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Schrover, M.L.J.C.

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Pillarization, Multiculturalism and Cultural Freezing

Dutch Migration History and the Enforcement of Essentialist Ideas

MARLOU SCHROVER | LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

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During the 1970s, the Netherlands introduced a set of multi-cultural policies which, through government subsidies, subsidised and promoted the otherness of migrants for several decades. Other countries also embraced multiculturalism. In the Netherlands, however, this policy represented a continuation of an older tradition of pillarization. Multiculturalism was not pillarization in new clothes, however, although there was a continuity of the underlying ideas, as this article will show. This led to a great deal of enthusiasm for multiculturalism, and subsequently to great disappointment, without it ever becoming clear what exactly the aim of the policy was and how its success or failure could be measured. The central thesis of this article is that the successive development of pillarization and multiculturalism in the Netherlands has led to a reinforcement of essentialist ideas concerning migrants and their descendants, as well as a freezing of ideas on 'the' Dutch culture. This double freezing then made adaptation difficult or impossible.

In general, people tend to think of society in simple categories, because simplification makes the social world understandable and manageable. It rationalises existing social arrangements, and creates the illusion of control.[1] Categorisations and essentialist beliefs form the basis for inclusion and exclusion, and make it possible to hold groups responsible for their (perceived) members.[2] Essentialist beliefs about groups are central to racism, but are also used for self-identification and can play a role in the process of group emancipation.[3] However, the history of Dutch integration policy shows that categorisation not only influences how people define themselves or are defined by others[4], but also – and more importantly – leads to fossilisation of ideas about the culture of immigrants, and that of society at large. Collective amnesia regarding change stimulates this process of fossilisation or cultural 'freezing'.[5] This explains the recent increase in Dutch intolerance towards

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immigrants and their offspring, which has taken outside observers by surprise, because the Netherlands has for centuries been proud of its record of tolerance and hospitality.[6] Several German politicians have expressed the view that the open Islamophobia currently common in the Netherlands would be impossible in Germany.[7] The recent Dutch move towards intolerance can however partly be explained by the Dutch history of pillarization (or vertically segmented pluralism)[8] and the transfer of ideas from pillarization to multiculturalism, in combination with the top-down, state-led interference with immigrant organising which resulted from both of these factors.

Pillarization was a distinctive feature of Dutch society, but multicultural policy was not typically Dutch, and neither is the tendency to talk about the outcomes of this policy in terms of tragedy[9], or failure (often without specifying what the goal of the policy was or how its success or failure can be measured).[10] Failure is then attributed either to unwillingness on the part of immigrants, or to wrong policies, or both. It can be shown that the unintended cumulative effect of state interference with immigrant organising during pillarization, and later multiculturalism, has led to what I call 'cultural freezing': the enforcement of essentialist ideas about both the culture of migrants and Dutch culture. If cultures are seen as static, integration or adaptation is impossible, and attempts at such will inevitably fail.

I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their comments on an earlier version of this article, and the editors for their positive feedback and encouragement.

1 R. Boyd and P. J. Richerson, 'The Evolution of Ethnic Markers', *Cultural Anthropology* 2 (1987) 65-79.

2 David E. Leary, 'Naming and Knowing: Giving Forms to Things Unknown', *Social Research* 62:2 (Summer 1995) 267-298.

3 Maykel Verkuyten, 'Discourses about Ethnic Group (De-)essentialism: Oppressive and Progressive Aspects', *British Journal of Social Psychology* 42 (2003) 371-391.

4 Rogers Brubaker, Mara Loveman and Peter Stamatov, 'Ethnicity as Cognition', *Theory and Society* 33 (2004) 31-64.

5 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York 1991) 204.

6 J.-W. Duyvendak, *Een eensgezinde, vooruitstrevende natie* (Amsterdam 2004) 10; *Financial Times* 4 December 2004; G. Mak, *Gedoemd tot kwetsbaarheid* (Amsterdam 2004) 11; Philomena Essed and Kwame Nimako, 'Designs and (Co)Incidents Cultures of Scholarship and Public Policy on Immigrants/Minorities in the Netherlands', *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 47:3-4 (2006) 281-312, 299.

7 *Vrij Nederland* 26 September 2009.

8 David O. Moberg, 'Religion and Society in the Netherlands and in America', *American Quarterly* 13:2 Part 1 (1961) 172-178. See the article by Kennedy and Zwemer in this issue.

9 S. Castles, 'The Factors that Make and Unmake Migration Policies', *International Migration Review* [further IMR] 38:3 (Fall 2004) 852-884.

10 Proceedings of the Dutch Lower House (hereinafter Proceedings), *Eindrapport Onderzoek Integratiebeleid* (The Hague 2004).

I will start with some general remarks about immigrant organising, pillarization and multiculturalism. These will be followed by sections describing organisation among immigrants, the influence of government policy and the effects of these on ideas about Dutch culture.[11]

Immigrant organisations

The extent to which immigrants cluster in organisations is a measure of collectively expressed and collectively ascribed identity.[12] The character, number and size of such organisations indicate the degree to which immigrants wish to profile themselves as different, or the extent to which others see them as different.[13] It is also through these organisations that authorities address immigrants as a collective. As such, organisations say something about the demarcations within and between immigrant groups, and between immigrants and non-migrants.[14] Immigrant organising is stimulated by (perceived) cultural differences between immigrants and non-immigrants, migration patterns and motives, characteristics of the immigrant group (sex ratio, religion, numbers, concentrations, age) and the division of resources among the immigrants.[15] The opportunity structure of the country of settlement is crucial to immigrant organising as this can frustrate, facilitate or encourage organisation among immigrants. A bell-shaped relationship exists between government interference and associational behaviour.[16]

11 There is a very large literature on migration from and to the Netherlands. For references see: Herman Obdeijn and Marlou Schrover, *Komen en Gaan. Immigratie en Emigratie in Nederland vanaf 1550* (Amsterdam 2008).

12 Rinus Penninx and Marlou Schrover, *Bastion of bindmiddel. Organisaties van immigranten in historisch perspectief* (Amsterdam 2001); A. van Heelsum, *Migrantenorganisaties in Nederland, deel 2. Het functioneren van de organisaties* (Utrecht 2004); Marlou Schrover and Floris Vermeulen, 'Immigrant Organisations. Introduction', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* [hereinafter JEMS] 3 (2005) 823-832; Marlou Schrover, '"Whenever a Dozen Germans meet …": German Organisations in the Netherlands in the Nineteenth Century', *JEMS* 32:5 (July 2006) 847-864; Marlou Schrover, 'No More than a Keg of Beer: The Coherence of German Immigrant Communities', in: Leo Lucassen, Jochen Oltmer and David Feldman (eds.), *Paths of Integration* (Amsterdam 2006) 222-238.

13 J.L. Cohen, 'Strategy and Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements', *Social Research* 52:4 (1985) 663-716, 685, 693.

14 B. Marquez, 'Choosing Issues, Choosing Sides: Constructing Identities in Mexican-American Social Movement Organizations', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24:2 (2001) 218-235.

15 R. Breton, 'Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities and the Personal Relations of Immigrants', *American Journal of Sociology* 70:2 (1964) 193-205, 204; Jose C. Moya, 'Immigrants and Associations: A Global and Historical Perspective', JEMS 31:5 (September 2005) 833-864.

16 Schrover and Vermeulen, 'Immigrant Organisations', 823-832.

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At one end of the scale are countries where the government forbids or discourages immigrant organisations. In the middle, we find countries where tolerating and funding immigrant organisations stimulate the creation and continuation of such organisations. At the other end of the scale are those countries where too much government interference leads to the crowding out of immigrants' own initiatives. As we shall see below, the Dutch government has encouraged, facilitated and subsidised immigrant organisations, but has also crowded out immigrant initiatives. Pillarization within Dutch society and the way multicultural policies have been implemented has contributed to this.

Pillarization

Pillarization, which characterised Dutch society between 1900 and 1960, has been defined as a form of segmental differentiation in a functionally differentiated society, which promotes social exclusiveness and an in-group mentality.[17] When the term was first coined, shortly after World War II, it was seen as a typically Dutch phenomenon. Later authors pointed out that other countries – such as Belgium, Switzerland or Austria – had similar systems of segmented pluralism, which were used for social mobilisation and the structuring of political conflict and compromise.[18] In the 1950s and 1960s, however, politicians and social scientists saw pillarization as a uniquely Dutch (and promising) transition to modernity.[19]

In the Netherlands, pillarization meant segmentation of society into religious and secular blocs and subcultures. There were four pillars (Catholic, Protestant, Socialist and Liberal), but only the Catholic and Protestant pillars provided the cradle-to-grave embeddedness said to characterise a pillarized society. The Catholic pillar showed most coherence. The Protestant pillar split into two or more pillars[20], and the Socialist and Liberal pillars were largely the result of strong organisation among Catholics and Protestants.[21]

17 Karel Dobbelaere, 'Towards an Integrated Perspective of the Processes Related to the Descriptive Concept of Secularization', *Sociology of Religion* 60:3 (Autumn 1999) 229-247, 231.

18 Val R. Lorwin, 'Segmented Pluralism: Ideological Cleavages and Political Cohesion in the Smaller European Democracies', *Comparative Politics* 3:2 (January 1971) 141-175; Frederick C. Engelmann and Mildred A. Schwartz, 'Partisan Stability and the Continuity of a Segmented Society: The Austrian Case', *The American Journal of Sociology* 79:4 (January 1974) 948-966.

19 Andrew Goss, 'From Tong-Tong to Tempo Doeloe: Eurasian Memory Work and the Bracketing of Dutch Colonial History, 1957-1961', *Indonesia* 70 (October 2000) 9-36, 13.

20 Paul Dekker and Peter Ester, 'Depillarization, Deconfessionalization, and De-Ideologization: Empirical Trends in Dutch Society 1958-1992', *Review of Religious Research* 37:4 (June 1996) 325-341.

21 A. Lijphart, *Verzuiling, pacificatie en kentering in de Nederlandse politiek* (Haarlem 1980, 8th print) 74.

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Pillarization as a policy meant that groups could apply for government funding for, for instance, private schools, the building of places of worship and support for their organisations. In the 1950s (shortly before the onset of depillarization), more organisations than ever – active in more fields than ever – received state subsidies.[22] Immigrant organising was influenced by pillarization – as will be described below – although this was no more than a footnote within the larger history of pillarization.

Multiculturalism

There is an extensive literature on multiculturalism, part of which seeks to pass moral judgement (was multiculturalism good or bad?) or deals with the (alleged) failure of multicultural policy.[23] This article takes a different approach, and examines the functionality of multiculturalism: why was it pursued as a policy, how did it change over time, and what were its consequences?[24] Some authors have equated pillarization with Dutch multiculturalism.[25] However, Catholics and Protestants formed large groups within Dutch society, while the groups that were targeted by the Dutch multicultural policies consisted of small minorities, with a weak socio-economic position. Furthermore, the people who formed the pillars were seen as members of Dutch society, whereas the groups that were targeted by multiculturalism were often not.[26]

In the 1960s and 1970s, multiculturalism emerged as an ideology and as a policy for managing the cultural diversity that resulted from increased immigration to Western countries[27], or as a way to avoid coping with change.[28] It was not only the Netherlands that followed a multicultural policy; the United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, Australia, the United States

22 Christopher G.A. Bryant, 'Depillarisation in the Netherlands', *The British Journal of Sociology* 32:1 (March 1981) 56-74.

23 For a summary of some of the literature see: Ayelet Shachar, 'Two Critiques of Multiculturalism', *Cardozo Law Review* 23:1 (2001-2002) 253-297.

24 Leti Volpp, 'Talking "Culture": Gender, Race, Nation, and The Politics of Multiculturalism', *Columbia Law Review* 96 (1996) 1573-1617, 1588-1589, 1608-1609.

25 B. Prins, *Voorbij de onschuld. Het debat over de multiculturele samenleving* (Amsterdam 2000) 13.

26 Halleh Ghorashi, *Paradoxen van culturele erkenning. Management van diversiteit in Nieuw Nederland* (Amsterdam 2006) 17.

27 Dominic McGoldrick, 'Multiculturalism and its Discontents', *Human Rights Law Review* 5:1 (2005) 27-56.

28 Mandy McKerl, 'Multiculturalism, Gender and Violence', *Culture and Religion* 8:2 (2007) 187-217, 204-205.

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and Canada did too.[29] Multiculturalism is currently no longer seen as a goal, but presented as a reality; sometimes with a positive connotation, but mostly not.[30]

Multiculturalism as an ideology has been defined as aspiring towards a plurality of cultures with all members of society seeking to live together, while maintaining separate cultures. According to this view, all cultures are of equal value, although the recognition of the legitimacy of cultures other than the dominant one usually pulls up short when these clash with perceived key values of the dominant culture.[31] According to several critics, multiculturalism may originally have grown out of the demands of minorities and others for a more inclusive society, but has become a way to sidestep the issue of racism or inequality. Multiculturalism ignores the fact that there is no mosaic of equally valued cultures.[32] When multiculturalism first took shape as an ideology, it was believed there might be.

Multiculturalism allowed countries to seem tolerant by showering minorities with rights, while at the same time segregating them.[33] Several authors found that, while multiculturalism had been introduced as a policy to facilitate integration, in practice it has done the reverse.[34] The idea of multiculturalism was appealing because acknowledging the rights of individuals and groups seemed to be a way to reduce social conflict. Multiculturalism granted groups the right to make claims for support *as groups*. Facilitation and financial support from the state were a crucial part of multicultural policy.[35] Multiculturalism as a policy led to

29 H. Runblom, 'Swedish Multiculturalism in a Comparative European Perspective', *Sociological Forum* 9:4 (1994) 623-640; C. Jopke, 'State Neutrality and Islamic Headscarf Laws in France and Germany', *Theory and Society* 36:4 (2007) 313-342.

30 See the *Guardian* website with the slogan 'London. The World in One City'. www.guardian.co.uk/britain/london/0,,1394802,00.html (21 March 2010).

31 Doriane Lambelet Coleman, 'Individualizing Justice Through Multiculturalism: The Liberals' Dilemma', *Columbia Law Review* 96:5 (June 1996) 1093-1167, 1119.

32 Prema Kurien, 'Multiculturalism, Immigrant Religion, and Diasporic Nationalism: The Development of an American Hinduism', *Social Problems* 51:3 (2004) 362-385, 378.

33 Robert S. Leiken, 'Europe's Angry Muslims', *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2005) 120-135.

34 Ewald Engelen, 'Towards an Explanation of the Performance Differences of Turks in the Netherlands and Germany: The Case for a Comparative Political Economy of Integration', *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 97:1 (2006) 69-79, 72; Kurien, 'Multiculturalism', 362-385.

35 Faisal Bhabha, 'Between Exclusion and Assimilation: Experimentalizing Multiculturalism', *McGill Law Journal/Revue De Droit De McGill* 54 (2009) 45-90, 57; Patrick Parkinson, 'Taking Multiculturalism Seriously: Marriage Law and the Rights of Minorities', *Sydney Law Review* 14 (1994) 473-505; Anne Phillips, 'When Culture Means Gender: Issues of Cultural Defence in the English Courts', *The Modern Law Review* (2003) 510-531, 517.

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institutionalisation, which dictated what was a legitimate identity and, as such, how migrant communities defined and presented themselves.[36] It was based on a conception of groups as homogenous, and having unique and inherent characteristics.[37] This perception of a coherent and unified entity was linked to a belief in an underlying essence. Multiculturalism failed to take into account that ethnicity is not an immutable, primordial essence, but is fluid, amorphous, and constantly being reinvented. This denial makes it possible to search for 'authentic' cultural differences. Multiculturalism was morally and politically acceptable only if ethnic minorities were actual groups with inherent characteristics.[38] It demanded the construction of a *public* ethnic identity (as opposed to a private one), and pressed individuals to organise into groups on the basis of perceived cultural similarity.[39] The struggle for recognition spurred ethnic formation, organisation and mobilisation by ethnic brokers who worked to obtain recognition by making cultures visible. Since claims for recognition were based on the supposed uniqueness of the group's culture, institutionalisation of multiculturalism led to overemphasising of differences between groups and underplaying of the diversity within groups. Because of this assumed group homogeneity, authorities encouraged the formation of one representative body. This not only denied differences within groups, but also increased competition between them, as they tried to legitimise their claims to speak on behalf of 'the community', and thus quality for funding.

The institutionalisation of multiculturalism led to the construction of collective public identities, quests for authenticity, assumptions about homogeneity, and competition within what are believed to be communities. Institutionalisation dictated what a legitimate identity was and, as such, how migrant communities defined and presented themselves. Crucial to multiculturalism is that integration was seen as a group process, which justified subsidies for immigrant organisations.[40] Immigrants in the Netherlands were encouraged to set up their own organisations.[41] As the

36 Justus Uitermark, Ugo Rossi and Henk van Houtum, 'Reinventing Multiculturalism: Urban Citizenship and the Negotiation of Ethnic Diversity in Amsterdam', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 29:3 (September 2005) 622-640, 624; J. Salaff and Pearl Chan, 'Competing Interests: Toronto's Chinese Immigrant Associations and the Politics of Multiculturalism', *Population, Space and Place* 13 (2007) 125-140, 126.

37 Maykel Verkuyten and Peary Brug, 'Multiculturalism and Group Status: The Role of Ethnic Identification, Group Essentialism and Protestant Ethic', *European Journal of Social Psychology* 34 (2004) 647-661, 647.

38 Verkuyten and Brug, 'Multiculturalism and Group Status', 648.

39 Kurien, 'Multiculturalism', 365.

40 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12: Onderzoek Integratiebeleid, Onderzoeksrapport, Aanvullend bronnenonderzoek Verwey-Jonker Instituut, 79.

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Organisations of migrants could get subsidies if activities were presented as 'cultural' and 'authentic'. State Mines in Heerlen: performance by dance group Pegasus (Pigasos) in the province of Limburg, the Greek for Happy Easter in the background, April 1968. Migrants' Historical Image Archive, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

sections below will show, Dutch government policy strongly influenced the number of organisations that were set up, as well as their nature, goals and continuity.

Stimulating immigrant organisations before 1900

Immigrant organising in the Netherlands – of course – predates pillarization and multiculturalism. Whether and how migrants organised depended on a range of factors, which included whether immigrants could join Dutch majority churches and other organisations; which tasks were delegated by the local or national governments to religious, majority or immigrant organisations; and whether religious organisations were held responsible for their poorer brethren. If the civil government, guilds or majority churches denied immigrants access to economic, social or political power, immigrant churches or other immigrant organisations could take on particular functions to make up for these restrictions.[42]

Local and national governments did play a role in the separate organisation of immigrants. In the sixteenth century, for instance, refugees from the Southern Netherlands (now mostly Belgium) founded the Walloon church in the Netherlands, which did not differ in its religious practices from the dominant Dutch Calvinist church (except in the language used). The reason for stimulating the foundation of a separate church was that, contrary to expectations within Dutch society, not all refugees proved to be wealthy. By founding a separate church, the dominant Calvinist church was freed from financial responsibility for the poor immigrants. In the seventeenth century, Huguenots fleeing from France also joined the Walloon church. Initially, the Huguenots founded their own churches, but the Walloon church deliberately stirred up trouble among the Huguenots and then appealed to the Dutch civil government to exercise its power to resolve these problems and make the Huguenots join the Walloon church. Lutheran immigrants from Scandinavian and German countries also organised in a separate church in the Netherlands. The Lutherans did not encounter restrictions within Dutch society; they were not denied guild membership (as Jewish and Catholic immigrants sometimes were); they were free to settle where they liked, and to choose any occupation they wanted. Their separate organisation was thus not intended to counter exclusion. The organisation of Lutherans was – like that of Walloons and Huguenots – influenced by the civil authorities. In the Lutheran church

41 Proceedings, session 1969-1970, 10504, no. 1: 12 Foreign Workers Memorandum; Peter Scholten, *Constructing Immigrant Policies Research-Policy Relations and Immigrant Integration in The Netherlands (1970-2004)* (Arnhem 2007) 78.

42 This section is based on: Penninx and Schrover, *Bastion of bindmiddel*. See this for references.

Migrants from the (former) Dutch East Indies were supposed to find their place within pillarized Dutch society, but not by starting their own pillar.
The Ottenhoff family arrived in Middelburg (province of Zeeland) from the former Dutch East Indies in 1952. This is a portrait of them in Dutch traditional costume, Middelburg 1952.
Migrants' Historical Image Archive, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

in the Netherlands, sermons were in German, although to many Lutheran immigrants the High German used was as foreign as Dutch. A language issue evolved, fuelled by differences in orthodoxy. The orthodox and the more liberal Lutherans both appealed to the Dutch civil government. In the end, the liberals gained most support, but as a result the Lutheran church symbolically broke with its status as an immigrant church and became a Dutch minority church, with sermons in Dutch and ministers who were now trained in the Netherlands, and no longer in German regions. Dutch authorities also played a crucial role in the organisation of Jews in the Netherlands. In 1814, Jews – immigrants and non-immigrants – were forced into a single organisation by Dutch civil authorities, who saw this as a way to counter the extreme poverty among some of the Jews: if there was one community, its richer members could be held responsible for the poorer ones.

Enforcing internal unity and creating external segregation via state-led, top-down initiatives did not originate at the time of pillarization or multiculturalism, but – as we shall see below – both phenomena did serve to stimulate this further.

Stimulating immigrant organisations and ethnic othering after 1900

In the 1920s and 1930s, immigrants made use of the possibilities created by pillarization. One example of this is the German schools, set up by migrants in The Hague, Amsterdam and Venlo, and subsided by the Dutch government.[43] These subsidies were, however, not meant to create or support ethnic 'micro-pillars'.

This changed after World War II, but not immediately. Between 1945 and 1960, 300,000 people came to the Netherlands from the former Dutch East Indies (present-day Indonesia). They formed the first large group of post-war immigrants. The 'repatriates' were carefully monitored by Dutch social workers, and a large number of commissions, organisations and agencies were set up to help them. In 1950, an umbrella organisation[44] was established which helped these repatriates from their moment of arrival. It assigned social workers – from the pillar that seemed most appropriate – to repatriates. The idea was that the newcomers would find their place within pillarized Dutch society, but not by starting their own pillar.[45]

43 Katja Happe, *Deutsch in den Niederlanden 1918-1945. Eine historische Untersuchung zu nationalen Identifikationsangeboten im Prozess der Konstruktion individueller Identitäten* (Siegen 2004) 62.

44 Centraal Comité van Kerkelijk en Particulier Initiatief voor sociale zorg aan gerepartieerden [Central Committee of Religious and Private Initiatives for the Social Care for Repatriates].

45 Goss, 'From Tong-Tong to Tempo Doeloe', 15.

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In the 1960s, when guest workers started to arrive from Italy, Spain and Portugal, things did change. Guest worker immigrants from Catholic countries could have fitted into the pillarized structure, which at the time of their arrival was still in place. Catholic immigrants in the Netherlands did not set up separate churches before the 1960s.[46] Rather surprisingly, however, the new Catholic immigrants started to do just that. The reason for this was a fundamental change in ideas about church organisation within the Catholic church.[47]

Traditionally, the Vatican forbade the formation of separate churches based on language or ethnicity. In the United States, Catholic clergy showed some leniency towards separate Catholic churches, and German, Irish, Polish, and Italian Catholic immigrants there did set up their own churches in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[48] Around 1900, Catholic Poles in the German Ruhr area and Irish migrants in the United Kingdom also organised into separate churches.[49] The Dutch clergy was stricter, however: in the 1930s, Italian, Slovenian and Polish miners and German dockworkers in the Netherlands were provided with chaplains who said mass and heard confessions in their own languages, but they were not allowed to form separate churches.

In 1969, as an outcome of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the Catholic church broke with one of its oldest principles. It dropped the principle of territoriality, which had organised churchgoers into parishes, and allowed migrants to start minority language churches. Shortly afterwards, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese-language churches were set up in the Netherlands.[50] Immigrants were organised by language and not according to country of origin. The Portuguese speaking churches, for example, included migrants from Portugal, the Cape Verde Islands, Brazil, Angola and Mozambique.

46 W. Sahner, *Katholische und Evangelische Seelsorge des Deutschtums in Holland. Kirchliche und kulturelle Gliederung* (Emsdetten 1950); Schrover, "Whenever a Dozen Germans meet…" , 847-864; M. Schrover, 'Grenzen van het Deutschtum. Duitse immigranten in het negentiende-eeuwse Nederland', in: L. Lucassen (ed.), *Amsterdammer worden. Migranten, hun organisaties en inburgering, 1600-2000* (Amsterdam 2004) 127-145, 127-128.

47 C. Laarman, 'De kerk. Migrantengroepen, geloofsbeleving en de versplintering van de katholieke kerk', in: I. Hoving, H. Dibbits and M. Schrover (eds.), *Veranderingen van het alledaagse 1950-2000* (The Hague 2005) 331-352; Charlotte Laarman, 'De Portugeestalige migranten en hun parochies in de Nederlandse katholieke kerk, 1969-2005', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische geschiedenis* 1 (2007) 117-142.

48 J. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church, New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815-1865* (Baltimore 1975); P. D'Agostino, *Rome in America: Transnational Catholic Ideology from the Risorgimento to Fascism* (Chapel Hill 2004).

49 L. Lucassen, *The Immigrant Threat: The Integration of Old and New Migrants in Western Europe Since 1850* (Urbana 2005).

50 Laarman, 'De Portugeestalige migranten'.

The reason for this dramatic change was that the Catholic church feared that migrants might otherwise lose their faith. This fear was not new, however, and had not previously constituted grounds to change policy (despite pressure in the United States). The reason for the change now was that the Vatican – like many of the governments in the countries of origin of the guest workers – believed this migration to be temporary, and that organisation into separate migrant churches would facilitate an easy return.

The change within the Catholic church had a spin-off effect via a rather complicated route. In the 1960s, the Dutch government held employers responsible for the well-being of the guest workers they recruited. The employers delegated this responsibility to Catholic charities, as these already had ties with the (Catholic) guest workers. The charities then branched out their activities to non-Catholic guest workers from, for instance, Morocco and Turkey.[51] The employers initially funded the charities, but in the 1970s the Dutch government decided to centralise activities for efficiency reasons.[52] The Foundations for the Welfare of Foreign Workers (*Stichtingen*[53]) played a crucial role. They were subsidised by the Dutch government to the tune of 40 percent, with local authorities and employers covering the rest. By 1975, government subsidies had increased to 100 percent, leading to a corresponding increase in government influence on and dependency by the organisations.[54] The creation of the Foundations was a reason for the general (non-immigrant) organisations to no longer see immigrants as their target group, and the migrants' problems as no longer their business.[55]

The Foundations worked on behalf of the guest workers, but were not guest worker organisations. The Dutch government favoured this construction as it feared influence both from the countries of origin of the guest workers and from right-wing immigrant organisations active in the Netherlands, such as the Turkish Grey Wolves, in the wakes of several severe clashes between right and left-wing guest workers in the 1960s.[56]

51 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 244.

52 Marlou Schrover, Judith ten Broeke and Ronald Rommes, *Migranten bij de Demka-staalfabrieken in Utrecht (1915-1983)* (Utrecht 2008).

53 *Landelijke Stichting Bijstand Buitenlandse Werknemers* which unites *Stichtingen Bijstand Buitenlandse Werknemers* and other *Welzijnsstichtingen*.

54 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 127-128, 244.

55 R. Rijkschroeff, J.W Duyvendak and T. Pels, *Bronnenonderzoek Verwey-Jonker Instituut. Tijdelijke Commissie Onderzoek Integratiebeleid* (Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 11 (The Hague 2004) 26).

56 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 138-139.

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Government interference in immigrant organisations had a crowding-out effect. The bottom-up initiatives by guest workers themselves had to compete with top-down initiatives subsidised and initiated by the Dutch government.
Parents wait for their children outside a Greek concentration school, Utrecht 1985.
Migrants' Historical Image Archive, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

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Crowding out

Government interference in immigrant organisations had a crowding-out effect. The bottom-up initiatives by guest workers themselves had to compete with top-down initiatives from organisations subsidised and initiated by the Dutch government. The result was that, for instance, language classes in Italian set up by the guest workers themselves outside school hours, were now moved into schools and given during school hours. The Italian guest workers and their organisations protested against this, as they feared their children might fall behind if they missed part of the regular Dutch curriculum. After three years of protests, the classes were again moved out of the schools. The Italians were however the only group to succeed in doing this. Children from other countries were concentrated in certain schools (called concentration schools); one school organised language lessons for all Spanish children, one for all Turkish children, etcetera. Mother-tongue apprehension was initially believed to make it easier for guest workers to return, but when it became clear many would not, it was believed that the classes would support identity development amongst minorities and that this would contribute to the creation of a multicultural society.[57]

In 1974, immigrant organisations were seen as essential not only for maintaining ethnic identity, but also for smoothing relations with Dutch society.[58] In 1975, the minister of Social Work pressed for more representation of guest workers within the Foundations. This was surprising, as only one year previously, the authorities were of the opinion that guest workers did not qualify for managerial positions within the Foundations because of their social and cultural background. The Foundations did not manage to find candidates, however, and nothing changed.[59]

Between 1973 and 1981, guest workers protested against their lack of influence. In several Dutch towns, there were groups of volunteers (many of them left-wing students) who gave Dutch language lessons to guest workers, and helped them with housing and labour issues. The left-wing Dutch students and other Dutch volunteers played a crucial role in setting up left-wing guest worker organisations, especially for Turkish and Moroccan workers. In due course, these organisations stood up against the Dutch influence, which they called patronising and colonial.[60] The students and other non-immigrant volunteers joined protests by the guest workers against

57 Scholten, *Constructing Immigrant Policies Research*, 81-82.

58 Rijkschroeff, Duyvendak and Pels, *Bronnenonderzoek integratiebeleid*, 24.

59 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 127-128, 138.

60 *Ibidem*, 140, 142, 253.

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the Foundations and set up alternative immigrant Councils (*Raden*)[61], which called the Foundations old-fashioned and patronising. The Councils were, like the Foundations, fully subsidised by national and local governments.[62] These Councils were also not immigrant organisations, as was true for the Foundations. Unlike the Foundations, the Councils however did include representatives of migrant groups, but never as part of the management.

The Foundations and the Councils competed with each other for the right to represent guest workers. They also competed for subsidies.[63] The Councils favoured left-wing initiatives and successfully protested against subsidies for religious organisations set up by the guest workers. This refusal created an opening for interference by the countries of origin, which then sent money and imams.[64] The result of all this was a remarkable constellation. The Foundations and the Councils received subsidies from the Dutch government and competed with each other and with left-wing immigrant organisations. Right-wing and religious immigrants' organisations were subsidised by the countries of origin and thereby evaded interference and crowding out by Dutch organisations.[65] The right was united, the left was divided.[66] In 1975, elections were organised for the Council in the Dutch town Utrecht. Because right-wing guest workers were so much better organised than their left-wing compatriots, all guest worker representatives in the Councils following the elections were right-wing.[67] A clash with the left-wing Dutch volunteers followed, and this signalled the end of the Councils.

Institutional path dependency

In the 1970s, the way in which group activities were subsidised made it advantageous to belong to an ethnic group. It was believed that by maintaining group-specific facilities, the socio-cultural emancipation of groups could be furthered, which would benefit individual socio-economic participation. This idea echoes the ideas behind pillarization. Subsidies were

61 *Belangenraad Buitenlandse Werknemers* or *Migrantenraad*; 1973 in Utrecht, 1974 in Dordrecht, 1976 in Gouda, and in 1978 in Delft.

62 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 138, 142.

63 W. Tinnemans, *Een gouden armband. Een geschiedenis van mediterrane immigranten in Nederland, 1945-1994* (Utrecht 1994) 238.

64 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 247.

65 Nicolaas Landman, *Van mat tot minaret. De institutionalisering van de Islam in Nederland* (Amsterdam 1992); T. Sunier, 'Moslims in de Nederlandse politieke arena', in: T. Sunier et al. (eds.) *Emancipatie en subcultuur. Sociale bewegingen in België en Nederland* (Amsterdam 2000) 138-157; Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 139, 141.

66 Penninx and Schrover, *Bastion of bindmiddel*.

67 Tinneman, *Een gouden armband*, 137; I. van der Valk, *Van migratie naar burgerschap. Twintig jaar Komitee Marokkaanse Arbeiders in Nederland* (Amsterdam 1996).

not granted to organisations that cut across ethnic boundaries. Immigrants were forced into homeland-based organisations, whose leaders were incorporated into advisory bodies and procedures. State funding relieved these organisations from mobilising a constituency.[68] Activities had to be presented as 'cultural' and 'authentic'. Local and national governments used the subsidies to the organisations to keep in touch with communities, and in this way held communities responsible for the actions of individuals.[69] This mirrors ideas about segregation and immigrant organisation from before 1900.

The policy of the 1970s can be described as 'selective exemptionism'. Immigrants were encouraged to retain what was believed to be their 'original' culture, through subsidies and exemptions from general rules. The same leeway was however not granted to non-migrants wishing to retain their culture. In 1974, for instance, Dutch women from the province Zeeland protested – without success – against the obligation to wear a helmet when riding a moped, as this made it impossible for them to wear their traditional caps with large wings and golden ornaments, which were part of their traditional dress.[70]

In 1981, the government decided that migrants should use general organisations whenever possible, rather than receive subsidies for their own organisations. Subsidies were reduced and the organisations which still received subsidies had to adapt their goals: there was no more bonding, but only bridging.[71] National umbrella organisations continued to be subsidised, but had few ties with local immigrant organisations and did not represent large numbers of migrants. Not all migrants were seen as in need of this kind of representation. Migrants from some countries – principally Turkey and Morocco – were seen as more problematic and more in need of support than others.[72] Municipal councils tried to get 'the Moroccans' or 'the Turks' to participate in and, perhaps more importantly, to sanction local policies, but without involving mosques, right-wing organisations or organisations financed by countries of origin. Municipal councils started a policy of 'artificial fertilisation': social workers, paid by the municipalities, set up self-help organisations. Mosques were kept at a distance, because municipal councils felt the state should not interfere in religious matters. By this time, the process of secularisation and depillarization was in full swing. Religious migrant organisations, and especially the mosques, were largely ignored, avoided and opposed. As a result, these developed in isolation from the rest

68 Thom Duyvené de Wit and Ruud Koopmans, 'The Integration of Ethnic Minorities into Political Culture: The Netherlands, Germany and Great Britain Compared', *Acta Politica* 40 (2005) 50-73.

69 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 251.

70 www.nuentoen.nl/fotos/118101/verplichting-valhem-middelburg-protest-.html (21 March 2010).

71 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 137, 248.

72 *Ibidem*, 130, 134, 253.

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Selective exemptionism in the 1970s. Migrants were granted certain rights, based on what was claimed to be their cultural heritage, while similar rights were not granted to Dutch non-migrants, who tried to make claims on exemptions based on tradition. The picture shows an unsuccessful protest in 1974 against the wearing of safety helmets on mopeds by Dutch women who wear national dress with matching caps.
Cor Out, Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau ANP.

of Dutch society. Local and national governments concentrated money and manpower on the development of non-religious self-help organisations. Despite – or perhaps because of – all the subsidies and professional support, these organisations mostly failed.[73]

At the end of the 1980s, multicultural policy changed again. The cultural brokers lost influence, and the immigrant organisations gained some.[74] In 1983, the government recognised that many of the guest workers and their families would stay in the Netherlands permanently.[75] The adagio 'integration while retaining identity' was dropped from government policy, although political parties continued to use it for decades afterwards.[76] The same went for institutions, the media and the public debate. Almost 25 years after the idea was abandoned, institutional path dependency meant this idea continued to resonate in public debates.[77] Moroccans, for instance, are currently presented as less integrated than Turks because they organise less as Moroccans and fail to stand up for 'the Moroccan community'.[78] This is a point of view that reflects the initial ideas behind multiculturalism.

The invention of ethnic minorities

The Dutch government stated in a 1983 policy memorandum that the Netherlands had a multicultural character, but that migrants had to respect and honour the norms and values of Dutch society.[79] Immigrants were now labelled 'ethnic minorities'.[80] What an ethnic minority was, was not defined in the memorandum, because the politicians who drafted it could not agree on a definition.[81] They simply listed the groups of migrants that the policy targeted. Not all groups were included, since not all groups were seen as problematic. Turks and Moroccans were, but Chinese, for instance, were not.

73 H. van Ooijen, 'Religion and Emancipation: A Study of the Development of Moroccan Islamic Organizations in a Dutch Town', in: W.A.R. Shadid and P.S. van Koningsveld (eds.), *Islam in Dutch Society: Current Developments and Future Prospects* (Kampen 1992) 163-180, 176-177.

74 Scholten, *Constructing Immigrant Policies Research*, 158.

75 *Ibidem*, 80; Proceedings, session 1982-1983, 16102, no. 21, 10.

76 Alfons Fermin, *Nederlandse politieke partijen over minderhedenbeleid 1977-1995* (Amsterdam 1997) 121.

77 Compare: R. Brubacker, 'The Return of Assimilation?: Changing Perspectives on Immigration and its Sequels in France, Germany and the United States', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24 (2001) 531-548; Erik Snel, 'De vermeende kloof tussen culturen. Een sociologisch commentaar op een actueel debat', *Sociologische Gids* 50:3 (2003) 236-258.

78 Uitermark, Rossi and Van Houtum, 'Reinventing Multiculturalism', 635.

79 Rijkschroeff, Duyvendak and Pels, *Bronnenonderzoek integratiebeleid*, 33.

80 Proceedings, session 1982-1983, 16102, no. 20-21 Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken, 'Minderhedennota', September 1983.

81 Henk Molleman, 'De drie I's: Immigratie – Integratie – Islam (5). Het minderhedenbeleid in Retrospectief', *Socialisme en Democratie* (2003) no. 1-2, 62-66.

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In the 1990s, government support for immigrant organisations was again reduced, but was still not stopped altogether, and the infrastructure remained intact.[82] To qualify for subsidy, immigrant organisations reproduced stereotypical ideas. Subsidy policy not only shaped the way subsidy requests were phrased, but also the type of activities organisations undertook.[83] Organisations were more likely to get subsidies if their plans were based on stereotypical ideas, especially with regard to Muslims. In this way, the Dutch state subsidised the 'othering' of migrants. Subsidies were mostly short-term and project based, and the ensuing repeated reproduction of ideas enforced stereotyping.[84] The system of subsidy led to fossilisation, with the same organisations receiving subsidies for the same activities year in, year out.[85]

In 2000, the subsidies for national organisations were stopped, but in 2002 a new temporary subsidy was introduced. A great deal of emphasis in political discussions was placed on a change in policy, but very little changed in practice.[86] Opinion leaders criticised multiculturalism, calling it a 'multicultural tragedy'.[87] Immigrant self-organisations were no longer seen as a means to develop and strengthen identity, nor as a route to emancipation. Cultural difference was problematised.[88] In 2001, the policy focus shifted from social-economic participation towards reducing social and cultural distance between migrants and Dutch society.[89] In 2002, the murder of Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn was presented as a 'clash of civilisations'. Fortuyn was murdered by a Dutch animal-rights activist, who wanted him to stop exploiting Muslims as scapegoats. Fortuyn was presented as someone killed for his criticism of multiculturalism.[90] The same was true of filmmaker Theo van Gogh, murdered in 2004.

82 Scholten, *Constructing Immigrant Policies Research*, 85.

83 Sunier, 'Moslims in de Nederlandse politieke arena', 138-157; Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 247, 262; Uitermark, Rossi and Van Houtum, 'Reinventing Multiculturalism', 627.

84 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 147.

85 *Ibidem*, 132-134.

86 R. Koopmans, '"Zachte heelmeesters": Een vergelijking van de resultaten van het Nederlandse en Duitse integratiebeleid en wat de WRR daaruit niet concludeert', *Migrantenstudies* 18:2 (2002) 87-92.

87 Paul Scheffer. 'Het multiculturele drama', NRC *Handelsblad* 29 January 2000; compare: S. Castles, 'The Factors that Make and Unmake Migration Policies', *IMR* 38:3 (Fall 2004) 852-884.

88 Rijkschroeff, Duyvendak and Pels, *Bronnenonderzoek integratiebeleid*, 54.

89 Scholten, *Constructing Immigrant Policies Research*, 86.

90 Essed and Nimako, 'Designs and (Co)Incidents Cultures of Scholarship', 304; Scholten, *Constructing Immigrant Policies Research*, 219.

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A Muslim pillar

Migrants from Turkey and Morocco and their offspring increasingly came to be referred to as Muslims.[91] Dutch society rapidly secularised in the 1960s and 1970s, and all kinds of behaviour that had previously been labelled deviant – homosexuality, divorce, children born out of wedlock – came to be accepted. Society moved from emancipation within pillarization to emancipation from pillarization. Rather surprisingly, the Dutch government started to press for the organisation of Muslims into what could be called an Islamic pillar, just as pillarization had definitely come to an end.[92] Islamic migrants from various countries did not come with a unified social infrastructure. This infrastructure, derived from and based on ideas about pillarization, was wrapped around them when they became part of Dutch society.[93] Islamic migrants found themselves in a confusing landscape. Dutch society strongly emphasised its secularised nature, but also had a large number of Christian holidays (which many people do not celebrate in a religious way), but Muslims are not allowed to exchange these for Islamic holidays.[94] Primary and secondary education are still recognisably organised according to religion (although often in name only). Islamic schools can be subsidised, but meet with a lot of resistance. The subsidy for building places of worship continued to exist after the demise of pillarization.[95] The Law on Premium Church Construction was abolished in 1975, but in 1976 a Broad Regulation Concerning the Subsidising of Prayer-Halls was introduced, and this was followed in 1981 by a Temporary Regulation especially for Muslims. Only in 1984 and 1986 did two motions in Parliament abolish subsidies for prayer halls for Muslims.

At various points in time, the Dutch authorities have felt a need to approach the 'Islamic community'.[96] Muslims came to the Netherlands from Indonesia (in small numbers only), Suriname, Iran, Iraq, (former) Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, Somalia, (former) Yugoslavia, Turkey and Morocco, as well as various other countries. There were language differences between these groups, and there were also differences between Ahmadiyyas, Sunnites and Shi'ites.[97] Sunnites form the majority among Muslims in the Netherlands. The Ahmadiyyas, who mostly came from Suriname, are not recognised as Muslims by Sunnites, and sometimes also not by Shi'ites.

91 Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, no. 12, 256.

92 Ghorashi, *Paradoxen van culturele erkenning*, 11.

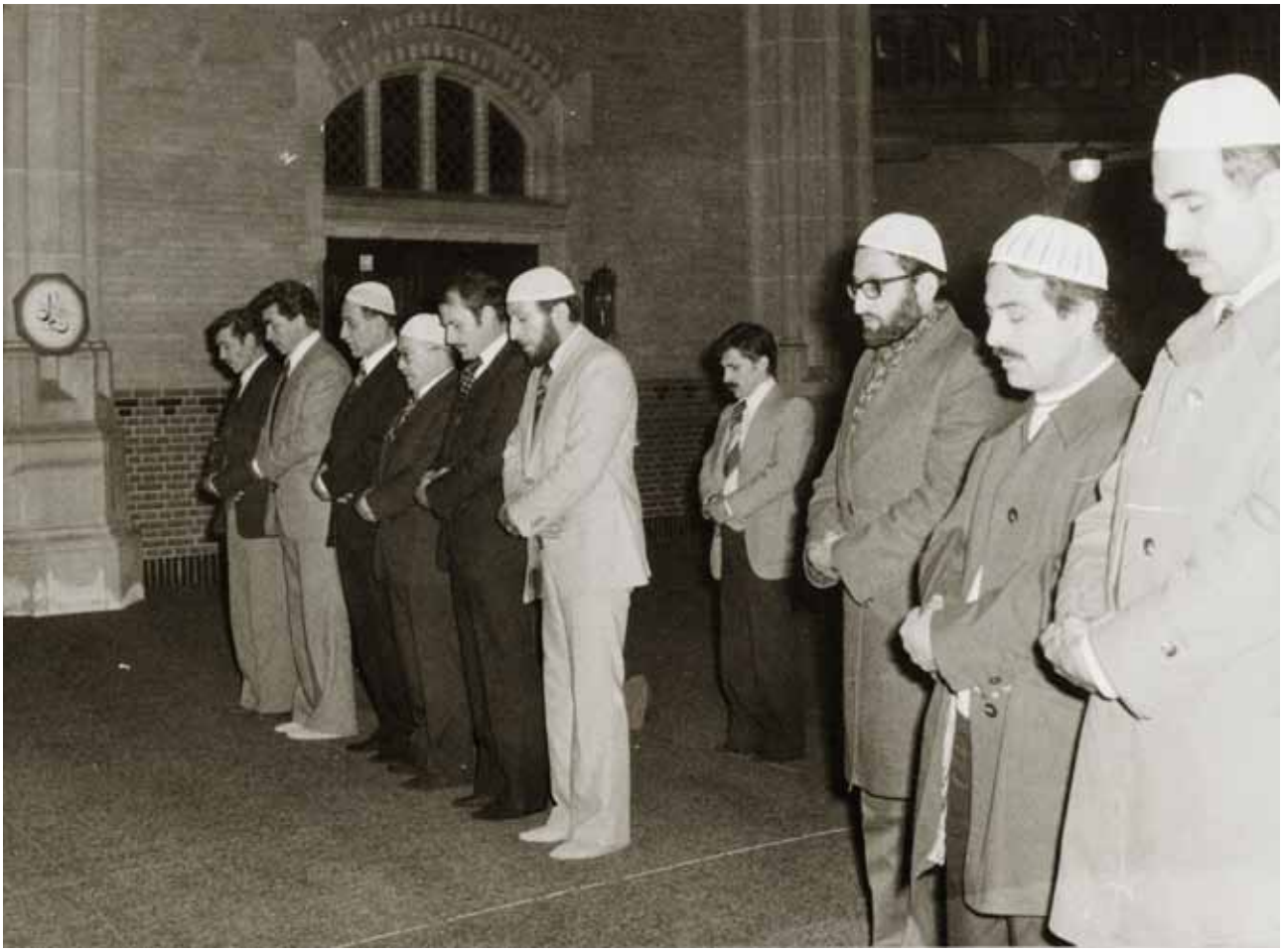
93 S. Blok, *Bruggen bouwen* (The Hague 2004); Proceedings, session 2003-2004, 28689, nos. 8-9, 79-80.

94 W.A. Shadid, 'The Integration of Muslim Minorities in the Netherlands', *IMR* 25:2 (Summer 1991) 355-374.

95 Blok, *Bruggen bouwen*, 487.

96 Landman, *Van mat tot minaret*, 32; Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad (ed.), *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens* (Oxford 2002).

97 Maulana G.R. Alladien Al-Qadiri, *Ahmadia's zijn geen moslims. Verzamelde krantenartikelen* (Amsterdam 2000) 1-2.



The first mosque in Amsterdam. Turks in Amsterdam often used the Nieuwzijds Chapel on the Rokin as a prayer space. There was a need for a large space, particularly during Ramadan and Friday prayers. The chapel eventually passed into in Turkish ownership in 1977 and a mosque was established. Until 1984, the building of mosques could be subsidised. Migrants' Historical Image Archive, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

There have been no bottom-up initiatives to unite Muslims in the Netherlands. Rather, it has been the Dutch government which has made repeated attempts to achieve this. The first umbrella organisation for Muslims was set up in 1975, but it excluded the Ahmadiyyas.[98] It was discontinued in 1980. In 1981, a new organisation was formed, which managed to survive until 1983.[99] There were also various parallel organisations which claimed to represent all Muslims in the Netherlands, but in fact none of them did.[100] In 1989, after the Satanic Verses controversy (and protest by Muslims in the Netherlands against the book by the British-Indian novelist Salman Rushdie), the government felt a more urgent need to get in touch with the 'Islamic community'.[101] Umbrella organisations came and went, but none of these managed to survive for more than a few years. After the El Moumni affair (a Rotterdam Imam who in 2001 declared that homosexuality is a disease), the 9/11 attacks (2001) and the murder of Theo van Gogh (2004), the Dutch government increased its attempts to create an Islamic umbrella organisation. In 2004, the Contact Body Muslims and Government (CMO)[102] was established, which represented Sunnites only. The government twice officially investigated to what extent the body represented all Muslims. Despite the fact that it was found that it did not, it was recognised as the official interlocutor of the Dutch government. The Dutch government wants to talk to one organisation only, which represents all Muslims in the Netherlands. It is aware of the fact that the CMO does not do so, but still seeks out this organisation to approve government policy, or to publicly disapprove of incidents. The government seeks to hold the 'Muslim community' responsible, as immigrant churches were held responsible for their members in the Early Modern Period.

Freezing Dutch culture

On the whole, we have seen that the heritage of pillarization and the way in which multicultural policies were implemented in the Netherlands led to static ideas about 'immigrant cultures'. These ideas were matched by static ideas about 'Dutch culture'. When, in the autumn of 2007, Princes Maxima claimed that there was no such thing as *the* Dutch identity, this led

98 *Federatie van moslimorganisaties in Nederland*: FOMON.

99 *Stichting Federatie Moslim Organisaties in Nederland*: MON.

100 W.A.R. Shadid and P.S. van Koningsveld, *Moslims in Nederland. Minderheden en religie in een multiculturele samenleving* (second edition; Houten 1997) 75; Landman, *Van mat tot minaret*, 249-250.

101 Shadid and Van Koningsveld, *Moslims in Nederland*, 75-76; Landman, *Van mat tot minaret*, 251-253; Thijl Sunier, *Islam in beweging. Turkse jongeren en islamitische organisaties* (Amsterdam 1996) 76.

102 *Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid*: CMO.

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to a large-scale debate. A Dutch newspaper invited its readers to define what Dutch culture was.[103] There was little consensus in the result. Serving one biscuit only with coffee was seen as typically Dutch by some, but as typically Protestant Dutch (and not Catholic) by others. A similar attempt three years earlier led to similar discord.[104] Answers differed according to religious and regional background, gender and age. From the perspective of the United States and Canada, the Dutch may live in a country the size of a postage stamp[105], but that does not stop them from pointing out differences between the Protestant North and the Catholic South, or the urbanised West and the rural rest. Many things that are labelled 'Dutch' in public discussion are no more than a century old. *Sinterklaas* (a holiday on December 5th) has only been celebrated in its current form for the last half century. In the beginning of the twentieth century, many Protestants objected to celebrating this clearly Catholic saint's day. Bicycles are seen as typically Dutch, but they date from around 1890; *Koninginnedag* (Queens Day: now April 30th) was introduced in 1898, and the national anthem in 1932. In the nineteenth century, different measures were used in different regions of the Netherlands; the time on the clock and the date on the calendar differed per region, and people from the North could not understand people from the South.[106]

The outcome of the search for a Dutch identity is influenced by the times in which the searchers live.[107] During the Dutch Revolt against Spain (1568-1589) and the Eighty Years War for Dutch independence that followed, frequent reference was made to the Dutch origin myth of the Batavian uprising against the Roman Empire (69-70).[108] Later, the Dutch Revolt itself became a defining element of Dutch identity, although Catholics had problems with its Protestant connotation.[109] In the middle of the nineteenth century, tribes which were believed to have lived in the Netherlands in Roman times – Franks (in the South), Frisians (in the North) and Saxons (in the

103 www.trouw.nl/hetnieuws/nederland/article812339.ece/Oproep_benoem_de_Nederlandse_identiteit?pageNumber=7#readers_responses (10 February 2010).

104 *Trouw* 31 March 2004.

105 Peter H. Stephenson, 'Going to McDonald's in Leiden: Reflections on the Concept of Self and Society in the Netherlands', *Ethos* 17:2 (1989) 226-247.

106 Hans Knippenberg and Ben de Pater, *De Eenwording van Nederland. Schaalvergroting en integratie sinds 1800* (Nijmegen 1988) 204; Willem Frijhoff, 'Cultuur op termijn. Een verkenning van identiteit in de tijd', in: Carolien Bouw and Bernard Kruithof (eds.), *De kern van het verschil. Culturen en identiteiten* (Amsterdam 1993) 17-40.

107 Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York 1995) 1-2.

108 Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York 1987) 72.

109 Maria Grever, 'De natiestaat als pedagogische onderneming', in: Maria Grever and Kees Ribbens, *Nationale identiteit en meervoudig verleden* (Amsterdam 2007) 35-60.

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East) – became the Dutch mythical ancestors.[110] This idea became popular at the end of the nineteenth century because it fitted the pillarized society that was taking shape. After this founding myth had been incorporated into Nazi ideology, its appeal crumbled. After World War II, the Batavian myth – about fierce warriors who fought for freedom – made its reappearance. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Polder model – a Dutch version of consensus policy – became fashionable. This was seen as a tendency towards pragmatic cooperation, in spite of differences. Dutch people were believed to have cooperated since the Middle Ages, because the Netherlands is partly below sea level and authorities had to set aside differences in order to protect the land from flooding. Recently, the Polder mentality as key element of Dutch identity has also been debunked as a myth.[111]

Although authors have pointed out since the 1970s the fluidity of collective identity construction[112], and hence the pointlessness of seeking to find such[113], this has not stopped people from trying to do so, and from coming up with answers that differ.[114] This is not to deny that there are trends in Dutch society, albeit temporal, and the attempt in this article to identify one of these is testimony to this. Trends, however, are more ephemeral than discussions on Dutch culture suggest. The search for a collective identity is neither new nor typically Dutch, and neither is the recent increase in attempts to define Dutch identity. In November 2009, Eric Besson, the French minister of immigration, national identity, integration and co-development, launched a nationwide debate on French national identity, which led to little. Earlier, Prime Minister Gordon Brown launched a road show to promote the concept of Britishness, which was later labelled an expensive flop.[115] In both cases, the triggers for the debates were discussions about multicultural policy, and its failure.

110 Marnix Beyen, 'A Tribal Trinity: The Rise and Fall of the Franks, the Frisians and the Saxons in the Historical Consciousness of the Netherlands since 1850', *European History Quarterly* 30:4 (2000) 493-532.

111 D. Bos, M. Ebben and H. te Velde, *Harmonie in Holland? Het poldermodel van 1500 tot nu* (Amsterdam 2007).

112 F. Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Cultural Difference* (Boston 1969).

113 R. van Ginkel, *Op zoek naar eigenheid. Denkbeelden en discussies over cultuur en eigenheid in Nederland* (The Hague 1999).

114 WRR, *Identificatie met Nederland* (The Hague, Amsterdam 2007).

115 *The Times* 26 December 2009.

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Conclusion

In the recent Dutch move towards intolerance, multicultural policy is seen as a cause of problems, and multicultural society as its negative result. Multicultural society, however, is largely a myth. The number of immigrants plus their offspring is too small, and their socio-economic and cultural power too restricted, to make more than a small dent in Dutch culture. In general, societies change because people travel, watch TV and surf the internet, because technologies change and the world modernises – to name just some of the most important causes for change. Words, foods or ways of dress maybe copied from immigrants, but they are quickly 'whitewashed' and their ethnic origin denied or (conveniently) forgotten.[116]

Dutch multicultural policy was politically and morally acceptable because of the longer history of pillarization and government inference with immigrant organising. The reason for the move towards intolerance is found in essentialist assumptions underlying multicultural policy, which for decades constructed migrants or minorities as different. This builds on decades of 'othering' via government subsidies. Multicultural policy in the long run influenced thinking about Dutch culture and has led to debates about Dutchness, which may have been futile, but did have tangible consequences, most importantly on integration policy. Some aspects of this process of categorisation are not unique to the Dutch situation. What is unique to the Dutch case is that, owing to the cumulative effect of pillarization and multicultural policy, the idea of multiculturalism was embraced more enthusiastically than elsewhere, and as a result disappointment and bitterness were felt more deeply. ◀

Marlou Schrover (1959) is an Associate Professor of Social History in Leiden. In recent years, her research has focused principally on the history of migration. In 2005, she received a grant for her NWO-VICI project on gender and migration (to be completed 2011). Recent books include (with Eileen Janes Yeo), *Gender, Migration and the Public Sphere 1850-2005* (New York 2010); (with Joanne van der Leun, Leo Lucassen and Chris Quispel), *Illegal Migration and Gender in a Global and Historical Perspective* (Amsterdam 2008) and (with Herman Obdeijn), *Komen en Gaan. Immigratie en Emigratie in Nederland vanaf 1550* (Amsterdam 2008).

116 Hoving, Dibbits and Schrover, *Veranderingen van het alledaagse*; compare: Elizabeth Buettner, '"Going for an Indian": South Asian Restaurants and the Limits of Multiculturalism in Britain', *The Journal of Modern History* 80:4 (December 2008) 865-901, 869.

The International Relevance of Dutch History: Closing Comments

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The contributions in this issue discuss the question of the relevance of Dutch history to an international public. The authors wish to avoid 'exceptionalism', but point – with the exception of the piece that examines the Holocaust – specifically to the particular in the Dutch past, focusing thereby on evergreen themes such as the Golden Age, the Dutch colonial empire and the role of religion. A great deal of attention is hereby devoted to the long perspective and the peculiar nature of Dutch 'civil society'. The aim is not so much to focus on what is unique to the Netherlands – and certainly not to hold up the Netherlands as an example – but rather to attempt to explain the Netherlands on the basis of general issues drawn from historiographical debates. In this sense, the yardstick applied is the international world. Another striking feature of the contributions is that an analysis that takes a longer view – path dependency, 'cultural freezing' (Schrover) and traditions – is back with a vengeance.

What is the international – or even global – relevance of Dutch history? Why should people who are not particularly interested in the details of the history of the Netherlands read about this history? The contributions in this volume offer a variety of answers to these questions. They do not pretend to give a definitive set of answers, nor to present just one approach, but are rather a set of explorations. A number of things stand out, nevertheless, and the contributions have a number of things in common.

To begin with, it could be argued that posing these questions says something about the current state of Dutch historiography and about the role of Dutch history in an international context. Dutch historians operate at an international level, write for an international audience and participate in international debates. This volume is a reflection of this situation. The authors do not concentrate on Dutch history as such, but rather place their national history in an international perspective by concentrating on the international relevance of the history and historiography of their country. Perhaps this also characterises the historiography of a comparatively small

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