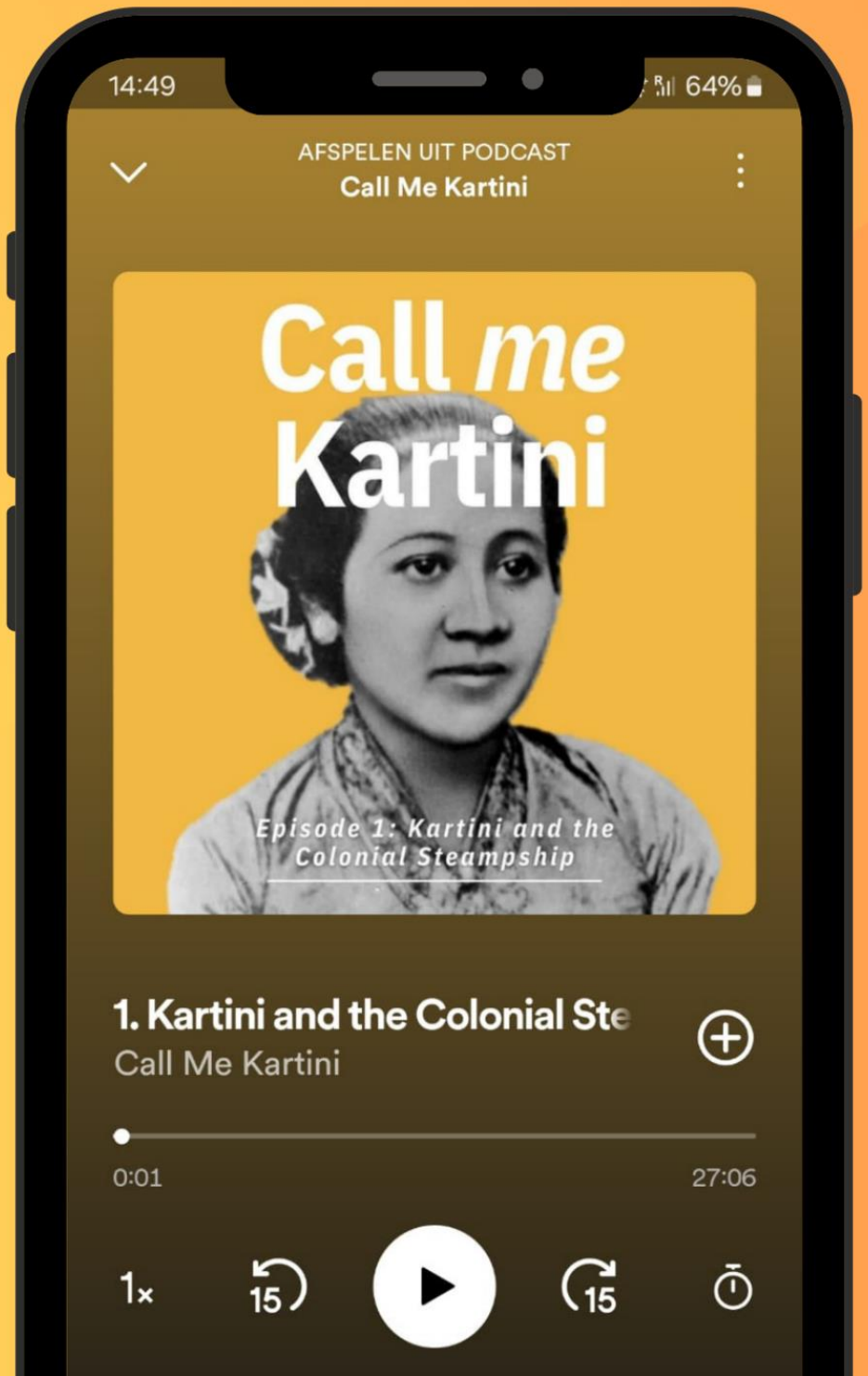
# Call Me Kartini

## Towards an Intersectional Approach in Academic History Podcasting

Dasja Zonneveldt



Call Me Kartini: Towards an Intersectional Approach in Academic History Podcasting

By
Dasja Zonneveldt

Submitted to
Central European University
Department of History
Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Supervisor: Dr. Paulo Jorge de Sousa Pinto
Second Reader: Dr. Soda Naoki

Vienna, Austria – Tokyo, Japan
2024

Image front page: Unknown. 1890-1904. Photograph. “Portret van Raden Ajeng Kartini.” 9 x 12cm. Wereldmuseum TM-10018776.

**Abstract**

Recent critical memory work in the Netherlands has focused on re-evaluating the romanticised perception of the Dutch colonial past that persists in contemporary society. While valuable knowledge about this historical period and its legacies is offered through various projects, there is a noticeable absence of podcasts that examine the individual lives of colonised people to provide an intersectional understanding of colonial society from their perspective. Simultaneously, there is no practice-based research that explores the potential of podcasting for public historians. Given these gaps in public knowledge and academic research, my project 1) developed a podcast based on an intersectional analysis of Kartini's life and letters and 2) critically reflects on the podcast-making process and how it impacts the translation of intersectional historical research, using the podcast *Call Me Kartini* as a case study.

The findings indicated that the podcast format impacted the presentation of sources, necessitating more descriptive language and storytelling techniques to engage the audience while maintaining a rigorous analysis of Kartini's letters. Podcasts may simplify historical narratives to some degree, but they also provide opportunities for nuanced storytelling and engagement with historical research, which has the potential to challenge conventional narratives. The research has also shown how important ethical considerations are in making history projects about the colonial past, especially when they are made by researchers from former colonising countries. The thesis opens up questions for further research in the hope that future podcasts will increasingly be able to bring rigorous, detailed engagements with the past to the public.

**Keywords**: intersectionality, narrative podcasts, Dutch-Indonesian colonial history, race, class, gender

**Dedication**

Voor Winnifred, de opper-schetebol

**Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my interviewees, Prof. Dr. Elise van Nederveen-Meerkerk, Dr. Farabi Fakih, Dr. Vineet Thakur and Dr. Ricardo Roque. Your time and insights were invaluable and enlightening. I would also like to thank Sita Magfira for making Kartini's voice come alive in her voice-overs. My podcast would not have been possible without these interviews and voiceovers.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Paulo Jorge de Sousa Pinto, for his support and feedback on my project and my second reader, Dr. Soda Naoki, for taking the time to give me comments. In addition, I would like to thank my inspiring and great friends and fellow students, Nina, Evva and Mariame, for their feedback and support. The same goes for my family: this project would not be the same without my parents, Miranda Arendsen and Marco Zonneveldt, and my sisters, Sara and Isis Zonneveldt. Thank you for always cheering me on and being there for me. Lastly, I am so grateful for Du and all of his love and support. *Ik hou van jullie allemaal.*

The European Commission provided financial support, granting me a full scholarship for the Erasmus Mundus Master's Programme History in the Public Sphere. Central European University also provided financial support, enabling me to buy recording equipment, which I used throughout the process and during my research trip to Java.

**Table of Contents**

**Project outcome**

This research paper discusses the podcast *Call Me Kartini*, which can be found through the following links:

- Website (www.dasja.nl): This website contains all episodes, of which the scripts and show notes can be found in Appendix A through D. By clicking on the image of one of the four episodes, a page opens with the audio file and notes. The episodes are meant to be listened to chronologically, going from 1 to 4.
    - Episode 1: https://dasja.nl/2024/06/05/episode-1-kartini-and-the-colonial-steamship/
    - Episode 2: https://dasja.nl/2024/06/05/episode-2-friendship-across-borders/
    - Episode 3: https://dasja.nl/2024/06/05/episode-3-at-the-intersection/
    - Episode 4: https://dasja.nl/2024/06/05/episode-4-the-future-of-the-past/
- The complete series is also published on Spotify (https://open.spotify.com/show/1rZ4PlZfp2DlBByAGoWfQR?si=9f6152e223c64ceb):
    - Episode 1: https://open.spotify.com/episode/3D4B5tkst3dmk10c11FJbM?si=8fb4c694f60f4be4
    - Episode 2: https://open.spotify.com/episode/2FsGLKuMNd8qR8PjcPupsL?si=8c09af4727f84dad
    - Episode 3: https://open.spotify.com/episode/3777HImBqQr7dx0H4sHO0C?si=981d3ba4521d4f2f
    - Episode 4: https://open.spotify.com/episode/0IjrXxaBv7Z51waHs9Qfii?si=ed70f46f285f4974

## Introduction

The legacies of the Dutch-Indonesian colonial past continue to affect contemporary society. This historical period, marked by Dutch colonisation and consequent independence of Indonesia, has increasingly attracted academic and popular attention, as exemplified by the recent growth in critical memory work in museum exhibitions, novels, TV programs and movies (Dragojlovic and McGregor 2022, 935). This signals an emerging critical evaluation of the Dutch colonial past as a reaction to the one-sided, oversimplified version of colonial history that has characterised and largely dominated Dutch engagement with the past (Dragojlovic and McGregor 2022, 936; Raben 2016, 17). Alongside movies and novels, podcasts have been created to discuss the history of slavery and colonialism. For example, the Dutch podcast *De plantage van onze voorouders [The Plantation of Our Ancestors*], which discusses the history and legacy of slavery in Surinam through the hosts' family histories, has gained critical acclaim and widespread popularity.[1] Another example is the podcast *Revolusi!* by Belgian historian David van Reybrouck (2021), which explores the history of Indonesian independence through oral history. While these projects offer valuable knowledge about these historical periods and their legacies, no podcast has delved deeper into the individual lives of colonised people to offer a nuanced understanding of colonial society from their perspective. This is the starting point for this research paper, which analyses the effects of translating historical research into the podcast medium.

Podcasts are a compelling medium as they have seen explosive growth in listeners in the past decade. A study found that 48% of Dutch citizens listen to podcasts, of which 25% weekly or daily (Markteffect 2023). With millions of listeners worldwide, podcasts have become an engaging platform for storytelling. A 2019 study found that 144 million

[1] The podcast was named the best podcast of the year in the Dutch Podcast Awards of 2020. The full series had approximately a million listeners. It has also been turned into a theatre play, see Kruyswijk 2020.

Americans had listened to a podcast, and 31% of the American respondents were interested in history as a podcast topic (Edison Research 2019). Podcasting has thus emerged as a popular medium for disseminating historical research among a broader audience outside academia (Covart 2022; Tromans 2016).

Public historians have turned their attention to podcasts as well, analysing existing history podcasts from non-professional and professional historians (Alegi 2012; Covart 2022; Salvati 2015). They have also discussed the limitations of podcasting as an alternative model for scholarly production: Cuffe (2019) warns of the oversimplification of historical narratives and Rayner (2016) highlights how the importance of an understandable and entertaining narrative poses constraints on nuanced academic writing. However, despite the growing interest in podcasts as a tool for public historians, there is still limited practice-based research that analyses what it means for historical research to be conducted through podcasts. This research in the sense of 'learning by doing' has been done in other disciplines, such as geography (Kinkaid et al. 2020), urban studies (Rogers et al. 2020) and geography (Gallagher and Prior 2014). Media scholars have analysed how the aural medium can facilitate "polyvocal dialogue and reach new publics" (Kinkaid et al. 2020, 2) or mix sensory immersion with narrative storytelling to create informative, entertaining and engaging podcasts (Harter 2019; Lindgren 2016; Sanchez Laws 2020; Wilbur et al. 2022), indicating the potential of the medium for historical pedagogy. Nonetheless, what is missing is a study that is based on practice and can analyse the process from the perspective of a researcher-producer. This type of research can give more insight into the precise workings, the potential and the pitfalls of the medium as a method and platform for historical research.

To fill this gap, this thesis project aims to examine the potential of podcasting as a tool for public historians to research and disseminate complex and historiographically grounded interpretations of history, which in this case is an intersectional understanding of Dutch-

Indonesian colonial history to a non-academic audience. As a case study, the podcast will focus on the life and letters of Raden Ajeng Kartini[2] (1879-1904), a young woman who lived in Java and wrote letters to European colonial officers, their wives, and Dutch feminists and politicians. In her letters, Kartini advocated for the rights of Javanese women, especially in education and marriage, and the emancipation of the Javanese people. Her letters were posthumously published, which made her a famous historical figure in Indonesia. Even though she is one of Indonesia's National Heroes and is celebrated every year on April 21, she is virtually unknown in the Netherlands (Bijl 2020, 10).

Kartini's letters are filled with ironic statements and sharp and critical reflections about what it means to be a woman and part of a society colonised by the Dutch. As such, her correspondence offers valuable and compelling insights into power relations and structures of the colonial society in the Dutch East Indies. They also open up questions about how the intersectional categories of race, gender and class influenced Kartini's life and thoughts. Her letters are unique because few extensive sources were written by women from this time, let alone a female colonial subject. The fact that she writes critically of colonialism is also extraordinary because not many other sources from this time have survived that express a similar nationalist sentiment (Coté 2014, 1). Kartini's letters thus offer a valuable addition to existing historical narratives, presenting a specific and underrepresented perspective on Dutch colonial society in Java. Furthermore, the ongoing relevance of the influences of race, gender, and class and the ways colonial notions influence their conceptualisation in contemporary society underscores the significance of Kartini as a case study.

Kartini has been appropriated in various ways. In Indonesia, she is seen as an iconic feminist and nationalist figure but also faces criticism for being conservative and exclusionary

[2] Raden Ajeng was a title, not a name. 'Raden' refers to her aristocratic status, while 'ajeng' meant that she was unmarried (Woodward 2015, 10). In the rest of the paper, she will be called Kartini. In one of her letters, she writes that she wants to just be called Kartini (Coté 2014, xiii) and scholars have used this name as well.

(Chin 2020, 74). Kartini became a symbol for wide-ranging social issues, and her memory has been evoked by national and international politicians, activists, and artists (Bijl and Chin 2020, 2-3). Because of this wide range of appropriations, Robinson (2020) distinguishes between the historical Kartini and the trope "Kartini". She calls the latter a "floating signifier", a concept that has been given "different meanings in different times, and is neither static nor solid" (131). She states that the general Indonesian public might have heard of her name but has never engaged with her work or scholarly literature about her (147). Her article and the work of Bijl and Chin (2020) have shown how political, cultural and social actors have used the image of Kartini for their contemporary concerns. Consequently, their representations of Kartini highlight only specific identities, focusing on her as either a feminist, nationalist or Javanese, obstructing an understanding of the complexities and particularities of colonial society and Kartini.

Given these gaps in public knowledge and academic research, my project aims to 1) develop a podcast based on an intersectional analysis of Kartini's life and letters, which does not foreground one category or identity but shows how power relations and identities are intersected and 2) critically reflect on the podcast making process and its merits for public historians. My thesis thus consists of two parts: the first is a capstone project in the form of a narrative podcast about Kartini based on intersectionality theory. The podcast combines an analysis of Kartini's letters with interviews with researchers, personal reflections, and audio fragments. Building on this practical exercise in podcast creation, the second part of my thesis, this research paper, will discuss the following research question: What are the effects of translating intersectional historical research into a narrative podcast format, using the podcast *Call Me Kartini* as a case study?

First, a literature review will discuss intersectionality, podcasting and public history to understand how the key components of intersectional research can be integrated into a podcast

format. Then, the paper discusses the methodology of analysing Kartini's letters and making a podcast. Finally, the podcast process and product will be analysed. The following sub-questions will be answered: How does the podcasting medium facilitate the exploration of Kartini's intersecting identities and experiences, including those related to race, class, and gender? How does podcasting influence the interpretation and presentation of Kartini's life and letters? And lastly, what are the challenges and limitations inherent in using podcasting to disseminate intersectional historical research, and how can these be addressed or mitigated?

## 1. Historiographical debate and theoretical framework

### 1.1 Historical context

Before I dive deeper into the theoretical framework of the paper, I will give a brief outline of the historical context of late colonial society in Java, focusing more specifically on how gender, race, and class structured the society and influenced individuals' lives.[3] The Dutch had been present in the Indonesian archipelago since the start of the seventeenth century but began to expand their control through military action and colonial civil administration from the nineteenth century onwards. By around 1900, most of the archipelago was under full Dutch control.[4] The colonial society was based on intersecting axes of power linked to gender, race and class. Firstly, the Dutch colonial law divided the population into three distinct legal groups based on a racial hierarchy: Europeans at the top, followed by individuals of mixed descent (so-called *Indische* or Indo-Europeans) and individuals who originated outside the archipelago, such as Chinese and Arabs (so-called Foreign Orientals) and the Indigenous population at the bottom.[5] Locher-Scholten (2000, 18) characterises this distinction as "the cornerstone of the colonial structure", influencing several domains of everyday life, whether it was the legal system, civil service or education. Despite efforts to maintain clear distinctions between these groups, in reality they were often blurred.

Secondly, within each racial group, there were class divisions. Among the Indigenous population, for example, there were the traditional aristocrats (*priyayi*), of which Kartini was one, who originally ruled over the lower classes of the native population. The *priyayi* received

[3] Unfortunately, it is outside the scope of this paper to give a more comprehensive historical context. For a more detailed overview, I would recommend listening to the podcast episodes or reading the scripts that can be found in the appendices of this paper.

[4] There was still military conflict in Aceh. For more information about this war and its role in Dutch culture, see Dolk 2001.

[5] Based on an analysis of the legal categories in late-colonial Dutch East Indies, Luttikhuis (2013) argues that 'Europeanness' was more important than 'Whiteness' in the colonial hierarchy. However, other scholars, such as Locher-Scholten 2000 and Sysling 2016 argue that racial ideologies about Whiteness were at the base of colonial policies and ideologies. For a more detailed discussion about the connections between race, science and ideology in the Dutch East Indies, see Sysling 2016.

power and patronage from the Dutch administration in exchange for their compliance with colonial rule (Taylor 2013, 88). Thirdly, gender roles intersected with both racial and class hierarchies. European women were seen as the bearers of culture and morality and were expected to maintain domestic spheres and uphold colonial values (Stoler 2002, 182-183). Dutch colonial policy treated lower-class Indonesian women differently than aristocratic women, as the former were expected to be part of the labour force and the latter were expected to adhere to more Western, Christian values (Locher-Scholten 2000, 29). The theoretical underpinnings of these intersections will be further discussed in the following section.

### 1.2 Intersectionality, critical memory work and colonial history

Even though Indonesia declared its independence from the Netherlands in 1942, the legacies of colonialism continue to have effects in both of these countries. Quoting Young (2012, 1), Dragojlovic and McGregor (2022, 935) state that "the postcolonial condition remains a feature of everyday life, whether at the level of institutions, law, economy, education, language, or cultural production". An awareness of these enduring legacies has given rise to efforts, especially in the cultural sector, to engage in decolonial work that aims to decentre "the ongoing perpetuation of Eurocentric systems of value" (Mignolo and Walsh 2018, 17). Critical memory work has been rising in both the Netherlands and Indonesia, aiming to decentre ongoing power dynamics between the former colonising and colonised countries.

In Dutch memory activism, efforts are made to make Indonesian women and women of Indo-European descent more visible in stories about the colonial past. This activism has resulted in literature, documentaries, and fiction films (Dragojlovic and McGregor 2022). However, Dragojlovic and McGregor (2022) argue that these representations are often still haunted by colonial dreams and, as a result, still reproduce colonial stereotypes, where the

Netherlands is seen as a progressive country that was essential in the development of the Indonesian people.

While recent critical memory work has focused more attention on previously underrepresented groups in colonial history, fewer projects have sought to consciously represent the intersectionality of gender, race and class in colonial society, specifically the late colonial society on Java. Within this context, the position of Indonesian women and women of mixed descent was particularly ambiguous, as Dragojlovic and McGregor (2022, 394) have stated. A history project based on an analysis of the life of one of these women can give more insight into how Dutch colonial society was organised around race, class and gender as axes of power. This is what this research project sets out to do, focusing on Kartini.

A theory that has been successful in dissecting power relations and how they influence various intersecting identities is intersectionality. Over the past few decades, intersectionality has evolved from a theoretical framework to a distinct field of study. (Cho, Crenshaw and McCall, 2013). It has not only travelled geographically – from its origin in the United States to other continents – but has also traversed different academic disciplines, and it has made its way outside of academia to popular blogs and activism (Nash, 2023). As recognised by scholars like Leslie McCall (2005) and Floya Anthias (2013), intersectionality stands out as a paramount theoretical contribution and a transformative development in comprehending the complexities of inequality across social identities.

Moreover, intersectionality is a valuable framework for historians of empires seeking a nuanced understanding of individuals within colonial societies, where various power dynamics influenced the lives of people that were part of these societies, whether they were European settlers, Indigenous people, men or women, from higher or lower social classes and everything in between. Intersectionality is particularly pertinent because the colonial expansion itself constructed many of the specificities of these intersecting identities. The

hierarchies of race, the racialisation and sexualisation of colonised people, and the ideological constructs are rooted in nineteenth-century colonialism (Mohanty 2003, 58). This is why intersectionality is a meaningful framework for this research project, which analyses the life of Kartini and aims to consider and address broader intersections of identities, power relations, domination and privilege in the late colonial society in Java.

Over the last decades, scholars have interpreted and used intersectionality in various ways. Some researchers see intersectionality solely as a theory, some as a method and others as a combination of both (Lutz 2015). Throughout the decades, scholarship has evolved from integrating race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, ability and other areas of identity to creating a model that aims to display a lived reality that embraces complexity (Levine-Rasky 2011, 240). Patricia Hill Collins (2021) considers intersectionality a critical social theory that combines research with social justice. She identifies six substantive constructs that are part of intersectionality, namely 'relationality, power, social, inequality, complexity, and social justice' (694). According to Collins, central to intersectional research are the premises that social markers of power are interdependent, intersecting power relations produce complex inequalities, and individuals' social location shapes their experiences and perspectives (694). She reiterates that intersectionality is not about "either-or frameworks that produce mono-categorical thinking of race or gender" (694). It looks at the connections and intersections of markers of powers within their historical and social context. These intersections influence how people experience and perceive the world.

In the case of Kartini, intersectionality can help to understand how different markers of identity and power influenced her life and perspectives. Within this research project, the focus will be on how race, gender and class intersect. Other categories would have been compelling as well, such as religion, as Kartini has also written about Islam (Dewi 2012). However, given the scope of the research project, the choice has been made to focus on the

other three categories for several reasons. Firstly, Kartini's own writings prominently feature her thoughts and critiques on race, gender and class. She addresses issues of racial hierarchy and the oppression of women. She frames these issues from her perspective as an aristocratic woman, as the analysis will show. Secondly, the historical context in section 1.1 has already introduced some of the existing scholarship on Kartini and colonial society that has laid a strong foundation for examining the intersection of these three categories. Building on this scholarship allows for a comprehensive analysis.[6] Lastly, the analysis can achieve greater specificity and depth by narrowing the focus. By centring the analysis around race, gender, and class, the thesis and podcast can offer a focused, in-depth exploration of Kartini's life and work.

While intersectional research centres around social inequalities, it does not only focus on oppression. Intersectional scholars emphasise that there is no such thing as complete and absolute oppression or domination, and they reject the notion of individuals as solely victims or oppressors. Instead, Collins (1993, 621) asserts that every individual experiences varying degrees of disadvantage and privilege due to the numerous systems of oppression that shape their lives. She emphasises that individuals can simultaneously belong to dominant and subordinate groups. As cited in Levine-Rasky (2011, 244), Susan Friedman (1995) agrees that intersectionality is not uni-directional but involves a "relational positionality" in which identity is "situationally constructed". She notes that people can have multiple and interlocking identities and emphasises that dominations and oppression can co-exist. This view is especially fruitful in avoiding a coloniser/colonised dichotomy in a colonial context, recognising, for instance, Kartini's privileged social class despite her struggles as an Indigenous woman.

[6] As already stated, this historical context was brief. The episodes in the appendices cite the other secondary research that has been used.

In the last few decades, the study of empires has shifted towards intersectionality, moving beyond simplistic binaries of colonisers and colonised to examine the multidimensional power dynamics at play. Early postcolonial studies focused on the binary of colonisers and the colonised and dichotomies such as Occident/Orient while largely ignoring other dimensions such as gender, class, religion, sexuality or nationality (Camiscoli 2013, 140). The guiding premise was that easily defined racial lines separated colonial societies. However, intersectional approaches have illuminated the complex interactions of race, class, gender, religion, and nationality within colonial societies. Scholars like Ann Laura Stoler and Anne McClintock have explored the intertwined nature of race, class, and gender in colonial contexts, challenging earlier dichotomies and highlighting the heterogeneity and changing character of colonial cultures (Fisher-Tiné and Gehrmann 2009, 5).[7] For instance, Frederick Cooper has advocated for a dynamic understanding of the 'politics of difference' within colonial society, emphasising their contested and unstable nature (as cited in Fisher-Tiné and Gehrmann 2009, 5).

[7] Ann Laura Stoler wrote about the conflicting categories of race, class and gender within colonialism, arguing that earlier divisions were too black-and-white (Fisher-Tiné and Gehrmann 2009, 6). Anne McClintock (1995) highlights the interconnectedness of these as well, stating that race, gender and class are not separate realms of experience but should be studied as intersections. In *Imperial Leather* (1995), she demonstrates how the Victorians linked race, class, and gender in ways that supported imperialism overseas and fostered social class distinctions within Britain. These works have inspired other historians to analyse colonial history from an intersectional perspective as well. For example, Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (1999) pointed out how gender, sexual, racial and class differences between social groups were created and were part of Dutch and French colonialism. While this book complicates the binary oppositions between coloniser and colonised, it still focuses mostly on the experiences of white European colonisers and less on the experiences of the indigenous population. Additionally, Mohanty (2003, 56) used Dorothy Smith's concept of 'relations of ruling' that posits "multiple intersections of structures of power and emphasises the process or form of ruling, not the frozen embodiment of it". These relations of ruling involved forms of knowledge and institutions that regulated sexuality, race, and caste/class. While this operation of rule consolidated states and imperial culture, these institutions were also individually and collectively resisted. She clarifies that colonial rule was built on the hierarchical distinction between coloniser and colonised. This distinction was connected to ideologies on race, gender, and class, which were reflected in laws and policies. Historians interested in people living in colonial societies should consider these multiple intersections to understand how individuals navigate, negotiate, resist, or accommodate these historical circumstances.

Applying this theory to historical research can help "to highlight the dynamic and complex processes of individual, community, and institutional negotiations of power in relation to each other at a specific historic moment" (Leong 2010, 624). Intersectional historical research can analyse the complicated histories of people, as well as the interplay of ideologies, institutions, and power. It rejects the idea of a universal experience among a particular social group and "directly confronts the particularity of oppression resulting from colonisation while paying attention to the materialism—the lived experiences […]—reproduced through the colonial condition" (Ossome 2023, 44). In other words, intersectionality emerges as a crucial lens through which to analyse the multidimensional experiences of individuals and communities. This makes intersectionality a fruitful lens for public history projects centred around the Dutch colonial past. Therefore, this capstone project examines how key components of intersectionality can be meaningfully embedded in a public history project, in this case, a podcast.

### 1.3 Podcasting and public history

Podcasts have emerged as a powerful medium for information dissemination and knowledge sharing. This is demonstrated by successful podcast series such as *Serial* and *S-Town*.[8] Over the last few years, scholars from various fields have turned their attention to the dual role of podcasting as a means to share scientific findings and as a method for producing knowledge (i.e. Durrani, Gotkin, and Laughlin 2015; Gallagher and Prior 2014; Rogers et al. 2020; Wilson 2018). Liz Covart (2022, 221) argues that podcasts are "an effective tool for historians to convey the past" because the intimacy and oral storytelling of podcasts can humanise

[8] In 2014, the year that *Serial* came out, the New York Times reported that the podcast had on average 1.5 million listeners per episode. As per May 2020, *S-Town* is reported to have been downloaded more than 80 million times. See: Carr 2014; Maddaus 2020.

history in a powerful way that she considers unique to the medium when compared to other media. However, there is a gap in the literature that explores the effects of podcast creation on the translation of historical research to a broader audience. In this sub-section, I will ask what the potential of podcasts is in engaging and attracting a broader audience. After that, I will examine how that impacts historical research.

Eden Kinkaid et al. (2020, 2) outline the strengths of podcasts as a way to "facilitate polyvocal dialogue and reach new publics". They argue that the free accessibility of podcasts across multiple platforms makes them an ideal form for public scholarship. Listening to different voices can elicit affective engagement, influencing audience responses to research (Kinkaid et al. 2020, 79). Scholars from other fields, including media studies, education, and communication, have shown how podcasts can enhance personal engagement and a sense of intimacy between the audience and the host through the use of voice, music and sound. They argue that sensory immersion within narrative storytelling makes podcasts informative, entertaining and engaging (Harter 2019; Lindgren 2016; Sanchez Laws 2020; Wilbur et al. 2022). These characteristics make podcasts an appealing medium for scholars seeking to reach broader audiences with their research.

In addition, there is an ongoing discussion regarding the relationship between historical research and podcasting. Public historians have analysed existing history podcasts from both professional and amateur historians (Alegi 2012; Salvati 2015). Honae Cuffe (2019) argues that history podcasts risk oversimplifying historical narratives. However, she also highlights the value of podcasting for historians, as it can provide insight into the research methodology while inviting listeners to partake in the process (Cuffe 2019, 553). Other scholars have recognised the challenges podcasting poses as an alternate model for scholarly production. Michelle Rayner's (2016) examination of audio documentaries and oral history projects sheds light on the differences in data analysis between historians and

producers. While historians engage in detailed textual analyses, radio producers must balance audience engagement and narrative construction, employing various tools such as primary and secondary sources, archival materials, music, and sound effects. While this can enhance emotional engagement, it could also conceal "its interpretation and narrative within the narrative and constructed form of the story it tells" (Rayner 2016, 116). In sum, the storytelling format and usage of different tools run the risk of losing nuance and detail, especially when market pressures for entertainment value steer narrative decisions.

Despite these methodological differences, combining historical research with an aural medium holds promise. There are specific characteristics that a podcast adds to a telling of history that an academic paper does not. As discussed above, podcasts have the potential to offer engagement with historical research and reach a broader audience. To this, I would add a few other characteristics, namely the situatedness of the narrator, which destabilises the idea of impartial history-telling as a "god trick" (as coined by Haraway 1988) and using the auditory in the production of knowledge, which destabilises the emphasis on the written word. A podcast is freely available and accessible to a broad audience. Furthermore, it is possible to reflect on positionality and historical inquiry while analysing a subject from multiple perspectives throughout various episodes. This makes podcasting a particularly interesting medium for intersectional stories.

To sum up, intersectionality can be a helpful framework for public historians who dissect the inequalities, power relations, and systems of domination that were part of colonialism. Even though intersectionality has been influential both within and outside the academic world, it has not been cited as being used in public history projects about the Dutch colonial past. Podcasts can be a valuable medium to articulate and disseminate research based on this framework. By reflecting on the inception and creation of a podcast informed by the theory of intersectionality, we can interpret and understand the opportunities, challenges, and

limitations that exist for public history media that aim to represent the intersections of power structures within colonial history.

## 2. Methodology

The form of and research method behind an academic podcast can take various shapes. *Call Me Kartini* is based on a comprehensive intersectional analysis of Kartini's letters, integrating quotes into a narrative with interviews and sounds. This thesis project is a form of practice-based research, which means that a "creative artefact is the basis of the contribution to knowledge" (Candy 2006, 1). This type of research focuses on developing knowledge about the practice, which in this case is podcasting. The research aims to understand how podcasting affects the translation of intersectional research by conducting a case study.

In this methodology section, I will introduce Kartini's letters and the intersectional methodology. Then, I will examine the method behind *Call Me Kartini,* following the phases of the podcast. Finally, I will discuss how the podcast incorporates insights from intersectionality, public history and colonial history while telling the story of Kartini.

### 2.1 Kartini's letters and intersectional methodology

The research used a recent complete collection and translation of Kartini's letters (Coté 2014). This volume contains 141 complete and partial letters. All of them were written between 1899 and 1904, written in Dutch and sent to ten European correspondents. After Kartini's death in 1904, one of her correspondents and the former colonial Director of Education, Jacques Abendanon, collected letters from the recipients and selected and edited them. He published these in 1911 in the book *Door Duisternis to Licht (Through Darkness to Light*). This book has been translated into several languages, including Indonesian and English (Coté 2014, xi). A 1920 English translation of this book was titled *Letters of a Javanese Princess*, even though Kartini explicitly did not want to be referred to by her aristocratic status and even wrote to her pen pal Stella Zeehandelaar: "Just call me Kartini" (Coté 2014, xiii). In 2014, a complete collection and translation of all the letters from the archive of the Royal Netherlands Institute

for Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) in Leiden was published. This collection contains all known letters of Kartini and has not edited any, which makes it more useful than the publication from 1911. Furthermore, the translation of these letters made it easier to use them in the English-speaking podcast.

These 141 letters were read through an intersectional lens. There is no single way of 'doing' intersectionality. Indeed, scholars have employed a wide variety of methods informed by intersectionality. However, Grant and Zwier (2014, 10-11) have summarised intersectional literature and stated that "intersectionality theories and intersectionally informed methodologies seek to explain, critique, and transform relationships of difference within and across one or more levels or social spheres, taking into account the workings of power through fluid, context-specific, co-constructed identity categories" (cited in Edwards and Esposito 2019, 46). This has been applied to the analysis of Kartini's letters. The analysis examined the ways in which race, gender, and class intersect to shape Kartini's life and thoughts.[9] On the one hand, this means analysing Kartini's statements in which she consciously reflects on race, gender and class. On the other hand, it means reading between the lines to see how these identities shape how she perceives her life within the context of colonial society. The method of intersectionality helps to understand how Kartini negotiated her multiple identities in the context of colonial society and it helps to see how Kartini was not someone who was dominated in all aspects of her life but also someone who used privileged aspects of her identity (see Lutz 2015, 42).



[9] As explained in the theoretical framework, there are more identities that can be used in intersectional analysis, such as age, geographic location, sexuality, ability, etc. but this research is focused on race, gender and class.

## 2.2 The method of podcasting

Podcasting is a way of doing and presenting research that differs significantly from writing (as will be elaborated on more in the analysis). The following method of podcasting was informed by Copeland and McGregor's (2021) guide to podcasting and Day et al.'s (2017) reflection on making their own podcast about water policy that integrates Indigenous and Western perspectives.

The making of this podcast followed various stages. This process is not linear but rather reiterative. Podcasting is like cooking. After an ingredient (an interview, a sound bite) has been added, the effect has to be tasted. Does it sound good in relation to the full product? What is the balance between the different parts? Does it mean something else needs to be added or left out? This makes podcasting a dynamic process, going from phase to phase and then back as needed. The first phase of this project was the analysis of the source material, as explained in section 2.1., and a literature review of existing scholarship about the history of the late colonial society on Java. However, the process has repeatedly returned to consulting these texts and seeking out others as different conversations and interviews shaped and changed the course of the research.

The second phase was audio collection. Interviews were conducted with scholars in Indonesian and colonial history to gain a deeper understanding of the context in which Kartini lived. The interviewees came from different disciplines to ensure that the podcast contained multiple perspectives on Kartini and research. For example, one researcher is specialised on international relations and intersectionality and another on gender history in the Dutch East Indies. In total, I interviewed four scholars.[10] The interviews were semi-structured. In the conversations, I asked specific questions about their discipline, such as how they defined race, gender or class in the context of Java around 1900. I also discussed quotes from Kartini in the

[10] I interviewed a fifth scholar but this interview has been lost due to a technical malfunction.

interview, asking them how they would interpret the text. Throughout the interviews, I balanced specific questions about one of the identities (race, class and gender) with intersectional approaches to these categories. The objective was to understand the intersecting structures of domination at that time.

The third phase was reviewing, transcribing, and analysing the interviews. The interviews were read multiple times, and the material was listened to several times, with notes added to summarise what was said and how well it was said. Key themes were identified, and quotations were selected for potential inclusion in the podcast. The interviews were compared to the researcher's own analysis of Kartini's letters to explore similarities or tensions.

The fourth phase was the sequencing and structuring of the information. Based on the key themes that arose from the letter analysis and the interview review, episodes were structured on a storyboard. This was an iterative process whereby the storyboard was revised several times to apply intersectional theory well while making the information accessible. While all recorded content and written analysis were considered, it was necessary to significantly and selectively reduce the amount of material that would be included in the podcast to create a coherent and engaging representation of the larger research findings. There was a priority for material that best illustrated the intersection of various power structures within colonial society and how they affected Kartini's multiple identities. Diverse perspectives were also prioritised. It was crucial that the interviews, narration and voice-overs together would create a cohesive narrative.

After the storyboard had been created, several versions of scripts for the episodes were written, reviewed and rewritten. Part of the script was the selection of quotations from the interview to be included. These decisions were based on various factors, including sound quality, overlap with key themes, affective quality, ability to make theoretical ideas understandable for a wider audience, ability to include them in the larger narrative of the

episode, and the desire to combine multiple perspectives from researchers with diverging areas of expertise. The final scripts for the episodes can be found in Appendices A through D.

The last stage of the podcast creation was sound editing in which the narration was recorded and edited, interviews were edited, and music was added. The music was selected to assist with mood, pacing, and context. Day et al. (2017) have argued that adding sound to podcasts is similar to how "rich, thick description" is used in written research papers to help "transport readers to the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experience" (Creswell 2009, 192). To sum up, these five phases made podcasting a dynamic process that will now be analysed in further detail.

## 3. Analysis

For public historians to understand the opportunities and challenges that technologies like podcasting present, we need to critically reflect on the podcasting process to "inform and progress our work", as Scriven (2022, 262) did for the scholarly field of geography. Over the course of a year, I have worked on the inception and creation of the podcast *Call Me Kartini.* In this analysis, I examine the making of this podcast to lay out the processes, mechanics and ethical decisions involved in telling an intersectional historical narrative to a non-academic audience.

Before I analyse the podcast, I will give a brief overview of the podcast series. The podcast is divided into four episodes, each lasting between 22 and 31 minutes. This length was chosen because it is an ideal time for the audience to listen to on a commute, while doing household chores or on a walk around the block. The script was written with an intended audience in mind. The target audience was between 20 and 50, interested in history but not necessarily professionally or academically trained in history, attentive to social issues but not overly versed in them. The podcast is meant to be informative while also being entertaining. Therefore, it was important to keep the listener engaged. The consequences of this intended audience for the script and use of sound will be described in the analysis below.

The podcast's first episode (Appendix A) introduces Kartini within the wider context of the colonial society around 1900 and the problem of 'archival silences' (Hartman 2008). The second episode, found in Appendix B, discusses how Kartini navigates her position as a woman in both colonial and Javanese society, addressing the intersecting issues of race, class and gender as it explores how gender expectations limited her while also inspiring her to develop feminist critiques. The following episode (see Appendix C) examines Kartini's continuing struggle for education, which lasted until 1903 when she married the regent of Rembang. This struggle gives insight into how Kartini negotiated her multiple positions as a

Javanese, as a woman and as an aristocrat. The fourth and final episode (Appendix D) dives deeper into the afterlife of Kartini, who passed away at a very young age after the birth of her son. Between 1904 and the present, Kartini's story has been used by Dutch colonialists, Indonesian nationalists and feminist groups to symbolise various ideas and ideologies. The episode asks why Kartini's story has inspired many and what it can mean for us today.

The structure of the episodes follows a similar flow. They begin with a short introduction that aims to ground the historical narrative in today's world. Then, the episode is divided into three or four parts, each discussing one aspect of that episode's storyline. They end with a teaser for the next episode. The episodes mix narration from the researcher, multiple interviews, excerpts from Kartini's letters, sound effects, and music. The analysis is divided into seven sections that each represent an aspect of either the content of the podcast or one of the characteristics of the medium and how that influenced the research process or the product. Dividing the analysis into these features gives more insight into how specific features of podcasting influence how intersectional research is conducted or presented.

### 3.1 An intersectional approach to Kartini's letters

Before analysing the form-specific elements of the podcast, it is important to examine how intersectionality has been used to tell the story of Kartini in the podcast. This approach has influenced the analysis of the sources and the narration in the episodes. The podcast builds upon existing research into Kartini's life and letters. As noted in the introduction, other historians have analysed Kartini from various perspectives, including the categories of race, gender, and class (see for example Coté 2014; Dewi 2012; Hawkins 2008; Mayasari-Hoffert 2023; Woodward 2015). This podcast brings this research together and expands on it by both analysing existing research and examining Kartini's works themselves through intersectionality. The benefit of the intersectional approach is that it allows for a nuanced

understanding of the multiple positions of an individual. Even in the episode about gender and feminism, these themes are always connected to race and class.

For example, episode 2 discusses Kartini's letters to Stella Zeehandelaar. In these letters, Kartini is most expressive about her struggles as a woman (Coté 2005). In this episode, Prof. Elise van Nederveen-Meerkerk talks about the existing ideas about gender in the society of the Dutch East Indies, both in the European and Javanese culture, and how they relate to race, class, and power. We discuss how women from higher classes have to navigate different problems than women from lower classes. For instance, one of Kartini's major criticisms of Javanese society is polygamy, an issue that mainly affected women in the aristocracy. The episode shows how Kartini's view on women's struggle is informed by her position and experience as a Javanese aristocratic woman.

This episode also discusses Kartini's friendship with her Dutch correspondents and the complexities of that relationship between coloniser and colonised. With Van Nederveen-Meerkerk, I discuss the quote:

> I am not a Javanese, not a child of the despised brown race to you, and for me you are not someone who belongs to the white race which hates, despises and ridicules the Javanese. For me you are a white person in the true sense of the word, white in skin and soul, for whom I have high regard, whom I love with all my heart, as would many of my countrymen I have no doubt if they but knew you (13 January 1900, 109).

This citation is an example of the complexities of the relationship between a Dutch and a Javanese woman, revealing intersections between race, gender and class. Kartini is aware of how the Javanese are racialised, how they are "hate[d], despise[d] and ridicule[d]". She both criticises and internalises this: she idolises whiteness and the kindness of the white 'skin and soul' but resists the negative connotations of the 'brown race'. She appeals to female solidarity and friendship while also acknowledging these racial boundaries between the Dutch

and the Javanese. As Hawkins (2008, 1) argued, racial boundaries between these women prohibited Kartini from joining a true 'transnational sisterhood', despite her social status as a *priyayi* woman which made it easier for her to form connections to Dutch citizens, European officials and their wives. In doing so, the podcast explains how intersecting power relations and identities could affect an individual's life in colonial society.

In the third episode, Kartini's struggle for education is placed in the wider context of her position as a *priyayi* woman in colonial society. Drawing on research by Pemberton (1994) and Sutherland (1979), Bijl and Chin (2020, 6) describe this social class that Kartini belongs to, the Javanese aristocracy, as occupying "an ambivalent position as the subordinate allies of the Dutch […] and as upper-class rulers among the native Javanese". Thus, Kartini straddled "the two worlds of European modernity and colonial Javanese society, a hybrid space that helped shape her unique voice and perspective on her identity and position as a woman of colour in the Dutch Indies" (6). The podcast gives more insight into how Kartini navigates this ambivalent position by focusing on her plans to study in Europe.

These plans started taking shape early in 1900, after which much of her correspondence was dedicated to this topic. She wrote to colonial officials to discuss the possibility of receiving a scholarship and to correspondents such as Stella Zeehandelaar and Rosa Abendanon-Mandri to explain her reasoning and keep them updated on how it was going. She also told them about the criticism she is facing within her family. To achieve her dream, she constantly had to seek support from both European correspondents and family members. Her correspondence shows that, while she maintained how important it was to go to Europe and while she was getting help from her brother, some Dutch parliamentarians, and colonial organisations, other plans were being made for her as well. In 1903, her plans to go to Europe made way for an alternative plan to study in the colonial capital, Batavia, for which the colonial government offered her financial aid. But right as she received a letter that

confirmed this scholarship, Kartini learned that her father had arranged a marriage for her, possibly supported by Jacques Abendanon, one of Kartini's most important correspondents and also the colonial Director of Education (Coté 2014, 805).

Kartini's struggle for education reveals how she was actively trying to change her future, how important it was for her to find access to education for women, and the emancipation of Java. Simultaneously, the development of her plans is also a way to lay intersectional power structures and intersecting identities bare. It shows how Kartini, as an individual, was affected by patriarchal, sociopolitical institutions from both Javanese and European cultures (Bijl 2017). These privileged her in some ways but oppressed her as well. Because of her aristocratic family, Kartini was able to receive primary education and network with colonial officials. Her letters show the influence of the colonial ideologies of the 'civilising mission', which was embedded in the Dutch colonial policy under the name of the 'Ethical Policy', starting in 1901. With this Ethical Policy, the Dutch colonial government aimed to develop the colony and its people according to Western standards. Under the guise of compassion and patronisation, the policy was guided by colonial interests, and its primary goals were to sustain colonial control and economic exploitation. Technical, social and economic changes were influenced by a mix of Western superiority and social concerns (Locher-Scholten 2000, 16). Linked to that were European conceptions of emancipation and civilisation that were deeply constructed through these ideologies. Kartini herself was influenced by these ideologies, which is most evident when she wrote about these European ideals of emancipation and civilisation.

At the same time, she rejected the European racist discourse and reflected critically on the racialisation of the Indigenous people, while negotiating the racial boundaries that existed between her and her correspondents. Their different position on either side of the colonial divide became clear when some of her correspondents opposed her plans to study in the

Netherlands because they thought it might be too confusing for a Javanese girl (Coté 2014, 33). In their stance, the influence of gender ideologies is visible as well. Contrary to her brother Kartono, who could study in Leiden, this was impossible for her. In sum, this episode explains the complexities of colonial policy at the time and it aligns with the intersectional theory that individuals can simultaneously belong to dominant and subordinate groups (Collins 1993).

The paragraph above has highlighted some examples of the intersectional analysis of Kartini's letters, which the podcast is based on. While this paragraph has merely scratched the surface, the podcast episodes dive deeper into the workings of race, gender, and class in colonial society in Java around 1900. The next paragraphs will each explore how different components of podcasting affected how this analysis was located in the medium, focusing on narrative construction, aural elements and ethical considerations.

### 3.2 Storytelling: bridging the gap between academia and the general public

What happens when an intersectional analysis is located in a podcast form instead of an academic article? Most importantly, podcasts require a narrative style different from that of written texts. This has consequences for podcasts as a pedagogical tool and as a research method. To start with the first one, podcasting makes immersive storytelling possible which can enable engagement from a wider audience, as discussed in the theoretical framework. Unfortunately, it is outside the scope of this paper to assess whether *Call Me Kartini* did engage a larger audience. Nonetheless, reflecting on how this focus on audience engagement affected the translation of a historical investigation is possible. First of all, keeping listeners interested and engaged was a leading premise during the process of developing the storyline and writing the script. There is a huge supply of podcasts, so listeners have to know what will happen in the podcast and why it is important to listen. Furthermore, listener attention can be

limited. A great aspect of podcasts is that they are an aural medium that can be listened to while doing other tasks, like walking or cleaning the house. However, the downside is that listeners could become easily distracted.

Therefore, *Call Me Kartini* uses storytelling techniques like narrative arcs, character development, personal anecdotes, and descriptive and sensory language to keep listeners interested and engaged. For example, I address the listener directly at the start of the first episode (see Appendix A), asking them to reflect on how historians would analyse their texts in the future. These ideas are meant to make listeners feel as if they were part of the story and to make them think about complex questions about sources and positionality in a way that is personal and easy to understand. Besides that, I included personal anecdotes in the introductions of episodes 2 and 3 (see Appendix B and C) and made sure that the segments with historical contexts contained visual language. Furthermore, *Call Me Kartini* includes teasers or cliffhangers for the next episode to ensure the audience keeps listening and wants to know the full story.

Using these narrative constructions and this language in the podcast has multiple consequences. A positive result is that it could help to bridge the gap between the academic world and the general public. It transforms historical research into a more attractive form that differs greatly from the type of language often found in academic journals or books. It forced me to think about complicated concepts and theories and try to find easier ways to explain them. Intersectionality is explained using the metaphor of the intersection instead of a lengthy theoretical explanation like the one in this paper. One might argue that this means that a historical narrative loses depth if it has to be explained in easy terms. Making the podcast made it clear that it is possible for narrative podcasts to have depth, explain theoretical concepts and show the complexities of history. However, the format of a podcast *does* make it more difficult to be fully nuanced about theory and research. Take, for example, the footnote.

In academic texts, footnotes can be a place where a scholar further explains a statement or offers complimentary evidence without losing the speed of the narration. Without arguing that only the footnotes make texts academic and nuanced, there is a slight loss of nuance in podcasts where footnoting is not an option. However, this can partly be remedied by providing the audience with show notes that include bibliographies or reading recommendations, which *Call Me Kartini* has done as well, as can be seen in the appendices.

Another consequence of the use of storytelling techniques is that an incredibly complicated past has to conform to a certain narrative technique.[11] While *Call Me Kartini* does speak about conflicting ideas and messy histories, the podcast had to leave out explanations about certain aspects of Kartini's life and colonial society to make the story flow. Readers of texts can more easily go back to an earlier section of the text. Podcast listeners can, in theory, scroll back, but this is not that easy or usual. Thus, the story has to flow and cannot go in too many directions. Consequently, the decision was made not to elaborate on Kartini's individual family members or her recipients too much to limit the number of names and characters. Despite this, the podcast did not resort to oversimplifying narratives. For instance, several historians have presented Kartini's 'quest' for education as a tragedy, with the heroine trying her best to make something happen but failing miserably (Coté 2014, 7). The podcast purposely does not do that, as it would be neither academic nor true. However, this shows that a researcher/producer has to constantly balance historical accuracy with perceived audience needs. The creation of *Call Me Kartini* has shown that it is possible to transform a full-fledged historical analysis into a podcast format. The podcast openly discusses the theory of intersectionality and themes such as archival silences, positionality and the legacies of the colonial past.

[11] It has to be said here that all forms of history writing are influenced by narrative structures or literary writing, as Hayden White (1973) has famously claimed as well.

### 3.3 Podcast as a research method

The paragraph above has illustrated how storytelling techniques, encompassing specific language and narrative structures, influence how scholars translate their research into a new form. Building on this, this section examines how podcasting influences how researchers *do* their research. To what extent can podcasting be used as a research method? This question might be more relevant when a podcast is based on oral history, as the voices of people are the source instead of written texts. However, I chose to include voice-overs of Kartini's letters to make it possible to approach written texts *aurally* instead of *visually.* It is important that someone did the voice-overs with a background similar to Kartini's to best represent her. Therefore, voice-overs were made by an acquaintance of mine, who is a young Indonesian woman. While there are many differences between these women—Kartini was aristocratic, wrote in Dutch, and lived over a century ago, while Sita is not aristocratic and uses the English translation of the letters—their similarities are significant and do justice to Kartini's identities within the scope of this podcast. The underlying premise is that hearing a representation of voice makes it easier for listeners to imagine Kartini as an actual person instead of just the creator of letters. Hearing her voice can elicit 'affective engagement' (Kinkaid et al. 2020, 82). This aligns with the idea of podcasting as a pedagogical tool for public historians.

Focusing more on the research method of this podcast, podcasting made source analysis different from academic texts: detailed textual analysis was not possible. Instead, interpretations had to be brief and balanced with interviews and sounds. An unexpected aspect of podcasting was that it changed how I approached my writing and research subjects. The steps of making a storyboard, an outline for the episode, a structure for the arguments, and choosing more visual language forced me to look at my research topics differently, as a roundtable discussion of Footnoting History also observed (Cuenca et al. 2014, 2). Familiar

research subjects like colonial history had to be transformed into an unfamiliar medium. The way I describe colonialism changed from a written focus on dates, numbers and events to a more aurally engaging focus on sensory examples and descriptions. For example, to explain the social stratification within colonial society, I borrow the metaphor of a *Pakketboot*, a steamship transporting mail and people within the archipelago, from historian David van Reybrouck (2024).

The auditory nature of the podcast medium changed my normal workflow. The processes of writing scripts and editing recordings were more fluid and iterative than written texts: I had to keep recording and listening to determine whether the story was delivered well enough. Of course, written texts must be constantly reread and rewritten, but podcasting forced me to slow down, listen, and reflect on what I had heard (also noted by Rogers et al. 2020, 449). It also made the research more embodied (Harter 2019): the researcher's sensory experiences became an important part of the research process. Furthermore, as my voice is attached to the medium, podcasting feels more vulnerable and personal than writing a text. As the next paragraph will show, it forced me to reflect more critically on the research process and be more vocal about this. In other words, the medium did not necessarily influence the message, using McLuhan's (1967) famous phrase, but it did influence how I approached my research process.



### 3.4 Ethical considerations: sound and music

Essential components in podcasting are voice, sound and music. The next couple of paragraphs will discuss this in detail, but first, it is necessary to explore the ethics behind these features. Because the research used an intersectional approach that focused on the interplay of power and identities, it was imperative to be mindful of finding ways to include multiple voices, reflect on positionality throughout and honour multiple perspectives, stories

and knowledge. Podcasting involves specific ethical considerations, especially when it comes to sound and music. These elements can provide an affective element to the narrative. It can evoke emotion and atmosphere. Scholars have argued that podcasting can help to destabilise stereotypes and make listeners think differently about dominant ideologies and marginalised perspectives. (Kinkaid et al. 2020; Leavy 2015). However, this potential of podcasting can fail miserably if the wrong choices are made for the additional sounds. The scholar/producer needs to be mindful and seek critical feedback when striking the balance between adding atmosphere and losing credibility.

To illustrate this, I needed to make decisions about sound and music during the production phase. For example, in the first episode, the historical context of Kartini's birth year is given. Because this text was quite long, adding some aural texture by adding different sound effects to the European historical context and the Javanese one seemed good. This historical context focused on the long nineteenth century, mentioning the spread of colonialism and general technological and social changes. Initially, I wanted to select dramatic nineteenth-century classical music but then realised this would have been too Eurocentric if I let the music continue playing when the narration shifted its focus from Europe to Java. At the same time, I was aware of the fact that the background music for the Javanese part should be chosen carefully to avoid exoticisation or Othering.[12] The most important music of the podcast, the intro and outro music, also had to be chosen carefully. The podcast now has a more general, modern-sounding soundtrack to avoid stereotyping and the risk of exoticising Kartini. A better option would have been to work together with Indonesian or Javanese musicians, but this podcast did not have the budget or professional reach to facilitate this.

[12] For a more in-depth historical discussion of Orientalism, Othering and music, see Mabilat 2008.

Another dilemma was the background and transition music. Most of the episodes discussed a few topics strung together by some music that marked the transition between the themes. Additionally, I added background music when I felt like a narrator's text or interview was quite long and perhaps a bit dry. Lastly, music was added to create an atmosphere and add an affective element. For example, in the first episode, I chose to add background music during my explanation of the historical context of colonialism. Because I was discussing serious topics, such as the enslavement of people and forced labour, I wanted the music to reflect the severity of the text. At the same time, I did not want the music to become too dramatic and, consequently, diminish or distract from the suffering of the people I was talking about. Therefore, I chose more abstract, sombre music that fit the mood but did not attract too much attention.

A crucial voice in the podcast belongs to Kartini. The podcast contains voiceovers throughout the episodes. The phrase ‘giving a voice’ to marginalised groups and individuals has been rightfully criticised by many scholars for being patronising. The trope further perpetuates power imbalances and undermines the lived experiences and voices that already exist within marginalised communities (Marx Ferree 2015, 36). Therefore, it was important to be mindful of who would voice Kartini’s letters. The voice overs are done by Sita Magfira, an Indonesian researcher and artist. As has already been explained, despite the differences between her and Kartini, the similarities in their identities as young Javanese women made Sita an adequate choice to do the voiceovers. She was not given instructions on how to articulate the text but was given space to interpret the letters herself. Kartini’s metaphoric voice is now as loud and clear in the podcast as it was in her letters.

### 3.5 Positionality and avoiding the 'god trick'

Another feature of podcasting that sets it apart from textual history writing is that it allows the researcher to be open about their situatedness and positionality. Self-reflexivity is a characteristic of podcasting; reporters often offer metacommentary on their research process.[13] There is a paradoxical element in hearing the voice of the narrator: on the one hand, researchers can still present themselves as the all-knowing observer with a voice that seems to come 'from above' and from nowhere. On the other hand, hearing someone's voice and using one's own voice also makes it easier to acknowledge the situatedness of the narrator. It resists the idea of knowledge as disembodied and transcendental and instead makes it embodied and partial. Moreover, hearing a researcher's and interviewees' voices might make researchers seem more human, flawed, and personal. Instead of presenting research as an objective truth, it is presented as something human-made. In academic texts, scholars often try to hide behind neutral-sounding writing styles that seem to hide their bodies (Durrani 2015, 2). Podcasting instead favours intimacy, and it makes researchers visible and physical.

Consequently, throughout the episodes, I openly reflect on my thoughts, ideas and mistakes in the research process. In the introduction episode, I include a reflection on my position as a white Dutch woman and ask how those aspects of my identity influence the way I approach my research. For example, it affects my research in the way that I have more knowledge *of* and thus more attention *to* European colonial society than the Javanese society. This causes an imbalance in how I position Kartini more in European society than the Javanese one. To illustrate this, in episode 2, I discuss how I initially portrayed Kartini as mainly being influenced by Western feminism. However, a conversation with an Indonesian student made me realise this was only part of the story. Moreover, this assumption that Kartini

[13] For example self-reflexivity is something that characterises popular podcasts, like *Serial, S-Town* and *1619,* making it a familiar aspect of podcasts for listeners (Jorgen and Lindgren 2022, 52).

could *only* develop feminist ideas because of the help of Western feminists has Orientalist roots. It comes from a long tradition of colonial stereotypes, portraying the Netherlands as a progressive and modern country crucial for the development of Indonesia and its people (Dragajlovic and McGregor 2022, 943).

In the early twentieth century, Dutch feminists even used Kartini's letters to highlight how much she admired Western ideas. They portrayed her as an example of how colonial intervention was beneficial. In this time of the Ethical Policy, they saw themselves as saviours who were in the colony to help "uplift" the population. The idea behind it was that of racial superiority: everything that came from the West was inherently better. This ideology justified the exploitation and oppression of the Indigenous population (Locher-Scholten 2000, 155-157). By only positioning Kartini in the context of Western feminism, I would have reproduced and strengthened these Orientalist tropes. Instead of just rewriting the text and erasing my mistakes, I included this reflection in the narration, and I also pointed at the fact that Kartini herself (August 1900, 125) criticises the idea that "[p]eople blame the books 'full of nonsense', which came from the West" were the only source for her critique of Javanese society.

Unfortunately, this thesis does not have enough space to quantitatively examine how the audience receives this self-reflection through a survey. However, as the Discussion section of this paper will show, this is a great opportunity for further research.



### 3.6 Voices and the possibility of polyvocal dialogue

The voice does not only impact positionality and self-reflexivity. Another promising aspect of podcasting for academics is the fact that "audio-storytelling methods of inquiry and representation have the potential to move beyond the limitations and privileging of written text in academia, allowing listeners to encounter the subtle dynamics and texture of the

speaker's voice through intonation, emphasis, narrative rhythm, and timing" (Day et al. 2016, 216). These nuances can give meaning to information that is more difficult to convey in written texts. In the case of Kartini, voice-overs of her letters add more emotional depth to her texts. It could create affective engagement for the listeners, making it easier to humanise a historical topic.

Moreover, including different voices enables listeners to encounter various perspectives in an affective way. Kinkaid et al. (2019, 4) already identified this meaning-making process as one of the main advantages of podcasting. *Call Me Kartini* includes the voices of seven people: the narrator, voice-overs of Kartini, four interviewees and the father of the narrator. These voices are from people from different academic and national backgrounds: Dutch, Indonesian, Indian and Portuguese. As such, they bring different perspectives on this history. For example, Dr. Farabi Fakih knew more about the role of Kartini in historical and contemporary Indonesian society and brought a critical note to the reception of the colonial past, while Dr. Vineet Thakur was critical of how race and gender discrimination still permeated contemporary Dutch society. The podcast served as a platform that brought different voices and different perspectives together. It showed how the field of historical research contains multiple voices and is dynamic. As such, it has the potential to be a way to stimulate intersectional, polyvocal debates about the past.

However, this potential for a Dutch audience is limited as a serious language barrier exists between an English podcast and a Dutch-speaking audience. As other scholars have shown, the Dutch upper layer of colonial society remains the current focus within representations of the colonial past (see, for example, Legêne 2017; Oostindie 2008; Raben 2016). Even though critical memory work is on the rise, including more Indonesian voices in colonial history in the public sphere would be beneficial. *Call Me Kartini* contains elements that could further this dialogue, but it is unsure if this podcast will succeed in making this

debate more polyvocal. The effects of listening to multiple perspectives on the Dutch colonial past for a Dutch audience would have been greater if the podcast had been made in Dutch. Nevertheless, the podcasting format did facilitate an exploration of Kartini's intersecting identities and experiences from multiple perspectives.

### 3.7 Podcasting as a collaborative process

An unexpected consequence of podcasting was that it shed light on the collaborative processes behind the medium. Scholars are often mistakenly seen as 'lone wolves', working in dusty archives by themselves, after which they write down their genius thoughts on a piece of paper. Of course, this solitary image has been debunked and deconstructed.[14] While making the podcast, I realised that I needed input from other pairs of ears. Firstly, as my podcast was concerned with positionality and intersectionality, I wanted to get second opinions on my narration. I created an informal sounding board by sending the scripts to two Indonesian students, who gave feedback on how I positioned Kartini in the podcast.

Secondly, I asked a small group of other people I knew well to listen to the podcast and provide feedback on several issues. I asked them what they did not find clear about the information, what parts they thought were interesting and which were not, and where they felt they lost attention in the episodes. These questions were not asked in a formal research environment and they were not planned. However, the decision to include listener feedback proved valuable. Their feedback helped to pinpoint which parts of the podcast did and did not work, either in the sense that they were not entertaining or not informative.

One of the respondents from the second group noted that she missed cliffhangers at the end of the episodes. The first episode was too 'polished' and felt like a closed story. The

[14] See for example the seminal work by Latour et al. (1979) about how science is created in and influenced by a social environment.

objective of the podcast is to provide the listeners with a nuanced, intersectional story of Kartini. This objective cannot be reached when they do not listen to the full series, so I decided to end the episodes with thought-provoking questions and a teaser for the next episode. Another respondent felt that one of the interviewees did not speak clearly and mumbled too much. This made me decide to be more strict in the length of interview segments. This feedback gives insight into the balance that a researcher/producer has to make between providing information and making the podcast engaging or interesting enough for the listeners.

These two informal, small focus groups have given insight into how podcasting should not be a solitary but rather a collaborative process. Ideally, podcasts would be a collaboration between historians, producers and community stakeholders to ensure that intersectional histories are accurately represented and ethically communicated to diverse audiences.

## 4. Discussion

The analysis of the creation and inception of *Call Me Kartini* has given insight into how various aspects of the podcasting medium affect the interpretation and presentation of intersectional historical research. It has shed light on what happens when intersectional research is translated into this medium. To build on that, this section will focus a bit more on the challenges of intersectional analysis in podcasting and present ideas for future research. Some of these challenges have already been touched upon in the analysis but will be reiterated here briefly.

Firstly, intersectional research focuses on complex and nuanced topics that are challenging to condense into podcast episodes without compromising on accuracy and depth. Secondly, storytelling techniques and narrative constructions pose the risk of oversimplifying or distorting historical narratives, especially intersectional ones. Although scholars have emphasised the influence of identities beyond race, gender, and class on an individual's life, *Call Me Kartini* predominantly focused on these three identities, aligning with Kartini's own emphasis and the substantial secondary research that positions race, gender, and class as pivotal axes of power in late colonial society on Java. The decision to concentrate on these themes was deliberate, prioritising depth over breadth, considering the constraints of episode and series length. This choice shows that the podcasting format influences the extent of the analysis. However, it would be possible for a longer podcast series to discuss religion and other identities in the future. Thirdly, podcasting forces historians to make decisions based on time constraints and production considerations, which could limit the range of sources and perspectives used. For example, *Call Me Kartini* could have used more audio archive material, but the podcast had no budget to request this material. The fourth and final challenge of podcasting is maintaining audience engagement and retention over multiple episodes, especially for complex historical topics. The audience is looking for something different when

they listen to a podcast than when they read an academic paper. Readers who want to quickly understand an academic paper can read the abstract, introduction and/or conclusion. This is different for podcasts: listeners have to listen to the entire series to follow the complete argumentation and story. Therefore, *Call Me Kartini* used narrative constructions like cliffhangers. This runs the risk of making history sound more dramatic and less academic. This, again, is a balance between audience needs and academic depth.

Moreover, ethical considerations and reflections on the implications of storytelling, music and sound have to be taken seriously, as these run the risk of helping to reproduce stereotypes and colonial ideologies. To mitigate this, critical self-reflection is crucial and feedback from other historians and communities can be fruitful. Furthermore, it is paramount to incorporate diverse perspectives and voices. In order to not lose depth and to help audiences learn more, podcasts could provide supplementary materials in the form of show notes, such as recommended articles and books, transcripts of the episodes and a bibliography. At the end of the episodes, *Call Me Kartini* guides the listeners to these show notes as well.

In addition to these more general challenges, a few specific difficulties arose during the process of making *Call Me Kartini*. First, podcasting requires technological skills and well-functioning technology. During a preparatory research trip to Indonesia, I conducted a few interviews in Jepara, Kartini's birthplace. I also recorded a few reflections on how Kartini was remembered in public spaces. However, upon return, the SD card that contained the audio files crashed and I was unable to recover them. Second of all, a difficulty of this podcast was that Kartini's letters are written sources. Making a podcast around oral history or audio(visual) sources might have been easier. However, several other history podcasts have

shown that history can also be told through great storytelling.[15] Additionally, adding voice-overs of Kartini's letter made the texts come more alive aurally, which helped to overcome this obstacle, but it was definitely a challenge for a relatively inexperienced podcaster. Related to that, the third challenge was the fact that *Call Me Kartini* was not made by a team but by a single researcher. A team made of script or audio editors, researchers, and producers could probably produce an even better podcast than a podcast made by one person. The positive side of this is that the researcher gained insight into multiple processes and mechanics of podcast making: this experience can be used to guide other researchers undertaking similar projects.

During this research process, it was not possible to conduct listener surveys to understand the audience's responses to the podcast. In the future, it would be useful to conduct this analysis, which would give more insight into the reception of podcasts. It would be compelling to analyse how the different components of podcasting (storytelling, voice, sound and music) influence listener experiences and their conceptions of the presented history. Furthermore, comparing perspectives from Dutch and Indonesian listeners would be especially interesting and could give insight into how the podcast could be developed to make an impact in the remembrance of the shared colonial past.



[15] For example, the podcasts *De Bourgondiërs* by Bart Van Loo or *Revolusi* by David van Reybrouck from Belgian radio broadcaster Klara. Both of these have a single host who give hour-long monologues about a specific historical subject. Both have also had big audiences. See Beukers 2021.

## 5. Conclusion

Using a practice-based approach, this thesis explored the effects of translating intersectional historical research into the podcast medium. The aim was to understand the potential of podcasts as a means to disseminate intersectional historical research to a wider audience beyond academia. It has highlighted the growing interest in podcasts as a medium for storytelling and for disseminating historical research, but also noted the lack of practice-based research that analyses what it means for historical research to be translated into podcasts. To address this gap in knowledge, a podcast series has been made, consisting of four episodes that discuss the life, letters and afterlives of Kartini, a famous historical figure in Indonesia who is virtually unknown in the Netherlands or elsewhere. Making this podcast helped the researcher understand the processes, mechanics and challenges of this medium for public historians interested in intersectionality and colonial history.

Several conclusions can be drawn from this practice-based research. The podcast process influenced how sources were presented. The goal of keeping the audience engaged and making the information easier to understand forced the researcher to use more descriptive language and storytelling techniques. This influenced how Kartini's letters were presented, even though they were still rigorously analysed, building on the researcher’s own primary source analysis and previous scholarship. While podcasts may simplify historical narratives to some extent, they also provide opportunities for nuanced storytelling and engagement with historical research. Podcasts can humanise history and challenge conventional narratives by combining scholarly analysis with narrative storytelling, offering new insights and intersectional perspectives on Kartini's life and legacy.

The research has also shown how important ethical considerations are in making history projects about the colonial past, especially when they are made by researchers from former colonising countries. An awareness of the continuing legacies of the colonial past and

a critical approach to positionality is crucial to ensure that the projects do not spread old colonial ideologies or stereotypes but instead actively reveal and critique them. Several components of the medium make this particularly challenging and therefore interesting, namely the issues of voice, authority, music and sound. Self-reflexivity has become one of the most characteristic features of podcasts, as influenced by the true crime genre. This feature is valuable for historians to address these issues of representation and authority, destabilising the idea that scholars always have the objective truth, an opinion that is especially damaging in the context of histories of colonialism. Scholars have to be aware of which music and audio they use to avoid reinforcing stereotypes. They must make sure that multiple perspectives, if not multiple actual voices, are heard in their podcast.

This research has implications for the broader field of historical scholarship. It highlights the importance of multimedia and interdisciplinary approaches to historical research and public engagement. In doing so, it opens up questions for future research. It would be fruitful to analyse how podcasts as a collaborative practice can create intersectional, historical narratives. For example, it would be interesting to make a podcast in collaboration with other researchers, artists, activists, communities, or stakeholders. Furthermore, a deeper analysis of specific aspects of podcasting, such as music or soundscapes, could shed light on how they influence the creation of a historical narrative. Lastly, in order to understand the reception of podcasts, an audience survey would be beneficial for a holistic reflection on the creation and dissemination of the podcast. This could give more insight into how listeners engage with podcasts and how different aspects of the podcast influence the way they understand history. Hopefully, future podcasts will increasingly be able to bring rigorous, detailed engagements with the past to the public.

## Appendices: Scripts and show notes

Reading directions:

- See the Project Outcomes section for links to the published podcast episodes.
- The text between brackets [like this] refers to music or sound effects.
- All of the text that is within the normal margins is narrator text.
- All of the indented text is either a piece of an interview or an excerpt from Kartini's letter.
- The interview text is transcribed. Grammatical mistakes in spoken sentences have not been corrected.
- References are given in the style of the Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition (author-date), but they will be put in the footnotes instead of throughout the text of the script to avoid confusion because they are not spoken out loud in the podcast.

### Appendix A. Episode 1: Kartini and the Colonial Steamship

### Script Episode 1

[sound of typing on a smartphone][16]

Think about the texts that you sent to your friends or family. The jokes you make, the plans you discuss. The questions you ask. What do they say about you? And what do they say about the society and the time that you live in?

And what would historians say about you if all of these texts and emails were saved and read a hundred years later? What can they know from the words you wrote down?

[Sound of library noises: Soft murmurs, page-turning, and distant footsteps create the atmosphere of a quiet archive or library.][17]

> Field recording: Hoi goeiemorgen, ik ben op zoek naar de brieven van Kartini. Waar kan ik die vinden? Oke, super dankjewel!

Today I'm in the university archive in Leiden, a city in the Netherlands, I am looking for the letters of Raden Ajeng Kartini. You might not have heard about her, but this woman is one of

[16] Pixabay 2022e.
[17] Pixabay 2022a.

the most famous figures in Indonesian history. She lived around 1900 on the island of Java. She is celebrated as Indonesia's first feminist, fighting for women's rights. And as one of the first nationalists and critics of colonialism.

In the archive, I am looking at tens of pages of letters that she wrote, more than 120 years ago. The woman who wrote these letters has almost become a myth since then. She has been the subject of songs, movies, and books. In Indonesia, her birthday is celebrated every year on April 21.[18]

Kartini is one of the few Indonesian women from the colonial society in Java who has left sources that we can now read to learn about this society and time. We can read them to understand how Kartini experienced colonialism from her position as an Indigenous woman. A lot of other voices from this time were not recorded, mainly from the Indigenous population, especially women.[19] How could that happen? Why do we know of certain historical figures but not of others? Who decides what is worth knowing? And what can Kartini tell us about colonial society, power and the archives?

[start intro music][20]

Intro:

My name is Dasja Zonneveldt, and I'm a Dutch history student. In this podcast series, I will take you with me on my research into the life and afterlives of a fascinating woman: Kartini, an Indonesian feminist and nationalist icon. I will go back in time to understand what it was like for her to live in a colonial society. What can her writings and life tell us about how race, gender and class functioned in this time and place? In four episodes, I will go to the archives, read her letters, and speak with researchers to learn more about Kartini.

This is 'Call Me Kartini', episode 1: Kartini and the Colonial Steamship. In this episode, I will introduce Kartini and talk about the historical period that she lived in. I will be talking about the Dutch colonial society on Java, power, silence and violence in the archives.

[end intro music]

[18] Bijl and Chin 2020, 1.
[19] Coté 2014, 1.
[20] Lexin_Music 2022a.

[Energetic 19th century European music][21]

It is April 21, 1879. The end of the nineteenth century is a time of big changes. You might know of a couple of interesting events that happened this year. Thomas Edison successfully made the light bulb; it was the year Albert Einstein was born and the year the mechanical cash register was invented. It was a time of social, political and technological change: colonialism was rising, and European powers tried to gain as much control over other territories as possible. The Industrial Revolution was in full swing. Factories sprung up, cities boomed. It was also the time of new political ideas. Feminism, nationalism, and liberalism emerged.

But on the island of Java, something even more interesting happened. On this day, April 21 1879, Kartini was born.

Later, she would become a feminist and nationalist icon, but that would only happen many years later. She was born into a big, aristocratic family. She had ten siblings. As she grew up, she started observing the world around her. She went to school, read books, and talked to friends, family, and acquaintances.[22]

[sound of writing][23]

And started writing down her thoughts. Her letters became her lifeline. Even though she spent most of her time at home, her letters spread throughout her network in the Netherlands and other parts of the Dutch East Indies.[24]

Her letters are incredibly revealing. They tell us what it was like to be a woman in this society, what it was like to be Javanese, and what it was like to be part of the aristocracy. I will talk later more about why this perspective is so unique. But first, it is important to understand the dynamics of the colonial society that Kartini lived in. What happened around the time that she lived? And what kind of power structures ruled this society?

[serious, sombre music][25]

[tone: energetic] Let me give you a brief overview of the history of Dutch colonialism in Indonesia, or what was then called the Dutch East Indies. It all started in the context of a race between European empires for resources, markets and power. Perhaps the most famous of

[21] Lexin_Music 2022b.
[22] Coté 2014, 1-2.
[23] Pixabay 2022d.
[24] For an overview of Kartini's correspondents, see Coté 2014, 18-24.
[25] Ashot-Danielyan-Composer 2023.

these markets was that of spices. Spices were a hot item in the sixteenth century. European countries, like the Netherlands, Portugal, and Great Britain, were looking for new, less costly ways to go to Asia, where spices like cinnamon and nutmeg were growing.[26] Each of these countries was competing with each other in the market. They built forts in trading ports. They worked together but also fought each other. Dutch merchants united themselves in the Dutch East India Company, the VOC. The VOC became successful. Ships full of tradeware sailed back home, and money streamed in.[27] Walking around the Netherlands, you can still see traces of this wealth in the beautiful 17th-century houses and the art in the museums.[28]

[tone: more serious] However, this wealth was built on grave costs. To make as much profit as possible, the VOC used violence, forced labour and enslavement. This kept the costs of trade as low as possible.[29] Colonising people, forcing them into labour or enslaving them was only possible if these people were seen as inferior. I will talk about this more later in the episode.

By the early twentieth century, the Dutch state had taken over, and the entire archipelago had been incorporated into one colony called the Dutch East Indies.[30] It was a time of war and violence, of trade and industry. But even though the empire seemed stable, there was also growing dissent.[31] From the end of the nineteenth century, individuals and groups in Indonesia and the Netherlands started criticising colonial society. This is the time when Kartini was born.

Let's zoom in a little bit more on the colonial society of the Dutch East Indies. I decided to reach out to Dr.. Farabi Fakih,

[sound of keyboard typing]

,a researcher at the university in Yogyakarta. He specialises in the political history of Indonesia in the 20th century. I met him and asked him to describe the Dutch East Indies during Kartini's life.

**Farabi Fakih**

The Netherlands Indies was a colony of the Netherlands. It had been a colony since

[26] Van Reybrouck 2024, 55-58.
[27] Taylor 2013, 34-59.
[28] Kehoe 2023, 28.
[29] Taylor 2013, 55; Van Reybrouck 2024, 57-58.
[30] Taylor 2013, 86.
[31] Locher-Scholten 2000,16-17.

300 years. She lived in Java, which was the main colony of the Netherlands Indies, and this was a colony that was heavily based on labour control and on plantation for the export market.

The Dutch East Indies was huge and incredibly diverse in terms of people, language and religions.[32] But the Dutch colonial law divided the population into three groups, based on a system of race. These three groups had different legal rights.

**Farabi Fakih**

So you had the Europeans, you had the what's called the Other Easterners. So foreign, the easterners, so like Chinese and Arab people. And then you had, of course, the Indigenous people, the inlanders [...] and this meant legal differences. This meant differences in access to particular institutions, laws and so forth, and the inlander or the Indigenous were the lowest part of the colonial structures. So they had the least rights and the least privileges.

[sound of seagulls and the ocean][33]

One of my favourite historians, David van Reybrouck compares the society of the Dutch East Indies to the steamship that travelled on the seas around the archipelago. These steamships were divided into three classes. The luxurious first class has space for sixty passengers. They had all the modern luxury in the world: beautiful bathrooms, a shiny promenade and delicious food. The second class was nice, too; the cabins were comfortable but had to be shared with others. They were close to the engines, so it was not as comfy as the first class. The third class did not really exist, only on paper. And then the fourth class. A sharp transition. Here, a thousand passengers had to share a tight space. They did not have cabins; they did not have bathrooms, and their food was not great.[34]

This ship reflects the bigger society of the Dutch East Indies, where Kartini lived. The class differences were big, not only on the steamships but in everyday life. These differences were also related to race: the first class was for the successful Westerners. The second class for the so-called Foreign-Orientals, Asians who did not come from the Indies. And the fourth class were the Indigenous people, the lowest part of the colonial structure. [35]

[32] Locher-Scholten 2000, 18.
[33] Pixabay 2021.
[34] Van Reybrouck 2024, 93.
[35] Van Reybrouck 2024, 93.

The groups were highly unequal. Farabi told me more about the numbers.

> **Farabi Fakih**
> The vast majority were Indigenous people, so something like 95% were within the Indigenous people. The Europeans were an incredibly tiny amount of people, which. at its height was probably down 250 to 300,000 people. Within a a colony that was around 50 to 60 million and then you had also Chinese and Arabs [....] but definitely a tiny percentage.

[serious background music][36]

A whole population of tens of millions of people divided into three groups, all on a different deck of the colonial steamboat. On paper, this seemed straightforward, but in reality, the distinctions were way messier. Among the Westerners were also wealthy people of mixed descent, so-called Indo-Europeans. Less wealthy Indo-Europeans did not belong to the first class. The Westerners were Dutch, other Europeans, Eurasians, and, funnily enough, Japanese. As you can see, these racial categorisations were not as straightforward in real life. They were colonial constructions. Despite the clear distinctions, they did not exist in reality.[37]

But these constructions did have legal and material effects. It mattered to which racial category someone belonged. This racial divide was not only seen on the deck of these steamships but reflected in the law and every aspect of society. The Indigenous people had the least rights of all the groups. They had different law and court systems. They got paid less. There was a well-known saying: the more pigment, the less payment.[38] This was connected to how they were seen and treated. In a newspaper, we can read that the average Dutch colonial resident saw the millions of peasants in Java as "dishonest, stupid, careless, childish, despotic, and servile."[39]

Kartini herself criticizes how the Dutch treated the Javanese:

> It grieves me so terribly and only too frequently have we been made to feel that we Javanese are not really human beings. How do the Dutch actually expect us Javanese to become like them if they treat us like that?[40]

[36] Ashot-Danielyan-Composer 2023.
[37] Locher-Scholten 2000, 18.
[38] Van Reybrouck 2024, 104.
[39] Gouda 1999, 249.
[40] The letter is dated 23 August 1900, to Stella Zeehandelaar. See, Kartini 2014, 132.

[background music][41]

So why did the Dutch treat the Javanese like that? Kartini herself said that Javanese people were not really treated like humans. Instead, they were treated and seen as a human race that was different from the white Westerners. In this colonial society, the Dutch colonisers used the concept of race to mark the differences between groups of people. Racializing meant that certain characteristics were ascribed to a group of people. These traits were said to be natural, inherent, and related to biology. But they were not. They were all made up and invented. The Dutch justified their own behaviour towards the local population of the Indies in terms of race. They had to explain to themselves and to the people they colonised why this hierarchy between colonizer and colonized made sense, why the coloniser had the power and the colonised did not. Race was one of the ways in which this was done.[42]

The question now is: where would Kartini be if she would go aboard a steamship? I will talk more about her family in episode 3, but for now, I can already give you a hint that her family was rich and influential. They were the traditional ruling aristocracy who worked closely with the colonial administration. This means that she was allowed to travel in the second class.[43] This also shows that the divide between the decks was not *only* based on race. Kartini was part of the Javanese aristocracy, and they played an important part in the Dutch colonial society, as Farabi told me.

> **Farabi Fakih**
> The majority of the population lived on one island in Java, right? That's over half of the people. The control of Java was made through a form of indirect rule, so the colonial state incorporated traditional Javanese landed aristocracy as a way to control the population. It wasn't always successful. In the early 19th century, of course, we had the this massive war in Java which killed quite a significant portion of the population, which is called the Java War 1825-1830. But especially after the Java war. The Javanese aristocracy was sort of successfully incorporated into the colonial state, and Kartini was a member of that small, elite Javanese aristocracy.



[41] William_King 2023b.
[42] Gouda 1999, 253. For more general discussions about the role of race in colonialism, see Mohanty 2003, 55; Johnson 2015, 238.
[43] Van Reybrouck 2024, 101.

The colonial steamship shows how Dutch colonial society was divided, mostly based on race, but social class was important, too. The Dutch used the local elite to gain control over the population, which gave the elite more rights than the rest of the native population.

The steamship is a useful image, but in reality, the differences between population groups were more blurry.

You might wonder why I chose to make a podcast about Kartini and why I keep mentioning this colonial steamship. The reason is that this steamship symbolizes the significant impact of class and race in colonial society. It not only sheds light on historical events but also on how we remember and interpret history. Factors like race, gender, and class influenced historical figures like Kartini and continue to affect how they are remembered—or if they are remembered at all.

When we think about history, we often envision men: merchants, politicians, soldiers. Much of what we know about colonialism comes from sources written by men, such as speeches, war documents, and contracts. These sources leave little room for women's stories. Consequently, men are more prominent in historical records and in our collective memory. This is what I talked about with Dr Vineet Thakur, a researcher of International Relations at the University of Leiden,

**Vineet Thakur**

> And you know, if I'm being more charitable, I think, you know, our histories and our disciplinary canons are filled with the exploits of great white men. You know, I think it's they also deserve some rest .

I agree, but why are our histories so filled with great white men? To understand that, we have to look a bit more at archives.

As a historian researching colonial history, I would go to an archive that has documents from the colonial period. I did that at the beginning of this episode. But here’s the thing. The colonial power structures influenced what was recorded and which documents were kept in an archive. The documents that you can find in colonial archives are usually documents that were exchanged between colonial officers and people working in the governance of the Dutch colonial system. But women could not hold these positions. So if you only look at these documents, you can only read the words and stories of men, both as the people making the documents and the people who the documents were about. Besides that, the colonial

government would only keep documents that they thought were important. And because the government was way less concerned with the experiences of women, they did not keep that many sources of them. Only if these women disturbed the colonial government in some way.[44]

So now you might understand how excited I was to read Kartini's letters. What I find so special about Kartini is that we can read *her own words* about the colonial society that she lived in. This is incredibly rare. It gives us an idea about the ways in which colonial society was experienced from a non-male, non-white perspective. I talked to Elise Van Nederveen-Meerkerk, a professor of social history at the University of Utrecht, about how difficult it can be to study historical women.

> **Elise van Nederveen- Meerkerk**
>
> women consist of more than half of the historical world population. But they have not been studied by historians to to a similar extent. So I think there's much more that we don't know about women and their activities in the past, if you compare it to men.

Why do we not know that much about women? I already talked about it a little bit and it also might seem like a small question, but when I started looking into that, I found out that it was not as easy as just historians not being interested in women. The problem is more structural.

Archives are often seen as places where we can study the historical truth, but in reality, they reflect the biases and power dynamics of the people who created them. Think about it: who decides which historical figures and events are remembered? The answer lies in power. What is included or excluded from an archive is a political act. Archivists, influenced by the political context of their time, determine what gets preserved and what gets forgotten. This typically means prioritizing records of the powerful: the state, the elite, the colonisers.[45]

And that is a problem. In a capitalist, colonial and patriarchal society, when archivists decide which documents to select and collect for the archive, oftentimes they do not select the stories of the less wealthy, of the women or Indigenous communities. And archives have a big role in



[44] About colonial archives and women, see Burton 2007, 286-288. About coloniality, archives, gender and race, see Finden 2023.
[45] Finden 2023.

shaping how we see history. So if archives only contain one perspective on colonial history, our idea of history becomes very one-sided. Other perspectives are then missing.[46]

But the marginalisation of voices in the archives is not always the result of the actions of an individual evil mastermind. I talked about this with Vineet.

> **Vineet Thakur**
> And there's this wonderful book by Michel-Rolph Trouillot. It's called *Silencing the past*, which, through this problem of archival erasures tells how at every stage of the assembling of the archive, from the moment the story is told to the moment when we as researchers, we retrieve and really tell the story, how at every stage you know the voices of the marginalised are actually, you know, erased and a lot of times it's not really active acts of erasure.[47] And in the sense that there are these sort of, you know, evil men trying to, you know, erase voices of women and so on so forth. Sometimes it's the structure of the archive as such tat that leads to erasure. So historians, you know, and scholars have tried to sort of think through this and try to figure out different ways in which you can retrieve sort of the voices of of of those who have historically not been included. So I mean the first way to do it, obviously look at to look at the archives properly and to be properly informed actually of our own blinkers.

[dramatic pause]

Our own blinkers. That is a good point. What Vineet is saying is that it is not evil master minds but the *structure* of the archive that is responsible for the erasure of people's voices. And researchers have to pay special attention if they want to recover these stories. They have to think about their 'blinkers'. The things that are in front of their eyes that is not allowing them to see everything. They have to think about what their identities allow them to see and what they allow them to consider as important or relevant.

What does that mean for me? As a Dutch, female historian, I need to be aware of my own identities when I read Kartini's letters. Because I am Dutch, I might consider the Dutch influence on Kartini's letters as more important. And because I am female, I might pay more attention to Kartini's position as a woman.

[46] Hartman 2008.
[47] Trouillot 1995.

If I want to find out more about Kartini, I can not only ask questions about Kartini but also about myself. What does my identity allow me to see? How does my background influence how I see Kartini? Is it possible for me to build a nuanced understanding of who Kartini was?[48]

**Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk**

That is important that you yourself also are aware, like I don't have the the truth and, you know, it's only one perspective of their histories and it's probably much more complicated [...] But that is also our profession, right? That you keep on learning and keep on having conversations about possible scenarios of the past. We can never know the full past.

There is not one version of the past, one truth. But there are multiple possible scenarios of the past. And as you might have noticed, Kartini *has* left a trace, she *did* end up in the archives. In the last episode, I will tell you more about how this was possible.

[Start outro music][49]

If I think back to my questions in the beginning and think about my texts and emails, I sometimes wonder how a historian would read them in the future. If my texts would even be saved in an archive. Would historians understand who I was? What would be impossible for them to know? Would they get to know the real me through what I wrote down? Maybe not. My texts are one trace of who I am and can only ever paint a partial portrait.

So we might never know all parts of who Kartini was. She might remain a mystery to us. But we can still read her letters and and consider what they tell us about things as large as Dutch colonialism, or Javanese societal norms, or as specific as the life of a young Javanese woman under the Dutch colonial empire in Java in the 1900s.

In the next episode: What sort of ideas did Kartini engage with? What made her the controversial figure that she is considered today?



[48] For a discussion about the role of positionality in the work of researchers, see Massoud 2022.
[49] https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-february-night-193416/. William_King 2024b.

> I am not a Javanese, not a child of the despised brown race to you, and for me you are not someone who belongs to the white race which hates, despises and ridicules the Javanese.[50]

Thank you for listening to this episode. For more information, book recommendations and quotes from Kartini, please check the show notes. I am Dasja, the researcher, scriptwriter, host and editor of this podcast. A special thanks to my interviewees, Elise, Vineet, Ricardo and Farabi. And I would like to thank Sita for her wonderful voice-overs of Kartini.

[Fade out outro music]

**Show Notes Episode 1**

**Episode Summary**

Think about the texts you send to friends or family. The jokes you make, the plans you discuss, and the questions you ask. What do they say about you? What do they reveal about the society and time you live in? Imagine historians analysing these texts a hundred years later—what could they learn about you and your world?

In this first episode of "Call Me Kartini," host Dasja Zonneveldt, a Dutch history student, goes back in time to understand the life and legacy of Raden Ajeng Kartini, an Indonesian feminist and nationalist icon from the early 1900s. Kartini's letters offer a rare glimpse into the life of a Javanese woman under Dutch colonial rule. The episode discusses the Dutch colonial society in Java, power, silence and violence in the archives.

**Guest Experts:**

- Dr. Farabi Fakih - Scholar specialising in the political history of Indonesia at the Universitas Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta.
- Dr. Vineet Thakur - Scholar of International Relations at the University of Leiden.
- Prof. Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk - Professor of Social History at the University of Utrecht.



[50] The letter is dated 13 January 1900, to Stella Zeehandelaar, see Kartini 2014, 109.

**Bibliography and Additional Resources**[51]

Are you interested in reading more about the topics that were discussed in this episode? I would recommend reading the following:

- Kartini's letters and their impact on Indonesian history.
    - Kartini, Raden Adjeng, and Joost Coté. 2014. *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*. Monash Asia Series. Clayton, Victoria: Monash University Publishing. http://site.ebrary.com/id/11057227.
    - Bijl, Paul, and Grace V.S. Chin. 2020. 'Introduction'. In *Appropriating Kartini: Colonial, National and Transnational Memories of an Indonesian Icon*, edited by Grace V. S. Chin and Paul Bijl, 1–16. Lectures, Workshops, and Proceedings of International Conferences. ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute. https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/appropriating-kartini/introduction/15DAA043D6D5060E7AB1ABCAA211D5CA.
- Books and articles on Dutch colonialism and its legacy.
    - Locher-Scholten, Elsbeth. 2000. *Women and the Colonial State*. Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies 1900-1942. Amsterdam University Press. http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.uu.nl/stable/j.ctt46n2p0.4.
    - Van Reybrouck, David. 2024. *Revolusi: Indonesia and the Birth of the Modern World*. Translated by David Colmer and David McKay. London: The Bodley Head.
    - Taylor, Jean Gelman. 2013. *Global Indonesia*. Routledge.
- Studies on the role of archives in preserving history.
    - Burton, Antoinette. 2007. 'Archive Stories: Gender in the Making of Imperial and Colonial Histories'. In *Gender and Empire*, edited by Philippa Levine. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199249503.003.0013.
    - Finden, Alice E. 2023. 'Counter-Mapping the Archive: A Decolonial Feminist Research Method'. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 0 (0): 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2023.2285759.
    - Hartman, Saidiya. 2008. 'Venus in Two Acts'. *Small Axe* 12 (2): 1–14.

[51] All of these works are also cited in the bibliography of this thesis. These show notes are meant to show how the website of the podcast (see Project Outcomes for the links) gives additional information to the audience.

**Music and Sound Credits**


Ashot-Danielyan-Composer. 2023. “Serious Dark Sorrow”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/omgeving-serious-dark-sorrow-157909/.

Lexin_Music. 2022. “Cinematic Time Lapse.” Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/hoofdtitel-cinematic-time-lapse-115672/.

Lexin_Music. 2022. “Europe Travel”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/mooie-toneelstukken-europe-travel-119948/.

Pixabay. 2022. “Library ambiance”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/library-ambiance-60000/.

Pixabay. 2021. “Sea and Seagull, wave”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/sea-and-seagull-wave-5932/.

Pixabay. 2022. “Typingphone”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/typingphone-101683/.

Pixabay. 2022. “Writing with Fountain Pen Nib”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/writing-with-fountain-pen-nib-70563/.

William_King. 2024. “Separation”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/solo-gitaar-separation-185196/.

William_King. 2023. “Stalemate (Relaxing Acoustic Nylon Guitar)”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-stalemate-relaxing-acoustic-nylon-guitar-149916/.

## Appendix B. Episode 2: Friendship Across Borders?

### Script Episode 2

[sound of Women's March in London 2017][52]

In 2017, millions of people went out on the street to protest for women's rights. The Women's March and the MeToo movement have shown that the fight for gender equality today is as important as ever. Feminism might seem modern, but it is not really. Women have spoken up about their rights all over the world and throughout history.[53] In the nineteenth century, more women began to discuss these ideas and form feminist movements. This was not a national phenomenon but spanned the globe, growing within and between empires.[54]

Kartini is an important figure in the history of women's rights. What were these ideas? What was she fighting for? And what obstacles did she face?

[intro music][55]

My name is Dasja Zonneveldt, and I'm a Dutch history student. In this podcast series, I will take you with me on my research into the life and afterlives of a fascinating woman: Kartini, an Indonesian feminist and nationalist icon. I will go back in time to understand what it was like for her to live in the Dutch colonial society on Java. What can her writings and life tell us about how race, gender and class functioned in this time and place? In four episodes, I will go to the archives, read her letters, and speak with researchers.

Welcome to Call Me Kartini. This is episode 2: Friendship across borders? In this episode, I will take a closer look at Kartini's ideas about women and feminism. What was it like for a woman to live in Java around 1900? Was it possible for Dutch and Indonesian women to be friends?

[end intro music]

[energetic music]

[52] Tullis 2017.
[53] See for example Schrupp 2017.
[54] Keating 2020.
[55] Lexin_Music 2022a.

It is 25 May 1899. I imagine Kartini sitting at her desk, excitement and curiosity bubbling up as she takes a pen to write this letter. A while before, she had posted an advertisement in a popular Dutch ladies' journal looking for a pen pal.

> A young lady in Java, who has received an extended and enlightened education, a girl who thinks deeply and has a warm heart, would be most pleased if a cultivated fellow subscriber would enter into correspondence with her in order that she might discuss and exchange ideas with an educated girl, for which she feels a great need.[56]

And a young woman from Amsterdam responded: Stella Zeehandelaar. Stella was a feminist and a social democrat. Kartini responded right away, happy to meet this 'modern girl'.

> I have so longed to make the acquaintance of a 'modern girl' – the proud, independent girl whom I admire so much; who walks through life with confidence, is cheerful and in high spirits, full of enthusiasm and commitment; working not just for her own benefit and happiness alone but also offering herself to the wider society.[57]

[transition music][58]

The two women started a long friendship, in which they discussed every topic imaginable: 'colonial gossip', current issues, books, childhood stories, and their hopes and dreams. Most of all, they talk about their experiences as women.[59]

In this episode, I will discuss exactly this: What was it like to be a woman in Javanese colonial society? What were some Dutch colonial ideas about women and gender? And what were some of the Javanese expectations?

How women experience expectations of their society and their family depends on many factors, such as ethnicity, social status, age, and whether they live in a city or the countryside. There are different expectations and beliefs about what women should be or do. In episode 1, I already spoke with Elise, a researcher of social history, about women in the archives. But I also asked her: how did people look at women at this time? What ideas existed?

[56] Suroto 2001, 7.
[57] The letter is dated 25 May 1899, to Stella Zeehandelaar, Kartini 2014, 67.
[58] GordieDean 2022.
[59] Coté 2014, 66

Elise told me that there are a few problems with this question. First of all, that was a very big question. It would take multiple books to talk about that. But second of all, the ideas that existed were not as straightforward as we may think. There were a lot of conflicting ideas about the roles of women. And then there was another problem: a lot of sources that discuss women and men and how they relate to each other were written by the Dutch. They wrote them from their perspective as colonisers. And that coloured how they saw Javanese society.

The Dutch wrote the following about Javanese women:

> **Elise van Nederveen-Meerkerk**
> They actually admired Javanese women for being so active. I am talking about peasant women, not the women from the elite. They were generally positive about the fact that they were so active, so they were taking care of the household, the children, they were working on the land. And you know, in the evening hours they also spun or wove. So they were positive about the activity of women, but it was also maybe a bit propagandistic. Or at least meant to stereotype their husbands, who were instead doing not so much. They were not working much, they were working a bit on the field, but then, you know, talking in front of their huts while the women were preparing food, et cetera. So it was also a way to stereotype lazy, unmanly Javanese men. So to sort of emasculate Javanese men compared to the white male breadwinner men.

This Dutch image of Javanese men and women is a stereotype. It was meant to criticise the Javanese. It was almost a kind of mirror to show the difference between the Dutch themselves and the Javanese. This was a way to *justify* the fact that the Dutch ruled over this population of "unmanly men" and "manly women". But then, around 1900, the Dutch developed new ideas about the roles of Javanese men and women. These were part of the Ethical Policy, that I will discuss more in episode 3.

> **Elise van Nederveen-Meerkerk**
>
> Especially around 1900, when, you know, the Ethical Policy came up and the the idea that the Dutch should not only profit from the colony but also bring something and to civilise to Javanese. That actually the Javanese should be taught so, so ordinary households should be taught the ideal of domesticity, for you know, women being at home taking care of kids, making sure the household is neat and stable, and that the household finances are being, you know, taken care of, that they don't, that the

husband doesn't spend too much. So the role of the women became sort of like the Dutch stereotypical housewife.

They had to be taught these values and also of course the Christian values of monogamy and not polygamy, which was still prevalent in many parts of the Javanese island. So yeah, it was a way to install Christian Western values in the colony.

[serious background music][60]

Elise is saying that from around 1900, the Dutch colonial authorities implemented some changes in the colonial policies. Through things like education, the Dutch tried to impose their own Christian, Western values on the Indigenous population of the Indies. This was only meant for the elite. The Dutch thought that *these* women would be open to education and change, to become a 'good' housewife and strengthen the family. Because the reality for other women, for poor women or rural women was completely different.[61] This had an economic reason.

In the first episode, I told you that the colonial economy was based on cheap labour.[62] Around 1900, Dutch plantations throughout the colony started to employ more and more women and even children.

**Elise van Nederveen-Meerkerk**

in the emerging plantations, which sprung up all over Java in this period, plantation owners were all too happy to hire entire families, including wives and children, to work for a very, very low wage to do hard physical labour like rubber tapping or sugar cutting.

The living and working conditions were harsh.[63] There were several horrible cases of plantation owners and administrators abusing and violating Indigenous women. These women were not expected to stay at home and get education at all. So how the Dutch colonizers acted towards women was clearly influenced by class.[64] The reality was that colonial policies affected women from lower and higher classes totally differently. This was for very pragmatic and opportunistic reasons. The Dutch colonisers were not interested in lower-class women

[60] Ashot-Danielyan-Composer 2023.
[61] Locher-Scholten 2000, 28
[62] Teeuwen 2022, 10.
[63] Teeuwen 2022, 17-18.
[64] Locher-Scholten 2000, 28.

staying at home, getting an education, or emancipating themselves. That would mean a loss in the workforce. The only women who could stay and home and be educated were Dutch women or women from the Indigenous elite.[65]

[music][66]

Kartini would never have to work on a plantation, exactly because she was part of the Javanese elite, I will tell you more about that in episode 3. For now, I can tell you that this meant that she struggled with different things than women from lower classes.

**Elise van Nederveen-Meerkerk**

It was maybe harder for elite women than for, you know, the ordinary peasant or village woman, because of the latter's pretty big role in in the public life. They went to the markets to, to shop or to sell. They worked in the fields, they went to fetch water, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Even if they had an inferior position [...] They did get out. They did have an important role also economically in the family.

Whereas I think for Javanese elite women, it must have been much harder. Even if they sometimes could get some form of education, they were much more confined by the, you know, the rules of how they should behave as a woman. [...]

So whereas in practise you would probably have a very simple and maybe not such a a rich life, you may have had sort of a practical freedom that was an independence that was much bigger than if you had to obey all the rules, social rules and norms in an elite household.

Women from different layers of society dealt with different problems that were specific to their social status. For example, lower-class women had to deal with class-specific problems, like plantation work or child marriages.[67]

[music][68]

Kartini writes a lot about the problems she faced as a woman. The person she discusses her struggles as a woman mostly with is Stella, the girl that she 'met' in 1899. In letters to her, Kartini writes about how strict life is for Javanese girls. They have to be silent and obedient.

[65] Locher-Scholten 2000, 29.
[66] William_King 2023a.
[67] Locher-Scholten 2000, 29.
[68] GordieDean 2022.

She also writes about polygamy. It was normal for Javanese aristocratic men to have multiple wives. Kartini herself had two mothers: her birth mother and her father's second wife.[69] But she saw polygamy as one of the biggest injustices of Javanese culture.

> And then to think that destiny may impose that gruesome injustice called polygamy on me … 'I don't want to' my mouth screams and the heart echoes that cry a thousandfold … But oh, 'want'! – do people in fact have a will?[70]

Kartini's solution to this inequality between men and women? Education. She writes a lot about how she thinks education and schools can help women—and not only women but the rest of the population as well.

> I too am utterly convinced that the woman can have a very significant impact, whether for good or for evil, in life; that she can most contribute to raising the moral standard of the human race. From a woman people receive their first education – it is on her lap that the child learns; to feel, to think, to speak – and more and more I come to realize that early education is not without significance for the rest of life. And how can Native mothers educate their children if they themselves are uneducated?[71]

Education was one of the biggest struggles in Kartini's life. In episode 3, I will discuss how Kartini fought incredibly hard to get an education herself. You will find out then whether this worked or not.

But for now, let's get back to Kartini's letters. The way she is talking about women: as educators, mothers, and helpers of the human race—all of this sounds quite conservative to us now—not really radical feminism. But at this time, it was quite new and modern. Kartini lived at a time when women were slowly entering public life. Writing these letters and being open about her thoughts was still quite radical.[72]

**Elise van Nederveen-Meerkerk**

> Her outspoken position, especially in her situation is also quite unique. I mean, maybe more women thought like her. I think she had two sisters, right, and they were were, of course, raised in the same household. And she might also have discussed things with

[69] Coté 2008, 5.
[70] The letter is dated August 1900, to Rosa Abendanon-Mandri, see Kartini 2014, 125.
[71] The letter is dated 31 January 1901, to Rosa Abendanon-Mandri, Kartini 2014, 180.
[72] Keating 2020, 99; Locher-Scholten 2000, 33.

her. But it's very unique that she put them on paper, actually out in the open, even if they're sometimes, you know, they seem quite modest and not very radical to us now, but for her it must have been very radical, maybe even risky, to write these things

Even if these might have been radical, Kartini was still a woman of her time who wrote from her position as an elite woman. She had a pretty isolated look at women's issues that was influenced by her own perspective and the problems that she herself faced.[73] She did not really discuss the issues of rural or lower-class women. For example, she did not address life on the plantations.

Much of what we know about Kartini comes also from her letters to European women. Maybe she thought these women would not be interested in the issues of servants or rural women. Kartini only mentions female servants around her house a few times. So they were there! But Kartini did not write much about them.

[energetic music][74]

From Kartini's home in Java, I want to take you back to some other places in the world.

At the end of the nineteenth century, feminism spread over the globe like a wave.[75] In New Zealand, women got the right to vote in 1893. In Britain, this took some more time. So-called suffraggetes decided to "do the work themselves", under the motto "deeds not words".[76] They organised campaigns, tried to storm the parliament, and went on hunger strikes. But feminist activism also took smaller, quieter forms, like letter writing.[77]

Of course, I am talking about Kartini now. Many historians place Kartini in the context of the so-called first wave of feminism. Their feminist goals were pretty different from what we now see as feminism.

**Elise van Nederveen-Meerkerk**

there were first wave feminists in Europe who were really thinking about totally equal rights, but I think the majority of them was Really acknowledging that in their day and age at least, that there was a specific role for women and men and a lot of the

[73] Chin 2020, 74.
[74] Lexin_Music 2022b.
[75] There is criticism of the metaphor of waves when discussing feminism, see Nicholson 2010.
[76] Pankhurst 1959, 43.
[77] Keating 2020.

> independence and the freedom that they sought was not necessarily for their individual development. [...] Even though Kartini does stress and and maybe other feminist also stressed the importance of independence or freedom, which may have also been a true desire or true plea behind the education of more women. It was very normal at the time to, and also politically correct, to stress that the development of women in general was more serving a broader collective. So this really fits with how a lot of the feminists in Europe would have thought about it.

Kartini and European feminists had similar ideas. Women should have the right to education, be treated as human beings and equal to men, help with household finance and hygiene, and help the lower classes. But Kartini also had more specific concerns that related more to the Javanese society, like polygamy.

Now, I have to be honest with you. When I started making this podcast, I made the same mistake as countless other historians made before me. I wanted to talk about how Kartini was influenced by Western feminism and people like Stella and give you examples of the Dutch feminist books she read. And these things are definitely important. Kartini had feminist friends and read a lot of feminist literature. But if I only talk about these Western influences, would that be the full story? Or would I miss other important things?

Kartini says this herself in one of her letters:

> People blame the books 'full of nonsense', which came from the West and penetrated deep into the inland to the quiet, peaceful region of Java's evergreen coast. [...] It was not only the books which made her rebellious – to hate conditions which have existed from time immemorial, and which are a curse – a curse for all who are women and girls! The longing for freedom, independence and emancipation was not born of recent days, but already, in her earliest youth, when 'emancipation' was still an unknown word to her, and books and other printed matter which discussed such issues were far beyond her reach, that desire was born in one of the sisters; conditions in the immediate and more distant horizons called it into life.[78]

[music][79]

[78] The letter is dated August 1900, to Rosa Abendanon-Mandri, Kartini 2014, 125.
[79] GordieDean 2022.

A friend told me: you don't become a feminist because you *read*, you become a feminist because you *experience*.

Think about how *you* became a feminist or became political. Was it because of books, social media, specific events, experiences or conversations with friends?

I don't really remember the first time I realised that society treated women worse than men. Maybe my parents told me, maybe I saw it happen right before my eyes. But what I *do* know is that my feminism grew and grew throughout my life as I experienced how women have less freedom and rights than men. Especially as I learned more about the experiences of women of colour, women with disabilities, refugee women, the list goes on and on.

It would not be right to say that Kartini was *only* inspired by Western feminism. There's a longstanding idea that the West represents progress and modernity and that indigenous women can only achieve emancipation through Western influence. In the early 20th century, Dutch feminists used Kartini's letters to highlight how much she admired Western ideas. They portrayed her as an example of how colonial intervention was beneficial. They saw themselves as saviours, who were in the colony to help "uplift" the population. The idea behind it was that of racial superiority: everything that came from the West was inherently better. This ideology justified the exploitation and oppression of the Indigenous population.[80]

So if I only talked about how Western feminism inspired Kartini, I would do exactly the same thing that these colonial feminists did a century ago. This does not only continue old, colonial ideas about superiority, about the West as progressive and the East as backward or inferior, but it is also not the full story. I imagine Kartini's feminism as a seed that started within her and was watered by the things she saw, the conversations she had with others, her family members or friends, and the books she read. All of this fuelled her fire and made her write the things she wrote.

Besides that, Kartini was definitely not the only one who was thinking about the emancipation of women. She even writes about knowing someone else in her letters:

> It was wonderful to hear that in the Minahassa there is also a Native girl who has 'crazy ideas' like us! So you see, we are not the only mad ones! And should the nobility not want us here, and the people also turn against us, then we can flee to that faraway soul sister to find work for head, heart and hand in some forgotten place far

[80] Locher-Scholten 2000, 55.

> from this power struggle. In the big, big world there must be a place somewhere where people can abide us![81]

So there were other women too![82]

Nowadays, Kartini is seen as one of Indonesia's first feminists. She is definitely the most famous, but it is important not to forget the other women in Indonesian history. Throughout history, women have been standing up for themselves. They have addressed inequality and fought to improve women's position in society. They have tried to gain more rights and relative independence.[83] These ideas are not unique to a specific time and place. They did not come from a specific region in the world.

[music][84]

But Kartini's relationship with European feminists was definitely important. It is time to dive a bit deeper into their relationships because I think interesting things are happening there.

Stella and Kartini wrote each other letters for years—long letters and short postcards. On paper, they seemed to be great friends. But there was a barrier between them. These women were on different sides of the colonial divide. The European women were part of the colonizing group, while Kartini was part of the people who were colonized by them. In this colonial world, European women had more rights and power.

While reading these letters, I wondered what the relationship was like between these women who were on such different sides of the colonial power imbalance. So, let's dive a bit deeper into the relationships between these women and see what kind of complexities there were. First of all, there was the complexity of race. Kartini had a completely different status as a Javanese woman. She tried to overcome this. In her letters to Stella for example, she emphasized the similarities between them: the fact that they were both women.

> I am not a Javanese, not a child of the despised brown race to you, and for me you are not someone who belongs to the white race which hates, despises and ridicules the



[81] The letter is dated 17 Febuary 1903, to Jacques Abendanon, see Kartini 2014, 570.
[82] Coté (2008) identifies her as Eti Wawu Runtu.
[83] A thorough overview of global feminism is Smith and Robinson 2022. For a more recent overview of women fighting for equality in Indonesia, see Blackburn 2004.
[84] William_King 2023a.

> Javanese. For me you are a white person in the true sense of the word, white in skin and soul, for whom I have high regard, whom I love with all my heart.[85]

And to another friend she writes:

> A deeper more intimate friendship between children from the same race could not be imagined than the friendship here between white children from the West and the brown children from the East![86]

While this may seem positive and optimistic, I also see the tension in these words. Kartini clearly understands that Javanese are seen by the 'white race' as the 'despised brown race'. Still, she writes these letters to white women. Kartini had a certain ideal of women. But the reality was harsher.

> **Elise van Nederveen-Meerkerk**
>
> So apart from indeed the ideal that all women are compassionate and warm and emancipated, they are just as well part of the colonial system, of course, white women. They have come there with their husbands or fathers to suppress a whole people.

In some of her letters, Kartini seems so positive about white women that it almost feels a bit naive. But she was not: Kartini was very aware of the distance between her and white feminists. Let me give you an example. In 1898, Dutch feminists organised an exhibition to showcase women's work in art and the economy. Kartini sent in artworks to show the work of Indigenous women from the Indies. She writes to Stella:

> I still remember how angry we were last year when the ladies of the Exhibition of Women's Work referred to us as 'the princesses of Jepara'. It seems as if in Holland one imagines that anything that comes out of the Indies that is not a 'babu' or 'spada' must be a princess or a prince.[87]

Even though the organisers said they were interested in Javanese culture, Kartini felt that they had no idea about her culture or society at all and it bothered her. They were clearly not on the same team. There are more moments like this. This complicated her relationship with the women she wrote to as well. And that made me think: were they really friends?

[85] The letter is dated 13 January 1900, to Stella Zeehandelaar, see Kartini 2014, 109.
[86] The letter is dated 4 October 1902, to Professor Anton, Kartini 2014, 472.
[87] The letter is dated 18 August 1899, to Stella Zeehandelaar, Kartini 2014, 75.

[music][88]

**Elise van Nederveen-Meerkerk**

> Do we have to put a label on it if they experienced it as friendship? I think friendship was something very different in, you know, 1900 than it is now. And maybe, you know the kind kinds of things you would tell your friends or I would, we wouldn't dream telling if we had been friends in 1900. Also, if you are like relatively equal and same class, same ethnicity, maybe so and and then of course the different backgrounds of the people and the different societies they lived in may have caused other obstacles to really call it what we now would call a friendship, but I think it's also if they experienced it as friendship. Who are we to to judge that it wasn't? What I do think is that writing was sort of a lifeline for Kartini and that would have been valuable in itself very much, even if some of the people she never met, but that can still be very close if you have a message like she did and sometimes also like sort of a a quest for help maybe even.

And that is true. However we label their relationship, it matters more what they thought of it. But it is still important to see the complexities of the relationship between Kartini and the European women, especially the factor of race. One historian, Michael Hawkins, wrote that true "transnational sisterhood" between Kartini and the other women was not possible. He said, and I quote, "Though Kartini aligned herself with Dutch feminists, the structures of imperial associations did not allow her to actually become a Dutch feminist. She remained Javanese."[89] Kartini longed to be equal, she longed for solidarity. But because of her position as an imperial subject, she would never fully reach that.

[Start outro music][90]

Simone de Beauvoir famously said: one is not born a woman, but becomes a woman."[91] But being a woman is much more than just gender. It is also connected to ideas about race and class. All of these things combined make us 'women'.[92] A quote from Audre Lorde summarises this well. She said: "There is no thing as a single-issue struggle because we do

[88] GordieDean 2022.
[89] Hawkins 2008, 1.
[90] William_King 2024b.
[91] De Beauvoir 2009, 18.
[92] Mohanty 2003, 55

not live single-issue lives."[93] I think the same can be said for Kartini. She had to fight multiple issues: both European and Javanese patriarchal societies and colonial racial boundaries.

Next episode: Kartini decides that she wants to take matters into her own hands. Did she get what she wanted?

> Please do not get a shock Moedertje, but we suspect trouble is brewing for us both and when the decisive moment for that arrives, only our independence can save us.[94]

Thank you for listening to this episode. For more information, book recommendations and quotes from Kartini, please check the show notes. I am Dasja, the researcher, scriptwriter, host and editor of this podcast. A special thanks to my interviewees, Elise, Vineet, Ricardo and Farabi. And I would like to thank Sita for her wonderful voice-overs of Kartini.

[End outro music]

**Show Notes Episode 2**

**Episode Summary**

In 2017, millions of people worldwide joined the Women's March. The fight for gender equality has a long history. Kartini has an important place in the history of feminism and the fight for women's rights. In this episode, Dasja dives deeper into Kartini's experiences as a woman in Dutch colonial Java around 1900. What was it like to be an Indigenous woman in this time and place? What was Kartini fighting for? And was it possible for her to truly be friends with European women if they were on different sides of the colonial divide? While looking for answers, Dasja realises that she is making the same mistake as other historians and feminists have made before her.

**Guest Experts:**

- Prof. Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk - Professor of Social History at the University of Utrecht.

[93] Lorde and Clarke 2007, 138.
[94] The letter is dated 22 June 1903, to Rosa Abendanon-Mandri, Kartini 2014, 602.

**Bibliography and Additional Resources**[95]

Are you interested in reading more about the topics that were discussed in this episode? I would recommend reading the following:

- Kartini's letters and her relationship to her correspondents:
    - Kartini, Raden Adjeng, and Joost Coté. 2014. *Kartini : The Complete Writings 1898-1904*. Monash Asia Series. Clayton, Victoria: Monash University Publishing. http://site.ebrary.com/id/11057227.
    - Kartini, and Joost Coté. 2005. *On Feminism and Nationalism : Kartini's Letters to Stella Zeehandelaar, 1899-1903*. Rev. ed. Monash Papers on Southeast Asia; No. 60. Clayton, Vic.: Monash Asia Institute.
    - Hawkins, Michael. 2008. 'Exploring Colonial Boundaries: An Examination of the Kartini-Zeehandelaar Correspondence'. *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review* 7 (2). https://www.academia.edu/16733700/Exploring_Colonial_Boundaries_An_Examination_of_the_Kartini_Zeehandelaar_Correspondence.
- On gender and the Dutch colonial society:
    - Locher-Scholten, Elsbeth. 2000. *Women and the Colonial State*. Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies 1900-1942. Amsterdam University Press. http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.uu.nl/stable/j.ctt46n2p0.4.
    - Taylor, Jean Gelman. 2004. *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*. Univ of Wisconsin Press.
    - Teeuwen, Danielle. 2022. 'Plantation Women and Children: Recruitment Policies, Wages and Working Conditions of Javanese Contract Labourers in Sumatra, c. 1870-1940'. *TSEG - The Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History* 19 (1): 7–36. https://doi.org/10.52024/tseg.8431.
    - Clancy-Smith, Julia., and Frances. Gouda. 1999. Domesticating the Empire : Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism. Charlottesville, Va: University Press of Virginia.
- On feminism in this period:
    - Keating, James. 2020. *Distant Sisters: Australasian Women and the International Struggle for the Vote, 1880-1914*. Manchester: Manchester

[95] All of these works are also cited in the bibliography of this thesis. These show notes are meant to show how the website of the podcast (see Project Outcomes for the links) gives additional information to the audience.

University Press. https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=2634305.

- On feminist thought:
    - Lorde, Audre, and Cheryl Clarke. 2007. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Revised edition. Crossing Press Feminist Series. Berkeley [California]: Crossing Press.
    - Beauvoir, Simone de. 2009. *The Second Sex.* Translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier. London: Jonathan Cape.

**Music and Sound Credits**

Ashot-Danielyan-Composer. 2023. "Serious Dark Sorrow". Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/omgeving-serious-dark-sorrow-157909/.

GordieDean. 2022. "Storytelling Podcast Vibe". Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/pulsen-storytelling-podcast-vibe-118024/.

Lexin_Music. 2022a. "Cinematic Time Lapse." Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/hoofdtitel-cinematic-time-lapse-115672/.

Lexin_Music. 2022b. "Europe Travel". Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/mooie-toneelstukken-europe-travel-119948/.

Pixabay. 2022. "Writing with Fountain Pen Nib". Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/writing-with-fountain-pen-nib-70563/.

Rennie, Tullis. 2017. "Women's March on London, 21st January 2017." Accessed May 16, 2024. https://soundcloud.com/tullisrennie/womens-march-on-london-21st-january-2017.

William_King. 2023a. "Documentary Ambient Guitar". Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-documentary-ambient-guitar-145480/.

William_King. 2024b. "Separation". Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/solo-gitaar-separation-185196/.

William_King. 2023b. "Stalemate (Relaxing Acoustic Nylon Guitar)". Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-stalemate-relaxing-acoustic-nylon-guitar-149916/.

## Appendix C. Episode 3: At The Intersection

### Script Episode 3

[music][96]

When I was 8 years old, my father and I visited a medieval library in Zutphen, the quaint little city my parents live next to. The tour guide showed us some century-old school books. Then he told us that these books had to be from boys because girls were not allowed to go to school or to read.

Voice-over dad: 'You looked at me and you were so upset!'

This is still a famous anecdote in our family.

And I was also thinking about this story when I read Kartini's letters. Kartini and I are two completely different people who live in different times, cultures, and parts of the world. But there was one similarity. She, like me, wanted women and girls to have access to education. However, while it was a given for me that I would attend school, Kartini's life was completely different.

[start intro music][97]

Intro:

My name is Dasja Zonneveldt, and I'm a Dutch history student. In this podcast series, I will take you with me on my research into the life and afterlives of Kartini, an Indonesian feminist and nationalist icon. In this series, I will go back in time to understand what it was like for her to live in the Dutch colonial society on Java. What can her writings and life tell us about how race, gender and class functioned in this time and place? In four episodes, I will go to the archives, read her letters, and speak with researchers.

Welcome to 'Call Me Kartini', episode 3: at the intersection. In this episode: Kartini's fight for education. I will look into Kartini's background, her influential family, and her aspirations

[96] Beeksander 2022.
[97] Lexin_Music 2022a.

to study in the Netherlands. Her struggle was set against a backdrop of deeply unequal power dynamics, where friends appeared to support her, but would they help her until the end?

[end intro music]

[sound of street in Java with people, buses][98]

In the summer of 2023, when I was preparing the research for this podcast, I went to Indonesia, to the island of Java, where Kartini lived her whole life. I took a bus to Jepara, the town where she lived, was born and wrote almost all of her letters.

[transition music][99]

Jepara is a small city on the northcoast of Java. It was once a prominent town. In the sixteenth century, the small kingdom fought against the Portuguese in Malacca. During the time of the Dutch VOC, the town was important as a port and administrative centre.[100] But in the nineteenth century, it lost its power and became a minor colonial post. In the middle of the town is the alun-alun, the main square, and not far from that rises an old, majestic building, the Kabupaten. Kartini grew up within the walls of this building. She was one of the eleven children of Raden Mas Adipati Ario Sosroningrat, the local ruler of Jepara.[101]

Kartini's family was an old and influential East Javanese family, the Tjondronegoro. Before Dutch colonial rule, the family had a high social position, which they maintained under colonialism.[102] The traditional elite was very friendly with the colonial regimes. The Dutch administration gave them power to rule over the local population. This was profitable for the nobility.[103] Farabi, the researcher from Yogyakarta, who I also interviewed in episode 1, knows more about this elite and their historical roots:

**Farabi Fakih**

The traditional name for them would would was called the *priyayi*, it actually means younger brother in Javanese and it denotes sort of kinship to the Sultan. So in a lot of

[98] Pixabay 2022b.
[99] William_King 2023b.
[100] Coté 2008, 4.
[101] Cramer 2023, 25.
[102] Coté 2008, 3
[103] Van Reybrouck 2024, 118

ways the structure of the traditional aristocracy that was incorporated into the Dutch colonial state continued on traditional Javanese Kingdom.

Kartini herself wrote about her family to her friends:

> Whether I am a princess? No more than you. The last prince in our family of which we are the direct descendants in the male line is, I think, at least 25 generations ago. Mama is still closely related to Madura royalty. Her great grandfather was a ruling king and her grandmother a queen. But we do not care one bit about this.[104]

So Kartini's family had a high social status and was influential all over East Java. But she said that she did not care for that status that much:

> Just call me Kartini—that is my name.[105]

Even if Kartini did not care that much about her social status, it did matter. It made it possible for her to come into contact with Western culture and people. It influenced the opportunities that she got in life, it influenced the things she could and could not do.

[music][106]

You might remember the colonial steamship from episode 1, how the colonial law divided the population into three groups. Kartini belonged to the 'Inlanders', the Indigenous population that was the lowest in the hierarchy that the Dutch had created in the colony. But now, you might have noticed, too, the *priyayi* were actually pretty high in the ranking of the Dutch political system.

What was this system exactly? The Dutch East Indies operated on indirect rule. Local regents, like Kartini's father, who was the regent of Jepara, reported to Dutch colonial officials called residents. In Javanese society, these regents were highly esteemed. The Dutch exploited this by offering them bonuses and power, making it attractive for the regents to cooperate. This dual relationship benefited both parties: the Dutch maintained cheaper and easier control, while the local rulers gained money and status.[107] So, the colonial hierarchy wasn't just about race but also about usefulness to the colonizers. The more useful a group, the higher their

[104] The letter is dated 18 August 1899, to Stella Zeehandelaar, Kartini 2014, 75.
[105] Kartini 2014, 74.
[106] Beeksander 2022.
[107] Taylor 2013, 88

status and rights.[108] On the colonial steamship, this local elite would have been allowed to travel in the second class. This system made the gap between families like Kartini's and families from lower social classes bigger.[109]

The result was that Kartini was positioned *in between* the European and the Indigenous groups. She got in close contact with Dutch colonial officials so she saw how the colonial government worked. At the same time, she also had her own experiences in the dynamics of Javanese society. When Kartini wrote her letters, it was from this position of being in between the European and Indigenous cultures. From here, her letters give more insight into how both of these societies worked and what role gender, race and class played in both of these. And this in-betweenness is especially compelling when we look at the time in which she lived.

[excerpt from Dutch radio show with musical instruments][110]

[transition music][111]

The time of Kartini's life, around 1900, was a time of change. Around 1900, the Netherlands started to encourage people from the colony to climb up the social letters through schooling. In 1901, Queen Wilhelmina said that the Netherlands had a 'moral calling'. Colonialism should do more than just generate profit, it should also help the local population. That was the start of the period of the 'Ethical Policy', a period of twenty years where there was more attention to the development of the Indies and the people.[112]

The idea? More education, more infrastructure, more missionary work and better healthcare.

This sounds like a positive development. It sounds like Dutch people were bothered by the exploitation and violence in the colony and wanted to change that. But this was not the case. Farabi said that this was …

[light music][113]



[108] Van Reybrouck 2024, 72.
[109] Woodward 2015, 24-25.
[110] Radio Oranje 2015.
[111] Lexin_Music 2022b.
[112] Van Reybrouck 2024, 107; Woodward 2015, 18.
[113] Beethoven 1802.

> an ideology that was meant to provide a moral justification for for what is an aggressive and very violent expansion which killed lots of people and destroyed lots of traditional communities. So in that sense, the ethical policy, which started in 1900. That was at the at the height of colonial expansion. They were spreading, they were attacking numerous societies outside of Java, right destroying societies and kingdoms they've destroyed Aceh. They were attacking Bali, Lombok. So all these places were attacked militarily and then integrated into the colony so the other side of the coin in this, you know of imperialism was this notion that this was all for the benefit of the people. And it that sense they had to prove that 'oh we do care!'.
>
> And the focus of the ethical policy was in Java, and that was primarily through improvements in education, improvements in agriculture and people's welfare. So a lot of what you would call developmentalist projects were introduced in Java during this period. So that include in particular with the with the nobility is the expansion of access to European or Dutch education up to the university level

The Ethical Policy seemed progressive, but control over the colony and the spread of Western culture was the most important. But it did have huge effects on the educational system. In 1900, "fewer than three thousand non-Europeans attended a Dutch-language primary school: 2,400 Indonesians and 400 Foreign Orientals."[114] From 1907, these numbers changed drastically. The people from deck 3 could go to a school in a local language. In 1940, there were 2.2 million children who benefited from this.

So how did that affect Kartini?

Because Kartini's family was aristocratic, they had already had the possibility to get an education. Kartini's family also found this very important. This is what Kartini says about it herself in a letter to a pen pal in 1899:

> Now I want to tell you something about me by way of introduction. I am the oldest, or actually the second daughter of the Regent of Jepara, and have five brothers and sisters – what a large number, eh?1 My late grandfather, Pangeran Ario Condronegoro of Demak, who was a great proponent of progress, was the first regent in Central Java to open his home to that guest from far across the sea: that is, Western culture.2 All his

[114] Van Reybrouck 2024, 109.

> children received only a European education and have or had (many of them are no longer alive) inherited a love for progress from their father, and they, in turn, gave their offspring the same education that they themselves had enjoyed.[115]

Kartini was one of the few Indigenous children who was able to go to school before the Ethical Policy started. This was one of the perks of being from the elite. This access to education was part of a larger plan that the Dutch had for the elite in the colony.

> **Farabi Fakih**
>
> And within that context the *priyayi* were seen as the sort of the actors that would allow for modernization. So there were changes in the sense that the priyayi were then becoming more westernised, they were more educational opportunities and so they were changing the way they think about their role in society. And the primary motive for the, for the Dutch people were so that the *priyayi* could then, you know, so gradually be integrated into the modern colonial state as part of the administrative kind of elite.

Access to education had a political purpose. But Kartini herself did not notice that at first. She loved going to school. But this all changed when she was twelve. From that age, she was not allowed to go to school anymore. As was the tradition of Javanese society, she had to stay at home instead.

> My parents were immovable: I entered my prison. For four long years I lived behind four thick walls without ever seeing anything of the outside world. [116]

But in her house, between those walls, she kept reading—books, magazines, and newspapers. She also met Marie Ovink-Soer, the wife of a colonial official of Jepara. Marie helped her practice Dutch and talked about Dutch feminist ideas and literature. When Kartini was 16 years old, she was allowed to go out again, on little trips to a nearby city. She went shopping or paid visits to family members or European colonial officials.[117]

To sum all of this up, Kartini grew up in a relatively privileged position in the Javanese society. She had a wealthy, influential family which allowed her access to education in ways that were not guaranteed for other Indigenous women of lower social status. Through her

[115] 25 May 1899, to Stella Zeehandelaar, see Kartini 2014, 68.
[116] The letter is dated 25 May 1899, to Stella Zeehandelaar, see Kartini 2014, 69.
[117] Coté 2014, 21.

social standing, she was able to come into contact with colonial officials, like Marie and her husband.

[transition music][118]

So Kartini was able to mingle with the passengers that were on the first class deck of the colonial steamboat. She went as one of the few to a Dutch-language school. But was her high class everything? How much power did it give her or her family? Kartini answers this question herself. She told Stella about her experience at the school:

> You ask me, 'Has your father much power?' What exactly is power? Papa does have a great deal of influence but power is only possessed by the colonizers. (…) The Dutch laugh and ridicule us for our ignorance, but when we try to educate ourselves, then they adopt a defiant attitude towards us. Oh! What a sorrow I experienced at school, where the teachers and many of my fellow pupils were so hostile towards us. But not all teachers and pupils hated us. Many knew us and were as fond of us as any other child. Many teachers found it difficult to award the highest mark to a Javanese, even though it was deserved.[119]

Even though Kartini was of a high class, the fact that she was from the colonised group would always influence her life, her experiences and her interactions with colonial systems like schools.

[transition music][120]

Despite these struggles, Kartini was clear: she wanted to continue her education. She wrote to Marie about her plans:

> I want to be trained as a teacher – to qualify for the two diplomas: the junior and senior diplomas and take courses in health, first aid and nursing. Much later I will take a language diploma in my own language. When we have finished, then together we will open a boarding school for the daughters of Native officials. I want to gain my training in Holland because Holland will prepare me in all aspects for the task that I wish to take up.[121]

[118] William_King 2023a.
[119] The letter is dated 13 January 1900, to Stella Zeehandelaar, see Kartini 2014, 101.
[120] Ashot-Danielyan-Composer 2023.
[121] The letter is dated October 1900, to Marie Ovink-Soer, see Kartini 2014, 150.

She did not only want to study for herself and become a teacher just out of passion for the job, but she had a bigger ideal: the emancipation of the Javanese people.

But she also knew how difficult it would be to fulfil these dreams. Her Dutch contacts warned her about the problems that she would have as a Javanese woman in the Netherlands. They were worried that the change would be too big. Her father warned her about these obstacles as well.

> What Father replied can be briefly summed up as follows: that I should not forget that I was a Javanese, that it was now not yet possible for me to go in that direction – it would be different in 20 years' time – but now it is not possible, without experiencing a very difficult life 'because I would be the first'.[122]

If she were allowed to go, Kartini would be the first Indonesian woman to study in the Netherlands.

[a bit suspenseful transition music][123]

There were many obstacles that she had to face. The most important were the racial boundaries of Dutch colonialism. As I said in the first episode, in this colonial society, race was a big factor. It was used to mark the differences between groups of people. Racializing meant that certain characteristics were ascribed to a group of people. These traits were said to be natural, inherent, and related to biology. But they were not. They were all made up and invented. But they did have real effects.[124]

Vineet, who I also interviewed in episode 1, explains it like this:

> **Vineet Thakur**
> I think we have to be clear that there's a difference between race and racism, right? Race doesn't exist. Racism does. So if you ask me the definition of race, I would say it is a way of categorising people based on often pseudo-scientific rationales of colour or creeds.
>
> […]
>
> it's a social construction.

[122] The letter is dated August 1900, to Marie Ovink-Soer, Kartini 2014, 119.
[123] Ashot-Danielyan-Composer 2023.
[124] See for example Gouda 1999, 253; Mohanty 2003, 55; Johnson 2015, 238.

Kartini was very aware of how Europeans racialised the Javanese.

In one of her letters, Kartini writes:

> We Javanese are accused of being born liars, completely unreliable and ingratitude personified. We have not only read this but have also heard it said many times which in itself provided a nice proof of the speaker's sensitivity. We merely smile when we read or hear such sweet expressions and we remind ourselves of the European social life which, oh so often, provides spectacular evidence of that love of truth, of honesty, of many, many of those same Europeans who look down from such heights to mock the totally dishonest, untrustworthy Javanese.[125]

I think this is one of my favourite parts of Kartini's letter. She is so incredibly aware of colonial society and how the Javanese are seen and racialised. And not only that. She wrote those thoughts and experiences down. She communicated them to her correspondents, who were part of the colonisers. She used such great irony to show the hypocrisy of this racism. Kartini was obviously not the only one who noticed and criticised colonialism.[126] But the way she does it, is still so sharp, even a century later.

I discussed this with Dr. Ricardo Roque, a professor who studies the relationship between science and colonialism at the University of Lisbon.

> **Ricardo Roque**
>
> it says a lot about the the level of discrimination and racism that existed in this period. But also it's important to see how aware those who were the object of these concepts were and how reactive they could be, how much they were also trying to mock, criticize and be ironic about it as she is in this passage.

But now it gets interesting. There is a lot of tension in Kartini's letters. Kartini criticises Europeans and the racist colonial society, but in other letters, she seems to be very enthusiastic about Europe and the Netherlands. When I read her letters, this surprised me a lot.

For example, in 1901, she writes:

[125] The letter is dated 27 October 1902, to Rosa Abendanon-Mandri, see Kartini 2014, 499.
[126] See, for example, Van der Meer 2021.

> Where in enlightened Europe, the centre of civilization, the source of light, the struggle for justice is still being waged fiercely and furiously, can we expect that in the backward Indies, which has been in deep slumber for centuries, and which is still asleep, it would be accepted, even permitted, that the women, who for centuries had been regarded and treated as an inferior being, could be regarded as a person who is entitled to a freedom of conscience?[127]

Europe as the centre of civilization? The source of light? How is it possible that she is so positive about Europe, while it is European colonialism that oppresses the Indies?

When I talked about this with Farabi, he told me that Kartini was very much influenced by the ideas of Ethical Policy that we discussed earlier.

> **Farabi Fakih**
>
> Kartini saw colonial society as having the potential for saviour. So as you know, to save the the Javanese nation.
>
> (…)
>
> She idolised right this notion of which is something she's she's never been to Europe, but she's have all of these ideas of how much better European society is?

It might seem strange that a Javanese woman would accept these ideas and make them her own. But this was exactly the kind of propaganda that the Dutch spread with this Ethical Policy at the time. All of that talk about the civilizing mission worked. It made Kartini herself believe that Europe was the place for modernity and modernisation. That this was where 'modern girls' like Stella lived and where she could become one herself too.

I talked with Vineet about why these ideals of Europe as the place for modernisation could be so appealing to someone like Kartini.

> **Vineet Thakur**
>
> And this modernising impulse in Enlightenment was strong. There was clearly something that Europe was doing well, right, which also enamored a lot of people. And finally, of course, there's there is that, you know, modernising yourself, becoming civilised again is the only way to advance yourself in a colonial society. You know you can only do better if you are, if you become a cog in the wheel of colonialism. So

[127] The letter is dated 20 May 1901, to Stella Zeehandelaar, see Kartini 2014, 196.

> again the point that you said, you know, Kartini being able to read, being able to debate, being able to sort of aspire for this particular kind of life. I mean, as a woman, if you've been oppressed for centuries. To be, you know, to see value in that colonial culture. You know it's it's quite natural, right?

Kartini saw the potential of Western, colonial culture. She could not finish her school and had to be secluded in her home for a few years, until her marriage. She was very aware of how limited her options as a woman were. This is a bit of a paradox: the colonial culture could help her achieve something that was otherwise not possible.

[segue music][128]

From 1899 until 1903, she started to write about education more and more. In 1903, everything seemed to go according to plan for her to study in the Netherlands. She had met with the colonial director of education and was good friends with his wife, Rosa. She had even met a Dutch parliamentarian, who decided to lobby for her in the government to get her funding.[129]

But things did not go as she expected.

> Please do not get a shock Moedertje, but we suspect trouble is brewing for us both and when the decisive moment for that arrives, only our independence can save us.[130]

The people that Kartini saw as genuine friends, as people who said they would support her dreams of getting education in the Netherlands, were not as excited behind her back. They thought that it would be too unpleasant for her, that she would face poverty or opposition from professors.[131]

Kartini and her sisters had sent an official letter to the colonial government, a memorandum, to ask for a scholarship to study in Europe. But then a local colonial official sent this letter to the colonial government:

> I would strongly advise against allowing the writers of this memorandum to go to Europe. The overwhelming mass of experiences that they would have there would merely confuse them. Moreover, they would only mix in circles where issues of

[128] William_King 2023a.
[129] Coté 2014, 805.
[130] The letter is dated 22 June 1903, to Rosa Abendanon-Mandri, Kartini 2014, 602.
[131] Cote 2008, 33.

> etiquette would be more significant than spiritual development and charmers such as they are would be so feted that they would lose their inner contentment.[132]

And Kartini faced criticism within the Javanese society as well. In her letters, she writes about 'fierce enemies':

> People are already trying to provoke the family to oppose our plans. 'It is not pantes that we want to go to Holland'. And: 'What a scandal to want to go there at someone else's expense.' And people are saying other things, that the purpose of our going to H. is 'we want to catch a Hollander there.' This has been said more than once: 'We want to marry a Hollander!' On one occasion it was said by someone during dinner at the home of a family member of ours – and by a European. People were amusing themselves at our expense and someone even said it was 'to make life easy for ourselves.' People were so kind as to explain this to mother in graphic detail; she took it very much to heart.[133]

[Start outro music][134]

How can we explain both European and Javanese opposition to her plans?

Imagine a busy intersection between different roads. These several paths come together in the middle. These paths are different aspects of who we are, based on race, gender and class. This metaphor helps to understand that our identities overlap and influence each other. For example, a Javanese woman might face discrimination differently than a white European woman or a Javanese man because the Javanese woman has to deal with both racism and sexism.

It's not just about one thing: it's about the complexity of these experiences. We can have privilege in one area and face oppression in another. Scholars have called this 'intersectionality': the intersection of identities. Intersectionality helps to see this complexity. It helps to recognize the many layers of who we are and how they impact our lives.[135]



[132] This letter, written by Piet Sijthoff, was dated 19 April 1903, to Jacques Abendanon and was cited in Kartini 2014, 585.
[133] The letter is dated 3 January 1903, to Mr. and Mrs. van Kol, see Kartini 2014, 546.
[134] William_King 2024b.
[135] See, for example, Crenshaw 1991; Collins 1990; Brah and Phoenix 2013. For a complete discussion about intersectionality, including references, see the theoretical framework in this paper.

I think this is a powerful way to understand what is happening with Kartini's dream to get education. Her position as a woman, as a colonial subject, as a Javanese, as unmarried, as young, as a member of a powerful family. All of these positions have influenced what Kartini could and could not do. She was able to get education, but had to leave school. She was able to create a network with Europeans, but would never be equal. They supported her dreams, but could not allow everything to happen as she wanted.

But this was not the end of the story. Next week: Was she able to get an education? Was she able to fulfull her dreams?

> My crown has fallen from my head. My golden illusions of purity and chastity lie shattered in the dust.[136]

Thank you for listening to this episode. For more information, book recommendations and quotes from Kartini, please check the show notes. I am Dasja, the researcher, scriptwriter, host and editor of this podcast. A special thanks to my interviewees, Elise, Vineet, Ricardo and Farabi. And I would like to thank Sita for her wonderful voice-overs of Kartini.

[End outro music]

**Show Notes Episode 3**

**Episode Summary**

For years, Kartini was fighting to be able to get an education in the Netherlands. As a Javanese woman, she did not only have to fight against the obstacles in the Dutch colonial society but in the Javanese society as well. Would she be able to fulfil her dreams or would these challenges be too big?

In this episode, Dasja looks into Kartini's background, her influential family, and her aspirations to study in the Netherlands. Her struggle was set against a backdrop of deeply unequal power dynamics, where friends appeared to support her, but would they help her until the end?

[136] The letter is dated 14 July 1903, to Mr. and Mrs. Abendanon-Mandri, see Kartini 2014, 617.

**Guest Experts**

- Dr. Farabi Fakih - Scholar specialising in the political history of Indonesia at the Universitas Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta.
- Dr. Vineet Thakur - Scholar of International Relations at the University of Leiden.
- Dr. Ricardo Roque - Senior Fellow Researcher at Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon, specialised in the interplay between science and colonialism

**Bibliography and Additional Resources**[137]

Are you interested in reading more about the topics that were discussed in this episode? I would recommend reading the following:

- About the history of Indonesia:
    - Van Reybrouck, David. 2024. *Revolusi: Indonesia and the Birth of the Modern World*. Translated by David Colmer and David McKay. London: The Bodley Head.
    - Taylor, Jean Gelman. 2013. *Global Indonesia*. Routledge.
- About intersectionality:
    - Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1991. 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color'. *Stanford Law Review* 43 (6): 1241–99. https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039.
    - Collins, Patricia Hill. 1990. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203900055.
    - Brah, Avtar, and Ann Phoenix. 2013. 'Ain't I A Woman? Revisiting Intersectionality'. *Journal of International Women's Studies* 5 (3): 75–86.

**Music and Sound Credit**

Ashot-Danielyan-Composer. 2023. "Serious Dark Sorrow". Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/omgeving-serious-dark-sorrow-157909/.

[137] All of these works are also cited in the bibliography of this thesis. These show notes are meant to show how the website of the podcast (see Project Outcomes for the links) gives additional information to the audience.

Beethoven, Ludwig von. 1802. “Moonlight Sonata (1. Movement), Op. 27, Nr. 2”. Performed by GregorQuendel. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/klassieke-piano-beethoven-moonlight-sonata-1-movement-op-27-nr-2-180627/.

Beeksander. 2022. “Stars”. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/pulsen-stars-125990/.

Lexin_Music. 2022a. “Cinematic Time Lapse”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/hoofdtitel-cinematic-time-lapse-115672/.

Lexin_Music. 2022b. “Europe Travel”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/mooie-toneelstukken-europe-travel-119948/.

Pixabay. 2022. “Writing with Fountain Pen Nib”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/writing-with-fountain-pen-nib-70563/.

Radio Oranje. 2015. “30 July 1941. Koningin Wilhelmina: rede over dreigend oorlogs-gevaar in Ned.-Indië, enz.”. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://soundcloud.com/beeldengeluid/radio-oranje30-jul-1941.

William_King. 2023a. “Documentary Ambient Guitar”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-documentary-ambient-guitar-145480/.

William_King. 2023b. “Stalemate (Relaxing Acoustic Nylon Guitar)”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-stalemate-relaxing-acoustic-nylon-guitar-149916/.

William_King. 2024b. “Separation”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/solo-gitaar-separation-185196/.

## Appendix D. Episode 4: The Future of the Past

### Script Episode 4

[sound of Black Lives Matter protest][138]

In the last few years, the question of how we remember the past has become increasingly relevant. Take, for instance, the movements that call for statues of problematic historical figures to be taken down. The renaming of streets and removal of statues are global phenomena that show that we are thinking differently about some historical figures. From debates over colonial history to reimagining national narratives, how we remember our "heroes" speaks volumes about our values and ideas in the present.

[intro music][139]

My name is Dasja Zonneveldt, and I'm a Dutch history student. In this podcast series, I will take you with me on my research into the life and afterlives of a fascinating woman: Kartini, an Indonesian feminist and nationalist icon. In this series, I will go back in time to understand what it was like for her to live in the Dutch colonial society on Java. What can her writings and life tell us about how race, gender and class functioned in this time and place? In four episodes, I will go to the archives, read her letters, and speak with researchers to learn more about Kartini.

Welcome to Call Me Kartini; this is episode 4: The Future of the Past. Today, we will take a closer look at Kartini's legacy. She has become a symbol of empowerment and resilience in Indonesia, but not everyone feels so positive about her. What is the relevance of her story in shaping our collective memory? What can this history mean for today or even the future?

[end intro music]

[sound of pen scribbling on paper][140]

[138] Pixabay 2022c.
[139] Lexin_Music 2022a.
[140] Pixabay 2022d.

For more than three years, Kartini had been sitting at her desk, writing letters to people from all over the Indies and even to the Netherlands. She had been writing with feminists, politicians, colonial officials, and old friends. Even though a huge part of her life was spent inside the walls of her family home, her letters were a lifeline that connected her to the wider world. But then, right when it seemed like she would succeed in her plans to study in Europe, the exact thing happened that Kartini was always afraid of.

[scribbling stops]

In the late summer of 1903, Kartini discovered that her dad had arranged a marriage for her. She was to be the wife of a newly widowed regent from another city, Rembang.

> My crown has fallen from my head. My golden illusions of purity and chastity lie shattered in the dust. It was my pride, my glory, that I was a pure, proud girl loved by my Moedertje as if I were her own child. Now I am nothing more than all the rest, I am like thousands of others who I had wanted to help but whose number I have now merely come to increase.[141]

As you heard in episode 2, Kartini had always criticized polygamy. And now she had to enter a polygamous marriage. Was this a tragedy? It could be. Some historians say that Kartini was unhappy and that this marriage showed how she could never escape Javanese traditions or European imperialism. But on the other hand, it might not have been the tragedy we think it is.[142] Kartini herself wrote in her letters that she was quite happy with her new life and her husband.

> I shall not embark on our wonderful task as a woman alone; a fine, noble man will be standing at my side in my efforts to undertake useful work for our people. He has preceded me in this role, has already earned his spurs in a field where I have yet to begin. Oh! He is such a dear, kind man. Aside from a noble heart he has an intelligent and clear mind.[143]

[sad, pensive music][144]

But the marriage would not last long. When Kartini was 25 years old, only ten months after she got married, she gave birth to her son. Not even four days after that, she died because of

[141] The letter is dated 14 July 1903, to Mr. and Mrs. Abendanon-Mandri, see Kartini 2014, 617.
[142] Coté 2014, 7.
[143] The letter is dated 14 August 1903, to Mrs. van Kol, see Kartini 2014, 631.
[144] William_King 2023a.

complications after the birth.[145] But her death was not the end of Kartini. Her legacy reached way beyond that.

How have Kartini's letters been saved? Why did she become so famous? You will find out in this last episode.

[transition music][146]

Remember that I told you in episode 3 about this new Ethical Policy that revolved around reform in the colony? Kartini was friends with Jacques Abendanon, who was a huge fan of this policy. She wrote him and his wife many many letters. After her death, he started collecting them and asked her correspondents for the letters as well. He selected them, edited them and published them as a book. This book was meant to help Abendanon's plea to reform colonial education. This book became a bestseller and was translated into multiple languages. Nowadays Kartini is even the second most-read Dutch-language writer, after Anne Frank.[147]

But because of Abendanon's editing, there are things about Kartini that we will never know; we don't know how much she criticized the Dutch or whether she knew that her friends did not support her plans to study in Europe. Her secrets died with her. What we can see, however, is what happened to her image and legacy after her death. How she was remembered. This will tell us so much about the role of history in later times, about power and remembrance.

[transition music][148]

> Change will come to the Native world, if not because of us then through others. Emancipation is in the air – it is ordained.[149]

And change would come. In the 1920s and 30s, Indonesian women's organizations sprung up. In 1928, the first Women's Congress was organised. A thousand participants discussed the



[145] Coté 2014, 7.
[146] Beeksander 2022.
[147] Bijl and Chin 2020. Not all of the letters were saved. Abendanon edited many of them to ensure that they did not criticize the Dutch colonizers too much and to protect her friendships. Many of her friends also refused to send Abendanon their letters; some might have even been burned, see Rutherford 2020, 116.
[148] William_King 2024a.
[149] The letter is dated 9 January 1901, to Stella Zeehandelaar, see Kartini 2014, 183.

same issues that Kartini had written about as well: marriage, polygamy, and access to education.[150]

At the same time, nationalism was growing in Indonesia. On 17 August 1945, after the Japanese occupation during the Second World War, Soekarno and Hatta declared Indonesia independent. In 1969, President Soeharto declared Kartini a National Hero.[151]

I talked to Farabi about why Kartini was so important as a national symbol.

> **Farabi Fakih**
>
> What's interesting is, of course Indonesian nationalists celebrated her, and after independence, you know she was given the status as, as, as a heroine, as a national hero. So in that sense, I think the way nationalist Indonesians afterwards took Kartini was that she was taken. They took over her image and sort of changed it, you know? So it was a successful form of take of sort of eliminating the colonial garb and then celebrating her for what she is, which is, as someone who has aspirations to modernity, which is in in the colonial context, it was colonial modernity.

For nationalists, Kartini was a symbol of modernity. But there was something I did not really understand. Dutch colonizers celebrated Kartini because she showed how well the ethical policy was working. Even though she criticized colonialism, she did have a very good relationship with some Dutch officials. Why would Indonesian nationalists then celebrate her as well?

> **Farabi Fakih**
>
> I think primarily it's because a lot of the Indonesian nationalists who became the elites of the Republic after independence. They were part of this Dutch society, so when they were young in school, they were also celebrating Kartini. Kartini had a mystique, and this position that is greater than the colonial state, but also that. So they grew up with this image of Kartini. And I think that that means that they cared very much about her

So nationalists grew up with this positive image of Kartini and then turned her into a nationalist symbol. This had everything to do with how the nationalists, who Farabi calls

[150] Blackburn 2004, 146-147.
[151] The Indonesian term for this is pahlawan nasional. Robinson 2020, 138.

‘republican elites’, met each other and interacted with each other before Indonesian independence.

**Farabi Fakih**

A large portion of Indonesia's Republican elites, because they were at the same batch of like sons and daughters of nobilities that had access to greater education. So, this is something that's really interesting is that in the 50s, up to the 60s, a lot of Dutch Republican elites, when they meet amongst each other, they were speaking in Dutch. So yeah, it's Sukarno meeting other, you know, his ministers or Hatta. They spoke more easily in Dutch than in Indonesian. Indonesian, to an extent, was a, was a new language to a lot of these people. They lived a sort of Dutch colonial lifestyle within that part of the upper crust of Indonesian society.

Farabi told me about a famous anecdote in which the first president of Indonesia, Sukarno, knew all the train stations on the way from Amsterdam to Rotterdam. They even loved Dutch food, like eating plain brown beans. Well, let me tell you something, there is nothing special about that food [tone: joking]. Imagine how effective the policy must have been for people to start liking Dutch food!

**Farabi Fakih**

Because that was part of the ethical policy, was to turn these, this class of educated Indonesian into Dutchmen to an extent. Right, you know, to make them really love the the. So to an extent they they must have some romantic notions of the Netherlands that was being created within the context of the classroom or and then they later on they went to the Netherlands. But they were very much anti against colonialism. So, but you know, but Kartini was one of those in which they could sort of, it's part of their old ideology, that sort of continued on.

The transition from a colony to an independent nation was massive and important. Kartini was almost a symbol of both continuation and change. In the Netherlands, Kartini was initially celebrated as a symbol of colonialism's benefits. Then, the Indonesian nationalists reappropriated her to tell their story of national emancipation.

[sound of city][152]

[152] Pixabay 2022b.

Walking around Indonesia today, you will see Kartini everywhere on the streets. Especially in Jepara, her birthplace. There is a roundabout with a statue of her in the middle. She is holding a torch of light in one hand and guiding a young girl carrying a book in the direction of the light. On the pedestal are quotes from her letters.

The centre of gravity of this remembrance is Kartini Day, which is celebrated every year on April 21st. Streets are lined with banners and flags in red and white, the colours of the Indonesian flag. There is music and parades. Women and girls wear kebayas and traditional outfits, and schools organize ceremonies to honour Kartini.[153]

[transition music][154]

> Perhaps people think they are doing me a pleasure by assuring me constantly that I write 'beautifully'. What good is that to me? I want my writing to have a lasting impact, Stella, and meaning can only be gained by digging deeply. My heart, my soul, must be excavated and if then a fountain of blood spurts up, only then will it have lasting meaning. It is wretched, but true.[155]

Kartini wanted her writing to have a lasting impact. And her writing did have an impact in both the past and the present. But what about the future?

I wanted to make this podcast because I think Kartini's letters are important for understanding the different aspects of colonial society. They show how an individual navigated this society as someone in between European and Indigenous cultures, trying to bridge the gap. She is influenced by both of these cultures, and she reflects on that in her letters. She writes about her positions as a woman, as a Javanese, as a muslim, as priyayi.

At the same time, while I was making the podcast and reading her letters, I was wondering. Am I the right person to tell her story? I thought about the other Dutch people before me who have used her letters to say something about Kartini, to make a statement. Was I not the same?



[153] Chin 2020, 93-94.
[154] William_King 2024a.
[155] The letter is dated 11 October 1902, to Stella Zeehandelaar, see Kartini 2014, 482.

**Farabi Fakih**

I think it's great that you come from a position in which you understand that that danger, right. So it's not about sort of replicating the white saviour trope or things like that. (…)

Right now in the Netherlands, there is a lot of debate about the colonial past. In 2020, the state officially apologised for the excessive violence during the Indonesian War of Independence.[156] In 2022, the government apologised for their role in the transatlantic slave trade.[157] But at the same time, the extreme right is getting more political power. In the elections of 2023, the party of Geert Wilders was the biggest in the last elections. In his party program, he wants to revoke the apologies for the past and make an end to 'leftist hate to the heroes of our history'.[158]

Maybe telling the story of Kartini can help to have a better idea of what colonial society was like from the perspective of an Indonesian woman. It can help to show how race, gender and class worked, how racism, sexism and classism worked. Knowing her story makes us understand colonial history and society better.

**Farabi Fakih**

Historians need to build empathy in a sense that people need to place themselves within the shoe of Kartini, right. Kartini's story and a lot of other stories, I guess, especially from the colonial period, allow us to think about our position in society today bbut imagine it through the eyes of those like Kartini in the past. I think creating empathy is is central. […] How does talking about Kartini allow us to think about these kind of positions? You know, racial positions or gender position and so forth? I think that's where it has the potential to be critical, to be emancipatory, so it doesn't just focus on early 20th century Java. That's irrelevant for most people in the world, right? [..]

So the question on on your part is, especially if this is for a Dutch audience, how does the story of Kritini how can it be used to think critically of their position, their positionalities? Thinking about the Dutch and maybe migrant issues or racial issues in the Netherlands or women's issues? […]

[156] Ministerie van Algemene Zaken, 2020.
[157] Ministerie van Algemene Zaken 2022.
[158] Partij voor de Vrijheid 2023, 30.

[serious background music][159]

Reading Kartini's letters made me realise how important it is to talk about history. It made me aware of how gender, race and class affect who we are, what our possibilities are in life, which advantages or disadvantages we have. But also how colonial ideas about race, gender and class are still present in society today.

As a white woman, I can't speak for the experiences of those who descend from colonized people. I can't speak about experiences of racism because I have never experienced that myself. But colonial ideas about race and gender still influence society today.

> **Vineet Thakur**
>
> Because racism and gender discrimination, a lot of people have this view. Oh, but it happened in the past, colonialism happened in the past. What? What are its continuing manifestations? Well, we may have become vocal about them in the past few years, but it doesn't mean that their material effects have disappeared.
>
> [...]
>
> There's a reason why coloured populations tend to be poorer, and within that, women of colour tend to be the poorest right, and similarly at an individual level too. I mean, they have real material effects of sort of on, you know, your chances of making it in life, everything from the one from the way one walks in, dresses the languages, one speaks, the accents, one speaks the language is in. If you have, you know, online interview, for instance, and if you have an accent that is not seen as a white accent. You're very less likely to get a job, right?
> The kinds of professions one wants to get into, and the kind of 1 networks one needs to get into those professions right, and they all matter even today. And but not just in terms of these terms, but also your life chances. What sorts of healthcare one has access to, whether one is more or less likely to go to prison or not, who is more likely to fall into poverty if you're not already poor, that is, all of that is still shaped by, you know, race and gender.
> So I think we we sometimes tend to focus a lot on economic capital, but which is important of course, but one's access to economic capital is also to a great extent shared by social capital, which is shaped by race and gender, right. Colonialism still

[159] Ashot-Danielyan-Composer 2023.

> continues to have an effect. I mean, in the Netherlands, in Amsterdam, I mean, if you look out all the beautiful 17th, 18th century buildings that we have, the culture that we have, where did all the money come from from right to find the answers, one might have to go to Java, right?

Times are changing. The Dutch-Indonesian colonial history receives more and more attention. But still, in the Netherlands, colonial history is talked about within a national framework. There is not that much interest in the Indonesian voices in this history. Instead, the focus is on the white upper layer. After decolonization, colonialism became a national story. For both Indonesia and the Netherlands.[160]

> **Farabi Fakih**
>
> Colonial history has always been part of National History, right? So for instance, for instance, in Leiden University, colonial history was one start within what was called Vaderlandse Geschiedenis so it's very nationalist in that sense, Indonesia also the same case. So we've sort of crafted a particular narrative that is very one sided. But I think this kind of analysis limits not just Dutch society, but Indonesian society as well. And I think dialogue is an important component here.

Dialogue is what is important, a dialogue between cultures and nations. This is something that even Kartini would have wanted.

> Could that small slice of life, our history, not become part of a biographical history of two peoples – the Dutch and the Javanese? Might it be possible that one day, mutual respect and love may unite Java and the Netherlands?[161]

[outro music][162]

Even if Kartini's life was not that long, her legacy has lasted for over a century. Kartini's story has shown that colonial history is complex. It was not just colonizer versus colonized, oppression versus domination. There were more layers, with power structures and identities intersecting. And in that wider society, there was a young woman, with all of her own hopes and dreams, flaws and merits, just trying to live her life and making it the best she could.

[160] Legêne 2014, 100. Raben 2016. Immler 2022.
[161] The letter is dated 18 August 1902, to EC Abendanon, see Kartini 2014, 437.
[162] William_King 2024b.

Kartini's story is not the only story that exists, of course, there are so many more different experiences of this part of history. I can only hope that their stories will be listened to next.

This was 'Call me Kartini'. Thank you so much for listening.

Thank you for listening to this episode. For more information, book recommendations and quotes from Kartini, please check the show notes. I am Dasja, the researcher, scriptwriter, host and editor of this podcast. A special thanks to my interviewees, Elise, Vineet, Ricardo and Farabi. And I would like to thank Sita for her wonderful voice-overs of Kartini.

[End outro music]

**Show Notes Episode 4**

**Episode Summary**

In the last few years, the question of how we remember the past has become increasingly relevant. Take, for instance, the movements that call for statues of problematic historical figures to be taken down. The renaming of streets and removal of statues are global phenomena that show that we are thinking differently about some historical figures. From debates over colonial history to reimagining national narratives, how we remember our "heroes" speaks volumes about our values and ideas in the present.

In this episode, Dasja takes a closer look at Kartini's legacy. She has become a symbol of empowerment and resilience in Indonesia, but not everyone feels so positive about her. What is the relevance of her story in shaping our collective memory? What can this history mean for today or even the future?

**Guest Experts:**

- Dr. Farabi Fakih - Scholar specialising in the political history of Indonesia at the Universitas Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta.
- Dr. Vineet Thakur - Scholar of International Relations at the University of Leiden.

**Bibliography and Additional Resources**[163]

Are you interested in reading more about the topics that were discussed in this episode? I would recommend reading the following:

- The various ways in which Kartini was remembered:
  - Bijl, Paul, and Grace V.S. Chin. 2020. *Appropriating Kartini: Colonial, National and Transnational Memories of an Indonesian Icon*. 1 online resource (x, 198 pages) vols. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing. https://muse.jhu.edu/book/73252.
- Postcolonial memory in the Netherlands, Indonesia and beyond:
  - Oostindie, Gert. 2012. *Postcolonial Netherlands : Sixty-Five Years of Forgetting, Commemorating, Silencing*. Edited by Michael Bommes, Vanja Stenius, and Lena Tsipouri. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9789048514021.
  - Kusno, Abidin. 2014. *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia*. London: Routledge. http://site.ebrary.com/id/10858567.
  - Nicolaidis, Kalypso, Berny Sèbe, Gabrielle Maas, and Kalypso Nicolaïdis, eds. 2015. *Echoes of Empire: Memory, Identity and Colonial Legacies*. London: I.B. Tauris. http://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1992209.

**Music and Sound Credit**

Ashot-Danielyan-Composer. 2023. “Serious Dark Sorrow”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/omgeving-serious-dark-sorrow-157909/.

Beeksander. 2022. “Stars”. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/pulsen-stars-125990/.

Lexin_Music. 2022a. “Cinematic Time Lapse.” Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/hoofdtitel-cinematic-time-lapse-115672/.

[163] All of these works are also cited in the bibliography of this thesis. These show notes are meant to show how the website of the podcast (see Project Outcomes for the links) gives additional information to the audience.

Pixabay. 2022b. “train station sequence, street vendors yelling, whistles, horn, trains starts Jakarta INDONESIA 940316”. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/train-station-sequence-street-vendors-yelling-whistles-horn-trains-starts-jakarta-indonesia-940316-18741/.

Pixabay. 2022d. “Writing with Fountain Pen Nib”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/writing-with-fountain-pen-nib-70563/.

William_King. 2023a. “Documentary Ambient Guitar”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-documentary-ambient-guitar-145480/.

William_King. 2024a. “February Night”. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-february-night-193416/.

William_King. 2024b. “Separation”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/solo-gitaar-separation-185196/.

William_King. 2023b. “Stalemate (Relaxing Acoustic Nylon Guitar)”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-stalemate-relaxing-acoustic-nylon-guitar-149916/.

## Bibliography

### Selected letters

Kartini Raden Adjeng, 1879-1904, and Joost Coté. 2014. *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*. 1 online resource vols. Monash Asia Series. Clayton, Victoria: Monash University Publishing. http://site.ebrary.com/id/11057227.

Kartini, Raden Ajeng. 25 May 1899. "Letter to Stella Zeehandelaar." In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 67-74. Victoria: Monash University Publishing. http://site.ebrary.com/id/11057227.

———. 18 August 1899. "Letter to Rosa Abendanon." In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 75-78.

———. 13 January 1900. "Letter to Stella Zeehandelaar." In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 93-110.

———. August 1900. "Letter to Mevrouw Ovink-Soer." In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 119-122.

———. August 1900. "Letter to Rosa Abendanon." In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 122-126.

———. 23 August 1900. "Letter to Stella Zeehandelaar." In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 126-141.

———. October 1900. "Letter to Marie Ovink-Soer." In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 150-152.

———. 31 January 1901. "Letter to Rosa Abendanon." In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 176-183.

———. 20 May 1901. "Letter to Stella Zeehandelaar." In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 194-198.

———. 17 August 1902. “Letter to Edie Abendanon.” In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 430-437.

———. 4 October 1902. “Letter to Professor Anton.” In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 472-477.

———. 11 October 1902. “Letter to Stella Zeehandelaar.” In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 480-482.

———. 27 October 1902. “Letter to Rosa Abendanon.” In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 497-506.

———. 3 January 1903. “Letter to Mr. And Mrs. Van Kol.” In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 544-547.

———. 17 February 1903. “Letter to Jacques Abendanon.” In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 568-570.

———. 22 June 1903. “Letter to Rosa Abendanon.” In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 602-603.

———. 14 July 1903. “Letter to the Abendanons.” In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 616-621.

———. 1 August 1903. “Letter to Nellie van Kol.” In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 631.

Sijthoff, Piet. 27 April 1903. “Letter to Gouverneur-Generaal.” In *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*, edited by Joost Coté, 584-585. Victoria: Monash University Publishing. http://site.ebrary.com/id/11057227.

**Sound and music used in podcast**

Ashot-Danielyan-Composer. 2023. “Serious Dark Sorrow”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/omgeving-serious-dark-sorrow-157909/.

Beeksander. 2022. “Stars”. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/pulsen-stars-125990/.

Beethoven, Ludwig von. 1802. “Moonlight Sonata (1. Movement), Op. 27, Nr. 2.”. Performed by GregorQuendel. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/klassieke-piano-beethoven-moonlight-sonata-1-movement-op-27-nr-2-180627/.

GordieDean. 2022. “Storytelling Podcast Vibe”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/pulsen-storytelling-podcast-vibe-118024/.

Lexin_Music. 2022a. “Cinematic Time Lapse.” Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/hoofdtitel-cinematic-time-lapse-115672/.

Lexin_Music. 2022b. “Europe Travel”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/mooie-toneelstukken-europe-travel-119948/.

Pixabay. 2021. “Sea and Seagull, wave”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/sea-and-seagull-wave-5932/.

Pixabay. 2022a. “Library ambiance”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/library-ambiance-60000/.

Pixabay. 2022b. “train station sequence, street vendors yelling, whistles, horn, trains starts Jakarta INDONESIA 940316”. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/train-station-sequence-street-vendors-yelling-whistles-horn-trains-starts-jakarta-indonesia-940316-18741/.

Pixabay. 2022c. “BLM_2_Protest_Lisbon_Portugal_June_2020”. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/blm-2-protest-lisbon-portugal-june-2020-64799/

Pixabay. 2022d. “Writing with Fountain Pen Nib”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/writing-with-fountain-pen-nib-70563/.

Pixabay. 2022e. “Typingphone”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/sound-effects/typingphone-101683/.

Radio Oranje. 2015. “30 July 1941. Koningin Wilhelmina: rede over dreigend oorlogs-gevaar in Ned.-Indië, enz.”. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://soundcloud.com/beeldengeluid/radio-oranje30-jul-1941.

Rennie, Tullis. 2017. “Women’s March on London, 21st January 2017.” Accessed May 16, 2024. https://soundcloud.com/tullisrennie/womens-march-on-london-21st-january-2017.

William_King. 2023a. “Documentary Ambient Guitar”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-documentary-ambient-guitar-145480/.

William_King. 2023b. “Stalemate (Relaxing Acoustic Nylon Guitar)”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-stalemate-relaxing-acoustic-nylon-guitar-149916/.

William_King. 2024a. “February Night”. Accessed May 17, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/akoestische-groep-february-night-193416/.

William_King. 2024b. “Separation”. Accessed May 16, 2024. https://pixabay.com/nl/music/solo-gitaar-separation-185196/.

**Secondary literature**

Alegi, Peter. 2012. ‘Podcasting the Past: Africa Past and Present and (South) African History in the Digital Age’. *South African Historical Journal* 64 (2): 206–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/02582473.2011.640344.

Anthias, Floya. 2013. 'Intersectional What? Social Divisions, Intersectionality and Levels of Analysis'. *Ethnicities* 13 (1): 3–19. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796812463547.

Beauvoir, Simone de. 2009. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier. London: Jonathan Cape.

Bijl, Paul and Grace V.S. Chin. 2020. *Appropriating Kartini: Colonial, National and Transnational Memories of an Indonesian Icon*. 1 online resource (x, 198 pages) vols. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing. https://muse.jhu.edu/book/73252.

Bijl, Paul. 2017. 'Legal Self-Fashioning in Colonial Indonesia: Human Rights in the Letters of Kartini'. *Indonesia*, no. 103: 51–71. https://doi.org/10.5728/indonesia.103.0051.

Blackburn, Susan. 2004. *Women and the State in Modern Indonesia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. http://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.04435.

Camiscioli, Elisa. 2013. 'Women, Gender, Intimacy, and Empire'. *Journal of Women's History* 25 (December): 138–48. https://doi.org/10.1353/jowh.2013.0056.

Candy, Linda. 2006. 'Practice Based Research: A Guide'.

Carr, David. 2014. '"Serial," Podcasting's First Breakout Hit, Sets Stage for More'. *The New York Times*, 24 November 2014, sec. Business. https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/24/business/media/serial-podcastings-first-breakout-hit-sets-stage-for-more.html

Cho, Sumi, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall. 2013. 'Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis'. *Signs* 38 (4): 785–810. https://doi.org/10.1086/669608.

Clancy-Smith, Julia., and Frances. Gouda. 1999. *Domesticating the Empire : Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism*. Charlottesville, Va: University Press of Virginia.

Collins, Patricia Hill, Elaini Cristina Gonzaga da Silva, Emek Ergun, Inger Furseth, Kanisha D. Bond, and Jone Martínez-Palacios. 2021. 'Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory'. *Contemporary Political Theory* 20 (3): 690–725. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41296-021-00490-0.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 1990. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203900055.

Copeland, Stacey, and Hannah McGregor. 2021. *A Guide to Academic Podcasting*. Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Coté, Joost. 2008. *Realizing the Dream of R.A. Kartini: Her Sisters' Letters from Colonial Java*. Ohio University Press.

Covart, Liz. 2022. 'History Podcasts: An Overview of the Field'. *Journal of American History* 109 (1): 220–29. https://doi.org/10.1093/jahist/jaac229.

Cramer, Th. 2023. "Kartini and de Nederlandse feministen. Vertegenwoordigers van twee verschillende werelden. Zo veel overeenkomsten, maar toch ook zo veel verschillen." Master's thesis, Universiteit van Amsterdam.

Creswell, John W. 2009. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 3rd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Cuenca, Esther Liberman. 2014. 'Bridging the Divide: The Challenges of Academic Podcasting to a Popular Audience'. Accessed 23 June 2023. https://www.academia.edu/11910138/Bridging_the_Divide_The_Challenges_of_Academic_Podcasting_to_a_Popular_Audience.

Cuffe, Honae H. 2019. 'Lend Me Your Ears: The Rise of the History Podcast in Australia'. *History Australia* 16 (3): 553–69. https://doi.org/10.1080/14490854.2019.1636676.

Day, Lindsay, Ashlee Cunsolo, Heather Castleden, Debbie Martin, Catherine Hart, Tim Anaviapik-Soucie, George Russell, Clifford Paul, Cate Dewey, and Sherilee L. Harper. 2017. 'The Expanding Digital Media Landscape of Qualitative and Decolonizing Research: Examining Collaborative Podcasting as a Research Method'. *MediaTropes* 7 (1): 203–28.

Dewi, Kurniawati. 2012. 'Javanese Women and Islam: Identity Formation since the Twentieth Century'. *Southeast Asian Studies* 1 (April): 109–40.

Dolk, Liesbeth. 2001. *Atjeh: de verbeelding van een koloniale oorlog*. Amsterdam: Bakker.

Dragojlovic, Ana, and Katharine McGregor. 2022. '"They Call Me Babu": The Politics of Visibility and Gendered Memories of Dutch Colonialism in Indonesia'. *Women's History Review* 31 (6): 933–52. https://doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2022.2090709.

Durrani, Mariam, Kevin Gotkin, and Corrina Laughlin. 2015. 'Serial, Seriality, and the Possibilities for the Podcast Format'. *American Anthropologist* 117 (3): 1.

Fischer-Tiné, Harald, and Susanne. Gehrmann. 2009. *Empires and Boundaries : Rethinking Race, Class, and Gender in Colonial Settings*. Routledge Studies in Cultural History. New York: Routledge. https://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0816/2008015683.html.

Friedman, Susan Stanford. 1995. 'Beyond White and Other: Relationality and Narratives of Race in Feminist Discourse'. *Signs* 21 (1): 1–49.

Gallagher, Michael, and Jonathan Prior. 2014. 'Sonic Geographies: Exploring Phonographic Methods'. *Progress in Human Geography* 38 (2): 267–84.

Gouda, Frances. 1999. 'Good Mothers, Medias, or Jezebels: Feminine Imagery in Colonial and Anticolonial Rhetoric in the Dutch East Indies, 1900-1942'. In *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism*, edited by Clancy-Smith, Julia, and Frances Gouda. 236-254. Charlottesville, Va: University Press of Virginia.

Haraway, Donna. 1988. ‘Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective’. *Feminist Studies* 14 (3): 575–99. https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066.

Harter, Lynn M. 2019. ‘Storytelling in Acoustic Spaces: Podcasting as Embodied and Engaged Scholarship’. *Health Communication* 34 (1): 125–29. https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2018.1517549.

Hartman, Saidiya. 2008. ‘Venus in Two Acts’. *Small Axe* 12 (2): 1–14.

Hawkins, Michael. 2008. ‘Exploring Colonial Boundaries: An Examination of the Kartini-Zeehandelaar Correspondence’. *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review* 7 (2). https://www.academia.edu/16733700/Exploring_Colonial_Boundaries_An_Examination_of_the_Kartini_Zeehandelaar_Correspondence.

Johnson, Latoya. 2015. ‘From the Anti-Slavery Movement to Now: (RE) Examining the Relationship Between Critical Race Theory and Black Feminist Thought’. *Race, Gender & Class* 22 (3–4): 227–43.

Kartini Raden Adjeng, and Joost Coté. 2014. *Kartini: The Complete Writings 1898-1904*. 1 online resource vols. Monash Asia Series. Clayton, Victoria: Monash University Publishing. http://site.ebrary.com/id/11057227.

Kartini, Joost Coté. 2005. *On Feminism and Nationalism : Kartini’s Letters to Stella Zeehandelaar, 1899-1903*. Rev. ed. Monash Papers on Southeast Asia; No. 60. Clayton, Vic.: Monash Asia Institute.

Keating, James. 2020. *Distant Sisters : Australasian Women and the International Struggle for the Vote, 1880-1914*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=2634305.

Kehoe, Marsely L. 2023. *Trade, Globalization, and Dutch Art and Architecture : Interrogating Dutchness and the Golden Age*. Visual and Material Culture, 1300-1700; 48. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Kinkaid, Eden, Kelsey Emard, and Nari Senanayake. 2020. 'The Podcast-as-Method?: Critical Reflections on Using Podcasts to Produce Geographic Knowledge'. *Geographical Review* 110 (1/2): 78–91. https://doi.org/10.1111/gere.12354.

Klara. 2021. 'Revolusi met David Van Reybrouck - NRC audio'. NRC. 4 May 2021. https://audio.nrc.nl/podcast/116619.

Kruyswijk, Marc. 2020. 'Prijs voor podcast over Surinaamse plantage'. Het Parool. 6 November 2020. https://www.parool.nl/kunst-media/prijs-voor-podcast-over-surinaamse-plantage~b2102a3b/.

Latour, Bruno, Steve Woolgar and Jonas Salk. 1979. *Laboratory Life : The Social Construction of the Scientific Facts*. Sage Library of Social Research; 80. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Leavy, Patricia. 2015. *Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice, 2nd Ed*. Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice, 2nd Ed. New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.

Legêne, Susan. 2017. 'The European Character of the Intellectual History of Dutch Empire'. *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 132 (2): 110–20. https://doi.org/10.18352/bmgn-lchr.10344.

Leong, Karen J. 2010. 'Still Walking, Still Brave: Mapping Gender, Race, and Power in U.S. Western History'. *Pacific Historical Review* 79 (4): 618–28. https://doi.org/10.1525/phr.2010.79.4.618.

Levine-Rasky, Cynthia. 2011. 'Intersectionality Theory Applied to Whiteness and Middle-Classness'. *Social Identities* 17 (2): 239–53. https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2011.558377.

Lindgren, Mia. 2016. 'Personal Narrative Journalism and Podcasting'. *The Radio Journal–International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media* 14 (1): 23–41.

Lorde, Audre, and Cheryl Clarke. 2007. *Sister Outsider : Essays and Speeches*. Revised edition. Crossing Press Feminist Series. Berkeley [California]: Crossing Press.

Luttikhuis, Bart. 2013. 'Beyond Race: Constructions of "Europeanness" in Late-Colonial Legal Practice in the Dutch East Indies'. *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'histoire* 20 (4): 539–58. https://doi.org/10.1080/13507486.2013.764845.

Lutz, Helma. 2015. 'Intersectionality as Method'. *DiGeSt. Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies* 2 (1–2): 39–44. https://doi.org/10.11116/jdivegendstud.2.1-2.0039.

Mabilat, Claire. 2008. *Orientalism and Representations of Music in the Nineteenth-Century British Popular Arts*. Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain. Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate.

Maddaus, Gene. 2020. '"S-Town" Podcast Producers Settle Lawsuit With Subject's Estate'. *Variety* (blog). 18 May 2020. https://variety.com/2020/biz/news/s-town-podcast-producers-settle-lawsuit-with-subjects-estate-1234610011/.

Markteffect. 2023. 'Markteffect Podcast Monitor: 8e editie'. Accessed 29 April 2024. https://markteffect.nl/whitepapers/67/markteffect-podcast-monitor-8e-editie.

Marx Ferree, Myra. 2015. 'Beyond the Us-Them Binary: Power and Exclusion in Intersectional Analysis'. *DiGeSt. Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies* 2 (1–2): 33–38. https://doi.org/10.11116/jdivegendstud.2.1-2.0033.

Massoud, Mark Fathi. 2022. 'The Price of Positionality: Assessing the Benefits and Burdens of Self-Identification in Research Methods'. *Journal of Law and Society* 49 (S1): S64–86. https://doi.org/10.1111/jols.12372.

Mayasari-Hoffert, Silvia. 2023. 'R. A. Kartini and the Many Faces of Colonial Female Subject: Domestic Cosmopolitanism in Colonial Indonesia'. In *A Space of Their Own*. Routledge.

McCall, L. 2005. 'The Complexity of Intersectionality'. *SIGNS* 30 (3): 1771–1800. https://doi.org/10.1086/426800.

McClintock, Anne. 1993. 'Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family'. *Feminist Review*, no. 44: 61–80. https://doi.org/10.2307/1395196.

McLuhan, Marshall, and Quentin Fiore. 1967. *The Medium Is the Massage*. New York: Random House.

Mignolo, Walter D., and Catherine E. Walsh. 2018. *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*. On Decoloniality. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Zaken, Ministerie van Algemene. 2020. 'Verklaring van Koning Willem-Alexander tijdens het staatsbezoek aan Indonesië - Toespraak - Het Koninklijk Huis'. Toespraak. Ministerie van Algemene Zaken. 10 March 2020. https://doi.org/10/verklaring-van-koning-willem-alexander-tijdens-het-staatsbezoek-aan-indonesie.

Ministerie van Algemene Zaken. 2022. 'Excuses regering voor slavernijverleden Nederland - Nieuwsbericht - Rijksoverheid.nl'. Nieuwsbericht. Ministerie van Algemene Zaken. 19 December 2022. https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2022/12/19/excuses-regering-voor-slavernijverleden-nederland.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. 2003. *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822384649.

Nash, Jennifer C. 2023. 'Intersectional Iconography: Promise, Peril, Possibility'. In *The Routledge International Handbook of Intersectionality Studies*. Routledge.

Nicholson, Linda. 2010. 'Feminism in "Waves": Useful Metaphor or Not?' *Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies Research*, January. https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wgss/30.

Oostindie, Geert. 2008. *Dutch Colonialism, Migration and Cultural Heritage: Past and Present*. Boston, UNITED STATES: BRILL. http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=4636562.

Ossome, Lyn. 2023. "Intersectionality from the Margins: Historical Subjects/Subjectivation in the Global South." In Davis, Kathy, and Helma Lutz. *The Routledge International Handbook of Intersectionality Studies.* 1st ed. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003089520.

Pankhurst, Christabel. 1959. *Unshackled: The Story of How We Won the Vote*. London: Hutchison,

Partij voor de Vrijheid. 2023. “Nederlanders weer op 1: PVV Verkiezingsprogramma 2023.” Accessed May 3, 2024. https://www.pvv.nl/verkiezingsprogramma.html.

Pemberton, John. 1994. *On the Subject of ‘Java’*. Cornell University Press. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctv3mtcbs.

Raben, Remco. 2016. *Wie Spreekt Voor Het Koloniale Verleden? Een Pleidooi Voor Transkolonialisme (Oratie Universiteit van Amsterdam; Arnhem: Indisch Herinneringscentrum 2016)*.

Rayner, Michelle. 2016. ‘The Radio Documentary and Oral History: Challenges and Opportunities’. *Australian Historical Studies* 47 (1): 108–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/1031461X.2016.1122696.

Research, Edison. 2019. ‘The Podcast Consumer 2019’. Edison Research. 5 April 2019. https://www.edisonresearch.com/the-podcast-consumer-2019/.

Robinson, Kathryn. 2020. ‘6. Call Me Kartini? Kartini as a Floating Signifier in Indonesian History’. In *Colonial, National and Transnational Memories of an Indonesian Icon*, edited by Paul Bijl and Grace V. S. Chin, 131–56. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing. https://doi.org/doi:10.1355/9789814843928-008.

Rogers, Dallas, and Miles Herbert. 2020. 'Podcasts and Urban Studies: Notes from the Field; Sounds from the Studio'. *Urban Policy and Research* 38 (1): 63–73.

Rogers, Dallas, Miles Herbert, Carolyn Whitzman, Eugene McCann, Paul J. Maginn, Beth Watts, Ashraful Alam, et al. 2020. 'The City Under COVID-19: Podcasting As Digital Methodology'. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie* 111 (3): 434–50. https://doi.org/10.1111/tesg.12426.

Salvati, Andrew J. 2015. 'Podcasting the Past: Hardcore History, Fandom, and DIY Histories'. *Journal of Radio & Audio Media* 22 (2): 231–39. https://doi.org/10.1080/19376529.2015.1083375.

Sánchez Laws, Ana Luisa. 2020. 'Can Immersive Journalism Enhance Empathy?' *Digital Journalism* 8 (2): 213–28.

Schrupp, Antje, and Patu. 2017. *A Brief History of Feminism*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1581613.

Scriven, Richard. 2022. 'Making a Podcast: Reflecting on Creating a Place-Based Podcast'. *Area* 54 (2): 260–67. https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12776.

Smith, Bonnie G., and Nova Robinson. 2022. *The Routledge Global History of Feminism*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis Group. http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=6859779.

Stoler, Ann Laura. 1989. 'Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundaries of Rule'. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31 (1): 134–61.

Suroto, Sitisumandari. 2001. *Kartini : sebuah biografi*. Cet. ke-6. Jakarta:  jambatan.

Sutherland, Heather. *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite: The Colonial Transformation of the Javanese Priyayi*. Southeast Asia Publications Series / Asian Studies Association of Australia ; 2. Singapore: Heinemann.

Sysling, Fenneke. 2016. *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia*. NUS Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv9hj794.

Tromans, Dom. 2016. 'Casting into the Past: Podcasting as a Medium for Producing Works of History'. Master's thesis, University of Bristol. https://www.academia.edu/27806498/CASTING_INTO_THE_PAST_Podcasting_as_a_medium_for_producing_works_of_history.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1995. Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Van Reybrouck, David. 2021. *Revolusi: Indonesië en het ontstaan van de moderne wereld*. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij.

Van Reybrouck, David. 2021. 'Revolusi!'. Podcast. De Correspondent and Klara. https://decorrespondent.nl/collectie/revolusi.

Van Reybrouck, David. 2024. *Revolusi: Indonesia and the Brith of the Modern World.* Translated by David Colmer and David McKay. London: The Bodley Head.

White, Hayden V. *Metahistory : The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Wilbur, Amea, Zahida Rahemtulla, Emily Amburgey, Shanga Karim, Diary Khalid Marif, Camille McMillan Rambharat, and Mohammed Alsaleh. 2022. 'The Power of Narrative Storytelling: How Podcasts as an Arts-Based Practice Enhance Solidarity and Social Activism in Adult Education'. *Studies in the Education of Adults* 54 (2): 161–76.

Wilson, Robbie Z. 2018. 'Welcome to the World of Wandercast: Podcast as Participatory Performance and Environmental Exploration'. *Podcasting: New Aural Cultures and Digital Media*, 273–98.

Woodward, Amber. 2015. 'Historical Perspectives on a National Heroine: R.A. Kartini and the Politics of Memory'. *Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection*, October. https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/2189.

Young, Robert J.C. 2012. 'The Postcolonial Condition'. In *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, edited by Dan Stone. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199560981.013.0030.