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Matthijs Kuipers

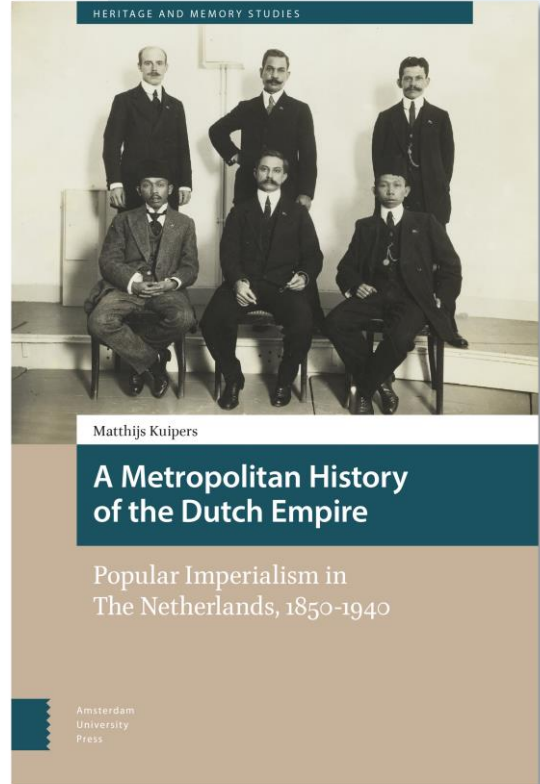
## A Metropolitan History of the Dutch Empire

*Popular Imperialism in The Netherlands, 1850-1940*

This book examines popular imperial culture in the Netherlands around the turn of the twentieth century. In various and sometimes unexpected places in civil society the empire played a prominent role and was key in mobilizing people for causes that were directly and indirectly related to the Dutch overseas colonies. At the same time, however, the empire was ostensibly absent from people's minds. Except for some jingoist outbursts during the Aceh War and the Boer War, indifference was the main attitude with which imperial affairs were greeted. How could the empire simultaneously be present and absent in metropolitan life? Drawing upon the works of scholars from fields ranging from postcolonial studies to Habsburg imperialism, the author argues that indifference to empire was not an anomaly to the idea of an all-permeating imperial culture, but rather the logical consequence of an imperial ideology that rendered metropole and colony firmly separated entities. The different groups and individuals that advocated imperial or anti-imperial causes – such as missionaries, former colonials, Indonesian students, and boy scouts – hardly ever related to each other explicitly and had their own distinctive modes of expression, but were nonetheless part of what the author calls a 'fragmented empire' and shared the common thread of Dutch imperial ideology. This suggests we should not mistake colonial culture's metropolitan invisibility for a lack of strength.

### BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Matthijs Kuipers lectured on (post)colonial history, humanitarianism, human rights, and racism at Utrecht University and is now employed by Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei.



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations

On Names and Terminology

### **Introduction: The Still Waters of Empire Run Deep**

Dutch Indifference

The Metropole in the Colonial World

Conquering the Metropolitan Mind

The Politics of History

Case Studies from a Fragmented Empire

### **1 Food and Indifference: A Cultural History of the Rijsttafel in the Netherlands**

Dichotomies of a Colonial Dish

The Metropolitan *Rijsttafel*

Who's Cooking?

The Politics of Colonial Food

The Limits of Permeation (Conclusion)

### **2 Indonesians and Cultural Citizenship: The Metropolitan Microcosm of Empire**

Dissent and Cultural Citizenship

Wim Tehupeiori: Naturalization and Social Mobility

Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo: Political Dissent in the Metropole

Jodjana: The Arts and the Idea of Association

Imperial Citizenship and Double Consciousness (Conclusion)

### **3 Schools and Propaganda: History Books and Schools as Sites of Imperial Campaigns**

Schools, Teachers and Pupils

History Lessons

'Classroom Collections'

Maps on the Wall (Conclusion)

### **4 Scouting and the Racialized Other: Imperial Tropes in the Dutch Scouting Movement**

The Advent of Dutch Scouting

An Empire without Boys

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Imperial Imagery in Dutch Scouting  
The 1937 Jamboree  
Scouting and Dutch Imperialism (Conclusion)

## 5 Missionary Organizations and the Metropolitan Public: The 'Inner Mission' and the Invention of Mission Festivals

Internal Colonialism  
Mission Festivals  
The Choice of a Missionary Career  
Gendered Role Models  
Finding Funds (Conclusion)

## Conclusion: A Fragmented Empire

### Sources

Archives and Libraries  
Published Primary Sources  
Published Secondary Sources

### Index

### List of Figures and Tables

#### Figures

Figure 1 A modern-day Javanese *tumpang*  
Figure 2 Mrs. Catenius-van der Meijden  
Figure 3 A *rijsttafel* in a colonial domestic setting  
Figure 4 Drawing of *Oost en West's* coat of arms  
Figure 5 *Boeatan's* tearoom  
Figure 6 Portrait of the *Indiërs Comité*  
Figure 7 Jodjana performing in Germany  
Figure 8 Poster announcing the 1937 World Scout Jamboree in Vogelenzang, Netherlands

#### Tables

Table 1 Annual number of classroom collections sent out by the *Koloniaal Museum* and the reported number requested by schools  
Table 2 Number of annual visitors to the *Koloniaal Museum*  
Table 3 Annual balance of the *Nederlandsch Zendinggenootschap* in the 1880s

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