

Summary

Subjects, Overseas Citizens and the Dutch Nation

1. Introduction

The central question in this study was how between 1945 and 2005 Dutch politicians brought overseas citizens from ‘the East’ and ‘the West’ into relation with the Netherlands. What, in a broad sense, were the opinions of politicians with respect to the national belongings of the Eurasian, Surinamese, Moluccan and Antillean Netherlanders? How did politicians think, speak and act in their respect? Did the self-evident Dutch presence in the overseas territories go hand in hand with an equally self-evident inclusion of the citizens from those territories into the Netherlands? Did the Netherlands, after being the imperial mother country in the colonial period, prove to be a fatherland for overseas Dutch nationals and former Dutch nationals in the post-colonial period? And what developments became apparent in that connection in the period between 1945 and 2005? In this study, I have regarded the political discourses on nationality, admission, civic integration and integration as techniques of inclusion into and/or exclusion from Dutch society. These political discourses regulate the relationship with the nation-state. Symbolically, they do so by inclusion into and exclusion from the people, and physically, by inclusion into and exclusion from the territory of the Netherlands. In this connection, inclusion into and exclusion from Dutch society can be regarded as a function of inclusion into and exclusion from the nation *and* citizenship. It is about the ways in which politicians brought postcolonial citizens in relation with the Dutch imagined community and the Dutch legal community. The interplay between the two dimensions was the central concern in this process.

The boundaries drawn by politicians were regarded as discursive rather than self-evident, natural boundaries. The question was whether and, if so, how in the post-war period Dutch politicians applied the symbolic and legal demarcations between outside and inside and between the own people and foreign people in respect of individuals who were, or still are, inhabitants of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The political discourses did not concern the relationship between the Netherlands and aliens in the classical sense. That dichotomy between the nation and the legal alien is also unnatural, but did not become a reality until completion of the formation process of the nation-states in the 19th century. In the schematic distinction between the nation-state and legal aliens, overseas postcolonial citizens occupied a separate position. Borders were formed within borders in their respect, for the post-war political discourses in the Netherlands involved the formation of borders between the Netherlands and people from territories that had maintained constitutional and cultural relationships with the Netherlands for centuries. In the long period before the decolonisation, all inhabitants of the Kingdom of the Netherlands were of Dutch nationality, albeit that the substance and meaning of that status varied, depending on the period in history, the territory and the population group.

2. Postcolonial Citizens and the Nation-State: (light on the) ‘dark spots’ in the theory on nations and citizenship

The political discourses on postcolonial citizens refer to the cutting edge between the Netherlands as an imperial power and the Netherlands as a nation. The ways in which Dutch

politicians formed relationships between overseas citizens (of colour), subjects and the Netherlands between 1945 and 2005 have shed light on the 'dark spots' of the traditional concepts of nation and citizenship. The fact that politicians distinguished subjects from overseas citizens and Netherlanders speaks volumes. It alerts us to the fact that conceptions of citizenship and nation that refer to the nation-state in terms of territorial borders fail to appreciate the transterritorial reality of the Netherlands, its territories and former territories and of the overseas Dutch nationals and former Dutch nationals. We found that discrepancy by comparing traditional conceptions of citizenship with the position of postcolonial citizens.

2.2 Citizenship and Nation: Territorially Delimited Concepts

Citizenship is a two-faced head. It has an inclusive and an exclusive dimension. What is particularly striking in the formation of theories at present is the inclusive dimension. This concerns the relationship between nationals and society. Bosniak argues that 'Most of the citizenship revival' 'that has occurred in the academy has taken place within this inward looking framework [...] The national society is treated as a total universe of analytical focus and normative concern, and citizenship then has to do with the nature of relationships prevailing among already assumed members.'¹ In other words: how do nationals relate to society, how ought they to do so and what rights and obligations does this entail. Examples include political, social, and socio-economic participation. They also include political rights, social rights and socio-economic rights. Marshall analyzed the expansion process of political rights, social rights and civic rights across nationals.² The rationale of this inclusive dimension of citizenship is universalist: it emphasizes the inclusion and incorporation of every national into society. Citizenship is 'soft on the inside.'³ It means that each national should have full citizenship. From a historic perspective, this universalist ethic is not self-evident. Some groups of nationals were second-class citizens. Although they were members of the people, their position was subordinate or marginal. Dominant beliefs on the identity or the place of those groups in society played a role in that respect. In a battle of liberation they would demand full citizenship within the nation-state. Telling examples are the feminist movement, the labour movement, the civil rights movement and the anti-apartheid movement. Those groups invoked their citizenship as an argument to occupy a position of their own right within the nation-state. The 'inward looking perspective on citizenship' as Bosniak calls it, emphasizes the processes of incorporation into the nation-state.

The inclusion of the national citizens within the borders of the nation-state has another side to it. It involves the exclusion of legal aliens outside the borders of the nation-state, i.e. citizenship is 'hard on the outside.' This element embodies the particularistic nature of citizenship. Citizenship holds a promise of inclusion that applies to nationals, but not to legal aliens. Nation-states reserve their internationally acknowledged right to attach conditions to the admission of legal aliens. The idea of the people's sovereignty plays a role in this: a people, through its representatives, has the right to retain the coherence of its national community by means of migration policies. This

¹ Bosniak 2006, p. 2.

² Marshall 1950.

³ Bosniak 2006, p. 2.

exclusive dimension of citizenship has occupied a much less central position in the formation of theories. Bosniak: 'What has happened is that citizenship's boundary questions are usually taken up by a specialized group of scholars across the disciplines in the field of immigration studies.'⁴

As a result of international migration, legal aliens have settled within the borders of the nation-state on a long-term basis. In this time of globalization, their numbers are considerable. The question then arises what this means for citizenship. Are the legal aliens within the national borders governed by the exclusive or inclusive dimension of citizenship? Is their legal alien status taken as the benchmark or is the emphasis on the fact that they actually reside within the national borders? According to Walzer, immigrants who have settled within the national political community should be treated as members of the community. If they are not treated equally, they will be a class of permanent second-class citizens, subjected to the 'tyranny of the class of national citizens.' In Walzer's view, it is unacceptable that this category is permanently deprived of political and social rights while they are governed by the laws and regulations of the country in which they live.⁵ In practice, the situation is not so extreme as proposed by Walzer. Nonetheless, a practice has developed in many nation-states that can best be described as 'the citizenship of aliens', as Bosniak calls it.⁶ Legal aliens who are legally resident within the national borders are generally granted more and more rights that nationals have, with the exception of political rights. They are sometimes referred to as 'denizens' to distinguish them from citizens. Soysal noted in this connection that 'universal personhood' has become increasingly relevant whereas 'nationhood' has decreased in value as a basis for experiencing a variety of rights.⁷ In addition, there is citizenship within a European context: EU-citizens who stay in other Member States have all kinds of rights that national citizens also have: socio-economic rights (work), and admission to the territory for example. Furthermore, as Sassen noted, even undocumented aliens may eventually win legal residence based on their informal citizenship.⁸

In sum, the view that arises from the literature is that, over the years, citizenship has increased in substance in welfare states as a result of liberation and because the rights that citizens can invoke have increased. Moreover, it can be observed that legal alienage is not necessarily an obstacle to substantial citizenship of legal aliens. Exceptions are political rights and a ban on expulsion.

2.3 Post-Colonial Citizens: The Nation-State and Overseas Citizens

Although opportunities for development within the borders of the nation-state are also of great relevance to postcolonial citizens, the study of their position requires a different emphasis. This is due to the fact that many of them are overseas citizens. If, in the interest of the imagined community, politicians are 'hard on the outside' and 'soft on the inside', what does that mean for the position of overseas citizens? Are they regarded in political discourses as belonging to the national community to which the inclusive dimension of citizenship should be applied? If they are construed as symbolic aliens, their inclusion is uncertain. The formal nationality of overseas

⁴ Bosniak 2006, p. 2.

⁵ Walzer, quoted in Bosniak 2006, p. 41-42.

⁶ Bosniak 2006; Cf. Soysal 1994, Jacobs 1998.

⁷ Soysal 1994.

⁸ Sassen 2002.

citizens as such can prove to be an uncertain status. Similarly, admission to the country whose nationality they have, could be problematized or complicated. And in the integration discourses, the overseas citizens, once in the fatherland, can be construed as an alien element within the national borders, with all the social consequences that entails. In sum, while the position of regular, legal aliens can increasingly be described as ‘the citizenship of aliens’ nowadays, which is demonstrated, among others, by Bosniak, Soysal and Sassen, ‘the alienage of citizens’ may nonetheless prove to be a tricky aspect for citizens of the (former) colonies. In sum: the *inclusive* function of citizenship that is a tacit assumption in territorially delimited conceptions of citizenship does not necessarily hold true for overseas citizens if they are not regarded as members of the imagined community.

On the other hand, territorially delimited conceptions of citizenship and nation fail to appreciate that the border between legal aliens and the nation-state may appear to be less than absolute in the case of overseas citizens. In their case, the conception of citizenship as being ‘hard on the outside’ (*excluding* legal aliens from the territory of the nation-state) may prove difficult to defend politically. Politicians may consider it to be morally untenable to apply or fully apply the regular, restrictive migration rules – acknowledged internationally as an expression of national sovereignty – to legal aliens who have a historical relationship with the nation-state. They may legally be on the outside without being fully affected by the restrictive aliens’ policy.

Post-colonial citizenship is characterized by both elements: an individual can be a national and be regarded and treated as an alien, or can be a legal alien and be partly treated as a national citizen.

3. The Formation of Ties between Overseas Netherlanders and the Netherlands

According to Anderson, British nationalism was characterized by an ‘inner incompatibility of empire and nation.’ Anglofied overseas British citizens were subordinate in rank compared to ‘English matturangos’ not only *overseas*, according to Anderson; moreover, they were not expected to relocate to the metropolis. Anderson considered this to be ‘the fundamental contradiction of English official nationalism.’⁹ How does the postwar Dutch political discourses on overseas citizens relate to this? What were the results of this analysis? How did Dutch politicians on the North Sea bring the Eurasian, Moluccan, Surinamese and Antillean (overseas) citizens in relation with the Netherlands between 1945 and 2005? On a general note, the Netherlands ‘fell into’ the role of colonial mother country of overseas citizens more easily than it assumed the role of fatherland when, after 1945, those citizens sought or found their way to the Netherlands under a variety of historical circumstances. Before 1945, politicians on this side of the ocean imagined overseas territories in the East and in the West to be inseparable parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, but that did not mean that the overseas population was accepted unconditionally as part of the imagined Dutch community on the North Sea. In the eyes of politicians, overseas Dutch nationality did not automatically entail Dutch citizenship within the Dutch society.

⁹ Anderson 1991, 92-93.

3.1 The Colonial Period: Dutch Citizenship to Sustain the Dutch Empire

In colonial relationships, the nationality of the population of the East and the West territories were a symbol of the Dutch hegemony. The Dutch nationality was helpful in the construction of predial and solidary subjects overseas. Although the manner in which the population's nationality was regulated may have differed between the East and the West, the purpose was the same. After 1892, the entire population of the West had formal Dutch citizenship, while the population of the East was divided into Dutch subjects and Dutch citizens. That did not mean that the 'natives' of the West were regarded as more closely related to the Dutch nation than the 'natives' of the East. Politicians did not see any discrepancy between the Dutch hegemony in the West and full Dutch nationality of the population, while they believed that such a field of tension effectively existed in the East. Both the Dutch subjects and the Dutch citizens of the colonies were entitled to admission to the territory of the Netherlands. However, that right was relevant only to a small number of the local elites. Politicians did not regard the nationality of the overseas population as a gateway to a future citizenship within the Dutch society. They had no reason given the limited degree of migration. The citizenship of the population in a substantive sense (politically, societal and social development) primarily referred to overseas relationships. The principal issue was how the 'integration' of people *in the overseas territories* had to be regulated without putting the Dutch hegemony at risk. In sum, in the colonial era, nationality, the admission and the integration of overseas citizens were not linked to reflections on their ties with the imagined Dutch community on the North Sea. The Dutch nationality of the overseas population and the related rights were not yet linked to reflections on the Dutch nation.

3.2 After 1945: The Construction of (Porous) Borders Between Overseas (former) Netherlanders and the Netherlands

3.2.1 Dutch Politicians, Eurasians and Moluccans

Immediately before and after sovereignty was handed over to Indonesia in 1949, in particular the Eurasians and Moluccans found themselves in a precarious position due to their political orientation and the social positions they had occupied in the Dutch-Indies society. Indonesian nationalists identified them with the Dutch administration. These people had developed a special orientation towards the Netherlands by means of the Dutch language, education, religious conviction or profession. After the independence, their position in the Indonesian society became untenable. In the 1950s and 1960s, both Eurasian Dutch and Moluccans would make the journey to the Netherlands. In that period, a total of approximately 312,500 people would migrate from the Indonesian Archipelago to the Netherlands. They included Eurasian Dutch (200,000), Moluccans (12,500) as well as 100,000 white Netherlanders, known as *totoks*.

Initially, the government and a majority in Parliament did not welcome the arrival of the Eurasians and Moluccans to the Netherlands. The fact that before 1949, Dutch politicians had construed both Eurasian Dutch and Moluccans as loyal, related and excellent Dutch people did not mean that after 1949 they were readily accepted as citizens of the Dutch society. It appeared that after 'the Indies were lost', Dutch politicians also lost their interest in continuing the ties with those overseas citizens. There was a sharp rift in the political discourses before and after 1949. Before 1949, politicians construed Eurasians and Moluccans as related, loyal and excellent

Netherlanders, whereas after 1949, they were primarily regarded as aliens, whose future lay outside the Netherlands.

First, the lot that befell the Moluccans. In the political debate on allotment of the Indonesian nationality in 1949, politicians preserved an exclusive silence in respect of the loyal Moluccans. As a consequence, the Moluccans were assigned Indonesian citizenship, which they strongly resisted. Immediately after 1949, when Moluccans became Indonesian citizens, the political aim of the Dutch government with respect to Moluccans was their 'integration into Indonesia.' There were 12,500 Moluccans, former militaries of the Royal Netherlands Indies Army (KNIL) and their families, who were staying in temporary camps, and the Dutch government did everything in its power to actually make them Indonesian citizens. When that aim proved impossible to achieve, the Dutch government eventually suspended the exclusive nature of their legal alienage: in 1951, Moluccans were collectively admitted to the Netherlands. That admission was preceded by a fierce political and legal battle between Moluccans and the Dutch government, in which the Moluccans received support of part of the Lower House of Parliament. During that process, Dutch courts underscored the Moluccan position that citizenship of the Indonesian society could not be enforced in view of the strained relationship with the Indonesian government. Given that context, the Dutch government could not persist in its policy of exclusion.

Although the government assumed responsibility for the fate of the Moluccans in response to court rulings in 1951, it nonetheless construed their admission to the Netherlands as 'the worst solution conceivable' that was 'temporary.' According to the government, the Moluccans would eventually have to return to Indonesia. While the Moluccans were already in the Netherlands, the Dutch government reserved the right to expel them. Authors such as Bosniak and Soysal have shown that inclusive dimensions of citizenship gain power in relation to aliens within the national borders: they are governed only in part by the exclusive 'hard on the outside' dimension of citizenship. For a considerable time, however, the government pursued a different policy with respect to the Moluccans who had migrated to the Netherlands. It was precisely in the Netherlands, *within the borders of the nation-state*, that the legal alienage of the 'Amboinese' had more significance than ever: Moluccans were discharged from military service, were isolated from Dutch society, were initially not allowed to work and, in theory, could even be expelled. By 1951, their *overseas Dutch nationality in the Dutch East-Indies* of before 1949 had been replaced by an alienage in the Netherlands, both *formally and materially*. This paradox evolved around a racist discourse on the Moluccan identity, and the economic conditions of the Netherlands: The Dutch government argued that the 'way of life, social beliefs and physical constitution' of the 'Amboinese' 'did not dispose' them to 'permanent admission to a Dutch community alien and unknown to them.' To add force to its argument, the government referred to the economic crisis in the Netherlands. Although in 1951, right-wing members of Parliament argued in favour of inclusion, the exclusion of Moluccans from the Dutch nation dominated the picture for a long time.

It was not until the 1970s that the Dutch government, supported by the Lower House of Parliament, changed its course. The eruption of Moluccan nationalism among youngsters in the

1970s emphasized once more that ‘citizenship within Indonesia’ could not be realized. Within the context of critical post-colonial reflections by the Dutch government on the exclusion of the Moluccans in the 1950s, their citizenship in Dutch society acquired more significance. From January 1977 onwards, Moluccans, who had in the meantime become stateless would be treated ‘as Netherlanders.’ This ‘social Dutch citizenship’ implied an absolute right of residence and eligibility for almost all rights that Dutch citizens had. Their denizenship was a symbol of restoration of the relationship between the Dutch government and these post-colonial citizens. Even so, the inclusion of Moluccans into Dutch society was not full because they remained an ethnic minority without political rights for a long time. In 2005, the Dutch citizenship of these postcolonial citizens had acquired more significance. At present, they are no longer regarded as a category of problematized ‘non-Western allochthonous people.’ Moreover, an increasing number of individuals that used to be stateless ‘social Netherlanders’ has been naturalized and silently transformed to Moluccan Netherlanders and they now have *all* the related formal rights. What the Dutch government regarded as impossible and undesirable immediately after 1949, i.e. full Dutch citizenship for Moluccans, had become a fact in 2005; a fact that Dutch politicians proved to be ready for only after a great many years.

The political discourses on the Eurasian Dutch were characterized by the same combination of rhetorics on identity, economic arguments and exclusion as the discourse in respect of the Moluccans. This is surprising, considering that after 1949, the starting position of the Eurasian Dutch differed from that of the Moluccans. Eurasians had retained their Dutch nationality. Legally, they were part of the substrate of individuals of the Dutch nation-state. In that respect, they were ‘on the inside.’ However, they were not admitted unconditionally to the Netherlands. Political discourses in the mid-fifties of the previous century expressed the idea that their Dutch citizenship was an improper status. In the political discourses, the inclusive function of Dutch citizenship appeared to be overshadowed by an exclusionary political debate on opting for Indonesian citizenship (Eurasian Dutch were put under pressure to opt for Indonesian citizenship). Furthermore, they were discouraged to come to the Netherlands, while a search was started for a new fatherland for the Eurasian Dutch outside the Netherlands. In political discourses, racializing played an important part: the government construed the Eurasians as ‘Netherlanders oriented towards Indonesia’ who were incapable of assimilation and whose citizenship in the Netherlands was not obvious. An additional argument was (just as for Moluccans) the economic crisis in the Netherlands, which was accompanied by scarce job opportunities and housing. By contrast, politicians did see a future in the Netherlands for the 100,000 *totoks*.

The identity that Dutch politicians assigned to them was at odds with the Eurasian self-definitions. Eurasians massively decided against exercising their option for Indonesian citizenship, and many of them tried to make the journey to the Netherlands from their own resources. At least, their Dutch citizenship guaranteed them formal admission to the Netherlands. It was not until 1956, against the background of a further deterioration in the Indonesian-Dutch relationships due to the New Guinea issue that the Dutch citizenship of the Eurasians acquired more significance. Increasingly, Eurasians were excluded from Indonesian

society. Against that background, the Dutch government, with the consent of Parliament, abandoned its discouragement policy. Subsequently, the Netherlands gradually warmed to the idea of becoming a fatherland for the Eurasians with Dutch citizenship. That change towards inclusion extended to Eurasians who regretted their decision to opt for Indonesian citizenship when they found that they were being excluded from Indonesia. For those former Dutch nationals, the government pursued an admission policy that was more favourable compared to the regular policies towards legal aliens. After abandoning the discouragement policies, the emphasis in political discourses shifted to the assimilation of Eurasians. That assimilation policy, delegated to Christian social work, was an ambivalent interim phase: Eurasian Dutch were at the same time construed as permanent citizens of the Netherlands and as 'other people' who were in need of civilization within the national borders. The fact that the Dutch citizenship of the Eurasians had gained significance therefore did not mean that they were immediately regarded as competent members of the Dutch nation. The effects of the assimilation policies were both gender and ethnicity specific: 'Totoks' were not a target group and due to the focus on the domestic atmosphere, the practice involved (an attempt to) disciplining Eurasian women and, to a lesser extent, Eurasian men. The assimilation policy, jointly with the political awareness that the Eurasian Dutch were here to stay probably gave them a symbolic advantage. Eurasian Dutch were not a part of the minority discourse that sprang up in the 1980s. On the contrary: since the 1980s, politicians construed the Eurasian Dutch tacitly (they were no longer referred to as a problem), and sometimes expressly, as 'competent' Dutch citizens who had 'largely integrated without problems.' Third-generation Eurasian Dutch would, largely out of the politicians' sight, cast aside the willingness to adapt that the first generation had shown, and would, casually as it were, emphasize the hybrid nature of the Eurasian identity and propagate the view that 'a multiple identity' and 'real Dutch citizenship' are not at odds with one another.

3.2.2 The Dutch policy on the Antillean and Surinamese Dutch

The political discourses on Eurasian Dutch and Moluccans in the 1950s expressed the idea that the coloured population from overseas should not be a part of the Dutch nation. That idea is not found on analysis of the political discourses about the overseas citizens of the West in the 1950s. This striking contrast illustrates the layered nature of the political discourses on the ties between postcolonial citizens and the Netherlands in that period. After the loss of 'Our Indies', which was regarded as a traumatic experience, Dutch politicians invested more than ever, symbolically and politically, in the relationship with the remaining territory in the West. Dutch politicians appeared to look for new positions to anchor the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles (as well as in 'Dutch' New Guinea). Great value was attached to both territories remaining within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The expansion (and reconfirmation) of an undivided and full formal Dutch citizenship for the whole population of the West, but also the royal visit to the West were in keeping with the construction of a single, unified Kingdom in the 1950s. With regard to the Surinamese and Antillean overseas citizens of the West, the government and the Lower House of Parliament emphasized the legal equality within the Kingdom. Thus, Parliament and the government strongly denounced the discrimination experienced by a number of Surinamese students in the Netherlands. In contrast with the discouragement policy with regard to the Eurasian Dutch, in the 1950s, politicians did

not even think about discouraging the admission of overseas citizens from the West. That idea was considered incompatible with the notion of the Kingdom. Moreover, male Surinamese and Antillean labourers and female nurses were recruited on a selective basis. This was also in keeping with the notion of the Kingdom idea according to politicians. The importance of the Kingdom therefore inspired politicians to political discourses in favour of inclusion of these overseas citizens. At the same time, however, the limits of that inclusive rhetoric could already be read between the lines. Politicians expected that the overseas citizens of the West would in time 'return to their own country.' In contrast with the Eurasian Dutch, the overseas citizens of the West were not a large community of settlers in the 1950s and did not lay a heavy claim on public facilities in the Netherlands. Under those circumstances, the Dutch citizenship of the overseas citizens of the West was an unproblematic status and their admission to the Netherlands a secure right.

When, in the course of the 1960s, migration from the West increased, the emphasis of political discourses gradually shifted from 'care for the Kingdom of the Netherlands' to 'concern' for the Dutch nation. In the 1960s, migration from Suriname was slightly higher than from the Netherlands Antilles. In those conditions, the political discourses on the Surinamese and the Antillean Netherlanders would be conducted along separate paths. Politicians would problematize the arrival and presence of overseas citizens, in particular the Surinamese, by reference to class and gender, and their unrestricted admission to the Netherlands would become an issue of political debate. In *pars pro toto* argumentations, politicians would perceive the problems of a small section of the male Surinamese labourers as a 'significant problem' that was allegedly related to features of the Surinamese labourer culture. By contrast, politicians remained silent about Antillean labourers, who were construed as calm, exemplary labourers. While politicians felt no need to find out more about Antillean overseas citizens, the government would commission surveys into Surinamese overseas citizens. Male Surinamese overseas citizens were construed as 'being in search of thrills and adventure', for which there was 'little room' within the Dutch society. Undoubtedly, the subtext of such remarks also referred to the fact that 'Surinamese' men and 'Dutch' women started having relationships with one another. Within the closed political discourses this type of relationships was traditionally problematized. It was no coincidence that Bayer compiled a report commissioned by the Dutch government, in which the sexual relationships between Surinamese male labourers and Dutch women were placed under the magnifying glass. The effect was that the boundaries of the 'Dutch people' were demarcated in a symbolic sense along lines of gender, ethnicity and class. Nonetheless, the free movement of persons remained in effect throughout the 1960s. Concurrently, political discourses expressed the borders of the inclusion. Dutch citizenship and admission to the Netherlands were guaranteed provided that migration to the Netherlands remained limited. Politicians construed the overseas population of the West as overseas citizens rather than citizens of the Dutch community.

At the end of the 1960s, the decolonisation idea would become a vehicle for politicians to initiate a debate on the politically sensitive issue of migration and citizenship of the overseas citizens of the West (and therefore their national belongings). Politicians were primarily concerned about the migration of Surinamese overseas citizens, which was more extensive than Antillean migration.

Politicians started to consider the Kingdom as a neocolonialist anachronism. Dutch citizenship, the symbol of the solidary Kingdom in the 1950s, was construed by them as an unnatural status. The Netherlands were considered to be an unnatural, social and cultural habitat for overseas citizens of the West. There was a wish to make haste with Suriname's independence and voices were heard in the Lower House of Parliament to adopt an admission scheme 'within the framework of the Kingdom.' The rumours about an admission scheme added to the migration from Suriname in the early 1970s. Against that background, the Dutch nationality of the Surinamese Netherlander rapidly lost its meaning in the political discourses. The Netherlands urged the Surinamese government to make haste with their independence. The independence in 1975 meant the closure of the borders of the Netherlands to people from Suriname. Overseas Dutch citizens became Surinamese citizens, who had no free access to the Netherlands in principle. As from 1975, the people of Suriname formally found themselves 'on the outside' of the Dutch nation-state; they had become legal aliens. Nonetheless, the historical ties were not without their significance after the independence: for a period of approximately 5 years, Surinamese legal aliens could rely on a privileged admission policy. That did not mean that the Surinamese (former) Dutch citizens were regarded as permanent citizens of the Netherlands. There was a belief that the Surinamese Dutch would ultimately return to Suriname in large numbers, which was reinforced by the government's view that they, unlike the Eurasians, could return. Thus, the idea of a return found its way to the provisions on nationality and discourses on integration. In the 1970s and 1980s, the political discourses on integration were dominated by pessimism about the ability of the Surinamese Dutch to adjust. They were considered a problematic ethnic minority. This notion gradually turned around. In the new millennium, politicians no longer regarded the Surinamese Dutch as a problem. This development was possibly reinforced by the fact that since the 1990s, Islamic Dutch citizens were designated as the principal problem group of Dutch society in the political discourses. Against that background, politicians sometimes referred to the Surinamese Dutch as examples of successful integration. This does not detract from the fact that those former overseas citizens could regard the formal classification as 'non-Western allochthonous' as offensive.

The political discourses on Antillean Dutch developed in the complete opposite direction compared to those about the Surinamese Dutch. From exemplary overseas citizens in the political discourses of the 1960s, they came to be considered a problematic minority group in the 1990s. That development in the political discourses was as follows: in the political discourses of the 1970s, politicians were hardly interested in Antillean overseas citizens. They focused their attention entirely on the Surinamese overseas citizens. Antillean migration was low compared to that from Suriname and Antillean overseas citizens were not yet an object of surveys. In the political discourses, the privileged Antillean Dutch still dominated the picture. The silences in the political discourses would have an inclusive function when Suriname became independent. Because Dutch politicians saw no social problem in the arrival of the Antillean Netherlanders, they did not insist on the Netherlands Antilles becoming independent. As a result, the Antillean Netherlanders kept their Dutch citizenship. After Suriname's independence, the image of the Antillean Dutch as a successful group continued to exist for a considerable time. The notion of an admission scheme received little political support and, particularly in the 1970s, the

government discarded that notion on principal grounds, arguing that an admission scheme reeked of discrimination. In particular, the advent of the new realism in the 1990s marked a turn in the debate about the Antillean Dutch. In the meantime, the population of Antillean Dutch had grown in size and reflected Antillean society more accurately than before. The free movement of persons within the Kingdom also guaranteed the unpredictability of migration from the Netherlands Antilles in terms of its nature and scope. Politicians had great difficulty coping with the undefined nature of the Antillean presence in the Netherlands, thereby indirectly construing Antillean Dutch as exogenous. The political discourses conducted in respect of Antillean Dutch in response to that uncertainty can be regarded as an attempt to regain control over the substrate of individuals of the nation-state in the same way as had been done for the Surinamese. Just as was done in the 1960s in respect of the Surinamese overseas citizens, the political discourses on the Antilleans were characterized by an exclusive *pars pro toto* mechanism: from the late 1990s onwards, politicians would inflate the problems of the underprivileged, thereby removing the privileged Antillean Netherlanders from the political discourses. Within this context, the government, supported by the Lower House of Parliament, conducted a policy of discouragement, making the option of an admission scheme an issue that could be discussed. An admission scheme was not adopted. Besides Antillean opposition, an admission scheme proved legally infeasible. By now, however, Antilleans were regarded as a maladjusted group, whose citizenship of the Netherlands was conditional. That symbolic alienage intertwined with the discourse on civic integration. Contrary to EU citizens, Antillean Netherlanders became a target group of the Civic Integration Newcomers Act (*Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers*). Over time, the Dutch nationality of the Antilleans has diminished in value in political discourses. The fact that Antillean Dutch, unlike the other postcolonial citizens, have always remained Dutch nationals has been of little significance in this respect. With regard to the formal legal nationality status, overseas Antillean citizens have always been 'on the inside.' In recent years, however, political discourses concerning them have primarily expressed 'an alienage of citizens.' These recent political discourses illustrate once again that Kingdom and nation are two distinct entities. It remains to be seen whether the constitutional reformations within the Kingdom will bring any change to that situation.

4. Political Discourses on Postcolonial Citizens as Communicating Vessels

The political discourses on citizens of the East and West were not isolated from one another. As noted in the introduction to this study, the historical, socio-scientific and legal scientific production of knowledge about people of the East and West is characterized by specialisms. The specialisms largely coincide with that distinction. In the production of knowledge, specialization seems to go hand-in-hand with blind spots about the cross-connections in the political discourses about the citizens of the East and the West. This study highlighted that political discourses about the East and the West have an effect on and enable one another. Thus, we can only understand the inclusive political discourses regarding overseas citizens of the West at the beginning of the 1950s (the emphasis on legal equality, the postulation of a solidary Kingdom, the recruitment of overseas citizens, the unproblematic admission) against the background of the trauma following the loss of 'Our Indies' in 1949. The Dutch citizenship of overseas citizens in and from the West acquired more significance within the context of a reformed Kingdom. This was all the

more relevant because, at that time, their relationship with the Netherlands still corresponded to the political expectations of the Netherlands: the overseas citizens of the West had not yet found their way to the Netherlands on a large scale. Their citizenship was still largely determined by the Dutch citizenship *overseas*; a citizenship within the Kingdom. The former overseas nationals from the 'lost' Archipelago wanted to take up residence in the Netherlands, which did not correspond with the general idea among Dutch politicians about the relationship between the Netherlands and its overseas citizens. Politicians problematized their Dutch nationality both symbolically and in their policies. They regarded the settlement of overseas citizens in the Netherlands as an unnatural course of events.

That 'inner contradiction between empire and nation' is the common denominator in the political discourses on overseas citizens. As Dutch subjects or overseas Dutch citizens, they were of Dutch nationality. But their political acceptance as members of the Dutch community on the North Sea was established with more difficulty. That reality manifested itself at times at which the settlement of overseas citizens in the Netherlands increased in scale or was imminent. The political problematization of the citizenship of the various groups of postcolonial citizens coincided with those moments. It meant that the political discourses over the years referred to a different postcolonial category to represent the alien element that needed to be regulated in the political discourses. In the 1950s, the role was played by the Eurasians and the Moluccans, as from the second half of the 1960s, by the Surinamese and, as from the 1990s, by the Antilleans. It was not necessarily an evolution from exclusion in the past to inclusion in the future, as is illustrated by the political discourses on the Antilleans. The political discourses on the national belongings of the overseas citizens has had an uncertain evolution. Politicians regularly needed the included group to tell a story about the less accepted postcolonial category. Comparisons of extremes played a part in that process as did silences. Examples are the silences about the Antillean and Eurasian Dutch in integration discourses at the end of the 1970s, while the presence of Surinamese Dutch in the Dutch community was problematized.

The borders formed by politicians between overseas citizens and the Netherlands were not hermetic, but were porous, as was discussed earlier. Counter-discourses, both within Parliament and on the part of the postcolonial citizens also played their part. Approximately 800,000 postcolonial citizens established themselves in the Netherlands. Dutch politicians brought postcolonial citizens, once they were in the Netherlands, into a relation with the Netherlands in various ways. The Eurasian Dutch from the Indies were expected to assimilate, the Moluccans had to keep their own identity, and the citizenship policies for overseas citizens of the West occupied the middle ground. This debate also had the features of communicating vessels. For example, the moderate communitarism with respect to the Surinamese Dutch at the end of the 1970s deliberately occupied the middle ground between the Eurasian assimilation and Moluccan segregation of the time. No matter how different the integration philosophy was, the common denominator was that postcolonial citizens were initially not regarded as competent and real Netherlanders. This was often related to some form of patronizing of the postcolonial citizens: politicians thought that they could lead them towards the correct relationship with the Netherlands. The 'inner contradiction between empire and nation' appeared to be projected

inwardly. In integration discourses, postcolonial citizens found themselves somewhere between subjects, overseas citizens and Dutch citizens, although various terms were used in the integration discourse: Asian-oriented, ethnic minority, nonwestern allochthonous person or nonwestern newcomers. In present-day political discourses, postcolonial citizens (except Antillean Dutch) are increasingly construed as assimilated and integrated into Dutch society. Their presence is no longer problematized. However, the silences observed in their respect in the political discourses have been replaced by new distinctions between 'we' and 'them', in which regard the Islamic minorities have now been invented as the 'others' within the borders.¹⁰

5. Dynamic Relationships between Nation, Nationality and Citizenship

This study was conducted as part of a research programme into *Transnationality and citizenship. New approaches to migration law*. The purpose of the study was to reconsider the meaning of citizenship in a transnational context from various perspectives. The transterritorial reality of the relationship between the Netherlands and its overseas citizens sheds light on the highly dynamic relationships that can exist between nation, nationality and citizenship (in a material sense). That transterritorial reality makes it clear that the formal nationality does not always entail the inclusion that is tacitly assumed in conventional perceptions of citizenship. Overseas citizens may lose their formal national citizenship because they are not regarded as members of the nation. On the other hand, retaining a nationality does not necessarily mean that the right to admission and settlement in the fatherland is unconditionally accepted. The political discourses and the related policy practices may construe overseas national citizens, who are formally 'on the inside', as outsiders. The political reflections on admission of Surinamese and Antillean Dutch from the West and the policy of discouragement in regard of the Eurasians have illustrated this. A right that is normally regarded as inherent in the notion of formal nationality, i.e. admission to the territory of the state whose nationality an individual has, proved far from obvious for overseas citizens. Opinions on the real substrate of individuals of the nation can therefore have the effect of politicians wishing to apply to overseas citizens part of the exclusive regime, even though that regime applies to legal aliens under conventional citizenship conceptions.

In the more generally accepted opinions on citizenship, the territory of the nation-state is the domain in which the inclusive dimensions of citizens apply without any restriction. As discussed earlier, the universalist ethic of full citizenship of every individual is the central assumption of that citizenship debate. It is about social, socio-economic and political participation and the rights to achieve that purpose. Citizenship is supposedly 'soft on the inside.' The universalist ethic refers mainly to the position of nationals within the borders of the country. But as Bosniak, Soysal and Sassen have shown, legal aliens can also acquire a variety of rights that national citizens have. Bosniak calls this the 'the citizenship of aliens' as was described above. The political discourses on integration of postcolonial citizens in the Netherlands showed a slightly different dynamic. As we have seen, the legal alien status of Moluccans acquired more significance within the borders of the Netherlands. As a result of racialized beliefs on differences, they were initially separated from Dutch society. In that respect, the political discourses with

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respect to the Eurasian, the Surinamese and the Antillean Dutch within the borders of the Netherlands placed greater emphasis on inclusion and participation in society. As we have seen, that did not mean that they were readily viewed as real or competent members of the imagined community. For the Eurasians of the 1950s, this meant assimilation, against the background of the idea that there was no way back. With respect to the Antillean and Surinamese Dutch there was the idea that a return was possible and, accordingly, the unequivocal message to them in the political discourses was that their citizenship in the Netherlands was not self-evident.

In addition the political discourses on postcolonial citizens illustrated that the 'hard on the outside' regime is not always tenable with regard to legal aliens. Under varying circumstances, and often after political and social pressure, the Dutch government adopted a privileged admission scheme based on historical ties for Surinamese citizens, for Eurasians regretting their choice for Indonesian citizenship and for Moluccans. And after years of isolation from Dutch society, the citizenship of Moluccans as part of Dutch society acquired more significance when the government decided to treat stateless Moluccans collectively as 'social Dutch citizens.'

In summary, the political discourses on postcolonial citizens and their ties with the Netherlands bear witness to a dynamic relationship between the nation, nationality and citizenship. It also points to a dynamic relationship between legal alienage and citizenship, even if the legal alien is outside the territory of the nation-state. With regard to the latter: if legal aliens have a historical relationship with a nation, political actors within that nation may decide to include them, even though that inclusion is often preceded by political battle. With regard to the first issue: if overseas nationals are situated outside the imagined community of the metropolis in political discourses, various dimensions of their citizenship may be at risk. As the idea that overseas citizens are related to the nation gains ground in political discourses, the inclusive dimensions of citizenship are also more meaningful to them.

6. A Sustainable Nation

In the introduction, it was argued that nations are reinvented again and again. Did the arrival of overseas citizens to the Netherlands lead to a redefinition of the Dutch people in political discourses? Yes and no. The fact that part of the coloured population of the former empire broke adrift and came to the Netherlands, was the reason for politicians to reinvent the Dutch nation. Politicians drew new boundaries between 'us' and 'them' which related to the arrival of those citizens of colour in the Netherlands. The distinction between 'real Dutch' and 'aliens' intertwined with their physical appearance. The initially defensive view on the inclusion of overseas citizens of colour into the Netherlands generally yielded in favour of an inclusive political discourse in later years. This applied in particular to those postcolonial citizens whose migration history was regarded as a more or less closed matter: i.e. the Eurasian, the Moluccan and the Surinamese Dutch and applied to a lesser extent to postcolonial citizens of the Netherlands Antilles, whose migration is still unstable in the eyes of politicians. The fact that a significant part of the Dutch citizens of colour have been accepted as members of Dutch society in political discourses does not mean that the prevailing definition of real Dutch has changed. To this date, there is the idea that proper Netherlanders can be recognized by their looks. That idea

is partly immanent, it is not voiced in political discourses, but can be heard in day-to-day social interaction. Although the dichotomy between autochthonous and allochthonous still has an external connotation, the remarkable feature nowadays is that the Islamic Dutch citizens are the ones who are expressly presented as allochthonous within the borders. There is the idea that Islamic citizens cannot be proper Netherlanders. As long as ideas about the nation continue to refer to an authentic, fixed core rather than the actual facts of individuals who reside, work and live in a country, full citizenship for everyone is out of the question. In the context of transnational connections of all kinds, a more cosmopolitan definition of national citizenship poses a challenge not only to the Netherlands, but also to other nation-states.