of the 20th-century, colonial Ordinances regulating concubinage and policing sex were combined with the increase of European female migration to the colonies. As Ann Laura Stoler (2010, p. 53-54) notes, the practices deployed by the colonial administration concerning the intersection of sex, race, and class were relative to each location — in the urban space of Java, on the one hand, Stoler argues that "concubinage itself was considered a major source of white pauperism, condemned at precisely the same time that a new colonial morality passively condoned illegal brothels"; in Malaya, on the other hand, she notes how colonial administrators and plantation owners saw the attempts by lower-level European officials to maintain a "middle-class lifestyle" through marrying European women as a way to fall into impoverishment. Newspapers

[26]Name used to refer to Chinese photographers in the Dutch East Indies (Ouwehand, 2017).

[27]Njai or nyai were terms used to described native Indonesian women who were both housekeepers and concubines in cohabitation with European men in the East Indies.

in Suriname continuously reported the issue of concubinage in the barracks amongst military personnel in Aceh, as it was "widely known that the villages near garrisons are often teeming with grown-up soldiers' children, who in most cases have grown up to be highly unproductive individuals in society, thus contributing new elements to pauperism" (Suriname: koloniaal nieuws- en advertentieblad, Apr 8, 1902). Similarly, while the practice of concubinage in the West Indies was not purely seen under the microscope of Christian deviancy during the 20th-century, the increase in illegitimate offspring still posed a political as well as social problem — in the Dutch Civil Code of 1838, for example, the Article 342 prohibited investigation of the paternity of a child while the Article 343, permitted investigations of the maternity (Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden, 1836). This meant racialized and poor women most often had to be the sole caretakers of their children with European men and were often blamed for the poverty and perceived degeneration of the mixed and native population — this is well documented in stereotypes surrounding the figure of the *njai* as evil, treacherous and untrustworthy (Pattynam, 2015; Woodrich, 2016). Furthermore, the impossibility of legally knowing the father of the child was combined with a fear of immorality due to consanguinity (since, unknowingly, relatives could establish relationships with one another) and white pauperism. All of these practices threatened the Dutch national fantasy of white honor and prestige.

Mothers caring for children without a father figure, colonial civil servants unable to financially care for their families in the colonies, and familial organizations that disturbed the centrality of the nuclear heterosexual home space (such as Hindustani familial organizations and polygamy inscribed in the Javanese *Adat*)[28] all posed a sociopolitical problem to the maintenance of empire that the Ethical Policy attempted (and failed) to contain. The fear of white pauperism, in particular, was entangled with both classed and racial stereotypes related to immoral, unproductive, and inordinate behavior — idleness, laziness, unproductiveness (both related to labor and patriotic sex), and disorderly behavior (such as anti-colonialism) were all inscribed within the fabric of imperial policy. The liberal ethos of improvement that underscores not only the Ethical Policy but the Dutch colonial enterprise in general, following Mark Neocleous (2014), is simultaneously a capitalist mode for waging a "*secret war*" on waste —"wasted land, wasted labor and wasted time", which were

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[28]The Adat is understood as the Indonesian and Malaysian traditional cultural systems, which involve a range of sociocultural practices and customary laws (civil, criminal, constitutional, and so on). It is worth noting, however, that according to David Bourchier (2007, p. 113), the Adat is an "idiom mobilized by many different groups for many different purposes", which is true for both Indonesian nationalists seeking independence and colonial administrators attempting to justify colonial rule.

mobilized under the rubric of property, propriety and order (Ibid, p. 67-68). Thus, the "*façade*" of the Ethical Policy (Breman, 2023) was (re)produced through the visual-discursive logic of "improvement": the improvement of the colonial territory through the cultivation of land, the construction of railroads, the mining of natural resources, the encouragement of Javanese and Hindustani smallholding (in the West Indies); the improvement of the native and "mixed-blood" population to the Dutch model of citizenship; the improvement of safety and order through the neutralization of dissident anti-colonial behavior that would not conform with the maintenance of the Dutch fantasy of nationhood. At the same time, this was entangled with an institutional and political war against the "domestic waste" (Neocleous, 2014, p. 69) of the Netherlands — modes of intimate surveillance of the so-called "inadmissible families" (Van Wel, 1992).

As Adrianne Dercksen and Loes Verplanke (1987, p. 11) note, since the mid-1850s, about sixty or seventy percent of the urban population of the Netherlands was poor or financially insecure — wages were low and class mobility was nearly impossible. Poor relief was considered the moral responsibility of churches and private institutions and not of the State, which allowed for the narrative that poverty was a natural condition prescribed by God or by the subject's fault instead of sociopolitical inequalities caused by State policies. Within this landscape, the government began deploying a few policies directed to the needy, which were centered around the need for improvement of the living conditions of the population (housing, education and labor legislation) (ibid, p. 13). The *home space* and the *family* took center stage in discussions of improvement. In 1889, the Government introduced the Labor Act and restricted the labor of women and children, which would be echoed in the Ethical Policy a few years later (ibid, p. 14).

The deployment of such policies was based on assessments of the families' behavior as a way to determine if their marginalization was caused by inherent and unredeemable traits, or if they could be reeducated and rehabilitated. According to Frits Van Wel (1992, p. 149), a rapport conducted by the Dutch Institute for Public Housing and Urban Development (*Nederlandsch Instituut voor Volkshuisvesting en Stadebouw*) in 1932 compiled four categories of abnormality in families: first, families considered "economically weak" and incapable of paying rent; second, families considered "socially weak", neglectful of their living space (including their neighborhoods) and who caused public disturbances; third, families considered "antisocial", not only disturbing peace but also unhygienic; fourth, families who were considered "hopeless and unsuitable" for rehabilitation, who were also targets of police surveillance. As a govern-

mental measure to sort out deserving from undeserving poor (Shilliam, 2018), families considered suitable were placed in temporary "residential schools" — which consisted of resocialization and re-education camps with several houses, public services (such as baths and laundry rooms) and supervision checkpoints (Van Wel, 1992, p. 149) (Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7: Entrance of Zeeburgerdorp, the plaque reads "temporary home for families" (1934), Amsterdam City Archives

What I want to showcase with these scenes is how, both in policies deployed in the colonies and in the metropole, the language of "*improvement*", "*betterment*", "*uplifting*" was a secretive narrative (attempting, but failing to) obscuring an imperial civilizing mission to assimilate and rehabilitate unwanted subjects into the mold (re)produced by the fantasy of Dutch nationhood. In the context of the construction of temporary homes for needy families in the Netherlands, the threat of pauperism was entangled with processes of racialization, whereby poor families were seen as akin to colonized subjects — they had become lazy, immoral, unrestrained and unproductive, which all are characteristics historically attributed to racialized people in the colonies that, now possessed by white people, appeared to disturb the national fantasy of wholeness from within. In other words, they became another *racial social group* in opposition to the desired Dutch archetype. These "rehabilitation camps" became biopolitical enclosures where unwanted subjects could be hidden from the gaze of the bourgeoisie, politically managed, and incessantly policed. In other words, they were also subjected to an economy of punishment whereby

unwanted behavior could result in eviction (Dercksen;Verplanke 1987, p. 17-18). Likewise, these families were the target of public scrutiny and stigma, the object of study of eugenicists and psychiatrists, and infantilized as children in need of guidance.

Much like newspapers in Paramaribo and Batavia continuously reported the necessity of *home improvement* as a mode to enable the performance of *Dutchness*, intimacy was fundamental for such endeavor. Women, in particular, were seen as the "paragons of morality" and tasked with learning how to be proper wives and mothers — poor relief, therefore, involved not only the financial and material assistance of families not positively affected by industrialization, but the education of women into "proper females": caring for their children, for their husbands, for the home space, being socially organized and serviceable, much like the narrative deployed for native and (mixed) European women in the colonies.

3.2.2
(De)Generative fantasies: race, sex and death

According to Ann Laura Stoler (2010), the intensification of the displacement of European women to the colonies (particularly the East Indies) in the 20th-century resulted in a "tightening" of racial boundaries that were previously routinely crossed by European men. She argues how the arrival of European women in the colonies brought forth new entanglements of race and class in the Intimate Public Sphere, which animated colonial attempts at (re)producing the fantasy of Dutchness through discourses based on the protection of European women that simultaneously undermined and over-emphasized their participation in the empire-building effort. That is, while the paternalistic nature of the *familial state* (Adams, 2005) confined European women to the home space and considered them more prone to sexual immorality than men, these women were still considered fundamental for the empire-building effort and had to be protected from tropical illnesses and the sexual advances from native men. The question, therefore, is not whether these women themselves were more outwardly racist than their male counterparts, but how discourses centered around their *quotidian encounters with difference* led to renewed attempts to secure the national fantasy.

The Netherlands was not the only colonial government to champion the protection of white women — particularly from sexual assault — at the top of their political agendas. As Anamaria Marcon Venson and Joana Maria Pedro (2013, p. 63) argue, together with the economic impetus to abolish slavery,

"there was also concern about the trafficking of white women for prostitution". The discourses surrounding the trafficking of white women, according to the authors, "in addition to bringing with it latent racism, was based on a commitment to protect the ideal of feminine purity" (ibid). Thus, the "white slave panic" (Blackemore, 2021; Vries, 2005; Doezema, 1999; Grittner, 1990; Guy, 1992) resulted in an array of international conventions, those of which the Netherlands was a signatory: such as the International Convention for the Suppression of the "White Slave Traffic" (Paris, 1910; 1949); the International Convention for the Suppression of Trafficking in Women and Children (Geneva, 1921, 1947); and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women of Full Age (Geneva, 1933) (Doezema, 1999; Castilho, 2014).

These conventions and other local colonial policies and discourses deployed under the guise of protecting European women in multi-ethnic spaces were inscribed within practices of secrecy — through the narrative of securing women's rights and safety, these colonial authorities *managed* female migration, female sexuality and, most importantly, attempted to secure the perpetuity of the *white national identity* (Grittner, 1990, p. 130). That is, by making white women sexual victims *par excellence* and simultaneously constructing racialized men as the ultimate perpetrators of sexual violence, these narratives were centered on two accounts: (1) the foreclosure of modes of sexual violence practiced by white men against their spouses and racialized women; (2) the conflation between prostitution and sexual migration with slavery, sexual trafficking and coercion.[29]

These administrative practices were inscribed in what Anne McClintock (1995, p. 43) calls "degeneration trope": the colonial networks between racial and gendered narratives of degeneration functioned as a mode of "social domination", where the dialectic relation between "the domestication of the colonies and the racializing of the metropole" supported various colonial visual-

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[29]I have discussed the relationship between prostitution, female sexual migration and gender oppression as part of my Undergraduate paper on legislation and political discourses and practices surrounding Dutch Window prostitution (1983-2012) for my bachelor's degree in International Relation in the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). The second point I mentioned, in particular, is part of a long-standing debate between abolitionists/regulationists of sex work, as well as feminists from diverse epistemic lineages, that provide distinct modes of "locating" the crux of female oppression. On the one hand, the conflation between prostitution and sexual trafficking prescribes gendered forms of oppression whereby any form of sex work is understood as sexual domination under capitalism since women would never voluntarily perform sex work (and consequently, all forms of sexual exchange in prostitution would consider the - male - clients perpetrators of sexual violence) (Outshoorn, 2005; Jeffreys, 1999; Pateman, 1988). On the other hand, regulationists argue for an understanding of sex work that does not immediately view it as inherently oppressive and pathologizing (of both sex workers and clients) but attempts to mitigate the conditions under which these women may suffer violence and coercion (Outshoorn, 2005; Venson; Pedro, 2013).

Figure 3.8: Photograph of European women and Chinese men exchanging payment (c. 1909), Leiden University Libraries Digital Collections.

discursive constructions of deviancy, immorality, antisociality, criminality and so on. I have discussed a few scenes in which racial deviancy was inscribed within the colonial fabric of empire in the previous section. In this section, I would like to briefly discuss secretive practices in the context of the Intimate Public Sphere concerning the connections between health politics, racial contamination and sexual degeneracy. The "degeneration trope" was further supported by evolutionary theories of social development — the narrative of the "Family of Man" — and of scientific racism (Locher-Scholten, 2000; McClintock, 1995, Stoler, 2010). The fear of contamination animated much of colonial policy and discourse at the end of the 19th-century and the beginning of the 20th-century and was intensified with the displacement of European women to the colonies — the economy of punishment for interracial/inter-ethnic relationships underscored the policing of female sexuality and the securement of whiteness. While there had been discussions of the modes in which concubinage and interracial relationships caused European men in the tropics to "go native" (Besser, 2003; Bischoff, 2013) it was nowhere as severe as the threat of disruption of racial boundaries through the perceived violation of European women's bodies. As McClintock puts it:

> Controlling women's sexuality, exalting maternity and breeding a virile race of empire-builders were widely perceived as the paramount means for controlling the health and wealth of the male imperial body politic, so that, by the turn of the century, sexual purity emerged as a controlling metaphor for racial, economic and political power (ibid, 1995, p. 47).

The rituals of everyday colonial encounters encompassed not only a (re)production of Dutchness — through clothing, food, customs, language and so on —, but also an incessant policing of the Lady of the House. The fear of racial and cultural contamination haunted the colonial encounter. The seemingly omnipresent gaze of the colonial authority witnessed every interaction and, at the same time, disposed of every possible evidence of scenes of Dutch "racial betrayal" (Rose; Heijmans, 2021) in which white women had sexual relationships with racialized men. While Rose and Heijmans (2021) have found judicial records in which Indo-European women were punished for adultery against their European husbands with racialized men, I have not encountered a single image that might provide us with such a visual.[30]

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[30]I searched the following digital databases: the KITLV (Southeast Asian & Caribbean Images) part of the archive of Leiden University; the National Archive of the Netherlands; the photographic archive of the Rijksmuseum; the National Museum of World Cultures

Instead, I bring forth a scene of a European woman paying a Chinese man in what appears to be the gallery of her house. What could they have said to each other? Did her gaze linger on him for way too long? Did his linger on her? Perhaps a neighbor noticed his recurring visits and made note that they happened only when her husband was away. Maybe the townsfolk gossiped about the lewdness in which her hand reached for him as she gave him his payment. For some colonial officials reporting back to the Ministry of the Colonies and seeking evidence of practices of "clandestine conversations" that presented a threat to the colonial authority, the scene could have shown enough (Figure 3.8).

The fear of racial and sexual contamination, therefore, pressed against the body of the Lady of the house and demanded of her self-vigilance in everyday interactions with both racialized men and women — whereas racialized men were alleged perpetrators of sexual assault, racialized women could guide the younger generation of white women living in the colonies into immorality. In other words, these racial and sexual colonial dynamics brought forth new modes for the management of social interactions, new social spaces for the enactment of the Dutch cultural identity through intensified practices of segregation in the Intimate Public Sphere (such as the creation of social clubs, white societies, events for white people only) and, finally, new rituals attempting to fix the stereotype. In this context, an obsession with cleanliness and hygiene underlined much of the content of colonial manuals and household magazines consumed by European women (both in and outside the colonies) — painstaking and extraneous detail about the cleaning and boiling of vegetables; the duration of the preparation of children's food; how to best allow ventilation in the house to prevent dirtiness; the local knowledge of plants and medicine as a way to prevent illnesses and so on (De huisvrouw, 1878). Underlying these seemingly inconsequential female household routines was the fantasy of Dutch morality and purity. As the "hygiene" section in the household magazine *De huisvrouw* states:

Foundation (*Stichting Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen*); the National Museum of Indonesia (*Museum Nasional Indonesia*); the National Archive of Suriname; the Rivierenland Regional Archives (*Regionaal Archief Rivierenland*). Multiple factors could have caused me to not find any images: (1) the combination of keywords I was using; (2) the unavailability of digital records due to their accessibility solely in-person; (3) the organization of the archives that make it difficult to navigate. Likewise, there are many records that were not available to me for being confidential/copyrighted, which was a particularly fitting outcome considering the theme of this chapter.

> Thousands of millions die, or are summoned too early for the punishment of nature, because they have committed crimes and sinned against the inexorable laws of nature, which are not to be trifled with. Industriousness, temperance, abstinence and self-control are the themes which one must always practice if one wants to live long and happily; every violation of this is reduced with age, and this is the only true cause of the fact that most people die so early (ibid, 1878, p. 2).

The colonial discourse assigned the position of the European wife as the Lady of the House in opposition to the inferior and degenerate races of her husband's "brown brothers" and the poverty of other unproductive and negligent whites who did not practice "industriousness, temperance, abstinence and self-control" (ibid). These household practices of hygiene, therefore, highlight the entanglements between the notions of *house cleaning* and *racial purity*: in the Intimate Public Sphere, the securement of *family home* was fundamental for the establishment of the *Dutch residence* (as in the territory composing the Dutch possessions). In other words, the role of the European woman as the Lady of the House was one of the manifestations of the conflation of familial prosperity with national fortune (Berlant, 1997, p. 4).

As both Ann Laura Stoler (2010) and Elsbeth Locher-Scholten (2000) note, however, the attempts deployed by the Ethical Policy of securing colonial development through the restriction of women to the home space and the construction of the husband as the sole breadwinner of the home did not take much effect outside urban and elite spaces. For example, looking at everyday scenes in rural Indonesia, Locher-Scholten (2000) remarks how native women continued to work both daily and nightly shifts in plantations, which was justified by colonial administrators as being a fundamental to the cultural practice of Adat. Underlying such discourse was not a will to preserve Indonesian cultural customs, but an Orientalism that saw Indonesian women as wholly different from their European counterparts (who were deemed ill-suited to work) and, simultaneously, attempted to economically benefit from more labor force (ibid, p. 51). Likewise, Rosemarijn Hoefte (2014, p. 17) notes how lower-class creole women in Suriname, despite colonial policies assigning the role of women at home, composed families who could not afford to not have all of its members working. Additionally, the immigration of Hindustani and Javanese communities to Suriname was supported by a notion of "work as a family enterprise," in which women in these families would contribute to the agricultural activities in their family smallholding (ibid, p. 17-18). Similarly,

the legislations attempting to manage marriages — such as the bill on voluntary monogamy of 1937 in Indonesia and Surinamese marriage laws for both Javanese and Hindustani immigrants — were centered around attempts at assimilating racialized families to the Dutch Christian archetype, particularly through the centrality of the Western nuclear family model. In Suriname, while religious Muslim and Hindu unions came to be legally recognized in 1937 (as they were not accepted before and children born from them were considered illegitimate), "polygamy and child-marriage" remained illegal (Hoefte, 2014, p. 65). In Indonesia, similar marriage laws were directed mostly at native and mixed elites and were met with severe protests (Locher-Scholten, 2000, p. 176).

Much like the inefficacy of these policies in managing the colonial lower-classes, metropolitan management of female sexuality and displacement as a mode to "clean" the urban cities from immorality was also met with quotidian pushback. An administrative discourse of hygiene was not only deployed in the context of "antisocial families," but also against urban prostitution. As I mentioned in the last chapter, the connection between race and degeneration was particularly poignant with regard to white prostitutes, who were seen through racialized "scopic regimes" (Copeland, 2010) of criminality and pathology (Gilman, 2010). The history of administrative practices and legislative discourses on Dutch prostitution has been composed of successive discussions about the regulation and the abolition of sex work, which recognized the advent of prostitution as a "necessary evil" but still deployed legislations to ban brothels and criminalize/prohibit prostitution (Outshoorn, 2005; Doezema, 1995; Doezema, 1998). These women were seen through the voyeuristic gaze of sexual degeneracy not only for contesting the social and religious norms of pre-marital chastity and disrupting the sanctity of marital sex, but also for tempting married men to be adulterous. Again, much like the politics of female respectability in the colonies, metropolitan policies banning prostitution were asymmetrically enforced — which results in authors claiming prostitution in the metropole, whilst being legally banned, remained openly practiced and was informally tolerated and regulated (Aalbers; Deinema, 2012).

In this context, the social routines of female sexual deviancy through prostitution provide us with ambivalent scenes in the Intimate Public Sphere. The injunction of the "white slave panic", its subsequent international policies, and the Dutch ban on brothels and street prostitution in 1911 brought forth new secretive practices of female deviancy. As a response to the illegalization of brothels and street prostitution, sex workers "tainted" their own homes by transforming them into what Linda McDowell (2009, p. 102) calls "liminal spaces": "on the edge of legality and in transitional spaces that move between

Figure 3.9: Interior of prostitution room, 1908, Amsterdam City Archives

being places of work and public spaces". I would add that these spaces were also at the interstices between notions of *privacy* and *publicness*. As Ronald Weizer (2012, p. 147) notes, "[i]n the area that is now the main Red-Light District, some women began sitting behind curtained windows, fully clothed and using mirrors to see approaching men, who were then alerted with hand signals and window tapping". In other words, these women articulated secrecy as a mode to administer the accessibility to their intimate spaces and practices — the scene of opening and closing the window to allow for particular gazes to view her and prevent unwanted modes of seeing is one such example. Furthermore, clients tapping on the glass, opening and closing of the window to allow or prevent her from being watched also signals a practice of secrecy whereby information about the interior of the room as a space for sex work (and her position as a sex worker) is asymmetrically disseminated. Weitzer (ibid) further claims that, overtime, such practices evolved to opened curtains and "soliciting became much less clandestine" (Figure 3.9).

The ambivalence of such secretive codes surrounding sexual deviancy (both through the administrative banning of prostitution and its counter-practices deployed by sex workers and clients) construct white women as prey to (often racialized) white slave traffickers and, simultaneously, as immoral subjects guilty of threatening the maintenance of the Dutch national fantasy by luring married men into committing adultery and promoting non-patriotic sex. At the same time that female sexual deviancy in the Netherlands was

being regulated through institutional and social practices of disavowal centered around such modes of (un)knowing and (un)seeing certain manifestations of transgressive sexual behavior, sex work in the colonies was entangled with other secretive colonial practices. For example, Mariëlle Kleijn and Marlou Schrover (2013) reveal the contradictions within the Dutch administrative stance surrounding prostitution by arguing that the microscopic attention to white women as victims of sexual assault and coercion occluded how racialized women in the colonies were being State-sponsored into becoming prostitutes to satisfy European sailors. The authors analyze the discourses surrounding the construction and maintenance of *Campo Alegre* in Curaçao (1949), the biggest open-air brothel in the Caribbean. The justification for the creation and maintenance of the brothel manifested in several ways: it was a mode for regulating prostitution on the island, preventing sexual assault and other local forms of prostitution; the economic development of the island dependent on the success of the oil industry and its employees were avid clients of prostitution; it was marked by military presence during the Cold War, and its personnel also consumed the services of the brothel (ibid).

The brothel was composed mainly of foreign sex workers from the surrounding countries and was regulated through registration policies and constant medical check-ups. Since the brothel was not registered as such and the prostitutes lived in the premises and paid rent, it was seen as an institution *hidden in plain sight.* In other words, another mode of secretive politics is at play here: unlike in the metropole, the Dutch authorities encouraged and financed the creation of the brothel and later attempted to distance themselves from such practices; likewise, while in the metropole white "degenerate" women used secretive practices surrounding prostitution as a mode of opposing the administrative legislations criminalizing sex work, the visual modes of hypersexualization of racialized women in the Caribbean and South America tethered them to unrecognized coercive modes of sexual exploitation. Such regulating policies, although remained unspoken in the context of Dutch parliamentary discussions about the legalization of sex work in the Netherlands (1983-2000), would actually inform much of the policies deployed in the metropole — such as sex worker registration, health checkups and so on (Outshoorn, 2012).

3.2.3
Home invasions

In the present final subsection, I would like to briefly situate the relation between the development of administrative modes of surveillance and improvement of pauper families in the Netherlands and the role of the Lady of the house in the colony as instances in which middle-class European and Indo-European women acted as *secret overseers of empire* in their daily interactions with poor and colonized women. In the previous subsection I laid out arguments about the various forms European women were being "acted upon" (McClintock, 1995) by the demands of the Dutch fantasy — here I wish to highlight how they were also *actors* in their own right, as well as the production of counter-knowledge from their surveilled subjects.

The role of the European woman as the Lady of the house signified not only the maintenance of the Dutch fantasy of nationhood through housework and motherhood, but also through their role as *social workers* in their communities and homes. The package of policies for the improvement of pauper families in the metropole was combined with the employment of middle-class women as social workers tasked with monitoring and evaluating the evolution of antisociality into proper citizenship. These young and moral ladies received training in specialized educational facilities such as the Training Institute for Social Work (*Opleidingsinrichting voor Socialen-Arbeid*) — later changed to School for Social Work (*School voor Maatschappelijk Werk*) — where they would be taught poor relief, child protection, housing work, community and youth work and supervisory work in factories and workshops (Canon Sociaal Werk Nederland, n/d). The ladies employed to perform supervisory work in the temporary homes for pauper families would be responsible for selecting the redeemable from the *irredeemable* families to live in the houses; collect the rent and monitor the behavior of the residents (Dercksen;Verplanke, 1987). In addition to scheduled home visits, the weekly collection of rent gave these ladies regular access to the families' home life — which "was the most important aspect of their work" (ibid., p. 17). That is, these ladies were responsible for observing and intervening in the intimate practices that were seen as at odds with the Dutch citizen archetype. Such modes of surveillance, therefore, took into consideration not only if the daily chores of the home were being properly performed (cleaning and cooking), but if the *interactions* of the family members with each other (such as the separation of the children's bedroom space according to gender, the division of rooms) also followed rules of propriety (ibid).

Figure 3.10: Zeeburgerdorp. House supervisor Mrs. Schuurman with children of the residents, 1927, Amsterdam City Archives.

It was also the responsibility of these "ladies of good standing" to "gain the trust of [their] tenants [in order to] gradually expand [their] influence" (ibid, p. 16-17). In other words, these women were tasked with disseminating and disciplining subjects into the Dutch national fantasy model of citizenship. Certainly, these needy families who were the targets of the imperial-building effort inside the metropole did not overwhelmingly agree with such modes of surveillance and evaluation. In fact, much like the case for the Ethical Policy in the Indies, these policies of poor relief did not take the desired effect, since only a small parcel of the families targeted was positively affected and managed to remain as tenants and improve their material conditions (ibid).

For women migrating to the colonies, the position of Ladies of the house as social workers meant the policing of racial boundaries crossed by their husbands in their daily interactions with racialized women, as well as the enforcement of colonial authority through the maintenance of the stereotype in quotidian encounters with the difference of the Other who worked in her home. In this context, colonial household handbooks such as *Ons Huis in Indië* (Our House in the Indies) written by J.M.J. Catenius-van der Meijden (1908) and targeted to other newly-appointed Ladies of the house of European enclaves in the Indies, functioned as discursive vehicles for both the (re)production of colonial regimes of truth through the dissemination of secrecy and the maintenance of the Dutch fantasy of nationhood. On the one hand, such

household manuals provided European wives with *specialized knowledge* about life in the colonies and how to navigate everyday colonial encounters: these manuals involved not only detailed information about forms of self-discipline, but also a guide on how to *master* the (re)production of racial and gendered forms of difference-making in the home space.

For example, in Van der Meijden's (1908) household manual, we find entire sections on how to properly interact with the native population: we learn that the best way to choose servants is from word of mouth from other townsfolk and previous employers, as the native population did not usually advertise in newspapers (ibid, p. 145); we learn that a proper and respectable Dutch household in the Indies should have at least seven servants, including a cook (*kokki*), a male gardener (*kebon*), a houseboy (*jongos* or *sepen*), a housemand or nursemaid (*babu*), a seamstress (*sahit*) and a coachman (Locher-Scholten, 2000, p. 89-90). More profoundly, Van der Meijden (1908) tells us about the ways in which boundaries between the European family and the native servants should be carefully and delicately drawn from the interplay between proximity and distance, familiarity and strangeness, gentleness and sternness:

> In acts and omissions, in words and gestures, one always remained the calm superior, the higher person, to whom the servants looked up to. One is brief in one's orders, but does not scold a servant. Temper always harms, but especially the mistress herself, who cannot control her senses because of excitement. And yet, with the phlegmatic natives, it achieves nothing.
>
> A soft word, spoken in a friendly tone, works much more on the mind, also with the natives, than anger and rage. Swearing and insulting disfigure the mistress and leave a grudge with the servants to whom they were addressed. Hitting, hand-touching are never forgiven and many an illness, followed by leaving for and dying in Europe, has been the result.
>
> [...] One never forgets that a good word always finds a good place, even with those less civilized creatures, who are affectionate enough, if only one treats them accordingly (ibid, p. 141)

The *secretive schemes* practiced by the Lady of the house through her position an overseer of empire were inscribed in visual-discursive modes of colonial representation, enacted through "forced and uncomfortable encoun-

ters" (Furtado, 2021) with both the difference and similarity of the Other. The fantasy of nationhood was (re)produced in these colonial manuals and its subsequent construction of citizenship based on the "Dutch archetype" — such manuals produced imaginings in which the Lady of the house strategically utilized her Dutchness (restraint, morality, industriousness) as a mode for exerting colonial authority over the native subjects in her care while, simultaneously, subtly maneuvering their "simple-mindedness" and affections in her favor. The notion of European women gently exerting authority in the home space was further supported through the logic of improvement — by being tasked with choosing and recommending native employees to work in the homes of her neighbors in European enclaves, she was responsible for sorting out the good from the bad, the *simple-minded children* from the *corrupted devils*. Like her civil-servant husband, who worked for the improvement of the colony (*the Dutch residence*), she was to work towards the development of the servants employed in her *home space* into quiet, diligent and docile people. She was to make of her maids into "helpful *Koessar*[31] who walk[ed] quietly around [her] and show[ed] all sorts of small attentions to make it easy for [her], entirely on [their] own" (ibid, p. 140). She was to make of her cook an active worker who "[w]ith a few words from her mistress, [...] already kn[ew] enough to know what [was] expected of her and industriously prepare[d] an Indian table as well as a perfect European table, which [was] not inferior to the best dishes from our European hotels." (ibid, p. 141). Finally, she was to make of her nanny a subject with great devotion for the lady's children:

> Where has ever been seen greater devotion than from the babu to the child entrusted to her? Who, after Mama, knows how to comfort the little ones better than the old baboo? All day long, she carries the child entrusted to her; nothing is too much for her. From early in the morning until going to bed in the evening she is with the child, and afterward she rests on her mat (tikar) in front of the bed like a dog. She guards, as it were, the breathing of the child (ibid, p. 141, my emphasis).

The secretive rituals of the Lady of the house, therefore, were inscribed in the proliferation of colonial practices of surveillance and control through the visual-discursive grammar of improvement and, more specifically, through the attempt at maintaining *intimacy* at a distance. That is, the Lady was to guide her servants into progress without revealing too much of herself —

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[31]"Koessar" appears to be a term used in the context of Dutch colonialism in the East Indies to refer to a native maid/servant.

caution was to be the guiding principle of every interaction. Van der Meijden (1908, p. 140) warns her fellow ladies of the house of the dangers of "[being] too intimate with the servants, especially [...] with the *babus* or with the body-maid. While it is not good in Holland if one is too familiar or intimate with the maid, in the Indies this is even more frowned upon. The respect is quickly lost as a result". In other words, underlying such forms of difference-making is an attempt at pursuing the Dutch national fantasy of integrity, whilst knowing (but not entirely acknowledging) the presence of the Other continuously signals its impossibility — that is, the servants had to be put in their place because, while they were composed of a "race of children" (De Surinamer: nieuws-en advertentieblad, Oct 24, 1915), they were also cunning, dangerous and deviant. As Van der Meijden (1908, p. 139) cautions, "[s]ervants who have been employed for a long time quickly know the weaknesses of their masters"; particularly, if their master is unmarried or out of home often, the servants only "seemingly take care of the house, of [their] master's business, while from time to time, after [they have] studied his '*toewan*'[32] well, know all his corridors, know his doings, as well as his hours of coming home and staying at home" (ibid, p. 139-140).

More profoundly, the nannies or nursemaids of the Dutch East and West Indies, while deemed a fundamental part of the crew of domestic servants of Dutch colonial middle-class families, still posed a great threat to the achievement of the fantasy of wholeness of the Lady of the house — for example, Van der Meijden (1908, p. 141) herself warns "every mother should be careful, because those good souls spoil the little ones". Female household magazines and colonial newspapers alike echo such sentiments: the affections from the nanny were commendable, but there were certain tasks that could only be performed by the *real mother* of the children. Here, the fear of biological and cultural contamination intertwine (the notions of *house cleaning* and *racial purity* I mentioned in the previous section) — the Lady of the house should not allow the maid to give the children "too many kisses" (De huisvrow, 1878, p. 115) as not to spread any illnesses and, likewise, should be cautious when entrusting the children to servants because they "are naturally less educated people" who can "systematically destroy everything that has been carefully sown in the child's mind and has already begun to germinate" (ibid, p. 62).

Such colonial fears represented by the Other are an obstacle to the completion of the fantasy — they are inscribed onto what Moran M. Mandelbaum (2020) through the work of Jacques Lacan, calls *fantasy2*. That is, if *fantasy1*

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[32]"Toewan"or "toean" is a term used in the context of colonial Dutch East Indies to refer to the European (male) master.

is the promise of wholeness and integrity the Dutch nationhood has to offer, *fantasy2* serves as a mode of justification as to why such integrity has not yet been achieved. The obstacles the Lady of the house must maneuver in her quotidian attempts at improving the Indies and helping her servants reach development are personified by the natives' inherent idleness, mischief, narrow-mindedness, foolishness and lack of proper education. In other words, the position of the Lady of the house as a secret overseer of empire in the confines of her home was precariously dependent on a state apparatus that was, itself, supported by a fantasy of national success constantly threatened to be unmade. In this context, the work of Brazilian scholar Lelia González (1984) offers a counterpoint to the ways in which the Lady of the house pursued the fantasy of Dutch nationhood through everyday forms of secrecy.

As I discussed through the work of Patricia Hill Collins (1986), racialized colonized women working in European homes were well aware of such imperial tactics and exercised their own forms of producing/acquiring knowledge. What both González (1984) and Collins (1986) discuss is how the nanny and/or nursemaid, in particular, deployed oppositional forms of subjectivity through the caretaking labor she performed to the master's children. That is, despite attempts made by Lady of the house to prove that she was *the real mother of the children,* the primary caregiver remained the racialized woman — despite colonial attempts at enacting and fixing racial boundaries to prevent "contamination", these women continued to secretly disseminate their cultural modes of belonging to European children. Similarly to what Lelia González (1984, p. 235) says of the black mother (*mãe preta*) that raised white children in colonial Brazil, I argue about such Dutch colonial experiences: "the white woman, the so-called legitimate wife, is precisely the other who, impossible as it may seem, only serves to give birth to the master's children. She does not perform the maternal function. This is carried out by the black woman. That's why the 'black mother' is the mother."

Likewise, as Hill Collins (1986, p. 14n2) discusses, "Black women's sense of affirmation at knowing that they were better mothers than their employers, and that they frequently had to teach their employers the basics about children and interaction in general". That is to say, the ways these women negotiated secrecy was not only through gaining knowledge about the intimacies of the European family life, but through the production of specialized knowledge not even their mistresses had: which was true not only for caretaking, but also teaching the mistresses the native language and culture, providing them with herbal knowledge and mediating their interactions with the local population outside their enclaves.

Likewise, we can interpret the perceived practices of *obstruction of the achievement of the Dutch fantasy* performed by racialized servants in general as what James C. Scott (2008, p. 29) calls forms of "peasant resistance" — we can apply his argument in the context of quotidian colonial struggles of (un)seeing and (un)knowing that underscore modes of colonial representation of both Self and Other as marked by "prosaic but constant struggle between the peasantry and those who seek to extract labor, food, taxes, rents, and interest from them". Which, according to Scott (ibid), involves "the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so forth." In other words, secrecy is also inscribed in modes of resistance that are outside the grammar of the spectacle — if one's primary notion of resistance is that of large-scale organized rebellion — and are, instead, part of ambivalent forms of identification in which the colonized is both subject and subjected of/to power. In other words, such daily, silent, prolonged and gradual struggles, provide modes of contestation in which the colonized strategically produce counter-forms of knowledge about their masters through secrecy — "petty acts of insubordination, passive noncompliance, subtle sabotage, evasion, and deception" (ibid, p. 31) – that continuously disrupt the achievement of the imperial fantasy of nationhood without, however, outright challenging the colonial administration.

Figure 3.11: Portrait of an Afro-Surinamese Nanny with Two European Children, Augusta Curiel, 1906, Rijksmuseum.

Figure 3.12: Portrait of Indonesian babu with three European children, unknown author (c. 1905), Leiden University Libraries Digital Collections.

4
At the threshold of abjection

> But very often (too often, to my taste) I have been photographed and knew it. Now, once I feel myself observed by the lens, everything changes: I constitute myself in the process of "posing:" I instantaneously make another body for myself, I transform myself in advance into an image. This transformation is an active one: I feel that the Photograph creates my body or mortifies it, according to its caprice — Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida, Reflections on Photography.*

> Being haunted draws us affectively, sometimes against our will and always a bit magically, into the structure of feeling of a reality we come to experience, not as cold knowledge, but as a transformative recognition. — Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination.*

Haunting, according to Avery Gordon (2008, p. 7) is a "constituent element of modern social life". Haunting is the language she invokes to describe the experiences of being routinely "affectively drawn" into systems of power that are "supposedly over and done with" (like slavery), but continue to make themselves known in the present (ibid, p. xvi). When I was born, friends and family visited me and my mother in the hospital. One of my mother's long-time friends jokingly said she was thankful for the lightness of my skin compared to the rest of the family — "*thank god she looks white,*" was what she might have said. Perhaps the room went silent, perhaps nobody paid any mind. Still, that marked my first day on earth. Before I was even able to form words, my hand was already being forcibly grasped — I was dragged across the room and had my body pushed to "the edge of things" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 40) so I could be pulled to look out into the Window to the "place of the enslaved" (Carneiro, 2023). It was as if, at the moment of my birth, I was presented with a mirror, and forced to look at myself from the outside. It was as if I was transported to a place where the division between past, present and future was amiss. I was brought to a world haunted by the "hold of slavery", in which "temporal entanglement best articulat[ed] the still open question of abolition

and the long-awaited but not yet actualized freedom declared over a century ago" (Hartman, 2022b, p. xxix). It was as if, like Modesto Brocos y Gómez foreshadowed, the day of my birth signaled the redemption of my mother for the miracle of miscegenation.[1]

I would grow up to hear time and time again that my body could be skillfully shaped to emulate whiteness. From an early age, I was to routinely perform "amputations" and "excisions" of my own body to shape it into someone else's likeness (Fanon, 2008 [1952]), p. 85). I was to "expunge" the abject in order "to become social" (McClintock, 1995, p. 71). One of the ways I negotiated this position, attending a small and predominantly white private institution during middle school, was by *excelling at education.* To heal centuries of historical hurt, to circumscribe the injury and transform the open wound into a scar, I committed myself to be rearranged (in terms of my body and the physical space it occupied) by mechanisms of power centered around the (re)production of white dominant social norms. As Jurandir Freire Costa (1983, p. 11-12) puts it in the preface of Neuza Santos Souza's "*Becoming Black: The Vicissitudes of Black Brazilian Identity in Social Rise*": "[t]he combination of certain hygiene rules with certain intellectual manifestations, combines with housing conditions and the miscegenation of physical traits, to define a contour of conduct and physical-moral postures, seen as indices of whiteness". The punishing gaze of my peers — their mocking of my features, their comments about my hair — could not override the praise of my teachers. I learned how to read and write long before any of my classmates; I attended English schools and was fluent as a child; I won student awards and was recognized for my intelligence. All things systematically denied to my ancestors.

For many black families, education holds not only the promise of class mobility but that of *respectability* (Collins, 2004; Du Bois, 2019 [1903]) — beyond the acquisition of knowledge, education promises a process of *humanization*, being recognized as a subject *of* knowledge. Access (or lack thereof) to education is underlined by "the elision of person and place" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 52), whereby educated bodies are incorporated to ordinate spaces and considered contributing members of society. Education leads to better jobs, better living arrangements, and the possibility of planning for the future. Education promises an escape from the life of the plantation, from

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[1]I am referring to the painting "Ham's Redemption" (1895), which portrays three generations of a family, the grandmother, the mother and the child. The grandmother says a thankful prayer, because the generational curse of blackness was broken due to the lightness of the child's skin because of the white father. The painting can be viewed at: https://enciclopedia.itaucultural.org.br/obra3281/a-redencao-de-cam

the ghetto, from the streets, from the prison. For my family, then, the lack of access to proper education was *a generational plight* that was seen to be broken when my mother became the first of us to finish basic school. Through her, the family could experience a series of firsts: after basic school, she was the first one to finish high school; the first one to go to college; the first one to get a job that did not entail underpaid manual labor; the first one to travel to another state in Brazil and the first one to visit another country.

My success rested upon the shoulders of my mother, who had to suffer being the precursor in navigating predominately white spaces as a black woman in Brazil — long before my birth, my mother had her body routinely "educated" into dominant norms of propriety to generate conditions of possibility so that I could thrive. Such a notion followed me wherever I went. I carried the weight of the success of my mother and the apparent failures of the ones that came before us. Likewise, my victories were not only shared generational feats, but were hinged in all the struggles of the ones who came before me — the "Black Exodus" that marked my family's displacement from *Morro da Mangueira* in Rio de Janeiro, to the countryside of the state of São Paulo, to the outskirts of the urban areas of the city, then to the metropolitan region of São Paulo. These displacements carried the stories of encounters with racial violence in Brazil: the 16 children of my great-grandmother, many of whom she had to bury one after another during an outbreak of meningitis in the 1930s; family members who became statistics of crime and police violence, like the great-aunt that I never got to meet, who was killed by a stray bullet during police action.

Needless to say, my mother was always deeply concerned about my education. As I continued to move upward into the next stages of higher education, my interest in the study of both contemporary and colonial Netherlands intensified. When I got accepted into the Graduate Program of International Relations at Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (IRI Puc-Rio), my mother suggested selling the family car so that I could travel to the Netherlands to conduct my research if I did not receive institutional financial support. The vignettes I offer in the beginning of every chapter are a result of these generational struggles, which, bittersweetly, have made it possible that I could experience with my mother a short journey to the Netherlands and share with her the evolution of my research.

When the archive is not merely a site of *excavation* but a place of *encounter* (Inayatullah, 2022), the separation between the researcher and the subjects and objects of study becomes hard to place — the archival document may be seen, in general terms, as an immutable and static *object*, but the

"stories of contact" (Ahmed, 2014) that compose it forge an intimate relation with the reader, where the grooves and indents of the pages make way for the radical imagining of sensorial experiences of inhabited places. Through this intimate relation I was forming with the archive, my body was continuously displaced between temporalities and affective dimensions, working along and against the archival grain to access "kind[s] of never-actualized record[s]" (Gilliand; Caswell, 2016, p. 56) that found in lived experiences and subaltern arrangements a place where the political force of a counter-history could emerge. The more I immersed myself in the stories of Dutch colonial and imperial landscape, the more familiar they seemed in relation to some of the stories that composed my own personal archive. As Ann Laura Stoler (2010, p. X) states, the ways in which we engage with colonial documents to write "displaced histories folded within them" are part of "the relationship between colonial pasts, the debris they leave behind, and what Derek Gregory calls that 'colonial present'".

A "potential history," characterized by Ariella Azoulay (2019) as a "form of being with others, both living and dead, across time, against the separation of the past from the present, colonized peoples from their worlds and possessions, and history from politics", emerged in the archival debris. When my mother and I arrived in the Netherlands, we left our things in a charming small hotel in Amsterdam-Noord and then decided to walk around the neighborhood taking photographs in front of the array of brick houses, parks, plaques and restaurants, like any excited tourist would do. And then it occurred to me that my (scant) archive about my family history that made that moment possible was just one in a sea of potential imaginative possibilities about the experiences of black people in Brazil — thus, beyond being marked by historical processes of racialization, my birth also tells another story. My mother chose my name before even being married to my father, honoring my great-grandmother, Maria Lidia Vargas Mattos, whom she considered an inspiring woman. My great-grandmother was born in 1900 as the daughter of an enslaved. As a child, she began working at the house of a rich farmer, who enrolled her in school and piano lessons — she was probably the first of us who learned how to read and write, she was very knowledgeable in politics and was very eloquent. Coincidentally, her and I share not only a name, but a birthday — thus, my birthday was a constant reminder of the great-grandmother who I never met, who paved the way for my grandfather and my mother and who inaugurated our family experiences in the 20th-century. Therefore, within the official narratives that criminalize, pathologize and force the racialized body to assimilate, there is a universe of lived experiences and inhabited places that

supersede their official telling in the archives. In other words, colonial archives (personal or otherwise, from our past and present) are continuously signaling both a process of *haunting* (Bhabha, 1994) and *being haunted* (Gordon, 2008) — that is, being inscribed within systems of colonial, gendered and racial power and, at the same time, fashioning other modes of existence. The ambivalent site in which I inhabit, therefore, speaks not only to the ways in which racial and gender norms of propriety press upon the racialized body, but also to a colonial geography of survival — from capture, from the Atlantic crossing, from bondage and from social and economic dispossession.[2]

Therefore, the objective of the present chapter is to discuss the ways in which both the colonizer and colonized body are inscribed within colonial disciplinary mechanisms that result in various modes of inhabiting social norms of conduct. I am interested in observing how disciplinary institutions (schools, housing complexes/prisons, and hospitals) articulated mechanisms of discipline through the colonial encounter. The chapter proceeds as follows: in the next section, I discuss the concept of discipline as theorized by Michel Foucault (2012 [1975]) and provide theoretical engagements working both *along,* and *beyond* his conceptual framing, particularly drawing from post-colonial literature. Furthermore, I offer a theoretical discussion about ways in which the analytic of the Panopticon, created by Jeremy Bentham (1995 [1748-1832]) and developed by Foucault (2012 [1975]), and the analytic of the Window, as the foundation of this dissertation theoretical and analytical engagements, provide distinct modes of articulating disciplinary mechanisms within the realm of visual politics. This theoretical section also offers discussions on the ways in which colonized subjects inhabit and resist norms. For the first point (inhabiting), I offer a discussion on the ways the body becomes subjected to and subject of norms through a "surface politics of the body" (Butler, 2006), particularly through the work of Judith Butler (2004; 2006) — within this landscape, I establish theoretical points of connection of various engagements regarding the instantiation of norms, through conversations between Butler (2004; 2006), Stuart Hall (2017), Frantz Fanon (2008 [1952]) and Homi Bhabha (1994) to account for the imbrication of racial, sexual and gendered norms. For the second point (resisting), I draw from post-colonial feminism (Hartman, 2022b; Abu-

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[2]In the introduction of chapter 2, I offered a personal account discussing my thoughts while flying over the Atlantic and reminiscing about M. W. Turner's painting "The Slave Ship (Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying)" (1840) as an example of a "spectacular scene" that inaugurated my status in the world as a daughter of diaspora. While the scene in this chapter, through a brief account of my family's history, brings forth similar images of brutal and continuous violence, I would like to think that the present introductions offer a kind of "revisit" — it is another way to interpret the scene of those who survived the hold of the ship.

Lughod, 1990; Mahmood, 2006) as a mode of complexifying traditional conceptions of agency and resistance, which allows for conceptions of the term beyond liberal narratives of *independence, will, responsibility* and so on. Finally, the analytical section aims to discuss the circulation of disciplinary mechanisms and the way the norms they put forth are inhabited within three landscapes: (1) the ways in which Dutch women were educated into colonial norms; (2) the spatial landscape of disciplinary mechanisms centered around the policing of disorder and the fabrication of docile laborers; (3) the experience of Surinamese female migrants educated and working in the Netherlands.

4.1
The political anatomy of detail: conceptualizing the Window as a disciplinary colonial visual technology[3]

In "*Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,*" Michel Foucault (2012 [1975]) examines the historical and political changes in the "economy of punishments", in which the transition into the 17th-century was marked by a redistribution of political mechanisms and "scopic regimes" (Copeland, 2010) of penalization. Foucault builds his arguments through three major historical developments in the economy of punishment. (1) *Torture*, marked the medieval theatrical administration of hurt, the *spectacle of public injury,* whereby the figure of the battered, tortured, and severed body functioned as the locus of the exercise of justice as well as of sovereign power — "the force of law as the force of the prince" (*ibid*, p. 47).

(2) *Punishment*, signaled the emergence of renewed criminal codes and penitentiary practices where the visual regime put forth by a discursive authority no longer evidenced the bodily horrors of injury, in which the criminal and the executioner both played a visible role. Instead, punishment was inscribed in political forms of secrecy where the "public responsibility" of the violence constitutive of the regulation of justice was effaced, and the visibility directed elsewhere — to the development of the emerging "juridical subject" constituted by modes of representation within signs of criminality, rights, citizenship and freedom; and to the logic of improvement inscribed within the bureaucracy of justice (not a desire to *punish*, but to "correct, reclaim, 'cure'") (*ibid*, p. 9-10). The network of penitentiary practices was redistributed and decentralized and, within and through them, new political rituals were formed: "[p]unishment of a less immediately physical kind, a

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[3]The title of this section is a reference to Foucault's "Discipline and Punish:The Birth of the Prison" (2012 [1975]), which is the topic of discussion.

certain discretion in the art of inflicting pain, a combination of more subtle, more subdued sufferings, deprived of their visible display" (p. 8).

And finally, (3) *Discipline*, indicates a transformation from the bodily harm inflicted in torture and the invisibility of juridical punishment to the gradual proliferation of mechanisms centered around the "forces" and "dynamics" of the body. Foucault (2012 [1975], p. 11) highlights the political and aesthetic configurations inscribed within this new relation: the body was transfigured into an *instrument* in a system of power, an *intermediary* figure in the dissemination of techniques for the management of life. That is, "the body that is manipulated, shaped, trained, which obeys, responds, becomes skillful and increases its forces" (*ibid*, p. 136). Here, *practices of docility* (the transformation of the body into an analyzable and manipulable object) are accompanied by an utilitarian arrangement (the processes of transformation, improvement, and efficiency of the forces of the body) (*ibid,* p. 136-137).

Through the concept of discipline, Foucault develops an analysis of a machinery of power that is (re)produced and proliferated as long as it is inscribed within an array of *intimate* modes of subjection: such forms of discipline address the body in an anatomical scale, "exercising upon it a subtle coercion of obtaining holds upon it at the level of the monarchism itself - movements, gestures, attitudes, rapidity" (Foucault, 2012 [1975], p. 137); likewise, they are part of a machinery that "breaks down" and "rearranges" the body (*ibid*, p. 138). Such intimate modes of subjection manifested in the disciplinary machinery are evidenced not just through a rationality concerned with the "smallest fragment of life and of the body" (*ibid*, p. 140)— that is, the idea that the intimate signals a microscopic attention to the body's composition —, but also through a modality of power composed by routine and quotidian processes of meticulous supervision of bodily action. The dissemination of such regulatory mechanisms and techniques, therefore, is not contained within the penitentiary institution, but is part of a diverse network of spaces and practices where the "architectural, [the] functional and [the] hierarchical" intertwine (*bid*, p. 148) — evidenced by the school and the military as other examples mentioned throughout the book. In other words, discipline does not signify a machinery tethered to the realm of the law, but to the *enforcement of norms.*

The central argument put forth in Foucault's (2012 [1975]) development of discipline, as Thijs Willaert notes (2013, p. 39), "is that disciplinary power and the human sciences share the same root". In other words, when discussing the disciplinary machinery as a network of techniques for the administration of the spatiotemporal capacities of the body — through its arrangement and

classification within particular spatial dispositions, as well as the ever-present modes of surveillance and management of the temporal "elaboration of the act" of the body, which includes rhythms, movements and gestures (Foucault 2012 [1975], p. 151) —, Foucault also signals the emergence of an intelligible subject-object to be known and managed within systems of power-knowledge.

Therefore, I wish to explore the concept of *discipline* developed by Foucault (2012 [1975]) in the context of the Dutch colonial administration to analyze modes of visuality ascribed to the creation of spaces and subjects that come to be legible within colonial social norms. A few challenges arise from this engagement. On the one hand, Foucault's work has been recurrently criticized by authors working with colonialism, coloniality and racial politics for creating a self-contained and self-generated genealogy (or archeology) of Europe, thus failing to account for how the colonial encounter is inscribed in the multiple networks of power he observes (disciplinary or discursive, for example) (Fernández; Esteves, 2017). Furthermore, more than an analytical insufficiency, others have criticized the applicability and/or replicability of Foucauldian concepts in political experiences outside of Europe, particularly by arguing that "[his] analysis itself reinscribes the West as subject" (Kaplan, 1995, p. 89) and perpetuates the colonial authority of the disciplines it seeks to critique (Spivak, 1994 [1988]; Said, 1993).[4]

On the other hand, the work of Michel Foucault has been ostensibly — but not exhaustively — articulated by scholars working within post-colonial episteme in the fields of Anthropology, History, Political Science, Sociology, Cultural Studies and International Relations (Stoler, 2009; Stoler 2010; Stoler, 1995; Hall, 2017; Bhabha, 1994; Mbembe, 2017; Mbembe, 2016; Carneiro, 2023).[5] These authors have, in various ways, worked *with*, *against*, and *beyond* the potentialities and limitations of Foucauldian analytical and conceptual

[4]Particularly, as Willaert notes (2013), in Disicpline and Punish, Foucault (2012 [1975]) creates an oppositional relation between sovereignty (represented through the centralized power of the monarch who administers torture) and discipline (represented through diffuse and depersonalized mechanisms of power). Drawing from Kaplan (1995), he highlights the ways in which this temporal and spatial opposition is problematized in the context of colonialism, whereby these elements (sovereignty and torture, on one side, and modernity and discipline, on the other) are simultaneously deployed — which is a similar engagement to the criticism Fernández and Esteves (2017) pose.

[5]Sueli Carneiro's "Dispositivo de Racialidade: A construção do outro como não ser como fundamento do ser" (Dispositif of Raciality: The construction of the other as non-being as the foundation of being) (2023) is an interesting example. In the introduction of the book, Carneiro announces she will be speaking from "the place of the enslaved" to the "hegemonic Self" — in this conversation between the subaltern voice and the hegemonic voice, she claims to "summon Michel Foucault" because he is someone of trust to the hegemonic voice, whom she also sympathizes with. Thus, beyond exploring Foucault's theoretical engagements, Carneiro "summons" him to act as a bridge between her subaltern place and the hegemonic Self as a disciplinary and racializing mechanism of power.

tools in various endeavors to precisely question the creation of Europe as a self-contained and self-fashioned historical event and work through the multiple ways in which colonial power is articulated — be it through interrogations of the relationship between discipline, modernity and colonialism (Mitchell, 1988); be it through analyses that highlight the ways in which European sexual discourses are already foregrounded by the colonial encounter (Stoler, 1995).

My contribution here is more related to this second engagement. I wish to linger on the site of ambivalence and friction that thinking *with*, *against* and *beyond* Foucault's concept of discipline offers us as a mode for dwelling on the relations and mechanisms of colonial power. I do not believe *discipline* is "incompatible" with discussions of colonial and/or imperial manifestations of power and, albeit through a meager footnote, neither did Foucault: "I shall choose examples from military, medical, educational and industrial institutions. *Other examples might have been taken from colonization, slavery and child rearing*" (Foucault, 2012 [1975] p.314n1, my emphasis). However, while I find the exploration of colonial mechanisms of discipline productive, the boundaries between the transitional modes of punishment that resulted in the disciplinary enterprise are worth questioning.

While Foucault (2012 [1975], p. 137) contends that (1) "many disciplinary methods had long been in existence" and, (2) the transition from the penalty of torture to punishment reformation and finally, to discipline was not clear-cut, he still argues that "in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the disciplines became general formulas of domination" (ibid). Moreover, he claims such formulas differed from slavery because they were "not based on a relation of appropriation of bodies," but were instead parts of systems with the capacity to "dispense with this costly and violent relation by obtaining effects of utility at least as great." (ibid., p. 137). An initial point of contention with such claims is found in Marta Fernández and Paulo Esteves' (2017, p. 142) critique:

> During the eighteenth century, discipline in Europe became a general formula of domination different from slavery for it was not grounded on a relationship of appropriation of bodies in contradistinction to the practices colonial powers resorted to in their colonies in the nineteenth century, such as forced labor; practices that were to impact violently upon the bodies of the colonized. This contradiction shows that to deal with its "Others," European colonial powers were resorting to outdated ways of punishment, that is, to practices that had been made unacceptable in the European modern context.

Furthermore, through the Fanonian concept of *bifurcation*, Fernández and Esteves (2017) highlight the ambivalent character of colonial power that administered non-corporal and diffuse punishment "at home" while exerting physical modes of direct intervention against the colonized "abroad".[6] I want to extend this discussion further by arguing that the ambivalent character of colonial discourse and practice (Bhabha, 1994) that created such dichotomous perceptions of an internality/externality in colonial political practices, also functioned through disciplinary mechanisms centered around "proprietorial notions of the self" (Hartman, 2022b, p. 6). In other words, against the opposition Foucault makes between appropriation (slavery) and individualization (discipline), I argue that the enforcement of colonial norms of conduct was *haunted* by *appropriation* (property, appropriation and propriety) and put forth a colonial body-relation in which the body of the colonized was *both* a site of *physical injury* and an *object of regulation* (among other things, like an object of desire and sexualization).[7]

Saidiya Hartman's (2022b, p. XXXII) concept of the "afterlife of slavery" evidences the "hold of slavery" in the modern world and, in particular, the inextricability of "personhood and property", "being subject and being slave": "the attributes of the human — will, consciousness, reason, agency and responsibility — were the inroads of discipline, punishment and mortification". One example Hartman (2022b) gives us of this binding relationship between appropriation/individualization is present in the contradictions of the concept of "freedom" in the context of the U.S. Emancipation period — the abolition of slavery brought forth actualized modes of appropriation and servitude based on racial difference, such as "the landless tenant and the indebted worker", and coercive forms of labor under the "free market" haunted by the "threat of punishment and imprisonment" (ibid, p. XXXIV).[8]

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[6]I have discussed in chapter 2 how the very notion of a distinction between "home" and "abroad" (the bifurcation Fanon speaks of) was continuously discursive enacted as part of the Dutch colonial discourse and, in chapter 3, how distinctions between the private and the public were also inscribed within these discursive regimes.

[7]I discussed these other possibilities in the previous chapters (desire, sexualization, affection, etc). I mention them briefly to underscore the transversality of these technologies I observe, which I have isolated for organizational and theoretical purposes in this dissertation. To evidence this transversality between disciplinary visual modes that assign the racialized body a site of physical injury/regulation and an object of sexualization, Hortense Spiller's (1987) articulation of "pornotroping" provides an example — according to her, the process of transforming black people into flesh involves "1) the captive body as the source of an irresistible, destructive sensuality; 2) at the same time — in stunning contradiction — it is reduced to a thing, to being for the captor; 3) in this distance from a subject position, the captured sexualities provide a physical and biological expression of "otherness"; 4) as a category of "otherness", the captive body translates into a potential for pornotroping and embodies sheer physical powerlessness that slides into a more general "powerlessness", resonating through various centers of human and social meaning" (ibid, p. 67).

[8]The same thing can be said about the post-abolition landscape in Suriname, where free

The circulation of colonial mechanisms that were animated by practices of both *physical punishment* and *discipline* elicit various scenes. The development of "regimes of truth" (Foucault, 2008 [1978-79]) in which people became *objects of knowledge* through the development of human sciences and its legitimized institutions — medicine, psychiatry, education — is supported by imperial practices that render the colonies the "laborator[ies] of modernity" (Rabinow, 1989, p. 289) through procedures that simultaneously caused *physical injury* and (re)produced the mechanisms for the maintenance of *colonial norms of conduct.* For example, the body of the colonized, as a site of visible punishment and an instrument of discipline, was further (re)produced through the perceived infringement of racial codes of conduct in the post-abolition U.S., which were part of mechanisms of bodily surveillance and supported by the practice of lynching black men as a public form of punishment under the rubric of the securement of (white) justice. Racial discipline, then, encompassed practices of bodily surveillance that are two-fold: (1) the composition of the black body, its gestures, and its movements were all under heavy scrutiny; (2) modes of subjection to systems of racial enclosure — the ghetto, the Black Belt, the prison— that restricted movement to particular spaces at particular times. The existence of Sundown Towns in the segregated U.S. as cities that prohibited the circulation of racialized people after sundown through legal ordinances and the threat of physical punishment is one such example.[9]

The entanglements between physical injury and discipline, as well as propriety and individualization also manifest in the *familial state* (Adams, 2005) of Dutch colonial rule. Much like the example Hartman (2022b) gives us of the status of formerly enslaved people as *subjects* but not *citizens*, post-abolition Netherlands was maintained through the perception of the colonized as a non-Dutch-subject — the *subject-object* relation signals the continuum of the relationship between *possession* and *propriety* in disciplinary colonial relations of power. The basis of the Ethical Policy (1901-1942) discussed in the previous chapter makes this point evident: under the guise of "improvement", a colonial package of laws and practices involving the simultaneous education of the colonized body and the physical punishment of inordinate behavior was deployed as a mode of maintaining Dutch colonial rule and its possessions. Following

people were legally required to work in the plantations for 10 years. Likewise, the contracts of indentured Hindustani and Javanese workers who migrated to Suriname in the end of the 19th-century also stipulated a mandatory period of time of 5 years (Hoefte, 2014).

[9]See also: Ariel Beaujot; Sun Up in a Sundown Town: Public History, Private Memory, and Racism in a Small City. The Public Historian 1 May 2018; 40 (2): 43–68; Elizabeth A. Patton (2019) Get Out and the legacy of sundown suburbs in post-racial America, New Review of Film and Television Studies, 17:3, 349-363; James W. Loewen. Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism. [New edition]. New Press; 2018.

Foucault (2012 [1975], p. 148), we observe a dual operation — "distribution and analysis, supervision and intelligibility" — at the intersection between the deployment of techniques of power and the (re)production of knowledge. However, by attempting to dislocate the concept from Foucault's European emphasis to contemplate the imperial co-constitution between colony and metropole, I argue such dual operation was inscribed within discursive practices that sought to (re)produce an array of mechanisms for the asymmetrical distribution and enforcement of colonial social norms.

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I have sketched so far a few potentialities and limitations the Foucauldian concept of "discipline" offers us to understanding the mechanisms of colonial power. In the following subsections, I continue to engage with Foucault and also ruminate on the theoretical landscape surrounding "discipline" that offers rich contributions to the discussion: (1) first, I explore the ways in which the analytic of the Panopticon and the analytic of the Window develop modes for understanding the circulation of mechanisms of discipline, albeit in distinct ways; (2) second, I mobilize post-structural and post-colonial scholarship to discuss the (re)production of norms and their modes of subjection; (3) third, I offer a discussion on the topic of resistance and its relation to discipline and norms of social conduct.

4.1.1
The Panopticon and the Window

To develop the *Window* as a technology of colonial visual politics (re)produced through disciplinary mechanisms, a conversation with Foucault's discussion on the Panopticon is warranted. In this work, together with Christina Sharpe's (2016) visual-orthographic metaphor of the *wake*, I am drawing from Foucault (2012 [1975]) to develop the analytic of the *Window* as a mode for understanding technologies and mechanisms of colonial visual power. However, there are some (dis)continuities between my present engagement and the Foucauldian elaboration of the Panopticon model. Both scopic mechanisms are formed at the intersection between "architectural, functional and hierarchical" (ibid., p. 148) arrangements of power, but the relations of power are inscribed within these models function under a distinct visual economy.

In "Discipline and Punish", Foucault (2012 [1975], p. 205) provides an analysis of Jeremy Bentham's (1791) Panopticon as a "generalizable model of

functioning; a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men". Foucault's interpretation of Bentham's Panopticon, as an analytic to comprehend the visuality and the practices of a certain articulation of power, is an architectural ensemble structured under a particular "economy of gazes" (Ballestê; Portugal, 2019) — through the exploration of Panoptical mechanisms in the penitentiary institution, Foucault (2012 [1975]), p. 43) follows Bentham's writings in his endeavor to sketch the *ideal* system of labor maximization (utility) and, simultaneously, of production of a moral reform (docility).

The visual political system structuring these practices is already laid out in the etymology of the word "Panopticon", which emerges as a combination of the Greek "*pan*" (all) and "*optikos*" (sight/seeing). In other words, the Panopticon indicates an omnipresent mode of surveillance, a state of "permanent visibility" (Foucault, 2012[1975]) within a mechanism of power that is all-encompassing while remaining anonymous. The scene Bentham sets, therefore, underlines an articulation of visual power through the interplay of binary processes of visibility/invisibility: the observatory function exercised in the Tower tethers all the prisoners to the Inspector's field of vision — the circular spatial distribution of the inmates in relation to the Inspector's Tower, as well the architectural composition of the prison that occludes the inmate's vision of each other, precludes any possibility of concealment. A minor gesture is never imperceptible. The relational character of such a schema is based on the transformation of the prisoners into *objects of knowledge* that can be observed, classified, and measured in comparison to each other.

The modality of visual power that allows the Inspector to watch over the prisoners indiscriminately signals a form of depersonalized, non-corporal subjectivity — the Inspector looks without being seen, knows without being known, visualizes while remaining anonymous. Such a mechanism of discipline, then, brings forth a particular relation to the circulation of power: since the prisoners cannot assert when they are being monitored, they "assume responsibility for the constraints of power" and, upon themselves despite themselves, adopt the conflicting roles of both the prisoner and the Inspector, thus "becom[ing] the principle of [their] own subjection" (Foucault 2012, [1975], p, 202-203). In other words, the Panopticon evidences a modality of power that creates a hierarchical, segmented, individualizing, self-disciplinary mechanism at the intersection between the practices of power and the (re)production of knowledge.

As an *ideal form of surveillance*, the Panopticon provides a way to "perfect the exercise of power" (Foucault, 2012 [1975], p. 206) by reducing

its costs while maximizing its efficacy, by providing an uninterrupted mode of visuality and scrutiny, and by acting directly upon the bodily forces of the prisoner — movements, gestures, actions. Most notably, Bentham sought to theorize the Panoptical structure as a modality of power that could be extended *beyond* the prison to other institutions (the hospital, the school, the military, so on) and into a mode of *governmentality*. Foucault (2008 [1978-1979], p. 67) affirmed such a point, during his period at *College de France*, by claiming that "[a]t the end of his life [...] Bentham [would] propose that the Panopticon should be the formula for the whole of government, saying that the Panopticon is the very formula of liberal government.". Furthermore, Foucault (ibid) argued that the relationship between disciplinary mechanisms and liberalism is the development of a governmental apparatus aimed at "producing, breathing life into, and [...] introducing additional freedom through additional control and intervention" — that is, the biopolitical administration of life through *productive* mechanisms of optimization, maximization and multiplication that, simultaneously, work to control, organize and monitor the forces of the body.

However, as Foucault (2012 [1975]), p. 205) argues, the Panopticon is "the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form". That is, the circulation of instruments of power detached from any friction, any constraint, any form of pushback — it is an abstraction of the exercise of disciplinary power from a network of multiple, conflicting and sociopolitical technologies, manifested through a "pure architectural and optical system" (ibid). In opposition, I am proposing the analytic of the Window as a form of observing colonial visual politics precisely at this site of *friction*, of *imperfect* exercise of power. Delving into both the archives and the extensive literature of authors who endeavored to discuss colonial Netherlands and contemporary racial Dutch politics, a recurring diagnosis about the practices deployed by the Dutch colonial administration highlights this "flawed" exercise of disciplinary power: for example, Jan Breman (2023, p. 75) notes a "lack of decisiveness and the will to achieve stated political goals" (in the context of the Ethical Policy) as a defining characteristic of the Dutch colonial administrative apparatus. Likewise, throughout her work on colonial relations in the Dutch East Indies, Ann Laura Stoler (2009, p. 21) has described the colonial administration as being composed of "failed projects, delusional imaginings [and] equivocal explanations". In a similar vein, when discussing the Ethical Period (1901-1942) in Indonesia, Elsbeth Locher-Scholten (2000, p. 18, my emphasis) stated that "colonial democracy would never be more than a *caricature* of its Western predecessors".

It is not that, through such affirmations, these authors indicate the Dutch

colonial administration was wholeheartedly ineffective in creating mechanisms of violence, oppression and surveillance, and, inadvertently, reproduce the dominant Dutch sociopolitical discourse that claims the Netherlands not being part of imperial systems of power. Instead, what these authors encourage us to question is the idea that the colonial apparatus exerts an *absolute form of power* over the colonized — that it functions through a frictionless network of rational, objective, depersonalized maneuvers with the intent and, most notably, with the *effect* of completely and unconditionally subjecting the Other.

By questioning such narratives, I am proposing the Window as an analytic of colonial visual politics that functions through a distinct "economy of gazes" (Ballestê; Portugal, 2019). The Panopticon model presents a particular landscape of visuality that functions through the "dissociation [of the] see/being seen dyad" (Foucault, 2012 [1975]), p. 202) — in this way, the Panoptical "scopic regime" (Copeland, 2010) performs a visual politics similar to Mirzoeff's (2011) concept of Visuality as the mechanisms of an authorizing force that maintains the status-quo. That is, the Inspectors "see" while the inmates are denied the "right to look" (ibid). Conversely, the foundations of the Window lie in the multiplicity of conflicting gazes. This interplay of light and shadow and of modes of seeing and unseeing does not result in a relationship where an authorizing subject views an Other that can solely be viewed, but in a multitude of interrelated and conflicting gazes bearing witness to the event — the colonial gaze (Clancysmith; Gouda, 1998), the familial gaze (Hirsch, 1999), the male gaze (Mulvey, 1975), the Western gaze (Mohanty, 1984); the "return of the look" of the colonized (Bhabha, 1994). In other words, the Window does not signal an *unverifiable* articulation of power, but continuous "forced and uncomfortable" encounters (Furtado, 2021) with the multiple ways of seeing and inhabiting the place of Self and Other and the perception of his/hers simultaneous sameness and difference.

The spatial disposition of the Panopical penitentiary structure enables a "perpetual characterization of the individual either in relation to this term [of performing particular tasks], in relation to other individuals, or in relation to a type of itinerary" (Foucault, 2012 [1975]) — that is, who establishes processes of relationality between the inmates, through classification and comparison of behavior, is the Inspector and never the inmates themselves. Here, the disciplinary forces are inscribed within the penitentiary spatial arrangement that prevents the connection between the prisoners and limits their relation to the Inspector to the highest degree. In opposition, the Window attests to the ways power functions in the "contact zone" (Wekker, 2016) of the colonial encounter, which is an ambivalent site of subjection and subjectivity at the

intersection between proximity/distance, similarity/difference, seeing/unseeing and so on. My argument, therefore, is not that practices of docilization and optimization of the body do not occur in the Dutch colonial context, but that they are continuously articulated, (re)produced, (re)interpreted and contested within this site of friction. That is, they circulate not through the perfect exercise of disciplinary power, but through "improvisational dimensions of [the] colonial encounter" (Pratt, 1992, p. 7).

4.1.2
Inhabiting norms: performance, mimesis and the in-between

As I mentioned, disciplinary power is not synonymous with a juridical form of power, but a capacity to enforce *norms*. For Judith Butler (2004, p. 41), the *norm* refers to the arrangement of mechanisms that "govern social intelligibility of action" — that is, norms fabricate grids of intelligibility against which the actions performed by subjects gain their legibility. Notably, subjects become, at once, *constrained* and *defined by* such modes of intelligibility since, while they are the conditions of possibility for the formation and the recognition of people as subjects, they also function as the parameters for this very recognition. In other words, norms are the "scopic regimes" (Copeland, 2010), or the visual landscape where subjects emerge as knowable and representable social agents.

To Butler (2004; 2006), gender emerges as an apparatus that produces and naturalizes conceptions of masculinity and femininity and, paradoxically, creates conditions of possibility for the very deconstruction of these notions. Such paradoxical nature accompanies subject formation through mechanisms of power — since our social visual landscape is defined within the parameters of the norm, which naturalizes particular social experiences and practices, what is considered as being *outside the norm* (the abnormal, marginalized or abject) is still being defined *through* and *against* the norm. That is, in the study of gender as a regulatory apparatus that produces intelligible ways of being social, the enforcement and naturalization of a gender binary (masculine/feminine) and its related practices define the legible field of action for the recognition as subjects — queer experiences that do not fit into such mold, therefore, are only read as such precisely because, at the moment of misrecognition, the norm continues to be enforced.

Furthermore, the ways in which subjects are regulated under norms that come to be understood as natural and neutral create the notion of an *internal, an essence, an identity* that is inherent to the subject. However, as Butler

(2006, p. 34) notes, "within the inherited discourse of the metaphysics of substance, gender proves to be performative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed." In other words, through the *repeated performance of gender*, the fantasy of interiority (and, relatedly, of a coherent and stable sense of self) emerges as the locus of identity of the subject. Thinking about gender (and other norms that act upon the forces of the body) in terms of *performance* and not something a pre-existent subject *is* and/or *possesses* allows for an understanding of the "deed" — the ongoing process of "doing, effecting, becoming" (Nietzsche, 1969, p. 65 apud Butler, 2006, p. 34) — within a "surface politics of the body", which discursively interprets and inscribes the materiality of the body within networks of disciplinary power that act upon it through idealization and fantasy that arise from the interplay between "presence and absence on the body's surface [and] a series of exclusions and denials, signifying absences" (Butler, 2006, p. 184).

In other words, the concept of *performance* refers to the array of enactments, gestures and movements at the surface of the body that continuously (re)produce the idea of an internal essence and the normative fantasy through practices of regulation. That is, for Butler (2006, p. 185) performance is the repeated *fabrication* of the subject through "corporeal signs and other discursive means". A similar engagement is put forth by Stuart Hall (2017) in discussions about race as another such regulatory apparatus. Like gender norms interpret the surface of the body within grids of intelligibility to construct female and masculine bodies through normalizing (and normative) stylized enactments of masculinity and femininity, race is constructed through discursive systems that convey meaning to the materiality of the body within discursive regimes and regulatory mechanisms and "classificatory systems of difference" (Hall, 2017, p. 33). Furthermore, Hall (2017) argues that race, as a "master concept" that works discursively as a *sliding signifier* through a metaphoric and metonymic chain of equivalences whereby the meaning of the signs of the body shift between biological (genetic) and cultural (ethnic) difference. In other words, Hall (2017) articulates a representational and discursive field where meaning attributed to the surface (and the perceived *internality*) of the body is inscribed within systems of power-knowledge-difference. In other words, the corporal signs of the racialized body acquire meaning through the interpretation of the color of the skin within systems of intelligibility (which would convey meaning in the perceived biological side of the chain of equivalences), but also through *cultural practices, gestures, performances.*

The encounter with the white child, for Frantz Fanon (2008 [1952]), provides us with such a scene where both racial and gendered norms press upon and constitute his colonial experience of blackness: Fanon's (2008 [1952]) quotidian encounters with racial norms of conduct and racist violence have led him to experience his own body through a "*third person consciousness*" — the punishing gaze of the white world makes it difficult for the black person to elaborate their own bodily schema. As a result, Fanon (2008 [1952], p. 84) is intimately aware of the composition of his body, the simultaneous *excessiveness and lack* of his movements and gestures:

> The elements that I used had been provided for me not by "residual sensations and perceptions primarily of a tactile, vestibular, kinesthetic, and visual character," but by the other, the white man, who had woven me out of a thousand details, anecdotes, stories. I thought that what I had in hand was to construct a physiological self, to balance space, to localize sensations, and here I was called on for more.

Fanon's (2008 [1957]) body is pinned by the gaze of the white child that speaks of him and, frightened, calls him a "Negro". The "atmosphere of certain uncertainty" (ibid, p. 83) that precariously supported his corporeal schema crumbles and, in its place, a *racial epidermal schema* emerges. Fanon's bodily experience is no longer a matter of "seeing himself outside himself" (through the third person), but seeing himself *triply displaced* — being simultaneously responsible for "his body, his race and his ancestors" (ibid, p. 84). Fanon's experience of displacement reveals the gap in the relationship between the enactment of a gesture and its ideal normative form — he is pressed upon and formed by multiple regulations that are contradictory. The hypervisibility of his body as a black man assigns to him a "badge" (Hall, 2017) that simultaneously signals an excessiveness and a lack in his enactment of masculinity: whereas, for the white man, the visual (re)production of virility is seen as the ideal instantiation of masculinity, for Fanon, it might be seen as a sign of aggression. Fanon describes shaking in fear of the pinning gaze of the child that unravels his corporeal schema, that interrupts and displaces his deed, and the child interprets it as if he is trembling with anger.

The simultaneous minuscule and harrowing distance that defines the relationship between his black skin and white mask that symbolically covers his face indicates the gap between the enactment of a norm and its constructed ideal. The gap indicates the possibility of a slip, of misrecognition and disidentification. Exploring this interstitial site between *performance* and the

(re)production of a norm through Fanon, Homi Bhabha (1994, p. 62, my emphasis) provides another mode for visualizing the displacement of the racialized body: "[i]n occupying two places at once —or three in Fanon's case— the depersonalized, dislocated colonial subject can become an incalculable object, *quite literally difficult to place*".

In Bhabha's essay "Of Mimicry and Men" (1994, p. 62), the exploration of the Fanonian epidermal schema brings forth the attention to the site "in-between the black body and the white body" where the friction between "meaning and being, [...] demand and desire" lies. Bhabha (1994) points to the paradoxical nature of the ambivalent character of the colonial discourse whereby, through the creation of the colonial stereotype that allows for the possibility of multiple and contradictory points of identification for the colonized (i.e. as both savage and infantilized), within the gap between the instantiation of a norm and its reproduction a potentially *transgressive doubling* emerges. The interplay between the *excessiveness and lack* of the colonized signals an enactment of norms that is continuously instantiated through slippages, displacements and differences. In other words, mimicry signals a repetition of the norm that instantiates a resemblance of "*a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*" (ibid, p. 86) — thus, it expresses another facet of the ambivalence of the colonial discourse that, while it attempts to appropriate the colonized and enforce the repetition of ordinate behavior, it is also threatened by the inappropriate articulation, an "ironic compromise" (ibid, p. 86), an inordinate, incomplete, *not quite right* instantiation of the norm.

This doubling vision of the Other, which Bhabha (1994) signals as the "partial representation/recognition of the colonial object" that, through the enactment of a norm, reveals the ambivalence at the heart of the colonial discourse and, consequently, disrupts its very authority. In this interstitial site, the colonial economy of gazes (Ballestê; Portugal, 2019) is unraveled by the "return of the look" (Bhabha, 1994) of the colonized, which, beyond revealing resemblance, reveals its menacing form through an instantiation of a norm that creates a "*difference that is almost total, but not quite*" (ibid., p. 91).[10]

[10]Homi Bhabha (1994) is not the only author to suggest the disruptive potential in the experience of in-betweenness caused by the representational split and displacement of the colonized subject. Another author who provides a similar engagement, and whom I mentioned in the previous chapter, is Patricia Hill Collins (1986) and her discussion of the "outsider within" as an inhabited interstitial place that underscores the experiences and knowledge practices of black women. Similarly, Gloria Anzaldua (1999; 2005) develops the concept of the "borderlands" and the "mestiza consciousness" to describe her experience of inhabiting the cultural and social borders between the U.S. and Mexico, and her lived experience transposed by multiple networks of power (being woman, Chicana, lesbian, American).

To return to the opening line of this chapter, while Avery Gordon (2008) describes how bodies are haunted by systems of power that affectively and materially perturb the subject's experience of displacement across time, Bhabha's (1994) argument points to the ways in which the *colonized body haunts the colonial authority* — which he describes elsewhere as "the fully realized presence of a haunting of history" (Bhabha, 1992, p. 147).[11] My aim of mobilizing these authors is to point out how the subject is *pressed upon and formed by* multiple regulatory mechanisms (such as race and gender), which intersect and converge in the formation of the subject, but may also pose contradictory demands upon the configuration of the body and cause slippages and uncertainties — thus, thinking about the array of mechanisms of colonial power requires ruminating in the interstitial places of subjectivization that emerge in the (re)production of colonial norms of conduct within a landscape of improvisational and imperfect practices of disciplinary power. The interstices that underlie the (re)production of colonial norms, from where we can observe the continuous interplay between the excessiveness and lack in the representational modes of the figure of the colonized Other, can be interpreted not only from a place of failure to elaborate one's corporal schema (as Fanon's account tells us), but also a site where another "potential history" can emerge (Azoulay, 2019).

4.1.3
The "archival romance," "the romance of resistance"[12]

Many authors have, in various ways, engaged with the "question of resistance" in both colonial and contemporary political landscapes: whether through a feminist lens, to discuss modes of subversion and contestation of gendered norms of conduct that assign value to perceived masculine attributes and practices. (Sjoberg, 2017; Walby, 1989); relatedly, whether through queer scholarship, to examine how queer bodies are both inscribed in and transgressive of binary gendered regulations (Butler, 2004; Sedgwick (2008 [1990]) whether through post-colonial and anticolonial perspectives, to ruminate on Anti-colonial struggle, processes of decolonization and quotidian encounters with racial norms and violence (Davis, 1981; Fanon, 2022 [1961]; Hartman, 2022b). In particular, as Lila Abu-Lughod (1990) notes, the building scholarly

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[11]This comment is situated within Bhabha's discussion of the relationship between diasporic literature and the world at large, through Toni Morrison's "Beloved" (1987).

[12]The title of this section is inspired by two authors: Anjali Arondekar's "For the Record" (2009) (see note 3 of previous chapter) and Lila Abu-Lughod's (1990) article "The romance of resistance".

interest in theoretical explorations of "unlikely forms of resistance" composes a shift from viewing through *spectacular instances of contestation of power* (large scale protests, for example) to observing how resistance manifests in *small, quotidian, unassuming intimate practices* (peasant, small scale and quotidian forms of resistance) (Abu-Lughod, 1990; Guillaume; Huysmans, 2018; Death, 2010; Cassidy; Yuval-Davis; Wemyss 2017). Within this theoretical landscape, I wish to develop a discussion on colonial forms of resistance on two related points: (1) the relationship between agency and resistance; (2) the ways in which we can navigate the concept of ambivalence to reflect on how norms can be inhabited.

Firstly, as Saidiya Hartman (2022b, p. 7) argues, thinking about the ways in which the colonized (and the enslaved, in her particular case) contested or questioned colonial norms requires a critical interrogation of terms that are often easily tossed around to describe *resistance*: like "will", "agency", "individuality", and "responsibility". The reflection Hartman encourages is how the conflation of agency and resistance may work not in favor of a complex notion of emancipation, but, instead, to reproduce a liberal conception of freedom, whereby becoming an agent means *having autonomy in relation to power* (therefore, being in opposition to subordination) and being capable of *individual will and action* (whereas the capacity to act signals the emergence of a "free" subject) (Mahmood, 2006). Through the analytic of the Window, instead of narrowly defining resistance in such terms, I propose an exploration of the relationship between agency and resistance where one's capacity to act is not divorced from networks of power and the emergence of the *subject* is precisely an effect of it. Consequently, Hartman's (2022b) purpose is not to excavate the archive to "recover the resistances of the dominated", but to critically examine how enslaved and formerly enslaved people in 19th-century U.S. "grappled with these terms and endeavored to reelaborate and refuse them in fashioning themselves as agents and in striving to make a free life" (ibid, p. 7).

The act of divorcing agency (as the notion of autonomous will) from resistance (the act of contesting and opposing norms) means observing how the dual process of subjectivization (subjected *to* and subject *of* relations of power) presses upon the subject and fabricates one's "corporal schema" (Fanon, 2012 [1957]) in multiple conflicting and contradictory ways to produce not only norms that *constrict*, but also affective processes that generate modes of obtaining pleasure (*jouissance*) (Butler, 1997; Hook, 2022). Like Hartman (2022b), Saba Mahmood (2006, p. 42) argues, "the meaning and sense of agency cannot be fixed in advance, but must emerge through an analysis

of the particular concepts that enable specific modes of being, responsibility, and effectivity". In particular, Mahmood (2006) examines the participation of women in the Islamic Revival movement — on the one hand, these women gather in mosques and theoretically engage with scriptures to educate each other in the Islamic doctrine, the social practices and the social norms of Islam, which involve their participation in spaces and practices traditionally restricted to men; on the other hand, through such communal pedagogical practices, these women (re)produce religious and institutional norms of what is historically considered "female submission", which encompasses notions of "shyness, modesty, perseverance, and humility" (ibid., p. 37). Furthermore, in the act of disengaging agency and resistance, Mahmood also dislocates the notion that female agency within gendered oppressive structures is inherently progressive (in a liberal feminist sense).

The desire to *excavate* the archives to *find* women, as subjects with the potential to reveal the inner workings of structures of power, might also speak to an archival politics that projects on them a "romance of resistance" (Abu-Lughod, 1990) — since, historically, women are oppressed by the authorizing and normative power of official archives that are mostly composed of men, we might be inclined to view their very presence in the archives as indicative of resistance. However, as both Hartman (2022b; 2021) and Mahmood (2006) demonstrate, their presence in the archives is always already marked by mechanisms of power, disciplinary regimes, normalizing and normative functions. The archive is not a neutral site where the past is held, but always a *subjectivizing force* where ghosts continue to emerge as subject-objects of representation. In the context of colonial Netherlands, we see how both European and colonized women are caught up in the circulation of a wide array of complex, contradictory and fractured norms (which refer to the "imperfect" politics I mentioned earlier) and, thus, inhabit, (re)produce and interpret norms in different ways: colonial citizenship politics, for example, which requires the reproduction of Dutch norms of conduct in relation to gender, race, sexuality and religion, for many colonized women was seen as a way to improve their condition within the social colonial landscape — thus, while these women were under the scrutiny of various disciplinary mechanisms, and had to perform and mold their bodies according to these norms, there was also a positive identification with the norm, such as being recognized as a citizen, being part of the middle-class enclave, receiving a home from the colonial administration, being the wife to a civil servant, being the authority figure in the home in relation to the servants, being able to support the children and provide them with access to various opportunities in the metropole, and

so on.

The various ways in which a norm can be inhabited, therefore, extend further than quotidian interactions within the home or community space. Revisiting Foucault's (2012 [1975]) discussion on disciplinary power, the disciplinary institutions that he examines (school, hospital, military) are also sites where norms — as the disciplinary norm of optimization and docility (which Foucault calls "normation") (Foucault, 2009 [1977-1978]), as well as (racial, gender) social regulations (Butler, 2004; 2006) — are inhabited in a multitude of contradictory, confusing ways: colonial educational facilities, for instance, were part of civilizational policies of *improvement* in the East and the West Indies through efforts to *assimilate* certain segments of the population into Western institutions (particularly, native, Creole and Indo elites) to (re)enact and enforce colonial norms of conduct (Locher-Scholten, 2000; Stoler, 2010; Stipriáan. 1998). While the children of Dutch settlers held overwhelmingly more access to schooling and were the main targets for the allocation of governmental funding, the existing colonial-sponsored directed to the colonized population were designed through modes of segregation along the "color line" (Du Bois, 2019 [1903]) — the creation of public schools and the subsequent allocation of state subsidies to institutions attended by colonized children accompanies these civilizational policies (Locher-Scholten, 2000; Stíprtaan, 1998; Frankema, 2013).[13] However, the creation of public schools and the allocation of subsidies was dependent on the enforcement of Dutchness — the Dutch language was the primary vehicle for education and the curriculum mirrored the Western model, particularly in regard to Dutch history and geography (Stíprtaan, 1998; Frankema, 2013).

In particular, the men and boys who were part of these European-sponsored forms of education (which also included technical schools) were gradually educated and trained to hold career positions within the administrative colonial apparatus, usually as lower-ranked colonial officials thus, not only did they perform colonial norms, but they also juridically enforced its regulatory mechanisms (Stíprtaan, 1998). Through the education received in these Dutch-sponsored colonial schools, the modes of knowing and unknowing,

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[13]The institutions directed to white students in the colonies were the European Primary School (Eropese Lagere School, ELS), the Extended Primary Education (Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs, MULO) and the General Secondary School (Algemene Middelbare School, AMS). Native Indonesian students attended the Native Primary School (Inlandsche Lagere School, ILS), Town Schools and Dutch-Indigenous Schools (Hollandsch-Inlandsche School, HIS) and unrecognized desa schools. The Surinamese population attended Town Schools. Chinese populations also had separate educational institutions, such as Dutch-Chinese School (Hollandsch Chineesche School). Due to the significant Jewish population in Suriname, the Jewish community also had separate institutions for their children's schooling (Joodse School).

Figure 4.1: Girl with reading board at the Oranjeschool (Primary School) in Paramaribo, National Archives of the Netherlands.

being and acting, seeing and being seen were inscribed within a normative European colonial framework — while these processes were violent and caused the erasure and exclusion of non-Western forms of knowledge, the (re)production of these educational norms also held many *promises*. As Álex Van Stipriáan (1998, p. 62) notes of the development of the educational system in Suriname, "those who could not afford a private school were sent to a Town School, and the new Regulations authorized the Commission for Education to send particularly bright but poor pupils to the (private) Head School at the colonial state's expense". In other words, Stipriáan (1998) describes how the acquiescence to norms of "Dutchification" through educational institutions presented the possibility of Dutch-sponsored upward mobility for colonized families. Likewise, other disciplinary institutions, like the Moravian Church in Suriname (which also had educational facilities), while enforcing particular norms of conduct, also provided the colonized people with a sense of *community*.

If we consider the Window to be a site where the colonial authority functions through an *imperfect exercise of power* and allows for the quotidian encounter of conflicting gazes, a few questions arise: what emerges at the site of the simultaneous sameness and difference of the colonized in relation to the colonizer is, necessarily, a scene of disruption and/or resistance? More profoundly, as Anne McClintock (1995) asks, through concepts like *doubling, mimesis, in-betweenness* and *hybridity* enacted by the quotidian performances of the colonized, does the transgression of a norm always result in an instance of *resistance*? These questions bring me to my second point. While authors have criticized the liberal ethos underlying particular articulations of resistance and agency (as for the case of critiques of liberal feminism), others have criticized the *overestimation* of the concepts of *hybridity* and *ambivalence* as categories used to define the sociopolitical experiences of the colonized.

In the previous section, I offered a few accounts of the ways in which the inhabiting of the interstices of norms brings forth a scene in which the colonial authority may be transgressed through the very site of ambivalence that allows for its mechanisms. While I discuss the analytic of the Window through the exploration of such encounters, interstices and liminal spaces, I do not consider these ambivalent sites as, inherently, an instantiation of a scene of resistance and/or subversion of a norm that signals the breakdown of the colonial authority. As McClintock (1995, p. 67) argues, "ambivalence may well be a critical aspect of subversion, but it is not a sufficient agent of colonial failure". In particular, McClintock examines how Luce Iragaray (1985) and Homi Bhabha (1994) articulate mimicry as oppositional strategies available to women and the colonized, respectively. In her analysis of Bhabha's work, which I also discussed in the previous section, McClintock (1995, p. 63) points the ways in which "colonial authority appears to be displaced less by shifting social contradictions or the militant strategies of the colonized than by the formal ambivalence of colonial representation itself" — that is, she is cautious of the dangers of locating *agency* in *ambivalence*, which may make way for an "ambivalence of form" where the attention to the (male) colonized body as a site of an ambivalence that can be strategically articulated may not sufficiently account for how, due to the very nature of the colonial discourse, the body of the colonizer is also a site of ambivalence that can be articulated for the maintenance of colonial authority.

What McClintock (1995) urges us to reflect upon is the array of "different culture possibilities" that the transgression, or the not-quite instantiation of norms, offers us as modes of comprehending colonial authority. Through the improvisational character of the colonial administration, the "imperfect"

exercise of colonial power, we observe how both sameness and difference, in various contexts, become the cause of praise and desire as well as of profound fear and anxiety. When the constitution of the colonial subject is predicated on the colonial encounter, the very modes of representation of the colonizer are already predicated on ambivalence — Dutch colonial middle-class households that serve both Dutch and native foods; the very hybridity in colonial fashion, whereby Ladies of the house wore a mix of both Dutch and native clothing pieces (Locher-Scholten, 2000); the quotidian usage of both Dutchness and Malay or Sranan Tongo as a mode for socializing and educating the colonized population (despite the enforcements to purely speak Dutch) and so on.

In other words, I mobilize these examples to, as McClintock (1995), ruminate in the ambivalent and interstitial site between the instantiation of norms and their ideal, whereby the transgression of the norm does not necessarily result in a scene of resistance — and viewing ambivalence purely as the site of anticolonial agency and potential disruption of the colonial authority occludes how the colonial discourse constructs multiple representational modes not only for the colonized, but also the colonizer. That is to say, since norms are inhabited, (re)produced, and contested in a multitude of conflicting ways, mimicry also takes upon various forms. The interplay between visibility and invisibility of both sameness and difference, therefore, manifests in distinct ways and opens the possibility for multiple cultural possibilities of (re)production, *transgression* and contestation.

Lastly, reflecting about and locating how resistance emerges in particular contexts within the circulations of conflicting norms, instead of simply *looking at women in the archive as resistors*, as Lila Abu-Lughod (1990) argues, might allow for richer contributions about theorizations of power — in Abu-Lughod's (1990, p. 42) work with Awlad 'Ali Bedouins communities in Egypt, for instance, she endeavored to highlight the "contradictory details of resistance [where] the complex workings of social power can be traced", particularly through the notion of resistance as a diagnosis of the historical shifts in the techniques of power that constitute the mechanisms of modernity and capitalism. She observes how Bedouin women practice an array of "minor defiances" in a sexually segregated world (like secrecy and silence), the ways in which they resist to marriage and marriage arrangements through songs, the instances where they defy traditional masculine norms by mocking masculinity and manhood, and the practices of defying generational norms of modesty by purchasing lingerie and similar products in urban Egypt.

Most notably, Abu-Lughod (1990, p. 42) argues that "instead of taking these as signs of human freedom, we will use them strategically to tell us more

about forms of power and how people are caught up in them". She points to the *transversality* of the interplay between contestation and reproduction of norms, whereby a potentially disruptive practice might, in turn, work to reproduce another norm — when these younger Bedouin women buy lingerie and associate with the younger generations in opposition to the rules of modesty of their elders, they are, ultimately, caught up in "new forms of subjection" that promote Western, gendered and capitalists circulations of power part of the Egyptian state and urban life (ibid, p. 50). In other words, whether discussing *quotidian and unassuming* modes of (re)production and contestation of norms, whether analyzing processes of *decolonial and anticolonial nationalist* struggle, the attention to resistance requires observing the ways in which the opposition to colonial violence may, beyond the promise of freedom, also signal to the ways in which subjects are continuously inscribed within various networks of power.

4.2
An atlas of the forces of the body

This analytical section observes a collection of scenes as a way to discuss colonial visual politics in terms of the circulation of disciplinary norms of conduct that mobilize an array of processes of regulation in relation to gender, race, labor, space, citizenship and so on. Likewise, I am interested in observing (and speculating) the ways in which these norms were inhabited, (re)produced, transgressed and contested in everyday experiences of the women who lived them. I also attempt to situate these experiences within a larger historical and political moments in Dutch colonial history — namely, the period leading up to Japanese invasion of Indonesia (1942-1945), the struggle for Indonesian Independence (1945-1949), and the anticolonial struggle of Suriname, which involved both the declaration of its autonomy in 1954 and formal Independence through the birth of the Republic of Suriname in 1975. While I do not explore these scenes in a linear or chronological fashion, nor do I intend to offer an exhaustive overview of these political moments, I mobilize them to connect quotidian and intimate stories within a shifting political landscape and contribute to discussions of colonial disciplinary mechanisms in Suriname and Indonesia, which are underexplored in the field of International Relations. The following subsections proceed as follows: (1) a discussion of the intersection of both gendered and racial norms of conduct for women in training to become settler wives in the Indies; (2) an exploration of disciplinary mechanisms of spatio-temporal colonial arrangements and their relation to the maintenance

of colonial order, particularly in relation to labor; (3) the ways in which Surinamese nurses in the Netherlands inhabited norms in their routines in metropolitan hospitals.

4.2.1
1921-1949, *Westeinde* 46. Reports from the Colonial School for girls and women.

> COLONIAL SCHOOL
>
> for Girls and Women.
>
> Start of the course on September 26, at the **Westeinde building**, 46. Prospectus and registration with the director **Sister L. M. Hellemans**, **Van Loostraat 54**, The Hague, until September 15, on **Wednesdays and Fridays from 3–5 p.m**. (De avondpost, September, 09, 1921).

The advertisement on *De avondpost*, published on September 9th, 1921 signaled the opening of the *Koloniale School Voor Meisjes en Vrouwen* (Colonial School for Girls and Women, or KSMV) to the public. In an unassuming building in The Hague, with towering green doors and large windows, both married and unmarried young Dutch women could be educated into becoming proper colonial wives, easily incorporated into the growing settler communities in the East Indies. The headmistress of the school, Sister Hellemans, endeavored to create, through the three-month duration of the course, "a bond between pupils and teachers" where "both sides work intensively and purposefully" to allow young ladies to become "future spouses and mothers who understand [their] responsibility and desire to fulfill [their] new duties in the far country as well as possible" (KSMV, 1925, p. 19). Beyond teaching models, therefore, the course offered the formation of *intimate bonds*, in which Sister Hellemans was "more than mother to the family," but also someone who offered "a homely spirit" in the school through the creation of a safe and familiar space of "support and friendship" in preparation to the journey to a foreign place (ibid., p. 22).

The educational practices carried out at the KSMV mark the intensification of the displacement of Dutch women to the Indies, as well as the end of the colonial enterprise of fabricating to-be-Ladies of the house — they were inscribed in the context of governmental incentives permitting the displacement of European women to the Indies in the beginning of the 20th-century, the economic duress of the 1930s, the political landscape of the Netherlands during the Second World War and, finally, the Independence of the East Indies and

formation of the Indonesian Republic. Therefore, the Colonial School for Girls and Women reflects Dutch colonial gender and racial aspirations surrounding its "exceptional" burden of civilizing its "brown brothers" from infants to, hopefully, proper social beings (in particular, the "brown sisters" of the Lady of the house), as well as disciplinary "preventative" measures to qualm the anxieties and fears surrounding the uncertainties the future in the Indies held for many Europeans.

The disciplinary routines of the school were composed of three quarterly courses per year, two lessons per week lasting 2 hours. Under Sister Hellemans' supervision, the school offered a variety of courses in topics considered fundamental for the fabrication of Ladies of the House in the Indies (KSMV, 1925): (1) Motherhood and household nursing, taught by Sister Hellemans herself; (2) Sickroom nutrition, also taught by Sister Hellemans; (3) Bandaging, taught by Mr. Ph. E. Maier, a physician and retired managing Officer of Health of 1st class;[14] (4) First aid for accidents, also taught by Mr. Ph. E. Maier; (5) Tropical hygiene, taught by Dr. A. C. de Koek, who was a former teacher at the School for the Training of Native Doctors (School Tot Opleiding Van Inlandsche Artsen, or STOVIA) in Weltevreden in the East Indies;[15] (6) Geography and Ethnography of the Dutch East Indies, taught by Mr. J. Lameijn, who was the former director of training and vocational schools in Bandung, and later the director of the Jan Pietersz Coen Foundation in Weltevreden;[16] (7) Malay language, also taught by Mr. J. Lameijn; (8) Dutch and East Indian cuisine and East Indian housekeeping, taught by Mrs. E. van Assen Sol; and, finally, (9) Sewing and cutting lesson for the production of garments for infants, children and adults for the Dutch East Indies, taught by Miss E. S. van der Veen, who was certified by the Association of Dutch Fashion Union (Vereniging Nederlandsche Modevakbond, NMVB).

Through these classes, the KSMV strived to (re)produce an East Indian microcosmos, with European teachers symbolically "taking the place" of indigenous people, after receiving their "expert" status in Indology for having lived in the East Indies for a period of time — that is, because figures like Sister Hellemans lived in the tropics and intimately knew colonial life, and thus were seen as authority figures about indigenous life and customs capable of providing "excellent education at the Colonial School, given by highly qualified teachers

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[14]The professor might have been trained in the National Training School for Military Physicians in Utrecht (Rijkskweekschool voor militaire geneeskundigen te Utrecht), which have granted him the military ranking of being 1st class Officer of Health.

[15]Technical Schools were also part of the stratified colonial school system I mentioned in note 13, In this case, the STOVIA was a school for native doctors located in Batavia.

[16]The Jan Pietersz Coen Foundation (Jan Pieterszoon Coen Stichting) was a boarding school located in Weltevreden, Batavia.

who have spent many years in India", they could *mimic* the dispositions of the colonized people in order to create "an Indian atmosphere. An atmosphere of idealism and hard work" (KSMV, 1925 p. 21-22). In other words, these institutions (re)produced colonial forms of mimicry (McClintock, 1995) in which they collectively performed (perceived) cultural practices of indigenous communities of the Dutch East Indies and, simultaneously, disseminated (interpreted) forms of indigenous knowledge to the European public.

This was part of the development of the colonial administration and, consequently, the education of the workforce in Dutch colonial society, whereby part of the "exceptional character" of the Dutch colonial administration in comparison to other colonial powers was the *intimate knowledge* the Dutch believed to possess in the matters of the indigenous society of its "crown jewel", the East Indies (Foray, 2019, p. 93) — for example, as Jennifer Foray argues, the discussions surrounding the deployment of the Ethical Policy that took place in the end of the 19th-century, were carried not only by "parliamentarians in The Hague, [...] administrators in the East Indies, [and] colonial power brokers of all political stripes", but also by "expert 'Indologists' trained in Indonesian traditions and customs" (ibid). Indology, then, was an academic pursuit necessary for Dutchmen who wanted to become civil servants in the *Bureau Binnenlandse Bestuur* (Interior Governance Bureau, or BB) in the East Indies. In Leiden University, for example, the men that composed the *India Orientalis* (a student fraternity part of Leiden University) received Indology education in linguistic and economic-legal matters pertaining to the East Indies in order to fulfill governmental positions in the colony. The Colonial School for Girls and Women, therefore, was constructed as the "female-equivalent" to the higher and longer education required from men. In other words, these academic institutions, in various ways, were constituted at the intersection between the dissemination of multiple circuits of disciplinary power and the (re)production of the human sciences and knowledge about the colonized Other — on the one hand, the development of colonial anthropology and ethnography required a process of analysis, classification and surveillance of the movements, gestures and rhythms of the customs of the colonized, which would then be interpreted and disseminated within systems of Western knowledge; on the other hand, being part of these institutional educations (which promised upward social mobility to work positions in the colonial administration) also involved the classification, monitoring and management of European students, as well as the education of their bodies into an array of norms to (re)produce Dutchness in foreign lands.

What I want to bring forth by situating the practices carried out at the

Colonial School for Girls and Women within Homi Bhabha (1994) and Anne McClintock's (1995, p. 63) previous discussion on anti/colonial mimicry, is how these and other colonial training institutions (re)produced precisely this site of "founding ambivalence" of the colonial discourse and authority — that is, a paradoxical mode of representation that attempts to fix while, simultaneously, displaces the subject through the "slippage between identity and difference". One of the examples McClintock (1995) gives of colonial mimicry is minstrelsy, a colonial "scopic regime" (Copeland, 2010) that attempts to fix the identity of the colonized through stereotypes that function through the hypervisibility and mocking of perceived "differential features" in comparison to whiteness. Thus, minstrelsy as a mode of colonial mimicry is founded on a transgression of the norm where the white person temporarily occupies the *flesh* of the colonized and theatrically performs the mannerisms of the "inferior races" in order to, paradoxically, *exacerbate difference* — reduce the colonized body to a "vessel for the uses, thoughts, whims, and feelings of others" and, at the same time, as the "locus of excess enjoyment" of white audiences (Hartman, 2021, p. 24; ibid, p. 29). Here, however, the boundaries between the staging of an exacerbated difference and the attempt at fabricating proximity and likeness are harder to pin down.

The desire to *know* and *master* the Other through the reproduction of his/her cultural practices is an attempt at circumventing "bitter experiences" (KSMV, 1925, p. 21) and "tropical suffering" (ibid, p. 27) that women were believed to face arriving in the Indies. Discussions surrounding the tropical disease called Neurasthenia were particularly poignant in relation to this point: as Ann Laura Stoler (2010, p. 66) notes, "the climatic, social, and work conditions of colonial life gave rise to a specific set of psychotic disorders thought to effect *l'equilibre cerebral* and predispose Europeans in the tropics to mental breakdown". "Colonial" (Stoler, 2010) and/or "tropical" (Besser, 2003; Bischoff, 2013) neurasthenia, therefore, was understood as the "most common manifestation" (Stoler, 2010) of the dangers the tropics posed to Europeans — and, to women in particular, evoked a specter of hysteria, racial/sexual deviancy and degeneration. The KSMV, therefore, was not simply an institution where Dutch women could *learn* about the colonized Other, but a controlled and familiar site where an imitation of the colony could be staged through the creation of an "Indian atmosphere" (KSMV, 1925, p. 22) in which the colonizer (re)produced routines of the tropics divorced from and in preparation to the dangers actual contact posed (Figure 4.2).

Such indiscernible place between practices of reproduction of difference and attempts at approximation to the colonized manifested in various ways

INDISCHE KOOKLES GROEP C VAN DEN 17en CURSUS
(Januari—April 1927)

Figure 4.2: Dutch East Indies cooking class, Group C of the 17th course (January-April 1927), Derde Propagandaboekje, KSMV, 1925

— in some cases, these women emphasized the decisions to join the course in preparation for their journeys out of fears and anxieties related to the suffering of "cultural shocks":

> The warmth, the strange, elusive people, the language, the food—everything hits you in that foreign land like an almost insurmountable mountain of difficulties that seem impossible to overcome. You fill your plate with strange things whose names you don't even know and try to work your way through with tears in your eyes. You diligently studied a book, 'Malay Without a Master,' on board and are surprised to find that no native understands a word of it, and your table neighbors laugh when you ask for 'bras' (raw rice) instead of 'nasi' (cooked rice). You arrive in your own house and cannot give the simplest commands to the servants, know nothing about the operation of an Indonesian household, and make mistake after mistake. The servants take advantage of your ignorance and deceive you as much as they can. And it gets worse. Sickness comes into the house or an accident happens, and you are far from a doctor, not knowing what to do. Then you start to hate Indonesia, wish you had never come, and are no longer able to appreciate

the beauty and goodness of the country. Against all these troubles, the Colonial School is a preventive measure. What I saw and heard there in the few hours I was guided has prompted me to sincerely exclaim, 'What a pity that not all girls going to Indonesia take this course; what misery would be prevented as a result (KSMV, 1925, p. 29-30).

In other moments, through the expertise of their teachers, they purported a discourse that undermined the force of the tropical adversities in the experience of European women in the Indies and, instead, strived to affirm that "difficulties [were] there to be overcome — and all the school teachers are eloquent proof that a long stay in the tropics does no harm to bright workers." (KSMV, 1925, p. 21-22):

Ah, it's sometimes so difficult to point out all the dangers to the girls that can destroy their young lives. You have to inform them to protect them from worse, but it often hurts me to disturb that sunny, carefree youth, to show something ugly amidst all those beautiful illusions of life. I never dwell too long on those serious illnesses, on those abnormal cases; quickly, I bring up an example that shows how, when the danger is fought in time, deeply impactful consequences can be completely avoided. I must not cause fear, I do not want to hurt. Doesn't that sound like a mother? We stand by the crib, 'The cat's out of the bag.' Madame, you see for yourself," The crib is a bit messy, yes, that's true. Skillfully, the doll representing a Dutch baby is laid in a 'nest' of blankets and sheets (ibid).

What I want to showcase through these discourses surrounding the KSMV is how, paradoxically, the very construction of the "Dutch citizenship" to be exercised in the Indies, foregrounded in an opposition to the nature of the colonized, was already predicated by the colonial encounter — that is, the very *fantasy of Dutchness* to be performed by the Lady of the House in the colonies as another facet of the colonial authority in the home space was already *tarnished* by the presence of the colonized. The educational rituals put forth by the KSMV, where these women were taught to be "proper colonial wives" through the (re)production of gendered and racial norms, which encompassed "industriousness, temperance, abstinence and [sexual] self-control" (De huisvrouw, 1878, p. 2), were accompanied by the mimicry of

cultural practices of the colonized around cuisine, health, language and so on.[17] The success of the Dutch enterprise in the East Indies through the enforcement of colonial norms of conduct (re)producing Dutchness — the process of "Dutchification" Stíprtaan (1998) speaks of —, paradoxically, hinged on the capacity of the colonizer to inhabit a *hybridized, ambivalent site* in which the ideal of Dutchness (as the ideal of a white, European, cohesive identity) continued to be pursued in the midst of various *slippages* and *displacements* between similarity and difference.

Year after year, around 30 to 40 women would conclude the course and embark on their journey to the East Indies in hopes of adequately putting into practices the lessons learned during class.[18] The names of the students, home addresses, marital status (as well as the names of the husbands), travel dates and destinations are forever recorded into the KSMV's *Stamboek* (register book) (Figure 4.3). These registers, additionally, provide observations of the behavior of the students and monitor their performance — they provide details of completed lessons, the reasons provided for missing lessons, the students who dropped out of the course, and those who "happily" completed the course and travelled to the Indies. There are even entries about the date of the marriages of women who entered the course engaged. Although I could not find/access records indicating the school received governmental funding, the National Archives of the Netherlands pointed to the financial support received from large companies and private individuals and the *Derde Propagandaboekje* (third Propaganda booklet) cited heavily endorsement of the course in Dutch newspapers.

Due to the lack of access to official records and scarce literature about the KSMV, I can only speculate about the ways in which these women inhabited ambivalent and interstitial colonial sites at the threshold of the (learned) performance of Dutchness and the idealization of their prosperous future in the colonies.[19] What did they talk about whilst cooking "Indian

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[17]It is worth noting that the discourses surrounding the KSMV also deployed a rhetoric centered around the family — the "homely space", the role of Sister Hellemans as a "mother", for example — in a similar engagement I have discussed in the previous chapter through colonial discourses about the deployment of the Ethical Policy in the East Indies. Furthermore, we can situate these preventative measures developed in the Colonial School as also inscribed within fears of sexual degeneracy and sexual contamination in the colonies — the rhetoric of the family was a mode for desexualizing life in the colonies and managing sexual anxieties (like the white slave panic).

[18]It is worth noting that not all the women who took the course traveled to live in the Dutch East Indies, as some of them went to other places in Europe, the West Indies and Africa. Still, the course was marketed towards making a life in the East Indies.

[19]I have found a book that discusses the Colonial School and its records in depth. However, I did not find a copy I could access to assist in the present discussion. See: Miel Groten. Klaargestoomd voor Indië: De koloniale school voor meisjes en vrouwen (1921-1949). Rijksmuseum, 2023.

Figure 4.3: Page 87 of the KSMV's Stamboek, Anonymous author (1921-1929), Rijksmuseum.

food"? Throughout the duration of the course, did Sister Hellemans' promise of creating familiarity and safety came to fruition? Did these women come to desire the Indies and project upon it an array of hopes and dreams for the future? What happened to the women who did not finish the course? What to say about the women who gave up leaving for the colonies — those who did not have their photograph neatly cut and glued to the pages of the Stamboek, those who failed to create bonds with the teachers and classmates, those who did not want to give up the urban metropole for the participation in the fabrication of the Tropical Netherlands elsewhere? Likewise, what about those women who refused to participate in the course, who might have said to their friends:

"Oh, come on! Why are you wasting your money with these unnecessary endeavors? I will become knowledgeable about Indian affairs only when I'm there, by trial and error".

Perhaps their friends, disciplined and educated by Sister Hellemans, would then reply:

"You are naive to rely on the helpfulness and hospitality of the Indians.

This mindset is unbecoming of the modern woman".[20]

Perhaps to many of these women who were encouraged to put part of their husband's or family's savings into the preventative measures offered by Mistress Hellemans, the "*beautiful illusions of life*" really did come true (KSMV, 1925, p. 14) — some of them could have married Dutch civil servants in the East Indies, raised Dutch children with access to Western education and become respectable Ladies of the House in their settler enclaves, working diligently for the maintenance of their privilege in relation to the colonized; some of them could have married Indo-Dutch colonial servants or professionals and built families that lived carefree and happy lives surrounded Indonesians, Indo and Dutch peers. Perhaps they *did* develop affections for the native population and, following the teachings of Sister Hellemans, worked to educate them into respectful and docile servants — these European women might have even, as Ann Laura Stoler (2010) and Elsbeth Locher-Scholten (2000) note, championed (some of) the causes of the colonized women: the demands for the revision of negative representations of the nyai; the attention to the dangers "nonprovisioned native women and children" faced (Stoler, 2010, p. 57); the advocacy for the legimation of mixed unions with European men (ibid); the access to education and to the political sphere for (elite) Indonesian women through the promises of the Ethical Policy.

Conversely, perhaps these women *really did have tears in their eyes* (KSMV, 1925, p. 29) when experiencing life in the Indies — some of them could have been forever "repelled by its climate, ill at ease in the midst of its strangely dressed crowds, lonely for [their] native country" but remained there due to the advantages the colony offered in terms of living standards (Memmi, 1974, p. 48); some of them could have, instead of rejoicing in the Empire-building effort, fantasied about returning to their home country for the rest of their lives, waiting for their lower-ranked civil service husbands to receive promotions that would never come. Perhaps the feeling of dread and the fear of the impossibility of achieving prosperity only intensified in the face of the economic crisis of the early 1930s, in which she would have to financially contribute to the household income to complement her husband's salary. In this context, The KSMV was also inscribed within this landscape of economic insecurity, lost financial investment and had fewer enrollment rates, which were also the case during the Second World War period. The Nazi-German invasion of the Netherlands in 1940 and the subsequent Japanese invasion of the Dutch East Indies in 1942 could have only intensified the dread. With the

[20]This dialogue is a recreation of testimonies part of the propaganda booklet (KSMV, 1925, p. 18).

surrender of the *Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch Leger* (Royal Netherlands-East Indies Army, or KNIL) to the Japanese Army in 1942, the "insurmountable mountain of difficulties" in reproducing Dutchness, then, might have really seemed impossible to overcome (KSMV, 1925, p. 29) — Dutch and Indo-Dutch families in the East Indies went back to the Netherlands prior to the invasion due to the threat of Indonesian Revolution, fled to Australia, or moved further into the Indonesian hinterlands (particularly if they had Indonesian relatives). Dutch families who continued to live in their enclaves were then subjected to the quotidian surveillance by the Japanese military and placed into internment facilities in colonial schools, prisons and religious institutions, which were separated by gender (Gouda, 2002). It is possible, then, that many of these women, who projected a fantasy of national prosperity based on the (re)production of gendered norms of conduct related to Dutchness in the East Indies, were separated from their husbands during Japanese rule in the West Indies — many who lost their husbands and fathers as prisoners of war — and subjected to house searches in which they attempted to conceal their children from the occupational forces.

The capitulation of the Japanese by the allied forces in August 1945, consequently, created a "very enthusiastic" atmosphere for the reopening of the Colonial School in the following year (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Inventaris 2.20.24) — the general belief was that Dutch colonial administration would seize back control of the Dutch East Indies and the KSMV would resume activities to manufacture to-be Ladies of the House to (re)produce Dutch colonial norms of conduct. However, for many Dutch settlers (and colonial administrations), the native population staged a sudden betrayal which would, in contemporary dominant Dutch historiography, one of the biggest traumas of the Netherlands: on August 17, 1945, Indonesian nationalists Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta proclaimed the Independence of the Indonesia Republic (Gouda, 2002; 1997). With the intensification of Indonesian nationalist sentiments, the transformation of red, white and blue striped flags into red and white ones, Dutch and/or Indo-Dutch women in the colonies said to have experienced "hurtful and humiliating" (KSMV, 1925) behavior in newly independent Indonesia and, as a result, Dutch families returned to the Netherlands (Gouda, 2002). The available records of the KSMV in the National Archives of the Netherlands conclude that, "given the political development in Indonesia, the school no longer had a reason to exist, so it was closed on December 29, 1949" (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Inventaris 2.20.24).

4.2.2

From Paramaribo to Yogyakarta, a geography of (dis)order[21]

The arguments I put forth in the present section, through analytical practices of approximation and distancing between the colonial mechanisms deployed to discipline the colonial population in both the East and West Indies, are twofold: (1) recovering the Foucauldian disciplinary schema, whereby disciplinary mechanisms function at the intersection between the "architectural, [the] functional and [the] hierarchical" (Foucault, 2012 [1975], p. 148), I wish to evidence how colonial disciplinary mechanism worked through the (re)production of the *spatial arrangements* of the colonized; (2) the ways in which the deployment of disciplinary modes of surveillance in the colonies, under the liberal ethos of securing "peace" and "order" informed the lived experiences of colonized women, particularly in relation to labor.

Revising the work of Mark Neocleous (2014, p. 11), the logic of improvement underpinned by the liberal ethos that marked the deployment of the Ethical Policy in the East Indies and its influence in the West Indies was also predicated on the dissemination of disciplinary apparatus aimed at *securing political and social order*, particularly in relation to labor. That is, the "secret war" against forms of living considered *wasteful* to the capitalist economy — "the disorderly, unruly, criminal, indecent, disobedient, disloyal and lawless" (*ibid*, p. 14) — was inscribed within the development of imperial mechanisms aimed at maintaining "order" and "peace" through violent means. The creation of what Ann Laura Stoler (2010, p. XVII) calls "imperial forms of detention", characterized by the deployment of practices of enclosing, confining and coercing the unruly subjects in the colonies, is predicated on colonial mechanisms of "peace" and "improvement". In this context, Neocleous (2014, p. 12), works *along* and *beyond* a Foucauldian theoretical engagement that observes how the apparatus of war *informs* politics, to, instead, provide an approach that thinks power relations as informed by *both* war and police apparatuses. In other words, Neocleous (2014) points to the binding relationship between "war power", as the apparatus aimed at fabricating order, and "police power", as the disciplinary mechanisms of *policing* and *regulating* disorderly bodies.

As Frances Gouda (2002, p. 83-84) points out, the flourishing Dutch East Indian exportation economy of, most notably, tobacco and oil, was plunged into decline as a result of the Great Depression's global economic landscape — furthermore, the administration of the newly appointed Governor General,

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[21]Yogyakarta was temporarily the capital of Indonesia during the Revolutionary war against the Dutch (1946-1948).

Bonifacius Cornelis de Jonge (1931-1934), was characterized by a gradual loss of the "progressive nature" of the Ethical Policy and the sedimentation of a conservative ethos pointed toward the maintenance of "*rust en orde, tranquility and order*" (Locher-Scholten , 2000, p. 17). During De Jonge's administration, an intense process of suppression of native politicians, media channels, educational facilities, and public assemblage was deployed in order to "forcefully oppose any and all attempts at revolution, however petty or insignificant they might initially seem" (ibid, p. 91) — this included not only the infinitesimal requirement to report anything and everything that could be, even fleetingly, interpreted as revolutionary or communist dissent, as I mentioned in the previous chapter; but also the virtual silencing of public political demonstrations. Thus, both perceived *private schemes* of native political articulation, and *public* political manifestations were punished with preventative custody, incarceration and displacement to internment camps without trial (ibid, p. 92).

In the Dutch West Indies, a similar landscape marked the political experiences of the colonized during the 1930s — the various processes of state intervention in Suriname with the intent of developing the industrial, mining and bauxite economies that had led to the contracting of indentured labor from the East Indies and British India caused the deepening of sociopolitical segregation along ethnic lines (Hoefte, 2014, p. 67). Furthermore, as Rosemarijn Hoefte (2014, p. 70) notes, "[t]he social unrest of the 1930s forced a look at the political situation, which was framed in the repression of communism and other unwelcome ideas", thus, "the experiences in the Netherlands East Indies again informed policy in Suriname". In similar fashion to what I previously described, the policies initiated by Governor-General Abraham Rutgers (1928-1933) and his successor Johannes Kielstra (1933-1944) reproduced an atmosphere of colonial sociopolitical suppression through intense surveillance and censorship of Javanese — they were monitored in transports, their mail to Java was breached and censored, their newspapers published in Malay were surveilled by the colonial administration in coordination with plantation managers (Hoefte, 2014, p. 79) — as well as emerging labor unions, and Afro-Surinamese national political movements, which were also branded as communist (ibid; Groenewoud, 2021).

The enforcement of colonial norms of conduct under a colonial discourse of "tranquility and order" (Locher-Scholten, 2000, p. 17) was related not only to the circulation of discursive mechanisms to police, pathologize and criminalize unwanted political behavior from the colonized, but also through the organizational practices to (re)arrange their spatial disposition — the

desire to transform the colonies into Tropical Netherlands (particularly the crown jewel, the Dutch East Indies) involved the aesthetic reproduction of Dutchness into the town planning of colonial urban centers whilst maintaining the alluring exoticism of the natural colonial topography. Thus, the colonial urban project, from its inception, was marked by a "racism inscribed in the social production of space" (Oliveira, 2019, p. 1).

In the Dutch East Indies, continuous processes of rural exodus impacted the spatial organization of traditional native communities, especially in regard to life in *kampongs* or *desa villages* — the processes of spatial modernization developed by the Dutch in the 19th and 20th-centuries resulted in the "breakdown of village infrastructure, authority and organization" due to overcrowding and overlapping authority that transformed many traditional settlements into "kampongs occupying enclaves often hidden from view" (Cobban, 1974, p. 405). Therefore, the "Kampong Question" (*Kampongvraagstuk*) was a topic of discussions within the colonial administration for many decades, marked by unresolved and frustrated conversations oscillating between the desire to abolish these spatial "anomalies" and the civilizing mission of incorporating them into the colonial cities and improving them to European living standards (*ibid*). While official discourses on improvement highlighted the health and construction hazards the kampongs posed, colonial administrators "feared that bad living conditions would drive the urban poor into the hands of the nationalists, whose stated aim was to overthrow the colonial government" (Reerink, 2015, p. 199).

While discourses put forth by the colonial administration through the Ethical Policy constructed the image of the native population as "a race of children" who could not govern themselves without Dutch guidance (De Surinamer: nieuws- en advertentieblad, Oct 24, 1915), the paranoia surrounding growing Japanese presence in the Indies, as well as nationalist political agitation also saw them as potential criminals and gang members (Gouda, 2002). The political life that could emerge in the sinuous paths of communities that could only be accessed by alleyways, that were impervious to the meddling of the colonial government under the Dutch East Indian Constitution (1854),[22] that were steadily growing due to continuous processes of native migration and that did not conform to social colonial customs, were of great concern to authorities. Many authors describe these *kampongs* as *slums* precisely to

[22]During the colonial administration, the villages were recognized as autonomous and managed their own affairs without Dutch intervention, as guaranteed by the Dutch East Indian Constitution (Regeeringsregle-ment) of 1854 (Cobban, 1974). Around the period surrounding the "Kampong Question" I mentioned, however, the constitution was altered so that the colonial administration could intervene in the desa that transformed into urban kampongs (ibid).

Figure 4.4: Street in a kampong, presumably in Surabaya (c. 1900), Leiden University Libraries

draw attention to how these urban "anomalies" were formed at the intersection of "ethno-racial domination and urban inequality" (Wacquant, 2004, p. 157) (Figure 4.4).

Attempts to "develop, standardize, and regulate these settlements" (Reerink, 2015, p. 194) involved the construction of new and *improved kampongs* that (re)produced the Dutch architectural aesthetic of modernization, as well as intervention in existing *kampongs*. The development of public housing as ordinate living settlements for natives was only accessible to the native population who could afford to pay for the rent prices, who were usually lower-ranked colonial officials (Wijono, 2015). For example, the families that moved into neatly arranged complexes in Semarang were categorized and hierarchized by the size of the house, which in turn corresponded to the amount of rent paid, which resulted in new class distinctions (ibid). The native civil servants who resided in these houses, in the face of the Colonial Housing Department, had to portray the appropriated balance between Dutchness and traditional culture — for example, complaints about how they bathed outside and did not use the bathroom led to the Housing Department's continuous presence in their homes to assure cleanliness and hygiene (ibid, 2015, p. 186) Likewise, the colonial government also developed living complexes to regulate the behavior of laborers from *kampongs* or *desa villages* and ensure maximum

profitability. For instance, Arjan Veering (2015) observes the construction of the Koeliekampong and, later, the Uniekampong to regulate the living conditions of the labor force of the growing Tanjung Priok harbor in Batava — these *kampongs* were developed as living spaces for coolies (and their families) under the surveillance of harbor enterprises and the colonial administration, with the intent to (re)educate their poor "work ethic" of casual labor to a status of standardized docility, hygiene and industriousness (ibid, p. 221-225). In these colonial-sponsored *kampongs*, a liminal site between a *living* and *working* space emerged based on a hierarchical structure organizing workers into distinct groups distinguished by level of labor experience: access to food was distributed by the management and the living spaces were communal (communal washing facilities; communal rooms with wooden beds, except for chief workers who could live separately with their families; and communal kitchens) (Veering, 2015). Furthermore, for the coolies working and living in the plantations of both East and West Indies, the Penal Section of the Coolie Ordinance allowed plantation owners to administer physical punishment for perceived infractions, which would account for any minor gesture and unwanted behavior, thus reinforcing colonial docility (Locher-Scholten, 2000; Breman, 2002).[23]

The place of women in the labor landscape was inscribed in the circulation of colonial norms of conduct and the articulation of disciplinary mechanisms. Through the concept of "women's work," Chandra Tapalde Mohanty (1996), invites us to reflect on how spatial and economic inequality are constituted by gendered and racial social mechanisms that inform the ways in which women come to occupy spaces in the labor market. That is, the "elision of person and place" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 52) that underlines the ways in which an array of social norms and mechanisms of power structure the work performed by women — such as notions of "appropriate femininity, domesticity, (hetero)sexuality, and racial and cultural stereotypes" (Mohanty, 1996, p. 6).

Despite political discussions to restrict female labor in both the metropole and the colonies to "to improve labour conditions and wages, but also to raise the standard of family life, to improve moral and spiritual well-being, housing and other aspects of workers' lives," colonized women continued to work (Locher-Scholten, 2000, p. 50). For Indonesian rural women in particularly, not only they composed a fundamental parcel of the agricultural workforce, but they also held the most labor-intensive jobs: "planting, weeding and

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[23]Due to international pressure, particularly the U.S., in relation to the severity of punishment administered by plantation owners against the coolies, the penal sanction in the coolie ordinance was abolished in the Dutch East Indies in 1931 (Gouda, 2022) and in the West Indies in 1948. See: Jan Breman. Koelies Planters En Koloniale: Het Arbeidsregime Op De Grootlandbouwondernemingen Aan Sumatra's Oostkust in Het Begin Van De Twintigste Eeuw. Brill; 3rd ed, 1992.
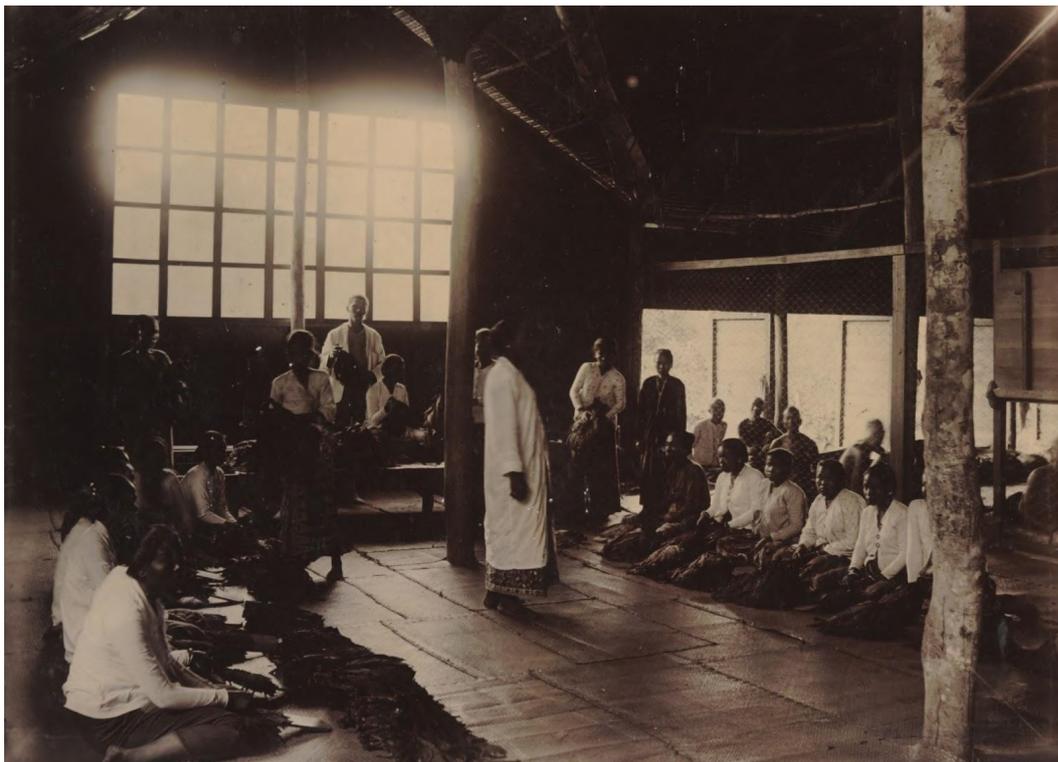
Figure 4.5: Women working in tobacco shed, probably in Timbangdeli (c. 1900), Leiden University Libraries.

the gathering of the rice ears one by one" (ibid, p. 56). Thus, to colonial authorities, these rural workers who lived in *desa* or in *plantation estates*, were motivated to work both out of economic necessity and religious customs (in regard to rice cultivation in particular) and composed "working families" in which all members contributed to the family income, formed an "ideal type" of native female worker (ibid, p. 64-65). To this end, the colonial archives are filled with photographs of Indonesian women picking rice, picking peanuts, sitting neatly arranged into production lines in tobacco factories, working diligently sorting coffee beans and so on (Figure 4.5). Whereas elite Indonesian and Indo-Dutch women were expected to perform docility through the (re)production of the family and, to this end, were the main targets of social inclusion and educational policies of the Ethical Policy, for the majority of Indonesian women, the rising rates of illiteracy amongst the native population (particularly in rural areas), the perceived unruly and disorderly living arrangements, the education of the body in the factory and in the plantations was another mode of preventing forms of colonial dissent. In fact, the very notion of favoritism in colonial policies towards the Javanese families who migrated to Suriname under indentured labor contracts was precisely because these working families were seen to reproduce docility and profitability more than the Creole population (Hoefte, 2014).

Figure 4.6: The Saramaccastraat in Paramaribo, Willem van de Poll (1947), National Archives of the Netherlands.

The Surinamese experience with the global crisis of the 1930s was marked by severe unemployment in the plantations, as well the bauxite mining industry, which was the driving force of the colony (Hoefte, 2014, p. 71). Similarly to the Dutch East Indies, the developing urban space of Paramaribo was the destination of intense migration movements from the rural areas of the colony, the Netherlands Antilles and from indentured workers from British India and the East Indies (Hoefte, 2014). In Paramaribo, colonial settlement patterns (re)produced the asymmetrical distribution of the space — along the vast extension of the riverside, Waterkant Street,[24] the main road of Paramaribo, was designed to reproduce yet another Tropical Netherlands. In the outskirts of the imposing array of colonial-style timber houses, which marked the living patterns of the settlers living in the city center, the colonized social life

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[24]The Waterkant Street is part of the Historic Inner City of Paramaribo, recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 2002.

Figure 4.7: Women in market in Paramaribo, Willem Van den Poll (1947/48), National Archives of the Netherlands.

was formed. The aesthetic of colonial disorder, which was the source of criminal reports, bourgeois complaints, and police intervention and persecution, was marked by images of dilapidated neighborhoods, cramped living spaces, clothes hanging out to dry by the windows (Figure 4.6). Within these urban landscapes, "immoral" and "indecent" Afro-Surinamese working-class women could not (out of refusal and/or necessity) remain home bound — as Hoefte (2014) notes, when working-class men migrated to work in mining sites and industries, the women remained responsible for managing and sustaining the household. These women took up various jobs, often in the informal sector, in order to be providers for their families. The National Archives of the Netherlands, as a result, are filled with images that attest to these continuous forms of displacement in the face of economic insecurity: Creole women carrying baskets around town, Hindustani women managing and selling goods in street markets, washerwomen hanging clothes (Figure 4.7). And again, where education for middle-class women was seen as a gateway to upward mobility and stable income, usually through the role of teachers, which reinscribed them in the continuous (re)production of colonial forms of knowledge and social and gendered norms of conduct, lower-class Surinamese women (Creole, Hindustani and Javanese) in the profound multicultural colonial society inhabited and transgressed colonial norms of conduct about femininity, labor and morality through such quotidian modes of survival in the urban space.

Throughout the 1940s and into the second half of the 20th-century, the relationship between the circulation of mechanisms of surveillance and the organization of the spatial arrangements of the colonized gained new contours. In the East Indies, the "specter of Japanese aggression" (Gouda, 2002) that haunted Japans's presence in the colony became a reality when the Dutch Royal Army was defeated. During this period, further fear of alliances between the Indonesian growing Nationalist Movement and the Japanese prompted the Dutch to "stress the rhetoric of the family more strongly than ever before, [...] glorifying a national colonial past as well as the harmonious cohabitation of different races, inside and outside the home" (Locher-Scholten, 2000, p. 100). Under Japanese occupation, many of the *kampongs* built by the Dutch colonial government to monitor and discipline the bodies of the colonized population were transformed into war internment camps where Japanese forces enclosed the Dutch population in the Indies. Indonesian perceptions of the Japanese presence in the colony were varied — when the Japanese defeated the Dutch Army, as Frances Gouda (2002, p. 108) notes, "Indonesian nationalists observed with a mixture of excitement and dread", caught between cooperation with the occupation under the promise of independence and the violence that the native population was subjected to at the hands of the Japanese. On the one hand, the Japanese (re)produced Dutch disciplinary mechanisms, not only by confining the Dutch population to internment camps, but also subjecting the native population to forced labor, routine police scrutiny and physical punishment. On the other hand, these Japanese forces attempted to "foster pride in Indonesians' 'nation/race' (*bangsa/kebangsaan*)" through an Anti-Western rhetoric and by providing young men with basic military training (ibid, p. 110).

Furthermore, both colonies were marked, in distinct ways, by the specter of U.S. presence — in the East Indies, there was a gradual shift in American foreign policy from economically supporting the Netherlands (particularly with its inclusion in the Marshall plan and financial and military assistance to fighting the Japanese occupation) to championing, at the end of the 1940s, Indonesian independence (Gouda, 2002). In the West Indies, the American presence during the Second World War contributed to an increase in the local exportation economy of bauxite and, later in the context of the achievement of autonomy in 1954, for the development of factories and the extraction of natural resources through the displacement of Maroon and Amerindian communities (Hoefte, 2014). Both colonies have complex and complicated histories with autonomy and decolonization and the structural problems of nation-building within politically diverse and multicultural societies. The

process of Indonesian independence was a long-awaited endeavor marked by centuries of Dutch colonial policies, Japanese invasion, Revolutionary wars with the Dutch attempting to seek back power that have resulted in profound violence — beyond seeing these processes of resistance as fought by a politically cohesive revolutionary front, the anti-colonial struggle was marked by internal conflict and political division between revolutionary groups (Islamic groups, communists groups and the "moderate" nationalist movement under Sukarno and Hatta) (Gouda, 2002).

In Suriname, the social political landscape of the economic crisis during the 1930s led to a series of protests that resulted in police violence and censorship, but also prompted the creation of various promising labor organizations. However, political leaders with the potential to become important figures not only in the anticolonial movement, but also in the decolonization political process, were deeply censored and penalized by the colonial regime — for example, the activist Louis Doedel who contested colonial policies (re)producing asymmetric socioeconomic relations in the colony, was forcibly institutionalized in a psychiatric facility by the colonial government (Hoefte, 2014). Similarly, Antom de Kom, who attended university in the Netherlands and navigated these disciplinary spaces and Western forms of knowledge by using "the master's tools" (Lorde, 1984) against them — while his presence in the university was part of disciplinary mechanisms for the (re)production of colonial knowledge and social practices, there he also participated in communist political circles and used a combination of theoretical knowledge and lived experience to write the first anti-colonial Surinamese book (De Kom, 1934; Hoefte, 2014; Groenewoud, 2021; Oostindie, 2004). In Suriname, he managed to breach the ethnic boundaries between the colonized population by highlighting common class struggles (gaining sympathy particularly with the Javanese) but was ultimately forced to return to the Netherlands by the colonial government (Hoefte, 2014; Groenewoud, 2021). The difficulties surrounding political practices of the organizations and, later, of the political groups, as Hoefte (2014) notes, were most intense around ethnic differences, which hindered organizational cohesion and the deployment of shared political goals — the political parties were constructed along ethnic, not political, affiliations, where many were distrustful of, in particular, Creole leadership, where immigrants felt they would have to acquiesce to "Creole norms" (Hoefte, 2014, p. 69).

In other words, these complex and conflicting political processes speak on the ways in which these revolutionary movements were also fuelled by an ideal of national congruence that were inscribed within internal struggles of diverging groups who opposed or failed to conform to an imagined cohesive national

ideal (Sajed, 2019). Furthermore, these complicated historical processes show precisely the various ways in which these political movements negotiated notions of freedom, colonial subjection and violence by entering the global stage, particularly under the gaze of the U.S., and consequently, were inscribed within new modes of subjection under the global capitalist economy.

4.2.3
The Hague, 1958. Bronovo Hospital. Missed calls from your Surinamese Sister.

On August 29, 1956, Delfi Baal bought a ticket from the Royal Netherlands Steamship Company (KNSM) to travel from Paramaribo to Amsterdam (Fotocollectie D. Roseval-Baal, Collection ID: COLL00484). She paid the total amount of 235 American dollars. She was one of around 200 Surinamese women who would travel to the Netherlands to become nurses in the context of a shortage of medical professionals as a consequence of the Second World War (Vijf eeuwen migratie, n/d).[25] I shall refer to these women by the figure of the "*Surinamese Sister*".[26] Perhaps the Surinamese Sister saw the advertisement in the local newspaper, perhaps she was informed through a friend about the opportunity to travel to the Netherlands to become a nurse and decided to apply. The requirements to participate in the Dutch Nursing Training course were the following: (1) the applicants had to be unmarried; (2) a high school diploma was mandatory; (3) the applicants had to display reliability and an "impeccable lifestyle" (in other words, the requirement for single but sexually moral women) (Vijf eeuwen migratie, n/d) — thus, the demands for acceptance were laid out, already conditioned by perfection.

While the Surinamese economy was boosted by the momentum of the Second World War, particularly due to U.S. interest in bauxite mining (Hoefte, 2014), for many Surinamese women, options for upward mobility continued to appear very limited — becoming a nurse in prestigious training schools in the Netherlands proved to be a better alternative to being a school teacher in Suriname. Therefore, the Surinamese Sister gathered her things, packed her bags, embraced her family and embarked on the ship in the pursuit of superior career opportunities and lifestyles. Like many children of colonized families, the Surinamese Sister grew up hearing that access to prestigious

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[25] According to Vijf eeuwen migratie, the number of Surinamese women that traveled to the Netherlands to pursue nursing is estimated at around 200, but could likely be more.

[26] The title of "sister" signals how nurses in the Netherlands were called, due to many hospitals being directed by the church. Furthermore, while I am evoking the "Surinamese Sister" to represent a more generalized experience of Surinamese women in the Netherlands, the testimonies I draw from are, mostly, from Afro-Surinamese women.

Figure 4.8: Surinamese on their way to the Netherlands in October 1956, W. Huls-Van de Leuv, International Institute of Social History.

education would open pathways for "good jobs, adequate health care, and the best neighborhoods" (Collins, 2004, p. 32). Still, she could not help but feel nervous, standing in the deck of the boat, staring at the vastness of the sea every night during the 16-day duration of the journey. A multitude of conflicting thoughts rushed through her head. *Had she done the right thing? What would she do now, alone in a foreign country? Would she ever be able to return home? What would be of her family?*

Upon arrival, things looked ever bleaker — a murky gray sky and a seemingly infinite assortment of red bricks welcomed her in Amsterdam. Perhaps it would not make much difference had she arrived during Autumn, and witnessed the red leaves falling to the ground. While Suriname and the Dutch Antilles had acquired formal autonomy in 1954 and were then considered to be part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Surinamese Sister failed to feel at home in the metropole. Such initial unhomely sensation was not just a result of the cultural differences between Suriname and the Netherlands in matters of cuisine and hygiene, for instance, but the ways in which she felt gazes lingering upon her expectantly. Throughout the beginning of the 20th-century, many before her had migrated to the Netherlands to pursue higher education and return to Suriname as either assimilated middle-class Creole colonial officials or nationalist revolutionaries. However, many members of the upper classes of Surinamese Creole society who had the opportunity to study

in the Netherlands did not return. In the 1950s, the emerging Surinamese community in the Netherlands, which was composed by multi-ethnic groups of Afro-Surinamese, Indo-Surinamese, Hindustani and Chinese communities, was the result of migration flows at the end of the Second World War that would only intensify throughout the course of Surinamese Independence in 1975 — according to Rosemarijn Hoefte (2014, p. 107) approximately one fourth of the Surinamese population would migrate to the Netherlands during decolonization.

As Gert J. Oostindie notes (1988, p. 64), in the context of immigration and labor recruitment of Surinamese and Dutch Antillean during the late 1950s and early 1960s, while Dutch employers were left unsatisfied with the contract of laborers to harbors and industries because "they could not be dismissed arbitrarily if they worked badly or were no longer needed", the case of Surinamese young women recruited to work as "student nurses" in hospitals across the Netherlands proved to be a more successful endeavor. The presence of the Surinamese Sister in the Netherlands, therefore, was inscribed within various social regulatory mechanisms, where she had to continuously perform the "impeccability" required for the acceptance of her participation in the training course and her presence in the Netherlands, and was under scrutiny of her contractors, her superiors and peers, her patients and the Dutch society at large.

In the archives of the International Institute of Social History, we find the traces of the journey of the Surinamese Sister, as well as quotidian scenes of her life in the Netherlands: KSMV tickets, registry portraits, photographs of trips, as well as festivities, her workday, the patients, the interior of the room she lived in the medical facility and so on. Through these records, we accompany the marks she left through her nursing care in the Bergweg Hospital in Rotterdam, the Psychiatric hospital Hulp en Heil in Leidschendam, the EmmaKliniek in The Hague, the Bronovo Hospital in The Hague, the Maasoord Hospital in Poortugaal (now part of Albrandswaard). Thus, despite the curious and often oppressive gazes of strangers, the Surinamese Sister believed in the promise held by the Nursing Training course. For the duration of the "pre-training barracks" (*vooropleidingsbarak*) of the course, the body of the Surinamese Sister was educated to absorb and reproduce a combination of Western medicine and Dutch cultural customs: she would tirelessly study the fundamentals of nursing, analyze models of the human anatomy, revise the functioning of physiology and become knowledgeable in psychology (Zusters..., 2018). Additionally, the Director of the course would further provide the students with "lessons on morality" (ibid) — as a result of the scarcity of available textual

Figure 4.9: Surinamese nurse wearing uniform, A. Jap-A-Joe, 1958, International Institute of Social History.

archives about the training course, I would assume the "morality" lessons entailed a combination of Dutch social and institutional norms of conduct and bioethics.[27] Similarly, beyond the education of the body into particular forms of knowledge within the field of human sciences, the forces of the Surinamese Sister's body (through its movements and gestures) had to be laboriously and meticulous disciplined in order to perform the most delicate of tasks: caring for the lives of the Dutch population — such as administering medicine and injections, carefully repositioning the sick body of the Dutch citizen into a hospital bed, knowing the body of the Dutch patient in the most intimate ways, through the site of its afflictions.

After the meticulous intensive training under surveillance of the nursing teachers and directors, the Surinamese Sister was ready to receive her nurse uniform — the visual-discursive significance of this rite of passage, the indication of the mobility to a superior level, could not be overstated: "until now, [she] was easily recognizable as a novice [...] but now [she gets] a real nurse's uniform. That is quite something. Don't forget the cape, also *a sign of the new dignity*" (Zusters..., 2018) (Figure 4.9). In other words, the earning of

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[27]There is a book that discusses precisely the migration of Surinamese women to the Netherlands during the 1950s and 1960s, however I could not find an available copy: Annemarie Cottaar. Zusters uit Suriname: Naoorlogse belevenissen in de Nederlandse verpleging. Meulenhoff, 2003.

the uniform functioned as a "primary visual marker" (Bleiker, 2018) to signal how these women (re)produced Dutch gendered and institutional norms legible within metropolitan grids of intelligibility. Therefore, this "brand-new nurse [...] now freed from the white apron" was incorporated into the routines and timetables of the hospital — she worked six days per week, beginning at seven a.m (Zusters..., 2018). Additionally, an important part of the rituals of the Surinamese nurse in the Netherlands was the consecrations of the Moravian Church, which had great influence in Suriname and provided the creation of religious and social bonds in the metropole. Furthermore, "[t]hen [she would] eat in the dining room. That was communal, with the director, everyone sat at the tables. Then a bell would ring, prayers would be said, and then [she] could eat." (Zusters..., 2018).

Through the quotidian rhythms of the hospital, the Surinamese Sister would come to interact with many white patients and, in turn, many of them would gaze upon a colonized person for the first time. The Surinamese nurses would be subjected to the curious and amused gazes of the white patients, who would unscrupulously and openly spectate the colonized body as a site of "explorations of dread and desire" (Hartman, 2022b, p. 52) — the testimonies provided by Afro-Surinamese nurses in the daily interaction with patients within this interstitial "economy of gazes" (Ballestê; Portugal, 2019) revealed the ways in which their experiences were located at the intersection of racial and gender norms of conduct:

"I was busy working in the hall. I was cleaning fruit. I had a big cut on my finger. And the lady almost fell out of bed. Because I had red blood! (Laughter). And she found that very strange" (Zusters..., 2018).

"Once someone asked me [...] 'Why do you have white hands?' (Laughter). Because she had learned from the pastor [...] Because there was no more water, we only went into the water with our hands. [...] I really had to laugh. Because I was still young, but I had to laugh. I say: how can the pastor say something like that?" (ibid).

More overtly, the Surinamese Sister was subjected to practices of public discrimination, in which her citizenship was continuously under scrutiny, displacement and deferral. The Dutch "post-colonial melancholy" (Kinnvall, 2018) caused by the loss of the Dutch East Indies, the impossibility of returning to the life in the bright colony, the violence suffered during the Indonesian Revolution (1945-1949) and the failure of the Dutch Royal Army to restore control of the colony was then projected onto the figure of the Surinamese

Sister — her body, then, occupied a fungible site against which negative sentiments of former colonial settlers could be voiced: "because I probably had a somewhat Japanese appearance or features, I experienced a patient who had been through the war years and had probably been in the Japanese camp. I didn't like him that much. When he saw me, he became very aggressive" (Zusters. . . , 2018). Furthermore, as Dorien van Duivenboden notes, (2019, p. 47) the presence of the Surinamese Sister in the Netherlands did not result in "convincingly positive" reactions from their peers and superiors either — for example, letters exchanged between white Dutch supervisors and/or colleagues, described Surinamese nurses as jealous of the educational background of Dutch women who had attended MULO school (despite some of the colonized women, themselves, also having attended MULO school in Suriname).[28] However, through the staging of the Window, a potential counter-history emerges:

"You are s*o black*!" said the white patient, through a piercing stare at the body of the Surinamese nurse.

"And you are *so white*!", was the quick retort of the nurse, her voice slipping between amusement and rage.

"How come you are able to speak Dutch so well?", the white patient persisted.

"I learned at school, *just like you*", was what the Surinamese Sister replied (Zusters. . . , 2018).

Through the instantiation of these gendered, racial and institutional norms, the subjection of the white body also emerges within disciplinary networks that render it a classifiable, organizable, legible subject-object of knowledge. An ambivalent relation, then, emerges — the body of the Surinamese Sister, though quotidian instantiations of norms of conduct in the sociopolitical reality of the hospital, is the one tasked with *monitoring, manipulating* and *improving the forces of the white body.* In this conflicting economy of gazes (Ballestê; Portugal, 2019), the white patient, who might have never before had to directly confront her own whiteness as a manufactured endeavor, is then dawned with the realization that the ideals surrounding Dutchness (here represented through the mastering of the Dutch language) can be emulated by the strange yet familiar figure of the colonized. More profoundly, the gaze of the Surinamese nurse who wears the same uniform as the other Dutch nurses,

[28]Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs (Extended Primary Education) in the Netherlands, the Dutch West and East Indies — it was divided into MULO-A (focused on business subjects) and MULO-B (focused on mathematics and physics). See more in: ¸

who speaks the Dutch language fluently, who is educated and incorporated into the quotidian practices of the hospital, subtly reveals that the differential positionalities that mark the visual-discursive distinction between the (white) Self and the (racial) Other are much more blurred than the white patient once believed. Similarly, the white patient is forced to confront her hospital bed and the sickness of her body — her position from the bed, looking up, while the Surinamese Sister looks down on her; while the "*black hands with white palms*" administer her medicine and become responsible for the preservation of her life. In other words, while the Surinamese Sister was subjected to social regulatory regimes at the intersection between the (re)production of medical knowledge and the dissemination of disciplinary mechanisms to police her performance as a nurse in the Netherlands, she was also inscribed within disciplinary networks tasked with *surveilling, optimizing* and *producing knowledge* about the white body — its afflictions, its pathologies and its grievances.

Though intimate photographs, oral accounts, immigration registers, written letters and official documents, I have attempted to offer scenes of the lived experiences of the elusive figure of the Surinamese Sister as a displaced and fractured subject that inhabited interstitial sites between the (re)production of metropolitan norms of conduct and the multiple, conflicting and contradictory networks of desire, willfulness, pleasure and pain that *pressed upon* and *fabricated* her as a legible subject. While certain mechanisms of regulations constituted the attempts at (re)producing the ideal of "impeccability" within gendered and racialized spaces and practices, the vast array of sociopolitical mechanism in Dutch society at large informed the varied experiences of these women who migrated to the Netherlands to be educated into social and professional norms of conduct — some of them yearned for the return to Suriname for the entirety of the training, which could have only intensified as a result of discriminatory experiences in the hospital. So, instead of feeling a sense of hopefulness in relation to the future to be made in the metropole, these women could only feel homesick. Perhaps they would call home and cry to their family members about having made a mistake. Perhaps their family members would say: *"You didn't want to stay in education, you wanted to stay in nursing, now you're going to persevere"* (Zusters. . . , 2018). And so they would.

But that was not what happened to many of them — as van Duivenboden notes, (2019, p. 48) the director of Maasoord, Mr Frederik Tolsma, who coordinated along with the Governor of Suriname the recruitment of Surinamese Sisters, would later admit that "there were a few 'apathic ones' who had slipped through the selection process in Surinam[e]". Were they the ones who did not live up to the standards of the "impeccable lifestyle" required of

them? The ones who gave up on the training before they could receive their nurse uniforms and decided to pursue other professions in the Netherlands instead? The ones who were unsatisfied with the intensive work-hours, the unsavory interactions with the fellow white peers and patients and returned to Suriname to work, instead, in the building of local hospitals? The ones who left the hospital to explore the political possibilities presented by the emergent Afro-Surinamese community in the Dutch suburbs? Perhaps through them, the Surinamese Sister made friends with participants of the growing Anti-colonial Afro-Surinamese movement of the 1960s. Perhaps one of them showed her a book of a fellow Surinamese man, called Antom de Kom...

Figure 4.10: Two Surinamese women in the room of one of them in the Bergweg hospital. Rotterdam, Jap-A-Joe, 1958, International Institute of Social History.

5
An intimate scene, a reprise

> When you embark on a journey, you have already arrived. The
> world you are going to is already in your head. You have already
> walked in it, eaten in it; you have already made friends; a lover
> is already waiting — Dionne Brand, *A Map to the Door of No
> Return: Notes to Belonging.*

Parting ways is a struggle. Through the writing process of this disserta-
tion, it seems like my hands have had a life of their own. I am compelled to
keep writing indeterminately until my hands feel like they have told enough.
And even then, they may urge me to write more — that is because I have told
all but a fraction of the stories the archive holds. If the colonial archive is a site
of both silence and inquietude, of stillness and displacement, of impossibility
and promise, where other modes for constructing knowledge can be accessed,
I have merely brushed against it. Perhaps, for now, that is enough.

The path this dissertation has taken accompanied my journey to the
Netherlands, both physically and epistemologically. The objective of this
displacement was to delve into the colonial archive of the Netherlands during
the 20th-century and, from its interior, bring forth quotidian and intimate
scenes of women's encounters with multiple networks of power. In my endeavor
to tell stories, I attempted to bridge the disciplinary gap between fact and
fiction, literature and science, past and present and offer a collection of
scenes that spoke about the ways in which visual politics was a fundamental
technology of colonial power — not just concerning the *act of displaying power*,
but the through the circulation of modes of *representation of similarity and
difference* within colonial fantasies and the networks of practices constitutive
of them. With this in mind, I endeavored to locate and discuss three (related,
imbricated, and transversal) visual political technologies and the scenes that
emerged from them within the archive — this articulation informed the
separation of each chapter according to a discussion of a particular technology.
More profoundly, the *form* of this dissertation attempted to operate within the
interplay between *structure* and *repetition*, on the one hand, and storytelling
and discontinuity, on the other, to construct particular rhythms, movements,
and flows from each section to the next. For structure and repetition, this

dissertation followed the same "formula" throughout all of its "developmental" chapters — a personal story that intimately connected my *personal* archive with the *Dutch colonial archive* and the theme of the chapter, mostly through vignettes of my journey to the Netherlands; theoretical sections discussing in detail the articulations of the colonial visual technology being explored; and, finally, analytical sections observing colonial scenes in which the technology being discussed manifested. For *storytelling and discontinuity*, this dissertation fluctuated between scenes, places, temporalities, textures, and rhythms. Thus, for the most part, this dissertation evaded linearity (which sometimes could not be helped when contextualizing colonial Dutch historiography), discursively alternated between metropole and colonies (sometimes occupying various places at once), recreated dialogues (when possible), speculated meanings, and inhabited bodies, houses, fantasies, dreams, and fears, sometimes all at once.

In Chapter 2, I discussed "*spatiotemporality*" as a technology of colonial visual power. This chapter began by posing questions about the narrativization of colonialism. I offered a critique of how the discipline (re)produces spectacle scenes of extreme violence against the colonized as the primary ways in which the colonial apparatus can be understood. I argued that a focus on the 20th-century Netherlands was an attempt to move beyond the "grammar of the spectacle" towards other modes of seeing and intimately engaging with the colonial archive and its complex networks of relations that extend beyond scenes of profound physical violence against the colonized body. In Section 2.1, I discussed the "racial amnesia" (Krishna, 2006) in the discipline of International Relations, that omits, excludes, or underplays the significance of race and colonialism for international politics. I argued that, in the context of discussions surrounding Dutch colonialism, this epistemological violence was particularly poignant. In Section 2.2, I offered an articulation of the Window as spatio-temporal analytic to comprehend the colonial processes of difference-making in the colonial encounter between the European Self and the colonized Other. To this end, I first situated how the "anatomy of colonialism" has been articulated within an extensive and transdisciplinary body of literature to inscribe visual politics as a fundamental part of its functioning — such anatomy was divided (for organization purposes) into three main technologies (which articulate transversally): (1) technologies of difference-making, which created classifications, measurements and knowledge of/about humanity; (2) technologies of production, which inscribed subject positions in the developing world capitalist economy; (3) technologies of discipline, social governing and law-making. In this context, the Window serves as an analytic to understand how difference is continuously portrayed in intimate moments, through the

attention to the details of the body of the racialized Other.

In Section 2.3., I offered a collection of scenes whereby difference was articulated through modes of representation based on a spatiotemporal divide. Furthermore, my objective in the analytical part of this chapter, beyond analyzing these processes of difference-making, was to contribute to discussions about Dutch colonialism in the field by discussing the historical and political landscape of the development of the Netherlands as a colonial power. In Section 2.3.1., I analyzed written accounts of colonial explorers through their published voyage journals to discuss their modes of representation of colonized people and places. I argued these representational modes were not related to "observable truths", but they effectively *created* what was being viewed at the moment of narration. In Section 2.3.2., I discussed the planetary flows of resources, people, and discourses from the metropole to the colonies. Furthermore, I deployed the concept of "familial state" (Adams, 2005) to discuss how colonialism was a "family business" centered around the acquirement, maintenance, and display of (familial) property. Likewise, the concept of familial state was also deployed to discuss the circulation of ambivalent modes of representation that mobilized an affective dimension. In section 2.3.3., I scrutinized the traditional narrative that there was no such thing as slavery in the Netherlands through the migration of domestic servants to work in middle-class European homes in the metropole. In opposition, I argued that having a racialized servant in the house, particularly for European women, was a sign of prestige. Furthermore, I observed the interconnections between racial difference-making and colonial forms of entertainment through the production of European "cabinets of curiosities" (a room for collecting "exotic" memorabilia), and displays of the racialized body and customs to European audiences.

In Chapter 3, I endeavored to discuss "*secrecy*" as a technology of colonial visual power. First, this chapter sought to problematize the grammar frequently deployed to discuss the presence of women in the archives as akin to discovering a secret concerning the functioning of (colonial) power. Instead, I invited us to ruminate in the social and political work secrecy does in colonial contexts, particularly within visual-discursive modes of representation of Otherness. The main argument of the chapter, discussed in Section 3.1., was that the "secret" functions as a placeholder for the asymmetrical distribution of knowledge and knowledge production. It is not so much a matter of acquiring information (*descovering the contents of the secret*) than with *producing* knowledge through these asymmetrical relations. Borrowing from Lauren Berlant's concept of "Intimate Public Sphere" (1997), I highlighted the relationship between the colonial administration, on the one hand, and the intimacy of the

body (sexuality, familial relations, the home space) as deeply imbricated in the (re)production of colonial secrecy and colonial subjectivity (subjects to be known, subjects to know) — which I referred to as "modes of (un)seeing and (un)knowing".

Furthermore, I offered two theoretical contributions to comprehending how secrecy was articulated in colonial Netherlands. The first one, in Section 3.1.1., centered around the production of the colonial archive — what Ann Laura Stoler (2009) calls "archiving-as-process" — through the dissemination of both classified and open-access records within the colonial administration. I intended to showcase how the never-ending requirement to produce evidence about potentially transgressive behavior from the colonized (to reveal a secret) was underlined by profound colonial anxieties about the matter of race and the necessity to uphold the fantasy of Dutch nationhood (which included displaying participation in the Empire-building effort). To this end, I established points of connection between my sociological engagements (departing from Foucault) and the realm of psychoanalysis (departing from IR engagements with Jacques Lacan, particularly about the notion of nationhood and citizenship). The second theoretical contribution, in Section 3.1.2., sought to discuss the ways both European and colonized women articulated secrecy in their everyday lives, particularly in quotidian encounters with one another. To this end, this section intended to tension feminist narratives about the private and domestic space as a site of absolute patriarchal domination of women (and their subsequent exclusion from the public and political arena) by looking into the ways in which both European and colonized women were inscribed in imperial relations of power. In the imperial political landscape, not only the *home space* constituted a fundamental site for the exercise of colonial authority, but European women became fundamental subjects *of* colonial power in relation to their colonized counterparts (particularly colonized women who worked in the European household). Thus, I argued that European women mobilized secrecy as a mode to produce specialized knowledge about the colonized Other and act as "overseers of the Empire" in the household. In opposition, colonized women articulated secrecy to inhabited ambivalent sites of inclusion and exclusion in their quotidian experiences in the colonial household.

In the analytical Section 3.2., I situated the scenes I intended to observe within the landscape of the post-abolition of slavery in the Dutch East (1860) and West Indies (1863) and the subsequent migration flows of indentured workers from British India, the East Indies and China to work in plantations in the West Indies, as well as the deployment of the Ethical Policy (1901-1942) in the Dutch East Indies and its subsequent discussions across Dutch

possessions. In the Section 3.2.1., I offered a collection of scenes to discuss how colonial citizenship (and familial relations) was imbricated in anxieties surrounding race, which included both the enforcement of the "Dutch citizen archetype" and politics of intimate surveillance of pauper families under the guise of improvement. In Section 3.2.2., I observed colonial discourses surrounding racial and sexual degeneracy, which included the policing of the white female body against the threat posed by the racialized colonized (particularly the men); the racialization of white prostitution in the metropole and counter-modes of secrecy through window prostitution (obstruction of view from authorities); and the practices of (un)seeing and (un)knowing surrounding the Campo Alegre open air brothel in Curaçao, which was an institution "hidden in plain sight" underscored by the hypervisibility of the sexual racialized body. In Section 3.2.3, I observed the relationship between European women as "overseers of Empire" and poor white families in the metropole, as well as their racialized house servants through discourses in domestic manuals and magazines. In the metropole, I analyzed the role of white middle-class women as social workers tasked with fabricating knowledge about "inadmissible families." In the colonies, I observed the way European women produced specialized knowledge about the racialized body through secrecy as a mode for ensuring colonial authority and, simultaneously, how the racialized body used secrecy to create oppositional modes of knowing.

In Chapter 4, I discussed "*discipline*" as a technology of colonial visual power. My objective with this chapter was to carry out a discussion about the various ways in which both European and colonized people inhabited colonial norms of conduct. To this end, Section 4.1. endeavored to work with, against, and beyond Foucauldian articulations of the concept of discipline, considering the criticism he has received over the years from post-colonial authors concerning his European framework. Instead of disregarding his conceptual work for failing to account for the diverging ways punishment was administered in the colonies, I argued for a complex understanding of the simultaneous circulation of torture, punishment, and discipline — which made the body of the colonized both subjected to physical injury and disciplinary mechanisms (among other things). Furthermore, this articulation problematized the separation Foucault (2012 [1978]) makes between appropriation (slavery) and individualization (discipline). In Section 4.1.1., I continued to have a conversation with Foucault, this time situating the similarities and differences between what the analytic of the Panopticon and the analytic of the Window offer to understanding mechanisms of discipline. My main argument was the difference between both was in their underlying "economy of gazes" (Ballestê; Portugal,

2019) — whereas the Panopticon is predicated on a state of permanent visibility in which the Inspector watches without being watched; the Window, on the other hand, is predicated on the encounter of multiple gazes. While the Panopticon is a mode for understanding the perfected exercise of disciplinary power divorced from internal or external constraints, the Window serves as a mode for viewing how disciplinary mechanisms operate precisely through friction.

With this in mind, in Section 4.1.2., I explored the ways in which subjects are constituted by networks of disciplinary power and their regulatory practices. Through the work of Judith Butler (2004; 2006), Homi Bhabha (1994), Stuart Hall (2017) and Frantz Fanon (2008 [1952]), I situated multiple theoretical engagements of the ways subjects have come to (re)reproduce norms of conduct and be recognized as subjects as a result of this very (re)production. Furthermore, against the notion that identity is constituted as something the subject possesses or is, these authors argue for an understanding of subjectivity being continuously reproduced through the "surface politics of the body" (Butler, 2006). That is, through the *performance* of norms of conduct which inscribed the subjects within grids of intelligibility of social norms. Finally, I discussed the notion of mimicry as articulated by Homi Bhabha (1994) as a mode for understanding how the colonial discourses that prescribe representational modes for the colonized may be disputed by its very (ironic) reproduction of norms. In other words, the objective of this section was to point out the multiple injunctions in the circulation of disciplinary mechanisms and their demands upon the configuration of the colonized body (gender and racial norms, for example), which signals how the colonial apparatus was constituted by an "improvisational" exercise of power.

In Section 4.1.3., I discussed ways to theoretically articulate the concept of resistance within the landscape of disciplinary mechanisms and social norms of conduct that press upon the body. My objective was twofold: (1) to perturb articulations of resistance that conflate it with agency, by signaling the importance of observing, instead, the political landscape that allows for subjects to inhabit norms in various ways (that might not always result in a scene of "resistance" in the liberal sense); (2) to displace the notion that concepts of ambivalence and hybridity are inherently subversive of norms by pointing out how the colonizer is also constituted by these modes of subjectivity. In Section 4.2, I situated the scenes I analyzed within the political landscape of Dutch participation in the Second World War and the Japanese invasion of the East Indies (1942-1945), the struggle for Indonesian Independence (1945-1949), and the Surinamese declaration of autonomy (1954)

and later Independence (1975). Furthermore, my objective was to discuss the "elision of person and place" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 52) in intimate experiences of women within disciplinary spaces. In Section 4.2.1., I discussed the *Koloniale School Voor Meisjes en Vrouwen* (Colonial School for Girls and Women, or KSMV) as an institution where European women were disciplined into becoming to-be-Ladies of the House (the "overseers of Empire from Chapter 3). The main argument of this section was that, through the lessons of the school, the production of the "Dutch citizen archetype" was already inscribed in the colonial encounter — that is, Dutchness and Europeanness were already predicated on ambivalent and hybrid cultural practices. In order to fabricate European women to uphold Dutchness in the East Indies, the students first had to "occupy" the place of the colonized and learn their customs, languages and practices.

In Section 4.2.2., I offered scenes that illuminated the Foucauldian (2012 [1975], p. 148) articulation of discipline as inscribed at the intersection between "[the] architectural, [the] functional and [the] hierarchical" spatial arrangements. Furthermore, I discussed the ways in which the liberal ethos of improvement and securing peace and order was predicated in the asymmetrical distribution of violence and forms of punishment which also informed the experiences of colonized women, particularly in the labor market. In this context, I observed policies and anxieties surrounding the fear of disorderly living and working spaces in the colonial territories and the administrative practices carried out in an attempt to correct it. Likewise, I offered a discussion on the complex landscape surrounding Indonesian and Surinamese independence, which, on the one hand, were pursued in an attempt to resist Dutch subjection but, on the other hand, also inscribed the newly independent countries within global capitalist systems of exploitation. Finally, in Section 4.2.3., I discussed the contract and migration of Surinamese women to study and work as nurses in the Netherlands due to a shortage of medical professionals as a result of the Second World War. Through testimonies written as dialogues throughout the section, I attempted to showcase the various ways these women inhabited social norms of conduct — being subjected to Western learning models, being monitored during the training course, being the subject of racist violence and, at the same time, being responsible for the maintenance of the white life, monitoring the white patient. Finally, I speculated on the array of possibilities these experiences offered, which one might call forms of resistance.

I recognize the limitations that are part of this research endeavor, and present now a few comments on them and future developments of this research. The first point of contention is related to form: on the one hand,

I found it productive and engaging to forego a linear and chronological temporality (for the most part) and articulate my arguments in ways I would consider "more freeing"; on the other hand, there was an underlying difficulty in discursively (as both in the act of writing and the construction of my argumentation) alternate between my proximity and distance as a narrator, the interplay between the storytelling and "theory-talk", and the transitions between detailing and generality — and the abruptness between these seemingly oppositional engagements might be apparent especially in the transition from particularly theoretically dense sections into fabulation. In other words, I feel the necessity to reflect more on how to improve the relationship between these two demands (a disciplinary engagement to theorize and an analytical engagement to fabulate about the archive) so as not to create a disconnection between them and negatively affect the comprehensibility of theoretical issues in empirical analysis, and vice versa.

For the second point, the broad spatial understanding of the Netherlands as composed by "a historically and socially contingent package of ideas and ideals" (Shephard; Sjoberg, 2012, p. 7) that circulated in the relationship between the metropole and the colonies allowed me to analyze the interactions between the West and the East Indies, which is underexplored in the post-colonial literature in general (which tends to focus on the bilateral relationship between metropole and a singular colony or deploy a comparative analysis between more than one colonial power and their administrative practices in their respective colonies), and in Dutch colonial literature in particular. While I think my analytical engagements in this dissertation have a lot to offer in terms of observing the *Dutch colonial landscape* and the circulation and obstruction of imaginaries and practices, I still believe a more profound reading of Dutch colonial historiography is necessary to reveal the very multiplicity and contradictions within the territoriality of these colonies. Likewise, because I decided to privilege the relations between the Netherlands, Suriname and Indonesia, other Dutch colonies were not part of the analysis and, therefore, mostly divorced from the circulation of practices that, in reality, they were also part of.

A third and final point is related to my analytical strategies and my relationship with the archive. An integral part of the arguments I put forth in this dissertation is based on my relationship with the Dutch colonial archive. On the one hand, critical fabulation allows me to speculate about the creation, organization, content and meaning of the archive, which is a fundamental part of the analytical work of this dissertation. Similarly, contrapuntal reading allows me to scrutinize the internal reality of the archive (the fantasy I argue

the archive constructs) against an external reality of Dutch colonial relations (often through the interference of the "'present'" in the imaginary of the past, based on my own interlocution). On the other hand, I feel as I have not scrutinized nearly enough my own assumptions about the archive, as well as *my own personal archive.* Allow me to explain better. While in chapter 3 I questioned the notion of women as subjects to be *found* in the archive and, in chapter 4 I reiterated this criticism against the perception that the mere presence of women would signify a scene of resistance, I still found myself slipping to the very terminology I was questioning in multiple instances. That is, I continuously had to check myself as I was writing, so as not (unconsciously) project these demands onto the archive, some of which I had a difficult time divorcing from. Which is to say that I have not paid the required attention to the ways in which my expectations and fantasies may have also, somewhat and unwittingly, "*tainted*" the archive. In other words, "*the archive still promises*" (Arondekar, 2009, p. 1).

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