



The Dutch Slavery and Colonization DNA: A Call to Engage in Self-Examination

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ABSTRACT

This article answers the question whether there is a Dutch slavery and colonisation DNA. After all, the Netherlands has centuries of experience (approximately three and a half centuries) with colonisation (including occupation, wars and genocide, rearrangement of land and population, plundering and theft), trade in enslaved people (the Atlantic route: Europe, Africa, North and South America) and trade in the products of these enslaved people. The Netherlands has colonised large parts of the world. This was a large part of Asia, including the Indonesian archipelago, Malaysia, Ceylon, Taiwan and New Guinea, large parts of the continent Africa, including Madagascar, Mozambique, Cape of Good Hope, Luanda, Sao Tome, Fort Elmina etc., and North (New York) and South America (including Brazil, Dejima, Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles). It is a fact that human conditions and circumstances influence the human DNA that is passed on to posterity. This goes through the mechanism of methylation. This mechanism is used by cells in the human body to put genes in the "off" position. Human conditions and circumstances are abstractly formulated, poverty, hunger, disasters and wars. These are also horrors that accompanied slavery and colonisation. The Dutch, as slave traders, plantation owners, occupiers of lands, soldiers, merchants, captains and sailors, and administrators and their staff, have had centuries of experience with practising atrocities. Because those experiences are translated into the DNA of posterity, it is understandable that Dutch authorities misbehave towards immigrants and refugees. Those institutions are political leaders, governmental institutions, such as the tax authorities and youth welfare, and also companies that do their utmost to avoid taking on immigrants. This behaviour is called institutional colour and black racism.

Keywords: Slavery and colonisation DNA, immigrants, refugees, Dutch tax authorities and youth welfare, and institutional coloured and black institutional racism.

Slavery and colonization have perpetrators, victims and witnesses. Witnesses, on contrast, can be found in the "camp" of perpetrators (colonisers) and victims (enslaved people). Incidentally, this observation stems from a cultural victimology perspective ('cultural victimology' represents a relatively new direction taken in the victimological literature over recent years to incorporate a number of features of the modern social, political and cultural landscape which both surrounds and permeates the notion of being a 'victim'; Hall, 2021). It is often argued by the current generation of former "perpetrators" that they are personally not to blame. This is true. But that does not alter the fact that their current actions were guided by their ancestors.

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This article speculates on how Dutch ancestors influence contemporary Dutch behaviour due to their position at the time as perpetrators and witnesses of slavery and colonisation. Also, this article discusses how slavery and colonisation has worked its way into the DNA of the affected peoples. Slavery and colonisation are an umbrella term for criminal and unwanted conduct, such as seizing land for personal gain, seeking profit at the expense of another, human trafficking, theft, robbery, pillage, assault and sexual violence, as well as waging wars and genocide to protect one's supposed property.

This article is written from a Dutch perspective, keeping in mind that the Netherlands is part of Western Europe that is responsible for global colonisation and slavery practices. First, the Dutch history of slavery and colonization is outlined. Second, an outline is given of the current Dutch political stance towards refugees and immigrants. Separately attention is given to Muslims. Thirdly, attention is paid to how the DNA of our ancestors may influence the present. Finally, it speculates on how the human beliefs of our distant ancestors affect the contemporary political climate.

FLEDGLING HOPE DASHED

At first there was hope. "Hope is like a country road. First there is no road. But when many people walk on it, the road arises by itself (Lin Yutang, original name Lin Yü-t'ang, 1895-1976²)."

"In 1955, the fifty-four-year-old Soekarno born as Koesno Sosrodihardjo (Surabaya, June 6, 1901 - Jakarta, June 21, 1970) entered the pulpit of the conference in Bandung on the Jalan Asia-Africa as the first president of the Republic of Indonesia with over 2,000 guests from Asia and Africa and many (future) government leaders from the countries that were part of these two continents. There he spoke the memorable words: 'Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, sisters and brothers, it is my great honour and privilege to welcome you to Indonesia on this historic day. This is the first conference of coloured peoples in the history of mankind. It is a start to the history of the world when leaders of Asian and African peoples can meet in their own countries. And not at a meeting thousands of miles away, among a foreign people, in a foreign country, in a foreign continent (this was the 1927 conference of the League Against Imperialism and Colonial Oppression in Brussels in which Hatta, Nehru and Einstein and many others had participated). Sisters and brothers, how wonderfully dynamic is our time! The passive peoples have disappeared. And in this turning point they found each other. We are united by a shared aversion to colonialism in any form. We are united by a shared aversion to racialism. And we are united in shared determination to preserve and strengthen peace in the world. Sisters and brothers, Indonesia is Asia-Africa in miniature with many ethnic and religious differences among its inhabitants. We have our will for unity, our Pancasila. We put into practice the principle of 'live and let live'. We are tolerant of each other. Bhineka Tunggal Ika, unity in diversity is the motto of the Indonesian state. Let this Asia-Africa conference be a great success (David van Reybrouck, 2020, pp. 497-498, a Flemish-Belgian cultural historian, archaeologist and writer)."

Unfortunately, this hope is quickly dashed.

² <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Lin-Yutang>

"The U.S. Secretary of State, Dulles, found the principle of the Bandung conference immoral. After all, who was not against communism was in favour of it (Van Reybrouck, 2020, pp. 499-510)." The decline began with France, Britain and Israel taking military action against Egypt on October 29, 1956, to keep the Suez Canal open to Western powers, all to counter Nasser's "flirtation" with China and Russia. Europeans wondered if a new power bloc was in the making: Moscow-Beijing-Bandung-Cairo. After the marriage of Fathia Halim Ritzk from Egypt to Kwame Nkrumah (his actual name: Francis Nwia Kofi, 1009-1972), Ghana's first President, Accra, the capital of Ghana, was added to that supposed alliance (Van Reybrouck, 2020, p. 509). 8 months after Soekarno's world summit, the Montgomery bus boycott began, a milestone in black history."

More than once, David van Reybrouck (2020) has argued that the world was not the same after Bandung. Fierce resistance was mobilized worldwide against colonization and slavery. For example, in 1958 there was the First Conference of Independent African States organized by Kwame Nkrumah with the goal of uniting Africa and detaching it from Europe. Bandung also had implications for African Americans. Malcolm X wanted to organize a Bandung conference in Harlem. According to Van Reybrouck, at the time, 1.3 billion people of colour were breaking free from colonialism and imperialism. Soekarno must have watched these global changes with pleasure, it may be reasonably assumed.

Unfortunately, under the Eisenhower administration, the Americans, who see communism as a global danger, started investing heavily in Indonesia as early as 1955 to drive out the communists there. The CIA led this operation. The goal was to oust Sukarno and establish a right-wing government in Indonesia. This was done in 1965-1966 through a gruesome genocide of half to 1 million Indonesian people (including progressives, Chinese and communists but also journalists, teachers and students). General Suharto was put in place by the Americans as the second president of Indonesia (Van Reybrouck, 2020, pp. 514-515). This was also called the Jakarta method. The Americans repeated this strategy several times in order to drive out the communists: in the Congo with a CIA buddy, the military dictator Mobuto Sese Siko on November 24, 1965, and then in Brazil, Bolivia, Ghana, the Central African Republic, Nigeria and Iraq. The same was done in Vietnam (1st of November 1955 – 30th of April 1975) where America sent its army. And further, under the leadership of Nixon and Kissinger, a genocide was carried out in Bangladesh in 1971 that killed one million people. Furthermore, the Jakarta method was repeated in Chile to depose Allende. That took place in 1971. But here the intervention of Americans in countries anywhere in the world did not end. Also, in 1965, the Americans set up new colonies, called the islets of the Chagos archipelago to establish military bases there. Now that expulsion of communists starting with the forced regime change in Indonesia after the Bandung conference in 1955 is called American imperialism (Van Reybrouck, 2020, p. 516).

A crucial question against the background of the preceding sketch of history is: did Sukarno not know that the United States spared nothing and no one to uphold its principles? Those principles are: a) America First and b) eliminate hostile non-U.S. benevolent (communist) governments. This American policy of originally European Americans was evident from 1798. In fact, whenever possible America called on its European allies, such as England, France and the Netherlands, which always followed the American lead. The answer to this we must remain guilty. Sukarno thought he might be protected against American aggression because he

envisaged worldwide peace and did not propose new borders. Below is another sketch of American brutality, also to show that Bandung's hopes were completely dashed.

"The United States, according to Middelkoop et al. (2018), from 1798 to 2017 outside its own borders, it conducted 255 military interventions and wars, at least one military intervention/war per year. The U.S. Department of Defense calls these wars 'preventative'. Furthermore, between 1946 and 2000, the United States intervened 81 times between 1946 and 2000 in elections of other countries. Before 9/11, there was a memo from the U.S. Department of Defense stating that within five years the United States planned to take out seven countries to eliminate (Middelkoop et al., 2018: 162): Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and concluding Iran. Before 9/11, the Bush administration planned an intervention against Iraq with the goal of removing Saddam Hussein from his throne. At the end 1980's, the United States was looking for a good excuse to station a U.S. force in the Middle East to station a U.S. force. reasons for these military interventions, wars and influencing elections are protection of U.S. oil and gas interests, maintaining of the dollar as a world currency, denying Russia, China, and France access to the 'gas and oil' treasures in the Middle East and to be able to have a blank check to wage the aforementioned wars. From 1942 to the present, America has waged war in nearly all Muslim countries in North Africa. This began in 1942 with an American invasion of Algeria and Morocco. These wars have been accompanied by millions of refugees, wounded and dead with the result that North Africans from above the Sahara do not does not consider the United States of America as a friendly nation (Steinmetz, 2020, pp. 5-6)."

THE DUTCH HISTORY OF COLONIZATION AND SLAVERY

In the Netherlands, in this twenty-first century, books, articles, and manifestos (Zwart Manifest (= Black Manifesto), 2021) are being published to address slavery, colonization and (institutional) black and coloured racism. The Black Lives Matter grassroots movement has been gaining momentum for attention, recognition, and acknowledgement over the many centuries of Dutch colonization, slavery and institutional racism in the continents of Asia, Africa, North and South America (including the Caribbean). Black Lives Matter (which includes Jerry Afriyie, of Kick Out Black Piet, Akwasi Owusu Ansah, poet and rapper, and Jennifer Tosch, founder of Black Heritage Tours in Amsterdam) has organized large demonstrations in many Dutch cities. The largest was in Amsterdam, on June 1, 2020. Black Lives Matter Netherlands has organized large demonstrations in many Dutch cities. The largest attention-grabbing demonstration was in Amsterdam, on June 1, 2020, at Dam Square.

"The death of George Floyd prompted the demonstration, yet another in a string of similar cases in which black Americans lost their lives at the hands of a racially assumed police force³."

³ <https://www.parool.nl/amsterdam/de-dam-volgepakt-met-demonstranten-tegen-politiegeweld-en-racisme~b4badc49/>



Figure 1: Black Lives Matter Amsterdam 1st June, 2020 (source NOS⁴)

Black Lives Matter demonstrations were also organised in the Netherlands in memory of Mitch Henriquez who was killed in The Hague in 2015 after being neck clamped by police, and Kerwin Duinmeijer a fifteen-year-old Amsterdam man who was stabbed to death by a skinhead on 20 August 1983 after an argument in the Damstraat. These demonstrations also addressed violence against anti-black activists, ethnic profiling, the alleged Dutch tax fraud affair with repeated victimisation of immigrants, Dutch support for "lethal immigration policies" at Europe's borders and the non-functioning amber alert for missing black children.

The Dutch history of colonization and slavery has (grand)mothers and (grand)fathers of resistance. Well-known Surinamese-Dutch grandmothers are Professor Dr. Gloria Wekker who wrote the book 'White Innocence. Paradoxes of colonialism and race' (2016) and Professor Dr. Philomena Essed who is a deputy college member at the Human Rights Board. Wekker (2016, p. 3) argues that the contemporary foundations of slavery and colonization can be found in the following statement by Paul Gilroy, Morrison (1993, p. 178):

"Slavery broke the world in half, it broke it in every way. It broke Europe. It made them into something else, it made them slave masters, it made them crazy. You cannot do that for hundreds of years without it taking a toll. They had to dehumanize, not just the slaves but themselves. They have had to reconstruct everything to make that system appear true."

Wekker (2016, pp. 6-26) argues that the Netherlands is a small country (less than 18 million inhabitants) 'with big pants on'. The Netherlands would like to play an important role internationally, this can also be deduced from the many international Courts of Justice in the city of The Hague, the Dutch city of government, according to Wekker. Dutch people are furthermore colourblind according to her (saying that they see no difference between people of colour and themselves) and feel elevated above immigrants, refugees, and expats, in other

⁴ <https://nos.nl/artikel/2358755-halfjaar-na-het-damprotest-wat-heeft-het-teweegebracht>

words elevated above all people of colour. Dutch people think of themselves as tolerant and as victims, especially in the Second World War, with the result that any reflection on their own contribution to the murder of so many Dutch Jews in labour and concentration camps is almost entirely absent. The same applied to Indonesia; the Dutch would give those "barbarians" value for money.

Essed (2019) considers the daily visible consequences of centuries of slavery, colonization, and black and coloured institutional racism. To these daily consequences she attaches a word, namely daily racism. Essed (2008) calls experiences of people of colour in the Netherlands everyday racism. In the weekly magazine 'De Groene Amsterdammer, 24 April 2019⁵', it is recorded as follows:

"To get to the bottom of what went wrong Essed asked Surinamese women about their experiences in the Netherlands for her thesis. The fourteen women, all of whom had received practical training and worked as caretakers for the elderly, typists or secretaries, talked about their lives and their daily dealings with white compatriots. How they were invariably extra checked in stores, accused of theft by their patients, scolded by neighbours, humiliated by colleagues, or harassed on the streetcar (a streetcar is a vehicle that rides on tracks, like a train or a subway). Although her interlocutors were hesitant to refer to this as discrimination - let alone racism - Essed gave this pattern a name: everyday racism. 'I wanted to break the image that racism is just something big and elusive from the past,' she says. 'For many people it's something palpable, for that you must name the everyday, but that didn't belong in the social sciences. The everyday was a blind spot.'"

"Once it is recognized that racial oppression is inherent in social order, it becomes clear that the real racial drama is not simply racism, but the fact that racism is an everyday problem. When, as we have seen, racism is transmitted in routine practices that seem "normal", this can only mean that racism is often not recognized, not acknowledged, let alone problematized. To expose racism in the system it does not make sense to fight people, to wonder whether she or he is a racist. What I am claiming is that there is no structural racism without everyday racism. On all levels of society, within and outside of institutions, we must analyse ambiguous racial meanings, expose hidden currents, and generally question what seems normal or acceptable (Essed, 2008, p. 15)."

A well-known Dutch great-grandfather and resistance fighter is Anton de Kom (1898-1945), who published "We Slaves of Suriname" in 1934 (the first print), which can be read as a fierce indictment of racism and exploitation. He described Surinamese history from the perspective of slavery and colonization. In 2020 the sixteenth edition was published with a foreword by important advocates of contemporary anti-colonial policies, such as Tessa de Leeuw, Duco van Oostrum and Mitchell Esajas. Some striking quotes include (Anton de Kom, 2020, p. 52):

"What drove the whites to these "wild" shores. What vocation animated them? What tidings, what happiness, what civilization did they have to bring to this free and happy people? Did they, the first Spaniards, who visited our shores, come to

⁵ <https://www.groene.nl/artikel/het-alledaagse-was-een-blinde-vlek>

bring to Guyana the blessings of autodafe⁶ and inquisition? Did they convey, in the name of Christ, the tolerance which Spain showed in those days towards the Jews and Moors, or the white civilization of the wheel, the stake and other tortures.”

The Dutch only appeared on the scene when their bed was spread. Did they bring a new element of civilization to the colony?

Down there the stench of sweat and the excrement of a thousand slaves packed in the hold already stinks a mile to the right. ... Underneath you can hear the whimpering of the slaves, the cries of the women in distress and the whip rustling down on the backs of the blacks.

You will not be able to take pleasure in the spaces under the covers, these filthy hotbeds of dirt and vermin, where men separated from women are all drawn, then packed together to gain space, wailing out their despair. You too must feel something of the despair and sorrow of blacks, dragged away from their hometown, far from their kin, sick with swell and poor nutrition, full of fear of their unknown destination (De Kom, 2020, pp. 57-61).”

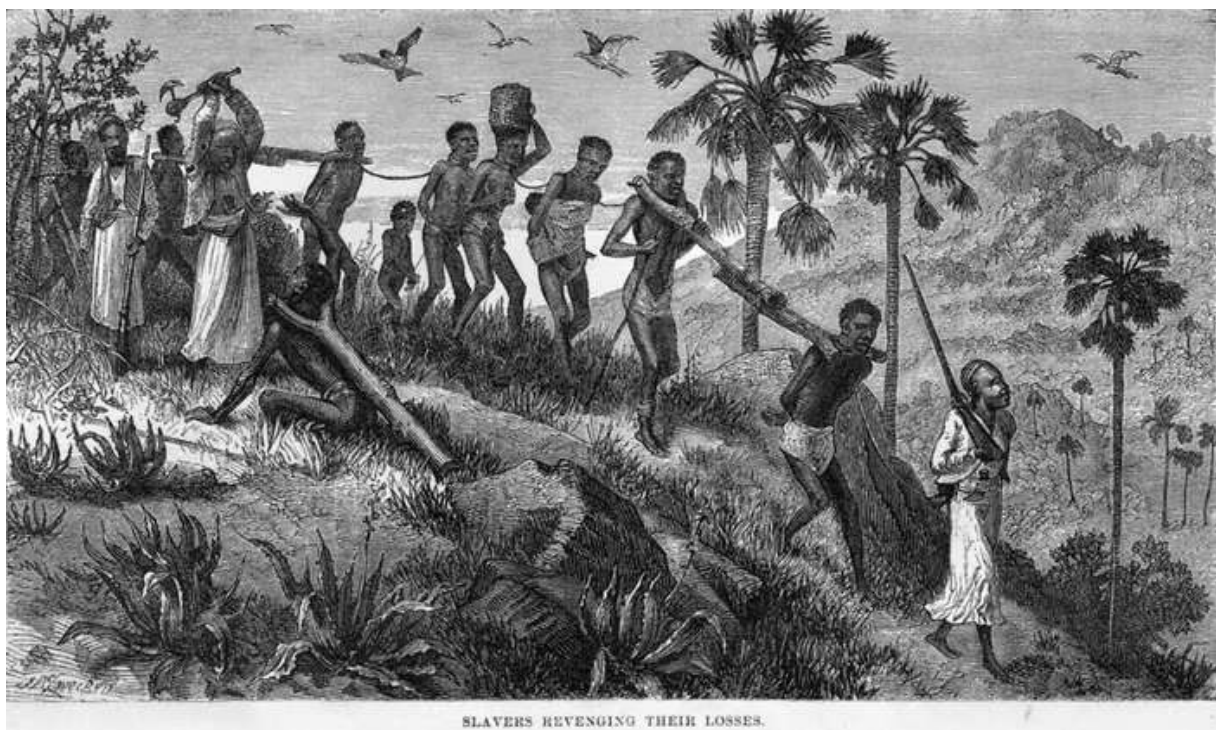


Figure 2: 15 Caribbean Nations Are Suing Europe over Slavery (source Google⁷)

“I will set up a consulting firm and listen to the complaints of my companions, as my mother once listened to the grief of her boy. ... But the tree, beyond my little table, passes the parade of wretchedness. Pariahs with deep hollow cheeks. Starving people. People without satisfactory

⁶ **Auto-da-fé**, (Portuguese: “act of faith”) , plural **autos-da-fé**, Spanish **auto de fé**, a public ceremony during which the sentences upon those brought before the Spanish Inquisition were read and after which the sentences were executed by the secular authorities. The first auto-da-fé took place at Sevilla in 1481. Link: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/auto-da-fe>

⁷ <https://ap.lc/1ohV4>

resistance. Open books to read the laboriously told story of oppression and deprivation. Indians, forest niggers, Creoles, British-Indians, Javanese, there were days, while the motor brigades of the police circulated in the streets outside, when more than fifteen hundred appeared at my table, some of whom had travelled seven to eight days to speak to me.

Bitterly, a Hindu said to me, "I have a donkey and a cart. If this animal has a wound, I will have some policemen on hand to give me a fine. When I recently had a wound on my leg and asked the hospital for free help, they literally threw me out (De Kom, 2020, pp. 191-193)."

It is remarkable that Amsterdam, the Dutch capital of slavery and colonial evil, has had its former administrators vetted by science (International Institute of Social History Amsterdam) to gain a better understanding of Amsterdam's position in the global network of colonization, slavery, plunder, genocide, theft and robbery of peoples who did not even know the Netherlands existed. This research assignment was given by the Green Left Deputy Mayor Rutger Groot Wassink and The College of Mayor and Aldermen. The result is a free book in 2021 for all residents of Amsterdam entitled: 'Amsterdam and the history of slavery'. Subsequently, Amsterdam Mayor Femke Halsema⁸ apologized for the city government's involvement in the history of slavery. In a speech during the Remembrance Day Slavery Past, she made it clear that the administration wants to take responsibility for Amsterdam's role in the slave trade and slavery and the suffering caused by it.

When Mayor Halsema and Deputy Mayor Groot Wassink received the first books, they uttered the following words (Brandon et al, 2021, p. 96):

"Slave trade and slavery were intertwined with the city (Amsterdam) and the city government. This is the inescapable conclusion we can draw today. It is not something that took place in distant lands, out of sight of the people of Amsterdam. The research teaches us not to put this part of history in a separate box in our history books anymore. Not that 'dark' page we can quickly turn. It is enormously important that a larger public can now become acquainted with it. Not because people should be ashamed or feel guilty, but because we want to know who we are, as a city and as a city government."

Brandon et al. (2021, pp. 57-59) 'Slavery in East and West' provided the following statement:

"Around 1615-1617, Laurens Real resigned as governor-general because he did not feel comfortable overpowering, exterminating and expelling the inhabitants of the Banda Islands and then letting the land deteriorate. The Lords of the Seventeen (the Amsterdam governing elite of the time) immediately appointed Jan Pieterszoon Coen (1587-1629) after which the aggressive policy of expansion gained momentum with the destruction of Jakarta (1619), the massacre of the Banda Islands (1621), and the beginning of the colonisation of Taiwan from 1622-1663."

⁸ <https://nos.nl/artikel/2387499-burgemeester-halsema-biedt-excuses-aan-voor-slavernijverleden-amsterdam>



Figure 3: 'Coolies' in Suriname (source Google⁹)

In the Netherlands, attention was also paid to Hindus who were dragged from India under false pretences to Suriname to be used as contract labourers. This is aptly described in Bhagwanbali's book (2021, p. 174), which in Dutch is titled 'De tot koelie gemaakten'. In the concluding review, the author says:

"The British and the Dutch colonial authorities introduced the Indentured Labour System to provide the planters in Suriname with cheap, docile, submissive and best performing non-white labour. For this, and to avoid comparison with slavery, they used mainly euphemistic terms to conceal the construct of the Indentured Labour System. In doing so, they pretended prosperity, well-being and a high degree of bliss for the contractors under the said system."

Without the Christian churches, colonisation and slavery would not have had such an impact. After all, according to Christian leaders, colonisation and slavery were carried out with the consent of God. For this way, the barbarians could be Christianised. This, too, is currently being researched in the Netherlands. Unfortunately, it is only the Protestant Church and not yet the Catholic Church. The announcement of the study is given below.

"The newspaper Trouw¹⁰, which was the first to publish about the research this morning, spoke with the theologian who leads the research, Heleen Zorgdrager of the Protestant Theological University (PthU). According to her, slave trade and slavery have long been justified with the Bible in hand. "Church and theology must account for their part in this history. I hope our research can be a first step in reflecting on this."

⁹ <https://ap.lc/FZKAH>

¹⁰ <https://nos.nl/artikel/2401320-groot-onderzoek-naar-slavernijverleden-protestantse-kerk>

This section focuses on a part of the Dutch slavery and colonisation. Not included are the narratives of Madagascar, Mozambique, Cape of Good Hope, Luanda (Angola), Sao Tome, Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon), Malacca (Malaysia), Papua, and Formosa (now Taiwan). What is hopefully explained is that the Dutch set up a worldwide network to make the most of slavery and colonisation. Unfortunately, there are no figures on the number of Dutch people who were involved in the implementation of slavery and colonisation day in and day out for centuries. These are people in the East, West, and the Netherlands, namely merchants, soldiers, administrators, slave owners, plantation owners, citizens etc. Those numbers of Dutch people of the total population who were involved in slavery and colonisation, could possibly provide an indication of the intergenerational DNA mutations that we today call (black and coloured) institutional racism, inhumanity, disapproval of Muslims and distrust of 'strangers'.

CONTEMPORARY CONSEQUENCES OF DUTCH COLONISATION AND SLAVERY

The social relations between its inhabitants in the Netherlands are gloomy. The Dutch social-emotional-economic climate is grim. Contradictions are not softened but magnified. Opposition hurts because one person indicates to the other by foot, hand, word and gesture that they completely disagree on a specific issue.

Recent examples of polarisation between Dutch people are discussed below. First of all, the improper treatment of the Surinamese Hindu President Chan Santokhi by his Afro-Surinamese compatriots living in the Netherlands before and after his Anton de Kom lecture on 10 September 2021 in the Tropen-Instituut (a Dutch museum with art from the Caribbean and Indonesia) in Amsterdam.

"With a noise protest of pan lids, horns, screeching whistles and cheering, the Surinamese president will be welcomed on Friday evening - just like the other visitors of the Anton de Kom lecture in the Tropeninstituut in Amsterdam, which Chan Santokhi (62) is giving this year. The demonstrators are angry that Santokhi has given his wife and people from his own circle high positions in government. But also, that Suriname is sliding along the economic abyss and people are poor. Santokhi is "not a leader, but a deceiver", Steve says, while De Kom fought for "justice, peace and equality". Steve does not want his full name in the newspaper, just like Renate (NRC, 2021¹¹)."

Secondly, with a raised fist instead of an open hand, Afghan allies who had worked with and for the Netherlands until the fall of Kabul on 15 August 2021 were not allowed to come to the Netherlands. This resulted in the resignation of Foreign Minister Sigrid Kaan on 16 September 2021 after a vote of censure by the Second Chamber of the Dutch Parliament, followed by the resignation of Defence Minister Ank Bijleveld on 17 September 2021. "The outgoing Cabinet (11-10-2021) expects that some 2,100 people in Afghanistan¹² still qualify for evacuation to the Netherlands." The Cabinet writes this in a letter to parliament. It is still unclear how this return will take place (to my sorrow, an Afghan interpreter was just killed by the Taliban and many Afghan allies have just received an e-mail from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs saying that they cannot be helped without a passport, with the euphemistic conclusion, 'stay safe').

¹¹ <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2021/09/11/protest-bij-lezing-president-suriname-a4057970>

¹² <https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/nieuws/buitenland/artikel/5259629/nog-ruim-800-mensen-komen-aanmerking-voor-evacuatie-naar>

Thirdly, without informing the Second Chamber of the Dutch parliament, allowing underage asylum seekers to be reunited with their niece/nephew instead of with their parents (August 2021 and earlier).

"Parties in the Dutch Second Chamber want clarification from outgoing VVD (conservative-liberal party (centre-right) Secretary of State Ankie Broekers-Knol (Migration) about the way decisions are made on family reunification with minor asylum seekers. The ministry adjusted the rules late last year without informing parliament (Trouw, 2021¹³)."

Fourthly, the outgoing Rutte Cabinet (Mark Rutte is Minister-President of the Netherlands) does not want to apologise to the surviving relatives of the enslaved people of Surinam, the Antilles and Indonesia (12 February 2021). He literally said the following:

"He emphasised that he has every understanding for the wish that apologies be made and 'respect' for the cities that do consider making apologies as a city administration. Research by the newspaper Trouw shows that more than three-quarters of Dutch people with a Surinamese or Antillean background find apologies for the slavery of the Dutch government very important.

The cabinet has discussed this, Rutte said, and fully rejects slavery. However, it has been decided not to apologise now, partly because of 'the risk that a debate on the subject might actually fuel contradictions in the Netherlands'.

Also, 'as a historian' he finds it difficult to apologise for something that happened 150 years ago. *"Who am I to point the moral finger at predecessors such as Schimmelpenninck or Thorbecke?"* The Netherlands was not a democracy then either, but an autocratically governed country. Rutte: "The majority of the Dutch had nothing to say.

The Minister President Mark Rutte had the same hesitation when it came to apologising for the persecution of the Jews. Yet that is what happened last year. "After all, 75 years is not as long ago as slavery (Trouw, 2021¹⁴)."

Fifth, the Taxes and Supplements Affairs (Dutch: Toeslagen Affaire) as of 2019 with the fall of Secretary of State of Finance Menno Snel and Lodewijk Asscher who retires in 2021 as PVDA party-politician and the uncovering of the Toeslagen Affaire by the diligent and tough work of the former member of parliament of the CDA (Christen Democratic Party), now independent member of parliament Pieter Omtzigt and the SP (Socialist Party) member of parliament Renske Leijten which has led to the fall of the Rutte III cabinet on 15 January 2021 that is still in office. Between 2013 and 2018, the Tax and Customs Administration pursued an extremely strict anti-fraud policy. As a result, people got into debt, became depressed or had to go through lengthy court cases to win their case. As a result, at least 70,000 children and young people have grown up in dire poverty. In addition, there are at least 42,000 parents who, as a result of government intervention, have had a horrible life, have lost their homes and sometimes also

¹³ <https://www.trouw.nl/politiek/kamer-wil-opheldering-over-gewijzigd-beleid-voor-gezinshereniging-met-minderjarige-asielzoekers-bde2f1b9/>

¹⁴ <https://www.trouw.nl/politiek/rutte-dit-kabinet-maakt-geen-excuses-voor-de-slavenhandel-b8ecba92/>

divorced their partners, are permanently in debt, have lost their children to youth welfare and have ended up in a poor mental and physical condition (NOS, 2021¹⁵).

"In the months of May and June 2021, the number of complaints filed by parents with the Recovery Benefits Implementation organisation (UHT) rose sharply. At the same time, we saw a sharp decline in the number of settled complaints. As a result, by the end of July, the UHT complaints team had accumulated a considerable backlog and exceeded the statutory deadline in 28% - more than a quarter - of the cases. When it comes to diligence, the UHT's complaint handling at that time fell short. And on other assessment standards too, such as open and easily accessible access and adequate registration, the UHT performed less than in the previous period. The National Ombudsman therefore makes a number of recommendations. In the coming period he will continue to monitor the way in which the UHT handles its complaints and will follow up on his recommendations (Aziz et al. 2021)."

The Dutch National Ombudsman¹⁶ concludes on 15 October 2021 in the NRC-Handelsblad (a Dutch national newspaper) the following about these abuses:

"This week, the National Ombudsman also concluded that thousands of parents who were affected by the benefits affair are now entangled in the maze of the compensation scheme. They hear too late from the Tax and Customs Administration when they come forward. The information they receive is unclear. And if they receive money, they have to take action themselves to ensure that they do not miss out on any new benefits because of that extra amount in their account."

Research by Statistics Netherlands (CBS¹⁷) shows that between 2015 and 2020, 1115 children of victims of the childcare benefit scandal were placed in care. This number of disadvantaged children could be much higher if research were carried out well before 2015.

Sixthly, parents and children who are victims of the mistakes of the Child Protection Department, because of which they have lost their child.

"Khadija had just been breastfeeding when her baby, two-week-old Yasmina, was snatched from her by the police and, together with her two-year-old brother, placed in care. Khadija and her husband Omar were well known, nothing was wrong. But the maternity nurse had seen 'something' and had reported it. Something' with things that weren't tidied up, dishes that hadn't been washed. The judge gave an order for an out-of-home placement, based on speculation. This is one of the many shocking stories about abuses in youth care in the book 'Kinderen van de Staat, Jeugdzorg in ademnood' (Children of the State, Youth Care in Need) by investigative journalist Hélène van Beek.

Every year about 46 thousand children are placed out of their homes and about three thousand are kept in closed institutions. In the Netherlands there are around 420 children per 5 million inhabitants in a closed institution. Children with behavioural problems who are not criminals are placed in 'Youth Care Plus'. Closed youth care institutions with gruesome prison regimes,

¹⁵ <https://nos.nl/artikel/2386210-70-000-gedupeerde-kinderen-toeslagenaffaire-krijgen-tegemoetkoming>

¹⁶ <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2021/10/15/iedereen-raakt-verstrikt-in-het-toeslagendoolhof-a4062054>

¹⁷ <https://nos.nl/artikel/2402299-meer-dan-duizend-kinderen-gedupeerden-toeslagenaffaire-uit-huis-geplaatst>

but usually without the treatment they need. They have fewer rights than juvenile delinquents who have to go into youth detention (and fewer rights than all other convicted criminals). Fences, naked searches, prison clothing and the dreaded 'iso', the solitary confinement cell, to which a child is regularly dragged by force in a 'tear dress'. They are arrested with a terrifying display of power and transported across the country in arrest buses. They stood there with eight, nine police vans, each with three, four men in it,' says Babs about how she was arrested at school (Volkskrant, 2020¹⁸)."

In seventh place, a disproportionate number of immigrants, refugees and undocumented migrants are victims of COVID-19. These facts have been substantiated by the results of the covid-19 survey in 2021 among Amsterdam residents¹⁹ with a immigration background. This showed that during the second COVID-19 wave, Turkish, Moroccan, and Ghanaian residents became ill more often (two to four times more often than non-immigrants), ended up in hospital and died (1,5 times more often than non-immigrants).

In eighth place, they are COVID-19 governmental policy measures excluding anti-vaxxers and vaccination doubters from social and economic life.

And finally, there is the movement Black Lives Matter where attention is drawn to institutional black racism in the Netherlands. The biggest (unexpected for the Amsterdam Major, head of police and head of public prosecution) was on the Dam on 1 June 2020. But there were also demonstrations for Black Lives Matter in other Dutch cities.



Figure 4: Dutch immigrants' victims of COVID-19²⁰ (source Pharos, 21 may, 2021)

It is sad to see that the victims of this black and coloured institutional racist Dutch government policy are mainly immigrants, refugees, and undocumented citizens. Implicitly it is stated here that it is caused by institutional racism. That is not easy to prove. Hard evidence can only be

¹⁸ <https://www.volkskrant.nl/columns-opinie/ontmantel-de-jeugdbescherming-die-maakt-gezinnen-onnodig-stuk~b1fa41d7/>

¹⁹ <https://nos.nl/artikel/2381750-corona-problemen-bij-migranten-hadden-eerder-erkend-moeten-worden>

²⁰ <https://www.pharos.nl/nieuws/amsterdammers-met-migratieachtergrond-vaker-besmet-ernstig-ziek-en-dood-door-corona/>

provided by asking all politicians and the institutions they represent about their opinions. What is known is that politicians from many parties are not very keen on immigrants, refugees and the undocumented. In the Dutch discourse (including government, parliament, and political parties) they express negative opinions about the presence and the religion (particularly Islam) of immigrants, refugees and undocumented people. The same applies to the Dutch business community, which already selects 'foreign' surnames when applying for jobs. Moreover, once immigrants are hired as employees in the business sector, they have the greatest possible difficulty in maintaining their position. Exceptions are the heavy and dirty professions, such as those in cleaning, agriculture, and horticulture. Other reasons than Institutional Racism, partly related to Institutional Racism, are poverty, poor housing, many crimes in the neighbourhood where immigrants, refugees and undocumented people live, hardly any job opportunities and disadvantages in education.

COLONIZATION AND SLAVERY DNA

Before looking at the DNA of slavery and colonisation, it seems wise to consider whether our DNA can be influenced by (social) environment, culture, and climate. Therefore, below is a cultural definition of DNA (Min et al. 2017). These authors make a distinction between cultural organisation and biological DNA.

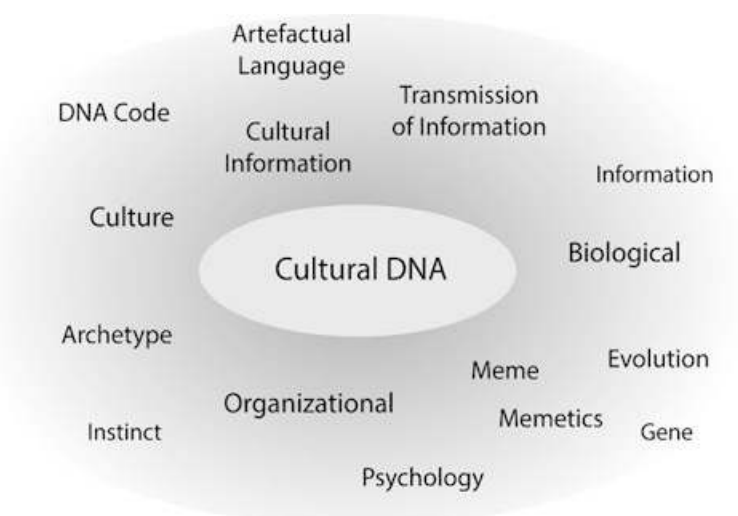


Figure 5: Cloud of keywords related to Cultural DNA

The cultural organisational DNA leans on the work of Gurnek Bains who wrote a book with the title: *Cultural DNA: The Psychology of Globalisation* (2015). Min et al. (2015, p. 4) state the following about this:

"The author applies this type of DNA analysis to eight of the world's cultures which he lists as Sub-Saharan Africa, India, the Middle East, China, Europe, North America, Latin America, and Australia. Bains mainly uses primary data accumulated over 25 years of working as CEO for the psychological consultancy YSC, which has 20 offices globally covering the eight regions mentioned above."

"A cultural DNA²¹ is a collection of genetic instructions used in the growth, development, functioning and reproduction of any culture. Whenever a group of people are together, they form a culture. The group establishes some unwritten rules called norms and the members start to develop a common set of values that over time defines how things are done in that particular group."

Biological DNA has been framed by the evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins by using the term meme. Below is a biological definition of a meme.

"Meme²², unit of cultural information spread by imitation. The term *meme* (from the Greek *mimema*, meaning "imitated") was introduced in 1976 by British evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins in his work *The Selfish Gene*.

Dawkins conceived of memes as the cultural parallel to biological genes and considered them, in a manner like "selfish" genes, as being in control of their own reproduction and thus serving their own ends. Understood in those terms, memes carry information, are replicated, and are transmitted from one person to another, and they have the ability to evolve, mutating at random and undergoing natural selection, with or without impacts on human fitness (reproduction and survival). The concept of the meme, however, remains largely theoretical. It is also controversial, given the notion of selfishness and the application of the concept to the evolution of cultures, which formed the basis for the field of memetics."

Much more concrete about DNA influence is Gunaratna (2017). He uses the concept of methylation. Below is Phillips' (2008) definition of methylation.

"There are many ways that gene expression is controlled in eukaryotes, but methylation of DNA (not to be confused with histone methylation) is a common epigenetic signalling tool that cells use to lock genes in the "off" position. In recent decades, researchers have learned a great deal about DNA methylation, including how it occurs and where it occurs, and they have also discovered that methylation is an important component in numerous cellular processes, including embryonic development, genomic imprinting, X-chromosome inactivation, and preservation of chromosome stability. Given the many processes in which methylation plays a part, it is perhaps not surprising that researchers have also linked errors in methylation to a variety of devastating consequences, including several human diseases."

Literally, Gunaratna (2017) says in the article: 'Culture etched on our DNA more than previously known, research suggests':

"This led the researchers to theorize that a large fraction, one quarter, of the DNA fingerprints likely reflect biological signatures of environmental, social or cultural differences between the ethnic groups.

Different racial and ethnic groups tend to follow different diets, live in neighbourhoods with varying levels of poverty and pollution, and are more or less

²¹ <https://gugin.com/cultural-dna/>

²² <https://www.britannica.com/topic/meme>

likely to smoke. DNA methylation can reflect these subtle cultural and environmental differences.

We study whites a lot, and then we try to generalize that to Sri Lankans, blacks, Asians, and other racial groups. That's not just socially unjust, it's bad science and bad medicine," Dr. Burchard said."

In short, the assumption that our social, physical, and cultural environment is passed from person to person through DNA seems plausible. From this source of knowledge, it is possible to examine whether and possibly how colonisation and slavery affect human DNA. DNA transfer distinguishes between victims, offenders and witnesses or followers. Witnesses or followers are likely to be found in both camps, those of the perpetrators and victims.

White (2017) states in his article 'How Slavery Changed the DNA of African Americans': "Widespread sexual exploitation before the Civil War strongly influenced the genetic make-up of essentially all African Americans alive today."

"Our genetic make-up is the result of history. Historical events that influenced the patterns of migration and mating among our ancestors are reflected in our DNA—in our genetic relationships with each other and in our genetic risks for disease. This means that, to understand how genes affect our biology, geneticists often find it important to tease out how historical drivers of demographic change shaped present-day genetics.

Understanding the connection between history and DNA is especially important for African Americans because slavery and discrimination caused profound and relatively rapid demographic change. A new study now offers a very broad look at African American genetic history and shows how the DNA of present-day African Americans reflects their troubled history.

Slavery and its aftermath had a direct impact on two critical demographic factors that are especially important in genetics: migration and sex. The trans-Atlantic slave trade was a forced migration that carried nearly 400,000 Africans over to the colonies and, later, the United States. Once in North America, African slaves and their descendants mixed with whites of European ancestry, usually because enslaved black women were raped and exploited by white men. And, more recently, what's known as the Great Migration dramatically re-shaped African American demographics in the 20th century. Between 1915 and 1970, six million blacks left the South and settled in the Northern, Midwestern, and Western states, in hope of finding opportunities for a better life."

According to White (2017), 80-83% of African Americans can trace their DNA back to African DNA. African Americans with lighter skin are relatively more likely to have emigrated to the Northern and Western states of the United States of America. Researchers from McGill University in Montreal believe that immigration within the United States of African Americans to more white states was only possible because there African Americans are less discriminated against by white (European) Americans than in the southern United States. Dark-skinned African Americans face more frequent and severe discrimination than light-skinned African Americans. This discrimination is called structural racism. The crux of their argument is that the likelihood of a happy life decreases as discrimination increases. According to these

researchers, African Americans with a lighter skin colour have more social opportunities in white states.

But that is not all. Diseases and their causes have not been studied by scientists in African Americans. They assumed that the results of such research on white Americans would also apply to African Americans. This does not appear to be true. Indeed, epidemiological research shows that African Americans suffer more than white (former European) Americans from coronary heart disease and its underlying causes, such as LDL-C and HDL-C cholesterol, hypertension, smoking, and type-2 diabetes (Lettre et al. 2011). Below is the result of this study among African Americans compared to White Americans.

"We replicated 17 loci previously associated with corona heart disease (CHD) or its risk factors in Caucasians. For five of these regions, we could leverage the distinct linkage disequilibrium (LD) patterns in African Americans to identify DNA polymorphisms more strongly associated with the phenotypes than the previously reported index single nucleotide polymorphism (SNP's²³) found in Caucasian populations."

White (2017) draws several lessons from this research. His lessons are listed below.

"Do these genetic findings matter to anyone other than historians and genealogists? The answer is yes—studies of genetic history like this one are important because they help explain why blacks and whites often have different genetic risk factors for the same diseases. African Americans are disproportionately affected by many common diseases, and while much of this is due to poverty and limited access to good health care, genetics plays a role as well. If African Americans are to fully benefit from modern health care, where diagnoses and treatments are increasingly tailored to a patient's DNA, it is critical that we understand African Americans' genetic history, and how it contributes to their health today. In other words, we need to understand not just the cultural and economic legacies of slavery and discrimination, but the genetic legacy as well."

The study by Ongaro et al, 2019 'The Genomic Impact of European Colonization of the Americas' can be considered a confirmation of the existence of slavery and colonisation DNA. This study also shows that the victims (enslaved people) also come from other African countries than is generally believed. Earlier -until 1640 CE- enslaved people came from Senegal and Gambia and more recently from Angola and Namibia. Furthermore, this research shows that the European perpetrators of slavery and colonisation came not only from Western Europe, but also from Italy (around the second half of the 19th century) and the Middle East. The trade in enslaved people from African countries was preceded by a massive European colonisation of both Americas, which virtually decimated the original. But it can be found in the DNA of the current inhabitants of both Americas. This was probably caused by rape and (forced) mixed marriages, as was the case with the enslaved Africans in both Americas.

²³ Single nucleotide polymorphisms, frequently called SNP's (pronounced "snips"), are the most common type of genetic variation among people. Each SNP represents a difference in a single DNA building block, called a nucleotide. For example, a SNP may replace the nucleotide cytosine (C) with the nucleotide thymine (T) in a certain stretch of DNA. See: <https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/understanding/genomicresearch/snp/>

“Despite being virtually isolated from the rest of the world until 500 years ago, most of the individuals living in the Americas harbour, together with Native American ancestry, a substantial genomic proportion inherited from Europe and Africa. These ancestral mosaics could be explained as the consequence of two major historical processes occurring over the Americas: first, the genocide of indigenous people of America that caused a sharp decrease of the Native American populations and, second, the admixture occurring after the European exploration and colonization, which was followed by African deportation and labour migration that has impacted the American continents in the 19th and 20th centuries (Ongaro et al. 2019, p. 8).”

“Subsequently, about 50% of all West African slaves were deported to Dutch, French, and British sugar plantations in the Caribbean. Accordingly, we estimated a high contribution from Benin and Nigeria in all the Caribbean populations and in populations from the United States, in line with the reported slave arrivals. Among all the analysed populations, ACB is characterized by the highest sub-Saharan ancestry proportion (88%), possibly due to the presence of sugar cane industry combined with the relatively low European immigration in the 18th century. At a microgeographic scale, Barbadians derive their African ancestry from “BeninNigeria” (50%) and from “BeninIvory-Coast” (21%), two of the main source areas reported for the British-mediated slave trade (Ongaro et al. 2019, p. 9).”

Are we now in a position to answer the question of whether originally born and bred Dutchmen possess colonisation and slavery DNA? We ask this question because in the here and now, executive officials implement laws against immigrants and refugees without any human scrutiny, i.e. without taking into account the circumstances of the people to whom these laws apply. A concrete example is when a small group of Bulgarians commit fraud, legislation is made for all immigrants and refugees, also because a large part of the Dutch politicians, including members of parliament and cabinet, distrust immigrants and refugees.

That answer: 'yes, a Dutch slavery and colonisation DNA has been found', has not been provided here. However, its presence has been made plausible. If only because their victims (this is especially evident in African American research), the enslaved people from many African countries (also 80-83%) can still be found in the DNA of the current inhabitants of both Americas. It has also been established that the descendants of the colonists (mainly European perpetrators) are prominent among the enslaved people through rape and (forced) mixed marriages. I have not been able to find anything about bystander colonisation and slavery DNA. That is not to say that bystander colonisation and slavery DNA does not exist.

CONCLUSION

The question is often asked why many, but not all, Dutch people prefer not to face immigrants and refugees in the Netherlands. They are, however, prepared to treat them kindly when they meet them as tourists anywhere in the world. But the idea of having dinner with them in their backyard is something they don't like. Not in my backyard' is the treatment immigrants and refugees receive in the Netherlands. In the 1970's, it was 'as long as an immigrant doesn't come home with my son or daughter as his or her lover, especially if she or he is Muslim or has African roots'.

This sentiment has been exacerbated since the 1980's. It started with the political party, the Centre Democrats, of Hans Janmaat, an extreme right-wing²⁴ politician, who with slogans like 'Eigen Volk Eerst (= own people first)' and 'VOL=VOL (Full = Full)' won seats in parliament a few times. He was leader of the Centre Party (a neo-Nazi party) and the Centre Democrats. This was followed by Geert Wilders' Party for Freedom (Partij voor de Vrijheid), a party that since 2006 has opposed Muslims and Islam but also immigrants, just like Janmaat using the slogan VOL=VOL. Wilders was convicted for his public statement 'Fewer Moroccans'. And most recently there is Thierry Baudet, party leader of Forum for Democracy from 2017. Baudet claims the following: "the West is suffering from an autoimmune disease. A part of our organism, an important part, namely our immune system, that which should protect us, has turned against us. On every level we are weakened, undermined, surrendered. Malicious, aggressive elements are being introduced into our social body in unprecedented numbers, and the real facts and consequences are being covered up, Baudet also brings in the American alt-right extremist, Jared Taylor. In total, 51% of all politicians in the Netherlands are in 2021 right-wing to extreme right-wing.

Against this background of these contemporary sentiments against people of colour, black people, Muslims, immigrants and refugees, this article attempts to answer the question: 'is there a Dutch slavery and colonisation DNA?' The question is necessary also because many politicians have Indonesian blood in their ancestors. This applies to the Dutch outgoing Minister-President Mark Rutte and party leader of the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie) VVD) Mark Rutte, to the party leader of the Party for Freedom (Partij voor de Vrijheid), Geert Wilders and to the party leader of Forum for Democracy (Forum voor Democratie), Thierry Baudet.

In order to answer the above question, the following approach was taken. First, we outline the hopes of the coloured peoples during President Soekarno's 1956 speech in Bandung, Indonesia. Then we show how the Americans smashed those hopes by staging regime changes, organising genocides, and even murdering presidents. And all this because the Americans were afraid of communism, the axis Moscow-Beijing-Indonesia-Cairo. Although this fear of communism is only half of the real reasons. The other reasons are neo-colonial in nature, namely the United States had set itself the goal of being the policeman of the world, earning dollars to pay for its wars and securing its oil interests worldwide (Steinmetz, 2019). The United Kingdom was a reliable ally in this 'battle' of the Americans, sometimes even 'Holier than the Pope'. Just think of the provocation of the war against Iraq, against Saddam Hussein who would have heavily armed himself against Western countries. Which later turned out to be a blatant lie. Europe, and therefore also the Netherlands, continued to follow the Americans and the English like a

²⁴ The Anne Frank House distinguishes three right-wing extremist subgroups in the Netherlands (Tokmetzis, 2017):

1. Identical formations. They strive for an ideal of a homogeneous Dutch nation within the area where this nation has historically been established. They reject external influences - immigration, but also Americanisation, for example.
2. Neo-Nazi formations. They differ from the identity formations in that they define the "typical" and the "foreign" based on biological-racist characteristics.
3. New right-wing radical groups. They have no clear ideological basis in old right-wing extremist ideologies and are characterised mainly by their rejection of Muslims and Islam in the Netherlands.

lapdog. This was also the case at the start of the US war against North Vietnam, another provoked war against the so-called communists from 1 November 1955 to 30 April 1975.

The next step in answering the question: 'Is there a Dutch slavery and colonisation DNA?' is to visualise the contemporary attention in the Netherlands for slavery and colonisation in the Caribbean (Surinam, a former Dutch colony) and the Dutch Antilles (partly still a Dutch colony) and Indonesia. Indonesia was a Dutch colony from 1596 to 1945, the Netherlands Antilles from 1634 to the present and Surinam from 1674 to 1975. For centuries, the Dutch colonies and the Dutch themselves have known people who resisted slavery and colonisation. The most famous resistance heroes in the Caribbean are Anton de Kom and Tula²⁵.

"The Golden Age is known as the Netherlands' heyday. But did you know that, during roughly that same period, the Republic of the United Netherlands (in Dutch: Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden) was responsible for 5% of all trade in enslaved people to the Americas during roughly the same period?

Indeed, did you know that between 1650 and 1675, the Netherlands was the largest trader in slaves between West Africa and South American plantations?

Nowadays, we in the Netherlands rarely remember the seventeenth century as a period of colonial expansion. We prefer to focus on painters, administrators and a few sea heroes (Fatah-Black, 2017)."

During the Java War (1825-1830), the Javanese people²⁶ revolted against Dutch corruption and exploitation. A bloody battle ensues, which the better armed Dutch ultimately put down. Some eight thousand soldiers were killed on the Dutch side, while the losses among the Indonesian population were many times greater. After the Java war, Dutch King William I set up a full-fledged Royal Dutch-Indonesian army (in Dutch: Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch leger), separate from the Dutch armed forces. that army had 3,000 soldiers from Ghana and Burkina Faso (Reybrouck, 2021, p. 59). In Indonesia, they were called 'belanda hitam', black Dutchmen. Furthermore, an important Indonesian resistance hero is the first Indonesian president Sukarno: as an activist, he advocates an independent Indonesia with Jakarta as its administrative centre.

Dutch resistance heroes against the colonisation of Indonesia and against slavery in Indonesia were Eduard Douwes Dekker, who in 1848 wrote a blistering indictment of the then Dutch government (Reybrouck, 2021, p. 58). According to a contemporary of Eduard Douwes Dekker,

²⁵ Tula worked as a slave for years on plantation Kenepa (Knip) in the west of Curaçao. He protested the injustice done to slaves by their masters and strove for freedom and equality. He spoke to his fellow slaves and took the initiative on 17 August 1795, together with about forty to fifty fellow slaves, to lay down their work and go to his owner Casper Lodewijk Van Uytrecht to plead for their freedom. This was the beginning of the largest slave uprising in the history of the Netherlands Antilles. Under Tula's leadership about two thousand slaves marched to the governor in Willemstad. As the leader of this revolt, Tula was one of the most important freedom fighters of the Netherlands Antilles and in 2010 he was declared the national hero of Curaçao. Every year on 17 August, the revolt that was carried out under his leadership is commemorated on the Dia di lucha pa libertat: the day of the freedom struggle, also called the Tula memorial. See:

[https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tula_\(slavenleider\)](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tula_(slavenleider))

²⁶ <https://npokennis.nl/longread/7894/hoe-regeerde-nederland-over-nederlands-indie>

this book was written "with a glow, a passion, an indignation, and an uncompromising hatred for the system (read colonisation and slavery) that seems to have finally awakened the Netherlands".

A sketch of the contemporary treatment of immigrants and refugees in the Netherlands is a third step in answering the question: 'Is there a Dutch colonisation and slavery DNA'. This sketch does not do much for the image that the Dutch have of themselves, namely a tolerant people. This sketch shows that immigrants and refugees do not have it easy in the Netherlands. Ethical profiling is constantly taking place, by the government, parliament, government agencies, such as the tax authorities and youth welfare, and 'white' companies that prefer to employ 'Their Kind of People'. Their Kind of People are people with the same norms, values, and cultural views as themselves. Ethnic profiling is not the only treatment meted out to immigrants and refugees in the Netherlands. I would venture the proposition that the darker the skin colour of the immigrant or refugee, the more serious the discrimination they face. To my regret, I had to experience this myself with an Afro-Surinamese friend of mine. When she came out of her house, she would look left and right to predict from which corner she would hear racist remarks, in the supermarket she was always suspected of theft and when she asked someone a question, that person would turn to me to answer her question (my skin colour is lighter than hers). Philomena Essed (2009) calls this everyday racism. Incidentally, ethnic profiling of immigrants and refugees in the Netherlands can have serious consequences for them. Examples of these serious consequences are their children being taken away by youth care, huge debts due to unjustified hefty fines from the tax authorities, losing their jobs and homes and being forced into divorce. And all of this because the government and parliament make laws that show a general distrust of immigrants and refugees. The executive officials then implemented these laws without any human touch, i.e., without considering the circumstances of the people to whom these laws apply. The same applies to the judiciary, to which immigrants and refugees appealed without any success. By the way, the judiciary regrets this and has promised to change its ways.

The price that immigrants and refugees pay for institutional coloured and black racism is immense. Professor Dr. Kamaldeep Bhui and his colleagues point out the psychological and psychiatric consequences.

"Racism is one of the many social determinants of poor health, but there is little action to surface direct and indirect consequences of racism, nor are there interventions to engage with patients' narratives of racism. Racism influences the lens through which people's abilities and hopes are seen and acted upon when minoritized groups engage with public services including housing, education, employment, and welfare support, all of which may lead to more need for healthcare. If minoritized groups seek help for mental distress linked closely to social stressors (such as poor housing or poverty), their access to care may be hindered by the constraints those stressors place on their ability to seek help, engage with and use interventions. These social stressors are frequently set aside by practitioners and disconnected from healthcare and services in ways that prevent meaningful advocacy and social support during crises and periods of help-seeking (Bhui et al. 2021, p. 1)."

The fourth and final step in examining how plausible it is that there is a slavery and colonisation DNA has a preliminary step. In this preliminary step, evidence is sought for the general

proposition that conditions in which people grow up influence human DNA. The opportunity is also taken to explain what genes and DNA are again.

“In humans, genes²⁷ vary in size from a few hundred DNA bases to more than 2 million bases. Every person has two copies of each gene, one inherited from each parent. Most genes are the same in all people, but a small number of genes (less than 1 percent of the total) are slightly different between people.”

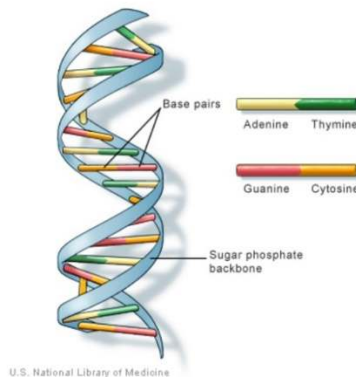


Figure 6: DNA is a double helix formed by base pairs attached to a sugar-phosphate backbone

“DNA²⁸, or deoxyribonucleic acid, is the hereditary material in humans and almost all other organisms. Nearly every cell in a person’s body has the same DNA. Most DNA is located in the cell nucleus (where it is called nuclear DNA), but a small amount of DNA can also be found in the mitochondria (where it is called mitochondrial DNA). Mitochondria are structures within cells that convert the energy from food into a form that cells can use.

The information in DNA is stored as a code made up of four chemical bases: adenine (A), guanine (G), cytosine (C), and thymine (T). Human DNA consists of about 3 billion bases, and more than 99 percent of those bases are the same in all people. The order, or sequence, of these bases determines the information available for building and maintaining an organism, like the way in which letters of the alphabet appear in a certain order to form words and sentences.”

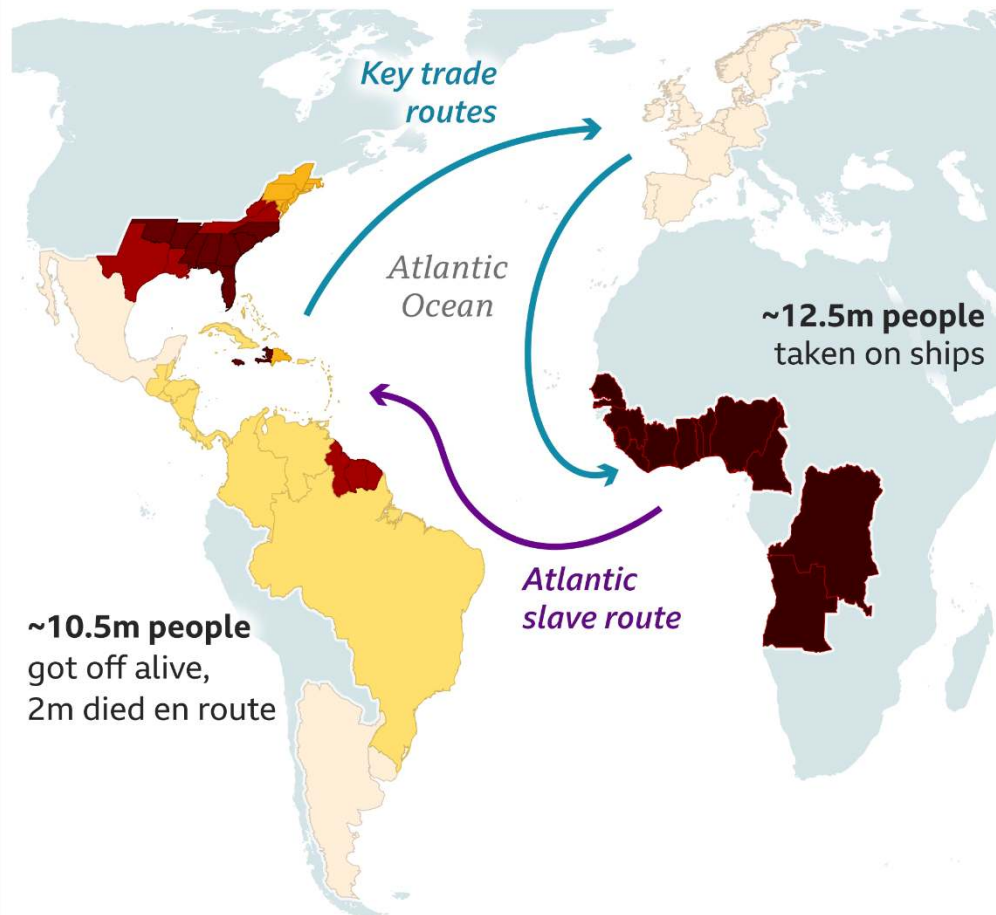
In short, how does DNA actually change due to circumstances? Circumstances is a euphemism for the horrors of colonisation and slavery. DNA is changed by these horrors through a mechanism called methylation. This is an epigenetic signalling tool used by cells to switch genes to the 'off' position. Methylation is a key component in many cellular processes, including embryonic development, genomic imprinting, X-chromosome inactivation, and preservation of chromosome stability (Phillips, 2008). Phillips (2008) says that it is not surprising that researchers link errors in the methylation process to terrible circumstances (read the horrors of slavery and colonisation). To demonstrate this, extensive American and Canadian research has been done on Afro-Americans compared to predominantly European Americans. History was included because, according to White (2017), history determines our genetic make-up.

²⁷ <https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/understanding/basics/gene/>

²⁸ <https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/understanding/basics/dna/>

Millions of people were traded across the Atlantic between 1515 and 1865

Average African ancestry of present day populations of African descent (%)



Note: Individuals of African descent in this study representing the Americas have at least 5% African ancestry

Source: Genetic Consequences of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the Americas, *The American Journal of Human Genetics*

BBC

Figure 7: Millions of people were traded across the Atlantic between 1515 and 1865 CE (Source BBC News, 2020²⁹)

Through slavery and colonisation, formerly enslaved people ended up in the United States. In the United States, the descendants of these enslaved people are called Afro-Americans. 80-83% of today's Afro Americans have African DNA, according to White (2017). The other part of their DNA can be traced back to European DNA and also DNA from the peoples who were overpowered by the Europeans in the United States. This has established that human DNA has

²⁹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-53527405>

a fingerprint of slavery and colonisation practices. Many enslaved Africans were raped by white people or (forcibly) married to white people. This has produced offspring with whiter skin than their African ancestors. This progeny immigrated into the United States to the whiter northern and western states. Because of their slightly whiter colour, these immigrants were less violently discriminated against by European-white-Americans than darker-skinned Afro Americans.

Does the above argument now establish that Dutch DNA has a fingerprint of slavery and colonisation? Part of the answer is no, because that evidence has not been provided. Through the existing research sources, nothing has been established about those responsible for slavery and colonisation, including the Dutch or the inhabitants of the Republic of the Seven United Provinces. Those inhabitants are slave traders and their white staff, slave owners and their white staff, (enlisted or enslaved) soldiers and administrators and their staff. What is certain is that the atrocities they committed had consequences for the DNA of their descendants. But that has not been established in this article. Another part of the answer is a resounding yes, because it has been established that the DNA of Afro-Americans in North and South America has left a considerable DNA African fingerprint. Unfortunately, I do not know of any similar studies in Asia, especially in Indonesia which suffered from colonisation and slavery by the Dutch for a long time.

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