

## Summary of Dissertation

### “Wij zijn eigenlijk altijd multicultureel geweest”

Een analyse van het discours over het 'multiculturele drama' in Nederland en de mediatorrol van Indonesische en Surinaamse migranten

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The Netherlands has been engaged in a multiculturalism debate since the start of the new millennium. Studies have principally centred on communication between native-born Dutch people and migrants, until now. This research focuses on the interactions between Muslim and Christian migrants from the same country of origin, namely the former Dutch colonies of Indonesia and Suriname. The research studies the potential mediator role that these so-called post-colonial migrants play in Dutch multicultural society in view of their reversed mission. The objectives of this research are to gain insight into the relationship between Christian and Muslim migrants and their contribution to the discourse on the multicultural society in the Netherlands. And, by doing so, develop further the theory of multiculturalism and reversed mission. Critical discourse analysis in this dissertation will be utilised as a tool for studying relationships among (migrant) groups.

Based on the Dialogical Self Theory and previous research (Wijsen and Vos 2014; Wijsen and Cholil 2014; Wijsen, Cholil and Ndaluka 2013), the author questions whether the ‘loyalty conflicts’ Scheffer (2007: 205) writes about are an adequate concept for understanding inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations between migrant communities, in this case from Indonesia and Suriname. The author also considers whether people indeed possess an inherent intractable propensity to pigeonhole others in the ‘in-group’ or the ‘out-group’, as Hofstede, Hofstede, Minkov (2010: 31-32) claim. Previous research has demonstrated that ‘in-group’ and ‘out-group’ classifications are flexible and fluent and that discourse analysis is an excellent means of studying this fluidity (Jørgensen and Philips 2002: 96-137; Wijsen 2013: 84-85; Wijsen 2016). Connecting critical discourse analysis and the theory of the dialogical self is something new (Wijsen and Vos 2015; Wijsen 2016). This is an innovative aspect in this study.

The author concludes that people from Indonesia and Suriname do not consider multicultural society as some kind of a drama or illusion. Migrants, and particularly the young of these communities, do have an inclination to accentuate their religious identity in their ‘country of arrival’. However, this does not necessarily result in ‘loyalty conflicts’ as they have been taught from a very young age that it is perfectly possible to live peacefully together, even if you fundamentally disagree with each other on a number of points, for example regarding questions of faith.

Regarding their contribution to the discourse on multicultural society, the author argues that the Indonesian and Surinamese migrants studied mainly wished to nuance the one-sided and negative image of Islam in the Netherlands; that they wished to impress upon their fellow migrants, particularly from Morocco and Turkey, that they should adapt more to Dutch culture; that according to them the multiculturalism debate has indeed become harsher, but that on the other hand a number of matters are well organised in the Netherlands; that inter-religious relations may need to be considered less ‘religiously’ and seen more as social or inter-personal, and that perhaps these could be approached less as something to be ‘managed’, which tends to be the Dutch way.

Regarding the development of a theory of multiculturalism and reversed mission, the author concludes that the theory of the dialogical and multi-voiced self gives an effective

conceptualisation of the 'new we' that Scheffer (2007: 404, 406) aims for; and that 'reversed mission' should not be understood as a new singular one direction trajectory, but as a 'reciprocal mission'.