Evelien Walhout, Nancy Jouwe, Eveline Buchheim, Ernestine Hoegen, Marleen Reichgelt, Larissa Schulte Nordholt, Nena Vandeweerd, and Heleen Wyffels (eds), *Gendered Empire: Intersectional Perspectives on Dutch Post/Colonial Narratives*. 2020, Hilversum: Verloren Publishers [Jaarboek voor Vrouwengeschiedenis 39]. 231 pp, ISBN: 9789087048839, price: 23.00 EUR (paperback).

As the editors note in their preface to this themed issue, this is only the third time that the *Yearbook of Women's History* has focused on the Netherlands' colonial past: the first of these topical issues was published in 1986 and entitled *Women in the Dutch Colonies*, and the second, appearing over twenty years later in 2007, was entitled *Mixed Feelings: Gender, Ethnicity, (Post) Colonialism*. But much has changed since then, even if, as guest editor Nancy Jouwe notes in her introduction, "Dutch historiography from a critical race and decolonial perspective" remains deficient, or perhaps nearly non-existent (p. 13). Undoubtedly, with its array of far-reaching, reflective, and critical contributions, *Gendered Empire: Intersectional Perspectives on Dutch Post/Colonial Narratives* promises to serve as one of the foundational texts in this developing historiography. Readers can expect to encounter pieces that speak to their own regional, conceptual, and methodological interests while also prompting them to consider new source material and avenues of inquiry.

In her thoughtful and expansive introduction to the collection, guest editor Jouwe articulates "four overarching points, part predilection part ambition" informing *Gendered Empire*. For one, the volume considers "the Dutch colonial empire as one analytical entity," despite colonial historiography's long-standing default to focus on either the East or West Indies but not both together. Two, Jouwe argues, the contributions to this volume demonstrate the continuum evident in our discussions of both the history and afterlives of Dutch colonialism. Dutch colonialism, in other words, cannot be relegated to the realm of the past; it remains both relevant and resonant. Along these lines, then, the volume explores the complicated relationship between colonial history and contemporary race relations. Lastly, *Gendered Empire* aims to demonstrate the importance and value of an intersectional approach, which reveals "more layered and intricate insights and analyses of the workings of the colonial." Importantly, and after years of dedicated advocacy to these ends, Jouwe questions whether, at long last, "intersectionality" might have moved from "margin to center" (p. 11). I would posit that, if this were to occur, *Gendered Empire* will have played a fundamental role in this process.

Jouwe's Introduction highlighting these and other themes is followed by thirteen contributions of various types and genres, including academic analyses, personal reflections and essays, interviews, and a concluding roundtable

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discussion featuring museum professionals and scholars. Nearly all of the contributions in this volume are original works; only Carla Tjon's "In Godforsaken Places: Shenzhen—Hong Kong—Paramaribo—The Hague—Rotterdam," a beautiful piece following the lives and journeys of her Hakka Chinese ancestors from Asia to South America and Europe, has appeared elsewhere. Employing a critical eye towards the contents of those wills written by VOC employees in eighteenth century Makassar, Suze Zijlstra's contribution complicates our understanding of the role of Asian and Eurasian women in colonial society—as wives, mothers, servants, and (sexual) property. Merve Tosun's essay analyzes eighteenth century Batavian images alongside testimonies written by enslaved women in order to highlight the occasional mobility and agency of household servants, while Caroline Drieënhuizen's "Of Beauties and Brides" sheds lights on the evolving yet always impartial and deeply flawed portrayals of Indonesian women in modern Dutch museum exhibits.

Even in those essays focused on more contemporary developments, we can see how the Netherlands' colonial past continues to shape all facets of daily life, including the most mundane of interactions. Sidra Shahid connects ongoing debates and discussions concerning the burqa with the Netherlands' so-called "ethical policy" implemented in the East Indies in the early twentieth century, and Lara Nuberg reflects on stereotypes and microaggressions born of the colonial past but continuously present and potent in Dutch society today. Eveline Buchheim and Marleen Reichgelt offer a pointed critique of Thom Hoffman's recently-published collection of colonial-era photography and an accompanying exhibition in Rotterdam. Here, we see how a purported attempt to reveal "a hidden history" can go horribly wrong, reinforcing long-standing messaging and harmful tropes while re-inscribing new but similarly flawed ones.

Serving as both a conclusion and an explicit invitation for further discussion and action, a roundtable discussion between researchers and museum professionals constitutes the final contribution of this volume. Marleen Reichgelt and Larissa Schulte Nordholt introduce the context and format of this roundtable, which was held in Leiden in January 2020: here, Wim Manahutu, Henrietta Lidchi, and Jos van Beurden explore the subject of colonial heritage as well as ongoing restitution efforts intended to return objects to countries of origin. Two curators, Sadiyah Boonstra and Priya Swamy, provide written responses to this roundtable: foregrounding the importance of truly intersectional policies and practices, Boonstra argues for a paradigm shift in our understandings of repatriation and restitution, while Swamy emphasizes the small but significant gestures that might create a new sense of cultural value within ethnographic museums.

Within all of these discussions, the idea of a “cultural archive”—a concept first developed by Edward Saïd in 1993 in *Culture and Imperialism*—looms large, as does Gloria Wekker’s examination of both the contents and implications of the Dutch cultural archive. In her foundational 2016 text, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*, Wekker argues that the Dutch cultural archive is informed by four hundred years of colonial epistemologies and practice, which, in turn, have generated a particular form of racism prioritizing the idea of “white innocence” while denying the very existence, let alone significance, of race and racism in post-colonial Dutch society. The essays contained in *Gendered Empire* effectively elucidate why, and how, this particular cultural archive continues to exert a powerful and durable influence.

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