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Women, Work and Colonialism in the Netherlands and Java

Comparisons, Contrasts, and Connections, 1830–1940

Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk

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For Ewout

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This book is the result of a long voyage. Intellectually, it has traversed a number of fields, most notably those of economic history, gender history and postcolonial studies. Chronologically, it has been many years in the making. My first, very immature, ideas about colonial connections and labour relations in the Dutch Empire were developed during the final stages of my Ph.D., over ten years ago. The postdoctoral project I then envisaged focused particularly on child labour. But the voyage was long in a more literal sense too. Not only did I twice travel 12,000 kilometers to Indonesia for research in the archives and to talk to colleagues, I have also changed institutions quite a few times over the past decade or so. In 2007, I moved from the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam to Leiden University, then back to the IISH, to Wageningen University, to the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS) in Amsterdam, before ending up at Utrecht University and Radboud University Nijmegen in 2017.

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Utrecht
January 2019

Praise for *Women, Work and Colonialism in the Netherlands and Java*

"This book makes an important contribution to the history of household labour relations in two contrasting societies, one in northern Europe and the other in tropical Asia. It also casts a new light on important issues relating to colonial economic policies and their impact on the economic role of women. It deserves a wide readership."

—Anne Booth, *SOAS University of London, UK*

"By exploring how colonialism impinged upon women's work in the Dutch Empire this carefully researched book opens a new and important field of inquiry. It urges us to rethink the momentous implications of colonial exploitation on gender roles both in peripheral and metropolitan societies."

—Ulbe Bosma, *The Free University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands*

"In this exciting and original book, Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk exposes the ways in which colonial connections helped determine the status and position of women in both the Netherlands and Java. The effects of these connections continue to shape the lives of women in both colony and metropole today."

—Jane Humphries, *University of Oxford, UK*

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

1

Introduction: Women's Work in the Netherlands and Java, 1830–1940

This chapter introduces the theme of our study: how colonial connections impacted women's work and household living standards in two parts of the Dutch Empire—the Netherlands and Java—in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It provides an overview of the relevant debates in the international economic history literature and introduces several important concepts, along with the sources and methods this study has employed. This chapter also sets the stage for the rest of this book by illustrating how the metropole and the colony were in many ways similar at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but diverged notably in the course of the colonial period.

1.1 Women's Work and Empire

At the start of the nineteenth century, women in the two main parts of the Dutch Empire—the Netherlands and Java—were remarkably economically active.[1] Foreign travellers to the seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century Dutch Republic had marvelled at the outspoken presence of

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Dutch women in the public and economic domain, such as the marketplace and in financial transactions. Recent historical research has confirmed that in early modern Dutch cities at least half of all women performed paid work (Schmidt and van Nederveen Meerkerk 2012). Likewise, contemporaries visiting Java commented on the relatively free and hard-working indigenous women they encountered. In 1817, Sir Stamford Raffles, Governor General during the British interregnum of the East Indies (1811–1816), wrote in his *The History of Java* that "the labour of the women on Java is estimated almost as highly as that of the men" (Raffles 1817, 109). Fifteen years later, a Dutch *resident* (district ruler) noted: "in general, one sees women here leading a life of heavy labour".[2]

However, roughly a century later, in 1930, the contrast between metropole and colony was striking. In the Netherlands, married women especially had withdrawn from the labour market almost entirely: only six per cent were registered in the census as having an occupation—a very low figure, even in comparison with other Western European women; and it had been consistently low since the second half of the nineteenth century (see Table 1.1).

In contrast, the recorded labour force participation of married women in Java was around thirty per cent, which is a gross underestimation of the actual percentage, because women working on the family farm were often not registered as gainfully employed (Volkstelling 1931–1934).

How did these remarkably divergent paths of metropole and colony come about? Part of the answer to this question undoubtedly lies in the realm of wider global economic divergence. Like many other Western European countries, the Netherlands jumped—albeit relatively late—on the bandwagon of industrialisation, self-sustained economic growth and increasing living standards for the majority of its inhabitants. Conversely, the Dutch East Indies, like many other tropical regions, increasingly focused on the production and export of agricultural crops and minerals, which favoured only a small part of the indigenous population.[3] However, this book argues that *colonial connections*, including economic, fiscal and social policies, contributed notably to the growing contrast between women's economic roles in both parts of the empire, as well as between Dutch and other European women. To explore this issue, this book makes comparisons, highlights contrasts and draws connections

Table 1.1 Female labour force participation in several European countries, 1850–1930

	Netherlands		Belgium		Denmark		France		United Kingdom	
	% of all women	% of married women	% of all women	% of married women	% of all women	% of married women	% of all women	% of married women	% of all women	% of married women
1850	24		38		25				30	
1860	18		36		25		25		28	
1870			36		25		24		28	
1880			34		24		30		25	
1890	15		29		26		33		27	
1900	17	5	29		30		35	20	25	13
1910	18	8	25	19	30	24	39	21	26	11
1920	18		21		34	20	42	29	26	9
1930	19	7	24	19	34	22	37	26	27	11

Source Pott-Buter (1993, 21, 201)

between developments in women's work in the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies—particularly Java, its first colonised and most densely populated island—between *c.* 1830 and 1940. I argue that, well into the nineteenth century, the fate of the majority of women in the Netherlands and Java, in terms of their functioning in the labour market, in terms of living standards and in terms of their perceived role in society and the household, developed relatively similarly. From *c.* 1870, the contrasts between the two groups nevertheless accelerated, although the foundations for these differences were laid in earlier decades, and they were firmly grounded in highly extractive economic policies as well as in racist-paternalist ideology.

Three questions are central: one is more descriptive; the other two more analytical. First, how did work patterns of households, and particularly the role of women's economic activities, develop in Java and the Netherlands? Second, to what extent were these developments shaped by colonial policies between 1830 and 1940? And, third, how did women's work contribute to the household as well as to the wider economy, in both the Netherlands and Java? The reader will be constantly reminded of the fact that while developments in metropole and colony might both have had partly endogenous and partly exogenous drivers, the role of the intended as well as unintended consequences of colonial policies was highly influential. This particular approach not only lends itself to addressing several important debates in economic and social history that have so far not explicitly been connected, it also has broader implications for the study of women's economic activities beyond the geographical scope of the Dutch Empire.

Investigating patterns in women's work is important for several reasons. First of all, labour relations, and in particular the position of women in the household and in the labour market, signify not only economic but also important social, cultural and political developments. Labour in whatever form (see Sect. 1.2) is required not only for sheer survival. It was also crucial in colonial relations, and the need for scarce labour in order to obtain the natural resources the tropics had to offer was a constant concern of the rulers of the British, French, Portuguese, Belgian and Dutch empires alike. For Java, this had already been the case in the VOC period (Breman 2010) and became more pressing under the Cultivation System in the period 1830–1870. As I will argue in Chapter 3, women's work alloca-

tion facilitated the solution to this labour scarcity. Second, in the words of Mrilanini Sinha, "gender was an important axis along which colonial power was constructed" (Sinha 1995, 11). Thus, from the first colonial encounters, European definitions of appropriate gender roles were used to "demasculinise" colonised men, particularly if they encountered—to their eye unusual—gender-specific divisions of labour. For instance, European colonists described African men who spun and washed as "womanly" (Amussen and Poska 2012, 344), or Indian men as "effeminate" and incapable of providing for their families (Sinha 1995, 55).[4] In the case of colonial Java, many contemporary Dutch observers commented upon the perceived "laziness" of indigenous men in contrast to the "industriousness" of their wives (e.g. Daendels 1814, 104; Onderzoek 1914, 1; Levert 1934, 247). This was a way to represent Javanese men as less masculine than their white, European counterparts, confirming the latter's superiority and thus justifying their presence in the colony. Third, studying colonial connections might help answer the hitherto unsettled question as to why Dutch women's labour force participation declined so much faster in the second half of the nineteenth century than in other Western European countries, and why it continued to be lower than elsewhere until the late twentieth century.[5]

More broadly, studying the role (and changes therein) of women in the household economy provides a more complete and accurate picture of the importance of the labour factor in practices of colonial extraction, processes of industrialisation and de-industrialisation, as well as in the development of living standards. Although all of these elements are closely intertwined, they are usually debated separately in the historiography. This book argues that a better understanding of developments in women's work in a colonial context provides important insights for several topical historiographic debates and helps link them together. The following section will briefly highlight the most important positions in these debates. First, however, I introduce some key concepts—particularly work/labour, households, and colonialism and imperialism—which will be used throughout the remainder of this book.

1.2 Household Labour Relations, Colonial Extraction and Living Standards: Concepts and Debates

Household Labour Relations

Until recently, the field of labour history has dealt primarily with developed capitalist countries and Eastern Europe/Russia. Studies focused almost exclusively on male-dominated sectors such as mines, factories, large-scale agriculture and transport, as well as their organised labour protests against capitalism. Within this analytical framework, the paid and unpaid activities of women and children were largely neglected. Although from the 1950s onwards studies started to appear on the labour history of colonies and former colonies, these, too, concentrated largely on mineworkers, dockers and plantation workers and paid hardly any attention to family members and household labour (van der Linden 2008, 1–2). Over the past two decades, however, the historiography of work and labour relations has shifted from its rather narrow, Eurocentric, focus on—predominantly male—paid labourers to a much wider geographical and thematic scope, including studies of bonded labour, subsistence agriculture and the economic activities of women and children.[6]

Following on from this global and inclusive trend in labour history, the present book aims to study "work" and "labour" in their broadest sense.[7] It therefore adopts the definition of work given by Chris and Charles Tilly: "any human effort adding use value to goods and services" (Tilly and Tilly 1998, 22). In order to prevent a holistic, and thus meaningless, concept of work, it is important to distinguish between different types of work, as well as between different forms of remuneration and labour relations. Figure 1.1 schematically classifies different types of work accordingly.

Figure 1.1 shows different types of work, their typical forms of remuneration and under what type of labour relation they might be performed. This latter category is very crude, as being "forced" can entail slavery, contract labour or the use of moral or physical threat, as may be the case with labour services for the community. Still, it is a helpful category, to point to the fact that almost all types of work, whether its fruits are intended for the market or not, can be performed either willingly or involuntarily. The

	Non-market work			Market work		
Type of work	housework	subsistence agriculture	communal labour	work in own or family business		work in someone else's business or household
				self-employed	*assisting family members*	employed
Type of remuneration	in-kind provisions	foregone expenditure	communal gains/ avoiding punishment	profits	share of profit/ in-kind provisions	wages/ payment in kind
Type of labour relation	independent/ forced	independent/ forced	forced	independent/ forced	independent/ forced	independent/ forced

Fig. 1.1 Schematic overview of work and labour relations (Adapted from Pott-Buter [1993, 7], van Nederveen Meerkerk [2012, 325])

comprehensiveness of the scheme is vital, because it allows us to include forms of labour that have been more typical outside the Global North in the past 200 years, such as slave labour on plantations (which would be placed in the far-right corner below), or communal labour. Moreover, it is very important to realise that throughout history households, and even individuals, have usually performed multiple types of work simultaneously. For example, a Javanese peasant woman will have performed market work by weaving cloth that she sold at a local market, in combination with subsistence agriculture when she planted rice on the *sawah* (wet rice field), and on top of that did unpaid work in the household, such as cooking and cleaning. Although in this book the latter category (i.e. the first column in the scheme) does not surface frequently, because unpaid household tasks are very hard to pin down in the historical records, all other types of work, and how they were combined by the different members of the household, will feature in this monograph.

Apart from a definition of work, a definition of the "household" is also appropriate. The household is generally seen as the unit of individuals with whom people live together on a daily basis in a distinct residence and with whom they pool and reallocate resources, such as income, food, and labour, to a certain extent. Although families (in the strict nuclear sense meaning parents and their direct offspring) and households often overlap, they are not necessarily synonymous, certainly not at every stage in the life cycle. Households can include non-family members, such as domestic workers or orphaned neighbours, as well as members of the extended family, such as grandparents, aunts and uncles, or nieces and nephews.

Whereas the nuclear family household has been dominant in much of the recent history of Western Europe, this was not so straightforward for earlier periods, nor for regions outside the Western hemisphere. Also, even within Europe, there has been considerable regional variation. In the Netherlands, for example, stem-family households, containing co-resident family members with a nuclear family, were very common until the second half of the twentieth century (Kok and Mandemakers 2010, 289–290). Nevertheless, despite this variation, the Netherlands has been part of the region (Northwestern Europe) where the nuclear family household type spread relatively early and extensively (de Vries 2008, 15–17). During the nineteenth century, the average size of Dutch households was between 4.7 and 4.9 persons, and this average only slightly declined (to 4.5) in the first half of the twentieth century. It was only after the Second World War that the average size of Dutch families declined drastically (Kok and Mandemakers 2010, 288; Bradbury et al. 2014, 77).

In colonial Java, households usually also contained a nucleus of a husband and wife and their children, but much more often the household would include more people. For example, the coming of age of the eldest daughter commonly involved the arrival of a son-in-law, moving in with his wife's family (Boomgaard 1989, 149). Islamic law (or *fikh*), which applied to the great majority of the population, allowed men to marry a maximum of four wives. However, polygamy remained largely restricted to an upper class of *priyayi* (noble) families, and in Java, less than two per cent of adult men had multiple wives. While extremely large households could be found among the elites, with the example of the Central Javanese princes, who could have up to seventy wives and co-wives (*selir*), as a clear outlier, most *tani* (peasant) men had just one wife (Locher-Scholten 2000b, 189). Although data on household size are less reliable than for the Netherlands, Peter Boomgaard (1989, 153–154) has estimated an average household size of 4.7 for Java as a whole, both in the 1840s and in the 1880s.[8] This means that, despite the fact that households more often contained non-nuclear family members in Java compared to the Netherlands, their sizes did not differ considerably, which can probably be explained by the effect of higher infant mortality in the colony, as mentioned in Sect. 1.4. In the first half of the twentieth century, the average Javanese peasant household size seems to have risen somewhat, to about 5.3 people per household by the end of the 1930s (Koeliebudgetcommissie 1941),

although there appears to have been quite some regional variation (Leigh and van der Eng 2010, 205).

As said, for most people the household is the place where income, food and labour are pooled and redistributed. This makes it an excellent unit of analysis for the history of women's work, particularly as most of these reallocations happen between different household members. As I will argue in this book, there have been important shifts in the allocation of labour, both in terms of the intensity of work and in the types of work different members of the household performed. Such changes may be induced by changing consumption needs, as Jan de Vries argues in his book *The Industrious Revolution*, which he uses to explain pre-modern economic development in Western Europe.[9] However, choices in labour allocation might also have been influenced by region-specific peculiarities. In Asia, for example, the *quality* of labour, as well as the use of female labourers, played a comparatively significant role in development, as Gareth Austin and Kaoru Sugihara have recently noted (Austin and Sugihara 2013). My book aims to provide more insight into the background of such "labour-intensive" paths of development, in which gender roles were supposedly highly significant.

Colonial Extraction and Underdevelopment

"Colonialism" and "imperialism", as well as the distinctions between the two, are much debated and historically developed terms.[10] This book defines "colonies" as settlements in one territory by a political power from another territory. Although colonies have been established by ancient African, Greek, Roman and Chinese empires, most academic literature on colonialism and imperialism deals with the spread of the Western European sphere of influence across the world since the sixteenth century.[11] While colonisation may be defined as the quest for natural resources and/or land, in search of economic betterment, "colonialism" involves the particular colonial system, practice and principles of administration that were put into operation in the colonial territories. In turn, the term "empire" comprises the totality of settlements from the view of the metropole as the centre of imperial administration, and "imperialism" is conceptualised as the "overarching […] ideology that openly advocated and practiced domination over the territories of people of a different race" (Young 2015, 58).

Imperialism is thus the complex of political-economic expansion, rooted in an ideology and rhetoric of superiority of the imperial power over those living in the regions under its occupation or sphere of influence. In other words, colonies were the separate parts, together with the metropole forming the totality of the empire, but colonialism on the ground was in turn very much influenced by imperialist ideas that promoted and justified the power and exploitation of peoples in overseas territories.

Colonial extraction, which figures heavily in this book, also needs to be defined, as it can be a quite narrow as well as a rather inclusive concept that, moreover, is not easy to measure. Many different forms of extraction are conceivable, ranging from quite direct expropriation and theft to more indirect burdens, such as colonial taxes or labour duties. Because of this variety, this book adopts the broad definition of colonial extraction that Ewout Frankema and Frans Buelens also employ: "a net transfer of economically valuable resources from indigenous to metropolitan societies" (Frankema and Buelens 2013, 2). Precisely because of the wide range of extractive measures, as well as the direct and indirect costs of empire, its costs and benefits have been extensively debated by contemporaries and historians alike. Imperial powers in the nineteenth century were constantly concerned about the cost of empire, and the ways to mitigate these costs were much contested in the metropoles (e.g. Davis and Huttenback 1986, 6–7; van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 111–112; Havik 2013). Moreover, the burdens of empire on the *colonised* population became increasingly debated in the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, not only by concerned citizens in the metropoles (Booth 2012, 1148), but also by the colonised themselves, in the context of growing nationalist and independence movements.

The academic debate too has been divided over the issue to what extent empires were profitable or not—and to whom. With regard to the Portuguese, the Dutch and the Belgian empires, there seems largely to be a consensus that, during most of modern imperialism, the benefits outweighed the costs for the metropolitan economies, even if the size of the remittances flowing to the metropoles has been debated.[12] Although the Portuguese state was confronted with high costs of maintaining its empire, it put the burden mostly on the indigenous African population by imposing labour duties and a myriad of taxes (Havik 2013, 179). As a result,

the Portuguese colonies in Africa were at least highly beneficial to Portugal's balance of payment throughout the colonial period (Lains 1998). In the Dutch and Belgian colonies too, the cost of empire was shifted mainly to the indigenous population, including forced cultivation and various taxes (Vanthemsche 2012; Wahid 2013). Particularly under the Cultivation System on Java, this book shows that net remittances were extraordinarily high (see Chapter 3). But also in a later stage, when the colonial finances of the Dutch East Indies were formally separated, private sector remittances continued to flow to the metropole (Booth 1998, 210–214; Gordon 2010).

For the British and French metropoles, though, the costs and benefits of maintaining their empires have been more intensively disputed by economic historians. In the 1960s and 1970s, most scholars still agreed that the British and French economies had greatly profited from low-cost imports from their overseas possessions, in combination with protectionist policies to safeguard colonial markets for products from the metropoles (Huillery 2014, 2–3). This relative consensus can be seen in the context of the academic popularity of World-Systems theory and the "dependency school", which blamed the former imperialist powers for the underdevelopment of the Third World (e.g. Frank 1966; Rodney 1972; Wallerstein 1989). Since the 1980s, however, this image of the profitability of the British and French empires has been increasingly contested (e.g. O'Brien 1988; Marseille 1984). These authors mainly stressed the immense military and administrative costs of maintaining an empire, which, on the whole, surpassed the benefits, even if some—predominantly elite—groups in metropolitan society became blatantly rich from their dealings with the colonies (Davis and Huttenback 1986). These revisionist accounts, in turn, provoked rather strong responses from authors claiming that, even if expenses were large, average living standards in the metropoles were high enough to bear them, that the empire's costs were still overshadowed by its (partly overlooked) benefits, and that the non-material gains of empire, such as status and moral feelings of superiority, should also be included in the equation (Kennedy 1989, 190; Offer 1993, 232, 236).

Regardless of the net benefits for the metropoles, there are of course the costs and benefits for the colonies that need to be taken into account. During and directly after decolonisation, the idea that colonialism had

brought modernity and progress to the colonies had been on the minds and agendas of neoliberal development economists (Rostow 1960, 139). Some historians too picked up this idea of colonialism as having been favourable to the development of the Third World (Landes 1969). More recently, however, some leading historians have considered the entire Western colonial enterprise as a huge negative-sum game (Booth 2007, 242). As Paul Bairoch put it in 1995: "if the West did not gain much from colonialism, it does not mean that the Third World did not lose much" (Bairoch 1995, 88).

More recent empirical evidence on cases such as colonial French West Africa (Huillery 2014), Portuguese Africa (Havik 2013; Alexopoulou 2018), and Dutch and British Southeast Asia (Booth 2007) confirms that not much was invested in the well-being of indigenous people, in terms of health care or education. This directly links to the topic of this book, as low colonial investment in girls' education has had an impact on the economic position of women. As Anne Booth has argued, US investment in education in the Philippines impacted positively on women's work: colonial Filipinas worked significantly less in the agricultural sector than other women in colonial Southeast Asia (Booth 2016, 175–176). Moreover, investments in infrastructure were in the first place intended to benefit colonial exports, even if they generated some positive effects for indigenous economic activities and led to changes in household labour patterns as well (e.g. Elson 1994, 255–260; Havik 2013, 181). One of these, usually unintended, side effects of colonialism may have been partial industrial development, as I will argue in Chapter 4. This links up to debates on de-industrialisation in the poor periphery, which in turn relates to questions on the effects of colonialism on living standards.

The De-industrialisation Thesis

In the decades after the Second World War, neoclassical economists as well as neo-Marxist and "dependency" scholars considered the de-industrialisation of the Third World to be a major problem. The former strand of scholars primarily explained this underdevelopment of industry in endogenous terms, such as the "primitive conditions" of indigenous

economies (Bauer 1976, 148) or the lack of dynamism among indigenous elites (Kerr et al. 1962).[13] The latter instead blamed colonial extraction, which had enforced a worldwide division of labour that impoverished countries in the periphery by destroying local manufacturing industries or by actively preventing industrial development there (Frank 1966; Rodney 1972; Wallerstein 1989).

In the early 1980s, such unilinear views on de-industrialisation came under criticism. On the one hand, scholars studying proto-industry in Europe argued that industrialisation was no unidirectional process: entire regions in Europe de-industrialised, or "re-agrarianised", at the onset of the nineteenth century. Moreover, in European industrialised areas, factory production and cottage manufacturing coincided until at least the late nineteenth century (Kriedte et al. 1981; Johnson 2002, 7–8). Further, social and economic historians of India have empirically demonstrated that the image of de-industrialisation is, at best, incomplete. As Deepak Lal noted in 1988, the de-industrialisation thesis does not hold for India. Although early nineteenth-century British textile imports certainly affected local production in India, modern textile factories were established in the country from the 1850s onwards. Also, modern industry remained highly intertwined with traditional cottage production, and for a long time, handicraft spinning and weaving in the lower market segments provided poor Indians with coarse but affordable cotton cloth (Lal 1988, 183–199). But in the higher market segments too, many handloom-weaving regions in India were able to compete with Western factory-made cloth until the first few decades of the twentieth century (Chandavarkar 1985; Roy 1993; Parthasarathi 1998). More recently, Gareth Austin and Kaoru Sugihara have introduced the term "labour-intensive industrialisation" to refute Eurocentric conceptions of the global diffusion of Western manufacturing technologies and practices (Austin and Sugihara 2013).

Due to these valuable insights, the de-industrialisation debate seemed to have died down for quite a while, but Jeffrey Williamson has recently reignited it. Williamson (2013) states that, due to falling trade costs, global market integration accelerated during the nineteenth century. This entailed a deepening of existing patterns of specialisation, in which the "poor periphery" focused on the export of primary products and raw materials to fuel the growing demands of manufacturing enterprises and

consumers in the "core". Simultaneously, industrialising countries increasingly specialised in export manufacturing, alongside trade and business services. Market forces would have formed the dominant mechanism behind this global division of labour. Growing demand for primary commodities drove up their world market prices, while rapid efficiency gains and competition in manufacturing production in the core depressed prices for industrial products. This led to a "terms-of-trade boom" in the poor periphery, which offered a dual incentive for de-industrialisation.

Although at first sight, Williamson's theoretical reasoning makes sense, his core assumptions, which are based on Ricardian trade theory, contain some fundamental problems which deserve closer scrutiny. First of all, he presumes that labour can be reallocated between industries and sectors within a country without additional cost, and that labour is always fully employed. Second, Ricardian models assume that traded goods are homogeneous (i.e. identical) across producers and countries, and that they are perfectly competitive in countries trading with each other. And, finally, *international* trade is taken to be the main driver of economic growth.

In this book, by scrutinising the heterogeneity of household labour, particularly the allocation decisions relating to women's work, I will show that these assumptions do not hold for colonial Java. The increasing tendency of Javanese women to take up part-time activities in the handicraft textile sector fits well with Austin and Sugihara's concept of labour-intensive paths of industrialisation. Specific local traditions of cloth production persisted because they were still strongly demanded by growing numbers of indigenous consumers. As has been noted for India and Africa (Haynes 2012, 13; Austin 2008, 602), for quite some time Indonesian consumers were reluctant to buy European textiles, preferring local creations. Because quality and taste mattered, the assumption of perfect competition thus makes little sense in the historical context of Dutch imperial trade relations. In a sense, local Javanese handicrafts even received an impulse from imports of factory-made textiles, a large part of which consisted of yarns and unfinished cotton cloth until the 1920s. Furthermore, as in India (Roy 2013), new techniques were introduced in colonial-era Indonesia to cope with cheaper European printed cloth, which enabled local producers to regain at least part of the indigenous market for coloured cotton textiles for a considerable time. To sum up, it was not so much *international* trade,

central in Williamson's analysis, which caused the resilience of indigenous textile production, but rather the growth of *internal* markets, and the way households responded to this demand by reallocating their labour, in order to retain, or increase, their standard of living.

Living Standards in the Long Nineteenth Century

Both in the economic historiography of Western Europe and in the context of the colonised regions overseas, standards of living have been the subject of intense debate since the end of the nineteenth century. For both geographical areas, the discussion has roughly been one between "optimists" and "pessimists". On the one hand, there are those academics who believe that industrialisation in the West, as well as colonisation in the East, brought modernisation and progress to all. This progress would also have translated into higher standards of living for the working classes in industrialising nations, as opposed to the more pessimistic accounts of Marx and Engels and their academic followers (for instance, Ashton 1949; Hartwell 1961; Lindert and Williamson 1983). Also, influential scholars such as Bauer have claimed that colonialism brought advancement in the "extremely primitive conditions of the African and Asian territories" (Bauer 1976, 148), and that these regions would have experienced particular economic progress under colonialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Key to this development brought by colonisers would have been infrastructure, public health measures and education (e.g. Gould 1993).

On the other hand, there are scholars who believe that large groups in society—in this case the labouring classes and the colonised—were exploited to such an extent that for a long time these processes hardly benefited the standard of living of the poorest (Hobsbawm 1957). With regard to wages in industrialising Britain, Charles Feinstein's contention that, at least before the 1850s, the real wages of industrial labourers improved only modestly continues to be debated (Feinstein 1998).[14] In the colonial setting, economic policies had led to resource extraction and deindustrialisation of the Global South, from which perhaps a small indigenous elite profited, while the majority of the population suffered even

more (Frank 1966; Parthasarathi 2011, 261). Moreover, investments made in the colonial infrastructure and other public provisions were intended largely for export trade and failed to improve conditions for the bulk of the indigenous poor. Real wages, but also other indicators of welfare such as infant mortality and calorific intake, suggest that people living in the colonised regions of Southeast Asia, for instance, did not profit much from colonialism (Booth 2012).

At the turn of the twenty-first century, a new impulse was given to the standard-of-living debate by Robert Allen's long-term comparative approach, which involved calculating to what extent average households in the past were able to obtain a particular consumption level, based on wages and prices prevalent in particular regions and time periods. Using this information, Allen constructed "welfare ratios" (for a more detailed explanation see, Sect. 5.1) first for Europe, and later, in co-authored work, for Asia (Allen 2001, 2009; Allen et al. 2011). Many scholars have followed Allen's example for other regions, such as Latin America (Arroyo Abad et al. 2012), sub-Saharan Africa (e.g. Frankema and van Waijenburg 2012), colonial India (e.g. Broadberry and Gupta 2006; de Zwart 2015) and Java (de Zwart and van Zanden 2015). The general picture emerging from these long-run geographical comparisons is that in many parts of the world standards of living were fairly similar, at least until 1800, that only English and Dutch living standards were significantly higher than those in the rest of Europe and the world, and that the gap between those two countries and elsewhere widened during the early modern period. After a period of decline and stagnation in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, welfare ratios started to increase spectacularly in Europe until 1860 to 1913, whereas in large parts of Asia living standards showed only modest growth, and even decline, in the same period (Allen et al. 2011, 27).

The debate on the exact impact of colonial rule on indigenous living standards is far from having been resolved due to varying ideological viewpoints and a lack of evidence (see also de Zwart and van Zanden 2015). This becomes very clear in the case of Java. While many historians have argued that colonial rule scarcely improved the living standards of the majority of the indigenous population in the Dutch East Indies (Boomgaard 1989; Booth 2012; de Zwart and van Zanden 2015), others have pointed to the more beneficial effects of colonialism—such as monetisa-

tion and infrastructural developments—on welfare (Elson 1994; van der Eng 2000; Dell and Olken 2017).

Apart from the unresolved discussion on colonialism's effects on living standards in the Dutch East Indies, the effects of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century colonialism on living standards *in the metropole* have so far been almost entirely overlooked (van Nederveen Meerkerk 2015). This book aims to shed new light on the debates on the role of colonialism by studying how living standards in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Dutch Empire developed, and why they developed this way. My research strategy is comparative in several respects: I compare the living standards of agrarian and urban working-class households in the Netherlands and Java, as well as over time, using a unique data set of almost 3000 household budgets. These sources offer unique historical information not only about the actual income and expenditure of households, but also about the composition of various sources of income, including the earnings of women and children, and income from non-wage work (see Chapter 5).

By exploring living standards, colonial extraction and structural change in the form of industrialisation and de-industrialisation, all through the lens of household labour relations, this book aims to bring together these topical debates in economic history. It argues that the intended and unintended consequences of colonial policies affected living standards in the colony as well as in the metropole in different ways. This affected households' strategies to reorganise their labour, which in turn impacted the structure of the economy as well as people's living standards. The case study of women's work in the Dutch Empire, specifically the Netherlands and Java, is relevant for several reasons. First, as Chapter 2 will show, while Dutch colonialism was comparatively intensive and extractive, it also shared many features with practices of other imperial powers, for instance in the realms of forced labour and social and labour policies. Second, although the Netherlands was first and fastest in this respect, other Western European countries also experienced a downward trend in female labour force participation. Both factors combined make the Dutch Empire an excellent benchmark for a pioneering study on the effects of colonial connections on women's work, on which further studies can build. Third,

studying the Dutch Empire through this lens fills an important lacuna in the historiography, as I will now show.

1.3 Economy, Society and Labour in the Dutch Empire: A Brief Historiography

In the nineteenth century, the Dutch academic historical profession focused predominantly on political topics. This started to change around the turn of the century. In 1894, at his inauguration as Professor of Dutch History at Leiden University, historian P. J. Blok programmatically spoke of history as a social science. He suggested that historians ought to broaden their focus to include economic-historical topics, including the history of trade and studies of the colonial past (Sluyterman 2014, 45–46). His suggestion was taken up by subsequent generations of historians, including N. W. Posthumus, who published important empirical work on the early modern Dutch economy, and I. J. Brugmans, who was more concerned with the social history of the labouring classes in the nineteenth century (Posthumus 1908–1939, 1943–1964; Brugmans 1929). In the same period, economists as well as historians started to pay increasing attention to the study of the economy and society in the Dutch East Indies (e.g. Mansvelt 1922; Boeke 1926; Furnivall 1939).

However, it was only from around 1970, under the influence of the *Annales* school as well as the "social science turn" in history, that a wealth of studies on the Dutch economy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries emerged. The topics they covered included the relatively late industrialisation of the Netherlands, economic growth and histories of the rise of wage labour and the Dutch labour movement.[15] Moreover, in the Netherlands, as in other countries, the rise of the "new social history", demographic history, and women's and gender studies spurred an interest in the history of Dutch women, including their economic activities (for an overview of some important works, see van Nederveen Meerkerk 2014, 182–190).

Likewise, a renewed interest in the study of the economic history of colonial Indonesia gained solid ground in this period, both within and

outside the Netherlands. Based on newly collected historical data from the colonial archives, the highly extractive Cultivation System (1830–1870; see Chapters 2 and 3) was scrutinised (Fasseur 1975; Elson 1994), and a fifteen-volume series *Changing Economy of Indonesia* appeared between 1976 and 1996, containing a treasure of statistical data for nineteenth- and early twentieth-century colonial Indonesia (see Sect. 1.5). Many detailed empirical as well as broad synthesising studies on the economic history of Indonesia were published (e.g. Boomgaard 1989; Maddison and Prince 1989; Lindblad 1993; Booth 1998; van Zanden and Marks 2012). In the wake of this revival of interest in colonial Indonesia's economic history, some studies on the economic role of indigenous women appeared, but such studies remained fragmented and largely revolved around the *discourse* involving the proper role of Javanese women, or around their encounters with Dutch colonists (e.g. Boomgaard 1981; Stoler 1985; Carey and Houben 1992). Apparently, it has proven very difficult to capture the voices and experiences of colonised women in the past. Being "natives" as well as women, they rarely surface directly in the colonial archives, and thus may be seen as standing in "the shadows of the shadows" (Spivak 1985, 265).

In addition, the renewed attention paid to the economic and social history of both the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies has hardly led to much in the way of *an integrated study* of developments in the metropole and the colony (Bosma 2014, 172).[16] This is all the more surprising since in the fields of political as well as cultural history a number of studies have recently appeared that assess not only the impact of the Netherlands on the Dutch East Indies, but also how the Dutch colonial past influenced the metropole, in a single analytical framework. This more integrated approach fits well with international trends in imperial history since the late 1990 s, when some postcolonial historians shifted to the analysis of reciprocal influences of the imperial project on both colony and metropole (e.g. Cooper and Stoler 1997; Conrad and Randeria 2002; Burton 2003). These scholars argue that we can understand the histories of both "the West" and "the rest" only by studying them inter-relationally, through the approach of *histoire croisée* or histories of entanglement. As Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper have claimed, "Europe was made from its colonial projects, as much as colonial encounters were shaped by conflicts in

Europe itself" (Stoler and Cooper 1997, 1). For example, historians such as Antoinette Burton and Catherine Hall have highlighted how imperialism formed a constitutive element of British nationalism (Burton 2003; Hall 2002). Moreover, various studies (e.g. McClintock 1995; Stoler 2002; Hall and Rose 2006) show that imperialism was not mainly a top-down creation by white male politicians and administrators, but that "white women, mixed families and colonial collaborators played an important role in weaving the weft through the warp of a decentralized historical process" (Manjapra 2014, 280).

This strand of literature, which—not unproblematically—is also called the "New Imperial History", focuses predominantly on political or cultural exchanges, and on the circulation of ideas, most notably in the British and French empires (e.g. Cooper and Stoler 1997; Levine 2004; Hall and Rose 2006). While economic relations were sometimes described as a factor in the background, socio-economic developments themselves, let alone labour relations, have been analysed much less frequently from this perspective (Ballantyne 2010, 451; Vanthemsche 2012, 4–5; van Nederveen Meerkerk 2013, 2015). This is also true for the Dutch Empire, whose metropolitan and colonial histories have only recently and quite slowly begun to be integrated (Raben 2013, 29). Most of these works studying mutual colonial effects focus either on the sociopolitical concerns of the Dutch with the welfare of the colonised population (Janse 2013), feminism (Waaldijk and Grever 2004), or on the influences colonialism had on the formation of Dutch metropolitan identity, nationality or material culture (e.g. Bossenbroek 1996; Bloembergen 2006; van Leeuwen 2008; Legêne 2010). Some excellent exploratory studies on the influence of colonialism on Javanese women's work in particular economic sectors have appeared (e.g. Boomgaard 1981; Locher-Scholten 1986, 2000a; Saptari 2011). However, no systematic study of colonial women's work on Java has yet been undertaken, and the entanglements between colonialism and women's work in both parts of the Dutch Empire have been studied even less frequently.

In the remainder of this book, I will show that colonial connections did indeed make a difference, although they were not the only determinant of developments in women's labour force participation on either side of the Dutch Empire. This is why it is important to connect the direct

and indirect influences of colonialism to other mechanisms that were at play in both the domestic and the global economies. In this respect, it is crucial to pay careful attention to chronology as well as to the *unintended consequences* of colonial policies put into practice. These all impacted the daily lives of households, both in the colony and in the metropole. In turn, households responded to new challenges and opportunities, thus affecting larger structures. The following section will provide a number of important stylised facts, comparing several socio-economic indicators in the Netherlands and Java around the beginning of my research period. Also, the section will give a brief overview of how these indicators developed—and diverged—during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in order to sketch the background to the development of women's work in both parts of the Dutch Empire.

1.4 Comparisons, Contrasts and Connections in the Dutch Empire

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Dutch Republic, a federation of seven provinces that had liberated itself from Habsburg rule, had been one of Europe's major economic powers. At the peak of its power around 1650, the Republic, comprising approximately the current Kingdom of the Netherlands (see Fig. 1.2), was a small country of about 40,000 km^2 and two million inhabitants. It was also one of the most urbanised regions in the world, with for the time a remarkably specialised agricultural sector and a rich history of trade relations with the Baltic region, as well as colonial trade in the Far East and the New World (de Vries and van der Woude 1997). The Northern Netherlands lost much of its dynamic force in the course of the eighteenth century, with a stagnating and even declining population. Moreover, it suffered severely from political turmoil and from Napoleon's occupation at the end of the century. In 1815, to form a buffer against the defeated French, the Northern and Southern Netherlands were joined to form the Kingdom of the Netherlands, headed by Willem I, the son of the previous *stadhouder* Willem V.[17] Despite the establishment of a parliament with representatives from the north and south, King Willem I and his government had almost unlimited legisla-

tive and executive powers. Willem's aim was to centralise and modernise the country, but his ambitious infrastructural and fiscal measures increased the already huge government debt and precipitated growing opposition among the southern provinces. After a costly war, the south seceded from the kingdom and formed its own nation, Belgium (see also Chapters 2, 3 and 4).[18]

With the establishment of the kingdom, the Netherlands also regained some of the colonies that had been part of its vast imperial sphere of influence in the early modern period. Most notable were the Dutch East Indies, particularly Java, a valuable asset that had been ruled by the British between 1811 and 1816. At the end of the sixteenth century, Dutch merchants had increasingly frequented the Indonesian archipelago (see Fig. 1.3) for its richness of spices and tropical goods. The Javanese town of Jacatra (later renamed Batavia by the Dutch, and today known as Jakarta) became a provisioning post for ships of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) sailing to the Spice Islands further east. In 1618, the Dutch decided to bring the entire city under its authority and Jacatra became one of the most important strategic VOC outposts. Few Dutch people settled there permanently, and the majority of temporary or more long-term migrants were male soldiers, merchants and clerks (Gelman Taylor 1983, 3–5). Until the late nineteenth century, European women seldom migrated to the Dutch East Indies, and the "scarcity" of white women led to sexual and marital relationships between European men and indigenous women (Gouda and Clancy-Smith 1998, 18). The particularities of Dutch imperial rule in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries will be further elaborated in Chapter 2, but for the context of this book it is useful to provide a broad sketch of Java, not the largest but certainly the most populous island in the Dutch East Indies.

Colonial Java distinguished itself from other parts of the Indonesian archipelago in many respects. First of all, it was the region that experienced the most intensive Dutch influence from the early modern period. Colonial rule largely confined itself to this island until the end of the nineteenth century, when the Dutch started to become increasingly interested in other parts of the archipelago in their quest for natural resources and geopolitical primacy in the region (Booth 1998, 2–5). Second, Java was relatively densely populated compared to other islands such as Sumatra, Borneo (now Kalimantan) and Celebes (present-day Sulawesi). The growing population pressure was of increasing concern to the colonial author-

Fig. 1.2 Map of the Kingdom of the Netherlands after 1830 (© Cartographic Studio 2019)

Fig. 1.3 Map of the Dutch East Indies, c. 1900 (© Cartographic Studio 2019)

ities and led to government inquiries into the well-being of the Javanese population. As a result of these two factor s, the archival source material to investigate the colonial history of Java is much richer and goes back much further in time than for the other islands (Boomgaard 1989). This is true, too, of the secondary literature, which has long focused predominantly on Java in the colonial period. To write the relatively under-explored history of women's work, it is useful to have a rich historiographical literature to fall back on and to contextualise this as much as possible. These are the most important reasons to focus on Java in this book.

Java is a highly diverse region, both geographically and ethnically. As Robert Elson has so aptly noted: "there are as many Javas as there are inhabitants of the island; each region, however defined, has a distinctiveness born of a specific history and physical and cultural ecology" (Elson 1994, xxi). Around 1830, the island housed over seven million people (Boomgaard and Gooszen 1991) and hundreds of distinct ethnic groups and languages. Java had a long-standing trade history, dating back to at least the fifteenth century, when commercial activities spread throughout Southeast Asia and beyond (van Zanden and Marks 2012, 21). Arab and Chinese merchants were highly active on Java, as well as on other islands of the archipelago, in long-distant trade and wholesaling, whereas Javanese women dominated trade in local markets (Watson Andaya 1995). Politically, Java consisted of a patchwork of smaller tribes as well as larger kingdoms, such as the sultanate of Mataram, which occupied a vast area in Central Java in the period from 1587 to 1755, and its successor states, the sultanates of Surakarta and Yogyakarta, which were granted a large degree of autonomy and self-government by the later Dutch authorities and survived until 1945. At the regional level, *bupati* (regents) were the most powerful. Many of these indigenous leaders had already cooperated with the VOC, as they were in charge of organising and levying various colonial taxes, which usually came on top of existing forms of taxation (Boomgaard 1989, 18, 24–25). The regencies were kept intact throughout the colonial period and were directly accountable to the Dutch *resident*, the most important official at the higher district level (see Fig. 1.4 for the residencies around 1900).

Despite the heterogeneity of the Netherlands and Java, I have chosen to take these geographical units as my point of departure for the comparisons

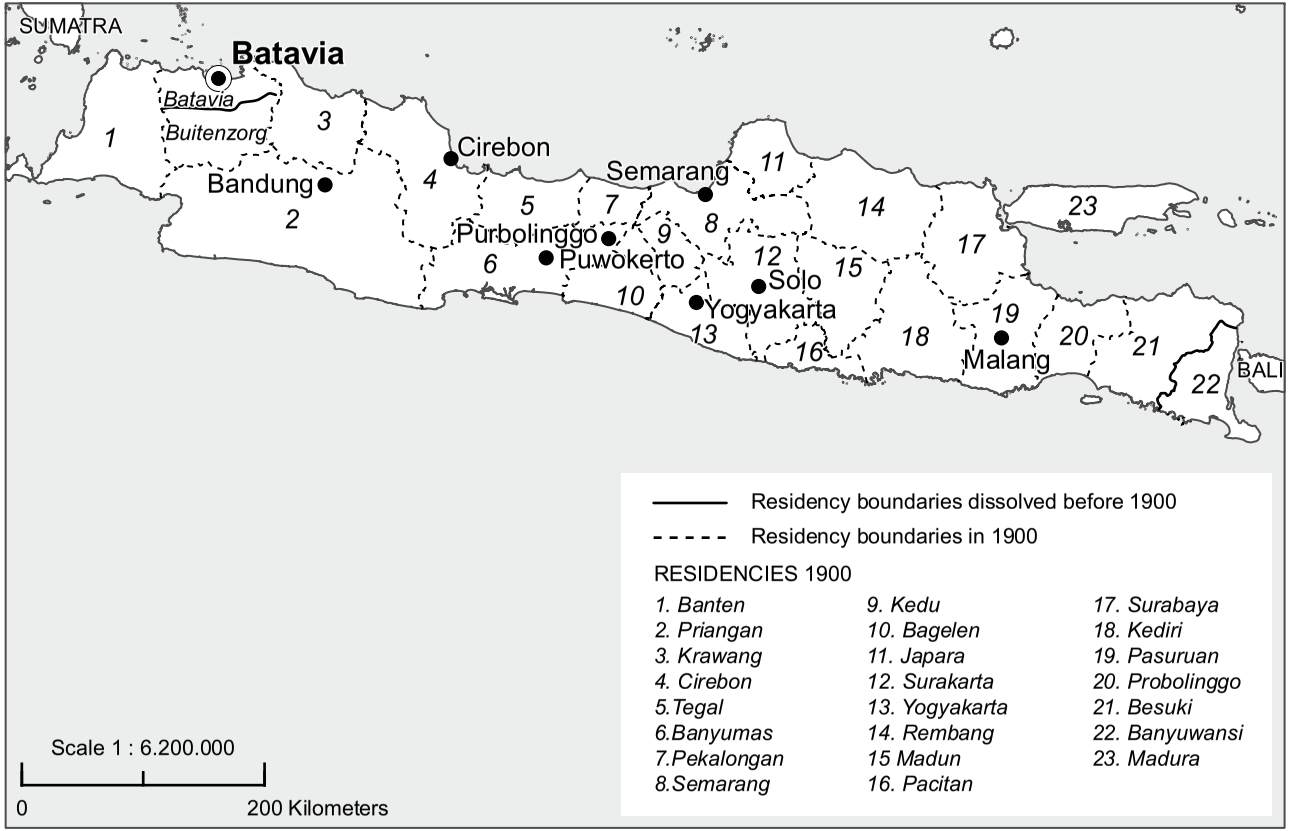

Fig. 1.4 Map of Java, *c.* 1900 (© Cartographic Studio 2019)

made in this book. Although at times I will focus on particular regions and local developments, the aim here is to provide a more general overview of women's work, and how it changed, in both parts of the world, even if such developments may have been less straightforward for all areas, and even if source material is at times fragmented (see Sect. 1.5). By choosing the level of the nation state—at least in the case of the Netherlands—as the unit of analysis, I by no means wish to imply that local or more global developments did, or do, not matter. However, I believe it is the appropriate scale at which to make a more comprehensive comparison of women's work in both parts of the empire, as well as of the connections that can be established between the two regions.

To what extent were the Netherlands and Java comparable at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and how did they increasingly contrast towards the end of the colonial period?[19] In terms of economic structure, both metropole and colony had a long and rich history of international and interregional trade. Still, in both parts of the Dutch Empire, agriculture was the most important sector in terms of employment (see Fig. 1.5, column 1). Certainly, in the period 1500–1800 the Netherlands had developed a specialised and productive agricultural system, with comparatively extensive use of wage labour (de Vries and van der Woude 1997). Nevertheless, despite its relatively modern and urbanised economy, forty-three per cent of the Dutch labour force worked in agriculture, and many areas in 1800, especially the sandy soils in the east, have been typified as "peasant-like" (van Zanden 1985, 346).

Simultaneously, in Java, the majority of the labour force in 1800 was comprised of small peasants. Although at the start of the nineteenth century many of them predominantly produced for their own subsistence, regional markets were already important for selling surpluses and constituted a large part of non-agricultural activity (Boomgaard 1989, 5–6) (see also Fig. 1.5). Indeed, trade was particularly important, and all the more noteworthy for this study given the remarkably high participation of women in this domain, for both the early modern Dutch Republic and Java (van den Heuvel 2007; Watson Andaya 1995). Whereas both in the Netherlands and in Java the share of the population working in agriculture declined throughout the nineteenth century, de-agrarianisation quickly accelerated in the Netherlands after 1900, while Javanese labour-

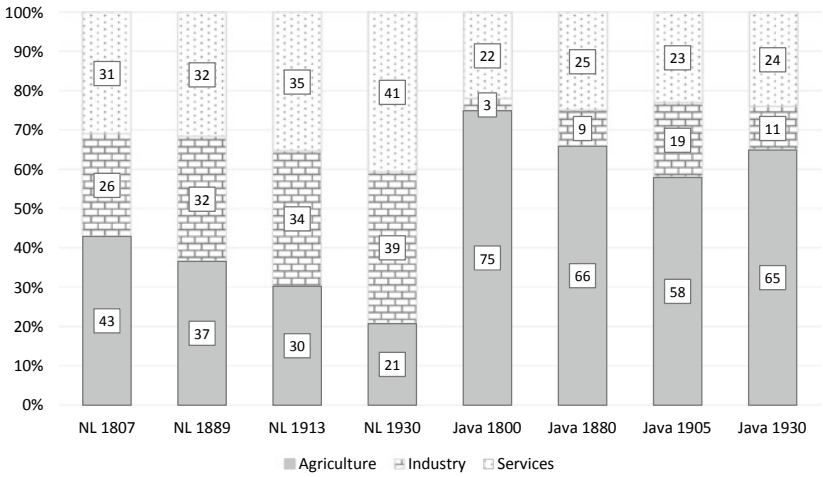

Fig. 1.5 Economic structure as % of active labour force, the Netherlands and Java, 1800–1930 (*Sources* Smits et al. 2000, 19; CBS 1930; Bosma 2016; van Zanden and Marks 2012, 37; National Archives The Hague, Koloniaal Verslag [1907], Bijlage A; Volkstelling Java and Madura 1930, 94–95. *Notes*: The figures for Java in 1905 seem to reflect a period of re-industrialisation. On the one hand, this could be due to an underestimation of industrial activity [particularly alongside agricultural activities] in earlier estimates, but it also neatly aligns with the expansion of the textile industry, mainly by female textile producers [van Nederveen Meerkerk 2017])

ers instead increasingly reverted to agriculture after the turn of the century (see Fig. 1.5). Trade did remain an import sector in Java, and particular types of industry, such as sugar production and handwoven textiles, actually became increasingly important in the late nineteenth century (see Chapter 4). Still, however, Java remained predominantly agrarian. The Dutch government made no serious attempts to stimulate large-scale industrialisation in the colony until the late 1930s.

Apart from economic structure, living standards were also to a certain extent comparable around 1800, in the sense that a large part of the population lived just above subsistence levels in both regions. GDP per capita was certainly already much higher in the Netherlands than in Java at the start of the nineteenth century (219 versus 28 guilders), but as inequality was probably larger in Dutch society, living standards among significant parts of the population were poor (van Zanden 2003, 18). Even

if urbanisation and specialisation had led to the development of a rather extensive middle class in the Dutch Republic (1579–1795), poverty was still widespread. In the first few decades of the nineteenth century, around fifteen per cent of the population was structurally supported by poor relief, and for the capital city of Amsterdam, this percentage was as high as twenty-five (van Leeuwen 1993, 320). Depending on the stage in their life cycle, another thirty-five per cent of the population balanced just above subsistence without relying on assistance. As van Zanden (2003, 13) has suggested, the purchasing power of agricultural wages in the Netherlands and Java actually even converged between 1820 and 1870, so that Javanese real wages in 1870 were at around ninety per cent of Dutch levels. As I will show in Chapter 5, this started to change dramatically in the decades thereafter, leading to an accelerating divergence of living standards in the metropole and the colony.

Demographically, both birth and death rates (especially infant mortality) were still quite high in the Netherlands at the start of the nineteenth century, and life expectancy at birth was around thirty-seven years (Wintle 2000, 10–12). In Java, birth and death rates were even higher than in the Netherlands at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and life expectancy was thirty years, suggesting slightly poorer conditions at the outset. However, in the course of the nineteenth century, this gap widened significantly: whereas in the metropole *real* GDP per capita (in terms of purchasing power) rose more than fifty per cent in 1880, the growth in the colony in the same period was just seven per cent (van Zanden 2003, 9). Indeed, whereas in both countries fertility as well as mortality declined over the colonial period, death rates dropped especially rapidly in the Netherlands after 1870 due to hygiene measures and better food quality. As a consequence, life expectancy rose impressively in the Netherlands to up to sixty-five years in the early twentieth century, whereas in Java it rose hardly at all before 1930. This was caused especially by differing levels of infant mortality in Java and the Netherlands, a difference that had become striking by the late colonial period (Booth 2012, 1164–1165).

With regard to social inequality too, the Netherlands and Java were reasonably comparable at the start of the nineteenth century. Recent estimates of the historical development of Gini coefficients suggest that these were relatively similar: fifty-six in the Netherlands and slightly lower, fifty-two,

Table 1.2 Income inequality in the Netherlands and Java, 1820–1930

	Netherlands		Java	
	Gini coefficient	Index (1870 = 100)	Gini coefficient	Index (1870 = 100)
1820	56	98	52	133
1850	48	84	42	108
1870	57	100	39	100
1890	42	74	39	100
1910	47	82	42	108
1930	42	74	50	128

Source Moatsos et al. (2014, 206)

in Java (see Table 1.2). Before 1870, it is hard to establish a clear trend in the development of social inequality in the Netherlands, also because data for these early years tend to be unreliable (Moatsos et al. 2014, 206). In Java, under the Cultivation System, social inequality is thought to have declined. After 1870, however, social inequality in the Netherlands became much less, whereas in Java it rose again. This implies that, in combination with generally rising living standards, the establishment of the welfare state in the Netherlands led to an increasing redistribution of income, from which the majority of labourers ultimately profited. In Java, on the other hand, no such redistribution occurred. As we know that no substantial indigenous middle class emerged, the gap between ordinary Javanese peasants and the elite must have widened over the late colonial period, despite the welfare measures intended under the Ethical Policy that the Dutch introduced to the island in 1901 (see Chapter 6).

Finally, social norms held by the Dutch elites and bourgeoisie about the appropriate role of working-class and peasant women in the economy and in the household diverged markedly from the last decades of the nineteenth century for metropole and colony. Around 1800, work and correction were seen as the principal means to morally discipline poor households, in both the Netherlands and Java. Parallel initiatives were undertaken by Johannes van den Bosch, who in 1815 established "peat colonies(!)" in the Netherlands, aiming to transform the urban poor into industrious agrarian workers, and who later, in 1830, introduced the Cul-

tivation System in Java, likewise to increase peasants' industriousness (see Chapter 3). While these norms were similar, it must be noted that the scope of changing labour relations was much vaster in the colony than in the metropole. As Chapter 6 will reveal, ideals and practices of the male breadwinner household started to pervade Dutch society after *c.* 1870, helping to create a sharp divergence in household norms in the colony vis-à-vis the metropole. Legislation to limit work by children and women was passed, and a few years later general education became mandatory until the age of twelve. Although in practice many Dutch working-class women and children kept working, their official numbers dropped significantly. The nature of their work became less permanent and visible and their contribution to household income declined (see Chapter 5). In the colony, in contrast to the metropole, the phenomenon of working married women remained very prominent, and their participation probably rose over the period. Protection for women and child labourers was introduced very late in the Dutch East Indies, following fierce pressure from the international community. Not only did Dutch politicians consider it "natural" for Indonesian women and children to work, their assumptions regarding inherent differences between Indonesian and Dutch women served even to justify the protection of the latter—a fine example of what Stoler and Cooper (1997, 3) have called a "grammar of difference".

All in all, we see increasing divergence between the Netherlands and Java in many economic and social domains, particularly after 1870. How were these growing contrasts shaped in an empire ultimately ruled by the same government? How did the economic and societal changes in both the metropole and the colony interact with developments in women's work? What effects, in turn, did the economic contribution of women to the motherland as well as to the colony have on changes in the economy, living standards and social relations in the Dutch Empire? This book strives to describe and explain the connections between economic and societal changes and developments in women's work in the Dutch Empire.

1.5 Methods and Sources

Throughout this book, I use a combination of quantitative and more qualitative methods of analysis, as I believe this to be the most fruitful approach to economic history. Furthermore, the research presented in this book is inherently comparative, both in a geographical sense—describing and explaining developments in women's work in the Netherlands and Java—as well as chronologically, highlighting and explaining changes over time. Taking the aggregate level of the Netherlands and Java does not mean that the book falls prey to "methodological nationalism", as Marcel van der Linden (2008, 3) has called the tendency of historians to conflate society and the nation state. Where possible, other levels of analysis, such as the local and regional, or the supranational, will be taken into account. Also, there is a constant eye for transfers and connections between developments in the colony and the metropole. The focus of the comparisons and transfers between the Netherlands and Java lies on the effects of, first, economic policies, second, fiscal policies and third, social policies, and how their—intended as well as unintended—effects impacted household labour allocation and living standards.

This study relies on a great variety of primary as well as secondary sources that were collected in the national archives in The Hague and Jakarta, as well as in local archives and libraries across the Netherlands. Most data were collected by me and my team. We derived information from numerous colonial reports, business archives, plantation archives, contemporary industrial surveys and individual collections. Larger databases, constructed by others or compiled by our own research team, were also used. The data files created by others were the historical Dutch censuses provided online by Statistics Netherlands (CBS),[20] marriage records provided by the Historical Sample of the Netherlands (HSN)[21] as well as data sets provided on a personal basis.[22] The databases Corinne Boter, Daniëlle Teeuwen and I created, which can be accessed freely online,[23] contain information on wages as well as on household income and expenditure and are based on multiple data sources. The appendices to Chapters 3 and 5 provide further information on the collection and use of the most important quantitative data in this book, the Dutch marriage registers and the databases on wages constructed in the course of this project.

Many of the tables and figures in this book benefit from the elaborate data series constructed and published in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s in the context of the *Changing Economy of Indonesia* project. The collection of these data—mostly serial data taken from the colonial reports—was instigated by the historian W. M. F. Mansvelt, Head of the Dutch East Indies Central Office of Statistics (CKS) in the 1930s. Mansvelt, however, did not survive the Second World War. After Indonesia's independence, his assistant, P. Creutzberg, continued Mansvelt's work at the Royal Tropical Institute (Koninklijk Instituut van de Tropen, KIT) in Amsterdam (Bosma 2014, 163). Later, Peter Boomgaard became editor of the series, which ultimately consisted of fifteen volumes, containing detailed information on a wealth of indicators, including trade flows, prices, land use and population growth in the colonial period.

Valuable as all of these sources and data sets are, some critical notes are in order. First of all, women have generally left far fewer traces in the historical source material than men. This is not only because, for much of world history, they have been less literate and thus produced fewer ego documents (Hufton 1995, 1–2). It is also because the people who created and preserved most of the historical sources have usually been men, and they have not always been interested in recording women's experiences in the past, nor were they necessarily ordered to do so by (colonial) governments. This is true particularly in the case of the economic activities of middle- and lower-class women, which were often seen as complementary or ancillary to men's (see, e.g. Humphries and Sarásua 2012; Schmidt and van Nederveen Meerkerk 2012). As regards *colonial* peasant women, an extra layer of bias occurs, as they were not only lower class and female, they also belonged to an—in the eyes of many colonists—inferior race (Spivak 1985). Moreover, apart from the problem of under-recording, Ann Stoler has also rightly pointed to the fact that colonial archives have often been highly selective about which documents to preserve, and how they fed into the representation of the Dutch as a colonial power. "In the Netherlands Indies", Stoler claims, "these colonial archives were an arsenal of sorts that were reactivated to suit new governing strategies" (Stoler 2009, 3).

Because of all these complications, we have to find ways to "interpret silences" in the source material. Sometimes, it also means that we must rely largely on circumstantial evidence and logical reasoning to reconstruct

the history of women's work, both in the metropole and particularly in the colony. So, for instance, if we know from a household budget that the husband works full-time for wages on a plantation and his wife only part-time, we can infer that the household's plot of land was predominantly worked by the wife and, if present, children. Often, however, it is also a matter of asking new questions to already familiar source material. All of these methods have been applied in this research, and I will deal with the customary source criticism where appropriate throughout the text.

1.6 Outline of the Book

This book adopts a thematic approach to the history of women's work in the Dutch Empire, although a certain chronological order is also adhered to. Chapter 2 will explain the background of Dutch imperialism from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the late 1930s. It compares the particularities of Dutch colonial governance, extractive economic policies as well as social policies with the activities of other imperial powers, most notably Britain and France, in these domains. Although Chapter 2 already hints at the importance of these domains with regard to women's work, the subsequent chapters will deal with each of these topics in more depth. So, Chapter 3 explores the direct and more indirect consequences of the Cultivation System for developments in women's work, not only for households in Java but also in the Netherlands. The focus is primarily on the period 1830–1870, although its consequences in the later decades of the colonial period are also discussed. Chapter 4 goes on to compare to what extent economic policies in the field of industrialisation played out for women's participation in the labour force, as well as for the division of work between men and women in both parts of the Dutch Empire. Chapter 5 aims to establish the effects of these changes on the standards of living of working-class and peasant households towards the end of the nineteenth century and reveals a sharply widening gap in living standards in the early decades of the twentieth century. The focus on the later colonial period in this chapter is due mainly to a lack of sources for the period prior to 1870. Chapter 6 also deals mainly with the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It compares the development of labour and social policies, particularly regarding women and children, in an empir-

ical framework. It establishes that while the ideological background and sociopolitical climate might have been highly comparable, economic as well as racist considerations nevertheless led to highly different policies in metropole and colony. Chapter 7 concludes by bringing together findings and providing answers to the three research questions posed in Sect. 1.1. It also points to the wider implications of this book's analyses for the historiographical debates alluded to in this introduction.

Notes

1. The research for this monograph derives from the project "Industriousness in an imperial economy. Interactions of households' work patterns, time allocation and consumption in the Netherlands and the Netherlands-Indies, 1815–1940", funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). Part of the book was written during my stay at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study (NIAS) in Amsterdam, which provided an additional stipend as well as an excellent academic work environment. Moreover, the final stages of the manuscript were completed in the follow-up Consolidator Grant project "Race to the Bottom" that was granted to me by the European Research Council.
2. Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia (ANRI), Pekalongan, Algemeen Jaarverslag 1932.
3. However, this is only part of the story, which has too often disregarded the important role of women's economic activities in processes of divergence, as for instance in the apparent "de-industrialisation" of the periphery (van Nederveen Meerkerk 2017).
4. Amussen and Poska (2012) also note, though, that, in turn, indigenous men considered white European men to be feminine. Also, European divisions of labour were not always adopted smoothly in the colonies, as both indigenous and white settler women had comparatively more access to economic activities than in the metropoles (ibid., 349–353). This corresponds with Kathleen Wilson's observation that "[c]olonial encounters generated a 'gender frontier', where two or more culturally specific systems of knowledge about gender and nature met and confronted one another, forcing the invention of new identities and social practices" (Wilson 2004, 23).
5. See Chapter 3 for a further discussion of the Dutch historiography of women's work in the 1980s and 1990s.

6. See van der Linden (2012) for a nice overview of the historiography, as well as of what has been done in the field of "Global Labour History" so far, and what is still on the agenda. For valuable criticisms of the concept of Global Labour History by various authors, see the discussion in the same issue of *International Labor and Working-Class History*.
7. Linguistically, "work" and "labour" are interchangeable concepts. There are only a few languages that distinguish between the two, English and Dutch being the most prominent among them. Nevertheless, in the discussion on child labour, it has been stated that "child labour" can be defined as harmful to the physical and/or mental condition of a child, whereas "child work" can be considered a more inclusive term, which also encompasses light, ancillary tasks children have done throughout space and time, or work that was in service of vocational training. See also Lieten and van Nederveen Meerkerk (2011, 16–17).
8. It must be noted, though, that there were considerable differences across residencies, ranging from an average household size of 3.7 in Banten to 5.9 in Rembang (Boomgaard 1989, 154, Table 12).
9. de Vries (2008). See Sect. 5.1 for further details of de Vries's "industrious revolution" thesis.
10. See Young (2015) for a neat and concise history of the development of the terms "colonialism" and "imperialism" since the nineteenth century.
11. Some of the literature includes the USA and Japan as modern imperialist powers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries because of their sphere of influence in Asia, which clearly also included imperialist-like ideological underpinnings.
12. For the Dutch East Indies in the late colonial period, see, for example, the different perceptions of Pierre van der Eng and Alec Gordon, in Gordon (2010) in this respect. See also Havik (2013), who stresses the constant struggle of the Portuguese metropolitan state to keep the colonial budgets in Africa in balance. Particularly in periods of economic crisis, Portugal resorted to a combination of highly extractive colonial taxes and hidden subsidies from the metropole to achieve this.
13. For such contentions about Indonesians, see Gordon (1998, 3).
14. Greg Clark (2001, 498) conversely states that "Feinstein's recent pessimism with regard to living standards is probably too great". However, the further substantiation of his position is quite speculative: "If farm day labourers were improving their living standards in these years, even in the south of England, it is hard to conceive that living standards were not also improving in urban areas" (ibid.).

15. For the most important works, see de Jong and van Zanden (2014, 93–94) and Lucassen (2014, 74–76).
16. One exception is the overview of the Dutch economy in the nineteenth century by van Zanden and van Riel, which pays considerable attention to the importance of the colonial drain for the development of Dutch state finances and economic development (van Zanden and van Riel 2004).
17. The *stadhouder* (stadtholder) had been the highest official in the Republic.
18. For a more detailed description of the young Kingdom of the Netherlands and Willem I's economic and fiscal policies, see van Zanden and van Riel (2004, chapter 3).
19. I consider the end of the Dutch colonial period in the East Indies to be March 1942, when the Japanese defeated the Dutch in Java and took government control. After the capitulation of Japan, the Dutch aimed to restore their colonial authority. They did not recognise the proclamation of Indonesian independence by nationalists such as Sukarno and Hatta. The Dutch did not acknowledge Indonesia as an independent sovereign nation state until 1949, after four more years of fighting and considerable international pressure, most notably from the USA.
20. See http://volkstellingen.nl/nl/index.html. Last accessed 29 November 2018.
21. See Appendix 3.1.
22. Courtesy of Pierre van der Eng (Indonesian Textiles Database) and Pim de Zwart and Jan Luiten van Zanden (Excel file welfare ratios Java). Readers who wish to consult these databases are requested to contact the creators of these respective databases.
23. See http://volkstellingen.nl/nl/index.html. Last accessed 29 November 2018.

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2

An Exceptional Empire? Dutch Colonialism in Comparative Perspective

This chapter compares developments in Dutch colonialism with other imperial powers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is argued that, while following trends occurring in other empires, Dutch imperialism stood out in various ways. First, colonial taxation was highly diversified and organised in ways that were quite effective for revenue extraction, as well as adaptive to new circumstances. Second, the Dutch set up an extraordinarily extractive system of forced cultivation in 1830, admired by many imperial states at the time and copied by some. Moreover, other forms of coerced labour continued to exist (*corvée* labour), or emerged (indentured labour), due to a continuous shortage of labour; these were practised on a relatively large scale and sometimes followed by other empires. Third, Dutch aspirations to improve the well-being of the indigenous populations around 1900 onwards resembled civilising missions in other empires, but stood out in terms of their relatively programmatic organisation, as well as in their disappointing results over time. All this nuances the traditional perception of Dutch imperialism as relatively indirect and benign, thus contextualising colonial influences on women's work in the chapters to come.

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2.1 Good Governance? Practices and Self-Images of Dutch Colonialism[1]

> The importance of the Indies […] bolstered Holland's assertion to be a valuable second-string player in international affairs, and the Dutch nation hoped to substantiate this claim by trying to administer its empire with more wisdom and discretion than other colonizing powers. (Gouda 1995, 23)

The representation of Dutch colonialism has long been ambivalent, both in the self-image of contemporaries and in the historiography since decolonisation. On the one hand, the Dutch had exerted colonial influence across the world since the late sixteenth century. The Dutch Empire existed for about 350 years and included numerous territorial acquisitions, ranging from the Americas to Africa and Asia. Between *c.* 1600 and 1800, colonial trade and influence were mainly practised by chartered companies, such as the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the Dutch West Indies Company (WIC) (Bosma 2014, 153–154). Particularly in Asia, Dutch presence had been powerful and increased over the early modern period as they built trading posts from Cape Town to Japan (de Zwart 2015, 10). Despite the bankruptcy of the VOC in the late eighteenth century, and the loss of many colonies to the British, the Dutch Empire was still the second largest in terms of land area and population around 1830. In fact, the Dutch East Indies became their core imperial project. On the other hand, "empire" seemingly played a much more modest role in the constituency of the metropole than in Britain or France, in terms of global territorial spread, military apparatus and self-identification as coloniser. With the possible exception of South Africa in the late-VOC period, the Dutch—unlike the British or the French—never established fully fledged settler colonies, and most of their colonial involvement was dominated by business interests. All this had major implications for the way the Netherlands set out to govern the Dutch East Indies—namely in a highly business-oriented and technocratic manner. This way of governing had consequences for how colonialism was experienced by the Dutch, both in the colony and in the metropole (Raben 2013, 9–10). It may also help explain why, until the late colonial period, there was relatively little overt

resistance to Dutch rule in the archipelago. In the words of the sociologist J. J. A. van Doorn: "Not brutal repression, but 'repressive tolerance' was the most effective weapon of Dutch colonial dominance" (van Doorn 1994, 103).

As Elsbeth Locher-Scholten perceptively noted over twenty years ago, the "Dutch self-image as a peaceful, neutrality-loving nation did not allow for imperialism, which was identified with greed and power games" (Locher-Scholten 1994, 91). Indeed, even in the late colonial period itself, when nationalism and the quest for self-governance were on the rise in the Dutch East Indies, most politicians and social commentators in the metropole did not question the legitimacy of their role as coloniser. There were some critical voices, such as H. H. van Kol, who, in 1901, wrote about "The Imperialism in the Netherlands", but these were exceptions, and fell silent after the military subjugation of the "Outer Islands", as the territories of the archipelago beyond Java were generally called (Bosma 2014, 167). Contemporary debates were confined to what embodied "good stewardship" of the colonised population, but *that* the Dutch were entitled to be stewards in the archipelago was seldom questioned (Legêne 2010, 176–177). This attitude partly explains why the Dutch state refused to acknowledge Indonesian independence directly after the Second World War, and even resisted it militarily until the international community forced it to yield in 1949 (Gordon 2010, 428).

In this context, decades after Indonesia's independence, many Dutch colonial historians continued to downplay the imperialist tendencies of the Dutch,[2] for instance labelling it as "expansion without empire" in the VOC period (e.g. Emmer and Klooster 1999, 48–49), or considering the term "imperialism" inappropriate to describe the Dutch experience in the nineteenth century—mainly because the Netherlands was not involved in the "Scramble for Africa" in the 1880s (Wesseling 1986).[3] Even more recent (and more nuanced) analyses have considered the Dutch to be "reluctant as a colonial power", typifying the aggressive territorial expansion as well as more direct interventions in local societies by the colonial government around 1900 as "short-lived and without lasting results" (Gommans 2015, 271). The particular representation of Dutch colonialism as non-imperialist, by many contemporaries and historians alike, may well account for the fact that Dutch imperial history has hardly been integrated

into present-day self-perceptions of Dutch people as having been part of an empire,[4] and only recently and often passingly is it integrated within the regular history curriculum at primary and secondary schools. Congruent with this, not many historians of Dutch colonialism have attempted to study the colonial and postcolonial histories of metropole and colonies in the same analytical framework, unlike in Britain and—to a lesser extent—France (Raben 2013, 8).

Since the 1990s, this self-image of Dutch imperialism, which has been reinforced by "mainstream" Dutch colonial historians, has been criticised, particularly by scholars who have also worked on women and gender history in the Dutch colonies.[5] Historical anthropologist Ann Laura Stoler, for instance, has convincingly shown how gendered, racial and social distinctions were consciously and unconsciously employed to define or redefine colonial relations and strengthen Dutch imperial rule (e.g. Stoler 2002). Moreover, historians such as Locher-Scholten and Frances Gouda have contended that the Dutch East Indies, as well as the particular ways in which colonial governance was effectuated, were vital for reinforcing Dutch self-identity as an important as well as distinct imperial power, as the opening quote to this section suggests (Gouda 1995, 23). Indeed, in 1994 Locher-Scholten gave a highly critical account of the tendency of Dutch colonial historians to downplay Dutch interventions in the East Indies. She did so by connecting the "Ethical Policy" (see Sect. 2.4) to activities of imperial expansion from around 1900 and argued that this connection resembled what was going on in the British or French empires at the time, thus abandoning the idea of a Dutch *Sonderweg* in this area (Locher-Scholten 1994; Bloembergen and Raben 2009, 7–8).

How do these self-images of Dutch imperialism in the East Indies relate to the way the colony was governed? The Netherlands was a comparatively small, Christian nation, with a population of just over two million in 1800 and around nine million on the eve of the Second World War living within its national boundaries, comprising only slightly over 40,000 square kilometres. This tiny metropole had to control a territory situated over 12,000 kilometres away, which was twenty times as large as the motherland, housing around seven to eight times as many inhabitants in 1930, the overwhelming majority of whom—around ninety per cent—were Muslims. Even though Java, the earliest and most intensively colonised island of the

Table 2.1 Population development (×1000 inhabitants) in the Netherlands and Java, 1830–1940

Year	Netherlands	Average annual growth rate (%)	Java	Average annual growth rate (%)	% of Javanese population who were Europeans (%)
1830[a]	2646		7149		
1840	2903	0.97	8481	1.86	
1850	3115	0.73	9452	1.14	
1860	3326	0.68	12,514	3.24	0.35
1870	3627	0.90	16,230	2.97	
1880	4055	1.18	19,541	2.04	
1890	4559	1.24	23,730	2.14	
1900	5179	1.36	28,386	1.96	0.28
1910[a]	5946	1.48	31,505	1.10	
1920	6754	1.36	34,433	0.93	0.44
1930	7825	1.59	40,891	1.88	0.47
1940	8834	1.29	47,492	1.61	

[a]For Java: figures for 1831 and 1912, as estimates for 1830 and 1910 are unavailable
Sources Smits et al. (2000, 109–111), CBS (2018), Boomgaard and Gooszen (1991), and van Doorn (1994, 23)

archipelago, was much smaller, it was still a challenge to rule, as it was slightly over three times as large in terms of territory and three to five times as large in terms of population (see Table 2.1).

The development of Dutch colonial governance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can be roughly divided into four periods: 1830–1870: "indirect rule", 1870–1900: "liberalisation and bureaucratisation", 1900–1920: the "ethical period" and 1920–1940: "dualistic interventionism".[6] Since the early modern period, economic interests and colonial rule had coincided in the East Indies. The VOC had had its own military and political institutions, with which it upheld its trading position in the overseas regions. When a Dutch Domestic Government (*Binnenlands Bestuur*) was established in Java at the beginning of the nineteenth century, after some failed experiments to set up a more extensive bureaucracy (van den Doel 1994, 20), it chose to continue its rather indirect rule based on economic primacy. The Cultivation System

set up by Governor General Johannes van den Bosch in 1830 (see Sect. 2.2 and Chapter 3) can perhaps best be typified as a "giant monopolistic government company" (van Doorn 1994, 197). Indeed, van den Bosch adhered to an administration as indirect as possible, as he wrote to J. C. Baud, Secretary of State for the Colonies in the Netherlands, in 1831: "we must not interfere with domestic or religious institutions, we must protect them against all mistreatment, and administer them as much as possible according to their own notions" (quoted in Elson 1994, 180). Still, the system required careful administration of the export crops produced by Javanese peasants and delivered to the government. Therefore, a prominent role in control and administration was given to the indigenous elites (*priyayi*), as well as to Dutch civil servants, who both received a percentage of the yield for their efforts. Apart from being indirect, this type of governance was also mainly economic in character, and in most cases government intervention was intended to promote the economic gains it could obtain from Java. European settlement patterns were congruent with this: predominantly men, working in government service. In 1860, almost half of all European men in Java were civil servants, and another third of them worked for the military (Fasseur 1975, 5).

When the Cultivation System was gradually abandoned in the 1870s, new forms of governance emerged. The role of indigenous rulers was restricted, the army of Dutch civil servants was expanded and private capital was increasingly allowed in the colony. Private entrepreneurs became more and more attracted to the less densely populated and fertile lands outside Java, which spurred the interest of the colonial government in the Outer Islands. This further prompted military expeditions to increase the Dutch sphere of interest, or, as it was euphemistically termed, "pacify" the territories outside Java. One consequence of this was the long Aceh War (1873–1913) (van den Doel 1994, 21).[7] The growth in the size of the civil service and in the level of military expenditure in this period, in combination with the end of the Cultivation System, transformed the colonial surplus into a deficit in the 1870s, directly leading to the state finances of the metropole and the colony being separated (Creutzberg 1972, xxiii–xxiv). Thus, in this period, economic liberalisation and political bureaucratisation went hand in hand. Indirect rule was abandoned in favour of a more interventionist and bureaucratic rule, in which government and private

(capitalist) interests were no longer intrinsically interwoven (van Doorn 1994, 198–199). The comparatively high level of Dutch colonial interventionism did not go unnoticed by foreign contemporaries. For instance, the French lawyer and political scientist Joseph Chailly-Bert, who visited Java at the end of the nineteenth century, remarked in 1900 that "Java est trop gouvernée" (Chailly-Bert 1900, 323).

In 1901, the Dutch government proclaimed the "Ethical Policy" (*Ethische Politiek*) for its overseas territories in the East Indies. The underlying idea was that, as "guardian" of the Dutch East Indies, the Netherlands was morally obliged to provide for the well-being of the population of the archipelago. At first, this "moral calling" had a predominantly economic tenor, but soon a programme of reforms was launched that also contained administrative, political and educational elements (Locher-Scholten 1981, 176). The Ethical Policy and its background will be described in more detail and placed in an international context in Sect. 2.4. In relation to governance, the ethical period marked the start of attempts to introduce a "welfare policy" for the indigenous population that was—at least in outset—highly ambitious compared with initiatives by other imperial powers. However, a lack of clear policy goals, in combination with financial difficulties after the First World War, frustrated many of the government's social initiatives. Moreover, in contrast to the metropole, the extension of political rights for an increasing part of the population was never on the agenda of the colonial government. This increasingly started to concern, as well as further divide, the different groups in the society of the Dutch East Indies.

Java had always been a highly hierarchical society, and colonialism only increased its segmentation. The colonial authorities formalised differences into administrative categories with distinct entitlements and legal positions. At the top was a small group of white Europeans, either immigrants or born in the Indies to two European parents. In the middle was the Indo-European (Creole) population, mostly born to Dutch fathers and Javanese mothers, a union that was quite common in the nineteenth century, when most of Java's colonists were male. However, around 1900, mestizo marriages and children were increasingly criticised in the context of growing concerns about the "purity" of the white race, the poverty of the Indo-Europeans, and the growing in-migration of European women

(Stoler 1997). At the bottom were the indigenous Javanese population, as well as the category "other Asians", who included Chinese migrants. Within the Javanese population, a small elite (*priyayi*), often working with the coloniser, had an administrative as well as customary authority over the majority of the Javanese population, mainly consisting of peasants. The Chinese minority formed a distinct group. The Dutch had an ambivalent attitude towards them: they often used them as middlemen—e.g. as tax farmers, see Sect. 2.3—but they also looked down on them; similarly, the Javanese population often loathed the Chinese, out of ethnic as well as economic discontent.

In the early 1900s, the differences between the various groups in society became even more pronounced than they always had been, leading to a growing awareness of their own identity. Tensions increased between the (often Christian or Confucianist) Chinese and Javanese, culminating in violence in the early 1910s. In the same period, a number of indigenous Islamic associations were founded, such as *Sarekat Islam* in 1911. A year later, as a response to the penetration of the Christian missions in the Outer Islands, another association, *Muhammadiyah*, was established based on Islamic principles. These organisations were not primarily intended as—nor allowed to be—political organisations (James and Schrauwers 2003, 65–66), but they nevertheless formed the basis of the later nationalist and independence movement, in which Islam played a major role. To quote Clifford Geertz: "Before, men had been Muslims as a matter of circumstance; now they were, increasingly, Muslims as a matter of policy. They were *oppositional* Muslims" (Geertz 1971, 65).

Whereas a small Dutch elite had embraced the idea of "association" between different population groups, implying increased assimilation and a truly unified "Indies" society, their minority position collapsed in the context of such increasing social polarisation and the failure of the Ethical Policy. Increasingly, the word "ethical" attracted negative connotations and was associated with anxiety and slackness, whereas fierce intervention was believed to be needed. This led to a "more conservative and repressive direction" of colonial government after 1920 (Goss 2009, 204). Consequently, the colonial state became increasingly pervasive in the economy and society in the late colonial period. In fact, with its administrative reforms, its cultivation plans in agriculture, and its welfare policies, the

Indies' government was much more strongly present and active than its counterpart in the metropole in this period (van Doorn 1994, 74–75, 96–97). Its interventions nevertheless remained deeply grounded in the idea of a dualist economy and society in which Europeans fell under European law and the indigenous population were subject to the jurisdiction of *adat* (local traditions and customary law). In the late colonial period, this philosophy, which had always formed the basis of the colonial government's indirect rule, was increasingly backed up scientifically by Dutch lawyers, anthropologists and economists.

Over the course of the next three sections, this peculiar mix of indirect rule and forceful intervention by the Dutch colonial government will be compared with the governance of other imperial powers of the time. Teasing out the particularities of Dutch colonialism serves to justify why specific themes in this book have been selected as a framework to study women's work in the Dutch Empire. The present chapter deals with these particularities, bringing them together in a final section, which will form the starting point of the following four, more empirical, chapters. I will zoom in on three issues that are crucial for the remainder of this book. First, colonial extraction and fiscal policies. Second, forced labour. And, third, social policies. What follows is necessarily based on secondary literature and does not pretend to offer a systematic or exhaustive comparison of different empires. Instead, this chapter sets the stage for the book's central research objective: analysing the influences of colonial connections on changes in household labour relations in the Dutch Empire.

2.2 Colonial Extraction and Taxation

Chapter 1 has already referred to the historiographic debates on colonial extraction. Briefly recapitulated, the costs and benefits of empire have been intensively disputed by contemporaries and historians alike. Some historians have focused on the relatively high (especially military) costs of maintaining the British, French and Portuguese empires (e.g. O'Brien 1988; Davis and Huttenback 1986; Marseille 1984). Others have instead argued that the costs were relatively minimal (e.g. Kennedy 1989) and that the benefits for the metropole—if not always in terms of economics, then

at least in terms of politics and status—prevailed (e.g. Offer 1993; Havik 2013, 171). Most seem to agree, however, that within metropolitan society the elites and capitalists had the most to gain from the overseas possessions (e.g. Davis and Huttenback 1986, 317). Apart from the costs and benefits for the metropoles, there is of course the issue of costs and benefits for the colonies that is relevant to this debate. This issue relates to the degree of colonial extraction, and how this affected the well-being of indigenous societies and economies in the colonial (and, arguably, the postcolonial) period. Moreover, it involves the redistribution of government revenues within colonial societies, for instance translated into investments in infrastructure and public works, or social transfers, such as general health care and education (see e.g. Booth 2007; Huillery 2014), which will be dealt with in Sect. 2.4. This section aims to put the fiscal and other revenue extraction in the Dutch East Indies into comparative perspective: how extractive was Dutch colonial rule?

One problem in addressing this question is that colonial extraction (and redistribution) is difficult to measure in the first place, let alone if we wish to compare different empires. Not only are the sources incomplete and often incomparable, there are also many different forms of extraction—ranging from sheer theft to indirect taxation—in cash or in kind. Also, it is often unclear which types of revenue historians include in their estimates of colonial extraction. Here, I choose to employ the broad definition used by Frankema and Buelens: "a net transfer of economically valuable resources from indigenous to metropolitan societies" (Frankema and Buelens 2013, 2). Such remittances generally consisted of tax revenues, net returns from government monopolies on trade and sold products, and unremitted government transfers (Booth 1998, 138–139). Often, colonisers legitimised transfers by claiming that these covered the costs of maintaining the empire, such as investments in infrastructure, or warfare in the colonies. Over time, both with an eye to imperial competition and for humanitarian reasons, the international community increasingly monitored excessive forms of extraction. However, the degree of control was amenable to definitions of what was considered extractive, and the ways in which "tradition" served to continue precolonial forms of taxation such as *corvée* labour (see also Sect. 2.3).

After the British Interregnum in Java (1811–1816) had ended, the Dutch King Willem I expressed the explicit aim that the gains from the colony would not only cover the costs of its administration, but that surpluses would flow into the Dutch state coffers. The Dutch maintained the land tax (*landrente*) the British had introduced in Java, and further aimed to profit from trade with the colony. However, the Dutch were unable to outcompete the British under the system of free trade, and Java became more of a burden than a cash cow in the 1820s, adding to the already large metropolitan state deficit (de Jong 1989, 19–21). Therefore, more protective trade policies were designed, in combination with forced cash crop cultivation; this became known as the Cultivation System. It involved the forced cultivation of export crops in exchange for monetary compensation. As we will describe in more detail in the next section, as well as in Chapter 3, this system involved the labour of millions of Javanese households. Although the Cultivation System was intended to replace the *landrente*, in fact it functioned alongside it, as well as along with other forms of *corvée* labour for the community (Fasseur 1992, 90; Bosma 2013, 72). While indigenous elites as well as Dutch colonial officials received a share of the profit (*kultuurprocenten*), the myriad of tax and cultivation obligations weighed heavily on the majority of the Javanese peasant population.

In addition to the gains from the Cultivation System, King Willem I created a fictive debt owed by the Dutch East Indies to the Dutch state for the bankruptcy of the VOC. Until 1865, this "debt" would result in yearly interest payments of ten million guilders to the Dutch treasury (de Jong 1989, 26). Furthermore, until the late nineteenth century a revenue farming system was in place, using private—mostly Chinese—intermediary collectors to gather taxes from all kinds of non-agricultural activities, such as fishery, trade, services and consumption, for instance of opium but also of more basic commodities such as salt. Because the monopoly to tax was auctioned and leased to the highest bidder, the potential degrees of extraction as well as corruption were high (Wahid 2013, 4, 9). All this contributed to annual colonial surpluses of millions of guilders, flowing directly into the Dutch treasury. Historians have argued that, at least until the 1870s, net remittances from Java to the Netherlands—after subtracting such costs as colonial administration and defence—were larger than

in most other imperial contexts (Maddison 1989, 646; Booth 2007, 257). Between 1830 and 1870 hundreds of millions of guilders ended up in the Netherlands as "colonial surplus", which, corrected for hidden subsidies to the Dutch Trading Company,[8] amounted to over three per cent of Dutch GDP, and to around half of all the Dutch state's tax income in the 1850s and 1860s (van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 180).

In the 1870s, however, the *direct* surplus from Java evaporated, mostly due to the high costs of the war in Aceh (North Sumatra) and the higher costs of infrastructure in Java and Sumatra. From 1877 onwards, the finances of the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies were treated separately, and, despite a fierce political debate, the Indies' contribution to the Netherlands was no longer included in the annual state budget. In fact, it took several decades before this practice of separate finances gained legal status (de Jong 1989, 198–227). Even though colonial contributions no longer ended up in the Dutch treasury, net gains from exports and financial investments remitted to the Netherlands remained considerable, fluctuating between an estimated eight and nine per cent of Dutch GDP between 1910 and 1940 (Maddison 1989, 647). Net business profits, remittances, pensions and other money flows from the Dutch East Indies to the Netherlands totalled possibly as much as twenty-four billion guilders in the period 1878–1939 (Gordon 2010, 440).[9] Compared with British involvement in India, for instance, even at its peak between 1921 and 1938 "the flow to the colonial power was relatively much smaller" than what the Dutch gained from the East Indies (Maddison 1989, 646).

After the demise of the Cultivation System in 1870, the importance of tax farming—most notably on opium—in the Dutch East Indies as a source of revenue for the colonial government increased drastically (Wahid 2013, 18). After 1900, opium taxes became a state monopoly, and their relative importance for total tax revenues declined in favour of other indirect taxes on consumables and direct taxes, such as income tax (Booth 2013, 50–51). As a consequence of such reforms, income taxes in the late colonial Dutch East Indies became much more burdensome than in most other Asian countries (Booth 1998, 159). In general, in the colonial context, direct taxes are regarded as more exploitative for the indigenous population than indirect taxes on trade. Recent studies on British, French and Portuguese fiscal policies in Africa have shown that when-

ever colonial states had the capacity to raise sufficient revenues by indirect taxation, which was particularly successful in coastal areas, they refrained from introducing heavy head or hut taxes (Frankema and van Waijenburg 2014; Havik 2013). Despite the fact that, certainly since the 1870s, colonial Indonesia was a relatively open economy and quite well integrated into international trade, the indigenous population of the Dutch East Indies was nevertheless disproportionately burdened by direct taxes. Indeed, in the late colonial period, over twenty per cent of total government revenue came from income taxes alone (Booth 2013, 47). In the early 1920s, contemporary observers warned that the Javanese could not be squeezed any more (Huender 1921).

Although studies on per capita tax levels have begun to emerge (e.g. Booth 2013; Havik 2013; Huillery 2014), the data we have are not sufficient to make cross-empire comparisons in a sensible manner. Therefore, it is impossible to make conclusive statements about the relative level of extraction of different colonial taxes. However, there is some evidence that, compared with British India, per capita tax revenues were higher in the Dutch East Indies until the end of the colonial period. Moreover, although per capita revenues were on average higher in other British colonies all over the world, average per capita *expenditure* in the British Empire had always exceeded revenues between 1860 and 1912. This was hardly ever the case in the Dutch East Indies, which indicates the relatively meagre investments the Dutch made in their overseas territories, except perhaps in the 1910s—at the height of the Ethical Policy—when public expenditure rapidly increased (Booth 1998, 142–144). Indeed, between 1920 and 1940, when such investments proved too costly, the Dutch again "put the fiscal brakes" on (Booth 1998, 160).

In contrast, whereas "extractive efforts in all corners of the empire were of paramount essence to London", in most of their colonies the British often had to struggle to run neutral budgets (Broms 2017). Other imperial powers probably had even more difficulty financing their empires, which may be the reason they resorted to more draconic tax measures, usually in the form of direct hut or poll taxes and forced labour schemes, as historians have recently shown for French and Portuguese Africa (Frankema and van Waijenburg 2014; Huillery 2014; Havik 2013). In the Portuguese Empire in particular, such measures were necessary due to constant colonial budget

deficits, requiring recurrent transfers from Lisbon. Revised policies in the 1920s led to a growing fiscal squeeze among the indigenous population, but not to satisfactory benefits for the metropole, as these were largely offset by the severe inflation of the period (Havik 2013, 179).

All in all, the combination of the burdens of the Cultivation System (1870), tax farming—especially important between *c.* 1870 and 1900—and the increase in forms of direct taxation since the 1910s contributed to a relatively high tax burden on the Javanese population.[10] Unfortunately, it is impossible at this point to systematically compare colonial extraction between the Dutch and other imperial powers. Nevertheless, comparisons of the drain from colonial Indonesia and British India (Maddison 1989; Booth 1998), as well as more general analyses of British and Dutch fiscal policies in terms of revenue and expenditure (Booth 1998, 2013), suggest that the Dutch designed highly effective ways of burdening the colonial population with different types of direct and indirect taxation, while not investing much in the well-being of most indigenous taxpayers (Wahid 2013, 20). All this had immediate implications for household disposable income and consumption, and thus for the need of women and children to contribute to the family income. These issues will be further explored in the next three chapters of this book.

Moreover, although all imperial powers seem to have made efforts to get the most out of their colonies in fiscal terms, it appears they were not very successful in turning this into a profitable endeavour, as, for example, the efforts of the French and the Portuguese in Africa show. In Britain, too, the colonial project was subsidised by the metropolitan taxpayer, and the largest share of this burden fell on the shoulders of the middle classes (Davis and Huttenback 1986, 306, 317). In contrast, the Dutch colonial authorities tried to balance the colonial budget in the East Indies by adjusting expenditure to annual tax revenues. That this was not always easy was due not so much to the level of investment in the well-being of the indigenous population as a whole. Instead, it reflected the fact that, in the relatively bureaucratised Dutch East Indies, the costs of the salaries and pensions of (often European) officials were fairly inelastic (Booth 2007, 249).

2.3 Forced Labour: Exceptional and Exemplary

In most colonial contexts, both in areas that were sparsely populated and in more densely populated regions, labour availability and recruitment were of utmost importance (Daviron 2010, 482). In Java, as in many other colonial sites across the world, various forms of bonded labour were in place. Thio Termorshuizen (2008, 264–267) distinguishes several types of bonded labour in the Dutch East Indies before 1860. First, slavery, which was abolished in 1860 and not omnipresent. Second, obligatory labour (*corvée* labour, or *heerendiensten* in Dutch), which had already been prevalent in the precolonial period, when the elites (*priyayi*) demanded a varying number of days' labour from commoners living in their communities. The VOC, and later the colonial government, partly adopted these *heerendiensten* for public works, and it is almost certain that these labour obligations increased drastically at the end of the eighteenth century (Boomgaard 1989, 51).[11] Third, the Cultivation System. Its inventor, Johannes van den Bosch, fiercely opposed slavery, but he also believed that "all labour above that required to meet 'natural needs' is the product of force; and that, frequently, this force is most oppressive where the labourer appears most free" (van den Bosch 1850 [1829], 316). Around 1850, between eight and eleven million Javanese were involved in the Cultivation System—fifty-seven to seventy-nine per cent of the total population—(Boomgaard and Gooszen 1991, 82), part-time, alongside *corvée* labour and subsistence agriculture (Termorshuizen 2008, 267).

The Cultivation System was much admired by contemporary British observers, such as J. W. B. Money and Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore (Brown 1985 [1861], xvii). In his publication of 1861, Money claimed that, with all its benefits, both to the Dutch colonial state and purportedly also to the indigenous peasants, the Javanese system could serve as a practical example to solve the problems of "poverty, crime, and dissatisfaction among the Natives, failing means and general discontent among the Europeans" in British India at the time (Money 1985 [1861], viii). However, these and similar recommendations did not translate into actual colonial policies in the British Empire. More generally, around 1900, the suitability of the Cultivation System for the most recently colonised regions in Africa was

still being debated by French, British, Belgian and Dutch representatives, even though most of them seemed to have rejected the practices by then (Daviron 2010, 497). The person most directly inspired by the Cultivation System, years after its demise, was probably King Leopold II of Belgium. After Africa had been divided up between the various European powers at the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, he introduced a similar, and highly exploitative, system of agricultural forced labour in the Congo Free State. He imposed an *impôt indigène* (indigenous tax) to be paid in rubber, which forced Congolese peasants to produce rubber on their lands (Frankema and Buelens 2013, 3). In 1908, these excesses led to pressure on Leopold to hand over "his" Congo Free State to the Belgian government, which distanced itself from the king's extractive practices. Nevertheless, the problem of labour shortages re-emerged. As late as 1917, the Belgians introduced a programme of *cultures obligatoires* (forced cultivation), which was—again—inspired by the Javanese Cultivation System (Houben and Seibert 2013, 185).

Although, after the 1860s, "free" wage labour became increasingly significant in Java, for instance in the sugar factories, obligatory labour remained important. As mentioned, until 1916 *corvée* labour continued to be used for the construction and maintenance of public works. These *heerendiensten* are estimated to have constituted on average one day per week, and this was exactly the maximum the colonial authorities ordained in 1864 (Boomgaard 1989, 39). Around the same time, however, a system of contract ("coolie") labour was introduced, as cheap labour was needed for the private sugar and rubber plantations in Java and Sumatra that followed the demise of the Cultivation System. The degree of voluntariness with which workers accepted such contracts is highly debatable. On top of this, the Coolie Ordinance (*koelieordonnantie*) was issued in 1880, providing for penal sanctions on "breach of contract" for coolies working on the islands outside Java; these were intended to prevent labourers from running away from sugar factories or plantations (Bosma 2013, 64). From the 1880s to the 1930s, hundreds of thousands of Javanese migrated as indentured labourers, not only within the East Indian archipelago, but also to the West Indies, most notably Suriname (Termorshuizen 2008). In theory, the penal sanctions protected both employer and employed. In practice, however, they predominantly benefited plantation managers,

who basically gained the authority to act as a police force to trace and punish runaway workers. Although the Coolie Ordinance became increasingly controversial, the penal sanctions remained in place until 1931 (Bosma 2013, 80–81) and were abolished only after fierce pressure from the USA (Cribb 1993, 228).

Indentured labour, including penal sanctions, as well as other forms of unfree labour, were not confined to the Dutch Empire—in fact, all colonial powers employed them. Interestingly, the British—who, in the international arena, were known as the protagonists of the anti-slavery movement—had been the first to start experimenting with a system of indentured labour in the 1830s. In the following decades, millions of Indian and Chinese contract workers were shipped, predominantly to the Caribbean, to work on plantations. Although British politicians and social activists voiced criticism from its inception, indenture was mostly represented—and accepted—as free labour, promoting the "happiness and well-being of the coolies" (Knox 1986, 360). Nevertheless, penal clauses and debt bondage implied serious restrictions on the freedom of indentured labourers, which is why some historians have labelled it "a new system of slavery" (Tinker 1974).

Contemporaries and historians alike have generally attributed the most atrocious and abusive forms of forced labour to the Portuguese Empire and to Belgium's interventions in the Congo Free State (Keese 2014, 396; Vanthemsche 2012, Chapter 1). Several authors have shown, moreover, that French colonial authorities were also fervent users of forced labour, such as the infamous *prestations*. This constituted a compulsory annual labour tax that was used for public works in French colonies ranging from Indochina to Madagascar and French West and Equatorial Africa (Fall 1993; Keese 2014; van Waijenburg 2018). Although the French increased the scope for indigenous populations to buy themselves out of these obligations in the 1920s and 1930s, very few Africans made use of this (Conklin 1997, 215). In fact, the *prestations*, which were officially regulated in 1912 and continued until the 1930s, were based on the *corvée* labour (*heerendiensten*) of the Dutch East Indies (van Waijenburg 2018, 73). Moreover, they could also include the forced cultivation of cash crops, thus resembling the Javanese Cultivation System (Frankema and van Waijenburg 2014, 391).

The International Labour Office (ILO), established in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, served as a tripartite international organisation to create and monitor international labour standards. Typically, however, the standards it developed in its early years were geared mainly towards the situation in industrialised Western nations. The ILO's constitution of 1919 even contained a "colonial clause", allowing metropolitan powers to partly or entirely exclude colonial territories from the treaties they ratified. In the 1920s, however, the organisation started to pay increasing attention to labour conditions in colonial settings. After fierce debates between the different member states, this led to the Forced Labour Convention of 1930, which aimed to eradicate all forms of compulsory labour in the long run. Again, the British were the most zealous proponents of this ban on forced labour, and their pressure effectuated the immediate abolition of forced labour *for private purposes* (Maul 2007, 480–481). Nevertheless, the British, too, went on to make use of forms of compulsory labour in their colonies until the end of the empire. Particularly in Africa, both the French *and* the British continued to make use of so-called communal labour services, recruited and carried out by native chiefs, under the pretext of being a traditional form of labour contribution. In reality, this came down to a system of forced labour for the public purposes of the colonial state, to which most adult men were exposed (Keese 2014; van Waijenburg 2018). In fact, whereas the British had "convincingly sold an image of Britain as the only colonial state without recourse to compulsory labour" (Keese 2014, 388), their preference for indirect rule made them turn a blind eye to the realities of forms of forced labour continuing in their colonies. The ILO Convention of 1930 facilitated this, as it made exceptions for military labour, forced labour as a consequence of court conviction, and any work or service forming part of the "normal civic obligation of citizens", however vaguely defined (Maul 2007, 482).

To conclude, Dutch colonial interventions in the sphere of labour in Java were exceptional, but also exemplary—in the sense of representative—of what went on in other empires. Exceptional, as the particular form of organisation through the Cultivation System between *c.* 1830 and 1870 was quite singular regarding the extent, scale and duration of extraction. Although, formally, forced labour was restricted to male labour, the employment of men in forced and *corvée* labour also affected the employ-

ment of women to a large extent. They were often expected to take up tasks that men were now less able to do, such as road construction and dredging. Moreover, the Cultivation System on Java depended on the labour input per household unit, so even if it was predominantly men who were cultivating the cash crops for export to the metropole, women's labour time in other productive work, such as subsistence agriculture, increased notably, as we will see in Chapter 3. Even though its benefits—supposedly for the coloniser *and* the colonised—were noted and commented upon by other imperial powers, the system was only truly imitated after its demise, and under probably much more brutal conditions, in the Congo Free State before the turn of the century. Despite these atrocities, it still served as a reference point for discussing problems of labour shortage in the colonies around 1900, and the Belgians even reintroduced forced cultivation in the Congo after 1917. Moreover, the *prestations* in French Africa may also be seen as having been partly inspired by the Cultivation System. At the same time, forced labour in the Dutch Empire was exemplary because, as in other empires, different forms of forced labour—ranging from "traditional" labour services to the community to indentured labour—were customary in the Dutch East Indies. Even the British, the fiercest opponents of coerced labour, were fully involved, and the indentured labour system in the Dutch East Indies followed their earlier example.

2.4 Between Civilising and Developing: Social Policies and Norms Compared

> The "civilizing mission" is a special kind of belief with, sometimes, practical consequences. It includes the self-proclaimed right and duty to propagate and actively introduce one's own norms and institutions to other peoples and societies, based upon a firm conviction of the inherent superiority and higher legitimacy of one's own collective way of life. (Osterhammel 2006, 8)

The Ethical Policy has been typified as a largely positive, developmental policy by many historians (e.g. Wesseling 1988; more examples can be found in Bloembergen and Raben 2009, 9–10). Its ethical exponents would have made it a special case, and another reason to doubt whether

the Dutch could be typified as an imperialist nation around the turn of the twentieth century (Locher-Scholten 1994, 91). However, in Elsbeth Locher-Scholten's view, the Ethical Policy was "the Dutch variant of the British 'white man's burden' and the French '*mission civilatrice*'" (Locher-Scholten 2000, 16). This section compares the endeavours of the Dutch with those of other large empires in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to investigate how Dutch social policies related to initiatives in other imperial contexts.

Inevitably, the word "mission" alludes to religious initiatives to convert "pagan" indigenous populations all across the world. Dutch missionaries, both Protestant and Catholic, had been active in the Indonesian archipelago since the seventeenth century, but they had never gotten a foothold in indigenous society. Zealous Christian missions would have opposed the trading interests of the VOC, which was thus reluctant to admit them (Osterhammel 2006, 12). When colonial relations intensified in the nineteenth century, several missionaries travelled to Java. The first to arrive were the Jesuits, around 1850, followed by the Protestants about a decade later. However, wherever they went, these missionaries found the Javanese Muslim population to have little interest in Christianity, and the missionaries sometimes encountered outright hostility (Ricklefs 2007, 55–56). Moreover, as the colonial government feared unrest among the population, it was very reluctant to allow Protestant or Catholic missionaries free rein in the East Indies (Derksen 2016, 33). However, the authorities took an ambivalent attitude, especially when Dutch influence expanded to the Outer Islands towards the end of the nineteenth century. In specific regions, missionaries became quite successful in this period, and some areas, such as West Sumatra or the Moluccas, still have high concentrations of Christians even today. Particularly in the Outer Islands, the colonial government started to regard Christian missionary education as a cheap way to counter the influence of the growing number of Islamic schools around 1900 (Frankema 2013, 322).

In addition to these religious initiatives, reform was urged by civilians and politicians when, in the second half of the nineteenth century, increasing opposition arose to the way the Dutch operated in the East Indies. Former colonial official Eduard Douwes Dekker (alias "Multatuli") wrote a highly critical novel in 1859 denouncing the extractive practices of Dutch

colonial rule. Increasingly, other social commentators as well as Dutch politicians argued for different policies in the colony. The leader of the orthodox Protestants, Abraham Kuyper, for instance, proposed that, as a proper "father", the Netherlands should take care of the well-being of the indigenous population of the East Indies; this involved, first and foremost, Christianising them and teaching them Christian values (Kuyper 1907 [1879], 331–332). Kuyper moreover advocated that the finances of the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies be separated (Locher-Scholten 1981, 179). These changing ideas resulted from the growing abhorrence of the exploitation represented by the Cultivation System, which had enormously benefited the Dutch treasury but, at the same time, purportedly led to growing impoverishment for the Javanese population. In 1899, publicist and lawyer C. Th. van Deventer wrote about the "debt of honour" (*eereschuld*) the Dutch owed to the Javanese population, which needed to be repaid by providing basic education and improving infrastructure (van Deventer 1899).

The first government administration led by an orthodox Protestant (Kuyper) consequently introduced the Ethical Policy, which in broad lines had three objectives: first, legal and administrative protection of the indigenous population; second, the expansion of primary education; and third, creating welfare by direct intervention in the economy and society by providing "welfare services" (*welvaartsdiensten*). A considerable budget of thirty million guilders was allocated to these interventions, spread out over ten years, though continuation was not guaranteed (Cribb 1993, 227–230). The Ethical Policy also involved the moral uplifting of the population through the dissemination of Christian, middle-class values concerning marital life and women's role in the family. Monogamy and the ideal of the housewife performing domestic and childcaring duties were central to these values. As Chapter 6 shows, however, such domestic ideals often clashed with contrasting images and practices of the role of women in Javanese culture and economy.

In its first two decades, quite some changes were effectuated in several fields. The colonial state made many investments in infrastructure and irrigation, with the intention of raising productivity in agriculture. "Rice banks" were set up in many villages to provide peasants with seeds and, in times of scarcity, cheap rice loans. This credit system especially was

looked upon admiringly by British and French colonial officials (Booth 2012, 1149). Furthermore, primary schooling and health care, which had until then almost been neglected by the colonial government, expanded rapidly until *c.* 1920. However, as Chapter 6 details, provisions remained very basic: most progress was made in the construction of roads, railroads and factory and office buildings (Bloembergen and Raben 2009, 10). On the one hand, this shows that, despite its moral dimensions, the Ethical Policy was still very much geared towards keeping the colony economically profitable. On the other, financial problems after the First World War compelled the colonial authorities to adopt a much more austere budget in order to prevent public expenditure exceeding revenue too much (Booth 1998, 160). Despite the Ethical Policy, standards of living for most of the indigenous population seem not to have risen tremendously. By the end of the colonial period, the Javanese still had a relatively low standard of living compared with other colonies in Southeast Asia, in terms of per capita food availability, child mortality and levels of education (Booth 2012, 1179; Frankema 2013). As Table 2.2 shows, compared with other colonial regimes in Southeast Asia, the Dutch instead spent significant amounts on its colonial bureaucracy ("Total 'government'").

Apart from insufficient funding, a major problem of the Ethical Policy was the lack of clear policy goals from the start. Another was the highly male-oriented nature of the policies: hardly any consideration was given to female education, for instance, and thus no acknowledgement of its role in reducing fertility levels, which remained high in the archipelago, leading to persistent population pressure in Java. At the time, however, the mixed results of the Ethical Policy were perceived less as the result of policy failures. Rather, it was framed as being a consequence of the indolence of the indigenous population and their reluctance to accept new, "modern" techniques (Cribb 1993, 241–242). The pessimism about the disappointing results resonated in the political and intellectual climate of the 1920s and 1930s. In terms of policies, the Ethical Policy was considered too "soft", and its ambitions were consequently toned down (Locher-Scholten 1981, 206). The concept of a "dual economy" emerged, which claimed that the nature and culture of the indigenous population did not allow for the adoption of "modern" capitalist economic practices, keeping it trapped in an underdeveloped condition (Cribb 1993, 243). This idea of

Table 2.2 Per capita government expenditure in several South East Asian colonies, 1931 (in current USD)

	Dutch East Indies	%	Philippines	%	Federated Malay states	%	French Indochina	%
Total	5.37	100	3.34	100	26.37	100	1.88	100
Administration	2.04	38	1.04	31	8.97	34	0.66	35
Defence	1.40	26	0.00	0	0.53	2	0.24	13
Debt service	0.70	13	0.40	12	2.37	9	0.08	4
Other	0.21	4	0.10	3	1.85	7	0.15	8
Total "government"	4.35	81	1.54	46	13.71	52	1.13	60
Education	0.48	9	0.94	28	1.32	5	0.06	3
Health	0.16	3	0.27	8	3.96	15	0.02	1
Public works	0.32	6	0.27	8	5.27	20	0.56	30
Agriculture/commerce	0.05	1	0.33	10	2.11	8	0.11	6
Total "development"	1.02	19	1.80	54	12.66	48	0.75	40

Source Based on Booth (2007, 252), Table 8

a "dual economy", developed by the Dutch ethnographer and economist J. H. Boeke, who had spent many years in the Dutch East Indies, contained many racial and cultural biases about the inability of indigenous peasants to adopt modernity (Boeke 1930). As we will see, this was not unlike developments in colonies with other metropolitan identities.

As the opening quote to this section suggests, the idea of the civilising mission is closely linked to the opposition of one's own, superior practices and culture against the inferiority of other, "uncivilised" or "barbaric" peoples. At some point in the nineteenth century, all major European imperial powers embarked on such a mission in their colonies, varying from what they called "internal pacification", bringing political order to "savage" indigenous populations, to the idea of "moral uplifting" or "betterment" by missionaries or reformers (Adas 2004, 31). The term "civilising mission" is borrowed from the French *mission civilatrice*, which became the official doctrine of the new imperialism of the Third Republic (1870–1940) (Mann 2004, 4). France is known to have launched the "most flamboyant version" of a much more general European project to impose Western culture upon its colonised populations (Osterhammel 2006, 8). This self-proclaimed "special mission" of France among other Western states (Conklin 1997, 1) related very much to its geopolitical position in Europe and in the world. Not only had it just lost a war on its own territory against Prussia (1870–1871), it had also always felt second best to Britain in terms of empire building (Burrows 1986, 114).

Algeria, which had been part of the French Empire since 1830, held a special place in the French imagination. Early attempts to civilise the indigenous population included assimilationist aspirations. This related not only to mixed marriages, but also to the idea that once the Algerians learned the French language in schools, their minds and bodies would absorb Western ideas, values and practices (Rogers 2011, 743). However, in the course of the nineteenth century, an increasingly Social Darwinist stance was adopted. Intermarriages were increasingly frowned upon. Experts claimed not only that Algerians were backward and prone to violence and disease, but also that a collective "Muslim mentality" explained their inclination to "idleness, brutality and stagnation" (Lyons 2013, 21). Consequently, schooling projects in Algeria never fully developed, and in 1930 only nine per cent of the Muslim population received some sort

of education (Burrows 1986, 134). In the Federation of French West Africa, which the French established in 1895, a similar racist position was taken towards the multi-ethnic indigenous population. Unlike in Algeria, the objective in West Africa had never been assimilation, but only to improve the situation of Africans within their own culture. By rational development, the value of the land and its people could be made gainful ("*mise en valeur*"). The best way to achieve this, French colonial officials believed, was to build railroads and to improve the health of both Europeans and Africans. In practice, however, railroad construction proceeded much more slowly than anticipated, and health measures predominantly benefited white settlers. For more comprehensive health care for the African population, funds were insufficient (Conklin 1997, 67–69). Likewise, investment in schooling for Africans was never a priority, and investments were low and funded mostly through African taxes (Huillery 2014). In Indochina and French Cambodia, public expenditure was also very low, and education and other social provisions were in a very poor state in these Southeast Asian French colonies (Booth 2007, 249; Burrows 1986, 134).

Before using the term "civilising mission", the notion of "improvement" or "betterment of humankind" had already been prevalent among Britain's elite. In the course of the nineteenth century, this notion extended to its empire, most notably the moral and material improvement of the British Empire (Mann 2004, 8). Nevertheless, even though Britain felt a responsibility to ameliorate the living conditions of colonised people, assistance was usually ad hoc and insufficient at least until the 1930s (Abbott 1971). In India, as well as in the rest of the British colonies in Asia, per capita public expenditure remained low, when we disregard military expenditure. Despite the prevailing ideology of "development" of colonised people, public investments started to rise only after 1930. Still, the bulk of expenditure was on the military instead of education or irrigation works. Tellingly, even in Malaya, the only colony where the British managed to raise considerable resources through personal and corporate taxation, budgetary surpluses were seldom invested in developing the indigenous population (Booth 2007, 262). In British Africa, public spending was probably even lower, and programmes for social assistance generally emerged only in the 1950s, the dying days of colonial rule (Seekings 2011, 157–158).

As in the French and the Dutch cases, the British "Victorian" civilising mission was deeply embedded in bourgeois values. The ideal of domesticity—the adoption of "European-style" homes, in which indigenous women were expected to perform domestic and caregiving duties—would "miraculously transform native peoples into 'civilized' colonial subjects" (Haskins and Jacobs 2009, ix). A paternalistic relationship was presupposed with regard to the colonised peoples, symbolised for instance as master vs servant, teacher vs pupil, parent vs child or husband vs wife (Mann 2004, 6). In the course of the nineteenth century, these differences between the coloniser and the colonised increasingly came to be seen as resulting not merely from cultural differences, but also as being underpinned by supposed racial differences. Racial theories served to claim the superiority of the British over, for example, Indians, thus legitimising not only colonial rule, but also the fight for the civilising mission (Mann 2004, 22).

Finally, the Portuguese imperial state was very late in implementing any public provisions for indigenous people in its African colonies. As mentioned above, the colonies were a financial burden rather than an asset to the metropole during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Only in 1953 did Portugal design five-year development plans to invest in the welfare of the native population and offset some of the effects of heavy taxation. Still, even in the 1960s, most expenditure targeted infrastructural improvements, which probably only indirectly benefited the indigenous population (Havik 2013, 181).

This sketchy comparison reveals many similarities between the civilising missions and the initiatives for the provision of public goods by the Dutch and other imperial powers. First, in most cases, bringing civilisation to colonised people implied, or explicitly propagated, notions of European modernity and superiority as opposed to indigenous backwardness and "barbarism". Put more strongly, by proclaiming European superiority the civilising mission was used to legitimise colonial rule. This vision of colonial relationships was highly paternalistic: like a teacher or parent, the European was to teach Western morals and practices regarding industriousness, hygiene, monogamous marriage and family life to the uncivilised. This view increasingly induced either passive or more outspoken resistance by colonised people. Second, although the intended "moral uplifting"

contained veritable elements of bringing progress, this betterment of the indigenous population was, in all cases, expected to simultaneously bring economic gain for the metropoles. Third, in all cases the "successes" of the civilising mission were generally limited: policies were often ad hoc and budgets insufficient. Except perhaps for the building of roads and railroads, public provisions such as education and health care remained vastly underdeveloped, with the exception of US investment in the educational system in the Philippines in the first few decades of the twentieth century (Booth 2012, 1148–1149). Fourth, in the Dutch, French, and British empires, we see a clear shift in policies as well as attitudes after the First World War, when the results of these civilising efforts proved disappointing. In all cases, a more technocratic approach was taken in the 1920s and 1930s, which was increasingly underpinned with rhetoric and/or theories of racial differences.

In a number of aspects, though, the Dutch Ethical Policy differed from the civilising missions of other Europeans. The first was that it emerged as a response to rising societal and political criticism of the heavily extractive nature of the Cultivation System. Moreover, in the particular sociopolitical culture that arose after 1870, responsibility to the Javanese people gained a specific Calvinist character (Locher-Scholten 1981, 179; see also Chapter 6). Second, Dutch initiatives came relatively late compared with their British and French counterparts, though considerably earlier than in the Portuguese Empire. Once it emerged, however, the Ethical Policy distinguished itself in a third manner, by providing a relatively coherent and ambitious programme, even if its goals were not clearly set and budgets proved insufficient to realise it fully.

2.5 Setting the Stage: Empire and Entanglements

> The colonial project was not handled sturdily and sloppily, but in Dutch style: meticulously and tidily, industriously and soberly, frugally and decently, unimaginatively yet thoroughly. (van Doorn 1994, 95)

This chapter has reflected on the exceptionality of the Dutch Empire. It has shown that, discussions on the costs and benefits of empires notwithstanding, most colonial powers sought to gain from their empires, not only in terms of status and geopolitical position, but also in terms of economic benefits. In a comparative perspective, the Dutch seem to have succeeded rather well in this, perhaps partly because of their "unimaginative yet thorough" approach. Especially from 1830 to 1870, when the Cultivation System was in place, this resulted in direct flows of millions of guilders from Java to the Dutch treasury. The Cultivation System formed a source of inspiration and comparison to many contemporary observers and was exemplary for later projects involving forced cultivation in the Belgian Congo, and probably also for the later *prestations* in French Africa. Moreover, despite the fact that increasing concerns about the well-being of the indigenous population were voiced in the Netherlands, the Dutch spent relatively little on the well-being of Java's indigenous population in the nineteenth century.

Apart from the Cultivation System, and especially after its abolition around 1870, the Dutch managed to levy direct and indirect taxes relatively successfully. At first, this took the form of land taxes as well as the revenue farming of indirect taxes on consumption goods, especially opium and salt. In the late colonial period, direct—personal and corporate—taxes became increasingly important. As Booth has shown, the Dutch arguably raised a much larger share of direct taxes in Java than other colonial powers elsewhere in Asia did, and presumably also more than the French or the British did in Africa, which was much less monetised and more difficult to extract direct taxes from (Frankema and van Waijenburg 2014). In terms of the use of forced labour, the Dutch hardly differed from other imperial powers, except again for the period of the Cultivation System, when millions of Javanese peasants were forced to devote part of their labour to cash crop cultivation. After the abolition of the Cultivation System, following the British example, indentured labour contracts became widespread in the Dutch archipelago, moving Javanese labourers within and outside the Indonesian archipelago.

Finally, the Ethical Policy seems to have been consistent with the wider ambitions of European imperialists to "civilise" "inferior" indigenous populations. Although a comparison shows many similarities, the Dutch pro-

gramme was distinctive on three accounts: first, its origins in societal and political protest against exploitation under the Cultivation System, which had a distinct Calvinist flavour; second, its relatively late emergence compared with other empires (except for the Portuguese); and, third, its relatively coherent and ambitious (though from the start underfunded) programme of social reforms.

How can we explain this partially divergent path of Dutch imperialism in terms of colonial extraction? The Netherlands was a small nation, with a long tradition of colonial trade relations, not least in Southeast Asia. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the British had definitively become the world's dominant imperial power, and the Dutch had lost most of its sphere of influence. Despite its overseas possessions in the West Indies, the Netherlands focused heavily on the colonial project in the East Indies over the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Unlike the British, French, Germans, Portuguese and Belgians, the Dutch did not participate in the Scramble for Africa at the end of the nineteenth century. In contrast to Wesseling, who has concluded from this that the Netherlands did not get involved in new imperialistic ventures, I would argue that, instead, this focus permitted a deep involvement in, and identification with, the Dutch East Indies, despite indirect rule. At the start, the objectives were highly economic, and the needs of the Cultivation System helped disseminate colonial administrative bureaucracy over the nineteenth century, in combination with indirect rule through indigenous elites. This allowed the colonial bureaucracy to become more intensely involved in economic life in Java than was the case in many other empires at the time. In the second half of the century, the colonial state expanded and became relatively heavily involved in many aspects of daily life in the Dutch East Indies, at least compared with many Asian and African colonies of other colonial powers. Crucially, it managed to set up a very efficient and complicated system of taxation. Not coincidentally, this was also the period when the Dutch colonial government aimed to extend its political and economic sphere of influence to the islands beyond Java.

A new phase was entered when the ambitious aims of the Ethical Policy were launched in 1901, promising an even deeper penetration into the veins of colonial society. Nevertheless, the lofty ideals of improving the well-being of the indigenous population appeared to be too costly,

in contrast to the rising level of welfare provisions in the metropole. The tensions between Calvinist norms of good guardianship, and the potential gains from the colony and its—predominantly Muslim—inhabitants, in terms of resources and cheap labour, were clearly rising. In the last two decades of Dutch colonial rule, the differences between various ethnic groups within the East Indies became more pronounced, and nationalist tendencies arose. Instead of granting more autonomy and equal—social, economic or political—rights to the indigenous population, the response was a more rigid and even more pervasive involvement of the colonial state, and at the same time a stricter adherence to and scientific underpinning of dualist policies, relying on *adat*. As we shall see in the remainder of this book, these paradoxes related to contrasts—between ideology and opportunities within the colony, as well as between ideals and practices in metropole and colony—that became more marked over the entire colonial period. This was most explicitly felt in the daily experiences of workers in the empire—in terms of labour allocation in the household, in terms of living standards and in terms of social protection. It is with these encounters, and the responses to them by men, women and children in the Netherlands and Java, that the following chapters are concerned.

Notes

1. This chapter has benefited greatly from comments by Ulbe Bosma, Corinne Boter, Ewout Frankema, Remco Raben, and Daniëlle Teeuwen.
2. For an early exception, see Kuitenbrouwer (1985; English transl. Kuitenbrouwer 1991).
3. See for an elaborate discussion: Kuitenbrouwer (1998, 59).
4. Strictly speaking, this could be formulated as "as being part of an empire", because the Dutch Kingdom still includes several former colonial possessions in the Caribbean. In 2010, the "Dutch Antilles" were formally dismantled, and three of the islands (Aruba, Curaçao, St. Maarten) are now autonomous countries within the kingdom of the Netherlands, whereas three other islands (Bonaire, Saba, St. Eustatius) are special municipalities within the Netherlands.
5. Most other important scholars reflecting on the particularly extractive nature of Dutch imperialism since the VOC period seem to come from

outside the Netherlands. See, for example, Wallerstein (1980, 38) and Maddison (1989).

6. My own terms, following both van Doorn (1994) and van den Doel (1994) in their typification of these particular periods, which I discuss in more detail below.
7. In fact, the Aceh expeditions had a longer history and more complex causes, with many international players, including the USA and even Turkey. Although the conflict was officially settled in 1913, the region would remain restless until the end of the colonial period (Missbach 2010).
8. The Dutch Trading Company had been given the exclusive right to handle all government shipping to and from the colonies. See van Zanden and van Riel (2004, 112), and also Chapter 4.
9. Equivalent to about 154 billion US dollars at 2007's prices, as presented by Gordon (2010, 441).
10. Presumably, in the less populated Outer Islands of the Indies archipelago, the per capita tax burden was even higher than in Java in the early twentieth century (Wahid 2013, 256).
11. The *corvée* labour system was scaled down from 1854 onwards, but only very gradually: it was not finally abolished until 1916 (Bosma 2013, 76).

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3

Industrious Women in an Imperial Economy: The Cultivation System and Its Consequences

The Cultivation System that was imposed by the Dutch on the East Indies between 1830 and 1870 constituted a "classic piece of colonial exploitation" (Elson 1994, 303). Javanese peasants were forced to employ part of their land and their labour for the cultivation of cash crops such as sugar, coffee and indigo for the European market. While the consequences of this system—both for Java and the Netherlands—have been much debated, the effects of the Cultivation System on women's work have seldom been investigated. This chapter argues that Javanese women's work was crucial for fulfilling the increasing labour demands of the system. Moreover, it contends that the Cultivation System not only drastically influenced women's work in Java, it also, through the vast remittances from the colony to the metropole, impacted—although more indirectly—gender-specific work patterns in the Netherlands. All in all, colonialism shaped, and was shaped by, women's participation in the household economy in both parts of the Dutch Empire, albeit in increasingly contrasting ways.

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3.1 Inducing Industriousness: Ideas on Poverty and Work in the Dutch Empire Around 1800[1]

During the early modern period, rhetoric and policies increasingly associated poverty with idleness—both in the Dutch Republic and in the Dutch East Indies. In the context of eighteenth-century economic decline, the answer to the growing problem of poverty was work: the idle poor should be transformed into hard-working and productive men, women and children. Consequently, Dutch welfare institutions increasingly restricted provisions for unemployed immigrants, begging was forbidden, and benefits became more and more dependent on the efforts to secure work of those applying for support (van Leeuwen 1996). In the second half of the eighteenth century, local work-based initiatives to combat poverty mushroomed in the Netherlands. For instance, workhouses were set up, and spinning contests organised to stimulate the production of yarns—typically the work of women and children. However, most of these initiatives failed sooner or later. Often, the poor refused to work, or, before long, women and children left the workhouse because of its unsavoury reputation or because they could earn more and work more flexibly elsewhere in the labour market (van Nederveen Meerkerk 2007, 177–179).

Interestingly, in the same period, norms had become much stricter for women from among the middle and higher classes of Dutch society with regard to the performance of work in the public sphere. Whereas sixteenth- and seventeenth-century humanists and moralists had instructed women to dedicate their time to household work and thrift in the broadest sense, which coincided with a high rate of labour force participation among women from all layers of society (van den Heuvel 2007; Schmidt and van Nederveen Meerkerk 2012), eighteenth-century norms instead stressed the responsibility of middle-class women to create a sphere of domesticity in which their husbands could optimally perform their role as breadwinners. Thus, the eighteenth century saw a shift to much more "class-based" social norms regarding women's work: humanist ideas gave way to "enlightened" views on work as a means to morally discipline the poor—men, women and children alike (Schmidt 2011, 53–56, 58, 60).

In Javanese society, labour had traditionally been scarcer than land. Local rulers expected their male subjects to perform services, in the form of *corvée* labour or the provision of agricultural products. Many households tried to avoid labour obligations by becoming nomadic farmers. This, of course, lowered extraction opportunities for local lords, but also for Dutch East India Company (VOC) traders. When the VOC moved into the hinterlands at the end of the seventeenth century, the Dutch tried to counter this "problem" of drifting farmers by introducing restrictive legislation. Just like in the Netherlands, the rhetoric of "vagrancy" was introduced in the East Indies, as appears from an instruction from 1686: "[…] also will be punished as tramps, vagabonds, and such, who could not have any other than malicious intent, of which riffraff be it highly necessary to clear the Company's lands, the sooner the better, in order that the righteous inhabitants live peacefully, cultivate the lands, and increase in wealth" (cited in Breman 2010, 41, present author's translation). As a result, both the VOC in the eighteenth century and the colonial government in the nineteenth severely restricted the freedom of movement of Javanese peasants, who were allowed to migrate only with the permission of both the village head and the colonial administration.

In some regions, most notably Priangan in West Java, the VOC had been able, with the help of local rulers, to enforce upon the peasantry the cultivation of export crops, predominantly coffee, since the seventeenth century. In this district, subsistence agriculture was probably left increasingly to women (Watson Andaya 2006, 106). Nevertheless, in most other regions indigenous peasants could not be easily persuaded or forced to cultivate export crops such as coffee, sugar and indigo. Until the first decades of the nineteenth century, most of them clung to the production of rice, with men and women working alongside each other, albeit mostly with different tasks. In the eyes of many colonisers, this "uncommercial" attitude of the Javanese peasant, in combination with the costly Java War (1825–1830), made the Dutch East Indies a financial burden rather than a profitable possession for the Dutch state (Elson 1994, 36–40).

The answer to this problem of economic sluggishness, both in the colony and in the metropole, was to be found in schemes to enhance the industriousness of hitherto "idle" subjects of the Dutch crown. Many early nineteenth-century policymakers, as well as intellectuals, believed that

poor relief formed a disincentive for creating industrious, law-abiding citizens (Gouda 1995, 20). After the Dutch Kingdom had been established in 1813–1815, initiatives to fight poverty were taken at the national as well as the colonial level. King Willem I entrusted one particular person to devise and implement his plans to counter pauperism by stimulating industriousness among poor families, first in the Netherlands and later on Java. This man, Johannes van den Bosch (1780–1844), had served as a military officer in the Dutch East Indies since 1799. He owned a plantation on Java, where between 1808 and 1810 he had experimented with the cultivation of export crops. However, the Governor General, Daendels, forced van den Bosch to return to the Netherlands in 1810. Upon his return in the Netherlands, van den Bosch took part in the struggle against the French in 1814–1815, and his contribution did not go unnoticed by the later king (Westendorp Boerma 1927, 2–4).

After the Vienna peace treaties of 1815, van den Bosch spent most of his days designing plans to combat poverty in the Netherlands. He wrote an elaborate book on the problems of poverty, unemployment, and the desired role of the state. Although poverty was particularly dire in towns, van den Bosch was convinced that—as opposed to Great Britain—*agriculture*, not industry, would be the solution in the Netherlands. His earlier experiments with cash crop cultivation on Java probably formed the foundation for van den Bosch's ideas (Schrauwers 2001, 301). He argued that poor urban families should be relocated to rural regions, where they could gain the "right to work" by learning how to cultivate agricultural crops for their own subsistence and selling their surpluses in the market. With private funds, van den Bosch established the *Maatschappij van Weldadigheid* (Benevolent Society) in 1818 to set up agricultural settlements in Drenthe, an underpopulated province in the east of the Netherlands consisting mostly of peatland. Tens of thousands of mostly urban paupers migrated (later, some were even deported) to these "peat colonies". Supposedly, several years in the countryside would transform them into industrious agrarian workers. Ideally, they would eventually leave the colonies with some savings and a reformed mentality, from which they would benefit for the rest of their lives (Schrauwers 2001, 303–313).

As in the eighteenth-century poorhouses, however, suitable colonists proved hard to find, and "industriousness" soon needed to be enforced to

a large extent. Some of the dwellings were transformed into penal institutions for convicted paupers. Even in the "free" peat colonies, regulations were strict and detailed. Throughout the 1820s, van den Bosch regularly corresponded with the overseers, ensuring that they saw to it that "no household would be bereft of the necessary, but that it itself would earn these necessities".[2] The meticulous detail of van den Bosch's calculations of the bare subsistence needs of households strikes the historian's eye when going through the archival material. The initiative was an example of social engineering: its overseers eschewed neither intensive control nor, at times, force over the daily lives of ordinary people. A strict regime of meals, work and rest was established, including only limited leisure time. Wages for work in the field were set at two-thirds of regular Dutch adult male wages, from which the costs of daily subsistence were subtracted.[3] Part of whatever a colonist family earned in excess of this had to be put into a health fund, part had to be saved, and part was paid out as pocket money. Their savings would enable the family to leave the institution within a couple of years (Berends et al. 1984, 60–61). While perhaps benevolent in intent, the experiment with the peat colonies clearly shows that, to the elite, the poor really were a "foreign country", as Frances Gouda has argued for this period more in general (Gouda 1995, 2).

Despite the initially intended voluntariness of the project, the peat colonies soon came more and more to resemble forced labour relations. Although van den Bosch was in principle opposed to slavery, he argued that he scarcely saw any distinction between "forced" and "free" labour (Bosma 2013, 68). After all, every wage labourer was to some extent enslaved, as he (and less commonly she) was always economically dependent on a boss or employer. Therefore, van den Bosch was not against coercing the poor to work (Westendorp Boerma 1950, 39–40). Indeed, colonists coming to Drenthe voluntarily were increasingly an exception: between 1830 and 1860 an average of just twenty-two families arrived of their own volition each year (Kloosterhuis 1981, 243). In the early 1820s, the peat colonies were already heavily reliant on state financing (Westendorp Boerma 1950, 38), and in 1859, the colonies were taken over by the state, thus officially becoming a public institution. From then on, local urban authorities forced most of the thousands of families and individuals to go to the peat colonies—which were consequently popularly called "beggars

institutions". In 1875, 2809 people were still living here, only ten of whom had volunteered (Anonymous 1875). Instead of transforming poor men, women and children into hard-working citizens, the colonies had become a fully fledged penal institution, to which undesired elements from urban society were sent.

Judged by their original intention of reforming the poor into hard-working citizens, the peat colonies can thus be considered a failure. Nevertheless, I have elaborated on these social experiments in Drenthe extensively, as they set an influential example for similar initiatives, both within and outside Europe.[4] Most significantly, the peat colonies formed a blueprint for the "Cultivation System" (*Kultuurstelsel*) on Java, designed and implemented by their inventor Johannes van den Bosch when he was Governor General in the Dutch East Indies (1830–1833). Although there were many distinct differences between metropole and colony, especially in their scale and effects, the relatively underexplored links with the intents and the design of van den Bosch's benevolent colonies in the Netherlands are particularly interesting. Both can be seen as "development projects" with state support, focusing on the agricultural production of cash crops by the poor, who would not only work for their subsistence but also receive a cash bonus for surplus crops. Moreover, in both cases the objective was to transform "lazy" paupers into industrious workers, and to this end, a certain degree of coercion was tolerated (Schrauwers 2001, 313–314). Especially Javanese *men* were depicted as idle, as opposed to their wives, whom the Dutch as well as the English portrayed as particularly industrious and entrepreneurial (e.g. Daendels 1814, 104; Boomgaard 1981, 7; Locher-Scholten 1986, 40–44). Van den Bosch stated that Javanese peasants needed to work only a few hours a day to survive. To make them produce also for the market, their industriousness needed to be enhanced, for their own benefit as well as that of the imperial economy (van den Bosch 1850 [1829], 304).

To achieve this, Javanese peasants were expected to reserve a proportion of their land and their labour to produce export crops, such as coffee, sugar and indigo, for the Dutch authorities. Although the Cultivation System in many ways resembled the forced cultivation schemes of the VOC, van den Bosch's philosophy was quite different, as he envisaged a win–win situation. As in the peat colonies in Drenthe, Javanese peasants were expected

to produce surpluses to be sold in the market, for which they would receive monetary compensation (Schrauwers 2001, 316). However, in order for the colonial government to be able to make a profit, most peasants obtained a *plantloon* (planter's wage) that—like in Drenthe!—only constituted two-thirds of the market price for these export crops. Moreover, part of this money served to pay taxes to indigenous elites and Dutch civil servants, which in practice meant that, on average, Javanese households received only a third of the market value for their produce (Horlings 2003, 154). Although its impact varied greatly from one part of Java to another, the Cultivation System had tremendous effects on both the Javanese and the Dutch economies, and consequently on women's work, as the next sections will highlight.

3.2 The Cultivation System and the *Batig Slot* (*c.* 1830–1870)

The Cultivation System actually started out as a highly locally variable form of agricultural–industrial exploitation of Javanese peasants that involved forcing them to cultivate tropical export products for very low compensation (Fasseur 1992, 27). Van den Bosch's idea was to use about twenty per cent of peasants' cultivable land for export crops, employing twenty per cent of their labour (on average sixty-six labour days). These duties were meant to replace the heavy burden of the land tax (*landrente*) (Van Niel 1992, 65). However, this general idea was never backed up by a detailed plan for implementation. In fact, Elson has typified the early years of the Cultivation System as "based upon an unsophisticated style of trial and error", which included many failures and mishaps (Elson 1994, 82). The type of cultivated crop, the proportion of peasant households involved, as well as the method and size of their payment all depended on local circumstances, which differed tremendously, particularly in the first chaotic years of implementation. What was clear from the outset, however, was the role of Dutch officials as well as village heads and regional rulers, the regents (*bupati*). They functioned as middlemen between the peasant-cultivators and the government to ensure demands in relation to crops were met and the modest planter's wage was paid to the peasants. In return for their

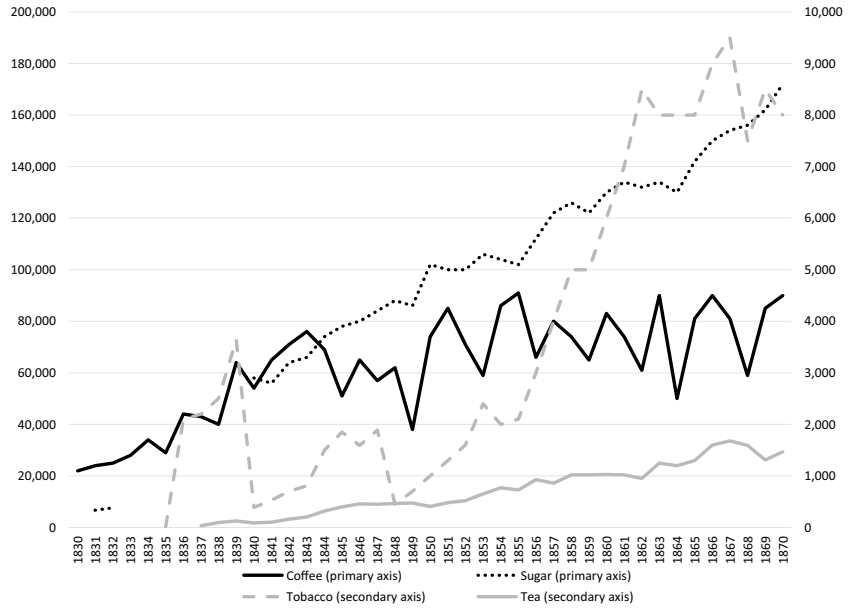

Fig. 3.1 Volume (tons) of most important cash crops under the Cultivation System, 1830–1870 (*Source* Mansvelt and Creutzberg 1975, 52–53)

services, these officials received a percentage of the proceeds (*kultuurprocenten*), which was of course intended to encourage these overseers to ensure the continuation of high yields (Elson 1994, 42–44).

The success of the Cultivation System, at least in terms of the production of cash crops (see Fig. 3.1), became evident within just a few years.

Until the early 1840s, the forced cultivation of coffee was especially lucrative for the colonial authorities. From then onwards, sugar gradually became the most prominent export product. In contrast, the production of indigo, which boomed in the 1830s, soon proved to be a financial loss. Moreover, it required so much arduous labour and encountered so much overt as well as tacit resistance from the Javanese peasants that it was mostly abandoned after the 1840s.

The abandonment of indigo was part of a more general reform of the Cultivation System after the increased burden on the land and especially on the labour of Javanese peasants had become painfully visible in the

1840s. This increased burden, combined with bad weather conditions, epidemic diseases, crop failures, and rising rice prices, led to successive famines in several residencies. The incapacity to deal with these difficulties in ensuring food security, which led many people to migrate or even die, were closely linked to imbalances caused by the Cultivation System. As we have seen, to secure an increase in the production of export crops, the colonial authorities had encouraged indigenous village heads to greatly intensify their control over peasants, their labour and their material resources (Elson 1994, 119). Apart from increasing the demand for peasant labour for forced cultivation, this also gave both European and indigenous officials the leeway to increase their burden in terms of labour services, for public works such as road maintenance, but also—illegitimately—for private purposes such as working their land (Van Niel 1992, 81; Booth 1998, 21). Furthermore, land tax—which was initially planned to be replaced by cultivation services—as well as indirect levies on consumption and marketed products increased notably (Van Niel 1992, 143). The demands on peasant households for labour services as well as cash payments grew so outrageously that many of them became indebted. Moreover, men especially, who were pressed to provide labour services, were unable to reserve sufficient time for subsistence production, which increasingly endangered peasants' food security. At the same time, if they fled their land to escape epidemics and extortion, peasants lost their rights to that land, which was generally claimed by the elite, leading to increasing socio-economic polarisation (Elson 1994, 124–125).

These failures of the Cultivation System necessitated reforms, primarily directed towards the alleviation of the heavy burden of labour on the Javanese population, in combination with more extensive controls on indigenous officials, for instance by restricting landholding by village heads. At the same time, even though the labour burden on peasants remained large, coffee and sugar cultivation in particular increasingly involved contract labour as well as free wage labour, meaning that payments (although still low) became somewhat fairer. Besides being a response to its shortcomings, the reforms of the Cultivation System also related to a changing political climate in the Netherlands, which had become more liberal, and—especially after the constitutional reforms of 1848—considerably restricted the Dutch king's leeway to interfere in

political and economic affairs (van Zanden and Marks 2012, 53). The democratising tendencies in the metropole following the adoption of the 1848 Constitution also led to increasing public opposition to the Cultivation System, even though it never became a major opposition movement in the Netherlands (Janse 2013; see also Chapter 6). These changes notwithstanding, reforms of the Cultivation System proceeded slowly and did not succeed everywhere on Java. Real problems of food security continued to exist, especially in sugar-producing regions. Moreover, until 1870, private entrepreneurship by European, Chinese or indigenous businesses was highly restricted, as it was regarded as a form of competition harmful to government cultivation (Elson 1994, 143–152).

The reforms did lead to a reduction in remittances to the Dutch government, and hence to a decline in net transfers to the Dutch treasury, but with a marked time lag: only after the late 1850s (van Zanden and Marks 2012, 50). Indeed, net remittances to the Netherlands were, and remained, considerable until the end of the Cultivation System in 1870 (see Table 3.1). Over the entire period, more than one billion Dutch guilders are estimated to have been transferred to the Dutch treasury as *batig slot* (colonial remittances). These remittances ultimately helped to solve the major financial crisis the Dutch state had been in since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Moreover, they compensated for the loss of the fiscal transfer that was the consequence of the secession of the Southern Netherlands in 1830. The colonial surplus formed a vital supplement to the state budget, which allowed for restructuring the large public debt from 1843 onwards and for infrastructural improvements (Horlings 2003, 166). Furthermore, as we will see in Sect. 3.4, the *batig slot* allowed for tax reforms in the Netherlands, which affected the purchasing power of Dutch households.

The effects of the Cultivation System on the labour time and economic well-being of Javanese households must have been enormous, but there has been neither much clarity nor debate on the size, distribution, and even the direction of these effects: positive, in the sense of new opportunities, or negative, in the sense of decreasing living standards. Some studies suggest that Javanese peasant households demonstrated considerable ability in adjusting to the increasing demands of the system (Boomgaard 1989; Elson 1994), but the dynamics that were in place are still unclear. In the

Table 3.1 Net colonial remittances (*batig slot*) to the Dutch treasury, 1830–1877

Period	Net colonial surplus (million Dfl)	% of Dutch GNP	% of Dutch tax income	% of excises on primary goods in total Dutch tax income
1831–1840	150.6	2.8	31.9	20.8
1841–1850	215.6	3.6	38.6	22.4
1851–1860	289.4	3.8	52.6	16.0
1861–1870	276.7	2.9	44.5	10.5
1871–1877	127.2	1.7	26.5	10.7

Sources 1831–1870: Estimates by van Zanden and van Riel (2004, 180), including hidden government subsidies. 1870–1877: de Jong (1989, 133, 262); GNP: Smits et al. (2000, 173, 177); Excises: van der Voort (1994)

next section, I will argue that to a large extent the ability of households to adapt to new circumstances related to the flexibility with which women especially employed their time. I then go on to claim that, in more indirect ways, the Cultivation System even affected how Dutch households in the metropole changed their labour patterns.

3.3 Consequences of the Cultivation System for Women's Work in Java

Table 3.2 gives estimates of the percentage of Javanese households involved in the Cultivation System. Although regional variation was large, ranging from about forty-five per cent of all households in the Residency of Jepara in Central Java to about ninety per cent in the Residency of Pasuruan in East Java (Van Niel 1992, 111–112), it is clear that the system affected the majority of peasant households in a dramatic way.

The Cultivation System led to important shifts in Javanese women's work, predominantly in three domains. First of all, the increasing labour demands of the system led to a larger role for women in agriculture. Not only did their role in subsistence agriculture increase, there were multiple ways in which they became involved in the production of cash crops themselves, even if it was explicitly not the intention to recruit women (or children) for this purpose. Second, women's activities in the market-

Table 3.2 Households and arable land engaged in forced cultivation, average for Java 1836–1870

Year	% of households	% of total arable land
1836	67.1	18.3
1840	73.3	26.2
1845	69.5	24.8
1850	63.0	21.4
1855	61.0	21.2
1860	56.2	19.0
1865	54.1	16.4
1870	39.3	13.0

Sources Elson (1994, 185) and van Baardewijk (1993, 190–193)

place expanded in the broadest possible sense, due to increasing monetisation of the economy. Third, most notably since the later 1840s, women were found to be increasingly performing non-agricultural activities in the countryside (Boomgaard 1989, 131). Whether born of necessity or opportunity, it is clear that women were important for the diversification of the Javanese peasant household economy, but there has so far hardly been any systematic investigation of their role.[5] In the following, I will provide a systematic analysis by describing shifts in labour relations within households and by estimating the amount of labour required for particular types of agricultural as well as for non-agricultural production. In the absence of large quantities of empirical source material on women's activities, these estimates are necessarily rough, but they are the first of their kind.

Traditionally, Southeast Asian women have played a large role in the subsistence production of rice and other food crops, such as millet and yams. Although the role of women in subsistence agriculture is not unique, there may have been a distinct Southeast Asian division of labour between men and women. Rice growing on dry lands (*tegal*) and garden agriculture were more the prerogative of women, whereas both men and women were required for wetland (*sawah*) rice cultivation (Stoler 1977, 77). Women, sometimes assisted by children, were responsible for the labour-intensive transplanting of young rice seedlings onto the *sawahs*, whereas men were

in charge of maturing the crop in the following three months, in tasks such as weeding, tilling and irrigation. Harvesting was a community task, in which women and children again played an important role (Elson 1994, 6). This labour division had an economic as well as a cultural background. Rice cultivation was labour-intensive but did not require much physical strength. Moreover, garden agriculture and child-rearing were convenient to combine, and Javanese men were more often absent from the home. Simultaneously, there were ritual and mythological values attached to rice cultivation, which in Javanese culture was strongly associated with female fertility and childbearing. The young rice seedlings were thus associated with reproduction and birth, so it was felt that these ought to be handled with feminine care (Locher-Scholten 1986, 82–83; Watson Andaya 1995, 172).

Although statistical information about the work of women in Java is notoriously absent for the period of the Cultivation System, there are indirect ways to estimate their increased involvement in subsistence agriculture. It is likely that an intensification of women's labour in subsistence rice cultivation occurred due to the labour demands the Cultivation System imposed on households, and in particular its adult male members, to grow cash crops. Although in some regions, the system led farmers to plant their rice *sawahs* with sugar or indigo, occupying the wetlands for between eighteen and twenty-four months, this competition with subsistence crops was often avoided by creating new *sawahs* for rice (Elson 1994, 238–239). Moreover, coffee was in principle grown on dry lands. This all implies that the cultivation of cash crops, mostly done by men, complemented rice cultivation, seriously extending the total workload of households (Boomgaard 1989, 82–83). As I have noted earlier, apart from the additional labour spent on export crops, *corvée* labour also increased notably after the 1830s, sometimes quadrupling the additional labour burden on male peasants.[6] Especially sugar and indigo took much more than the anticipated sixty-six days' labour and were more likely to consume between 120 and 130 days of an adult man's time (Boomgaard 1989, 82). In some regions, such as Pekalongan (North Central Java), male peasants had only fifty labour days left to spend on food production for their own use, even though about ninety were actually required (Elson 1994, 88). As a consequence, women's involvement increased. Around 1900, on aver-

age about seventy-five per cent of all hours spent on rice cultivation was performed by women (Koch 1919, 4–7), compared with a figure more like fifty per cent before the Cultivation System (Locher-Scholten 1986, 39; Watson Andaya 1995, 167). It is likely that in the heyday of the system, the corresponding figure was even slightly higher (Elson 1994; for estimates see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 uses the existing statistical data on rice yields, the amount of arable land, and the number of labour days required to cultivate rice from the *Changing Economy in Indonesia* series,[7] in combination with more qualitative descriptions of women's share in rice production (Boomgaard 1981, 19; Elson 1994). From these data, it is possible to roughly calculate what this labour intensification entailed for the average Javanese peasant woman, because we can make aggregate guesstimates of the number of labour days women would have to spend on rice cultivation. Taken together, these sources of information report an average increase in labour days spent by Javanese peasant women on rice cultivation suggest that the Cultivation System did indeed make a difference in the division of labour in peasant households. In the first stage of the system, the increased role attributed to women was due mainly to a reallocation of their time, because additional tasks such as weeding became necessary as many men were drawn into forced cultivation. Also, harvesting, which prior to the Cultivation System had been done by men and women together, became a more exclusively female task (Boomgaard and van Zanden 1990, 17). For the residency of Pasuruan, for instance, it was noted that around 1840 women did all of the tasks, from transplanting the rice and weeding to harvesting (van der Poel 1865). As noted in Sect. 3.2, men had a shortfall of twenty labour days for rice cultivation, and this was presumably compensated by women, thus explaining most of the rise in the number of labour days per adult woman between 1815 and 1836 shown in Table 3.3. The reforms of the late 1840s seem to have temporarily interrupted this process, but after the 1860s the relative involvement of women in subsistence production must have increased again, with rising per capita rice yields. It is therefore safe to say that time allocation by women played a crucial role in safeguarding food security in the later decades of the Cultivation System.

Table 3.3 Estimated intensification of Javanese peasant women in rice cultivation, 1815–1880

Year	Rice yields (in 1000 tons)	Ha of arable land	No. of labour days needed	Estimated proportion of women engaged in rice cultivation (%)	Full-time labour days of women	No. of full-time days per adult woman	Index (1836 = 100)
1815	860.0	521,212	156,363,636	50	78,181,818	47	64
1836	1202.6	884,265	252,015,441	70	176,410,809	72	100
1846	1621.1	988,476	281,715,549	80	225,372,439	76	105
1860	2051.2	1,235,663	352,163,855	80	281,731,084	74	102
1870	2849.2	1,499,579	470,867,789	75	353,150,842	92	127
1880	3816.2	1,684,857	529,044,945	70	370,331,461	90	124

Sources Rice yields and arable: Boomgaard and van Zanden (1990, 41, 109, 112, 114, 116). Required labour days: Boomgaard (1989, 221, 224, 227). Population data: Boomgaard and Gooszen (1991)

In the traditional gender-specific division of labour prior to the Cultivation System, crops sold in local markets were predominantly the domain of male agricultural labourers (Watson Andaya 1995, 168). This division of labour remained common practice at the beginning of the Cultivation System. With regard to the forced cultivation of cash crops, colonial officials even noted that it was not the intention of the system that women and children were involved.[8] Nevertheless, for several reasons, the colonial authorities displayed quite ambivalent attitudes towards the role of household members under the Cultivation System. In the first place, it was assumed that the household would be self-sufficient in terms of food provisioning (Stoler 1977, 77). This reproduction of labour by the household was in fact an important premise of the system, making sure that compensation rates (*plantloon*) could remain low. Labour intensification as well as reallocation among household members was thus a logical consequence. Moreover, in due course, many export crops appeared to be too labour-intensive to be exclusively cultivated by men. Women, and to a lesser extent children, were soon employed, both as unpaid members of the household economy and as wage workers. Women regularly assisted their husbands in cultivation for export, for instance, in the case of coffee. Coffee-bean picking especially was highly labour-intensive and was often done by women. Depending on the region, coffee growing could require between one hundred and 240 labour days per year (Elson 1994, 89). Furthermore, women were frequently engaged as wage workers on plantations. From the early days of the Cultivation System, tea cultivation required many extra labourers, especially for picking tea leaves, and it was hard to find wage labour.[9] In Priangan, it was noted that the majority of tea-leaf picking was paid work performed by women and children from neighbouring villages.[10] Also, we found that women were hired as monthly wage workers in nopal/cochineal production, one of the smaller segments of forced cultivation.[11] Finally, in sugar production, which steadily increased during the Cultivation System (see Fig. 3.1), women were employed in almost all tasks, such as weeding and harvesting, with the exception of the very heavy labour of digging canals for irrigation (Alexander 1984, 367).

It is difficult to transform these impressionistic descriptions into quantifiable data, because the information is patchy, and regional circumstances (crop type, soil suitability, percentage of land/labour involved in forced

Table 3.4 Minimum estimates of labour days for adult women spent on cash crop cultivation, Java 1815–1870

Year	Total no. of fulltime women involved in cash crops (minimum estimate)	No. of fulltime days per adult woman under the Cultivation System
1815	0	0
1836	236,326	35
1846	293,770	36
1860	284,948	27
1870	323,162	31

Source Author's own calculations, based on Minimum estimate labour (input van Baardewijk 1993, 190–193); Population figures (Gooszen and Boomgaard 1990); Information on women's involvement in cash crop production (Elson 1994)

cultivation) differed greatly. Nevertheless, we can make an educated guess about the average absolute minimum number of days Javanese peasant women spent annually on cultivating cash crops. For this, we need to make a few assumptions based on what we know of the usual involvement of women in particular forms of cash crop production and the proportion of households engaged in the Cultivation System (Table 3.2), as well as of the crop yields associated with the system (van Baardewijk 1993). Apart from the coffee and tea picking mentioned earlier, at least half of which was done by women, we know that women were involved in particular tasks in tobacco cultivation (half of the irrigation and weeding, all of the sorting and bundling) and in cinnamon scraping (exclusively women). In sugar cultivation and processing, on the other hand, they played a far less important role (Elson 1994, 205). Considering the changing mix of products under the Cultivation System and assuming the minimum input of labour necessary to arrive at the yields registered,[12] a conservative estimate of the average number of ten-hour full-time days worked by women can be made for Java as a whole. The result of this exercise is shown in Table 3.4.

It seems that Javanese peasant women spent an average of at least more than one month each year on cultivating cash crops. Initially, it was mostly the export of coffee and tea, two crops which involved an important share of female labour. Even although the cultivation and production of sugar

employed many more male than female labourers, the sheer growth of its export volume since the 1840s (see Fig. 3.1) makes it important for women's work in cash crop cultivation too, as women were quite regularly hired for planting and weeding the sugar fields (Knight 1994, 58–59). In the later years of the Cultivation System, the number of days per capita dropped somewhat. This is consistent with the reduction in the total labour burden on households after the late 1840s and also with the intensification of women's involvement in rice cultivation (see above). In the later days of the Cultivation System, the involvement of women in cash crops increased again, mainly owing to the rise in coffee cultivation on private coffee plantations owned by Europeans, which were permitted in Java after the second half of the 1860s.

Apart from precipitating drastic changes in agriculture for Javanese women, the Cultivation System also impacted their work in other economic sectors. Traditionally, women were the ones who traded whatever small surpluses the household generated from the land, such as rice, vegetables and fruit, in local markets (Watson Andaya 1995, 172). At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Raffles noted that "The women alone attend the markets and conduct all the business of buying and selling. It is proverbial to say the Javan men are fools in money-concerns" (Raffles 1817, 353). Although he was clearly over-stereotyping, as well as neglecting the role of male Chinese and Arab intermediaries and market overseers, it is evident that women played a ubiquitous role in the marketplace. Normally, women brought their commodities there once every (five-day) week (Elson 1994, 14). This implies they spent seventy-three days per year in the market before 1830. Apart from selling in the marketplace, women's labour also involved the often heavy transport of products from the fields or their homes to the market (Boomgaard 1981, 12).

Two important side effects of the Cultivation System facilitated trade: first of all, the investments in infrastructure to transport the export crops from the fields to the harbours, and, second, the increasing monetisation due to the cash payments of *plantloon* to the peasants. As a consequence, more markets (*pasars*) arose, and they were more frequently visited (Boomgaard 1989, 113–114). Not only local goods were traded here; foreign luxury commodities, such as Chinese porcelain[13] and European luxury fabrics such as velvet or mousselines,[14] as well as semi-manufactures to

be processed in the home industry, such as European cotton yarns,[15] were also traded. The growing circulation of money led to an increase (in some regions even a doubling within ten years) in the number of shops (*warung*), which were run by both men and women (Elson 1994, 263). Moreover, women took the opportunity presented by the increasing number of seasonal migrant workers travelling several miles from their villages to work on coffee or sugar plantations. They started selling food, such as rice dishes or fried peanuts or bean cakes, along the roads towards the plantations.[16] For many women, the preparation of food, traditionally a task carried out by women in the domestic sphere, thus became a way to earn some extra cash. All in all, it is hard to gauge to what extent their trading and retailing activities increased, but given the rise in the number of markets in many different regions of Java reported in the colonial reports, with women being the most important retailers,[17] we can assume an average increase of twenty-five per cent. This is equivalent to around eighteen days per year spent in food and commodity markets (in addition to the existing seventy-three).

Third, and finally, the Cultivation System most definitely influenced industrial activity, not least women's involvement in the industry. Women had traditionally been active in a number of industrial activities such as spinning and weaving, straw-plaiting, mat-making and bamboo- or wood-working (Boomgaard 1989, 129–130). In the first two decades of the Cultivation System, until 1850, the heavy labour burden placed upon Javanese peasants diverted the labour of men and women away from cottage industrial activities to agricultural work in subsistence and cash crops. Imports of European textiles increased, seemingly contributing to this decline in local industry (Lindblad 1994; van Zanden and Marks 2012, 92–93). This seems to support the view of dependency theorists as well as of neoclassical economic historians, who have claimed that colonialism and globalisation led to the de-industrialisation of the "non-European periphery", particularly the Dutch East Indies (e.g. Williamson 2013, 42). However, as I have recently shown elsewhere (van Nederveen Meerkerk 2017), industrial activity recovered after *c.* 1850, for instance, in aspects of textile production such as weaving and batiking, where women played a crucial role, as will be elaborated in Chapter 4. Besides textiles, there were many other cottage industries, such as straw-mat-making and bamboo-working, that showed

increased activity in the later years of the Cultivation System, be it out of opportunity—increasing welfare and commercialisation (Elson 1994, 270–271)—or a necessity to supplement household income (Boomgaard 1989, 134). The increased monetisation and the growing local demand for indigenous products, but also the rising number of landless peasants, who sought alternative work opportunities in wage labour and cottage industries, stimulated local industrial activity.

Table 3.5 gives a crude order of magnitude of the implications of the increased demand for labour and commercialisation arising from the system, suggesting an increase of forty-seven per cent in the labour time of women over the course of the Cultivation System. In the first instance, this related mainly to an intensification in the forms of agriculture, with women replacing and assisting men deployed in forced cultivation. After the reforms of the late 1840s, there was more leeway to increase commercial activities. It has to be noted, though, that these are highly aggregate figures; they take no account of regional variations, nor the fact that women's work in all of these aspects was highly intermittent, seasonal and thus never full-time in the way the table might suggest. Moreover, women had many more tasks. They were involved in the cultivation of *palawija* (secondary food crops), and, of course, they had domestic duties such as food preparation and childcare, which I have disregarded here because there are even fewer sources to even begin to quantify these tasks. What can be said, is that the increased participation of women in subsistence agriculture as well as market work, led to a shift of part of these domestic tasks, such as cleaning and child-mending, to their children. This reallocation of household duties would both explain why we find less evidence of child labour in the historical sources.

Also, some authors have suggested that the combination of these shifts in household labour had important demographic implications. One explanation has been given by Boomgaard (1981), who argues that the pressure on household labour led to a conscious shift in fertility behaviour among Javanese peasants: as there was a need for more labour power, the number of children was increased. However, we find little evidence for children's participation in the sources, certainly not in cash crop cultivation, although they may have helped increasingly in the rice fields. In my opinion, Peter Alexander (1984) has offered a more convincing hypoth-

Table 3.5 Rough estimates of number of full-time, ten-hour days worked by women

			Index
Before 1830	Rice cultivation	50	
	Cash crops	0	
	Market activities	73	
	Industrial activities	40	
	Total	163	100
Around 1850	Rice cultivation	75	
	Cash crops	35	
	Market activities	80	
	Industrial activities	20	
	Total	210	129
Around 1870	Rice cultivation	90	
	Cash crops	30	
	Market activities	90	
	Industrial activities	30	
	Total	240	147

Source Based on Tables 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4

esis, which corresponds with my findings on an increasing workload of adult women. Because women spent more time in the fields, sometimes further away from home, and spent less time with their infants, delegating this care to older children in the household, the period of breastfeeding declined notably, presumably from 24 to 18 months. This had major implications for fertility rates, which rose as a consequence of the shorter lactation period (Alexander 1984, 367–369).[18] This, largely unintended, demographic consequence of the Cultivation System provides an alternative, and plausible, explanation for the extreme population growth in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Java in the colonial period.

All in all, it is safe to conclude that the Cultivation System greatly influenced the working lives of Javanese peasant women in multiple ways. As these effects lay particularly outside the sphere of cash crop production, this development largely went unnoticed by contemporaries, as well as by most historians.

3.4 Consequences of the Cultivation System for Dutch Households and Women's Work

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Dutch women participated more extensively in the labour market than much of the historiography suggests (Pott-Buter 1993; de Vries and van der Woude 1997, 604–605). In the protoindustrial town of Tilburg, for example, of all women older than sixteen almost sixty-three per cent were registered as having an occupation in 1810. If we consider only Tilburg's married women, the corresponding figure is still around forty per cent (van Nederveen Meerkerk 2008, 244). Tilburg is probably an extreme case, not fully representative of the Netherlands, because it was an area of specialised cottage textile production and, despite its considerable population (6000), still rural and relatively poor. However, also in cities such as 's-Hertogenbosch in 1808 over forty per cent of all adult female heads of households were registered as having an occupation, a figure that does not include the work of married women. Many of these women worked in lace-making or as housemaids (unmarried women), or in the retail trade and victualling (widows).[19] Despite their invisibility in the sources, many married women also worked, for instance in brickmaking, pipe-making and in the textile and garment industries. Nevertheless, these married women were often not included in the statistics, either because they worked with their husbands or because they were employed in cottage industries that contemporaries regarded as "additional income" (van Oven 1913, 11–18).

Besides working in trade and industry, many Dutch women still worked in agriculture at the start of the nineteenth century. For unmarried women, becoming a farm maid outside their family's own farm constituted a regular part of the lifecycle, allowing them to combine all kinds of domestic duties with farm work to prepare them for their future role as a farmer's wife. Married peasant women usually performed all sorts of tasks in the family business, including household work, but many also worked as wage labourers on neighbouring farms—often seasonally, during harvest time for instance. Traditionally, farmers' wives had been involved in milking and cheese-making. Moreover, as in Java, they were typically the ones selling

the family farm surpluses in local markets or door to door (van Nederveen Meerkerk and Paping 2014). Following Jan Luiten van Zanden's estimates, around 1810 almost thirty per cent of all married and widowed Dutch women must have worked in agriculture for at least a significant part of their life, even if their labour was usually not registered (van Zanden 1985, 74–75).

Judging from these scattered pieces of information, at the beginning of the nineteenth century at least forty per cent of all women over the age of sixteen, but more likely around fifty per cent, were active in the labour market. More comprehensive evidence from a large sample of over two million marriage records shows that between forty-five and fifty-five per cent of all brides reported an occupation in the first few decades of the nineteenth century (see Appendix 1). Of course, these figures tell us only about the labour of women to be wedded, generally young women who, once married, may have switched or abandoned the work they did. Indeed, when we compare these percentages with the proportion of adult women stating that they were involved in paid work in the first two reliable occupational censuses (1849 and 1889), it appears that the marriage records overstate total female labour force participation. We do know, however, that censuses tended to underreport women's work, especially that of married women (Humphries and Sarásua 2012; Schmidt and van Nederveen Meerkerk 2012), and therefore, the actual labour force participation of adult women will have been somewhere in between (see Fig. 3.2).

The marriage records and the censuses, though differing in extent, show a similar trend, suggesting drastically declining female labour market participation especially after 1860. Remarkably, around 1900, when the censuses become much more reliable in terms of recording women's work, reported participation seems to have stabilised, and actually rose in the early 1900s, whereas the proportion of brides not giving an occupation at marriage continued to decline until the 1920s. This was partly a reflection of the fact that, owing to rising incomes in the Netherlands as well as educational opportunities for girls, fewer young women needed to work as domestic servants or in a factory. But given the slight rise in the labour force participation of women after the turn of the century indicated in the censuses, there also has to have been an effect engendered by changing social expectations among brides in this period: their direct environment,

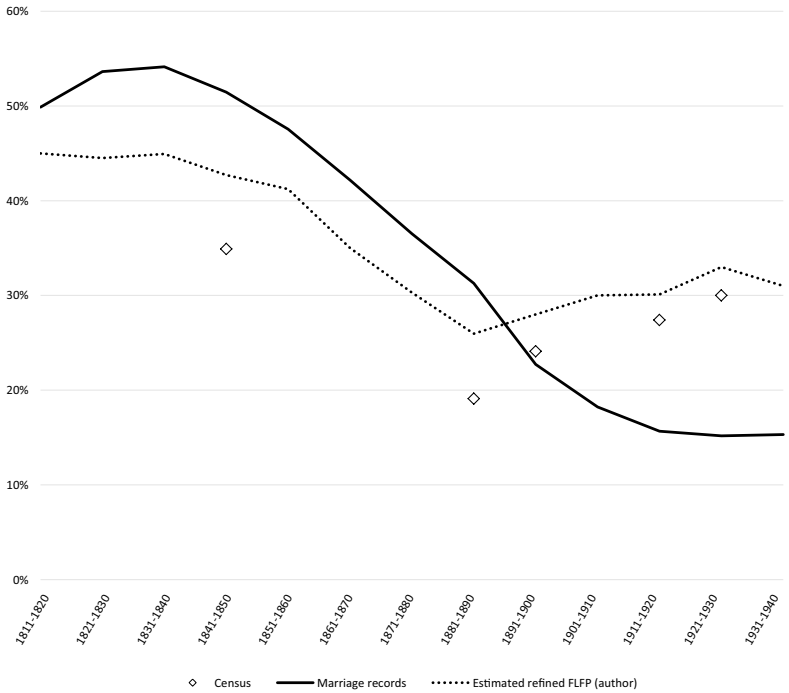

Fig. 3.2 Dutch women >15 with registered occupation, censuses and marriage records, 1811–1940 (*Source* See Appendix 1)

and perhaps they themselves, expected women to become housewives after getting married. This is confirmed by the fact that domestic service, typically an occupation that young, unmarried women performed for several years before marriage, had actually become much more important in 1899, compared with 1849.[20] Presumably, these extra servants were able to assist the woman of the house in households that had become somewhat richer over the past years or replace her economic activities on the farm or in the shop.

Although some work may thus have shifted from married to unmarried women, part of the decline in Dutch female labour force participation was nevertheless real, and it was steeper than in other West European countries, where underreporting was also common (Humphries and Sarásua 2012). We need to explain why this was so. Historians have offered various

explanations for the comparatively low participation of Dutch women in the labour market, but for different reasons all seem to be problematic. First, the relatively late industrialisation of the Netherlands has been suggested (e.g. Fhuri Schnetlage 1982, 9; de Bruijn 1989, 30). However, in other late industrialisers, such as France and Scandinavia, women did not have historically low labour force participation rates—on the contrary (see Chapter 1, Table 1.1). While we do indeed find the highest recorded participation of women and children in those regions that were the first to industrialise—mainly textile areas such as the city of Leiden and the regions of Brabant and Twente—these were regional exceptions (Boter 2017). Moreover, as I will show in Chapter 4, here, too, industrialisation did not cause a sustained rise in the labour force participation of women in the Dutch textile industry. Rather, the mechanisation in this sector and move to factories stimulated a *shift* from the participation of married women in the home to the, more visible, participation of mostly *unmarried* women and girls. Mechanisation of agricultural production processes, such as dairy-making, which affected women's work, occurred on a large scale only from the 1890s (van Zanden 1985, 267). Thus, this development cannot explain the earlier and steeper downward trend in the Netherlands either.

A second argument adduced points to the fact that the Netherlands was not involved in the major European wars of 1870–1871 and 1914–1918, meaning that, unlike in other countries, Dutch women were not mobilised to replace men. However, as Janneke Plantenga has shown in her comparison of female labour market participation in Germany and the Netherlands, this explanation does not hold, as in Germany, too, the First World War only temporarily affected women's work and did not determine longer-term trends (Plantenga 1993, 81; Pott-Buter 1993, 21).[21] Moreover, timing is again crucial, as the decline in female labour force participation had already set in before 1870. Another common explanation has been the "pillarised" character of Dutch society (see Chapter 6), in which the Church and confessional parties advocated a "specifically Dutch pattern of norms and values" regarding the position of married women in the family (Hooghiemstra and Niphuis-Nell 1993, 27). But the adoption of ecclesiastical norms was not an exclusively Dutch phenomenon, and, most importantly, the labour force participation of Dutch married women had already begun to decline decades before the heyday

Table 3.6 Index of real wages in some West European countries, 1860–1913 (1860 = 100)

Year	Netherlands	England	France	Sweden
1860	100	100	100	100
1870	110	105	116	108
1880	144	115	123	109
1890	160	145	143	131
1900	190	163	164	159
1913	200	175	167	179

Sources Netherlands: Vermaas (1995, 148); England: Allen (2005, 118); France: Lhomme (1968, 46); Sweden: Jörberg (1972, 350)

of pillarisation (Plantenga 1993, 5). More recently, van Poppel et al. have pointed to a more general "change in social norms", which led to the withdrawal of women from the Dutch labour market. But these authors also acknowledge that it is difficult to trace the underlying mechanisms of such a change (van Poppel et al. 2009, 124–125).

All in all, the explanations for the atypical development in the Netherlands offered so far are unsatisfactory. An interesting starting point for further investigation might be the research carried out by Plantenga, who claimed that "the Netherlands could afford a low rate of female labour market participation" due to relatively high male wages (Plantenga 1993, 193; see also van Eijl 1994, 64–65). This was where her study ended, but where mine begins, because we now have to ask why male wages rose after the 1850s, more so even than in other West European countries (see Table 3.6).

There are several indications that this rise in male real wages, and thus in the living standards of Dutch households after the 1850s, were indirectly related to gains from the colony. It was exactly in the period 1850–1870 that colonial contributions from the East Indies to the Dutch treasury were the most significant in terms of total government revenue (see Table 3.1). As was noted above, the state had experienced severe financial difficulties, especially after Belgium seceded from the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1830. Since the 1820s, the government's two main strategies to diminish the public debt involved increasing taxes and extracting higher revenues from the colonies. While the latter led to the implementation of the Cul-

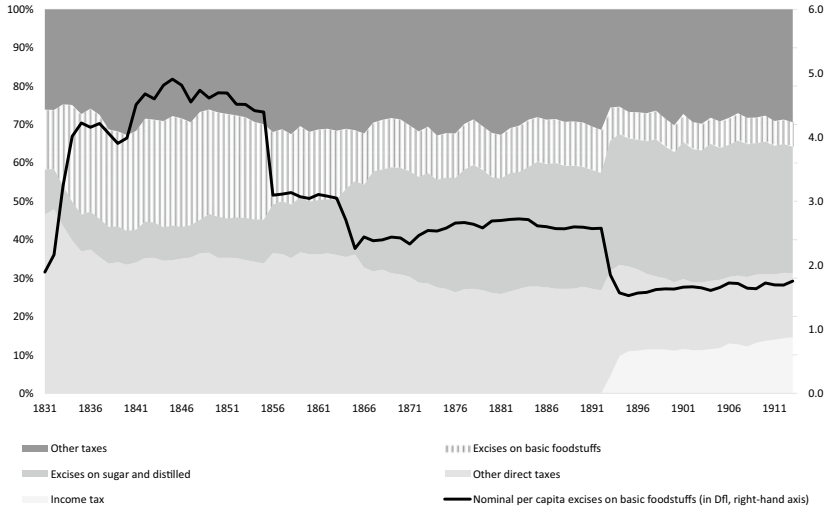

Fig. 3.3 Per capita revenues in the Netherlands from taxes as % of total taxes, 1831–1900 (*Sources* NA, Rekenkamer, inv. nos. 252, 266, 267, *Statistisch Jaarboekje* [1853, 309–314], and van der Voort [1994, 259–262])

tivation System, the former led to tax increases in the period 1832–1836, mainly in the form of excises on primary consumption goods such as bread and meat (Horlings 1996, 234). Between 1833 and 1855, the average Dutchman spent five guilders per annum on indirect taxes on basic necessities (see Fig. 3.3, black line). These excises, levied at the municipal and the national levels, drove up the prices of basic consumables, thus seriously depressing real wages until the 1850s (van Riel 2018, 547).

Since the start of the Cultivation System in 1830, colonial revenues had risen to account for about fifty per cent of total Dutch tax revenues by the 1850s and 1860s. Although the gains from the system started to dwindle after 1870, they had contributed substantially to alleviating the enormous public debt of the Dutch state. In the longer run, this meant lower state expenditure on interest payments. This enabled Dutch excise taxes to be substantially reorganised from the mid-1840s (Fritschy and van der Voort 1997, 85; Horlings 2003, 167). Indirect taxes on a large number of consumables, most importantly bread and fuels, were drastically lowered in this period (striped area in Fig. 3.3).

Most important was the abolition of the milling tax in 1855, which, in a society where bread and other grains formed the most important ingredient in labourers' diets, had a direct positive effect on their purchasing power. So, whereas earlier in the nineteenth century, the share of household budgets spent on bread, flour and other grains such as rice had constituted over thirty-five per cent, this share had declined after 1855 to about twenty-five per cent and consequently fell as workers' incomes further increased (van Riel 2018, 551, Table 8.24). As fiscal historian de Jong notes: "The East Indian gains enabled the Dutch government to lower the tax pressure on the 'common man' without having to impose an equal tax burden on the well-off citizen" (de Jong 1989, 42). This corresponds to the remarkably steep fall in female labour force participation between the 1860s and the 1890s, as depicted in Fig. 3.2. Indeed, recent research has confirmed that, after the 1860s, male wages in both industry and agriculture started to allow a male breadwinner model. Theoretically, provided he had steady, full-time employment, an industrial male wage labourer could henceforth support a family of five with his income. For agricultural labourers, we see a similar pattern, although the agricultural crisis (1878–1895) temporarily distorted this, and wages stagnated. After *c.* 1895, however, real incomes of both industrial and agrarian male workers quickly rose again, with welfare ratios[22] increasing to well beyond 2.0 (Boter 2017, 141; van Riel 2018, 546; see also Chapter 5).

In the 1850s, there was thus a striking coincidence of massive gains from the Cultivation System and fiscal reforms in the Netherlands, which led to a decreasing dependence of the Dutch state on tax income from excises on basic foodstuffs. This was followed by a remarkably fast decline in female labour force participation after 1860. I do not mean to suggest a perfect relationship between the *batig slot*, the rise in real wages, and the decline in female labour force participation. However, as other historians have also argued (e.g. Maddison 1989, 354; Elson 1994, 551; van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 503), there is no doubt that the comparatively favourable colonial gains from the Javanese Cultivation System (see also Chapter 2) solved many of the financial problems being experienced by the Dutch state. In this section, I have pushed this argument somewhat further by suggesting that the tax reforms in the metropole enabled by the *batig slot* contributed to changing divisions of labour at the household level. In

particular, excise reforms lowered the price of basic commodities, such as bread and fuel, thus enabling relative incomes of working-class families to rise between the 1860s and the 1890s. This coincided exactly with the most spectacular withdrawal of both brides and married women from the labour market (see Fig. 3.2), also compared with other West European countries at the time. Even if many of these women and daughters continued to supplement household income with more informal and casual forms of labour (see Chapter 5, and also van Nederveen Meerkerk 2015; Boter 2016), others were able to devote themselves full-time to homemaking (de Vries 2008) and to more years of education (see also Chapter 6).

3.5 Comparison: Economic Policies and Shifting Burdens in the Dutch Empire, *c.* 1830–1870

At the start of the nineteenth century, both Dutch and Javanese women were highly active in the labour market. This coincided with an ideology towards poverty, work, and economic development that stressed the importance of stimulating—particularly agricultural—labour among the subjects of the emerging Dutch colonial state. In both parts of the world, these views were confined mostly to women from the peasant and labouring classes, but these classes were still predominant in both societies, despite the existence of a sizeable middle class in the urbanised Netherlands. Given the poor condition of the Dutch economy and public finances after wars in both the Dutch East Indies and the Netherlands, plans were drawn up to enhance the industriousness of the urban and rural poor. Those plans stemmed from a common intellectual background, inspired by the enduring pressure on the social welfare system, in the context of economic stagnation since the eighteenth century. Furthermore, tax contributions by households were seen as indispensable for servicing the public debt without having to rely on tariffs or other taxes that affected capital (van Riel 2018, Chapter 7). Therefore, in the 1820s and 1830s the tax burden, either in the form of compulsory cultivation and land rent (Java) or of excises on basic consumables (the Netherlands), was increased.

Without a doubt, the Cultivation System was the most exploitative, as well as the most financially rewarding, example of these economic and fiscal policies under King Willem I.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the arduous economic circumstances, in combination with heavy tax/labour burdens, benefited labouring households neither in the Netherlands nor in Java. To make ends meet, men, women and—to a lesser extent—children all contributed to the household economy, albeit with quite specific tasks according to a division of labour by age and sex. The Cultivation System increased the burden on Javanese women, who to some extent had to replace men in subsistence production. Also, they were involved in cash crop cultivation and, increasingly, in retailing as well as protoindustrial activities. These developments also meant a greater dependence of the household on female labour, which may have increased the bargaining position of women. In the Netherlands, in contrast, after initially increasing in the first few decades of the nineteenth century, female participation rates declined more steeply than in other West European countries, in response to real wages for men rising more quickly than elsewhere. In this chapter, I have argued that these developments were unmistakably related to the millions of guilders that flowed into the Dutch treasury from the Javanese Cultivation System. This revenue permitted a crucial restructuring of state finances, including the opportunity for excise reforms in the 1850s, which demonstrably contributed to higher real wages thereafter.

Like many other European countries, the Netherlands had embarked on a path to sustained economic growth by the end of the nineteenth century. Of course, the colonial gains from the Cultivation System were not solely responsible for this development, but they did constitute an important foundation for the economy and emerging welfare state, or, in the words of van Zanden and van Riel (2004, 178): "the colonial surplus was vital for Dutch public finances". Apart from these colonial links, broader developments in the global economy as well as on the European continent, with which the Netherlands had intensive trade relations, surely played a role too. In exactly the same period we have been discussing, and especially after 1860, structural changes took place in the Dutch economy, which finally managed to industrialise on a large scale. Arguably, however, the industrialisation of the Netherlands, and particularly that of

textiles, one of the first industries to have mechanised, was also linked to its colonial possessions in the Dutch East Indies, which were targeted as an export market for Dutch textile products. Some historians have, moreover, contended that this development totally wiped out indigenous Javanese textile production. Obviously, as textile production traditionally provided work for women in both parts of the empire, this had important implications for the allocation of their labour. For this reason, the next chapter will go on to investigate the processes of industrialisation and de-industrialisation and the consequences for women and the gender division of labour, by focusing on the textile industry in the Netherlands and Java.

Notes

1. I am grateful to Corinne Boter, Heidi Deneweth, Fia Dieteren, Manon van der Heijden, Arthur van Riel, Ariadne Schmidt and Daniëlle Teeuwen for their useful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.
2. National Archive The Hague (NA), Van den Bosch Collection (vd Bosch), inv. no. 58, Benevolent Society, fol. 79v.
3. Ibid., fol. 14v.
4. In the Southern Netherlands for example (Westendorp Boerma 1950, 37) and in France (Gouda 1995, 114).
5. Boomgaard (1981, 1989) has provided some information on Javanese women's changing role in the household, in terms of labour input and reproduction. Elson (1994) provides sketches of women's work in his seminal work on the Cultivation System. The important work of Locher-Scholten (1986, 1987) on women's work in colonial Java mainly pertains to the period after the Cultivation System.
6. Although *corvée* labour was intended only for the male breadwinner (*adjek*), there are indications that forced labour services increased to such an extent that household "dependants" (*afhangelingen*), too, were required to provide these services. Arsip Nasional Jakarta (ANRI), K50—Archief Directeur der Cultures (Cultures), inv. no. 1623, Residential report Tegal 1856.
7. The *Changing Economy in Indonesia* series is a series of publications of statistical source material relating to the Dutch East Indies for the period

1795–1940. It was launched in 1975 by W. M. F. Mansvelt, and the final volume appeared in 1996. See also Chapter 1, Sect. 1.6.

8. NA, Koloniën, 1850–1900, inv. no. 5830, Geheime verbalen, no. 47, 12 February 1852.
9. ANRI, K3—Batavia, inv. no. 2/1, General Report 1837/1838.
10. ANRI, Cultures, inv. no. 1621, Cultuurverslag Preanger Regentschappen 1862 and 1863.
11. ANRI, Cultures, inv. no. 1626, Cultuurverslag Jepara 1652. Cochineal insects were used as a natural red (crimson) dyestuff before the introduction of chemical dyestuffs later in the nineteenth century. Their natural hosts were nopal cacti, which is why it is referred to as nopal/cochineal cultivation. Breeding was highly labour-intensive, which is why women were hired full-time for this.
12. These are most probably underestimates, as Javanese rulers had an interest in reporting lower yields and labour input than the true figures (van Baardewijk 1993, 24).
13. For example, ANRI, K7—Cirebon, inv. no. 2/12, Algemeen jaarverslag 1836; inv. no. 3/8, Algemeen jaarverslag 1850.
14. For example, ANRI, K14—Yogyakarta, inv. no. 276, Algemeen jaarverslag 1836; ANRI, K6—Preanger, inv. no. 7/2, Statistieke opgave over 1840.
15. For example, ANRI, Preanger, inv. no. 5/2, Algemeen jaarverslag 1860.
16. NA, 2 October 2002, Koloniën 1850–1900, inv. no. 559, Verbaal van 27 November 1856, no. 24.
17. ANRI, K1—Banten, inv. no. 101. Algemeen jaarlijks verslag van den staat der Residentie Bantam over 1840; ANRI, K3—Batavia, inv. no. 2/3, Algemeen verslag 1852; inv. no. 324/7, Algemeen verslag 1880.
18. Alexander does note the possibility that women took their infants with them in the fields, or that they adjusted their working hours to allow for breastfeeding. However, this is highly unlikely, because often the working conditions were far too straining to make this possible (Alexander 1984, 368).
19. Erfgoed 's-Hertogenbosch, Stadsbestuur van 's-Hertogenbosch, inv. nos. 5349–5357, Registers waarin per wijk (A-J) en huisnummer namen van bewoners, hun beroep, aantallen van de verdere gezinssamenstelling, bedrag van de belastingaanslag en namen van personeel of dienstboden en het bedrag waarvoor deze werden aangeslagen, staan aangetekend, voorbedrukt en ingevuld, [ca. 1808].

20. A comparison between Volkstelling (1849) and Volkstelling (1899) shows that the number of domestic servants rose over those fifty years from 103,789 (or, almost twenty-eight per cent of all women who were registered as having an occupation) to 189,585 (or, over forty-three per cent of all women who were registered as having an occupation).
21. In fact, as early as 1919 the Germans had designed policies in the broader context of demobilisation to ensure that the many women who had flowed into industrial jobs to replace men during the First World War were rapidly removed from the labour force (Bessel 1993, 140–141).
22. The welfare ratio is a measure introduced by the economic historian Bob Allen (2001). It allows one to compare living standards in different historical societies. A welfare ratio expresses the purchasing power of an adult man's nominal wage, by deflating it at any particular moment in time with a specific basket of consumption goods. A welfare ratio of 1.0 implies that the adult man is, in theory, exactly able to sustain a family of four people—himself, his wife and two children. Boter (2017, Chapter 5) has criticised and revised some of Allen's calculations, but nevertheless concludes that, from around 1895, the male breadwinner wage was on average attainable for industrial and agricultural wage workers.

Appendix 1—Reported Occupation in Marriage Records and Censuses

Period	With occupation	No/unknown occupation	% of total	Compared with previous decade (%)	Census (%)	Estimated FLFP* (author) (%)
1811–1820	47,978	48,219	49.9			
1821–1830	57,907	50,086	53.6	7.5		44.5
1831–1840	62,370	52,849	54.1	1.0		44.9
1841–1850	64,112	60,494	51.5	−5.0		42.7
1851–1860	67,381	74,339	47.5	−8.0	34.9	41.2
1861–1870	65,838	90,223	42.2	−11.5		35.0
1871–1880	61,788	107,411	36.5	−13.5		30.3
1881–1890	52,708	115,782	31.3	−14.5	19.1	26.0
1891–1900	44,320	150,770	22.7	−27.5	24.1	28.0
1901–1910	39,687	178,116	18.2	−20.0		30.0
1911–1920	41,430	222,816	15.7	−14.0	27.4	30.1
1921–1930	32,945	184,027	15.2	−4.0	30.0	33.0
1931–1940	9736	53,821	15.3	1.0		31.0
Total	648,200	1,388,953	31.8			

*FLFP = Female labour force participation. This is defined as the share of women in the age category 15–65 reporting an occupation

Sources Marriagerecords: Kees Mandemakers, Dataset WieWasWie Marriage Certificates Occupations (original values), release 2014_01. Censuses: 1849: http://www.volkstellingen.nl/nl/volkstelling/jaarview/1849/; 1889: http://www.volkstellingen.nl/nl/volkstelling/jaarview/1889/; 1899: http://www.volkstellingen.nl/nl/volkstelling/jaarview/1899/; 1930: http://volkstellingen.nl/nl/volkstelling/jaartellingdeelview/BRT193007/index.html. All last accessed 24 September 2018

Marriage Records

The marriage records in this database were collected over the past two decades by a team of researchers at the following Dutch regional archival institutions: Groninger Archieven, Drents Archief, Historisch Centrum Overijssel, Gelders Archief, Noord-Hollands Archief, Het Nieuwe Land, Zeeuws Archief and Regionaal Historisch Centrum Limburg. This particular 2014 release was made available by the Dutch Central Bureau of Genealogy (CBG) to the International Institute of Social History in September–December 2013. The total number of registrations included

is 2.1 million; the total number of individuals referred to (including parents and witnesses) is 12.7 million.

Marriage records listed the Christian names and surnames of bride and bridegroom, their ages, occupations and municipality of residence. Also, information about the couple's parents (names, ages, municipality and occupations) was given. While these are invaluable sources of information on women's work, some caution is in order when using them to reconstruct female labour force participation. First, marriage records do not tell us whether the bride continued to work during her married life. Therefore, the conclusions of this research cannot be directly applied to the labour market experience of married women. Second, this source provides a lower-bound estimate of the number of working women, as brides might choose not to state an occupation if they knew beforehand, they would leave the labour market after marrying. Third, the records do not capture information on the occupations of women who never married. For this, we are dependent on other sources, such as censuses.

Censuses

There are many reasons to regard information on women's work from the censuses as *minimum* estimate (see also Schmidt and van Nederveen Meerkerk 2012, 79–81). First, married women's market-oriented work was not always considered gainful employment by male census-takers, as it was often part-time, casual, or seasonal work and/or perceived as assisting or supplementing the male breadwinner's economic activity. Censuses were thus inclined to underreport women's work, especially in agriculture (see e.g. van Zanden 1985, 68–69; Horrell and Humphries 1995). Second, households themselves may have been reluctant to report wives or daughters as working, as this was considered a sign of lower-class status (Pott-Buter 1993, 17). For the Netherlands, the 1859 Occupational Census is particularly unreliable, which is why I have not used it here. From 1909 onwards, the Dutch censuses were more complete in recording married women's work (van Zanden 1985, 68) , so the problem of under-recording becomes less of a problem. The rise in participation rates in the first few decades of the twentieth century should be attributed to

the large number of *unmarried* women entering the labour force, in particular in industries such as electronics but also in the service sector (e.g. van Drenth 1991; de Haan 1992).

Author's estimates

For the early nineteenth century, there are no national censuses available, but municipal censuses as described in Schmidt and van Nederveen Meerkerk (2012) has been used to gauge the labour force participation of women prior to the first national census of 1849. For the period 1849–1899, an average was constructed of the under-recorded FLFP in the census years and the overrepresented FLFP in the marriage records, based on the average for the decade preceding the census year. For the censuses of 1920 and 1930, a conservative upward correction factor of ten per cent is assumed. In these years, most brides no longer reported an occupation, even if they worked (Boter 2017, Chapter 2).

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4

Industrialisation, De-industrialisation and Women's Work: Textile Production in the Dutch Empire

This chapter studies the relationships between the processes of industrialisation and de-industrialisation and women's work within a colonial context. It does so by investigating textile production in the Netherlands, as well as in its overseas colony Java. The important position of women in the textile industry—the forerunner of mechanisation in the nineteenth century—has been understudied by economic historians, because their work generally remains unrecorded in the statistical sources. By including women's work, I challenge two common claims in the historiography: first, that Java would have de-industrialised due to Dutch colonial economic policies, and, second, that new colonial markets for textiles in Java directly boosted the lagged industrialisation in the Netherlands. To this end, this chapter first highlights more general developments in industrial policies in the Dutch Empire. It then focuses on textile production in Java and the Netherlands, with a specific emphasis on women's work and the evolution of gender-specific divisions of labour.

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4.1 Textile Production, Colonialism and Gender[1]

As highlighted in Chapter 1, many economic historians have claimed that in the "Age of Empire" countries in the "Global North" increasingly enhanced their labour productivity by mechanising and rationalising production, whereas many regions in the "Global South" experienced de-industrialisation, in the sense that the share of manufacturing in output and employment declined (Pike 2009, 51). According to Jeff Williamson (2013), the Dutch East Indies constituted an extreme case of de-industrialisation in the Global South. Williamson suggests that global market integration accelerated, due to falling transportation costs in the nineteenth century. This deepened existing patterns of specialisation, in which the "poor periphery" (i.e. colonial Indonesia) focused on the export of primary products and raw materials to fuel the growing demands of manufacturers and consumers in the industrialising "core" (i.e. the Netherlands), which began to specialise in the export of manufactures alongside trade and business services. Compared to other "peripheral" regions, including other colonised Southeast Asian countries, the Dutch Indies experienced a very steep terms-of-trade boom, which arguably led to a greater focus on agricultural (cash crop) products and therefore to de-industrialisation (van Nederveen Meerkerk 2017, 1224, Figure 1). As a result, Williamson argued that "globalization must have done bigger damage to industry in Indonesia than almost anywhere else in the non-European periphery" (Williamson 2013, 42).

Many historians of colonial Indonesia, including Howard Dick (1993), Thomas Lindblad (1994), and Jan Luiten van Zanden and Daan Marks (2012, 92–93), have come to similar conclusions, namely that indigenous textile production on Java must have been a story of outright decline. Unlike Williamson, who focuses on market forces (i.e. relative terms of trade for agricultural and industrial products in combination with declining transport costs), these historians place greater emphasis on the specific political economic context to explain the de-industrialisation of Java. According to these authors, this was due to colonial extraction, most notably labour intensification in agriculture following from the Cultivation System, with its extreme focus on cash crop production (see

Chapter 3). Moreover, colonial policies were designed to stimulate imports of Dutch textiles to Java, most importantly by imposing high tariffs on foreign imports and granting covert state subsidies to Dutch textile factories targeting the Javanese market. While I by no means want to downplay the importance of colonial economic policy for the industrial development of Java, this chapter nevertheless argues that the image of straightforward de-industrialisation needs revision and nuance by including the—often unrecorded—textile production of Javanese women.

Apart from affecting the colony, this state involvement—targeted at promoting textile manufacturing in the metropole—would have accelerated the broader process of mechanisation and industrialisation in the Netherlands, which seriously lagged behind other Western European countries in this respect. Just as elsewhere, textile production was one of the first sectors to be rationalised and mechanised in the Netherlands. However, I will argue here that while leading to output growth in the Dutch textile branch—particularly in the region of Twente in the east of the Netherlands—exports to Java did not coincide with large-scale mechanisation. At least for the decades up to 1860, output growth rested largely on the extension of family-based textile labour.

Both in Java and in the Netherlands, women had been involved in textile production for centuries (Hall 1996, 101; van Nederveen Meerkerk 2008). As this chapter will show, they continued to do so over the course of the nineteenth century, but the importance of this fact has been understated in the historiography. Investigating the case of textile production in the Dutch Empire offers a unique opportunity to analyse an understudied question: the impact of colonial connections on developments in women's work, as well as the relations between the gender-specific divisions of labour and economic change, both in the colony and in the metropole. This chapter therefore underscores the importance of studying consumption preferences in creating niche markets for indigenous production, a factor that has also been highlighted for Africa (Austin 2008, 602). Instead of merely focusing on technological explanations for the competitiveness of textile industries as well as for changes in the division of labour between women and men (as in Clark 1987), this chapter offers a more differentiated analysis. It takes into consideration the unintended consequences of colonial policy, as well as consumption patterns. A closer look at the trade

statistics, differentiating between specific types of textiles that were actually imported from the Netherlands into Java, will reveal how the demand for cloth was actually composed, and how this impacted women's work.[2]

4.2 Economic Policies, Industrialisation and De-industrialisation in the Dutch Empire

As noted in earlier chapters, the Netherlands was a relatively late industrialiser. Before the southern provinces (present-day Belgium) seceded from the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1830, industry—mainly mining and textiles—had been concentrated in the south. Indeed, before this secession, Dutch textile imports into Java came predominantly from the Southern Netherlands. In 1824, King Willem I established the Dutch Trading Company (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij—NHM). Formally, the NHM was a private company, in which the king himself took 4000 shares by investing four million guilders.[3] Its broad aim, however, was to enhance Dutch economic interests by promoting industry and reviving international trade. Willem I envisaged the new company as being a successor to the VOC, which had gone bankrupt at the end of the eighteenth century (de Graaf 2012, 39–41). Although it never obtained a full monopoly, the NHM was required to give trading preference to Dutch goods and to use only ships sailing under the Dutch flag; it was also given the exclusive right to handle all government shipping to and from the colonies (van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 112).

Apart from the transportation of cash crops such as coffee and sugar coming from Java to the Netherlands, NHM ships were given priority in carrying textiles from the metropole to the colony. Johannes van den Bosch, Governor General of the Dutch East Indies and inventor of the Cultivation System (see Chapter 3), single-handedly convinced the king that this would provide the opportunity to promote industrialisation in the Northern Netherlands (Mansvelt 1925a, 264–265). The large population of Java, which would be primarily engaged in cash crop production instead of local industry, formed an excellent potential market for this.

Consequently, the preferential trading rights awarded to the NHM were reinforced by the introduction of tariffs of twenty-five to thirty-five per cent for non-Dutch textile imports to the East Indies, whereas the Dutch paid just six per cent in import tax (Van der Eng 2013, 1025–1026).[4]

Simultaneously, numerous measures were taken in the metropole to enhance textile production. After the Belgian secession, these initiatives were redirected towards the northern provinces. For example, Belgian cotton textile producers were encouraged to transfer their businesses to the Northern Netherlands (Jansen 1999, 139). The NHM invited engineers and investors from Belgium and Britain to the Netherlands, particularly to the eastern region of Twente, where there was a tradition of linen weaving and wages were low, in order to create a local cotton industry. In 1833, a weaving school was established in Twente to instruct cottage weavers in the region how to work with the flying shuttle. In addition, there were attempts to concentrate weavers in workshops, although it would take several decades before cottage weaving was entirely abandoned (van Nederveen Meerkerk et al. 2010, 379).

To promote these organisational and technical innovations, the Dutch government subsidised the initiation of cotton textile production all over the Northern Netherlands, although the emphasis was placed on the region of Twente (van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 118). Small textile producers in Twente, in particular, received hidden state subsidies after 1830 if they produced for the Javanese market. These consisted of guaranteed deliveries to the NHM (the "Linen Contracts"), acquired by consignment, for which the government was willing to pay favourable prices (Plemp van Duiveland 1957, 18). According to estimates by van Zanden and van Riel, hidden state subsidies to industry alone amounted to a total of over twenty million guilders in the 1830s. More than half of those went to textile firms. In the early 1840s, another 9.6 million was granted to textile producers (van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 119). As Fig. 4.1 shows, cotton cloth production almost doubled between 1835 and 1845, and most of this was shipped off to Java.

Despite the trading preferences awarded to the NHM, state subsidies and the import tariffs imposed on non-Dutch imports to Java, the boost given to the Dutch textile industry was at best only a partial success (Mansvelt 1925a, 341). On the one hand, some Twente textile firms were

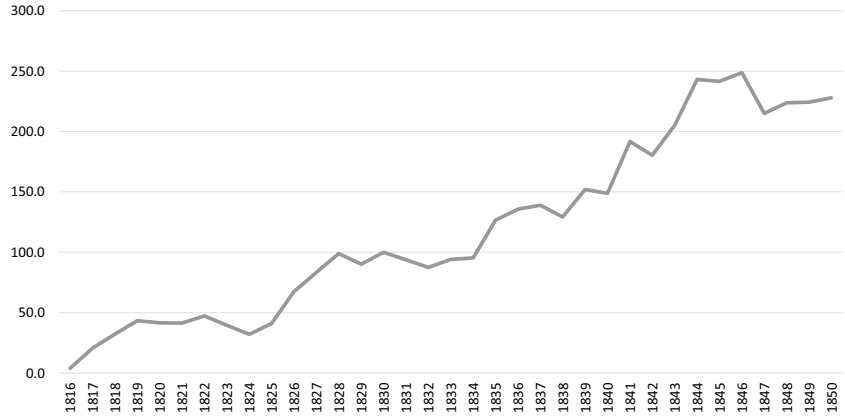

Fig. 4.1 Estimated increase in the volume of cotton cloth production in the Netherlands, 1816–1850 (1830 = 100) (Based on Jansen 1999, 334, column 8)

able to make large profits, and the increased exports to Java reportedly led to thousands of extra jobs being created in the Dutch textile industry in the 1830s and 1840s (van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 142). On the other hand, the mechanisation of textile production in the Netherlands was slow compared to that in other Western European countries. For years, the hidden state subsidies enabled Dutch textile firms to adhere to rather conservative entrepreneurial behaviour instead of investing in new technologies. Cotton-spinning machines, for instance, were introduced in the Netherlands on a large scale only after 1860, and the products of the few that had been introduced in the 1830s and 1840s could not compete with the better-quality, lower-priced British cotton yarns (Jansen 1999, 127). In this sense, colonial policies intended to facilitate industrialisation in the metropole actually hampered innovations in Dutch textile production. Moreover, the state severely distorted the market. Overproduction had become a major problem as early as the 1840s (Mansvelt 1925b, 99). State guarantees for deliveries by Twente entrepreneurs to the East Indies also proved to be costly, leading to massive losses for the NHM, and as a result, they were abolished in 1843 (Jansen 1999, 140).

Turning from supply to demand, there are indications that the consumption of Dutch textiles in Java stagnated after the 1850s. In the 1860s,

the colonial authorities became increasingly concerned about the sluggish reception of Dutch fabrics in Java. It has been estimated that in the period between 1864 and 1868 cotton imports accounted for only a little over one-third of all Javanese textile consumption, implying that indigenous Javanese producers still supplied about sixty-five per cent of all textiles consumed by the Javanese population.[5] This is confirmed by the import statistics, which indicate that consumption of total imports of cotton cloth per capita hardly ever exceeded 0.2 kg before 1870 (see Fig. 4.2), whereas one sarong (a wrap skirt, traditionally worn by indigenous men and women) required around 0.4–0.6 kg of cloth (Van der Eng 2013, 1023). Thus, to even minimally clothe the Javanese population, local production still needed to substantially exceed imports in this period.

The stagnation and decline in Javanese demand for Dutch textiles through the 1850s and much of the 1860s reported in these statistics also surfaces in more qualitative accounts. Complaints were raised about the increasing volume of unused textiles rotting away in Batavia's warehouses. Several investigations were conducted, but these failed to agree on the precise cause of the decline in demand. Some reports blamed high textile prices, combined with the declining welfare of the Javanese population. Others suggested instead that local producers were increasingly competing with imported textiles, although one reporter was puzzled that "as there have been earlier complaints that the native was pulled away from his own business by forced labour services [that is, by the Cultivation System – EvNM], it is remarkable that he finds the time and the opportunity therefor".[6] Evidently, contemporary officials did not reckon with the possibility that women performed the bulk of indigenous textile production (cf. "*his* own business"). Also, insufficient attention was paid to the *quality* of the fabrics, as well as to the consumption preferences of indigenous households. Both of these issues will be further elaborated on in Sect. 4.3.

Turning back to the metropole, the kick-start given to textile-based industrialisation after 1830 may have been induced by government intervention and the NHM, but a truly dynamic textile industry did not develop in the Netherlands before 1865. Only then did the growing domestic market and increasingly integrated European markets serve to accelerate industrial growth in various industrial sectors, including textiles

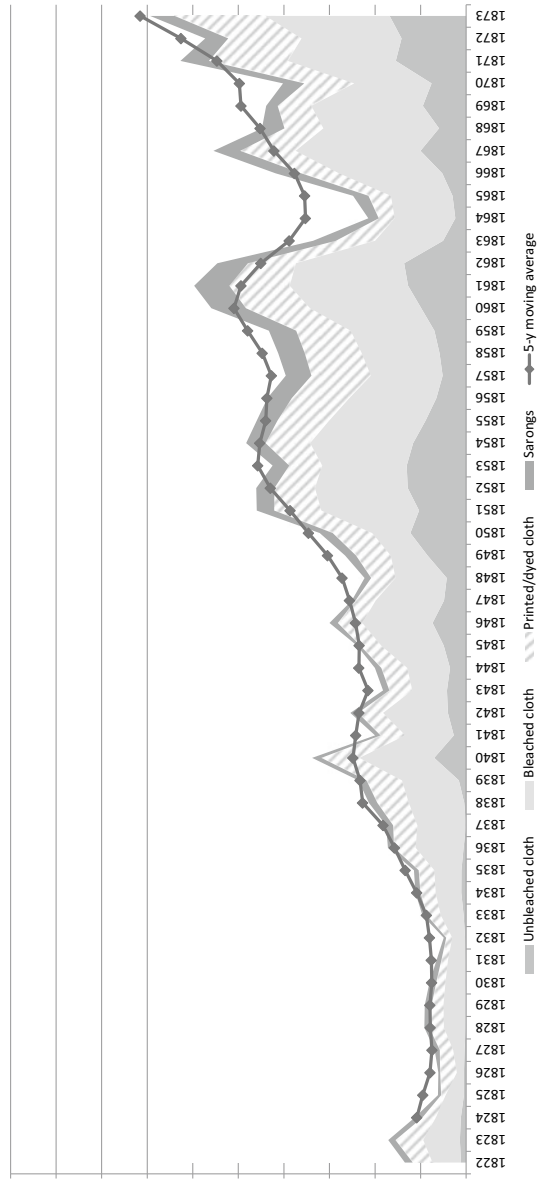

Fig. 4.2 Per capita imports of cotton cloth, in kg per person, Java 1822–1873 (Based on Database Indonesian textiles [Creator: Pierre van der Eng], version 2015)

(van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 295). Moreover, after the liberalisation and growth of world trade in the second half of the nineteenth century, new markets, both in Europe and Asia (including China and British India), were opened up to Twente's textile factories (Plemp van Duiveland 1957, 16). Interestingly, the NHM found alternative markets in West Africa, where the wax-print imitations originally destined for Java became increasingly popular, and would continue to be so until the twenty-first century (Ankersmit 2012, 7). Indeed, the company's 1873 annual report made great play of this surge in globalisation:

> Behold, who could have thought or predicted that in small-town Goor, where in 1834 the first flying shuttle buzzed through the warp, 40 years later French merchants would come to buy its manufactures, and deliver them duty-free to an English port, destined for the African Gold Coast – and yet, it is indeed a fact.[7]

As a consequence of all these developments, trade restrictions in Java were relaxed. In the late 1860s, import tariffs on non-Dutch textiles were lowered and in 1874 equalised. In the early 1880s, the NHM ceased all trading activities and concentrated on finance. Textile imports were left to private trading firms, not only from the Netherlands but also from Great Britain and India (Van der Eng 2013, 1026–1027). All in all, textiles largely disappeared from the radar of Dutch colonial policymaking, and developments were left to the market. Only in the 1920s and 1930s did the state again intervene extensively in Java, this time to enhance local production (e.g. Schwenke 1939, 160; Aten 1952, 195) and to protect both Javanese industry and Dutch imports from increasing competition from Japanese textiles (van Oorschot 1956, 48–49).

With this sketch of fundamental developments in industrialisation in the Dutch Empire in mind, we will now explore how textile-producing households responded to these broader nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century changes in the political economy, focusing first on Java and then on the Netherlands.

4.3 Textile Production and Women's Work in Java

> The indigenous woman in general has the great virtue that she is diligent. Amidst her domestic cares and worries, she finds some moments to tighten the beam of the handloom and weave a couple of strips. The weeping of a child, the homecoming of the husband, the visit of a neighbour, etc., interrupts her labour. Later, however, she bravely takes her work to hand again. (Jasper and Pirngadie 1912, 6)

In the precolonial Indonesian archipelago, cloth had a religious as well as a ceremonial value. Moreover, it served as a marker of socio-economic status. Textiles were also commonly used as currency and frequently in gift giving (Hall 1996, 101). Cloth weaving was primarily associated with women and the "life-giving properties of females", who metaphorically spun the "thread of life" (Watson Andaya 1989, 30–31). This differed, for instance, from India, where cotton weaving was predominantly executed and controlled by men. Traditionally, batik, the traditional labour-intensive Indonesian craft of wax printing cotton cloth with all sorts of artistic patterns, was a particular specialised craft performed by women with royal or elite status (Jasper and Pirngadie 1916, 3).

As noted above, many historians have contended that the intensified imperial relations since the beginning of the nineteenth century, most notably the introduction of the Cultivation System and the preferential textile imports by the NHM, ruined Javanese indigenous textile production. After the introduction of the Cultivation System in 1830, Javanese women would have had less time to produce cloth, as their time and labour were redirected to subsistence agricultural activities, while their husbands were forced to cultivate cash crops (Boomgaard 1981, 17–18). Some cultivation reports also suggest that, in the early days of the Cultivation System, women took up ancillary activities that were more profitable than spinning and weaving, such as preparing and selling food to male plantation workers.[8] Finally, the monetisation that the Cultivation System entailed provided native households with more cash and opportunities to buy cheap imported—especially Dutch—cotton cloth in the market. Mainly these three factors have been suggested to have ruined indigenous

textile production in colonial Indonesia (Matsuo 1970, 8; Lindblad 1994, 91–92).

However, there are many indications that, after a period of disruption during the first few decades of the Cultivation System, local production recovered from the mid-nineteenth century. By looking carefully at the actual composition of textile imports to Java, as well as the consequences for the different stages of local cotton production, I will show that indigenous labourers responded flexibly to several of the policies and developments described above and that no outright de-industrialisation occurred at least until the First World War. In doing so, I will also consider local consumption preferences, the ability of local producers to accommodate these growing niche markets and the changes in the gender-specific division of labour that were inherent in this process.

Spinning

Hand-spinning is a highly labour-intensive task. Depending on the fineness of the thread, it requires four to eight spinners to provide one full-time weaver with sufficient hand-spun yarn (van Nederveen Meerkerk 2008, 243). At the beginning of the nineteenth century, many Javanese women were engaged in spinning alongside their activities in agriculture and the household, and they usually processed the thread they made themselves into simple woven cloth for home use.[9] While most Javanese households had cultivated their own cotton before the nineteenth century, there were already signs of a cotton shortage during the British interregnum on the island (1811–1816). As a consequence, particular regions specialised in cotton cultivation (Matsuo 1970, 11). In later decades, the Dutch on several occasions tried to promote cotton cultivation on Java because it was thought that both the Javanese and the emerging factories in the Netherlands would benefit of becoming less dependent on American or Indian raw materials.[10] However, these attempts did not amount to much. In his yearly report of 1862, for instance, the Director of Cultivations of Priangan mentioned indigenous cotton in this region: "The favourable weather conditions have contributed to its increased planting; it would doubtlessly accrue, were it not that the natives preferred to buy European

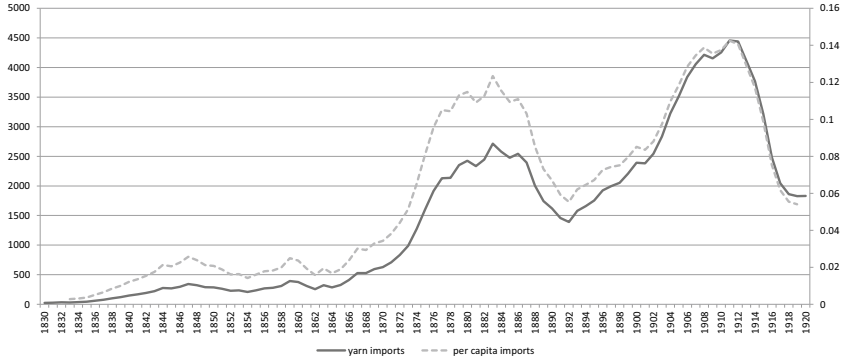

Fig. 4.3 Yarn imports to Java and Madura (×1000 kg) and kg per capita (right-hand axis), 1830–1920, 5-year moving averages (*Sources* Muller [1857], Bijdragen [1887], and Korthals Altes [1991, 107–112]. Population figures: Boomgaard and Gooszen [1991, 37, 82, 119–120] [Table 5])

yarns to weave cloth rather than spinning their own-grown cotton first to threads, which takes a lot of time".[11]

From import statistics, we can, indeed, infer that in the course of the nineteenth century cotton-factory yarns were increasingly in demand on Java, especially from the 1860s (see Fig. 4.3). More qualitative sources confirm this development. From the 1850s to the 1880s, numerous colonial reports mention the growing preference among Javanese women for imported factory yarns. In 1864, the resident of Batavia noted that, due to the high textile prices during the American Civil War, demand for imported cotton goods was low, with the notable exception of cotton yarns.[12] Remarks were made about the low efficiency of hand-spinning ("which with his [*sic*] way of doing proceeds very slowly and demands a lot of time and labour").[13] Related to this, comments were made about the lower price of imported yarns compared to home-spun material,[14] which reflected lower prices of cotton yarns on the world market after the American Civil War. Moreover, factory yarns were finer than the thread Javanese women spun and were preferred for weaving fine cloth (Jasper and Pirngadie 1912, 15).

Although we cannot precisely quantify the decline in spinning among Javanese women, it is certain that this activity largely disappeared in the

second half of the nineteenth century. To what extent did this shift to the use of factory-made thread constitute a loss of industrial capacity? First of all, as noted, hand-spinning was extremely time-consuming. The preparatory process of cotton ginning alone took an adult two full days to produce 1.25 pounds of ginned cotton. Consequently, it required on average ten days of female labour to spin three *tukal* (raps) of thread (Matsuo 1970, 4). If a woman sold her spun yarns in the market, she could make a net profit of only two cents from two days of spinning labour, while weaving a *slendang* (shawl) would yield her seventeen cents for ten days' labour—a seventy per cent higher profit (Verslag 1903, App. L). Second, European spinning machines markedly advanced during this period and were able to deliver a more even and stronger product compared to a few decades earlier. Thus, apart from labour preferences, consumer preferences, too, were at play. In those regions where hand-spinning survived until the beginning of the twentieth century, there was a distinct division of labour, with older women doing the spinning while younger women occupied themselves with the more profitable weaving (Jasper and Pirngadie 1912, 14). Even if the opportunity cost of female labour was traditionally low for hand-spinning, thereby enabling competition with factory-made yarns, the Cultivation System had probably made the labour time of younger women in subsistence and market agriculture more valuable than before (Elson 1994, 277; see also Chapter 3).[15] As I will now argue, female labour was also reallocated to hand-weaving, especially after the most stringent demands of the Cultivation System were increasingly relaxed.

Weaving

The sharp rise in demand for factory-made cotton yarn after 1860 suggests a revival in hand-weaving in colonial Java in the aftermath of the Cultivation System. The cloth was intended for own use, but was also increasingly sold at domestic markets. Moreover, trade statistics show that textile exports from Java to other islands in the East Indies expanded slowly but surely (see van Nederveen Meerkerk 2017, 1228, Figure 2).

Although we have no statistics on the precise number of women involved in weaving, we can gauge their labour input by approximating the

Table 4.1 Estimated woman-years of weaving labour needed to process imported yarn, Java, 1830–1920[a]

	Woman-years	Index (1870 = 100)
1830	2515	4
1840	12,000	21
1850	15,147	26
1860	30,102	53
1870	57,213	100
1880	1,25,507	219
1890	75,412	132
1900	1,78,098	311
1910	3,40,000	594
1920	1,52,129	266

Sources Muller (1857), Bijdragen (1887), Korthals Altes (1991, 107–112), and Dalenoord (1926, 172)
[a]For more details, see the online appendix to van Nederveen Meerkerk (2017): https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/downloadSupplement?doi=10.1111%2Fehr.12424&attachmentId=198509701

number of hours labour required for weaving imported yarn into cloth. Contemporary estimates suggest that the maximum amount of yarn that one Javanese hand-weaver could process in a month was ten kilograms. Depending on the coarseness of the yarn, this yielded a piece of cloth of between seven and nine square metres (Dalenoord 1926, 172; Jasper and Pirngadie 1912, 151–152). Since we have estimated the total volume of imported yarn (Fig. 4.3), we can calculate how many full-time weaving months were required to process this factory yarn into woven cloth (see Table 4.1). If each full-time weaver were able to process ten kilograms per month, she would need 120 kg per year. Thus, to arrive at the minimum number of weavers, we can divide the total annual volume of imported yarn by 120 (assuming full-time weaving activity). However, we know that most weavers worked part-time or seasonally, so the actual number of women involved in weaving will have been much larger. Also, we should reckon with the fact that many weavers still used locally spun yarn until circa 1870. This would of course add thousands of woman-years in textile production to the figures in the table, at least for the decades before 1870.

This resurgence did not occur in all parts of the island; instead, we see increasing specialisation in some areas. For instance, in the regency of Priangan (West Java) thousands of women were reported to be active in weaving, and their cloth was traded both locally and regionally in the 1850s.[16] As late as 1890, the colonial authorities noted about this region that

> There is hardly a quarter, a hamlet, or a house where the clattering of the loom does not resonate. That which the industrious mother of the house produces in excess of what is needed to clothe the family she brings to the market. Indeed, it is only a plain tissue, but due to the reliability of the good and its low price (NLG 1.50 to NLG 3), this indigenous fabric can easily compete with the European calicoes, which testifies to the fact that cheap is expensive. (quoted in Rouffaer 1904, 12—current author's translation)

Other typical textile centres around 1900 were Karawang (West Java), Jepara, Bagelan, Yogyakarta and Madiun (all Central Java) (Matsuo 1970, 15). In addition, Surabaya and Banyumas were mentioned as regencies where "domestic industry [was] highly developed".[17] This increasing specialisation of course shows the development of supra-regional markets and monetisation, which in time made household textile production intended purely for self-use redundant. Despite the more market-oriented character of textile production, labour nevertheless remained organised at the household level. In 1912, Jasper and Pirngadie noted the following about weaving in the Dutch East Indies:

> It has not taken an industrial flight, and is not bothered with a rational division of labour; it has remained an individual handicraft, according to which articles are being obtained of a more pronounced artistry. One can certainly marvel at the fact that, during the application of the various, sometimes complicated techniques, no attention is paid to the inconvenience of the deficient tools. To this ill, the weaver does not at all flinch, even if her work is difficult and protracted; what her tools cannot perform, she does with her fingers. (Jasper and Pirngadie 1912, 5–6)

As Table 4.1 suggests, it was not until between 1910 and 1920 that handweaving activities may have declined in Java, as it is unlikely that women

again shifted to the use of home-spun yarn. Rather, this fast decrease in weaving activity was caused by increasing competition in the international arena, most notably from Japan, which had industrialised spectacularly over the previous decades. In 1914, ninety per cent of all imports to the archipelago still originated from Europe, but competition changed dramatically during the interwar period (Lindblad 1994, 97). For the first time, combined imports of European and Asian cloth started to seriously depress indigenous weaving, which had remained resilient up until the First World War. Although yarn imports to some extent recovered in the early 1920s, levels stabilised at a lower level than before the war. Still, after the First World War, competition with imported woven cloth was maintained to some degree by specialising in the production of colourful sarongs, for which new indigenous markets evolved (Dalenoord 1926, 173; Aten 1952, 196). From the early twentieth century, a divide emerged between consumer demand in West Java and the north coast of the island, where inhabitants adopted the West-Javanese habit of wearing colourfully handwoven sarongs, and Middle and East Java, where men and women primarily wore batik sarongs (van Warmelo 1939, 10). Again, local production met specific regional consumption desires that imported factory-made cloth could not satisfy.

For indigenous hand-weaving to continue to be able to compete in a context of increasing imports from Japan after the First World War, a restructuring of labour organisation was necessary. In the 1920s, handloom weaving was increasingly organised under a "proto-industrial" *Verlag* system (called *bakul*), in which entrepreneurs, mostly Dutch and Chinese, put out yarns in the region to be woven by women in their own households. The women no longer sold the finished product themselves, but received a wage in return for their weaving activities (Matsuo 1970, 36–40). For the first time in history, the Dutch started to become concerned with promoting indigenous textile production in Java. In 1921, the Textielinrichting Bandung (T.I.B., Bandung Textile Institute) was established. Here, a specific loom was developed for indigenous weavers; it was a combination of an old Dutch and a British-Indian handloom, which was semi-automatic because it used a non-electric flying shuttle. The productivity of this new "T.I.B. loom" was much higher than that of the traditional loom, the *gedogan*. In the 1920s, women from the countryside were sent to this institute

Table 4.2 Number of handlooms and power looms in Java, 1930–1938

Year	No. of handlooms	Increase (1930 = 100)	No. of power looms	Increase (1930 = 100)
1930	257	100	44	100
1931	524	204	44	100
1932	777	302	44	100
1933	1299	505	46	105
1934	1622	631	258	586
1935	3919	1525	414	941
1936	4376	1703	668	1518
1937	11,994	4667	2013	4575
1938	30,028	11,684	4200	9545

Sources van Warmelo (1939, 9) and Van der Eng (2013, 1046)

to receive training in new weaving techniques in order to disseminate this knowledge in their local villages (Aten 1952, 195).

Stimulated by this initiative, weaving activities again expanded in the area around Bandung and specifically in the town of Majalaya. The first large weaving mill with handlooms was established there in 1929, and over the next decade, the textile industry quickly spread in the area, with the number of workshops rapidly increasing. As Table 4.2 shows, Indonesian textile production initially ramped up in the early 1930s, owing in part to the T.I.B. semi-automatic handloom, while fully fledged mechanisation using power looms would not be introduced until the late 1930s.

This upsurge in workshop production coincided with a rapid decline in agricultural prices during the Great Depression, which drove many landless workers off the plantations and into textile production. Increasingly, young men were taught how to use the T.I.B. loom, thus altering the age-old traditional division of labour in weaving (Schwenke 1939, 162). The surge of unemployment in agriculture may explain why, for the first time in the history of Indonesian textile production, men turned to work as weavers. Women still accounted for a majority of workers in the early 1930s, but men continued to enter the profession in growing numbers (Antlöv and Svensson 1991, 115–116). The gender division of labour changed even more drastically with the mechanisation of the textile industry in the late 1930s. While the 1930 Census reported that only

twenty per cent of all workers in the textile industry (including cloth printers) were male, in 1941 the large mechanised firms employed fewer than 20,000 women out of a total workforce of over 61,000 (Volkstelling 1930, 94–95; Van der Eng 2013, 1045–1046). Thus, on the eve of the Japanese takeover of Indonesia, the proportion of women in the *mechanised* weaving industry was less than a third.[18]

It should be noted, though, that these statistics include only semi-automatic handlooms and not the "primitive *desa* looms", as a contemporary called them (Schwenke 1939, 160, fn. 1). The traditional *gedogan* looms used by female weavers in their homes are thus not taken into account, which underlines my point that contemporary statistics seem to have been predominantly concerned with male labour, and that women's work was generally underreported in the colonial sources. According to some postcolonial estimates, there were still around 500,000 handlooms in Indonesia directly after the Second World War, in addition to the semi-automatic looms mentioned in Table 4.2 (Van der Eng 2013, 1043).

Cloth Printing

While Javanese women started to use factory-produced yarns for weaving, a probably even more spectacular development occurred in cloth printing (batiking) from the 1850s. Batiking involved the meticulous process of hand-painting cloth with beeswax, alternated with several dyebaths, resulting in differentiated colour tones of the fabric, which could take days and even weeks to finish. The use of imported cloth for traditional cloth printing has a long history, as even in the precolonial period women typically did not print on the coarser locally woven cloth, but relied on fabrics imported from India, which had a higher thread density, and were thus very suitable for treatment with beeswax (Clarence-Smith 2009, 130). As the import statistics in Fig. 4.4 illustrate, during most of the colonial period *unfinished* bleached and unbleached cloth in particular were imported, and this was subsequently labour-intensively hand-printed by indigenous textile workers to yield the traditional batik. After 1860, however, unfinished imported cloth was increasingly processed using more efficient block-printing (*cap* batik) methods.

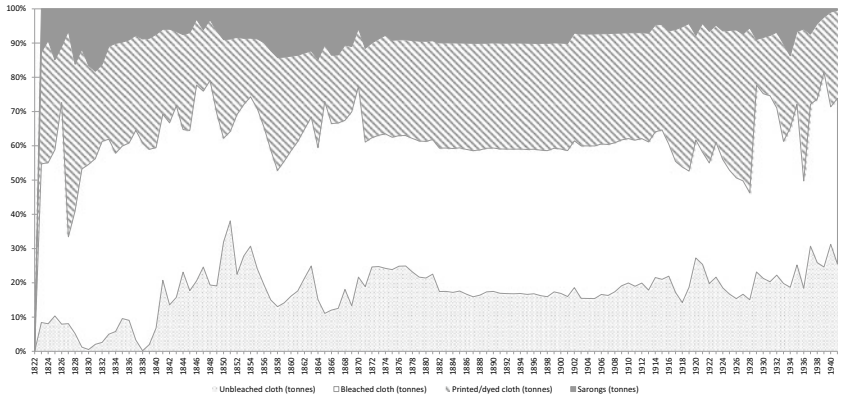

Fig. 4.4 Composition of cloth imports to Java, 1822–1940 (Based on Database Indonesian textiles [Creator: Pierre van der Eng], version 2015)

During the British interregnum in Java at the beginning of the nineteenth century, attempts had been made to export imitation wax prints to the island. In his *The History of Java*, Sir Stamford Raffles, Governor General, noted that:

> A very extensive and valuable assortment of these cottons, imitated after the Javan and Malayan patterns, was recently imported into Java by the East India Company, and on the first sale produced very good prices; but before a second trial could be made, the natives had discovered that the colours would not stand, and the remainder were no longer in demand. (Raffles 1817, 216–217)

Over the following decades, the Dutch also tried to ship dyed textiles and ready-made sarongs to Java, but most of the cloth (over sixty per cent in most years during the entire colonial period, see Fig. 4.4) remained unfinished. This was probably related to continuing problems with the poor quality of the factory-dyed cloth, which was confirmed in NHM reports in the 1860s.[19] Apart from the quality of the fabrics, particular tastes in patterns and styles played a role in slack demand. In his 1857 treatise on the textile trade to Java, Hendrik Muller, a Rotterdam merchant and publicist, claimed that "while [Dutch textile producers] have researched

and satisfied the demands of Dutch buyers, they have not equally related themselves to the buyer on Java" (Muller 1857, 76). Though the NHM archives suggest that some manufacturers did try to do so, for instance by producing headscarves with Koran texts translated by academics in the Netherlands into Arabic characters,[20] these attempts did not amount to much, not least because of the reported "unwillingness of Mohammedan priests to recommend these headscarves to the faithful Mussulman".[21]

Later, in 1889, the colonial authorities reported that European factories were unable to imitate the batik sarongs according to popular Javanese tastes. Rather, these were produced by numerous Javanese women, especially in Central and East Java, who were supervised by elite women, sometimes even by women of European descent.[22] In some places, European wax prints did find a small market, but "only among the poor, as no village head, no self-respecting native, wears imitation batik" (Rouffaer 1904, 25). Depending on the quality of their maker, the batiks were relatively expensive, and they were particularly desired by the higher-ranked in Javanese society, as well as among European ladies.[23] From around 1860 onwards, however, local craftspeople developed a new type of cloth that was more affordable than batik, yet of higher quality than the imported European wax prints. The new product, probably adapted from block-printing techniques in British India, was called *cap* (pronounced "chap", Malay for "stamp") batik. It was produced in a more standardised fashion than traditional batik. Its labour intensity was much lower: an experienced worker could produce about twenty printed sarongs per day, whereas it took twelve to fifteen days to batik one piece of cloth from start to completion (Jasper and Pirngadie 1916, 79). *Cap* batiks were thus much cheaper than traditional batik cloth, and they could compete favourably with European imports. In 1870, a colonial official noted that:

> The time is gone that the native focused exclusively on making batik as a form of art, which was of exquisite beauty but had to be recompensed likewise. Nowadays, he delivers products in this genre that, in terms of their value for money, are in no sense inferior to those fabricated in Europe. To sustain competition with him, the European batik producer will need to be able to deliver his manufactures for a much fairer price.[24]

Nevertheless, *cap* batik could not entirely compete with traditional batik, as around 1900 it was observed that "every native who can somehow afford it chooses the real batiks over the *tjap*, and the *tjapped* cloth over the factory-made ones" (Rouffaer 1904, 26–27). Both quotes clearly indicate that indigenous preferences played a large role in the continuing demand for locally produced textile goods. Some contemporaries commented that this demand for hand-painted batik was related to "the love of the Javan for monstrous and impossible shapes", which did not accord as well with the symmetry of the stamping technique as the more whimsical results of traditional batik (Rovers 1873, 420).

With the introduction of block-printed *cap* batik, a new division of labour also emerged: the new technology was practised solely by men. Perhaps this break with tradition in wax-print production relates to the fact that the new technique was adapted from India, where calico printers had been male for centuries (Riello 2010). Nevertheless, the introduction of *cap* block-printing did not drive women from the labour market, but rather boosted demand for batik in general, thus creating opportunities to participate in textile production for men and women alike (de Kat Angelino 1930, xiv). For instance, in 1889 it was noted that "Everywhere in the *desas* one finds the housewife at the batik rack to manufacture for herself or her housemates, often also for commerce, the usual garments".[25] Cautious estimates suggest that in the district of Solo (present-day Surakarta, Central Java) and the residency of Pekalongan (Central North Java) alone, the annual production of hand-painted and *cap* batiks amounted to five million and two million guilders, respectively (Jasper and Pirngadie 1916, 10). In the 1905 Census, over 800,000 women in Java were listed as working in industry, at least half of whom will have been engaged in textile production.[26] Because this census is very incomplete and gives only aggregate figures per sector, this represents only a very minimal figure, which includes many women weavers, but given that batik was more widespread than weaving at the time, we can assume that hundreds of thousands of women were active in this craft at the beginning of the twentieth century.

In subsequent decades, colonial reports in many residencies noted a decline in batik activities, but, as Van der Eng has also remarked, this is probably due to a concentration in particular regions rather than an

actual decline (Van der Eng 2013, 1040). In 1924, more than 1000 batik workshops were reported in the four residencies of Yogyakarta, Surakarta, Kediri and Pekalongan alone, most of them employing in excess of ten workers (Fievez de Malines van Ginkel 1926, 163). Apart from these more concentrated forms of production, women continued to make wax prints in their own homes, but as with the domestic weaving industry, their numbers were unfortunately not recorded.

To conclude, women were and remained very important in the Javanese textile industry throughout the colonial period, because demand for locally produced cloth continued to be high. Although the role of women in hand-spinning quickly waned due to the import of factory yarns, their activities in weaving and batik were in fact stimulated by imports of yarns and white cloth. Interestingly, in some sectors, such as semi-mechanised weaving in workshops, and *cap* batik, Javanese men took up textile jobs for the very first time. As we will now see, several shifts in the gender-specific division of work also occurred in the Netherlands over the course of the nineteenth century.

4.4 Textile Production and Women's Work in The Netherlands

In Europe, cotton textiles had been virtually unknown until the sixteenth century. Spinners and weavers processed wool, flax and hemp into—generally coarse—fabrics. A pronounced division of work came into being, in which women dominated the more labour-intensive preparatory stages of textile production, such as the carding, hackling and spinning of raw materials—bottlenecks in the production process before mechanisation—and men were occupied in the higher-added-value processes, such as weaving, cloth shearing and dyeing. In the Netherlands, these finishing stages had mostly become urban artisanal work, and craft guilds tried to monopolise and regulate production and to set rules against married women being accepted as independent artisans (van Nederveen Meerkerk 2006).

As global trade expanded during the sixteenth century, the lighter and more colourful cotton fabrics from India became increasingly popular among European elites. Because the techniques for producing cot-

ton thread and cloth were not available in Europe, artisans realised that they had to find alternative ways to compete (Lemire and Riello 2008, 893–894). Around 1600, lighter types of cloth (such as woollen serge) as well as mixed woollen-cotton or linen-cotton fabrics emerged, first in the Southern and Northern Netherlands, and later in England. For much of the seventeenth century, the Dutch town of Leiden became the leader in the production of woollen cloth for the world market. This greatly affected gender-specific labour relations in the Netherlands. Wage labour and forms of subcontracting in textiles increased for both men and women. With the demand for yarn growing, the labour force participation of women increased significantly, both in the textile towns and in the countryside (van Nederveen Meerkerk 2008). Despite these developments, both the woollen and linen industries declined in the course of the eighteenth century, as imported cotton fabrics became ever more popular. The value of imported cottons and linens increased by around 62% between 1753 and 1792 (van Riel 2018, 45). At the same time, however, rising demand for cotton goods led to an increase in the number of cotton workers within the Dutch Republic towards the end of the early modern period, especially weavers of mixed linen-cotton fabrics, although technology lagged behind developments in Britain.

Statistical sources at the beginning of the nineteenth century nevertheless still report almost 10,000 wool spinners, 16,500 flax spinners and 2500 cotton spinners in the Northern Netherlands,[27] most of whom were women. In addition, there were almost 2800 wool weavers, 3350 linen weavers and over 6000 cotton weavers—predominantly men (Jansen 1999, 133, 136–137). Before the mechanisation of textile production, the proportion of female labour in basic cloth production amounted to around 70%. By 1849, this relationship had been reversed, with the census reporting a little over 22,000 male and only 11,600 female spinners and weavers (Volkstelling 1849). What had happened? Mechanisation can only go so far to explain this reversal of gender relations in the textile labour force during this period. As we have already noted, the number of cotton mills in the Netherlands was modest before 1860, and weaving mechanised gradually only after 1850. Most textile firms used imported cotton yarns from Britain, which were finer as well as cheaper than the yarns produced in the Netherlands (Jansen 1999, 127). As factory yarns thus replaced

hand-spinning, a bottleneck in the production process was solved, and weaving received an impulse.

For a long time, many textile firms still worked with semi-automatic handlooms, and many weavers continued to work at home. As late as 1857, the NHM's annual report stated that, despite increasing efforts to introduce power looms in the Twente region, "The handloom still remains, in many families, a beneficent makeshift, for thousands of indigent labourers".[28] Interestingly, both boys and girls were trained to work with the semi-automatic loom from the 1830s, and for the first time in centuries, weaving was practised by men and women in the Twente home industry (de Groot 2001, 177). This appears to have been a transitional phase, which related to the fact that thousands of married women had lost employment in hand-spinning, but they still needed to be productive in order to contribute to the modest family income. Moreover, Twente was a rural region, where most households were still able to work a plot of land, and there are indications that the additional income provided by domestic hand-weaving formed a source of cash for daily, sometimes even luxury, expenses, especially in the slack winter season. As was noted in 1858: "in every family, one or multiple members are generally to be found, who employ the handloom exclusively to counter particular domestic necessities, and especially to obtain a constant penny to pay taxes, or to acquire salt, soap, *or colonial wares* [italics EvNM]".[29]

Thus, whereas the subsidised exports to Java did not initially lead to many innovations in the Dutch textile industry between 1824 and 1860, it did boost output in the home industry, either because of the necessity to bring in extra subsistence income faced by some households or because it allowed them to consume some minor luxuries. Most importantly, it led to shifts in the traditional division of labour within the household resulting from only limited technological change—the introduction of the semi-automatic loom. Apparently, household strategies striving for additional cash income that women and children could no longer gain from hand-spinning at home were the prime driver behind this change. Obviously, not all women who had previously been engaged in hand-spinning could resort to hand-weaving, as hand-spinning was much more time-consuming. This to a large extent explains the reversal of gender relations in the textile industry before 1850. Another share of the women

who no longer spun shifted to the garment industry, making and mending clothes, which, according to the census of 1849, was actually the largest employer for adult women after agricultural work and domestic service.[30]

When, after the 1850s, technologies changed more rapidly and the power loom was progressively introduced into the textile factories, both men and women were hired as weavers (Boter 2017a, 67). Evidently, women operating steam-driven looms were no less productive than men. In 1858, for instance, the Gelderman weaving company had organised a competition between ten male and ten female weavers to produce the most cloth within a certain amount of time; the competition was won (albeit narrowly) by the latter.[31] Likewise, there were no evident physical or productivity reasons to allocate mechanised spinning specifically to either sex. Nevertheless, from the 1860s, when steam-driven spinning finally took off in the Netherlands, it was mostly men who operated the machines, again contrary to traditional gender-specific divisions of labour. Only boys and men worked at the "self-actors" that were introduced in this period, not because women or girls could not operate them or because they would be less efficient, but because organised labour in Lancashire had successfully managed to shut out female workers, and the Dutch adopted this division of labour along with the machines. In contrast, the ring-spinning machines, which were introduced on a large scale in the Netherlands in the early 1900s, were operated primarily by young women, again after the British example (de Groot 2001, 365–367). Thus, the Twente factories not only took over the British machines, but also adopted their *institutionalised* gender divisions of labour (van Nederveen Meerkerk et al. 2010, 379–382).

Another, quite gender-specific, consequence of technological and organisational changes in textile production was that the women and girls working in Dutch factories were predominantly *unmarried*. For the factory owners, young unmarried women constituted a source of cheap labour, who as spinners and weavers were paid less than men for the same work, even if some of this wage differential related to the fact that women operated fewer machines at the same time (Boter 2017a, 118). For the unmarried women involved, factory work was often a welcome alternative to working unpaid on the family farm or in domestic service. Despite the harsh working conditions in many factories, girls earned more

in cash and had relatively more freedom while working outdoors under the supervision of a factory overseer instead of their own parents or a master or mistress (Janssens 2014, 91). Although concerns were raised about the morality of the fact that girls and boys worked under the same roof in factories, owing to the presumed rough manners and bad language of the boys and the likelihood of sexual relationships occurring, many employers as well as labouring families nevertheless wanted girls to work in the factories, because they were a cheap and docile labour force and they provided additional income for their family at a time when many working-class families still had to struggle to get by (Boter 2017b, 88).

Attitudes towards *married* women working in the factories were less favourable. Although it was acknowledged that they formed a minority among the female personnel, some contemporaries regarded factory work by married women as a serious problem. This related to the more generally perceived moral problems of unrelated men and women working closely together, as well as to the idea that housewives needed to avoid working outdoors in order to be able to provide a stable home (see also Chapter 6). In 1873, the NHM agent commented that boys and girls from the labouring classes "rushed into mostly unreasonable marriages",[32] which were, of course, encouraged by the fact that both sexes frequently interacted at the factory. Clerics in particular were concerned with the moral state of factory labourers. In 1890, Alphons Ariëns, chaplain in the city of Enschede, remarked for instance that:

> In my opinion, there are more in the factories than should be and I would desperately wish that not the law but private initiative would reduce the number of women in factories. The general feeling is […] that the presence of married women in the factory does not work well in a moral respect. […] Also, the material well-being of the household is in most cases more harmed than advanced, even if on Mondays there is six to seven guilders more on the table; order and decency are far to be found and an indecent household is an expensive household; for mending and making clothes there is no time. (Arbeidsinspectie 1890, 18–19)

Nevertheless, married women were still to be found in the factories in the final decades of the nineteenth century, either as permanent workers or in casual work in times of greater labour demand (de Groot 2001, 376).

Moreover, although the proportion of married women working in factories actually declined in this period, many textile producers outsourced specific tasks to home workers, often married women, who, in addition to their domestic duties, bundled yarn or sewed sacks at home (Boter 2017a, 67). The instability of the Dutch textile industry in these decades, combined with the inability at that stage to mechanise all production processes, ensured an on-and-off demand for flexible labour, whereas on the supply side households could still make good use of the extra income generated by women.

Despite the importance of women for the Dutch textile industry, as well as the importance of textiles for Dutch women's work, the 1899 Census reveals that—as in 1849—men accounted for a much higher proportion of workers in the textile sector than women: seventy per cent and thirty per cent, respectively. This was in sharp contrast to what we have seen in the case of Java and also compares unfavourably with the participation of women elsewhere in Europe (Schmidt and van Nederveen Meerkerk 2012). Only in the textile regions did the participation of both young unmarried and married women remain relatively high compared with the average participation of Dutch women. However, these higher regional participation rates did not translate into an increase in the proportion of women in the labour force as a whole, due to the relatively overall modest degree of industrialisation in the Netherlands generally (Boter 2017a, Chapter 2).

In the first few decades of the twentieth century, the overall proportion of women active in Dutch industry stabilised at around thirty-seven per cent (Plantenga 1993, 82), whereas their share in the total labour force rose again, as we have seen in Chapter 3. This can be attributed to the expansion of the service sector during those years, which led to the creation of more highly skilled and attractive white-collar jobs for women, such as clerking in the financial and business sector (de Haan 1992), as well as to opportunities in retailing. Regardless of the stagnation of women's work in industry, however, employment opportunities in textile production continued to grow during the 1920s (see Table 4.3).

For women, as well as for men, the number of jobs increased considerably. Even relative to the growth in the total working population in this period, the "roaring twenties" still offered new possibilities in the Dutch

Table 4.3 Men and women employed in the Dutch textile industry according to the 1920 and 1930 censuses

	1920			1930		
	N	% of all employed	As % of branch	*N*	% of all employed	As % of branch
Men	43,230	7.0	65.7	56,870	7.8	65.5
Women	22,559	17.0	34.3	29,929	19.6	34.5
Total	65,789	8.8		86,799	9.8	

Source Plantenga (1993, 88)

textile factories, predominantly for unmarried girls. Nevertheless, the proportion of men relative to women working in textiles hardly changed and was similar to that in earlier decades, suggesting that little changed in the division of labour within the sector.

Nevertheless, there are indications that in times of severe crisis this pattern of gender segregation was disrupted, at least in cotton production and usually temporarily. In 1930, for instance, the Dutch Cotton Spinning Mill NKS (*Nederlandsche Katoenspinnerij*) in the town of Hengelo in Twente fired male spinners operating self-actors and hired fourteen-year-old girls (the youngest current labour legislation allowed) to prevent further losses during the economic crisis. To justify this shift, the NKS stated that: "we have ceased promotions, transferred several workers, and substituted them by girls, as we fear that in the future the self-actors will disappear and ring-frames will replace them" (quoted in de Groot 2001, 363—current author's translation). In other words, the male prerogative inherited from the Lancashire mills had now been broken, on the grounds not of technological change, but of the *prospect* of such a development. In other parts of the Netherlands, too, male labourers were fired on a large scale and replaced by—often young, unmarried—women. The national Director of the Dutch Labour Inspectorate noted: "in industrial centres one sees the questionable phenomenon of housefathers being unable to find employment and [thus] living off the earnings of their daughters".[33]

To conclude, the gradual introduction of cotton cloth production in the Netherlands altered long-standing patterns of gender-specific labour relations in the textile industry. These changes were not in the first

place induced by mechanisation *pur sang*, but should rather be seen in the light of broader technological developments—including a different *organisation* of production. This involved, for instance, moving particular production processes to factory halls, in combination with introducing semi-automatic handlooms, which temporarily promoted cottage hand-weaving by all family members. When new machinery was introduced, such as the self-actors, and later the ring-spinning machines, it was usually not a question of the suitability of a particular sex for the task in terms of dexterity or productivity. Rather, path-dependent divisions of labour were adopted—in these cases, from Lancashire—together with the machines. Only severe crises seem to have been able to break such institutionally defined patterns. Finally, whereas textiles were relatively important for Dutch women's work throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this did not contribute to a substantial expansion in female labour force participation, as occurred in many other European countries. The Netherlands industrialised too late, and the industrialisation that did take place was too regionally confined to enable such a shift nationwide. Moreover, the women who did work in textile factories were predominantly unmarried. With the disappearance of hand-spinning, and later hand-weaving, married women disappeared from textile production altogether, a development different from what occurred in Java over the same period. Let us now turn to a more systematic comparison of both parts of the Dutch Empire.

4.5 Economic Change, Women's Work and the Unintended Consequences of Colonial Policies

This chapter has challenged two conventional wisdoms that have dominated the economic historical literature on the Dutch Empire: first, that Dutch colonial policies ruined indigenous textile production in Java, and second, that the growing consumer market in Java was essential for the metropole to industrialise. In this sense, the economic policies pursued by the Dutch colonial state only partially had the effects intended, both

with regard to the development of Java as an export market for textiles produced in the metropole and to kick-starting industrialisation in the Netherlands. In fact, at the peak of the exports of textiles to Java, industrial development in the Netherlands slowed down (see also van Riel 2018). Of course, eventually, the Netherlands did experience structural change, including the mechanisation of textile production, but this did not genuinely take off until after the main focus of Java as the primary export market had been abandoned and the innovation-obstructive subsidies of the state to the NHM had been abolished.

At the same time, however, I have illustrated that colonialism *did* have consequences—albeit largely unintended—for women's work and for the gender-specific division of textile work in both parts of the Dutch Empire. In Java, imports of European factory-made yarns and—largely unbleached—cotton cloth rapidly redirected women's labour from hand-spinning to the less time-consuming and more profitable hand-weaving. Moreover, indigenous cloth finishing was boosted by these imports in several ways. First of all, traditional batik provided increasing work opportunities for women. Second, to compete with the cheaper (but qualitatively less valuable) imitation wax prints, new block-printing techniques were introduced which, for the first time, drew large numbers of Javanese men into textile production. All of these new shifts in labour divisions were to a large extent driven by the flexibility of married women's labour, as well as by the consumption preferences of the indigenous population—two factors that have often been neglected in the economic history of colonial Java.

Turning to the case of the Netherlands, technological change in the broader sense—small technical innovations, as well as changes in the organisation of production—altered the age-old gender division of labour in textile production. Here, the early cotton industry expanded due to subsidised exports to the colony. However, this did not immediately entail large-scale mechanisation because the guaranteed purchase of part of their produce did not encourage textile entrepreneurs to make large investments in new machinery. Instead, production would continue to depend largely on relatively low-paid hand-weavers in the cottage industry until at least the 1860s. Yet during this same period, the availability of imported factory-made yarn increased, leading married women and

their daughters—traditionally spinners—to take up previously male-dominated weaving. The cloth that these Dutch home weavers made was not geared as closely to Javanese consumption preferences as policymakers had originally intended. It was mostly unbleached and white cotton cloth that was exported to the colony, where it would be further processed and dyed, thus generally value added outside the Dutch industry.

With the introduction of the flying shuttle in weaving in Twente in the 1830s, Dutch girls and women were familiarised with this new form of handloom weaving alongside boys and men. One could argue that such technological changes in textile production provided the momentum for changes in traditional divisions of labour. In this respect, there were parallels between the metropole and the colony, albeit with sometimes opposite effects. For instance, when, almost a century later, Dutch engineers finally introduced the semi-automatic loom in colonial Java, men and boys entered the weaving profession for the first time. Sometimes, technological innovations adopted from elsewhere altered long-standing gender-specific division of labour, as we have seen in block-printing techniques in Java coming from India, where cloth printing had been a predominantly male profession, or the adoption of Lancashire labour divisions when spinning machines were adopted in the Netherlands.

All in all, this chapter has shown that colonialism and textile production in the Dutch Empire were highly interwoven, but in ways that differ from what most of the existing historiography suggests. Certainly, not all developments in the textile industry on both sides of the empire can be explained in terms of colonial connections. Local labour market conditions and consumption patterns also strongly influenced how textile producers responded at the household and the enterprise level to more global developments. The position of—especially married—women was very important in these responses, both in Java and in the Netherlands. The relatively low opportunity cost of their labour, combined with their flexibility, especially when their tasks could be performed in the vicinity of the home, was crucial to the growth of production in handwoven cotton textile during much of the period considered. To what extent the additional income they provided was crucial to the sheer survival of their families, or whether it allowed for new, more respectable, patterns of con-

sumption of non-necessities by the household, will be the subject of the next chapter.

Notes

1. This chapter contains thoroughly revised parts of earlier published work: van Nederveen Meerkerk (2017, 2018). I am greatly indebted to Pierre Van der Eng for providing me with his dataset on Indonesian textiles. I should like to express my thanks, too, to Corinne Boter, Kate Frederick, Michiel de Haas and Arthur van Riel, who read earlier versions of this chapter.
2. Van der Eng (2013) has also carried out such an analysis, coming to more realistic estimates of indigenous textile production in Java. However, he does not look at the consequences for labour relations, nor does he expand on the important role of women in the different stages of the production process.
3. These private investments by the Dutch king represented almost fifteen per cent of the initial capital of the NHM, de Graaf (2012, 39).
4. After serious protest by the British, the tariffs for Dutch imports to Java were raised to 12.5% in 1836.
5. National Archive, The Hague (NA), Ministerie van Koloniën 1850–1900, inv. no. 2362, Verbalen, no. 80, 26 November 1870.
6. NA, Koloniën 1850–1900, 2362, Verbalen, no. 80, 26 November 1870.
7. NA, NHM, inv. no. 5271, Report 1873.
8. Arsip Nasional di Republik Indonesia, Jakarta (ANRI), Residential Archives Besuki, "Statistiek van Bezoekie [1836]"; ANRI, Residential Archives Bagelen, "Statistiek der Residentie Bagelen [1837]".
9. NA, Ministerie van Koloniën 1800–1850, inv. no. 3042, Statistiek van Java en Madoera in het algemeen, door Van Beusichem, 1824. "… and one also mostly saw the *desa* [village – EvNM] women busy weaving cloths and spinning cotton yarns".
10. ANRI, Cultures, Verslag Preanger 1856; NA, Koloniën 1850–1900, inv. no. 892, Verbaal 3 December 1859, no. 20/1504; Verslagen van de hoogleraar de Vriese, belast met het onderzoek naar cultures. de Vriese stated that: "This cultivation would become doubly advantageous; because the internal trade of Java would find a mild source of wealth in

it, and as the product increases in soundness, so the fatherland's factory could gain more from it".

11. ANRI, Cultures, Priangan 1862.
12. ANRI, Residential Archives Batavia, 350/7, AV Batavia 1864, 99.
13. ANRI, Cultures, Priangan 1862.
14. ANRI, Batavia, inv. no. 324.1, Verslag over 1874.
15. A similar process occurred in the mid-nineteenth century to late nineteenth century in India under the influence of the rise of cash crop agriculture in the colonial period, but Haynes reports that there were fewer labour market alternatives for women, as Indian weavers were generally male, Haynes (2012, 44–47).
16. ANRI, Residential Archives Priangan, inv. no. 3/12, Algemeen Verslag 1849 and 30/4, Statistiek 1852.
17. NA, Handelingen van de Staten-Generaal 1814–1940, inv. no. 197, Koloniaal Verslag 1889, Bijlage PPP.
18. It is unclear, though, how many women still wove at home. However, as there was mention of overproduction by the mechanised industry already, it is highly unlikely that the remaining domestic weavers were able to compete with mechanised textile production for the market at this point in time.
19. NA, NHM, inv. no. 5272, Report 1863; Report 1866.
20. NA, NHM, inv. no. 5272, Report 1863.
21. NA, NHM, inv. no. 5273, Report 1873.
22. NA, Handelingen, inv. no. 197, Koloniaal Verslag 1889, Bijlage PPP.
23. NA, Handelingen, inv. no. 197, Koloniaal Verslag 1889, Bijlage PPP.
24. NA, Koloniën 1850–1900, 2362, 26 November 1870.
25. NA, Handelingen, inv. no. 197, Koloniaal Verslag 1889, Bijlage PPP.
26. NA, Handelingen, inv. no. 368, Koloniaal Verslag 1907, Bijlage A.
27. Before 1830, the southern provinces, which later seceded to become the independent nation of Belgium, were still part of the Netherlands, but the statistics used here refer only to the northern provinces that, since 1830, have constituted the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
28. NA, NHM, inv. no. 5271, Report 1857.
29. NA, NHM, inv. no. 5271, Report 1858.
30. Volkstelling (1849). The percentage of all women of 16 years and older working in the garment industry was 4.7%, whereas 1.1% worked in the textile industry.
31. NA, NHM, inv. no. 5271, Report 1858.
32. NA, NHM, inv. no. 5273, Report 1873.

33. NA, Arbeidsinspectie, inv. no. 267, Letter from C. Zaalberg to Prof. Jac. van Ginneken.

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5

Contrasting Consumption: Household Income and Living Standards in the Netherlands and Java, 1870–1940

This chapter aims to bring together developments in living standards in the Netherlands and Java by highlighting the role of the contribution of women and children to household income and by scrutinising changing consumption patterns. While some historians have hinted at connections between the standard of living in metropole and colony, few studies to date have based such assumptions on firm empirical evidence. Moreover, changes in consumption patterns as well as in household income (as opposed to male wages) have seldom been systematically integrated into debates on living standards. Bringing in consumption as well as the earnings of women and children is highly relevant, because it gives a much more accurate picture of household income and thus of the standard of living. Furthermore, investigating colonial connections in combination with a move away from an exclusive focus on male wage incomes offers an important new impulse to the wider debate on living standards in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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5.1 Living Standards, Consumption and the Male Breadwinner Model[1]

Chapter 1 has already alluded to the historiographical discussions on the effects of both industrialisation and colonialism on living standards in metropoles as well as colonies in the long nineteenth century and has indicated that these debates are far from having been resolved. In the same vein, the debate on colonial living standards in the specific case of the Dutch East Indies is still ongoing, owing to varying ideological viewpoints and inconclusive evidence. Many historians have contended that living standards of the indigenous Javanese population deteriorated, or at best stagnated during the nineteenth and early twentieth century (Boomgaard 1989; Booth 1998, 114; de Zwart and van Zanden 2015). According to Anne Booth, Java was "close to the bottom in terms of living standards", even compared to other Southeast Asian colonies in the first decades of the twentieth century. One reason for this was that, despite changing attitudes around 1900, leading towards more "ethical policies" in the colony as opposed to sheer extraction, expenditures on economic and social infrastructure were relatively poor in the Dutch East Indies (Booth 2012, 1179, 1181). Some other economic historians, however, have provided more positive accounts of the effects of colonialism on the living standards of Java's indigenous population, for instance due to the progressive effects of monetisation and wage labour opportunities (Van Niel 1992; Elson 1994), industrial development (Dell and Olken 2017), or following from the available food supply per capita (Van der Eng 2000).

As also mentioned in the introduction to this book, Robert Allen has recently given a new impulse to the standard-of-living debate by taking long-term comparative approach. Allen's method involves calculating to what extent average households in the past were able to obtain a particular consumption level, based on wages and prices prevalent in particular regions and time periods. Thus, Allen constructed "welfare ratios" first for Europe (Allen 2001, 2009), and later, in co-authored work, also for Asia (e.g. Allen et al. 2011). The welfare ratio is calculated by deflating the annual wage of an unskilled male labourer, generally based on 250 working days per year, using the current price of the basket of food and non-food commodities required to subsist for a period of one year. Allen assumes

that a family consisting of husband, wife and two children required 3.15 baskets: three consumer baskets, including an average five per cent uptick for rent.[2] A welfare ratio of 1.0 thus equals the purchasing power of the male wage at subsistence level providing for an average household of four people; this is also seen as reflecting the "poverty line" (Allen 2013). However, the items in the basket can also be adjusted to calculate consumption levels exceeding the sheer subsistence level, instead indicating what was considered to be a "respectable" standard of living for households in a given context.

A great advantage of the welfare ratio method is that it enables temporal and geographical comparisons of living standards. Nevertheless, this approach has also aroused fierce criticism in recent years, often concerning the lack of attention Allen and his colleagues pay to the contribution of other household members than the adult male (Humphries 2013; Boter 2017) and of non-wage labour (Boter 2017; de Haas 2017). Also, some critics have noted that Allen tended to underestimate average required calorific intake (Humphries 2013) or family size (Schneider 2013) and moreover to neglect differences over time and space. Indeed, the study of historical living standards in both the Netherlands and Java has also predominantly focused on *men's* real wages (van Zanden 2003; de Zwart and van Zanden 2015; van Riel 2018). Therefore, such criticism goes to the heart of this chapter, which focuses on the labour and earnings of women (and to a lesser extent children), and puts the household and its production and consumption patterns centre stage. My research is to a large extent inspired by Jan de Vries's "industrious revolution" concept, which "argues for a shift of attention from the *daily wages of individuals* to the *annual earnings of households*" (de Vries 2008, 86). Moreover, de Vries points to households' changing desires in consumption—for instance of colonial commodities—as important incentives behind the changing labour allocation of households. In the second half of the nineteenth century, these consumer preferences changed again, according to de Vries, as working-class households developed an increasing desire for home-produced "Z-commodities" such as hygiene and homeliness. This demand-side shift on the part of households would have stimulated women to stay at home instead of working in the paid labour market, in order to provide the household with these Z-goods (de Vries 2008, chapter 5).

While focusing on the demand side offers an interesting perspective, I take a more open approach as to whether consumption formed the initial driving force behind increased labour efforts, or whether they were a later outcome of rising living standards (van Nederveen Meerkerk and Schmidt 2014, see also van Riel 2018, 535–536). As argued in Chapter 3, this increase in living standards in the Netherlands was due partly to the excise reforms that were enabled by the growing colonial revenues from the Cultivation System. This chapter will show that, following this development, wives' contribution to household income declined in the Netherlands, whereas it did not in Java, taking wages *as well as* non-wage income from agriculture into account. The male breadwinner model became increasingly financially attainable in the metropole, and first in urban areas, only later in the countryside. In contrast, the contribution of women remained essential to the family income of indigenous Javanese throughout the colonial period. To take these connections a step further, this chapter will highlight to what extent increased consumption of coffee, sugar and other colonial goods by Dutch households impacted changing labour relations, and particularly women's work and earnings, in the overseas possessions of the Netherlands.

In this chapter, new empirical material on male and female wages will be complemented by information from Dutch and Javanese budget surveys from the late colonial period. These surveys enable a comparison of the composition of income of Dutch and Javanese households over time. They also shed light on the consumption patterns of households, how these compare between the metropole and the colony, and how these changed over time. An analysis of these sources shows a clear divergence in the living standards of working-class households in the Netherlands and Java in the course of the nineteenth century, with a particular acceleration in the early twentieth century. Household consumption in this period improved in the metropole, even for unskilled labourers, whereas improvements were negligible for Javanese households. Although this conclusion corroborates earlier research on diverging living standards in the Netherlands and Java (van Zanden 2003; Booth 2012), this chapter is the first to examine what this divergence meant in terms of household labour allocation, income diversification, and actual consumption patterns. By showing what the respective members of the household contributed and with which types

of labour, and how this changed over time, we create a more realistic picture of the development of living standards in the Dutch Empire. Moreover, by shifting the focus from male labour to include all members of the household, the importance of the work of women and children for the subsistence, or additional consumption, of households becomes clear.

5.2 Nominal and Real Wages in the Netherlands and Java

Despite the recent growth in the international historiography on wage trends and real wages, little effort has been made to reconstruct Dutch wage series based on new empirical data.[3] Only recently have scholars such as Arthur van Riel (2018) and Corinne Boter (2017) taken on the challenge of providing long-term wage series for industrial and agricultural workers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Appendix 1 provides an overview of the source material and its limitations, as well as a reconstruction of the data for this project as provided by Corinne Boter and adapted by me. In total, the database contains 7876 observations of individual wage data, but for the purpose of this chapter I have singled out only unskilled day wages. This leads to a sub-sample of 2582 observations of male wages and 1442 observations of female wages. While the data are somewhat unevenly dispersed across time and region, Boter (2017, 200–201) has developed a reliable method to extrapolate missing regions or periods. Unfortunately, no data could be found for women's wages in agriculture after the 1910s, which somewhat complicates the comparison between sectors and between the Netherlands and Java.[4]

Although the series by van Riel and Boter diverge slightly due to the use of different source material and different weighting techniques, they show remarkably similar trends, with very high correlation coefficients. Because of these similarities, and because the series reconstructed for our own project also contains a wealth of information on women's (and to a lesser extent children's) wages, which are weighed and extrapolated in the same way as the male wages, I chose to work with Boter's series.[5] For the Dutch East Indies, we have collected over 4000 wage observations for the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with almost 2500

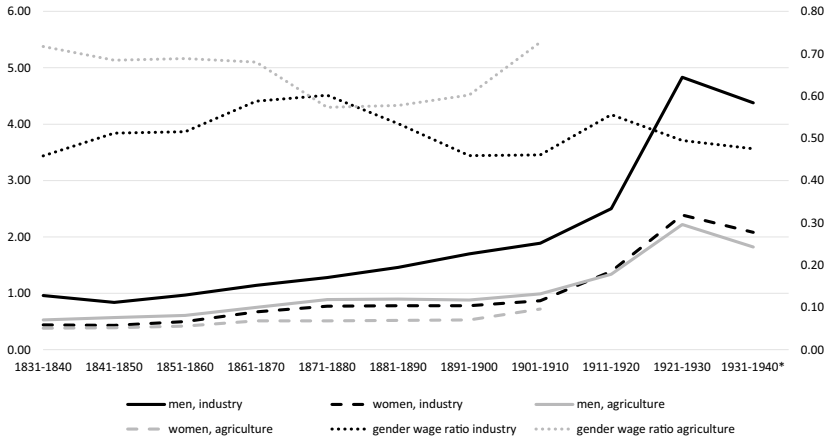

Fig. 5.1 Trends in nominal day wages (in Dfl) of unskilled labourers in industry and agriculture, men and women and gender wage ratio (f/m wage, right-hand axis), the Netherlands 1831–1940
(*Industrial wages extrapolated based on: van Zanden [1998, 78]) (*Sources* Dutch wage database July 2018. See Appendix 1; Boter [2017]; CBS [1925, 92]; Posthumus-van der Goot [1938, 23])

pertaining to Java, the largest data set—to my knowledge—on nominal wages for colonial Java. From these data, I have selected only unskilled coolie day wages, resulting in a subset of 1163 male and 863 female wages, mostly for agricultural work. Appendix 2 shows the variety of sources and the breakdown according to region and sex.

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 show the development of nominal wages for men and women in the Netherlands and Java, respectively, all in guilders, noting that the Dutch and the Dutch East Indies guilder were basically at parity after the mid-nineteenth century (van Zanden and Marks 2012, 55). However, as nominal wages were significantly lower in Java than in the Netherlands throughout the period, it makes more sense to show a comparison of relative nominal wage growth between both regions. Figure 5.3 thus shows the index figures of decennial growth in nominal wages for men and women in the Netherlands and Java between 1871 and 1940.

An analysis of Dutch nominal wages over the long nineteenth century shows a steady general rise in both industry and agriculture, and for both sexes, with the clear exception of two periods of crisis in the 1840s and

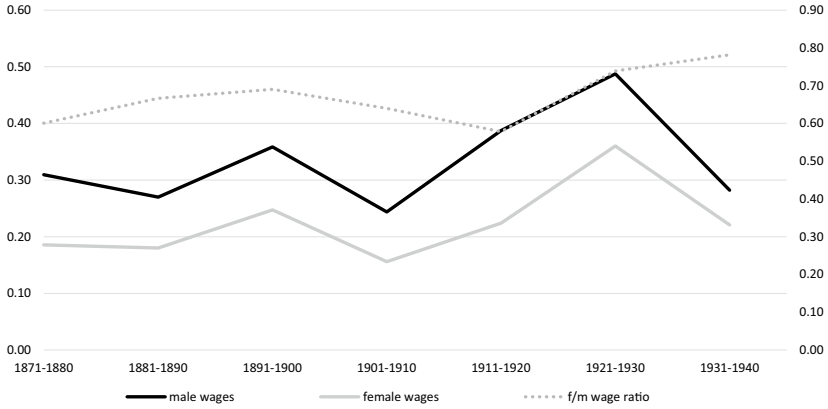

Fig. 5.2 Trends in nominal day wages (in Dfl) of unskilled coolie labourers, men and women and gender wage ratio (f/m wage, right-hand axis), Java 1871–1940 (*Sources* Dutch East Indies wage database August 2017. See Appendix 2. Most of the data has been collected by Daniëlle Teeuwen)

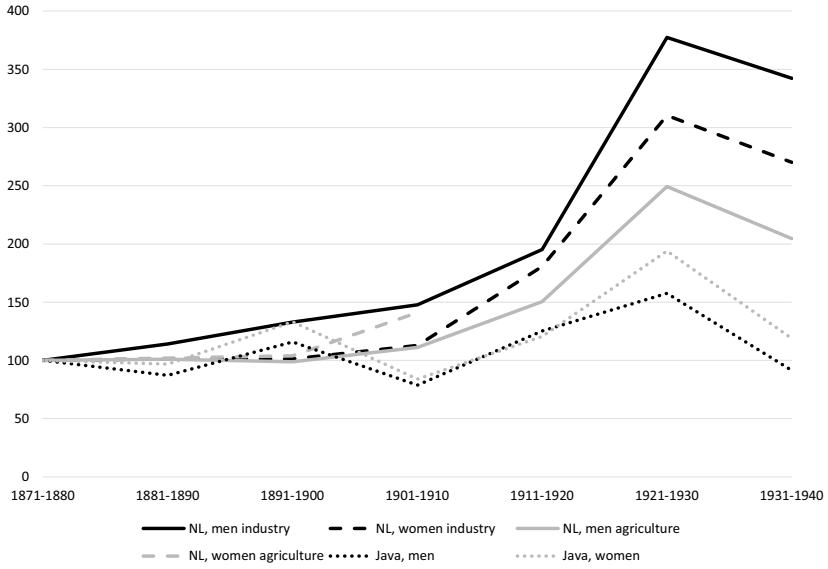

Fig. 5.3 Relative growth in nominal wages, Netherlands and Java, 1871–1940 (1871–1880 = 100) (*Sources* See Figs. 5.1 and 5.2)

1930s. Also, it is clear that an acceleration in the growth in nominal wages took place after the turn of the century and was most notable for men working in industry. Women's industrial wages also rose, but significantly more so than men's only in the 1860s and 1910s. Particularly in the 1860s, women's nominal wages rose 34% on average, whereas men's wages rose only 17.5% over the same period. This is consistent with a temporary rise in demand for female labour in the new factories, as described in Chapters 3 and 4, while at the same time the supply of married women willing or able to work declined. Between 1880 and 1910, nominal wages for women were largely stagnant, corresponding with the rising supply of young, *unmarried* women in this period. Accordingly, the gender wage gap narrowed somewhat in 1850–1870 as well as in 1910–1920, but in all other periods women's nominal wages did not exceed half of men's wages in industry. In agriculture, the gender wage gap was less pronounced throughout the period, with female day wages normally more than seventy per cent of those of male day labourers, except during the agrarian crisis of the 1870s–1890s.

In Java, the change in nominal wages was much more volatile than in the Netherlands, with significant relative peaks and especially troughs, leading to periods of absolute decline in the wages of both men and women, for instance in the 1880s, 1900s and 1930s. To an extent, this related to the fact that, in general, nominal wages were so much lower in Java than in the Netherlands that a wage change of just a few cents had a relatively large impact. In fact, nominal wage rates were sometimes so low that it might have been more profitable for workers to shift their labour to subsistence agriculture, if they owned or leased a small plot of land. This difference in the economic and occupational structure might even partly explain the vast differences in wage rates between the Netherlands and Java (see Table 5.1), even if in terms of real earnings the divergence was less than the nominal difference (van Zanden 2003, 19–20). Throughout the period, the gender wage gap among Javanese *agricultural* workers was roughly comparable with that among Dutch agricultural workers, with day wages for women fluctuating between sixty and seventy per cent of those for men. However, in most decades between 1871 and 1940 the actual growth in women's nominal wages was higher than that for Javanese men. In the 1920s and 1930s, women's wages rose to up to eighty

Table 5.1 Ratio between nominal wages in the Netherlands and Java, 1871–1940

Numerator / Denominator	Industrial wage Dutch men / Coolie wage Javanese men	Industrial wage Dutch women / Coolie wage Javanese women	Agrarian wage Dutch men / Coolie wage Javanese men	Agrarian wage Dutch women / Coolie wage Javanese women
1871–1880	4.1	4.1	2.9	2.7
1881–1890	5.4	4.3	3.3	2.9
1891–1900	4.7	3.2	2.5	2.1
1901–1910	7.8	5.6	4.1	4.6
1911–1920	6.5	6.2	3.5	n.d.
1921–1930	9.9	6.6	4.6	n.d.
1931–1940	15.5	9.4	6.4	n.d.

Sources See Figs. 5.1 and 5.2

per cent of men's. This slightly higher growth in the wages of Javanese women compared with that for men reflects a relative rise in the demand for female labour, especially on plantations (see Sect. 5.5). As we saw in Chapter 3, under the Cultivation System women had become increasingly important for providing food security for the household through their greater involvement in subsistence agriculture. With the rise of plantation cultivation, the demand for cheap female labour increased relative to that for male labourers in the later colonial period, not only in Java but also on the island of Sumatra (Teeuwen 2016).

Table 5.1 shows that while nominal wages had already been consistently higher for both Dutch men and Dutch women in the nineteenth century, this difference accelerated in the first few decades of the twentieth century. If we compare just agricultural wages, nominal wage rates were around three times higher in the Netherlands in the last few decades of the nineteenth century than in Java, and even higher for industry. After 1900, Dutch nominal wages skyrocketed compared with the Javanese. Although this suggests a divergence in living standards, the change in nominal wage data is of course insufficient to allow us to be conclusive about this. We will therefore now look more closely at how developments in the cost of living influenced real wages over time.

As mentioned in the introduction, the living standards debate has often focused on men's real wages, which leaves out not only the earnings of other household members, but also the income from economic activities other than wage-based work. Because all of these components differed significantly over space and time (see e.g. Humphries 2013; Hofmeester et al. 2014; de Haas 2017; Boter 2017), as a consequence series of male wages deflated by a basket of consumption goods in fact reflect merely the *purchasing power of men's wages* (assuming full-time employment) in a given period and region. Nevertheless, to determine to what extent household members other than the male head were required to work in order to reach a particular level of income (subsistence or more "respectable" income), establishing men's real wages is an important first step, especially when one aims to compare different regions.

For calculating trends in the purchasing power of male wages, the nominal day wages for Dutch men in industry and agriculture as well as those for Javanese men (see Appendices 1 and 2) were first translated into annual income, assuming 250 working days per year, which is common in the historiography and is also the usual standard for both the Netherlands and Java (Allen 2001; Allen et al. 2011; de Zwart and van Zanden 2015; Boter 2017; van Riel 2018). Consequently, I have deflated these series with the cost of a subsistence basket required for an entire household of five persons—a couple with three children—according to the recently reconstructed price series for the Netherlands in each period (van Riel 2018, 542) and Java (de Zwart and van Zanden 2015). As van Riel's series runs only to 1913, I have used the historical estimates of the consumer price index provided by the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS 2018) to gauge the further trend in the development of real wages in the 1920s and 1930s. Moreover, the consumer baskets for Java as reconstructed by de Zwart and van Zanden for the 1930s show a price drop, which would have pushed real wages up suddenly, resulting in steeply rising welfare ratios. As this is highly inconsistent with both the contemporary and the historical literature (e.g. Koeliebudgetcommissie 1941; Booth 2012), I have decided to use a deflator taken from a large data set of household budgets in the 1930s.[6]

Figure 5.4 provides a comparison of the trends in the purchasing power of male wages in the metropole and the colony. Due to the use of decen-

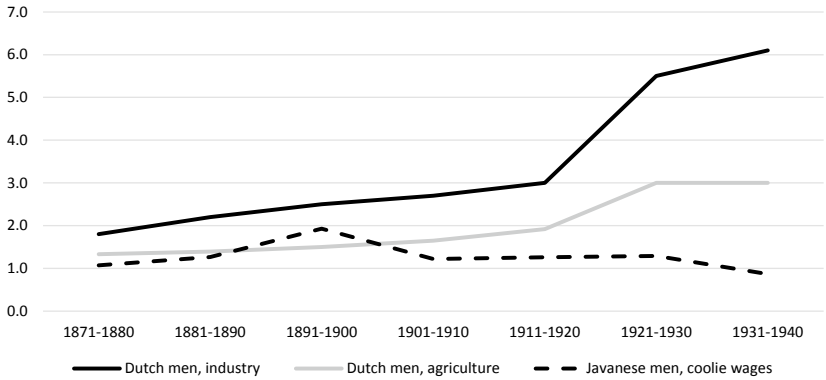

Fig. 5.4 Decennial trends in welfare ratios of male wages, the Netherlands and Java, 1871–1940 (*Sources* Netherlands: Dutch wage database July 2018 [See Appendix 1]; Deflator: van Riel [2018, 701–702] [until 1913]; CBS 2018 [CPI 1914–1940, very crude estimates, See Appendix 1 for explanation]. Java: Dutch East Indies wage database, August 2017 [See Appendix 2]. CPI deflator from: de Zwart and van Zanden [2015], except 1931–1940, taken from: Koeliebudgetcommissie [1941])

nial averages instead of annual observations, the lines are obviously much smoother than in historical reality. However, the purpose of this exercise is to compare more general trends in the Netherlands and Java, without losing ourselves in detail. Moreover, the trends depicted broadly correspond with other reconstructions of living standards in the Netherlands and Java, although these almost never address the interwar period (Boter 2017; van Riel 2018; van Zanden and Marks 2012, 155; de Zwart and van Zanden 2015).

If we compare these trends in the purchasing power of male wages in the Netherlands and Java, several things become evident. First, the real wage of Dutch men, both in industry and in agriculture, rose throughout the period 1871–1930, with a clear acceleration around the turn of the century. However, the extent to which agricultural labourers were able to provide for a household of five was just above subsistence level (welfare ratio = 1.0) in the decades up to 1900, whereas for industrial workers the welfare ratio was already almost 2.0 in the 1870s, and rose to around 3.0 in the 1910s. During the crisis of the 1930s, consumer goods prices

dropped steeply, even exceeding the fall in nominal wages in industry (see Fig. 5.1), which is why the purchasing power of industrial wages still rose in the 1930s. As the wage fall was relatively steeper in agriculture, real wages in this sector first declined and later rose somewhat; overall, the picture is one of stagnation in the decennial average. Of course, these trends do not reflect the purchasing power of those people who lost their jobs during the crisis years—clearly a major problem in this period—even though the Dutch state did provide crisis support for the unemployed and their families (Platenburg 1943, 33).

In contrast, for Java the average picture is one of modest growth in the purchasing power of male coolie wages between 1871 and 1900, whereas stagnation and decline prevailed after the turn of the century. Over the entire period, real wages almost never much exceeded subsistence levels (welfare ratio of 1.0). A notable exception was the period 1891–1900, when nominal wages rose (see Fig. 5.2) while consumer prices declined somewhat.[7] Interestingly, the graph shows that, in comparison, Javanese coolies did not fare much worse than Dutch male agricultural day labourers until around 1900. After the turn of the century, however, the purchasing power of Dutch men in agriculture diverged from that of the Javanese wage worker. As we will see below, this had important implications for the economic involvement of women in both parts of the world, as the empirical evidence from household budget surveys suggests. On a theoretical note, however, based on the wage rates established above we can also estimate what contribution by women would have been desirable and necessary for consumption levels to be slightly above subsistence (see Table 5.2).

Assuming that, given their other duties in the household and in subsistence agriculture, married women did not work full time for wages, I have calculated the purchasing power of their wages based on 125 days of paid work. With this inclusion of the theoretical wage work of women, it becomes very clear why the participation of married women in the Dutch wage labour market declined rapidly in the last few decades of the nineteenth century (see Chapter 3). Especially in industry, the purchasing power of an unskilled male worker was sufficient to maintain a household of five. If the wife of an industrial wage worker continued by working for wages on a part-time basis, her wage could contribute up to around

Table 5.2 Purchasing power of men's and women's wages, the Netherlands and Java, 1871–1940

Period	Netherlands						Java		
	Industry			Agriculture					
	Men	Women[a]	Total	Men	Women[a]	Total	Men	Women[a]	Total
1871–1880	1.8	0.4	2.2	1.3	0.4	1.7	1.1	0.3	1.4
1881–1890	2.2	0.4	2.6	1.4	0.4	1.8	1.3	0.4	1.7
1891–1900	2.5	0.5	3.0	1.5	0.5	2.0	1.9	0.7	2.6
1901–1910	2.7	0.6	3.3	1.7	0.6	2.3	1.2	0.4	1.6
1911–1920	3.0	0.6	3.6	1.9	n.a.	n.a.	1.3	0.4	1.6
1921–1930	5.5	1.3	6.8	3.0	n.a.	n.a.	1.3	0.5	1.8
1931–1940	6.1	1.4	7.5	3.0	n.a.	n.a.	0.9	0.3	1.2

[a] assuming 125 days of wage work per year

Source See Fig. 5.4

twenty per cent of the total wage income of the household. For agricultural households in the Netherlands, this share would have been slightly higher, whereas welfare ratios were considerably lower than for industrial households. From this, we would expect women to have withdrawn more rapidly from wage labour markets in industrial settings than in agrarian regions. This is confirmed by the data from the household budgets (see next section). But after 1900, also in the case of agriculture, welfare ratios for male wage workers rose to such an extent that they were sufficient to provide for an average household, on condition that they were employed full time. So, even in the absence of data on women's wages after 1910 we can assume that wage work by married women in agriculture also started to decline swiftly. This is confirmed by the literature, which shows that women's waged work was confined mostly to unmarried young women (Platenburg 1943, 20–21).

In Java, this picture differed notably. As we have seen in Fig. 5.4, male welfare ratios fell far behind those of Dutch men after *c.* 1900. The potential contribution of women's wage work to household income was therefore higher relative to the Netherlands, around twenty-five per cent or even more of total potential wage income. This, of course, related to the consistently lower wage gap between Javanese men and women compared with the Dutch situation. Particularly after 1900, even with the potential wage earnings of wives, welfare ratios in Java never exceeded 2.0.

This exercise shows that, in theory, given the prevailing wage and price levels, living standards diverged significantly between the Netherlands and Java during the colonial period, even if women worked half the year for wages. Especially after 1900, in the Dutch case the male wage alone would have been sufficient to sustain an average household, whether the man worked in industry or agriculture. Put differently, the income of women (and children) was dearly needed to ensure a respectable standard of living, and even for subsistence: in industry in the Netherlands up to the 1860s, in agriculture in the Netherlands up to the early 1900s, but in Java until the end of the colonial period. This largely explains the trends in female labour force participation noted in Chapter 3.

Even if this reconstruction of welfare ratios corresponds with some of our earlier observations on women's labour market participation and with our expectations on the divergence of living standards, it is still a very hypo-

thetical one. One of the problems, of course, is the assumption of full-time employment for men, as well as the supposition that women worked half of all working days for wages. Moreover, as we have recently increasingly come to acknowledge, wage work is not the only form of income generation for households, and this especially applies to economies in the Global South (e.g. van der Linden 2008). To explore these dimensions of the development of household income, let us now turn to an analysis of actual household budgets of Dutch and Javanese workers from the end of the nineteenth century to the 1930s. As I will discuss below in more depth, there are some problems of how representative these household budgets are, for one thing because they usually refer to employed, non-broken families. Nevertheless, they do have the advantage of giving a detailed snapshot of the actual composition of the income and expenditure of real households in the past; this can be used to verify and complement the trends established by the more derivative methods used above (see also A'Hearn et al. 2016, 3, 11).

5.3 From Wages to Household Income: Exploring Household Budgets

In recent years, household budgets have been "rediscovered" by academics as a source for historical research on living standards.[8] Although household surveys differ widely in level of detail and quality of information, they generally at least provide information on the income and expenditure of households over a particular period. In many cases, they list the various sources of income the household obtained, as well as expenditure on different consumption items and taxes, rent and even leisure activities. Several historians have used these sources to analyse, for example, changes in the labour allocation of different household members (e.g. Horrell and Humphries 1995), poverty (e.g. Gazeley and Newell 2011; Gazeley and Verdon 2014) or patterns in diet and nutrition (Gazeley and Horrell 2013; Gazeley and Newell 2015). About eighty-five per cent of the almost two million household budgets currently known to be available for historical research—as well as most of the studies using them—pertain to Europe and the Americas (A'Hearn et al. 2016, 9). Although some studies analyse

household budgets in Asia and Africa (Fang et al. 1998; Komori 2007; Booth 2012; Beegle et al. 2012; Serra 2014), this type of research is still in its infancy. Moreover, historical comparisons of living standards in different parts of the world, or within empires, are virtually non-existent. This section aims to offer one such comparison, even if the budgets for the Netherlands and Java are not always easy to compare.

There are two advantages to using household budgets over real wage series to reconstruct living standards: first, they often enable us to take into account the monetary contributions of all family members and, second, they provide information on forms of income other than wage work. Particularly for non-industrialised societies like Southeast Asia, where a large share of income came from subsistence and self-employed agricultural labour, household budgets enable us to reconstruct the relevance of non-wage income (Booth 2012). As I will show, non-wage income constituted an important share of the household budget not only in Java, but also for many late nineteenth-century Dutch households, rural as well as urban. Although it is seldom specified how many hours the various members of the household spent exactly on generating this non-wage income, we can make some educated guesses on the involvement of women—and to a lesser extent children—in these activities. This enables us to relate changing living standards to developments in labour relations, which links up to broader debates, such as the rise of the male breadwinner in the Netherlands and the rise of free wage labour in the Dutch East Indies (e.g. van Poppel et al. 2009; Bosma 2013; van Nederveen Meerkerk 2013).

In the last few decades of the nineteenth century, the Dutch government became increasingly preoccupied with mapping the economic circumstances of the working classes in the Netherlands, as well as of indigenous peasant households on Java. Such growing concerns about the well-being of the population must be considered against the background of the "Social Question" in the Netherlands following from industrialisation, as well as the—quite simultaneous—growth in opposition in the metropole to the exploitation of the population in Java (see also Chapter 6). As a result, several surveys were carried out in both parts of the empire, and household budgets of various occupational groups were drawn up to document their socio-economic status. The Dutch and the Javanese budgets differ slightly in terms of structure, size and timing. Also, sources are more abundant for

Table 5.3 Number of available household budgets according to period and region

Cross section	Actual year	Region	No. of budgets
1900	1886, 1891, 1912, 1913	Netherlands, various regions	126
1900	1886, 1888, 1900	Java, various regions	66
1935	1935	Netherlands, various regions	598
1935	1933–1934, 1939–1940	Java, various regions	1969

Sources Netherlands: Statistisch Instituut (1886), (1891), SDSC (1912), KNLV (1913), and CBS (1937a, b). Java: Arminius (1889), Verslag (1903), Economische Zaken (1934), and Koeliebudgetcommissie (1941)

the first few decades of the twentieth century than for the late nineteenth century, which makes systematic comparison over time problematic. Nevertheless, for the entire period, 725 household budgets for the Netherlands and over 2000 budgets for Java were found and analysed. The available material is clustered into two cross sections for both the Netherlands and Java around 1900 and around 1935 (see Table 5.3). These cross sections mark the periods when the considerable acceleration in living standards between the metropole and the colony began (see Fig.5.4), and when the crisis of the late 1920s and early 1930s left its imprint on economies worldwide.

Not all these budget studies were constructed in exactly the same way, but at least all of them noted information on total income and expenditure, usually comprising different entries with regard to income composition and types of expense, with slightly varying levels of detail. Most of the studies concerned reconstructions of individual budgets, but in some cases aggregates were taken for groups of households, one example being the 1940 Coolie Budget Study of Javanese households on plantations. Most of the Dutch sources give aggregate as well as household-level information. For both the Netherlands and Java, fewer budgets are available for the earlier period than for the latter. Therefore, the samples for around 1900 run the risk of being less representative. However, contemporaries drew up these budgets with the aim of getting a general idea of household income and expenditure, which means they paid attention to issues of representativeness.

For the Dutch case, various social groups are represented, allowing us to compare urban and rural labourers, as well as different income brackets. In particular, there were significant differences between rural and urban households that highly influenced the division of household labour. The Dutch 1935 cross section is highly representative, as 598 households from four different occupational groups (artisans, civil servants, farmers and agricultural labourers) were studied. Moreover, the households examined are from 119 different municipalities, representing all Dutch provinces (CBS 1937a, 15). However, the bulk of all households consisted of a married couple with co-resident children. Therefore, childless couples and widows/widowers are less well represented, although they also formed a minority in society at large (CBS 1937a, 19). Lastly, the 598 households have been classified according to income, which facilitated a distinction between various social classes.

Unfortunately, data are much scarcer for Java in the earlier period. In 1889, the Dutch colonial administrator H. G. Heyting, writing under the pseudonym "Arminius", published three budgets of Central-Javanese peasant households, which, he claimed, were representative for such villagers (Arminius 1889, 1720). Indeed, around 1900, about eighty per cent of all male household heads worked in agriculture, and about seventy per cent of them were farmers, peasants or tenants working their own land. Wage labour, either on indigenous farms or European plantations, was performed by, respectively, twenty-five and four per cent of Javanese men listed in the census as working in agriculture.[9] In 1902, a government report was drawn up after severe flooding in the residency of Semarang; the report included sixty-three usable budget studies of peasant households, but only for this region (Verslag 1903). Finally, a 1940 government inquiry created a large data set of 1945 household budgets of plantation coolies, factory coolies and craftspeople employed by twenty-five different European enterprises, spread throughout Java. Because the aim of the 1940 budget study was to investigate the bare minimum subsistence level of plantation workers, the budgets might be on the low side (Locher-Scholten 1987, 88). However, an equally geographically spread control group of hundreds of "ordinary peasant households" was used to compare the incomes and consumption patterns of the wage labourers. This ran-

domly selected control group of peasants related to almost fifty-five per cent of the economically active on Java and thus seems very representative.

The household budgets thus collected have been aggregated by period and analysed according to various sources of income: wage labour, agricultural "home production" (or subsistence agriculture), self-employed labour (income from agricultural or other products sold in the markets) and other sources of income. The value of produce for personal consumption was normally based on actual local market prices. This has therefore been taken into account both on the income and on the expenditure side, as it constituted foregone expenses of having to buy food in the market. I now go on to compare the income composition of households in the reported budgets, first for the Netherlands and then for Java, and briefly compare the respective developments over time.

Table 5.4 lists the average annual income of our 1900 and 1935 samples of Dutch households. To facilitate comparison over time, I express the purchasing power of the 1900 sample in 1935 guilders. To control for household size, average incomes are also given per consumption unit (see Appendix 3). For the purpose of comparison with the welfare ratios of unskilled labourers reported above, I have removed the highest income groups from the sample.

The information from the household budgets is consistent with the trends in welfare ratios for rural as well as for urban households noted above, but it reveals some remarkable differences. First of all, total income per household in 1900 differed much less for rural and urban households than the nominal and real wage information suggest. This relates to the much more important share of agricultural produce for rural households, which was included in the household budgets. Moreover, the budgets reveal that the share of wage income brought in by family members other than the male household head was much larger in the countryside than in cities: twenty-one per cent compared with thirteen per cent on average. For rural women and children, this income came predominantly from seasonal agricultural work, whereas in the urban context many married women still worked in home industries around 1900. Tasks such as wrapping candy, potting vegetables and peeling shrimps were regularly outsourced to homeworkers. Also, home-spinning married women were crucial for the wool industry in some regions (de Groot 2001, 206). Mechanised wool

Table 5.4 Average annual income of unskilled Dutch rural and urban households, 1900 and 1935

Year	Group of households	Ave. no. of consumption units	Total income		Wage women and children (%)	Home production (%)	PP growth compared to 1900 (%)	Growth in the male welfare ratio compared with 1900 (%)
			Per household	Per unit				
1900[a]	Rural	4.1	844	206	21	23		
1935		3.8	1051	277	10	33	34	88
1900[a]	Urban	3.9	897	230	13	0		
1935		3.2	1131	353	5	–	53	135

[a]In 1935 guilders

Source See Table 5.3

factories still outsourced parts of the production process to homeworkers; mostly, married women were assisted by their daughters, while men and boys worked in the factory (Directie van den Arbeid 1914). Furthermore, married women often gained irregular wages as washerwomen or cleaners in private households. Interestingly, even in towns—particularly smaller ones where households regularly owned a plot of land—some non-wage income was derived from the home production of vegetables and potatoes and/or cattle for self-provision (Arbeidsinspectie 1890, 16).[10] Subletting rooms to lodgers accounted for some three per cent of urban households' extra income around 1900. This was often in the hands of the woman of the house. All such contributions were negligible for urban households around 1935, which explains why the growth in their income between the two periods was less than it potentially could have been based on the theoretical male industrial welfare ratio (compare the last two columns in Table 5.4).

Secondly, both the nominal and the real rise in rural household incomes continued to lag the growth in urban/industrial household incomes. This is consistent with the information from the development in male wages as described above; thus, much of it is to be attributed to the slower pace of nominal wages in agriculture. However, the gap from the household budgets is much less pronounced than it is from the welfare ratios. This relates to the continuing importance of generating non-wage income for agricultural households, in which women and children played an important role. As opposed to urban households, where less than ten per cent of total income came from non-wage income, at the beginning of the twentieth century this share was about thirty per cent in households of agrarian day labourers. Most of this was derived from the sale and household consumption of agricultural products from their own land. All rural households in the sample owned or rented a plot of land on which they cultivated potatoes and vegetables and/or kept cattle. Naturally, the extent of the profits was closely related to the size of the available land, which greatly differed between households. Families with little land mostly produced for their own consumption, while those with more land were able to sell more of their surpluses (KNLV 1913, Appendix 4). Unfortunately, the exact labour division within home production remains unclear from this source, but one of the conclusions of the budget survey of 1909 was that

"households cannot afford to miss the wife's income, [which] is an important objection to the abolition of married women's labour. The wife of an agricultural wage labourer does not necessarily have to work for others to utilise her energy: she can do so in her own business" (SvL 1909, 16). We know from later reports on the socio-economic situation of agricultural wage labourers that their involvement in the family farm was still of vital importance to household income in the 1930s (Platenburg 1943, 21).[11] Wage work by married women, which in the early twentieth century had been performed either individually or as part of family units during the harvest season (SDSC 1909, 102), had become of lesser importance in the 1930s.

For the Netherlands, the information from the household budgets thus leads to a more nuanced picture than that based upon the estimated changes in nominal wages and welfare ratios. Around 1900, the male breadwinner model had perhaps already been the ideal in the Netherlands, but it was not yet fully practised. Many women and children still worked, in wage labour, in home industries and/or in subsistence agriculture, probably to attain a certain level of consumption above that of sheer subsistence. This had changed in the 1930s, when the contributions of women and children were far less important. Whereas wage labour income from women and children had been quite substantial in—especially rural—Dutch households around 1900, its share declined considerably in the 1930s, and mostly consisted of income by children older than fourteen. Nevertheless, for agricultural day labourers, who saw their nominal wages stagnate over the 1930s, the *non-wage income* provided by family labour was still dearly needed and thus prevalent throughout.

We now turn to developments in the household income of Javanese peasants between *c.* 1900 and 1935. In sharp contrast to developments among Dutch households, and in line with our earlier observations of trends in wages, the average disposable income per consumption unit decreased in Java (see Table 5.5). Although we have no budgets for wage labourers around 1900, I assume they had an income similar to that of peasants, given the rather flat income distribution of the Javanese economy (van Zanden 2003, 19).

The decline in real incomes is consistent with the trends in welfare ratios over the first few decades of the twentieth century referred to earlier.

Table 5.5 Average annual income of Javanese households, 1900 and 1935

Year	Group of households	Ave. no. of consumption units	Total income		Wage women and children (%)	Home production (%)	Income growth compared with 1900 (%)	Growth in the male welfare ratio compared with 1900 (%)
			Per household	Per unit				
1900[a]	Peasants	4	107	27	7	71		
1935	Peasants	4.3	88	20	3	78	– 26	
1935	Plantation wage workers	3.5	87	25	17	17	– 8	– 25

[a]In 1935 guilders

Source See Table 5.3

Interestingly, the purchasing power of peasants seems to have decreased more than that for wage workers. For the average Javanese peasant, income from wages had always been of lesser importance than income from their own agricultural produce, whether consumed by the household or sold on the market. Still, around 1900, wages had on average formed about twenty per cent of peasant households' income, whereas this share had declined to around eight per cent in the 1935 sample of peasant budgets. Consequently, the share of wage income that peasant women and children brought in declined. Part of their wages derived from agricultural work, such as harvest work in neighbours' fields. For the 1900 sample, we also know that in many of the cases where women and daughters brought in wages, this did not relate to agricultural work but to income from weaving. In these particular households, weaving on average contributed seven per cent to annual household income, confirming it to have been an important addition to the family income for peasant households (see also Chapter 4).

Because weaving was a part-time activity, many women earned some additional cash by selling surplus foodstuffs and moreover received rice in return for agricultural labour for others. Furthermore, the work women performed in subsistence agriculture saved families much money they would otherwise have spent on food in the market. As our sources do not distinguish between the hours worked by the different household members, we do not know precisely how large the separate contribution of women was. We do know that women commonly planted or transplanted the rice, tended the gardens and sold rice and garden produce at the market (Boomgaard 1989, 107). The 1900 budgets show that garden produce alone accounted for ten per cent of the average peasant household income. Moreover, food production for personal use, which constituted over half of the household budget in 1900, and forty-three per cent in 1935, also involved the input of female labour. Assuming that women performed only half of the subsistence agriculture, which seems a conservative estimate,[12] I can conclude that peasant women contributed about another twenty-five per cent to household income in 1900, and around twenty per cent in 1935. Moreover, it is likely that the relative importance of income from garden plots—predominantly the responsibility of women—grew in this period. As land possession became increasingly skewed, poorer peasants in

particular had to rely more intensively on the yields from their gardens, as a contemporary budget study from Kutowinangun shows (Economische Zaken 1934, 66–67).[13]

For plantation workers, for whom we have budgets only for the second cross section, the share of wage income was much higher than that for ordinary peasants. There were pronounced differences between the income composition of plantation workers living on the plantation and those living off the plantation though (see Table 5.6) with the former deriving a relatively much larger share of their income from wages than the latter. The wage income of wives and children constituted a considerable share of total household income among workers living on the plantation, who had become fully fledged wage-working families. For workers living off the plantation, the income from agricultural production was much more important. Often, these households had a very small plot of land, which yielded between eighteen and twenty-five per cent of the average annual income. As their husbands presumably worked most of their time on the plantation, we can assume that the bulk of this work was done by women, perhaps assisted by their children.

A comparison of trends over time from the income information in the household budgets shows that, in the Netherlands, real incomes rose for the households of both unskilled agricultural and industrial workers. In contrast, real incomes in Java show a decline between *c.* 1900 and *c.* 1935, confirming the existing literature as well as the estimates of male welfare ratios given above. However, welfare ratios reflect the purchasing power only of male wages and assume full employment. Including the earnings from women and children, as well as non-wage income, shows these were vital for the household's subsistence. Especially in Javanese households, the income of women and children from wage labour and particularly their contributions to subsistence agriculture were essential for attaining a particular level of consumption. It is safe to say that, on average, their contributions constituted between twenty-five and thirty-five per cent of household income, if we add up wage income and foregone earnings of home production. In the Netherlands, around 1900, a similar contribution was probably common in households of agricultural day labourers. Although female wage labour in agriculture declined over the next few decades, women's work on the family farm remained important,

Table 5.6 Share of wage income from different household members, plantation workers, Java, 1939–1940

	Men		Women		Children		Others					
	Yearly income (in Dfl)	% of household income	Yearly income (in Dfl)	% of household income	Yearly income (in Dfl)	% of household income	Yearly income (in Dfl)	% of household income	Total wage income	Total household income	% from wage	% from home produce
Unskilled plantation workers	60.96	55.5	30.00	27.3	8.16	7.4	3.00	2.7	102.12	109.81	93	5
Unskilled factory workers	93.00	66.1	27.72	19.7	11.28	8.0	3.12	2.2	135.12	140.75	96	3
Unskilled plantation workers living off plantation	27.96	21.5	7.32	5.6	5.52	4.2	2.16	1.7	42.96	130.18	33	25
Unskilled factory workers living off plantation	57.36	64.8	5.28	6.0	1.32	1.5	1.56	1.8	65.52	88.54	74	18

Source Koeliebudgetcommissie (1941)

but—in the context of rising male wages—less vital than in the case of Java. In Java, especially in the plantation economy, the importance of the wage work of wives and children for household income was striking and differed notably from the situation of Dutch wage workers in agriculture in the 1930s. I will now investigate how these divergent developments in nominal and real incomes affected the consumer behaviour of unskilled households in the Dutch Empire.

5.4 Consumption, Nutrition and Expenditure Patterns Compared

It is crucial to analyse changes in household expenditure when investigating living standards. Previous work by, most prominently, Robert Allen (e.g. 2001, 2009) relied primarily on the presumed composition of particular baskets of goods and non-goods that the average household would consume (see Sect. 5.1). Although these baskets have proven to be a useful tool, enabling temporal and geographical comparisons, they include rather generalised assumptions about consumption patterns. First, it is assumed that all consumption goods were bought in the market for average national retailing prices. This is particularly problematic for non-industrial societies, but also for industrialising societies, such as the Netherlands around 1900. In our household budgets, the value of home-produced goods that households consumed themselves were recorded as expenditure for local market prices. The sources thus reveal what households consumed in total, not exclusively items bought. Interestingly, an analysis of the total income and expenditure of households based on these budgets shows that, in the 1900 sample, both rural and urban households tended to spend more than they earned on a yearly basis. As the welfare ratios were above subsistence, this suggests that households consumed more than the basic necessities in Allen's basket, and sometimes were willing to run a budgetary deficit to do so.[14] Second, the standardised baskets conflate historical change, largely neglecting changes in consumer preferences, or the strategies people applied to provide in their food security when incomes changed. An example is the possible increase in cassava consumption when the provision of rice in Java declined in the 1920s and 1930s. Although it is

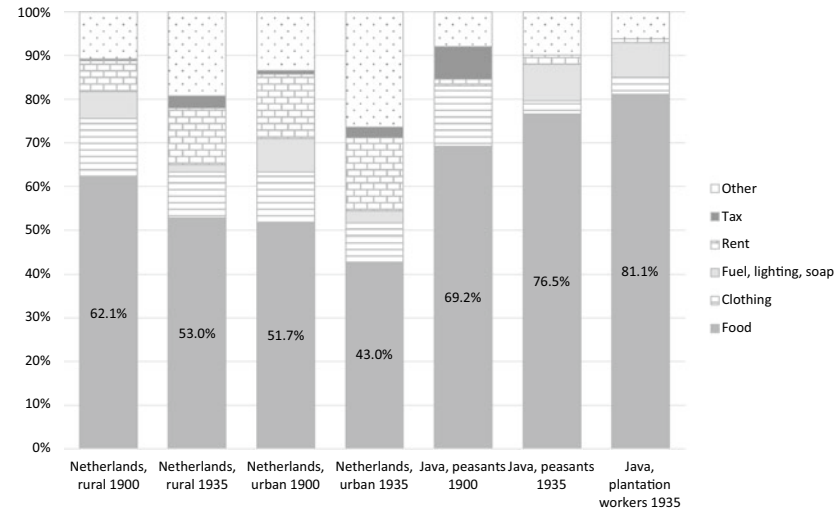

Fig. 5.5 Share of expenditure on different items of consumption, the Netherlands and Java, 1900 and 1935 (*Source* See Table 5.3)

doubtful whether the switch from eating rice to cassava should *not* be seen as a deterioration in diet, as Van der Eng proposes (2000, 614), it is important to inform the debate on the standard of living by analysing and giving meaning to *actual changes* in household consumption patterns.

Figure 5.5 shows the average expenditure of rural and urban households in the Netherlands around 1900 and 1935, as well as that of Javanese peasants in 1900 and 1935, and of plantation workers in 1935. For the Netherlands in 1935, only the lowest-income groups are taken into account, which results in a downward bias for the Netherlands as a whole, as the middle class had grown in size over the first few decades of the twentieth century. However, as our main interest here is establishing trends in the living standards of unskilled and low-skilled labourers, this is justifiable. It still leaves us with quite a large sample of 74 rural and 273 urban households.

The first thing that strikes one when comparing trends over time as well as regional variance is changes in the relative share of expenditure on food. Although food costs as a percentage of the total household budget are not the only indicator of living standards (Clark et al. 1995), Engel's

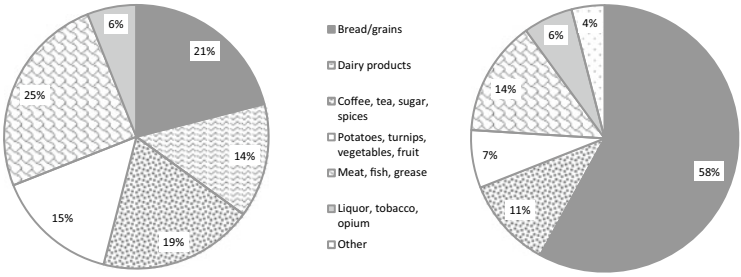

Fig. 5.6 Specification of expenditure on foodstuffs, the Netherlands and Java compared, 1935 (*Sources* CBS [1937a, b]; Koeliebudgetcommissie [1941])

Law implies that basic foodstuffs have a relatively low demand elasticity, as a basic level of nutrition is required. So, if incomes rise, the relative share of expenditure on food will decline, and, conversely, if the proportion of income spent on foodstuffs is high, we can assume a relatively lower standard of living. Our budgets show that both urban and rural workers in the Netherlands still spent on average fifty-three and sixty-two per cent of their income, respectively, on food in 1900. Among Javanese peasants, this figure was even higher, *c.* sixty-nine per cent. This confirms our impression that in 1900 both Dutch day labourers in agriculture and Javanese peasants were living just above the subsistence level. Another observation is that the percentage of total income that rural and urban Dutch households spent on food declined over the first few decades of the twentieth century, whereas Javanese peasants and plantation workers instead spent more (around eighty per cent) of their budget on foodstuffs in the 1930s than in around 1900.[15] Moreover, whereas, around 1900, the income of peasants tended to exceed expenditure, by the 1930s the two were more or less equal, implying that peasants no longer had any reserves, let alone scope to expand consumption (van Nederveen Meerkerk and Boter 2016, 21).

Of course, not only the expenditure on food but also the quality and variety of the diet are of key importance for assessing living standards. A more detailed analysis of the types of foodstuff shows further distinct differences in household consumption between motherland and colony (Fig. 5.6).

In the Netherlands, in 1935, households spent roughly a fifth of their food expenditure on bread, whereas Javanese households on average spent more than half on rice. Among Dutch households, both in 1900 and in 1935, around forty per cent was spent on meat, fish and dairy products (SDSC 1912; KNLV 1913; CBS 1937a, b). This was also true for the 186 low-income households in the 1935 sample, implying that even the "poorest" households might spend a considerable proportion of their budget on protein-rich food. Thus, in 1900 and particularly in 1935, even households with a modest income were well able to feed themselves at a quite reasonable (respectable) level (see also van Riel [2018, 674, Appendix Table F.3]). In Java, on the contrary, households in all income groups consumed food that resembled subsistence baskets much more than respectability baskets. They spent the major share of their budget on basic foodstuffs, especially grains, which means that their diets were infinitely less varied than those of Dutch households. Moreover, Van der Eng's (2000) claim that in the 1920s and 1930s cassava formed a substitute for the declining availability of rice is not confirmed by the information from the budgets. In fact, the proportion of consumed food other than rice relative to total food expenditure had been at least eleven per cent, and probably more, around 1900 (Verslag 1903); in the 1930s, it had been only seven per cent.[16] This suggests that even in times of dearth, Javanese households did not prefer to eat food they considered of lesser quality.

The rise in the quantity as well as the quality of the food in the Netherlands had major repercussions for calorific intake. The increase in protein and sugar consumption especially contributed to an average increase in calories between the 1850s and the 1930s. Between 1850 and 1900, the rise from 2200 calories per capita in 1850—barely sufficient to perform physical labour—to 2700 around 1900 to a large extent depended on the greater consumption of bread, as well as the increasing consumption of meat. From historical evidence before 1850, we know that the per capita consumption of meat and dairy products had fallen in the 1830s and 1840s (van Riel 2018, 546). This started to change after the 1850s. Whereas in 1850 households generally consumed meat once a week, this had become twice a week by around 1900 (de Beer 2001, 59–60). In the first few decades of the 1900s, however, sugar consumption in particular rose sharply in the Netherlands, indicating that it was especially luxury

consumption that drove a further increase in calorific intake up to 3010 calories per day. About two-thirds of this rise in calorific intake came from sugar. Whereas the average Dutchman or Dutchwoman consumed fourteen kilograms of sugar per year in 1900, this had almost doubled to thirty-three kilograms by the 1930s (Scholliers 1987, 78).[17] Conversely, in Java, where much of the sugar consumed in the West was cultivated, the average consumption of sugar was only 8.5 kilograms per capita on an annual basis (Rooseboom 1934, 267).[18]

A more general comparison with Java shows that, at the end of the nineteenth century, estimates of daily per capita calorific intake ranged from 1500 to 1800 (Van der Eng 2000, 597; van Zanden 2003, 15)—much lower than in the Netherlands, although people were on average ten centimetres shorter and thus required fewer calories.[19] According to the budget studies from the 1930s, however, the average calorie intake for the control group of peasants as well as for plantation workers living off the plantation hardly improved and in some regions actually fell, as Appendix 4 shows. On average, these households lived just above or even below the subsistence level, according to current FAO standards in relation to daily calorie intake (1680 kcal).[20] Urban coolies living in Batavia were a bit better off, with an average daily calorie intake per male equivalent consumption unit of 2052 kcal in 1937 (CKS 1939). Interestingly—together with foremen and craftspeople, who were medium to high skilled—the average wage worker household *living on the plantation* fared relatively well, with intakes that were on average all above subsistence level. However, this primarily related to the different *quantities* of food they consumed; there was no significant difference in the diversity of their diets (Koeliebudgetcommissie 1941). If we relate this to the information we have on the income composition of the different types of worker, we can conclude that the extra wage income that women and children living on the plantations managed to bring in meant the difference between subsistence consumption and a moderately higher level of consumption, at least in terms of quantities of food.

5.5 Goods from the East and the Plantation Economy in Java

Already in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, coffee and tea consumption had increased markedly in Western Europe. Due to the gradual fall in prices of new colonial commodities, such as spices, sugar, tea and coffee, in the course of the eighteenth century these products became increasingly available to people from different social layers. The Dutch Republic was no exception; in fact, it has been contended that the spread of these new beverages occurred relatively early and fast here, due to the relatively high living standards of its population and the country's important role in international trade, with Amsterdam being an important staple for colonial goods. Particularly in the eighteenth century, the number of coffee shops as well as dry coffee and tea vendors rose impressively in Dutch towns. Dutch women, and increasingly married women started to dominate the sale of coffee and tea, indicating that there are also interesting early modern relations between colonial trade and women's work (van den Heuvel and van Nederveen Meerkerk 2015). Around 1780, the average Dutch person consumed about 4–5 kg of sugar per year, 0.5 kg of tea, 2.8 kg (equalling almost 1 cup per day!) of coffee and 2–3 kg of tobacco. Only the British on average consumed more sugar (9 kg) and tea (0.7 kg) on an annual basis (de Vries 2008, 160). Thus, it seems that coffee, especially, had already established itself as a relatively popular drink in the Netherlands, which explains why the Dutch East India Company was so keen on encouraging (forced) coffee cultivation on the island of Java as early as the early modern period (Breman 2010).

However, it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that the consumption of coffee, tea and sugar became truly pervasive among all layers of society (van Riel 2018, 536). Beer and gin—popular beverages for the lower classes—were eventually replaced by coffee, either voluntarily, or with the encouragement of the Dutch bourgeoisie and socialist temperance movement, which in the 1870s increasingly started to promote the consumption of coffee instead of alcohol. Alcohol was seen as one of the vices of working-class behaviour in this period and was linked to the "Social Question" (see also Chapter 6). Thus, as part of the civilising movement, in the late nineteenth century several workers' coffee houses

were established by the socialist movement (Wijsenbeek 1994, 136–138). Moreover, there was a relationship between the consumption of coffee, tea and sugar, as the latter was used to sweeten the tropical drinks (Rooseboom 1934, 262; de Vries 2008, 32). In his famous book *Sweetness and power,* Sidney Mintz has even argued that, from 1850 onwards, sugar started to make a "significant contribution to English working-class diet", and that tea with sugar "played a fringe role in the core carbohydrates" of workers (Mintz 1985, 148–149). In the Netherlands, a similar development occurred, as the annual per capita consumption of sugar rose from four to fourteen kilograms between 1850 and 1900—a rise of over 200% (de Beer 2001, 59). This accelerated in the following decades, as we saw in Sect. 5.4: about two-thirds of the rise in average calorific intake between 1900 and 1935 related to sugar consumption.

The increasing consumption of tropical commodities such as sugar and coffee gave an enormous impulse to both trade and production. Between 1830 and 1870, most of the coffee, sugar, tea and other commodities were obtained under the Cultivation System, and almost all of it was exported to the Netherlands due to the NHM shipping preferences (see Chapter 4). However, this extractive regime was abandoned in the 1870s and a liberalisation of the economy took place. More and more European—particularly Dutch—enterprises were set up in the Dutch East Indies, cultivating cash crops for the world market. Between the 1870s and the 1890s, per capita imports to the Netherlands of items such as sugar and coffee for domestic consumption increased by 500 and 100%, respectively (CBS 1901, 149, 160). Although part of these imports came from the Caribbean, and especially (beet) sugar cultivation was on the rise in the Netherlands itself after circa 1900 (Terlouw 1969), the Dutch East Indies remained a very important provider of other tropical crops until the end of the colonial period.

The number of private plantations for coffee, tea, sugar and rubber increased rapidly from the 1870s onwards, and in the 1930s, there were around 1400 plantations on Java, producing colonial export crops for the world market with a total value of around forty million guilders annually (Mansvelt 1979, 36; Locher-Scholten 1987, 88). On most of these plantations, some or even many women performed year-round or seasonal labour. Also, around 1890, about twenty per cent of the labour force in the

sugar mills, used for sugar refining of the harvest, were women (Alexander 1984, 367). During the late colonial period, the number of women on plantations rose, particularly on Sumatra. Due to the constant demand for labourers, migrant labour was attracted to the Sumatran plantations, first from China, but from the turn of the century increasingly from the more densely populated island of Java. Whereas Javanese women constituted just ten to twelve per cent of all workers on Sumatran plantations around 1900 (Stoler 1985, 31, 38), this figure increased to around thirty per cent by the 1930s (KvA 1937–1938). But on Java, too, there was a constant demand for women's labour, which is confirmed by the consistently narrowing nominal wage gap between the sexes (see Fig. 5.2). Women were particularly wanted for tasks such as weeding, picking coffee beans and tea leaves, but sometimes they also performed more arduous tasks, such as sugar cane cutting, and eradicating *alang-alang* (Japanese blood grass, a tough and suffocating weed).[21]

Although women on plantations accounted for just a few per cent of the total female labour force in Java, the fact that their labour was in constant demand, relatively well paid compared to that of their male counterparts, and constituted an important addition to household income make them a category that should not be neglected. Perhaps most interestingly for this study, their economic input was directly stimulated by the changed consumption patterns in the metropole, including those among Dutch working-class households, which, especially in urban contexts, could now increasingly afford to allocate the labour of married women mostly towards household and childrearing duties.

5.6 Diverging Living Standards

This chapter has offered deeper insights into changes in the income composition and living standards of Dutch and Javanese lower-income households in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The reconstruction of male and female nominal and real wage rates based on new empirical source material, as well as income and expenditure information from household budgets, shows the following trends. Theoretically, around 1870, the wage of a Dutch urban labourer was already sufficient to

maintain a family of five. It rose to be sufficient to support three households of that size in the 1910s, and as many as six in the 1930s, when deflating it with a basic basket of consumption goods against current prices. Welfare ratios among agricultural day labourers showed a much more modest rise, but if a man were fully employed his wage could, theoretically, reach a welfare ratio of 3.0 in the 1930s. However, household budgets show that, in fact, around 1900, both urban and rural households tended to run a small deficit, since they consumed a much more extensive diet than the subsistence baskets represent. Their diets improved considerably in the early twentieth century, with higher calorific as well as protein intake, implying that the living standards of even the lowest-income households had risen. Whereas Javanese men working in agriculture did not do so much worse than the average Dutch agricultural labourer around 1870, their welfare ratios mostly stagnated throughout the colonial period. Evidence from the household budgets confirms that the diversity of the diet, as well as the financial scope permitted by peasants' budgets, deteriorated over the first few decades of the twentieth century.

These observations all directly connect to developments in the involvement of female labour in the Netherlands and Java. In the Dutch context, wage work by married women virtually disappeared after 1900. Developments in the purchasing power of women's wages compared with that of men's (Table 5.2) go a long way to explaining this trend. In the course of the twentieth century, the opportunity cost of married women's work simply became too high to be allocated profitably in the wage labour market. In the same period, the ideal of the male breadwinner—female homemaker had gained firm ground among all social layers of Dutch society (de Vries 2008, 186–237). As both the theoretical and empirical exercises in this chapter have shown, this ideal had now become affordable for most households. Nevertheless, in rural households, the work of women and children on the family farm remained important, especially in the context of the 1930s, when men's real wages stagnated and unemployment rose. The household budgets show that the share of income derived from home production actually rose between *c.* 1900 and 1935 for agrarian day labourers, which also implies a continuing importance of family labour.

In contrast, for Javanese day labourers, the wage income of women and to a lesser extent of children were vital for survival in the 1930s, as

Table 5.6 shows. On average, it accounted for between 7.5 and 35% of total household income, depending on whether the household lived on or off the plantation. Moreover, especially in coolie labourers' households living away from the plantation, an extra eighteen to twenty-five per cent from home production was added to household income, either for personal consumption or sale. As coolies had working days of eight to nine hours (Teeuwen 2016, 14), most of this work on their own plot of land will have been done by women. In peasant households, the importance of women's monetary income instead declined after 1900; this relates partly to the decline in weaving in the 1930s (see also Chapter 4). Nevertheless, their work on the family farm remained as important as it had been throughout the late nineteenth century, an observation noted, too, in the 1930 Census (Volkstelling 1931–1934).

Finally, this chapter has drawn connections between the spectacular increase in the consumption of tropical commodities such as sugar and coffee in the metropole, and the increased demand for, and continuing importance of, indigenous women working for wages on plantations in the colony. Of course, the links are not all-encompassing. First, not all the sugar consumed in the Netherlands came from Java, as Dutch beet sugar production was on the rise since the late nineteenth century.[22] Second, some of the tropical commodities were re-exported to other countries—even though, for instance, the bulk of the coffee entering the Netherlands seems to have stayed there for domestic consumption (CBS 1901, 1911, 1931, 1940). Nevertheless, the dramatic rise in living standards in the Netherlands—both entailing an increase in consumption and a decline in married women's labour force participation—was in sharp *contrast* to the situation in Java, where living standards stagnated and women's economic participation remained high. In addition, the rising demand for tropical commodities in the Netherlands, as in the West more generally, *stimulated* the demand for Javanese women's work on plantations, thus again highlighting another intricate connection between labour relations in the metropole and the colony.

Notes

1. Data on wages and household surveys in this chapter have been collected jointly by Corinne Boter, Daniëlle Teeuwen and me. Research assistance was provided by Lizelotte de Rijk, student at Wageningen University. The author would like to thank Anne Booth and Corinne Boter for their useful comments on this chapter, as well as Pim de Zwart for providing us with the Excel database with welfare ratios from de Zwart and van Zanden (2015).
2. Allen assumes that women consumed about ninety per cent and children on average fifty-five per cent of the adult male equivalent diet.
3. A notable exception is the work of Vermaas, which has largely remained unpublished, with the exception of Vermaas (1995). Arthur van Riel has incorporated much of her data in his unpublished dissertation (2018).
4. In the first few decades of the twentieth century, the phenomenon of female day labourers in agriculture declined drastically. Nonetheless, as late as in the 1930s around nineteen per cent of all day labourers were supposedly women (Platenburg 1943, 7, 20). Despite this, wage data for agricultural workers cover only men.
5. I would like to refer, though, to van Riel (2018, 706–707, Appendix G.2), for his reconstruction of the annual wages of Dutch men. In Appendix 1, I compare decennial averages for our own series with van Riel's. Even the correlation between these decennial averages (which necessarily lead to some loss of accuracy) turned out to be very high, with Pearson coefficients between the two series of $R = 0.98$ (industrial workers) and $R = 0.96$ (agricultural workers).
6. This concerns the average costs of annual consumption items (food, fuel, housing, clothing and other items) of 390 peasants in the late 1930s, which corresponded with the subsistence level. Taking these rates to deflate, an annual male wage gives a welfare ratio of 0.9, which is consistent with the descriptions in the literature on living standards in Java, including van Zanden's own calculations of real wages in van Zanden and Marks (2012, 115, figure 6.4).
7. Database de Zwart and van Zanden, version August 2018. This can be obtained from the present author on request.
8. I say "rediscovered" because social scientists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries designed and collected workers' household budgets to examine their social and economic conditions. A pioneer in this respect

was the French mining engineer and scientist Frédéric Le Play, who published an impressive comparative series (thirty-six volumes) of European workers' budgets, entitled *Les ouvriers européens* (Le Play 1855).

9. National Archives The Hague (NA), Handelingen, inv. no. 368, Koloniaal Verslag 1907, Bijlage A.
10. In larger cities such as Amsterdam, the importance of home foodstuff production was negligible.
11. For the late 1930s, Platenburg notes that, of all permanent adult female workers on small farms, eighty-six per cent were family members, mostly wives. For all permanent workers below the age of fifteen, a similar percentage (eighty-five) were family workers, mostly own children. Interestingly, Platenburg mentions that this "thus reduces the problem of female and child labour in agriculture", implying that only wage work on another farm can be qualified as problematic labour. Platenburg (1943), 20–21.
12. On average, in the early twentieth century, women were responsible for fifty–eighty per cent of Java's rice cultivation (Locher-Scholten 2000, 56).
13. I am grateful to Anne Booth for pointing me to this reference.
14. In 1900, the average rural household ran a deficit of 104 guilders per year (in terms of the purchasing power of a guilder in 1935), for urban households this deficit was 214 guilders. In 1935, these averages were all positive (van Nederveen Meerkerk and Boter 2016, 19).
15. It must be said, though, that this includes at least six percentage points of non-necessities, such as tobacco and opium. Still, this leaves about three-quarters of the budget that was spent on food.
16. The figures for 1900 are minima, as the source makes no distinction between rice and other food bought in the market, so I assumed this to have been all rice, which most probably does not correspond with historical reality. Apart from turnips such as cassava, fruit and vegetables are also included in this category. Judged by what the hundreds of (even very poor) peasants and plantation wage workers consumed, cassava does not seem to have been popular as an alternative to rice.
17. As refined sugar yields 4020 kcal per kilogram, this means that the average daily intake of kcals from sugar grew by 209 kcal in this period. As total consumption increased by 310 kcal, the rising importance of sugar in the diet explains 67.4% of the average increase in calorific intake in the Netherlands.
18. Thus, the average Dutch person had an average daily intake of 363 kcal from sugar, compared with only 93 for the average Javanese. In the 1930s, about thirty to forty per cent of that sugar was consumed through indus-

trially processed foodstuffs, such as jellies, pastries and lemonades (Rooseboom 1934, 261).

19. On average, around 1900 the height of Dutch men was 170 cm; that of Dutch women was 159 cm. In contrast, Javanese men were on average 160 cm, and Javanese women 150 cm (van Zanden 2003, 15).
20. According to FAO standards, adults with an average height of 166 cm (men) and 154 cm (women) require a minimum average of 1680 kcal per day (FAO, Updating the minimum dietary energy requirements, 2008 report, http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/ess/documents/food_security_statistics/metadata/undernourishment_methodology.pdf). Since the Javanese men and women investigated in the report were on average 5–10 cm shorter (Koeliebudgetcommissie 1941, 29), I take 1650 kcal as the minimum sufficient intake. The shaded boxes in Appendix 4 show regions with average intakes lower than 1650 kcal. These were generally among the lowest-income groups and especially in Central and East Java. Anne Booth has recently suggested that the figures for those households not living on the plantation might be on the low side (Booth 2012, 1155). Indeed, the figures mentioned in the report are sometimes impossibly low, but they were not corrected for the lower consumption of children and adult women (Koeliebudgetcommissie 1941, 72). I have therefore corrected the figures in Appendix 4 according to the consumption units for children and women (Appendix 3).
21. NA, NV Cultuuronderneming Way Lima; NV Cultuuronderneming Kedongdong, inv. nos. 37, 62–77. See also Muller (1914).
22. Until the early 1870s, almost all Javanese sugar was exported to the Netherlands. This declined swiftly after the abolition of the NHM shipping preferences (Terlouw 1969, 11). Simultaneously, the Dutch government started to favour domestic beet sugar producers. As a consequence, Java had to reorient its production to other markets, such as the USA and the British Empire (van Gelderen 1939, 17). As plantation owners were still mainly Dutch, however, and the Dutch still played a role in shipping these commodities, a large share of the profits ended up in the Netherlands, enhancing economic development in the metropole.

Appendix 1: Dutch Wage Database—Sources and Methods

Introductory Note

The Dutch wage database was created by Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk and further refined by Corinne Boter. The data were collected by Corinne Boter (*c.* ninety-five per cent) and Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk (*c.* five per cent). Single observations often reflect aggregate average observations by contemporaries, but it was generally impossible to establish on how many individual observations these averages were based.

The dataset shows clear concentrations of wage data in particular periods (e.g. the end of the nineteenth century, when the Labour Inspectorate was established). Especially after the 1910s, it was difficult to obtain information on unskilled wage labourers. Furthermore, nominal wages often differed substantially between regions, although this problem became less pronounced in the course of the period, as the national labour market became more integrated (van Riel 2018). Still, data at the provincial level have been weighted in order to establish trends at the national level. This method is explained in detail in Boter (2017, 110–112).

There are also clear sectoral biases, with a concentration of wage data for agriculture in the late nineteenth century, and more information on industrial labour in the twentieth century. In part, this reflects the actual shifts in the Dutch occupational structure from agriculture to industry. But it also reflects the introduction of labour legislation in this period, for which registration of all kinds of information about labour conditions was required. Part of the bias is explained, too, by the fact that some of the information comes from particular secondary literature, for instance on agriculture (e.g. van Zanden 1984) or industry (e.g. de Groot 2001). As the number of detailed historical studies on women's work and wages in the Netherlands is still rather limited, this is all we have for now. There is undoubtedly much more material still hidden in many company archives, but the scope of the present project has meant we were not able to include that (see also Boter 2017) (Fig. 5.7 and Tables 5.7, 5.8, 5.9).

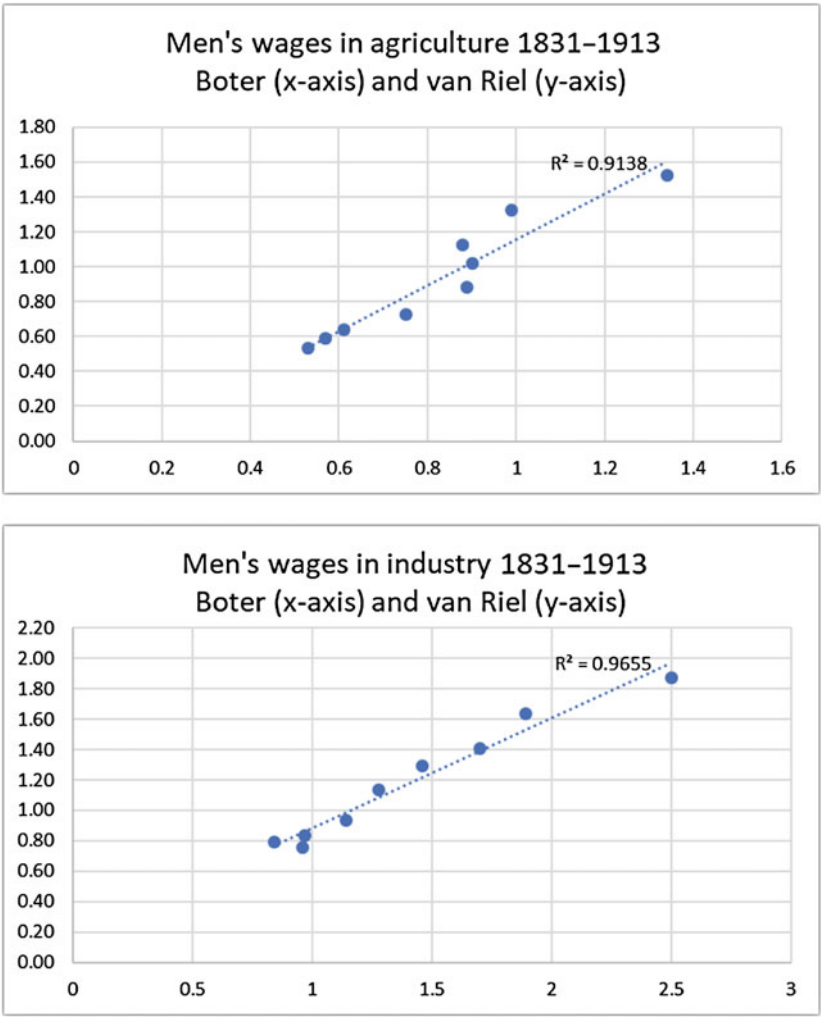

Fig. 5.7 Correlation between Boter (2017) and van Riel (2018) wages series

Table 5.7 Total number of observations in Dutch wage database (version July 2018)

	Agriculture				Industry						
Period	Men	% of total	Women	% of total	Men	% of total	Women	% of total	Children	% of total	Total
1800–1830	146	1.9	74	0.9	122	1.5	9	0.1	2	0.0	353
1831–1870	153	1.9	118	1.5	367	4.7	180	2.3	533	6.8	1351
1871–1900	1917	24.3	1557	19.8	181	2.3	74	0.9	44	0.6	3773
1901–1940	815	10.3	263	3.3	725	9.2	157	2.0	439	5.6	2399
Total	3031	38.5	2012	25.5	1395	17.7	420	5.3	1018	12.9	7876

Source Dutch wage database (version July 2018)

Table 5.8 Breakdown of wage data according to skill level (HISCLASS—see van Leeuwen and Maas [2011])

Skill level	N	%
Unskilled	4300	54.6
Lower skilled	2956	37.5
Medium skilled	580	7.4
Higher skilled	4	0.1
Unknown	36	0.5
Total	7876	

Source Based on: Boter (2017, 188)

Table 5.9 Number of observations for unskilled men's and women's wages, 1831–1940, used in this chapter

	Agriculture		Industry	
Period	Men	Women	Men	Women
1831–1840	24	11	14	2
1841–1850	21	10	98	54
1851–1860	24	14	147	103
1861–1870	0	0	14	6
1871–1880	0	0	1	0
1881–1890	122	33	96	52
1891–1900	1187	984	4	3
1901–1910	374	35	151	36
1911–1920	10	0	129	91
1921–1930	7	0	149	7
1931–1940	0	0	10	8
Total	1769	1087	813	362

Source Dutch wage database (version July 2018)

List of Primary and Secondary Sources from Which the Unskilled Wage Data in This Chapter Are Derived

Archives

National Archives The Hague, Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij, inv. no. 11276.

Published Sources and Literature

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Appendix 2: Javanese Wage Database—Sources and Methods

Introductory Note

The Dutch East Indies wage database was created by Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk and further refined by Daniëlle Teeuwen. The data were collected by Daniëlle Teeuwen (*c.* ninety-five per cent) and Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk (*c.* five per cent). The main sources used are annual and monthly reports, minutes, financial reports, and work reports, stating how many men, women, and children were employed, what kind of work they performed, and how much they were paid. Secondly, a large variety of statistical sources were employed, such as statistical annual reports of the Central Bureau of Statistics (Centraal Kantoor voor de Statistiek) and the Labour Inspectorate for the Outer Islands (Arbeidsinspectie voor de Buitengewesten) on labour issues in the East Indies.

The total database contains over 4000 observations of wage data, pertaining mostly to day wages in agriculture (about 60%), but also in industry (about 33%), and to a lesser extent in services (about 3%), and unknown (about 4%). Wage data from the islands of Java (*c.* 63%), Sumatra, Ambon, Borneo, Madura, and Sulawesi are included. Industrial and agricultural wages were highly correlated, with correlation coefficients of $R = 0.83$ (men's wages) and $R = 0.82$ (women's wages).

Single observations often reflect aggregate average observations by contemporaries. In some cases, when minimum and maximum wages were given, the average wage was calculated according to the following formula: $\text{lognormal} = \exp((\ln(1) + \ln(2))/2)$ (Tables 5.10 and 5.11).

Table 5.10 Total number of observations in Dutch East Indies wage database

	Men	% of total	Women	% of total	Children	% of total	Total
1831–1870	23	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	23
1871–1900	342	8.4	201	4.9	38	0.9	581
1901–1940	1900	46.7	1369	33.6	197	4.8	3466
Total	2265	55.7	1570	38.6	235	5.8	4070

Source Dutch East Indies wage database (version August 2017)

List of Primary and Secondary Sources from Which the Unskilled Wage Data in This Chapter Are Derived

Archives

- Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia (ANRI), Cirebon, inv. no. 6/15.
- ANRI, Batavia, inv. no. 324/7.
- ANRI, Yogyakarta, inv. no. 310.
- ANRI, Preanger, inv. no. 2/7.
- National Archives The Hague (NA), Michiels-Arnold Cultuurmij., inv. no. 92.
- NA, Oost-Java Rubber Mij., inv. no. 2.
- NA, Exploitatie Mij. Land Widodaren, inv. no. 1.
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Table 5.11 Number of observations for unskilled men's and women's wages, Java, 1871–1940, used in this chapter, including breakdown according to region

Period	West Java				North-Central Java				South-Central Java				East Java				Average day wage in Java (weighted)			
	Men		Women		Men		Women		Men		Women		Men		Women		Men		Women	
	Dfl	N	Dfl	N	Dfl	N	Dfl	N	Dfl	N	Dfl	N	Dfl	N	Dfl	N	Dfl	N	Dfl	N
1871–1880	0.28	18	0.15	10	0.30	13	0.17	12	0.31	12	0.20	8	0.39	8	0.24	8	0.31	51	0.19	38
1881–1890	0.20	2			0.32	2			0.28	4	0.18	3					0.27	8	0.18	3
1891–1900	0.24	2	0.15	1	0.22	2	0.16	2	0.22	2	0.14	2	0.40	19	0.28	15	0.36	25	0.25	20
1901–1910	0.23	83	0.14	47	0.24	125	0.15	37	0.23	131	0.14	40	0.30	61	0.21	30	0.24	400	0.16	154
1911–1920	0.59	7	0.33	2	0.32	12	0.18	4	0.36	22	0.22	9					0.39	41	0.22	15
1921–1930	0.46	36	0.26	42	0.48	121	0.34	116	0.51	157	0.38	151	0.47	91	0.4	91	0.49	405	0.36	400
1931–1940	0.29	18	0.20	18	0.27	84	0.21	80	0.30	61	0.23	65	0.28	70	0.23	70	0.28	233	0.22	233
Total		166		120		359		251		389		278		249		214		1163		863

NB: Only unskilled coolie wages (both in agriculture and in industry) of adult men and women living in Java have been used in this chapter

- Levert, P. 1934. *Inheemsche arbeid in de Java-suikerindustrie*. Wageningen: Landbouwhogeschool.
- Onderzoek. 1914. *Onderzoek naar de oorzaken van de mindere welvaart der inlandsche bevolking op Java en Madoera* Xa, deel 1. Batavia: Ruygrok.

Appendix 3: Units of Consumption

It is commonly accepted that the average calorie requirements of men, women, and children differ (see also Schneider 2013, 101). The averages taken by Allen (e.g. 2001, 2009) are presumably too low, as he proposes that children living at home consumed 0.5 baskets, without controlling for age or physical activity. Instead, we take the more historically realistic calculations of consumption units that were also applied in the original budget studies of 1935 (CBS 1937a, 14). Those studies recorded household size, and the corresponding "male equivalents" were recorded. The reports indicate that one consumption unit represented the requirements of one adult man. An adult woman needed fewer calories. She was therefore assumed to require 0.9 consumption units. Depending on their children, children required between 0.15 and 0.9 consumption units (see table for more details).

Age	Unit of consumption
0	0.15
1	0.2
2	0.3
3	0.35
4	0.4
5	0.45
6	0.5
7	0.55
8	0.6
9	0.65
10	0.7
11	0.75
12	0.8
13	0.85
14	0.9
Women > 14	0.9
Men > 15	1

Bibliography Appendix 3

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Appendix 4: Average Daily Calorie Intake by Different Types of Household, Java, 1940

Based on the information in the budget study on family composition, the average number of calories reported in the study was adjusted for number of children and adult men and women living in the household to the average standard for adult male equivalents (see Appendix 3). This means that the average calorie intakes listed below are higher than those mentioned in the original report (Koeliebudgetcommissie 1941, Table 239). Even so, undernourishment was omnipresent, especially among workers and peasants outside the plantations. The shaded boxes represent the averages where the daily intake was presumably below subsistence level according to FAO standards. These depart from minimum average requirements of 1680 kcal per day for adults with an average height of 166 cm (men) and 154 cm (women) (FAO 2008, 22). Since the Javanese men and women investigated in the report were on average 5–10 cm shorter (Koeliebudgetcommissie 1941, 29), we take 1650 kcal as the minimum sufficient intake. The shaded boxes in the table show regions with average intakes lower than 1650 kcal. These were generally among the lowest-income groups, and especially in Central and East Java.

No.	Province	Regency	District	Type of plantation	Total families		Calorific intake						
							Garden coolies	Factory coolies	Foremen/craftspeople	Garden coolies	Factory coolies	Foremen/craftspeople	Peasants
					N	%	Living on plantation			Living outside plantation			
1	West Java	Tjiandoer	Patjet	tea	55	2.8	3121	3216	3018	3039			
2	West Java	Bandung	Tjiparaj	tea	60	3.1	2406	2629	2375	2222			1783
3	West Java	Sukabumi	Djampang Tengah	tea	67	3.4	2601	2373	3102	2242			2310
4	West Java	Krawang	Cikampek	rubber	62	3.2	2774			2980			2293
5	West Java	Krawang	Cikampek	rubber	71	3.7	2774			2568			2947
6	Central Java	Tjilatjap	Madjenang	rubber	76	3.9	2522	2566	2644	2001			2370
7	Central Java	Pekalongan	Kadjen	rubber	47	2.4				1876			1568
8	Central Java	Bojolali	Temon	rubber	74	3.8				1438	1933	2372	1155
9	Central Java	Yogyakarta	Kalasan	tobacco	74	3.8				1758	2383	2815	1774
10	Central Java	Pemalang	Pemalang	sugar	53	2.7				858	1183	2508	1044
11	Central Java	Pemalang	Pemalang/Tjomal	sugar	86	4.4				1215	1919	2394	1319
12	Central Java	Kota Mangkunegaran	Kota Mangkunegaran	sugar	54	2.8				1037	1287	2205	1506
13	Central Java	Kota Mangkunegaran	Kota Mangkunegaran	sugar	85	4.4				1064	1579	1860	2186
14	East Java	Bondowoso	Pradjekan	coffee	44	2.3	3124	2830	2727				
15	East Java	Banjuwangi	Gentong	coffee	51	2.6	2425	2925	2637				
16	East Java	Kediri	Paree	coffee	58	3.0	1872	2555	3112				1738
17	East Java	Djember	Tanggul	rubber	71	3.7	2896	2853					2178
18	East Java	Malang	Pajak/Kepanjen	rubber	162	8.3	2079	2103	2637	1298			1613
19	East Java	Djember	Rambipuji	tobacco	67	3.4	1937		2536	2003			1925
20	East Java	Djember	Rambipuji	tobacco	65	3.3	1730		2347	1982			1748
21	East Java	Siduarjo	Krian	sugar	67	3.4				1314	1408	2025	1443
22	East Java	Siduarjo	Krian	sugar	148	7.6				1438	1757	2279	1731
23	East Java	Bondowoso	Bondowoso	sugar	47	2.4				1968	1811	2589	1512
24	East Java	Bodjonegoro	Pandangan	wood	156	8.0				1474	2217	3283	1527
25	East Java	Madiun	Tjaruban	wood	145	7.5	1988		2409	1864		2136	1572
	Java				**1945**		**2490**	**2608**	**2681**	**1640**	**1825**	**2498**	**1644**

Source Koeliebudgetcommissie (1941, Table 239)

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6

Norms and Social Policies: Women's and Child Labour Legislation and Education

This chapter compares changing contemporary debates and ideologies pertaining to the work of women and children in the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies. A particular political culture emerged in which Christian notions of "good guardianship" and the "civilisation" of the population legitimised a degree of state intervention in their welfare—in both the mother country and the colonies. The role of women and children in this process of "moral uplifting" was pivotal. Also, the initiatives taken (or omitted) by the state to implement social provisions in both parts of the empire are investigated, with a particular focus on labour legislation and general education between 1870 and 1940. In this period, measures for labour protection and investments in general education drastically increased in the metropole, but lagged seriously in the colony. Whereas the sociopolitical context led to concerns underpinned by similar ideologies, in the course of the late colonial period rhetoric diverged more and more in order to legitimise these differences.

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6.1 Introduction: Rhetoric of Difference[1]

For much of the nineteenth century, the Dutch state was reluctant to engage in public provision such as general education, social assistance or protective labour legislation. For long, the prevailing ideology among Dutch policymakers and intellectuals had been that poor relief formed a disincentive to industrious behaviour and would nurture laziness among the impoverished (Gouda 1995b, 20. See also Sect. 3.1 of this book). More generally, the political dominance of conservative liberals throughout most of the century stimulated an economic policy of laissez-faire, which formed an important barrier to the extension of a national welfare policy. Although from around 1850 central government passed legislation delegating a number of social responsibilities—such as poor relief and health care—to municipalities, this legislation did not yet entail substantive public investment at the national level. Within the context of urban growth in the industrialising Netherlands, this led to an increasingly inadequate system of social care (van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 257–261).

Growing social problems, in combination with the perceived threat of the industrial proletariat being attracted to socialism in the second half of the nineteenth century, slowly but surely resulted in the more intensive involvement of the Dutch state in the well-being of its population—in both the mother country and the colonies. Simultaneously, however, social policies took on a very different shape in the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies. These differences were reinforced by increasingly divergent ideological underpinnings, entailing strong gender as well as racial components, resulting in variant trajectories for labouring households in both parts of the Dutch Empire. While the connections between early nineteenth-century initiatives and debates regarding labour policies have been studied in the same analytical framework (Schrauwers 2001; Bosma 2013), to my knowledge no similar exercise has yet been undertaken for the later colonial period.[2]

Studying such connections is highly relevant because important changes took place in the late nineteenth century: a welfare state slowly but surely emerged in the metropole, whereas social legislation in the colonies seriously lagged behind. Moreover, important ideological changes occurred

in this period, which I believe contributed first to similarities—but before too long to the divergence—in social policies in the different parts of the empire. As we have seen in Chapter 3, at the beginning of the nineteenth century the political elites considered work by all members of the labouring classes—men, women and children—to be the key to an industrious and flourishing society and economy, both in the Netherlands and in Java. Towards the end of the century, however, the well-being of the poor and working classes became increasingly defined as a "Social Question" in the Netherlands, in which child labour and women's work formed a vital concern. Similar concerns led to the formulation of an "Ethical Policy" in the Dutch East Indies in 1901, in which the ideal place for Javanese women was, likewise, in the household. Nevertheless, attitudes towards the work of women and children in the colony were far more ambivalent, as I will show. In the 1920s and 1930s, the ideal of the male breadwinner society had gained solid ground in the metropole, culminating in draft legislation in 1937 to prohibit any paid work by married women, whereas in the same period work by women and children in the colony was regarded as rather unproblematic and even "natural".

6.2 Work, the Social Question and Ethical Policy

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the intensification of industrialisation in the Netherlands and the social problems it engendered, such as poor working and unhealthy living conditions, increasingly attracted the attention of contemporary publicists and politicians. The work of Dutch children and women formed important elements in this "Social Question". Progressive liberals, in particular, started to debate the social consequences of industrialisation, through the medium of their own societies and journals. Their attention was directed primarily towards the labouring classes, to prevent them from falling prey to the emerging labour unrest and socialism (van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 245). Nevertheless, some social liberals also had less self-interested concerns about the miserable plight of many of the working poor, and they believed that the state should act to alleviate some of the worst injustices of industrialisation. Although

demanding social legislation was a bridge too far for most of these liberals, they agreed on legal intervention in one particular domain: child labour (van Leeuwen 1998, 289). In 1874, after the fierce parliamentary debate, Samuel van Houten, one of the more progressive liberal members of parliament, succeeded in getting his Child Labour Act (*Kinderwetje*) passed, which prohibited *factory* work for children under the age of twelve. Though far from comprehensive, as we shall see in the next section, it did constitute the very first piece of Dutch labour legislation.

Apart from child labour, women's work—and especially *married* women's work—was on the agenda of bourgeois efforts to civilise the working classes.[3] One of the goals was to transform married women from the labouring classes into devoted, neat and frugal housewives, as these would lay the foundation of a stable family life, preventing disorderly behaviour such as alcoholism among their husbands or vandalism by their children. Being a proper housewife was thus perceived to be incompatible with full-time work outdoors (Smit 2014, 385). In the 1880s, the civilisation ideals also gained political weight. Both the women's movement and the emerging liberal, confessional and social democratic political parties became involved in the debate on labour. Their discussions concerned not only the need to protect women and children against exploitation, but also, more generally, the suitability of married women for work, on both physical and moral grounds (e.g. Giele 1981, 87; Jansz 1990, 36; Dudink 1997, 105). These concerns led to the 1889 Labour Act (*Arbeidswet*), containing regulations on "excessive and hazardous labour by juvenile persons and women" (see next section).

During this period, a particular sociopolitical context had developed in the Netherlands that historians have termed "pillarisation" (*verzuiling*). From the 1870s onwards, interest groups emerged that were organised according to ideology (Catholic, orthodox Protestant or socialist), establishing associations and organisations in many societal domains. These "pillars" had to collaborate with each other and with the less organised "rest" (liberals and non-orthodox Protestants), because no single group was large enough to obtain a political majority. This led to a transformation in the direction of society, from a more liberal to a more neocorporatist tendency, in which all the pillars were to resolve as many of their problems as possible within their own group, with minimal support

from the state. In this new order, the Social Question had a distinctive place. The elites of the newly organised confessional groups—orthodox Protestants and Catholics in particular—adopted the strategies of civilising the working classes that had already been adopted by the liberal bourgeoisie, putting these efforts in a religious framework (van Zanden and van Riel 2004, 242–249). Even if the religious pillars adhered to the concept of "sovereignty in their own sphere"—referring to the arrangement of all kinds of social provisions at the lowest possible level, with state intervention restricted to exceptional cases of necessity—pillarisation nevertheless dramatically changed the national political landscape. It was precisely the success of these pillars in organising schooling, poor relief and unions, directed at the working classes, that strengthened the confessional parties' wish to extend the electoral franchise, culminating in general suffrage for Dutch men (women followed two years later) in 1917 (James and Schrauwers 2003, 57).

Indeed, confessional politics became increasingly important in constituting a form of social security towards the end of the century. With increasing industrialisation, the labourer had gained a more important role in the economy and society, and this was also reflected in contemporary theological ideas about labour. Instead of being a curse for sin, originating in Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden, manual labour was increasingly seen as virtuous—at least for the lower social strata. Modern theologians depicted labour as the driving force behind the societal and economic progress that was God's will. On these grounds, ministers and confessional politicians would have to convince the labouring classes that they should not contest their position through strikes or work stoppages, that their superiors ought to promote their best interests, and that the state should set some minimum conditions for monitoring labour protection (Buitenwerf-van der Molen 2007, 173–177). To this end, the orthodox Protestant politician Abraham Kuyper had already made quite revolutionary propositions in parliament in 1874, but the time was not yet ripe (Koch 2006, 154).[4] Interestingly, fifteen years later it was the very first confessional administration in the Netherlands, a coalition of Catholics and orthodox Protestants, that introduced the 1889 Labour Act, with its restrictions on women's and children's work.

Some historians have defined this particular sociopolitical culture, in which the elites of the diverse pillars also looked after their less fortunate followers, as "patronizing citizenship" (Waaldijk and Legêne 2009, 187). As Locher-Scholten had already argued in 1981, this specific Dutch political culture may likewise help explain the development of a changing attitude to the Dutch East Indies in this period. The moral uplifting (of the Dutch labouring class, of metropolitan society, by women adopting a political role—the aim of early feminists—and by confining prostitution) was a central theme in this more generally changed political climate (Locher-Scholten 1981, 178–179). Politicians and social commentators in the metropole became increasingly aware that the excessive financial revenues derived under the Cultivation System and, after its abolition, the huge tax revenues derived from the Dutch East Indies (see Chapters 2 and 3) had negatively affected the financial state of the Dutch East Indies. The devastating consequences for the welfare of the archipelago and its native inhabitants increasingly raised the indignation of contemporaries. In a famous article, publicist and lawyer C. Th. van Deventer pleaded for this "debt of honour" (*eereschuld*), which ran into millions of guilders, to be repaid and invested in the well-being of the population, for instance by providing basic education and improving infrastructure (van Deventer 1899).

In the spirit of the age, on its inauguration in 1901 the second confessional administration in the Netherlands, led by the Protestant Kuyper, implemented the Ethical Policy in the Dutch East Indies. In her annual address to parliament, the young Queen Wilhelmina stated that "the Netherlands was to fulfil a moral calling towards the population of these provinces" (cited in van Randwijck 1971, 55). As Kuyper had already declared in *Ons Program* (*Our Programme*) in 1879, his Anti-Revolutionary Party aspired to a form of "custody" over Dutch overseas possessions rather than exploitation or colonialism. This custody was to be achieved by the moral uplifting of indigenous populations, in the first place by Christianising them (Kuyper 1907 [1879], 331–332). The Ethical Policy had two main objectives: improving the welfare of the indigenous population and at the same time increasingly subjecting them to the colonial state. This policy followed from the fact that, as a Christian nation, the Netherlands had a moral obligation to the indigenous inhabitants

of the colony. This entailed missionary work, the protection of contract labourers and a general investigation into the "lesser welfare" of the indigenous population (Koch 2006, 462). This attitude towards the common indigenous people had striking similarities with the attempts made in previous decades at civilising the working classes in the metropole. According to the Anti-revolutionaries, the labouring classes in the Netherlands also had to be morally uplifted and protected in ways that resembled practices of custody (Kuyper 1907 [1879], 369–370). Another parallel was that responsibility for their living standard was no longer placed solely on the working poor themselves, and that society and—to a limited degree—the state ought to create vital minimum conditions for its population's welfare, in both the mother country and the colony.

One element of the Ethical Policy was a focus on Javanese households, and particularly the place of women. In some sense, concerns about the position of married women in the Dutch East Indies and their working activities mirrored those about Dutch housewives, but in addition to class race/ethnicity invigorated paternalism. As noted in previous chapters, the traditional idea many Dutch people had about the Javanese woman was that she was very active, both within the household and in the labour market, in contrast to her husband, "the average coolie, who does not work unduly hard" (Levert 1934, 247). Around 1900, the Report on the Lesser Welfare was still projecting an image of the Javanese woman who "toils and drudges as long as her powers allow her to" (Onderzoek 1914, 1). Nevertheless, European notions of the role of "the" indigenous woman had become more differentiated in the course of the nineteenth century. This was partly due to the more intensive encounters between Javanese and Dutch people, the latter having increasingly settled (with their families) in the colony. Partly, however, these new ideas were related to increasing concerns in the Netherlands about the standard of living of the indigenous population. Indonesian women were regarded as important actors in the civilisation offensive this new attitude entailed.[5]

Like a century earlier, the industriousness of the Javanese population was considered important, but the newest insight on this issue was that the loose family ties on Java supposedly led to a lack of diligence and entrepreneurship, thus hampering the region's economic development. To strengthen these ties and guarantee a more stable family life, the wife

needed to function as the centre of the household, and it was recommended that she withdraw from the public domain (Locher-Scholten 1986, 41–44). Furthermore, Christian missionaries tried to impose "Western" family norms on the households they converted. Their attention was initially directed towards combatting polygamy and convincing Indonesian women that their most important role was to be a housewife and mother, whose first and foremost obligation lay in their household duties (van Bemmelen 1986, 71–72). The way to achieve this, however, was highly indirect, and through the conversion of higher-class "intermediaries". Recent research on Catholic missionary schools on Java, for instance, shows that Dutch nuns taught "modern" domestic tasks and values to *priyayi* (elite) girls, who in turn were expected to instruct lower-class indigenous women. Such an approach clearly indicates the very limited knowledge of, or disinterest in, indigenous practices and social relations by the Dutch. The missionaries paid little attention to the fact that elite women generally did not perform household tasks—they had a large domestic staff for this purpose. Moreover, they overlooked the large social distance between different social groups in Java (Derksen 2016).

The promotion of Western family values in the Dutch East Indies thus most prominently affected the role of *priyayi* and Christian women, who were of course small minorities in a society largely consisting of Muslim small farmers, and probably hardly reached the households of indigenous farmers or labourers. As we shall see, both economic interests and racist prejudices were too entrenched to allow the "cult of domesticity" to include the majority of women, non-Christian *desa* (village) women, whose labour would actually become more important than it already had been, as I have indicated in Chapter 5. As opposed to the communis opinio on the proper role for Dutch women, the idea that Indonesian women should not be performing work outdoors at all was uncommon. Unlike in the metropole, satisfactory protective labour legislation and education for indigenous women and children were not on the political agenda in the colony.

6.3 Labour Legislation and Social Provisions in Both Parts of the Empire

From the end of the nineteenth century, the slow but steady increase in state intervention in the Netherlands led to a number of concrete legislative initiatives intended to protect the well-being of members of the lower classes, and women and children in particular. The Housing Act of 1901, which stipulated that local governments had to ensure affordable and decent housing for the working classes, was one important step. Moreover, the Children Acts (passed in 1900, implemented in 1905) were introduced to protect children against parental abuse and neglect and could even lead to the denial of parental authority in extreme cases. This was quite revolutionary, considering the principle of sovereignty in their own sphere (see above) adhered to by many confessionalists, which meant that family affairs were typically seen as a private issue (Smit 2014, 18–19). Another milestone was the Compulsory Education Act of 1901, which obliged all Dutch children aged between six and twelve to attend primary school. With respect to the specific protection of labourers, most notably women and children, legislation came about from 1874 onwards (see Table 6.1).

The first of these labour laws, the 1874 Child Labour Act, was in fact a fiercely debated political compromise, intended to eradicate the most excessive abuses of children in factories and industrial workshops. Due to serious resistance in parliament to state intervention, the law covered only industrial labour by children younger than twelve and made explicit exceptions for field labour in agriculture or domestic service, sectors in which many children and young adults worked (Schenkeveld 2008, 33). The 1889 Labour Act went a little further, comprising the first protective measures for women. For instance, the law restricted the working day for women and children under sixteen to a maximum of eleven hours and prohibited Sunday and night labour for these groups. Nevertheless, this law also permitted exceptions, for example regarding Sunday work for women in dairy processing, such as the butter and cheese industries (Leydesdorff 1977, 33).

Legislation thus did not immediately mean the eradication of all forms of child labour. Moreover, enforcement was not always easy. Even after the Kuyper administration had enacted the first law on compulsory schooling

Table 6.1 Legislation on the labour of women and children in the Netherlands, 1874–1937

Year	Name/type of legislation	Most important coverage
1874	Labour Act	• Children younger than 12 years of age prohibited from working in factories or workshops
1889	Labour Act	• Maximum length of the working day set at 11 hours for women and for children aged 12–16 • Women and children prohibited from working at night • Women and children prohibited from working on Sundays (exception: dairy industry) • Women prohibited from working during first four weeks of giving birth
1906	Labour Act	• Women prohibited from working in mines
1911	Labour Act	• Minimum working age raised to 13; protective measures for children under 17
1911	Amendment	• Married women and women with children prohibited from working on Saturday afternoons (exceptions possible)
1912–1913	Amendment	• Women prohibited from working for postal service at night
1919	Labour Act	• Maximum length of the working day set at 8 hours, maximum length of the working week set at 45 hours, for men and women
1919	Labour Act	• Minimum working age raised to 14; protective measures for children under 18
1919	Amendment	• Cleaning women and bakers' wives permitted to work nights
1919	Amendment	• Sunday labour prohibited for men, certain exceptions for women's work
1919	Amendment	• Women prohibited from working during the two weeks prior to and the six weeks after giving birth
1923	Royal Decree	• Female civil servants required to resign on marriage

(continued)

Table 6.1 (continued)

Year	Name/type of legislation	Most important coverage
1924	Education Act	• Female teachers technically required to resign on marriage
1935	Amendment	• Female teachers required to resign on marriage
1937	Private Member's Bill	• *All* work by married women prohibited (not adopted)

Sources Leydesdorff (1977, 33–35), Ruijters (1981, 5), and Smit (2014, 16)

for children aged up to twelve, many children stayed at home, for instance to help on the family farm, especially in seasons when their labour was dearly needed.[6] In the early 1920s, just after the minimum age for child labour had been raised to fourteen years, many parents complained to the Labour Inspectorate that this law obliged their children to remain at home idle for two years: they no longer had to go to school, but they were not yet allowed to work.[7] The archives of the Labour Inspectorate show that, despite society's changing norms, child labour was still very much part of some working-class households' daily life.[8]

As with child labour, married women's paid employment had not completely disappeared by the beginning of the twentieth century, but it was rather confined to the private sphere. Although the official censuses show a clear decline in the participation of women in the Dutch labour market, particularly in the category of registered gainful employment by married women, part of this decline must be ascribed to the under-registration of wives who worked in the family business or in domestic industry (Schmidt and van Nederveen Meerkerk 2010, 80, 82).[9] In the 1910s, a study and exhibition focused attention on the situation in Dutch domestic industry, in which many women and children worked part-time. It is hard to estimate their numbers, in part owing to limitations of the study, shortcomings that the Director General of Labour at the time, H. A. van Ysselsteyn, acknowledged.[10] We do know for certain, however, that many women performed paid work at home, rolling cigarettes, wrapping sweets and canning vegetables for example. Interestingly, these women also produced for the colonies. They made trimmings for sale in the Dutch East

Indies, but sometimes also fabricated military accessories, such as badges and "embroidered grenades".[11]

Further labour legislation in the Netherlands in this period again targeted women's work. One of the measures following the economic crisis of the early 1920s was the 1923 royal decree that required women in civil service positions to resign upon marriage. A year later, under the Compulsory Education Act (*Leerplichtwet*), female teachers who married were also required to resign, though enforcement was at the discretion of the school. In 1935, however, it was made compulsory, a situation that would persist until the 1950s (Ruijters 1981, 5). In 1937, the conservative Catholic Secretary of State Carl Romme even proposed legislation to prohibit married women from undertaking paid work of any sort. The documents drawn up by the committee preparing the bill provide interesting information on the discussions between conservative, confessional, liberal and socialist members, most of whom did not disagree so much on the "true calling" of the married woman, but on the question of whether the state ought to prescribe this ideal or leave it up to households themselves.[12] This latter argument eventually prevented the bill from passing parliament.

In contrast to the metropole, the reluctance of the Dutch state to interfere in matters of the well-being of the Javanese population persisted until the late colonial period. From the 1850s onwards, concern had arisen among some progressive Dutch citizens about the exploitation of the indigenous population of Java. The atrocities of the Cultivation System, and the large gains derived from it by the colonial state (Chapter 3), increasingly led to popular indignation and the feeling that the Dutch should undertake action to improve living conditions among the Javanese. The Ethical Policy, implemented in 1901, had its roots in the final two decades of the nineteenth century. Most of its primary goals ("developing" the indigenous population and improving their welfare) were met by initiatives between 1905 and 1920. Thereafter, the political climate changed, and Dutch "ethical politics"—which had taken on a negative connotation over the years as being either patronising or soft—became much more restrictive (Locher-Scholten 1981, 206). Fear of Indonesian nationalism, especially in relation to education, played a large role in this (Gouda 1995a, 24). However, economic considerations were probably even more important and very much entangled with developments in the metropole. As

Anne Booth has argued, between 1890 and 1930 social transfers relative to GDP actually tripled in the Netherlands. The increasing demands of the Dutch populations on public finances, in the form of unemployment benefits, pensions, health and housing, made the government reluctant to increase public expenditure in the colonies (Booth 2012, 1148).

While earlier generations of historians have praised the Ethical Policy for its achievements,[13] more recent research is much more ambivalent and critical, both in terms of the reach of and the intentions behind the policies (Bloembergen and Raben 2009, 13). Even if public expenditure in the Dutch East Indies increased dramatically in the first few decades of the twentieth century, most of it was spent on expanding the government bureaucracy and on improving infrastructure and irrigation systems to ensure the provision of basic foodstuffs (mainly rice) (Booth 1998, 154–157). While these activities of the Dutch colonial state undoubtedly contributed to the welfare of the indigenous population, more direct interventions into their socio-economic position, such as labour protection or general education, seriously lagged behind, both compared to the mother country and to the colonies of other imperial powers.[14] Moreover, in the domain of medical and social care, the colonial government was highly reluctant to play a role. In 1902, there were only ninety-one indigenous government doctors (*dokters Djawa*) for around thirty million Javanese, as opposed to fifty-nine European government doctors and forty private medics, all of whom treated only Europeans and rich indigenous people. There were only fifty-nine government hospitals in Java and Madura to which the indigenous could turn for medical help. These were supplemented by private (usually mission) hospitals of varying quality (van Deventer 1904, 206–208).

With respect to poor relief or social assistance to indigenous people, no direct role was undertaken by the colonial government, except in providing emergency aid in the case of natural disasters, such as the floods in Semarang in 1901–1902 (van Deventer 1904, 211). Twenty years later, medical and social provision for the indigenous population had probably improved somewhat in larger cities, but by no means sufficiently to compensate for the growth of these urban centres. Moreover, in the rural areas, where the vast majority of the Javanese population still resided, medical aid and social assistance were left to private initiatives (Huender

1921). Interestingly, it was exactly these gaps in the field of social welfare, which first Christian and somewhat later—but much more successfully—indigenous Muslim organisations started to fill, that contributed to the religiously inspired growth in resistance to colonial rule in the Dutch East Indies (James and Schrauwers 2003, 65–66).

When we zoom in on labour protection and legislation, the focus of this section, the reluctance of the colonial state to interfere becomes even clearer. Although in the 1860s, in the aftermath of the Cultivation System, the government became opposed to using forced labour in the Dutch East Indies, the implementation of measures countering such practices was in Elson's words "a matter of appearance rather than of fact" (Elson 1986, 162). Indeed, the contracting of "free labourers" from Java on the Outer Islands of the archipelago was in fact a system of indentured labour, with many restrictions on labourers' freedoms—formally regulated by the colonial government in the 1880 Coolie Ordinance. This ordinance, with its penal sanctions on breach of contract by labourers, in practice endowed colonial plantation managers with police powers, allowing them to imprison workers, a situation that continued until as late as 1931 (Bosma 2013, 80–83). In his 1895 dissertation on labour legislation in the Dutch East Indies, the lawyer C. H. van Delden commented on the coolie ordinances that "at all times, while designing prescriptions for labour legislation, the Neth.-Ind. Government seems to have focused rather exclusively on the interests of private industries, without meanwhile paying sufficient attention to the interests of the native" (van Delden 1895, 14).

Admittedly, the Dutch colonial government from 1911 onwards did stipulate some protective measures for the coolie labourers, but only for migrant contract workers. As late as 1939, colonial officials acknowledged that labour protection, in the sphere of minimum wages and pensions for instance, had never been implemented for the majority of Java's indigenous workers. This had always been legitimised by the assumption that those who did not migrate to the Outer Islands to work on plantations relied on their "social connections, to which they can revert".[15] Indeed, as a female indigenous student of one of the private Van Deventer schools noted in a personal letter, she was happy to be able to continue her education for free; after the death of her father, who had taken care of many nephews and

nieces, his widow and children were left with few financial means.[16] This is only one example of how the lack of social legislation directly impacted the financial situation of indigenous families.

The total absence of labour legislation and protection for indigenous labourers, most notably women and children, can be explained by a need for cheap labour, which, as we will see below, was ideologically underpinned and legitimised by the alleged innate cultural and biological differences between Indonesian and Dutch people. However, since the Netherlands had become a member of the League of Nations after the First World War, it was obliged to apply all conventions that it ratified also in its colonial possessions. This meant that the League's International Labour Office (ILO) Conventions on Women's Night Work (C004), Minimum Age (C005) and Young Person's Night Work (C006), which were all ratified by the Dutch state in the early 1920s, also had to be applied to the Dutch East Indies.[17] Nevertheless, the Dutch were reluctant to translate this into actual legislation and had to be summoned by the ILO to undertake action (Locher-Scholten 2000, 53).

It was not until 1925, and only after the fierce parliamentary debate, that an ordinance was issued to regulate the night work of women and child labour in the Dutch East Indies. Interestingly, when compared with the original ILO conventions, the Dutch ordinance was far less restrictive. First of all, it stipulated a minimum age of twelve for any work for Indonesian children, instead of the fourteen years that was decreed in ILO Convention C004, Article 2 (ILO 1925, Article 1). Remarkably, the minimum age for child labour in the Netherlands had just been raised to fourteen in 1919. Secondly, night labour for women, which was defined as a consecutive period of eleven hours *including the period between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.*, was confined to only seven hours (from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m.) in the Dutch East Indies decree (ILO 1925, Article 3). In the Netherlands, night work for Dutch women had already been prohibited since the 1889 Labour Act (see Table 6.1). Thirdly, even though the ILO Convention allowed for exceptions regarding particular seasonal work, the Dutch definition of "closed workspaces" was particularly broadly defined, so that the tobacco sheds—which had only roofs, no walls—in which thousands of children under twelve worked were exempted from the ordinance (de Kat Angelino 1930, 122; White 2001, 111).

Because of its leniency, some Dutch members of parliament, such as the socialist Ch. G. Cramer (1879–1976), called it a "fake ordinance" that was geared towards the needs only of employers in the Dutch East Indies and entailed no real protection for Indonesian labourers (Staten-Generaal 1925–1926, 646–647). Proponents of night work by Indonesian women and children stated, however, that indigenous culture and traditions made women's hard physical labour customary, and that children were better off working than being idle (Locher-Scholten 2000, 51–52; White 2001, 110–111). It was argued by the People's Council (*Volksraad*, an advisory body to the colonial government installed in 1918, consisting of indigenous, Dutch and Chinese members) that indigenous Javanese children matured earlier. This opinion was given academic authority by contemporary lawyers, such as Boeijinga, even if the latter was very critical about the limited reach of the new regulations.[18] Such opinions were voiced first and foremost by Western entrepreneurs and liberal politicians, who viewed Indonesian women and children as a source of cheap labour and opposed state intervention. But it was not only the business community that stressed the inherent differences between Dutch and Indonesian women. In 1925, publicist Henri van der Mandere wrote:

> It is self-evident that women in Western society are excluded from hazardous and tough labour […]. Women's position in Indonesian society is incomparable to that of the Dutch woman. Whereas manual labour is an exception in the Netherlands, it is the rule here; there are even regions where it follows from *adat* that almost all work is done by women. (van der Mandere 1925, 25)

Like van der Mandere, many Dutch people considered it "natural" for Indonesian women to work. Moreover, the inherent differences between Indonesian and Dutch women made it self-evident that the latter were to be protected from hazardous work. Similarly, lawyers as well as politicians used arguments such as "the early maturity of eastern peoples" (White 2001, 111) or "the particular circumstances in the tropics" (de Kat Angelino 1930, 102) to derogate from international standards as prescribed by the ILO. These are fine examples of what Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper have called the "grammar of difference" (Stoler and

Cooper 1997, 3). A language of "othering" was used to legitimise what were, ultimately, economic considerations. As late as 1930, the Dutch official P. de Kat Angelino, who was entrusted with a major investigation into the deplorable working conditions in the batik industry, stressed that, while measures to improve working conditions among women and children ought to be taken, "social legislation, which would bring the Eastern enterprise in the Neth.-Indies to Western levels, would ruin the batik industry" (de Kat Angelino 1930, 102). Rather than advocating social legislation, therefore, de Kat Angelino urged legislative measures to be taken in the economic sphere, aimed at finding solutions for the volatility in the demand for labour in particular sectors, and the consequent employability of workers (de Kat Angelino 1930, 104).

6.4 General Education in the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies Compared

Apart from labour legislation and social protection, there is one other very important potential target of state policy that relates to household labour relations, gender and economic development more generally: education. In this section, I will mainly focus on primary education, for children up to the age of twelve, because this is the area where most changes occurred in the period under investigation—albeit on a different scale in metropole and colony—and because it relates most directly to what was defined as "child labour" at the time.

In the Netherlands, the first national education legislation stemmed from the Napoleonic period (1801, 1803, 1806, the latter remaining in force until 1858). The 1806 legislation set out rules for primary education in state-financed schools—that is, the national government delegated responsibility for the maintenance of school buildings and the payment of schoolteachers to the municipalities. Apart from the content of the curriculum (mainly reading, writing, Dutch language, and basic arithmetic) and the criteria for the qualifications of teachers, including the installation of a school inspectorate, it was explicitly stipulated that state schools would not provide education based on religious principles. For this, there would be non-state-funded "special schools" (*bijzondere scholen*); permission to

establish such a school was given by the authorities only under strict conditions (Boekholt and de Booy 1987, 99–101). This school system was inspired by the French revolutionary ideal of *laïcité* (secularism), but also matched well with the liberal course in Dutch politics in the first half of the nineteenth century.[19]

Despite compulsory education not being introduced until 1901,[20] and state schools continuing to charge school fees, the percentage of Dutch children enrolled in primary education—meaning that they received at least some years of schooling—rose steadily over the nineteenth century (see Table 6.2).[21] These figures are consistent with more detailed research at the local level that suggests the effect of legislation in 1901 prescribing compulsory education was in fact relatively small, and that the law merely confirmed an existing situation. The law obliged every child under thirteen to have had six years of primary education. In 1921, this was raised to seven years, which effectively meant continuing in education until the age of fourteen (Smit 2014, 11). For most Dutch children, education ceased after this age. Table 6.2 shows that in the Netherlands the share of children receiving secondary (let alone tertiary) education was negligible until the late 1920s, which is consistent with our observations that juvenile labour—that is, work by children over twelve years of age (and after 1919 over fourteen years)—was still very much prevalent until the Second World War.[22]

Regardless of these favourable developments in general education in the Netherlands from the early nineteenth century onwards, several confessional groups, including Catholics, orthodox Protestants and Jews, were highly dissatisfied with the state-school system. They criticised the system for its lack of freedom to provide proper religious, faith-based education. A fierce political "school struggle" (*schoolstrijd*) emerged, with slow but steady landmarks for the confessionalists. The 1848 Constitution, for instance, in principle prescribed freedom of education, albeit under government supervision. However, an 1857 amendment to the Education Act stipulated that only secular schools were entitled to state subsidies. This distinction between state-funded and special, non-state-funded schools would remain a thorn in the side of the confessionalists. Another step forward for them was the 1889 School Act, which permitted subsidies for special schools under certain conditions (Boekholt and de Booy 1987,

Table 6.2 School enrolment rates for the Netherlands, by type of education, 1820–1940

Year	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1820	65.18	0.00	0.22
1830	69.01	0.00	0.35
1840	72.60	0.24	0.31
1850	75.94	0.31	0.21
1860	74.11	0.30	0.26
1870	80.14	0.22	0.23
1880	80.19	1.04	0.25
1890	83.12	1.19	0.40
1900	83.53	1.35	0.40
1910	88.32	1.84	0.46
1920	89.39	2.48	0.46
1930	92.79	16.82	2.26
1940	88.92	21.53	2.23

Source Barro and Lee Dataset, version 2016, http://www.barrolee.com/. Last accessed 15 January 2019; Barro and Lee (2001)

149–153). The struggle ended definitively only in 1917, when the confessionalists agreed a trade-off between full (financial) equality for public and religious schooling and universal (male) suffrage.

Turning to the colony, the Dutch colonial government paid hardly any attention to educating the indigenous Javanese population until *c.* 1860. In 1827, there were only three government schools, and it was not until 1845 that the Secretary of State for the Colonies, J. C. Baud, began to take this matter seriously. In 1859, the first law on the establishment of state indigenous education on Java was passed. However, by 1870 there were still only fifty-eight schools for indigenous pupils, with only 6000 students out of a total of thirteen million Javanese. The Dutch government invested only 300,000 guilders in indigenous schools, while spending more than twice as much (700,000 guilders) on schools for the children of the *c.* 25,000 Europeans living in the colony. Not only were there few schools and teachers, the quality of those schools was deplorable in terms of knowledge, didactic skills and material provisions such as proper school books (Anonymous 1870).

In 1893, the Dutch colonial government passed an ordinance that extended primary schooling. Among other things, it introduced first- and second-class schools. The first-class schools (five years of schooling) were intended for children of well-to-do indigenous people and village heads, and the second-class schools (three years of schooling) were for all indigenous children. Second-class schools offered only basic reading and writing in the local language and some arithmetic. Interestingly, even elite children were not taught much Dutch in the first-class schools, mostly reading and writing in their native language and Malay, as well as arithmetic and courses such as geography and Javanese history. This attests to the dualist cultural separation that the Dutch colonial authorities meant to maintain between the indigenous and the European population, as we have also seen in Chapter 2. Despite the ordinance, there were still only forty-three first-class schools in 1903, and mere 245 second-class schools. In that same year, there were 326 private schools for indigenous children, some of them mission schools. The number of schools was inadequate to meet demand: there was great pressure on the schools, and van Deventer concluded that the number of students, and especially girls, had risen tremendously: from a little over 50,000 in 1892 to almost 86,000 ten years later (van Deventer 1904, 194–195). Given the huge and relatively youthful population of the colony, such figures were negligible though.

By 1920, things had slowly but surely improved. In 1920, there were 4710 popular schools (*desa* schools, previously second-class schools) and 1562 "normal" indigenous schools (previously first-class schools), with a total of almost 500,000 pupils. Over 22,500 indigenous children, a very tiny elite that was generally destined for civil service in the East Indies, went to one of the European schools. All in all, while still low, the percentage of indigenous children receiving an education had risen from around 0.5 in 1900 to 3.2 in 1920 (Huender 1921, 214). Enrolment rates among primary school children were of course higher, rising from a little over two per cent of all children up to the age of twelve in 1900 to more than nine per cent in 1920, and almost twenty-six per cent on the eve of the Second World War. Nevertheless, these figures were still low compared with the corresponding figures for the Netherlands (see Fig. 6.1).

Clearly, this was not the effect of legislation—after all, in the Netherlands general schooling had only become mandatory in 1901—but of

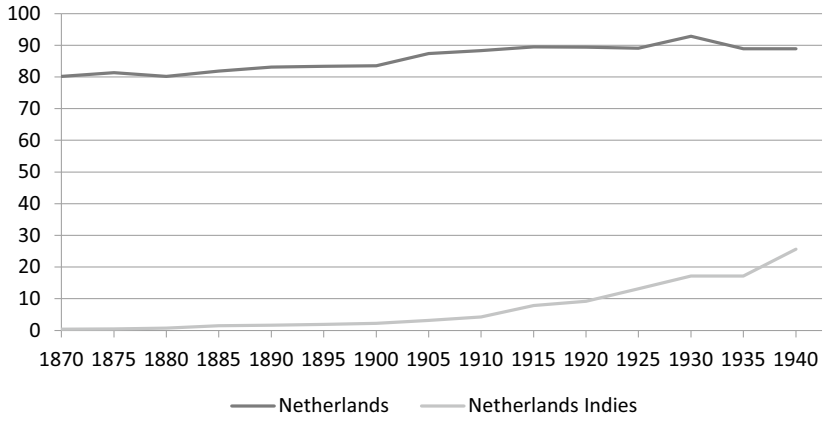

Fig. 6.1 Enrolment ratios, primary school, Netherlands and Dutch East Indies, 1870–1940 (*Source* Barro and Lee Data set, version 2016, http://www.barrolee.com/. Last accessed 15 January 2019)

differences of investment in schooling. Table 6.3 shows that, while both in the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies, state expenditure on primary schooling rose quickly in both parts of the empire in the late colonial period, per capita spending nevertheless differed significantly.

Until the 1920s, the Dutch government spent around fourteen times more on primary education per head of the population in the Netherlands than in the Dutch East Indies. The lack of proper state schooling did lead to private initiatives though. Traditionally, there had been the religious boarding schools (*pesantren* and *pondok*) that taught Arabic, religious philosophy and the Koran. The colonial government was ambivalent about this type of education, and many Dutch observers scorned this type of schooling, calling it for instance "a sort of religious education that hazes and confuses the mental capabilities, instead of developing them" (Anonymous 1870, 386). However, as the 1857 amendment to the Education Act was also extended to the Dutch East Indies, and the government was not allowed to finance religious schools, this excluded the possibility of having co-financed state-private schools with a Christian signature. Confessional education in the colony was therefore left to the missionaries (Frankema 2013, 321). As the colonial government let the

Table 6.3 Public expenditure on primary education, Netherlands and Dutch East Indies, 1900–1939

Year	Netherlands			Dutch East Indies			Ratio of per capita expenditure (NL/East Indies)
	Expenditure (NLG million)	Population (×1000)	Per capita (in NLG 1900)	Expenditure (NLG million)	Population (×1000)	Per capita (in NLG 1900)	
1900	7	5104	1.37	4	42,746	0.10	14.0
1910	14	5858	1.99	8	48,206	0.14	13.7
1920	53	6754	3.23	25	53,723	0.22	14.5
1930	80	7825	6.14	39	60,596	0.60	10.2
1939	53	8834	4.17	19	69,145	0.36	11.6

Sources Netherlands: CBS, Statline: http://statline.cbs.nl/Statweb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=80509ned&D1=0-2,5,8,11-12,15,18&D2=0,10,20,30,39,50,60,70,80,90,95,100,105,110,113-115&HDR=T&STB=G1&VW=T. Last accessed 15 January 2019

Dutch East Indies: Database on educational attainment for Indonesia and Congo, from Frankema (2013)

missions operate relatively autonomously until the early twentieth century, the educational and non-educational activities of Christian missions of several denominations remained inherently "splintered" throughout the colonial era (Gouda 1995a, 66–67).

After 1900, in line with the Ethical Policy, several Dutch benefactors undertook private initiatives for indigenous schooling. Two examples were the Kartini and Van Deventer schools, established in 1916 and 1917, respectively, for the provision of basic and advanced education to indigenous girls, with the objective of "elevating (*verheffen*) the Javanese woman" (Gouda 1995c, 30–31). However, as a contemporary Javanese observer noted, the creation of Van Deventer schools meant that "private foundations were fulfilling a task that should really be carried out by the government" (Gouda 1995a, 97).

Although the state indigenous schooling system was in principle open to both boys and girls, it was intended primarily to provide boys with the education necessary to enable them to maintain a family, or—for the higher classes—to prepare them for a career within the colonial administration. Moreover, depending on the region, indigenous parents could object to their daughters being in the same classroom as boys (Gouda 1995c, 27). These obstructions are reflected in reported school enrolment rates for the period 1909–1922, which indicate that girls constituted only about eight per cent of the total number of pupils (Lelyveld 1992, 83, 152). Likewise, the scarce data available on literacy rates also reveal low family investment in the education of girls: according to the 1930 census only 2.2% of indigenous women could read and write, while 10.8% of indigenous men were registered as literate (Volkstelling 1931–1934, 29). Among Dutch officials and citizens, this was not perceived as a problem, and it was believed that educating a small number of *priyayi* women would suffice to further disseminate knowledge and values to ordinary women (*desa* women or *volksvrouwen*) (Gouda 1995c, 28). As indicated earlier in this chapter, the same philosophy was pursued at the missionary schools in the archipelago. Such colonial perceptions, however, attest to much cultural insensitivity, given that elite women generally did not perform domestic tasks, and that the social distance between various indigenous social groups was large (Derksen 2016). Nevertheless, letters from the 1930s written by young female graduates to Mrs van Deventer-Maas, who, with

her late husband, had founded the Van Deventer schools, reveal that some of the educated middle- and upper-class girls had internalised the desire to "enter into the world to try to teach [their] knowledge to the Javanese people".[23] Some of these girls had very ambitious wishes, such as Willy Hamzah Amoendai from Borneo, who, after having received secondary education at a Van Deventer school, expressed her hope to establish a school in her home village.[24]

All in all, this brief comparison of the development of, and state investment in, primary schooling in the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies leads to some interesting observations. It seems that, as was the case with labour legislation, the Dutch authorities displayed an ambivalent attitude towards educating the common indigenous people. On the one hand, the Javanese population ought to be "uplifted", preferably by non-religious general education, but—as with the labour issue—this should certainly not cost too much. In the Netherlands, enrolment rates in primary education were already quite high at the start of the nineteenth century—and had gradually risen since—to around ninety per cent when it was finally made compulsory by law in 1901. Since 1917, in the metropole even special schools with a confessional signature received public funding. Although enrolment rates in the colony also started to rise following the introduction of the Ethical Policy, the vast majority of indigenous children did not receive primary schooling until the end of the colonial period, and literacy rates remained low, especially among girls. Accordingly, per capita public spending on general education in the Dutch East Indies was a tenth of what it was in the metropole, even in the 1930s. The accompanying ideology very much related to norms on child labour. In the mother country, by the early twentieth century, labour by children below the age of fourteen was considered undesirable—and this was reflected in relatively stagnant secondary schooling enrolment rates. Conversely, the idea that indigenous children in the colony should be in school instead of working, or helping in the household, never gained widespread currency.

6.5 Towards an Imperial "Male Breadwinner Society": Similar Ideologies, Different Practices

In the final decades of the nineteenth century, the well-being of the Dutch working classes and of the indigenous population of Java increasingly occupied the minds of concerned Dutch politicians and social commentators. However, these concerns were underpinned by a highly dualistic ideology, coloured by gender, class and race. On the one hand, the Christian notion of "guardianship" motivated action on behalf of the weaker inhabitants of the Dutch Empire, both in the context of the metropolitan Social Question and the colonial Ethical Policy. Christian family values were central to these new policies. It was imperative that women, both in the metropole and in the colony, stayed at home to provide a stable home for their children and husbands. On the other hand, until the late colonial period cultural and racial differences were alluded to in order to justify why, as opposed to the Dutch case a few decades earlier, social legislation and basic education were not necessary, and even undesirable, for Indonesian women and children. This distinction between "the" Indonesian woman and child and "the" Dutchwoman and child had strong racial, class and religious underpinnings. Whereas in much of the nineteenth century, the Dutch elites had regarded the lower classes in the Netherlands as "a foreign country", as Frances Gouda (1995b, 2) has argued, this started to change around 1900, when they became integrated into the pillarised organisation of society. Social, economic, and, ultimately, political citizenship rights for these groups quickly expanded, in the form of labour protection, access to state-funded primary education, and eventually the right to vote. The attitude towards the Javanese subjects of the empire, on the other hand, differed strikingly. Attempts to "civilise" and instil "modern" Western family values among the indigenous population through missionary schools and the feminist movement remained largely restricted to *priyayi* women and the minority of converted indigenous Christians.

In sharp contrast to the Netherlands, the Javanese population did *not* gain political citizenship, and Muslim *political* organisations were forbidden. Furthermore, the entitlement to social and economic citizen-

ship was very much restricted for the majority of the Javanese population who did not belong to the (very small) upper or middle strata of society. Ironically, schooling and social welfare by Muslim organisations, such as *Muhammadiyah*, were allowed, and this would ultimately contribute to indigenous resistance to the Dutch colonial state (James and Schrauwers 2003, 61). Moreover, unlike white Dutch settlers in the Dutch East Indies, most Javanese, and even many Indo-European inhabitants, did not fall under European jurisdiction. *Adat* (local traditions and customs) was uniformly utilised to exclude the indigenous population from political, economic and social citizenship rights. In the 1920s, *adat* was used as an argument against labour protection for Javanese women, who were rhetorically compared with "the" Dutchwoman, who, it was claimed, was not suited to hard labour and thus required protection. Historical memory had obviously faded quite quickly, as only a few decades before most Dutch working-class women and children had performed heavy labour, in factories or in the fields, without much social protection.

Notes

1. This chapter is a thoroughly revised and extended version of van Nederveen Meerkerk (2016). I am grateful to Corinne Boter, Francisca de Haan, Kirsten Kamphuis, and Daniëlle Teeuwen for their useful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter. I am much indebted to Ewout Frankema for providing me with his dataset on educational attainment in Congo and Indonesia, pertaining to Frankema (2013).
2. With the notable exception of a study on child labour by White (2001).
3. See Chapters 2 and 3 for more on the "civilizing mission".
4. Kuyper had been a fierce critic of van Houten's first law on child labour because, in his view, it was intended merely to regulate labour and not "to protect the child" (Koch 2006, 151).
5. One volume of the extensive research report (comprising twelve volumes, but with its sub-volumes totalling thirty-six volumes) was entitled *Verheffing van de Inlandsche vrouw* [The Elevation of the Indigenous Woman].
6. Nevertheless, there were large regional variations, resulting from the different agricultural systems—for example capital versus labour intensive (Schenkeveld 2008).

7. National Archives The Hague (NA), Arbeidsinspectie, inv. no. 1746, various petitions.
8. In 1928, for example, the Director General of Labour, C. Zaalberg, complained: "in industrial centres one sees the questionable phenomenon of housefathers being unable to find work and living off the earnings of their daughters". NA, Arbeidsinspectie, inv. no. 267, letter from C. Zaalberg to Jac. van Ginneken, 1 August 1928.
9. Still, compared with other West European countries, which also had to deal with under-registration in the official census records, the labour force participation of Dutch married women was significantly lower around this time (Pott-Buter 1993, 31). Particularly in relation to married women, see ibid., 200–201.
10. NA, Arbeidsinspectie, inv. no. 331, letter from H. A. van Ysselsteyn to Prof. N. W. Posthumus, 28 December 1912.
11. Ibid., inv. no. 334, documents concerning labour circumstances in domestic industry in general.
12. Ibid., inv. no. 271.
13. See Chapter 2.
14. For a comparison of colonial education in Asia, see, for instance, Frankema (2013).
15. NA, Koloniën Dossierarchief, inv. no. 1038, social labour legislation in the Netherlands-Indies 1937–1940.
16. NA, Collectie 424 Van Deventer-Maas, inv. no. 17, Letter from Miss Soehanti Kartohadiprodjo to E. van Deventer-Maas, 3 August 1934.
17. For a description of these conventions, see http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:12000:::NO:::. Last accessed 31 October 2017. See also White (2001, 110).
18. Boeijinga (1926, 153): "How little this regulation matters is most evident to us if we consider that only the labour of children below twelve years constituted any arrangement, while for youthful persons between twelve and sixteen years nothing has been done yet. And for women, little was arranged regarding night labour, while the regulation in no way interferes with […] day labour".
19. In practice, however, the school inspectors were mostly ministers of the Reformed Church, who were sufficiently educated, and moreover, especially in smaller communities, schoolteachers often also functioned as sacristan and organ player in the church (Boekholt and de Booy, 103).

20. For both financial and ideological reasons, the argument being that the state should not interfere in the domain of parental decisions (Boekholt and de Booy 1987, 115).
21. See Barro and Lee (2001, 546–547), for further explanation of the enrolment ratios used. The paper accompanying the latest version of the dataset (2016) is Lee and Lee (2016).
22. See Chapter 2. For a quantitative analysis of child labour in the nineteenth-century Netherlands, see van Nederveen Meerkerk (2009) and Smit (2014).
23. NA, Van Deventer-Maas, inv. no. 16, Letter from Miss Saparti to E. van Deventer-Maas, 20 June 1935.
24. Ibid., Letter from Miss Willy Hamzah Amoendai to E. van Deventer-Maas, 18 June 1936.

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7

Conclusions: Women's Work and Divergent Development in the Dutch Empire

This book has provided the first systematic comparison of developments in women's work in the Netherlands and Java, its most intensively colonised overseas region, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It set out to describe and explain how and why women's participation in the labour market changed, to what extent the divergent developments can be related to the fact that both regions were part of an empire, and how such imperial entanglements functioned. To this end, the previous chapters have dealt with three main questions. First, how did the work patterns of households, and particularly women's economic activities, develop in Java and the Netherlands? Second, to what extent were these developments shaped by colonial policies between 1830 and 1940? And, third, how did altering women's work patterns contribute to the household as well as the wider economy, both in the Netherlands and in Java? Roughly speaking, these questions can be captured under the headings "comparisons", "connections" and "consequences". In this chapter, I will synthesise the analyses of the previous chapters, organised along these particular lines.

In what follows, I will argue that the divergence in women's work patterns in the metropole and the colony related largely to increasingly vary-

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ing standards of living in both parts of the empire. These developments were partly a result of intentional colonial policies, but a great number of changes were unforeseen, and perhaps even undesired, consequences of how colonial relations evolved. Also, it is evident that links with colonialism were much more direct and influential in Java, and much more indirect in the Netherlands. Still, to understand why in the Netherlands the participation of married women in the labour market declined much faster than in Java, and also notably faster than in other West European countries, it is vital to study the role and particular character of Dutch colonialism. As we have seen in Chapter 2, the Dutch managed to implement a relatively extractive colonial regime, in terms of taxation and labour services (most prominently through the Cultivation System). This had implications not only for changes in women's work in Java and the rest of the Dutch East Indies, but also for developments in the metropole.

7.1 Comparisons: Developments in Women's Work in the Dutch Empire

As noted in Chapter 1, at the beginning of the nineteenth century the rate of female participation in the labour market was high both in the Netherlands and in Java. This section will highlight how this participation rate changed in both regions over the course of the century, both in quantitative and in qualitative terms. As I have emphasised throughout this book, establishing exact long-run participation rates is rife with difficulties for several reasons. First of all, no comprehensive national-level data are available for the period before 1849, when the first reliable census was taken in the Netherlands. For Java, the first contemporary data on the size of the labour force date from 1905. So, for the period before 1900 we will have to make do with educated guesses and extrapolations from more regional sources. Second, the sources that are available tend to misrepresent women's work. For instance, while, at least up until the end of the nineteenth century, Dutch marriage records probably give quite a reliable picture of *unmarried* women's economic activities, they fail to report unpaid married women's work and thus do not provide accurate information on the *total* labour force participation of women. In turn,

over the entire period, censuses tended to underestimate women's work, both in the Netherlands and in Java. Still, the censuses from the 1920s and 1930s are reasonably accurate, even if, in both countries, an unknown proportion of the women working on their family farm were not registered as economically active. This brings us to the third difficulty, namely how do we define work? As mentioned in Chapter 1, I choose to employ a broad definition of work, in the words of Chris and Charles Tilly "any human effort adding use value to goods and services" (Tilly and Tilly 1998, 22). Such a definition means that we have to look beyond the traditional focus on "wage labour" and include many other types of economic activity, both market- and non-market-oriented. For men, but especially for women, wage work was less important than it is presently. Indeed, there were many ways in which women's activities could be highly lucrative for the household. However, since such work often did not end up in the more general statistics on labour force participation, it must be identified using other historical sources.

Considering these problems, is it possible then, or even sensible, to quantify women's involvement in the labour market at all or even to suggest orders of magnitude? From the preceding chapters, it appears that in many cases we are left with just educated guesses, based on different methodologies for the metropole and the colony. Recent comparative research on female labour force participation in some European countries between 1700 and 1950 indicates that participation rates in rural areas—which often exceeded sixty and sometimes reached ninety per cent—were usually much higher than in cities, where rates were around or below fifty per cent and showed a particularly strong decline over the period 1850–1950 (Humphries and Sarásua 2012, 53). For the Netherlands and Java too, it is evident that the major trends I have sketched in the preceding chapters are closely related to the differences in the structure of their economies, which widened over the nineteenth century.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, agriculture was the most important employer for married women both in the metropole and in the colony—in the Netherlands, around thirty per cent of all married women were farmers' wives (van Zanden 1985, 74–75). This figure will have been at least twice as large in Java, given that around seventy-five per cent of the indigenous population worked in agriculture (Bosma 2016). In

the Netherlands, though, employment in agriculture—especially female wage work—declined drastically over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We should note, however, that although their share in the total wage-earning population declined, Dutch farmers' wives remained important on the family farm until the end of the period we are dealing with here; there, they produced food for household consumption—thus, constituting foregone expenditure on the market—and dealt with the sale of surpluses to augment the total household income (see Chapters 3 and 5).[1]

In Java, in contrast, agriculture remained the first and foremost economic sector, stimulated by the pressing demands of the Cultivation System (*c.* 1830–1870) and the lack of initiatives to stimulate mechanised industrialisation in the colony until the 1930s. Under the Cultivation System, the already high workload of Javanese peasant women expanded in multiple ways. Rough estimates suggest an overall increase in their labour input of almost fifty per cent (see Table 3.5). First of all, the increasing labour demands of the system, which diverted part of men's labour to the cultivation of export crops, led to a larger role for women in agriculture. Not only did their role in subsistence agriculture increase, there were multiple ways in which they became involved in the production of cash crops as well. Second, women's activities in the marketplace, selling agricultural produce, and/or prepared foodstuffs for plantation wage workers, expanded in the broadest possible sense, due to the increasing monetisation of the economy (see Chapter 3). Third, women were found to be increasingly performing non-agricultural activities in the countryside, most notably textile weaving and dyeing. Until the 1840s, their labour time spent on textile production diminished, especially in spinning, due to imports of factory yarn. However, after *c.* 1850, the imported semi-manufactures from the Netherlands instead stimulated textile weaving and finishing processes, leading to an upsurge in women's home industrial work, which lasted into the early decades of the twentieth century (see Chapter 4).

In the Netherlands too, hand-spinning had rapidly declined in the first few decades of the nineteenth century as a result of the imports of—mainly British—cotton yarns, resulting in the loss of work opportunities for married women. Because most of the cotton factories were located

in the south, which seceded from the kingdom in 1830, new plans for industrialisation were drawn up in which the Dutch East Indies took a prominent role as a market for Dutch textiles. These plans involved the introduction of the flying shuttle on semi-automatic looms, which in the first few decades were still used in people's own homes. This entailed the involvement of women and girls in handloom weaving, thus also leading to an increase in their participation in particular regions of the Netherlands, most notably in Twente in the east. Nevertheless, the actual industrialisation of the Netherlands occurred only after 1860, when the envisaged production of Dutch textiles for colonial markets had already proven its rather limited success. In the first two decades after industrialisation took off, the demand for cheaper female workers was considerable, which explains the steeper growth in their nominal wages compared with men's between 1860 and 1880 (see Fig. 5.1). This might have temporarily drawn married women into Dutch textile factories, but they were always a minority and increasingly seen as undesirable by middle-class observers, as well as by labouring families themselves, as social norms shifted in favour of a male breadwinner model (see Sect. 4.4).

In fact, the rise in real wages for Dutch men, which was larger than the corresponding rise in many other West European countries in this period, soon permitted this breadwinner-homemaker ideal to be attained, at least in households where a male household head was present and in full-time employment. Although this did not rule out poverty entirely, and some urban households too still relied on the work of wives and children, their activities primarily took place in the sphere of the household and included domestic industrial work or taking in lodgers.

Throughout this book, women's work in the service sector has probably received less attention than it deserves. In fact, according to the Dutch 1930 census, over sixty-three per cent of all women with a registered occupation worked in this sector, the two most important occupations being retailing and domestic service (Volkstelling 1934). Moreover, as I highlighted in Chapter 4, with the professionalisation of society in the Netherlands and the increasing educational opportunities for young women, clerical work also became attractive for the unmarried. Indeed, in 1849 and 1899 too, domestic service was the single most important profession for Dutch women. These—mostly young and unmarried—working-class

women performed household duties, allowing middle- and upper-class women to devote more time to their families, leisure, or, occasionally, to their careers. We also know that, especially in the nineteenth century, maidservants were employed for miscellaneous agricultural tasks in rural regions or as shop assistants in urban environments (Bras 2002; van Nederveen Meerkerk and Paping 2014).

For Java, Chapter 3 has pointed to the importance of women in retailing as well, and their activities expanded with the increasing monetisation of the economy that resulted from the Cultivation System. Given the very small proportion of elite and European households living in Java compared with the vast population of the island, the phenomenon of domestic service was relatively negligible in the colony. In the census of 1930, less than four per cent of the economically active adult female population was registered as doing paid domestic work (Volkstelling 1931–1934, 94–95).

With respect to the Netherlands, it is safe to say that in the first half of the nineteenth century forty-five to fifty-five per cent of all women were active in the paid labour market, even with the often unrecorded and seasonal or casual character of married women's work. More must have worked unpaid on the family farm. In Java, numbers are harder to reconstruct, but estimates of full-time labour hours in agriculture and other activities confirm the contemporary image of almost all women being highly industrious. However, over the course of the nineteenth century, female labour force participation in the colony rose, whereas in the metropole it swiftly declined, most notably between 1850 and 1880. I have argued in this book that this was closely related to the rising living standards in the Netherlands, which allowed a male breadwinner ideal to rather quickly be realised in this period and more pervasively than in many other European countries. Also, it contrasted markedly with developments in Java, where a male breadwinner ideology was perhaps half-heartedly preached but never feasible for the majority of the population due to stagnating living standards. Indeed, in the 1930s, only six per cent of all married Dutch women were recorded as having an occupation, whereas the officially registered labour force participation for Javanese women was almost thirty per cent in the same period. Even if myriads of causes underlay these divergent developments, they are at least partly explained by the direct and indirect effects of colonial connections.

7.2 Connections: Colonial Relations and Unintended Consequences

As Chapters 2 and 3 have highlighted, the Kingdom of the Netherlands was burdened with an immense public debt at its inception in 1815. Partly, this debt was inherited from the early modern period, but it was aggravated by economic turmoil, unexpected wars and ambitious investments to stimulate the Dutch economy. Although GDP per capita at the beginning of the nineteenth century was significantly higher in the Netherlands than in Java (van Zanden 2003), large groups in society did not reap the benefits of this. Poverty was still widespread in the Netherlands, and many households lived just above subsistence level. Women and children contributed to household income on a large scale, either through paid or unpaid labour, as Chapter 3 and the previous section have argued.

King Willem I had outspoken ideas about where the Dutch nation should be headed, and he pursued a tight grip on economic planning, both in the metropole and in the colony. Part of the solution for the financial troubles was found in a quite regressive tax system, both in the Netherlands, where excises on basic commodities were drastically increased in the early 1830s (see Fig. 7.1), and in Java, where the Cultivation System was implemented in the same period. As noted in Chapter 2, this system was highly extractive as well as being profitable to the metropole, arguably more so than in other empires at the time. Alongside the Cultivation System, other forms of taxation, such as land taxes and indirect taxes, continued to exist (see Sect. 2.2). Through these measures, the Dutch government introduced highly effective fiscal and economic policies, particularly weighing relatively heavily on the lower strata in both Dutch and Javanese society. The rhetoric behind all this was also very similar: both parts of the empire, as well as its inhabitants, ought to be developed, the metropole mostly as an industrial and trading power, and the colony as a provider of cash crops for the world market. To help achieve this, Willem I established the Dutch Trading Company (NHM) in 1824 and plans were designed to make more adequate use of the hitherto unproductive hours of Dutch and Javanese commoners. Typically, these norms for industriousness applied to men, women and children from the working poor and peasant population alike (Fig. 7.1).

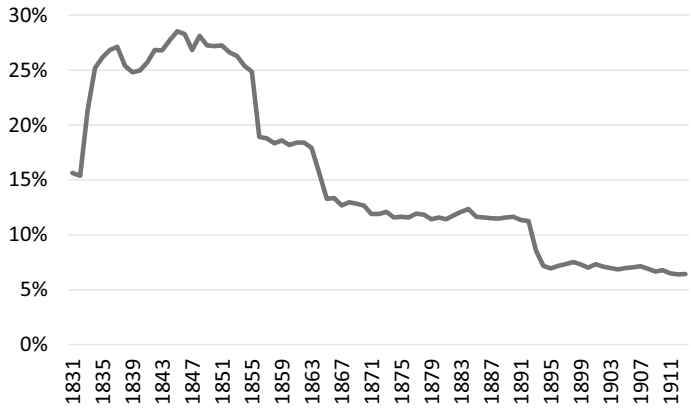

Fig. 7.1 Excises on basic foodstuffs as a proportion of total tax income, the Netherlands, 1831–1913 (*Sources* National Archives, The Hague, Rekenkamer, inv. nos. 252, 266, 267, Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken [1853, 309–314], and van der Voort [1994, 259–262])

Ironically, the gains from the Cultivation System turned out to be so beneficial that the metropolitan public finances had been placed on a sounder footing within a few decades. As a consequence, the fiscal screws could gradually be loosened for the Dutch population. Various excises on basic commodities, such as bread and fuel, were abolished from the mid-1850s onwards (see Fig. 7.1). As foodstuffs constituted a relatively large share of working-class and peasant expenditure, these changes certainly contributed to the increasing purchasing power of Dutch households. In the second half of the nineteenth century, men's real wages rose faster than in other West European countries (see Table 3.6) and particularly in the first few decades of the twentieth century welfare ratios and the quantity and quality of consumption rose spectacularly (see Chapter 5). Around 1900, provided that they had sufficient employment, most households in both the Dutch urban and rural contexts could get by. Especially in agricultural wage working families, the contributions of women and children were still very important in ensuring an above subsistence-level standard of living. Also in urban contexts, households still benefited from the wage and non-wage income of housewives, though less so than in the countryside. Over the next few decades, however, living standards in the

Netherlands improved impressively. In Java, in contrast, living standards were just above subsistence levels around 1900 and did not improve much over the following decades, despite the efforts of the colonial government to improve the well-being of the indigenous population through the Ethical Policy. Although the Cultivation System had been abandoned in the 1870s, the inventive ways in which the Dutch designed and levied colonial taxes continued to depress Javanese incomes. The Semarang household budgets show, for example, that peasant households on average spent ten per cent of their (modest) income on taxes (Verslag 1903).

The continuing, and even rising, rate of participation in the labour force of Javanese women, both in agricultural and in textile production, was an unintended consequence of the colonial policies in place. For instance, it had never been the intention of the Cultivation System to involve Javanese women on a large scale, other than for subsistence agriculture. Moreover, the rise in hand-weaving and cloth dyeing, as a result of the import of factory yarns and semi-finished white cloth, was definitely unforeseen and probably undesired. To some extent, the increased input of Javanese women workers even ran counter to views about the proper role of women, as homemakers instead of breadwinners, which were increasingly propagated not only in the metropole but also in the colony in the context of the Ethical Policy and a confessional political climate (see Chapter 6).

However, as Chapter 6 has also highlighted, the ideal of domesticity was, at the same time, only half-heartedly pursued in the colony. An extensive range of social provisions and labour protection never came into being in the Dutch East Indies. This was due, on the one hand, to financial constraints on the realisation of the ambitious ethical goals set in 1901 and, on the other, to economic considerations, such as the need for cheap female and child labour on plantations. The increasingly pronounced differences with the metropole, where a welfare state including general education and labour protection for women and children had in fact emerged, were justified by pointing to inherent cultural and ethnic differences. These differences also resonated in new theoretical work on the structure of the "dual economy" in Java under colonial rule (Boeke 1930). Interestingly, the male breadwinner ideology gained ground in the metropole in a period when a considerable decline in married women's labour force participation had already set in, because it had become increasingly attainable for more

and more households. Here too, ideology thus clearly followed economic change, which in turn was—albeit more indirectly—linked to developments in the empire at large.

7.3 Consequences: Women's Work and Economic Development in the Dutch Empire

As I concluded in Chapter 3, the increasing labour input of women in subsistence agriculture was vital for safeguarding a basic level of food security under the Cultivation System on Java. The demand on men's labour time had become such a strain in many areas that women performed up to eighty per cent of the work in subsistence agriculture at the peak of the system around 1850; this had been around fifty per cent at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Locher-Scholten 1986, 39; see also Sect. 3.3). When the demands of the Cultivation System were relaxed somewhat, after *c.* 1850, many women found the opportunity to earn some extra money through hand-weaving or batiking. Interestingly, for this they used imported yarns and white cloth from the Netherlands, which were more successful in the colony than the factory-made calicoes intended to conquer the Javanese market and boost industrialisation in the Netherlands (see Chapter 4). After the abolition of the Cultivation System, the plantation system became more important in providing European entrepreneurs with tropical export products for the world market. On the plantations too, women often played an important role. The budget surveys from the late 1930s show that women's wages, especially in those households living on the plantations, made up twenty to thirty per cent of total household annual income (see Table 5.6). This helps explain why plantation-working households were generally better off than the average peasant household, in terms of total income as well as level of consumption and calorific intake. For example, despite suggestions in the literature that poorer families could shift to inferior subsistence crops such as cassava (Van der Eng 2000), many plantation workers preferred rice, which might have

been made affordable owing to the extra income earned by women (see Sects. 5.3 and 5.4).

In the Netherlands too, women's contributions were vital to household income. Especially in the first half of the nineteenth century, when poverty was still widespread and the economy largely stagnant, many women and children were active in the paid labour force. Until the 1870s, first in the context of post-Napoleonic stagnation and later in the wake of industrialisation, it was mainly urban poverty that was on the political agenda. So, a "Benevolent Society" was initiated to reform the urban poor around 1820, and in later decades the Social Question primarily concerned urban industrial workers. With the rise in living standards in the Netherlands, around 1900, non-broken urban households in which at least the husband was employed reached welfare ratios well above subsistence. In rural areas, however, many households still very much needed both the wage and the non-wage incomes of women and children in order to reach a sufficient level of consumption. The household budgets show that their contributions consisted of between twenty-five and thirty-five per cent of household income, if we add up wage income and foregone earnings of home production. In urban households, the extra income generated by women, for instance in home industries, was probably used to attain a level of consumption that corresponded more with a respectability basket. In the 1930s, welfare ratios had risen to such an extent that most Dutch urban as well as rural households were able to reach this level, including a marked rise in the consumption of sugar and many non-food items such as books and even leisure activities. The urban–rural divide had not completely evaporated, though, as many rural wives and children continued to perform unpaid work on the family farm (Platenburg 1943).

With regard to the effects of women's work on the wider economy and society, we can draw the following conclusions. In Java, the extra labour input by women in subsistence agriculture enabled Javanese men to focus on the cultivation of cash crops. Indirectly, the immense economic gains of the system thus received an impulse from the extra hours Javanese women devoted to rice cultivation. Moreover, the activities they developed in the cottage textile industry, increasingly catering to regional markets with handwoven and batik cloth, can be considered a form of labour-intensive industrialisation (Austin and Sugihara 2013) and def-

initely did not lead to the outright de-industrialisation of the colony. Additionally, as cheap labourers on plantations, whose wages were consistently lower than the—already meagre—plantation wages of men (see Fig. 5.2), women's labour added to the profits made by the owners of these enterprises, which until the end of the colonial period were partly remitted to the metropole (Gordon 2010). Finally, the implications of women's increased labour force participation on demographic developments were also considerable. The debate around the spectacular growth in the population of Java in the nineteenth century has centred mainly around the opposition between the "irrational" economic behaviour of indigenous households as a response to economic limitations on the one hand (e.g. May 1978), and the positive effects of colonial interventions in health care (cf. Alexander 1984, 362), most notably vaccination against smallpox and the additional income-generating activities created by the Cultivation System (e.g. Boomgaard 1989, 183–184; Henley 2005, 353), on the other. However, as some anthropologists have also noted, but not systematically explored (Alexander 1984; White 2011), the household reallocation of labour might have been a more plausible explanation for this changed demographic behaviour. The fact that Javanese women were forced to devote a substantial part of their time to subsistence agriculture as well as to the cultivation of cash crops led them to increasingly delegate the care of young infants to their older children (see Chapter 3). This dramatically shortened the time they breastfed, leading to a rise in fertility and birth rates—with all the long-term consequences that entailed.

In the Netherlands too, married women's labour input was influential for larger economic processes. Even if large-scale mechanisation and industrialisation did not take off as swiftly as intended in the 1830s to 1860s, married women and children did provide a large part of the flexible labour for cottage weaving that was stimulated by the activities of the NHM and Twente textile entrepreneurs. By introducing what Peter Stearns has called "key elements of change in technology and labor organization" (Stearns 2016, 18), the foundations for later industrialisation were thus laid, and women and children played a crucial role in this shift towards structural economic change. What is more, women's changing role in the labour market can be associated with decisive shifts in consumption, which ultimately bolstered domestic markets. The rise in

household income stimulated the consumption of processed foods and durable industrial manufactures. This domestic demand was vital to the take-off of industrialisation, as van Riel has recently pointed out (van Riel 2018, 564). Around 1900 this shift in consumption was still mainly an urban phenomenon, and only later would households in the countryside follow this trail of more "respectable" consumption baskets. Women's and children's earnings contributed to this broadening of consumer patterns, as welfare ratios based on male wages did not start to accelerate until after the late nineteenth century (see Table 5.2).

Although all of the developments described and analysed here were to a certain degree specific to the context of the Netherlands, Java and the particular character of Dutch imperialism, the results of this study can also be highly relevant for studies on women's work and economic development in other geographical areas. The final section of this chapter highlights the broader mechanisms identified in this book and links back to the international historiographical debates discussed in Chapter 1.

7.4 Wider Implications and Further Research

This book is, to my knowledge, the first to have brought together research on colonial connections, living standards and the development of labour relations. Its combined focus on women's work, non-wage work in agriculture and the economic activities of indigenous colonised households—aspects that have so far been understudied in the historiography—reveals several mechanisms by which colonial entanglements affected economic development in both colony and metropole. One mechanism is the response of both colonial and metropolitan households to the changes in living standards that wider colonial economic policies entailed. Another mechanism is how these shifts in labour allocation, which involved great changes in the use of women's time and energy, were not only vital for reaching a particular level of subsistence, but also impacted consumption patterns, such as more expensive higher-quality textiles made in Java, or increased meat and sugar intake in the Netherlands. A third mechanism is found in the highly extractive and efficient

way in which Dutch colonialism managed to exploit labour and other resources from the East Indies, first primarily through the Cultivation System, and later by numerous other fiscal and economic policies. This influenced a colonial–metropole divergence, whereby the labour force participation of Dutch married women declined rapidly—faster even than elsewhere in Europe—while the efforts of married Javanese women only increased. A final highly complex mechanism is the shift in social norms towards women's work in the metropole and colony. On the one hand, they superficially converged, in the sense that a male breadwinner ideology was desired for both. In practice, however, diverging developments in social and labour protection were increasingly justified by stressing the inherent cultural and biological differences between Dutch and Javanese women and children. Ultimately, changing social norms helped solidify the divergence between colony and metropole.

How can the specific case of the Dutch Empire be of relevance to the international historiography? In a sense, the Dutch case, with its very effective system of colonial extraction and a comparatively rapid decline in women's labour force participation, might have been unique. Nevertheless, it is highly probable that similar mechanisms of widening living standards between colony and metropole and an impact of colonial relations on women's work patterns occurred in many other imperial contexts. It would be useful to investigate how these mechanisms developed elsewhere and how they can be linked to larger debates on industrialisation and de-industrialisation, living standards and colonial extraction. My thoughts on this are as follows.

First of all, with regard to the de-industrialisation debate, it is evident that within the context of nineteenth-century colonialism and imperialism structural changes in the economy took place everywhere in the Global North as well as in the Global South—albeit with different timing and intensity. The colonial policies of Great Britain, itself the world's first industrial nation, led for example to rather early initiatives (from the 1850s onward) in British India to stimulate mechanised textile production there, which affected the household division of labour and female labour force participation in the colony.

Second, with regard to debates on living standards, it is clear that the degree of redistribution of colonial remittances in the metropole might

have differed notably between empires, thus contributing to an explanation for the differentiated timing of the rise of the male breadwinner economy. While, for example, in the Netherlands the capitalist class surely profited most from the *batig slot*, excise reforms eventually also led to a trickling down of benefits to a larger segment of the population. In Britain, on the other hand, where the costs of empire might have outweighed the benefits, the tax burden was laid primarily on the middle and lower classes, whereas the profits of empire ended up in the pockets of entrepreneurs (Davis and Huttenback 1986).

Third, and related to this, in the light of the debate on colonial extraction it is clear that compared with other imperial powers the effectiveness in the Dutch Empire was relatively greater, and the profitability of the Cultivation System developed comparatively early. In Belgium, for instance, which is perhaps even more notorious for the extractive character of its colonial policies, the flows to the metropole occurred much later, in a context when industrialisation in Belgium was already well underway and female labour force participation comparatively high. We might also consider the differing effects of colonial decision-making regarding cultivation directives. It is conceivable, for example, that the choice of particular export crops in some colonial contexts—e.g. sugar in the Javanese case, which was excessively exposed to volatile and declining world market prices in this period—led to excessive pressure on the income and labour input of indigenous households, whereas in other colonial contexts, such as British Malaya, more favourable or more diversified choices might have been made.[2]

For future research, it would be worthwhile exploring such comparisons further and more systematically. Also, it would be interesting to study to what extent the various imperial powers influenced each other, directly—by informing themselves about one another's developments and policies—but also more indirectly—by investigating how economic competition in the global market led the different players to exploit the labour of households in their colonies in various ways. Ultimately, I hope that this book will serve as an important building block for the study of these, and other, themes.

Notes

1. The census in 1899 (Volkstelling 1899) lists 28,251 married women with an occupation in the agricultural sector, compared with about 490,000 women married to a farmer or agricultural labourer in this year (almost 50% of all 1,022,012 married women in the Netherlands at the time). Assuming that most of these women worked on the family farm—and the information from the household budgets reveals an average contribution to household income for own use of 23% (see Chapter 5)—we know for certain that the registered labour force participation was too low if we apply our own broad definition of work. The 1930 census records 109,316 women with an occupation in agriculture, 48,779 (44.6%) of whom were married (Volkstelling 1931–1934). Although wage work in agriculture for married women had virtually disappeared, 33% of household income was accounted for by home production (see Chapter 5). At the same time, there were still almost 550,000 women married to a farmer or agricultural labourer. This accounts for just over one-third of all 1,516,207 Dutch women married in 1930. This shows how structural change in the economy affects the overall participation of women, even if we use a broad definition of work.
2. I am grateful to Ulbe Bosma for pointing this out to me during a workshop at Utrecht University, 20 December 2018.

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Index

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