

Breathing the air of Suriname?

The life course of Hindostani labour migrants after indenture in Suriname, 1873-1940.

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Breathing the air of Suriname? The life course of Hindostani labour migrants after indenture in Suriname, 1873-1940.¹

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‘[...] my soul, this is a foreign land where no one is known to me. Who will come and support me? The only one to whom I can turn to is Khuda [Allah] who has cared for me and will take care of me in future as well.’²

These are the words of Rahman Mohammed Khan (1874-1972), an Indian indentured labourer in Suriname between the 13th of April 1898 and the 13th of April 1903. Khan writes these words in his autobiography around 1943, describing his arrival at the plantation Lust en Rust³ in Beneden Commewijne.⁴ His memoirs give a unique insight into his daily life, but also into the experiences of indentured labourers in Suriname and the life during and after their five-years contract period.⁵

This one-of-a-kind work offers a bottom-up perspective, which has gained more attention in public discussions on colonialism in recent years. Since the turn of the century, more questions are raised on the place and consequences of imperialism in Western European identity and society. Consequently, a growing presence of the colonial history in education and a shift in perspective are prevalent. For example, in the Netherlands, the book *Wij slaven van Suriname* (We, slaves of Suriname) of Surinamese resistance fighter Anton de Kom became an integral part of Dutch history classes since 2020.⁶

Next to these social developments, more scholarly attention has been paid to the colonial past. The history of slavery is a central feature in this long-lasting, extensive historical discussion.⁷ Even

¹ I am very grateful for everyone who assisted and supported me during this research. I especially would like to thank my supervisors prof. dr. Jan Kok and Björn Quanjer MA for their inspiring advice, which always challenged me to dig deeper into this research. I also would like to thank dr. Coen van Galen for his advice and help. Additionally, I would like to thank dr. Maurits Hassankhan, who was so kind to answer my questions regarding the database.

² Munshi Rahman Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, translation: Kathinka Sinha-Kerkhoff, Ellen Bal, Alok Deo Singh (eds.), *Autobiography of an Indian indentured labourer* (Delhi, 2005 [1945]), 92.

³ Rahman Khan only calls the plantation where he served his contract ‘Lust en Rust’ several times and mostly uses the Sranan Tongo name ‘Skerpi’, Rahman Khan, *Javeen Prakash*, 89-90.

⁴ An 1899 map displaying the districts in Suriname is added on page 41.

⁵ Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*; Nationaal Archief, *Suriname. Contractarbeiders uit India (Hindostanen) [Suriname. Indentured labourers from India (Hindostanis)]*, 1999, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/index/nt00345?searchTerm=>> [retrieved on December 21th 2020].

⁶ The book of Anton de Kom has been added to the *Canon van Nederland* (Canon of Dutch History) for secondary schools: Anton de Kom, *Wij slaven van Suriname* (16th edition; Amsterdam, 2020 [1934]).

⁷ Surinamese history has recently been dominated by the study of slavery. The publication of the Surinamese slave registers gave a boost to the amount of research possibilities: Cornelis W. van Galen, Maurits S. Hassankhan, ‘A research-note on the slave registers of Suriname, 1830-1865’, in: *The History of the Family* 23:3 (2018), pp. 503-520; Nationaal Archief, ‘Suriname. Slavenregisters’, 2017, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/zoekhulpen/suriname-slavenregisters#collapse-8675>> [retrieved on November 30th 2020].

though slavery is a topic worth studying, it seems wise to remember that colonial history does not start nor end with the study of slavery. By only focussing on slavery and the abolition of the institution, one would seem to neglect the period between the formal emancipation of the enslaved and the independence of the former colonies. This period, however, encompasses 50 to 150 years of valuable and interesting history.⁸

The consequence of leaving this period out of the scholarly scope is that the history of many groups of people who lived in colonial societies after emancipation will be understudied. One of those groups consists of Hindostani indentured migrants, coming from British India to Suriname in the period from 1873 to 1916. This thesis will focus on the lives of these 34,000 people and specifically on their life course after indenture, which, as the scientific discussion below will present, is a relatively understudied feature of the extensive fields of colonial and indentureship studies.

The central choice investigated in this thesis will be settlement or repatriation, therefore focussing on only a segment of the life course. Hence, the research question is as following: ‘How did individual characteristics and the Surinamese context influence the post-indenture choice of repatriation or settlement of Hindostani indentured migrants in Suriname between 1873 and 1940?’ This research period is selected because the system of indentured migration existed between 1873 and 1916. As will be the case, the actual research period will be more broad than these 43 years due to the possibility of re-indenture(s) and because of consequences of the methodology.

In chapter 1, the scholarly discussion and the hypotheses will be presented. In the second chapter, a short overview will be given of who migrated from India to Suriname based mainly on the written literature and Khan’s autobiography. In the third chapter, the main sources will be problematised and the method will be presented. In chapter 4, an analysis of the individual demographic characteristics of the indentured migrants will be conducted. Chapter 5 will shed light on the time-related development and on the influence of external factors in Suriname, determining the role of the district where an indentured migrant served his contract and the sort of crops cultivated on the plantations.

This research will contribute to the scientific debate on indentureship in a colonial context, by casting light on the ending of the contract period and therefore, a better understanding of indentureship and its consequences is possible. Secondly and more specifically, this research will contribute to the understanding of the life courses of labour migrants from India. For the Surinamese case, this is even more interesting, since in the first decade of the 21st century, about 295,000 descendants of the Hindostani migrants still lived in either Suriname or the Netherlands.⁹ Thirdly, this research will

⁸ For example: J.P. Siwipersad, *De Nederlandse regering en de afschaffing van de Surinaamse slavernij (1833-1863)* (Groningen, 1979).

⁹ G. Choenni, Chan E.S. Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani 1920-1960. Worteling, identiteit en gemeenschapsvorming in Suriname* (Amsterdam, 2012), 29.

contribute to the research projects *Life after Slavery*, *Legacies of Bondage* and *Historical Database Suriname* by studying an integral part of post-slavery Surinamese society and population.¹⁰

But next to these academic contributions, this research also contributes to public discussions. As historian Margriet Fokken states, there is a feeling amongst Hindostani Surinamese that their history is underrepresented in social and scientific debates. Additionally, for large groups in Suriname, the Netherlands and elsewhere, it is interesting and important to explore and get acquainted with their family history. This research hopes to give these people a better understanding of their ancestors' lives in Suriname.¹¹

Before commencing with the scholarly debate, it is important to discuss the use of language in this thesis. Where possible, this research tries to decolonize the research on the history of the Hindustani indentured labour experience by not directly copying Dutch or English terms used by colonial governments. An example is the word *coolie* (in Dutch: *koelie*). Although the definition of this concept differs through time and place, it was generally referring to a hired labourer, mainly of a Chinese, Indian or Indonesian descent. In the period in which indentureship existed, the term *coolie* was mostly associated with the racially determined groups of Hindostanis in Suriname. In the present time, it is associated with a derogatory notion and a clear relationship of domination.¹²

In order to prevent the use of derogatory terms and in order to focus on the perspective of the Hindostani *kantráki* (which stresses the function rather than the status of the person in question), from this point this thesis will be using Sarnami Hindostani terms. This language developed in Suriname among the *kantráki* as a result of the mixture of the different languages spoken in British India – for example Hindi and Urdu – and of in lesser extent Sranan Tongo, English and Dutch. It is, however, impossible to entirely eliminate Eurocentric vocabulary. In some cases the Dutch or English term will be used, for example in discussing the Dutch immigration registers.¹³

¹⁰ Van Galen, Hassankhan, 'A research-note on the slave registers of Suriname', 516-517; Radboud Institute for Culture and History, 'Legacies of bondage: towards a database of Surinamese life courses in a multigenerational perspective (1830-1950)' <<https://www.ru.nl/rich/our-research/research-groups-0/radboud-group-historical-demography-family-history/current-research-projects/legacies-bondage/#:~:text=The%20project%20Legacies%20of%20bondage,the%20Platform%20Digital%20Infrastructur e%20SSH.>> [retrieved on January 12th 2021]; Radboud Institute for Culture and History, 'Life after Slavery: Setting the research agenda of slave histories in the global era, 1750-1900', <<https://www.ru.nl/rich/our-research/research-groups/radboud-group-for-historical-demography-and-family/current-research-projects/life-after-slavery/>> [retrieved on October 7th 2020].

¹¹ Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 29; Gaiutra Bahadur, *Coolie woman. The odyssey of indenture* (London, 2013), xix-xxi; Margriet Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki. Constructing Hindostani identities in Suriname in the era of indenture, 1873-1921* (Hilversum, 2018), 11-13; Sandew Hira, *Terug naar Uttar Pradesh. Op zoek naar de wortels van Surinaamse Hindostanen* (The Hague, 2000).

¹² Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantákti*, 23-25, 122-125; Chan E.S. Choenni, *Hindostaanse contractarbeiders 1873-1920. Van India naar de plantages in Suriname* (Volendam, 2016), 25-26.

¹³ Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 16-22; Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 264-271.

Chapter 1: From docile labourers to acting individuals. The scholarly discussion.

While slavery and abolition have been central to Surinamese historiography, from World War II onwards there has been increase in historical interest in the period directly after the abolition of slavery. In 1863, the enslaved people in Suriname were emancipated and a ten year system of apprenticeship (*Staatstoezicht*) was installed. From 1873 onwards, an organised system of indentured labour caused 67,500 people from India, Indonesia and Macao to migrating Suriname to work on plantations in the Dutch colony for five years. The last regulated batch of the in total 34.024¹⁴ British Indian *kantráki* arrived in Paramaribo in 1916, while the last indentured migrants from the former Dutch East Indies (currently Indonesia) arrived in 1939.¹⁵

In order to contextualise the above, this chapter will discuss the scholarly debates regarding indentureship. First, a short overview of the historiographical development of colonial history will be presented, before shedding light on the debate on indentureship. In the second section, the state of the debate on the indenture of *kantráki* in Suriname and their life course after indenture will be discussed. The last part of this chapter will present the hypotheses.

The historiographical development of colonial history and the indentured labour system

Colonial history has long been studied in a rather institutional, top-bottom perspective, with a focus on the territorial, political and economic expansion of European colonial imperial states. Attention was paid to the colonial governments, officials and central European figures in the overseas territories, while there was little attention devoted to for the colonised actors. If the perspective of the colonised was taken into account, it mostly appeared that colonialism developed the non-European areas.

However, partly due to the immigration of people from the (former) colonies after World War II, the migrants brought with stories and experiences of living in a colonial sphere. Consequently, more attention was paid to their side of the story and a postcolonial perspective became increasingly important in scholarly debate on colonial history from the 1970s. This made way for a growing focus on the colonies themselves, the suppressed groups in those colonies and the negative effects of colonialism. In the 1980s, following the increasing historiographical focus on macrohistory, more attention was paid to the processes of slavery, the migration of enslaved and later indentured migrants

¹⁴ This number represents the amount of Hindostani migrants who arrived in Paramaribo; a total of 34,304 Indians departed from Calcutta. The difference between these numbers can be explained by the fact that the death rate on the ships to Suriname was higher than the birth rate. Next to these immigrated Indians, there was a small number of free migrants – which is not taken into account in this thesis – and about 3,000 British Indians who migrated from British and French West Indian colonies. The latter group is added to the database used in this thesis. See: C.J.M. De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen in Suriname* (Amsterdam, 1953), 71-73, 87, 176-177.

¹⁵ Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 119-121; Joshua R. Hyles, *Guiana and the shadows of empire. Colonial and cultural negotiations at the edge of the world* (Lanham, 2014), 86-91; P.C. Emmer, 'Asians Compared: Some Observations regarding Indian and Indonesian Indentured Labourers in Surinam, 1873-1939', in: *Itinerario* 11:1 (1987), pp. 149-154, here: 150; Rosemarijn Hoefte, *In place of slavery. A social history of British Indian and Javanese laborers in Suriname* (Gainesville, 1998), 14, 61-62.

and other socioeconomic and demographic subjects. In the 1990s, inspired by the famous works of Edward Saïd, *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*, a call for a new perspective was successful. Among others, historian Tony Ballantyne stated that a more cultural-historical approach was necessary for studying and understanding colonialism properly. In this New Imperial History, scholarly attention should be focused on discourses, power relations, gender and ethnicity. Ballantyne mentions three new focus points: the moral frameworks of empires, the reciprocal relation and influence between the colony and the colonising country, and the webbed character of colonial spaces.¹⁶

As with the trend in colonial history, the debate on the indentured labour system transformed from an institutional, politically oriented discussion towards more postcolonial, bottom-up analyses of the life of the indentured migrants. Indentured migration is often regarded as a system replacing the institute of slavery. Colonial governments sought to fill the labour shortage that arose after the abolition of the trade of enslaved people and especially after the abolition of slavery. Mostly colonies with a low population density faced many problems in attracting enough labourers. The first by ordinance regulated group of indentured Indian migrants arrived in the British colony of Mauritius in 1829 to work on plantations for five years. The enlistment of Indian indentured migrants was, however, not limited to British colonies. French colonies also attracted Indians, and other colonies to which Indians migrated were among others Fiji, Réunion, Natal (South Africa), and British Guyana. When comparing the number of migrated Indians, the flow to Suriname only accounted for about 3% of all Indian indentured migration between 1830 and 1917.¹⁷

¹⁶ Doortje Swaters, *Tegen de grens van emancipatie. De ontwikkeling van slavernij in Nickerie, 1820-1842* [thesis] (Nijmegen, 2018), p. 5-7; Remco Raben, 'A new Dutch imperial history? Perambulations in a prospective field', in: *BMGN – Low Countries historical review* 18:1 (2013), pp. 5-30; Remco Raben, 'De lange sporen overzee. Nieuwe koloniale geschiedenis in Nederland en eromheen', in: *De Gids* 170:12 (2007), pp. 1218-1228; Tony Ballantyne, 'Religion, difference, and the limits of British imperial history', in: *Victorian Studies* 47:3 (2005), pp. 427-455.

¹⁷ Hoeft, *In place of slavery*, 30; Hyles, *Guiana and the shadows of empire*, 74-76, 86-91; Brij V. Lal, 'Understanding the Indian indenture experience', in: *South Asia. Journal of Asian Studies* 21:s1 (1998), pp. 215-237, here: 216; E. van den Boogaart, P.C. Emmer, 'Introduction. Colonialism and migration, an overview', in: P.C. Emmer (ed.), *Colonialism and migration. Indentured labour before and after slavery* (Dordrecht, 1986), pp. 3-18, here: 8-10; Radjinder Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname. Arbeidsmigratie vanuit Brits-Indië onder het indentured-labourstelsel 1873-1916* (The Hague, 1996), 14-15, 78; Rosemarijn Hoeft, 'Indenture in the long nineteenth century', in: D. Eltis, S. Engerman, S. Drescher, & D. Richardson (Eds.), *The Cambridge World History of Slavery* (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 610-632, here: 611; Stanley L. Engerman, 'Servants to slaves to servants. Contract labour and European expansion', in: P.C. Emmer (ed.), *Colonialism and migration. Indentured labour before and after slavery* (Dordrecht, 1986), pp. 263-294, here: 272. For indentureship in the British Caribbean and British Guyana, see for example: Lomarsh Roopnarine, 'Indian migration during indentured servitude in British Guiana and Trinidad, 1850-1920', in: *Labor History* 52:2 (2011), pp. 173-191, here: 173-174; S.L. Engerman, 'Economic change and contract labour in the British Caribbean. The end of slavery and the adjustment to emancipation', in: David Richardson (ed.), *Abolition and its Aftermath. The historical context, 1790-1916* (London, 1985), pp. 225-244, here: 225-226, 231-235. For indentureship on Trinidad, Mauritius, Fiji, see for example: Laurence Brown, 'Inter-continental migration and the refashioning of indentured labour. Arthur Gordon in Trinidad, Mauritius and Fiji', in: David Lambert, Alan Lester (eds.), *Colonial lives across the British empire. Imperial career in the long nineteenth century* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 204-227. For indentureship on Danish St. Croix, see for example: Lomarsh Roopnarine, 'Re-indenture, repatriation and remittances of ex-indentured Indians from Danish St Croix to British India [...]

The moral aspect of indenture has gained more attention among scholars since the 1960s. According to sociologist Radjinder Bhagwanbali, this debate can be divided into two sides. Hugh Tinker is often cited as one of the main advocates for the critical position that indentureship is actually a disguised, new form of slavery. In his 1974 publication *New system of slavery*, Tinker argues that Indian indentured migrants experienced the same situation and circumstances as the formerly enslaved. There are, however, some critics who have put this ‘Tinkerian’ thought into perspective, but who follow the idea that indentureship is an in-between form of slavery and free labour. One of those scholars is Panchanan Shah, who has argued that the system was badly organised and was of a corruptive and bad nature, but not fully comparable to slavery.¹⁸

On the other side of the debate is a much smaller group of scholars who state that the process of recruitment was well organised and, although there were cases of conflict and misleading, an improvement of the processes and systems of indentureship could be observed. Some of these historians are Maurits Hassankhan and Brij Lal, who, together with Doug Munro, edited a volume on indentured labour in 2014. Mahen Utchanah states the following in the foreword: ‘This work shatters the ‘Tinkerian Paradigm’ which has [...] portrayed the Indian indentured labourer as helpless and docile, incapable of resisting oppression [...]’¹⁹ In his own contribution, Hassankhan endorses this statement and states that these immigrants had agency. They were not helpless individuals as Tinker stated, but could resist oppression and thus can be seen as active participants in the system of indentured labour.²⁰

This thesis will follow the latter statement by Hassankhan that *kantráki* were indeed active actors in the process of indentureship, but it will be kept in mind that hierarchical relations have had their influence on the role that the Hindostani migrants played in the process of indentured migration. However, as will be clear, the main goal of this thesis is not to position itself in this debate on the moral nature of indentureship.

[...] 1863–1873’, in: *Scandinavian Journal of History* 35:3 (2010), pp. 247–267; For African indentured labourers, see for example: Monica Schuler, ‘The recruitment of African indentured labourers for European colonies in the nineteenth century’ in: P.C. Emmer (ed.), *Colonialism and migration. Indentured labour before and after slavery* (Dordrecht, 1986), pp. 125–162, here: 152.

¹⁸ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 20–25; Hugh Tinker, *A new system of slavery. The export of Indian labour overseas* (Oxford, 1974); Panchanan Saha, *Emigration of Indian labour* (Delhi, 1970).

¹⁹ Mahen Utchanah, ‘Foreword’, in: Maurits S. Hassankhan, Brij V. Lal, Doug Munro (eds.), *Resistance and Indian indenture experience. Comparative perspectives* (New Delhi, 2014), pp. 7–8.

²⁰ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 24–25; Roopnarine, ‘Indian migration during indentured servitude’; Maurits S. Hassankhan, ‘The Indian indentured experience in Suriname. Control, accommodation and resistance 1873–1916’, in: Maurits S. Hassankhan, Brij V. Lal, Doug Munro (eds.), *Resistance and Indian indenture experience. Comparative perspectives* (New Delhi, 2014), pp. 199–240, here: 200–202; P.C. Emmer, ‘The meek Hindu. The recruitment of Indian indentured labourers for service overseas, 1870–1916’, in: P.C. Emmer (ed.), *Colonialism and migration. Indentured labour before and after slavery* (Dordrecht, 1986), pp. 187–208, here: 188–189. For more literature on Hindostani and Javanese resistance in Suriname, see: Rosemarijn Hoeft, ‘A passage to Suriname? The migration of modes of resistance by Asian contract labourers’, in: *International Labor and Working-Class History* 54 (1998), pp. 19–39; Rosemarijn Hoeft, ‘Control and resistance. Indentured labor in Suriname’, in: *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids/New West Indian Guide* 61:1–2 (1987), pp. 1–22.

Additionally, this thesis will take into account the three-way interaction in indentureship posed by Lomarsh Roopnarine, where the relations between the Indian government, the Caribbean local governments and planters, and (in his study) Danish government play an important role. This seems to follow Ballantyne's call for attention for the webbedness of colonial spheres. There is, however, a subdivision needed between the Dutch and British governments. This means that the processes of indentureship has to be viewed not only as a migration between two parts of the worlds, but as an interconnected, four-way mechanism between different actors. The result of these intertwining relations is what shaped the eventual conditions and aspects of the Indian indentureship in Suriname.²¹

The case of Suriname

Hindustanis were not the first nor the only group to be recruited by the Dutch. As historian Joshua Hyles portrays, the Dutch colonial government, the *Koloniale Staten*, sought to fill the labour shortages. A first attempt to compensate for a declined population of enslaved individuals was to attract Dutch farmers to work on Surinamese plantations. In 1845 the first group of *Hollandsche boeren* arrived in Suriname. This plan was never really successful due to the small number of people willing to move and a high death rate among the ones that did migrate.²²

In 1858, about 500 Chinese farmers were recruited from Macao. Although these labourers became quite successful in the colony, the problem of labour shortage was not resolved. The *Koloniale Staten* put effort in a more large-scale labour immigration and eventually convinced the Dutch States General to sign the Recruitment Treaty with Great Britain.²³ This treaty allowed the Dutch to recruit labourers in British India with the intention that the attracted migrants worked on Surinamese plantations for five years. The Dutch agreed that the contract labourers were to remain subjects to the British crown during their contract period until 1927²⁴ – which granted the migrants the right to appeal to a British agent present in Suriname.²⁵

²¹ Roopnarine, 'Re-indenture, repatriation and remittances', 249-250.

²² Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 14; Hyles, *Guiana and the shadows of empire*, 74-76, 86; Van den Boogaart, Emmer, 'Introduction', 8; Cornelis Atzes Hoekstra, 'De Hollandsche boeren in Suriname', in: *Neerlandia* 7 (1903), pp. 111-113; Herman Obdeijn, Marlou Schrover, *Komen en gaan. Immigratie en emigratie in Nederland* (Amsterdam, 2008), 143-144. For Indonesian indentured labourers, see for example: Hoefte, *In place of slavery*.

²³ The full name of the treaty is *Convention between Great Britain and the Netherlands, relative to the emigration of labourers from India to the Dutch colony of Surinam*. For more information on the communication and discussions between the *Koloniale Staten* and the States General, see: Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 31-33.

²⁴ Ex-kantráki remained 'strangers' (*vreemdelingen*) in the eyes of the Dutch government. Only their children born after June 10th 1927, had the right to call themselves a Dutch subject. See: De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 184-186.

²⁵ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 180-181; Choenni, *Hindostaanse contractarbeiders*, 726-730; Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 31-32, 44-55, 61; Hoefte, 'Indenture in the long nineteenth century', 625; Hyles, *Guiana and the shadows of empire*, 86-87; Obdeijn, Schrover, *Komen en gaan*, 248-249; Rosemarijn Hoefte, 'Slaan of treuzelen? Verschillen in verzet tussen Hindostaanse en Javaanse contractarbeiders', in: Peter Meel, Hans Ramsoedh (eds.), *Ik ben een haan met een kroon op mijn hoofd. Pacificatie en verzet in koloniaal en postkoloniaal Suriname* (Amsterdam, 2007), pp. 152-168, here: 152-153.

It seems that the Dutch-Surinamese colonial administration rather easily could follow and copy the British patterns of indenture, recruitment and migration. That the Dutch actually did follow these examples is apparent from the next citation from 1878 by the Dutch businessman and publicist Balthazar Heldring: '[...] what we [the Dutch] can learn from this subject from Demerara. After all, there already exists a supply of work forces from British India since years on a large scale [...]'.²⁶ Additionally, the Recruitment Treaty implies the exemplary function of the British arrangements: 'The arrangements [...] are those prescribed by the regulations of the British colonies.'²⁷ That the British regulations formed an example is not only a matter of convenience, but in all probability the British government put pressure on the Dutch to act in ordinance with their conditions.²⁸

Following the discussion in the Dutch States General about the nationality of the contract labourers, combined with a growing sense of Dutch nationalism and pride, 32,962 contract labourers were recruited from the Dutch East Indies between 1890 and 1939. This resulted, in combination with a growing nationalistic tendency and an expanding resistance movement against indentureship in India, in the last ship with *kantráki* arriving in 1916 and the formal abolishment of Indian indentureship in 1920.²⁹

When considering the Dutch colonial sphere, historian Remco Raben states that, unlike in British and French historiography, the New Imperial History perspective has not yet been fully incorporated by Dutch colonial historians. The framework used by the majority, according to Raben, is too focused on the colonial society as a whole, while regarding the colonial government as the most important actor and colonial relationships and connections as the only networks. He states that there should be a shift towards an idea of a varied and multi-institutional colony, in which non-political institutions should have a greater influence and where corporative and information networks play a significant role.³⁰

The statement by Raben seems true for studies by Dutch historians in the 1950s and 1960s. C.J.M. de Klerk is often cited as one of the first authors to study the Hindostani indentured migration from India to Suriname. Although his 1953 work elaborately describes the process of recruitment, the systems of migration and indentureship and the integration of Hindostanis in Surinamese society, De Klerk does so from a Dutch, institutional and colonial perspective. According to Fokken, De Klerk does not take the Hindostani perspective sufficiently into account.³¹

This institutional point of view is not unique. For example, historian J.D. Speckmann and studies the Hindostani labour migration based on the plural society thesis. This thesis – according to

²⁶ '[...] wat wij omtrent dit onderwerp in Demerary kunnen leeren, Immers daar bestaat de aanvoer van werkkrachten uit Britsch-Indië sedert jaren op groote schaal [...]': Balthazar Heldring, 'De toekomst van Suriname', in: *De Gids* 42 (1878), pp. 534-549, here: 535.

²⁷ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 178.

²⁸ Idem, 178.

²⁹ Hoeft, *In place of slavery*, 44-55, 61.

³⁰ Raben, 'A new Dutch imperial history?'.

³¹ De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 27.

Fokken – states that ‘Surinamese society was made up of distinct ethnic groups that were culturally, politically and economically separated from one another. The only thing that held this divided society together, was white political rule’. The use of this theory shows Speckmann’s top-bottom and institutional perspective.³²

The posed idea of Raben of the absence of the perspective of New Imperial History becomes questionable after investigating the historiographical developments from the 1960s onwards. Since then, there has been an increase in the number of Hindostani authors studying the indentured labour system. In 1963, a volume was published, remembering the fact that ninety years before, the first ship (the *Lalla Rookh*) with 399 Hindustani³³ migrants arrived in Suriname. In the different chapters, according to the introduction, more attention was paid to the Hindostani perspective, in order ‘[...] to contribute [...] to the fight against prejudices, misunderstandings and mutual mistrust, so that the discussion about the social and cultural problems of our country can take place in a spirit of mutual respect.’³⁴ It is strikingly interesting that, despite the goal of these papers to emphasize the Hindostani perspective, Speckmann and De Klerk also contribute to this volume by adding a paper in which both authors appear to hold on to their colonial and institutional point of view.³⁵

From the 1980s onward, academic have conducted more quantitative research on the Hindostani indentured migration. Piet Emmer, professor emeritus on European expansion and migration, opposed the aforementioned Tinkerian paradigm by re-evaluating the circumstances in which the Hindostani indentured labourers were recruited, the labour which was exercised and the choice to settle or to return to India. Emmer stated that there were many differences between slavery and indentureship, by showing that the labourers enjoyed some personal freedoms and women had a higher chance of emancipation than they would have had in British India.³⁶

Rosemarijn Hoefte, professor in Surinamese history after 1873 and a critic of Tinkerian thought that indenture was a new form of slavery, disputes this thesis of female emancipation by stressing the importance of intersectionality in the process of oppression. Hoefte stressed that female *kantráki* were disadvantaged by the combination of their sex, social status and racial origin. This

³² Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 28.

³³ 410 Hindostanis embarked the ship. 11 of them died during the sea voyage: Nationaal Archief, ‘Hindostanen in Suriname’, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/zoekhulpen/hindostanen-in-suriname>> [retrieved on November 2nd 2020]; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

³⁴ ‘[...] met deze bundel studiën bij te dragen tot de strijd tegen vooroordelen, misverstanden en wederzijds wantrouwen, opdat de discussie over de sociale en culturele problemen van ons land in een geest van wederzijds respect kan plaats vinden’: W.I. Lutchman, ‘Ter inleiding’, in: E.G. Azimullah, H. Ganpat, W.I. Lutchman (eds.), *Van Britsch-Indisch immigrant tot burger van Suriname* (The Hague, 1963), pp. 11.

³⁵ Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 27-28; C.J.M. de Klerk, ‘De komst en vestiging van de Brits-Indiërs in Suriname’, in: E.G. Azimullah, H. Ganpat, W.I. Lutchman (eds.), *Van Britsch-Indisch immigrant tot burger van Suriname* (The Hague, 1963), pp. 15-27; J.D. Speckmann, ‘Het proces van sociale verandering bij de Hindostaanse bevolkingsgroep in Suriname’, in: E.G. Azimullah, H. Ganpat, W.I. Lutchman (eds.), *Van Britsch-Indisch immigrant tot burger van Suriname* (The Hague, 1963), pp. 51-58.

³⁶ Emmer, ‘The meek Hindu’, 187; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 28-29; P.C. Emmer, ‘The great escape. The migration of female indentured servants from British India to Surinam, 1873-1916’, in: David Richardson (ed.), *Abolition and its aftermath. The historical context 1790 – 1916* (London, 1985), pp. 245-266.

resulted in a sexual labour distinction, where women performed different tasks and therefore mostly received less payment. The financial disadvantaged group that arose from this sexual and social difference became strongly dependent on men and planters. Hoefte concludes from this that women had a notable smaller chance of re-indentureship and permanent settlement after their contract than men, mostly because most women could not survive on their own or could not afford to build up a new life in Suriname because of the lack of savings.³⁷

Since the 1990s, the debate on Hindostani indentured labour follows a broader trend in historiography, by shifting to a perspective more in line with cultural history. More attention has been paid to a bottom-up, postcolonial and subaltern perspective, in which the *kantráki* received the most attention. Additionally, it became customary to use primary sources like personal stories, oral history, objects and pictures for studying migration processes. The work of Fokken is a good example of this bottom-up perspective, which can also be seen in publications by Hoefte and in the works of Hindostani-Surinamese researchers Sandew Hira, Chan Choenni, and R.I. Djwalapersad. These authors can be described as scholars who study subaltern history, mostly with a post-colonial and feminist perspective, in order to put the Hindostani migrant central in their research.³⁸

Following this trend, it is important that Indian cultural values are taken into account in order to improve our understanding of the position in which Hindostani immigrants were situated. Hindostanis believed that crossing the sea, or the *kali pani* (black waters), to other lands is a sin and therefore, one's social position will be lost because of the detachment from the river Ganges. Following this detachment, the migrant will be cut from the cycle of reincarnation. Not only did this affect the process of consideration to emigrate, but it is particularly important when one wants to repatriate to India after indentureship. Without the rights of the caste they formerly belonged to, it was difficult to maintain a life in India. This concept is based on Vedic traditions and is therefore important to Hindus, but also to Muslims. It is argued by Sumit Guha and Choenni and Choenni that culturally, Muslims from Hindostan are more inspired by and tied to the Vedic traditions than by and to Middle Eastern cultural customs. Additionally, according to Sumit Guha: '[a]n adequate understanding of South Asian society requires us to [...] bring non-Hindus back in [...]'³⁹

³⁷ Bahadur, *Coolie woman*, 163-177; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 29; Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 3-4, 102-113; Hoefte, 'Indenture in the long nineteenth century', 611; Rosemarijn Hoefte, 'Female indentured labor in Suriname. For better or for worse?', in: *Boletín de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe* 42 (1987), pp. 55-70.

³⁸ Choenni, *Hindostaanse contractarbeiders*; Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 34. 46-53, 69-72; Hira, *Terug naar Uttar Pradesh*; R.I. Djwalapersad, R.W. Mac Donald, *De laatste stemmen der immigranten* (Paramaribo, 1988).

³⁹ Bahadur, *Coolie woman*, 46-50; Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 27; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 19, 67-68; Marina Carter, Khal Torabully, *Coolitude. An anthology of the Indian labour diaspora* (London, 2002), 167; Sumit Guha, *Beyond caste. Identity and power in Southeast Asia, past and present* (Leiden, 2013), 1-15.

Lacuna in the study of Surinamese indentureship

In studies after 1999, the availability of the database of the Hindostani immigrants made it possible to investigate many demographic aspects of the immigrants. Although this database is created from Dutch colonial sources (see below), it contains a lot of individual information with which much can be said about the lives of the Hindostanis. This database could therefore be used to investigate the migration, contract period and lives of these *kantráki* in a bottom-up perspective.⁴⁰

A great part of the historiography on indentureship focusses on the process of recruitment, migration and on life on the plantations. However, not much quantitative research has been devoted to the post-indenture life course, specifically to whether the *kantráki* returned to India or settled permanently in Suriname. The historiographical development of this choice will be set out in the following part.

As Hoeffte has indicated, whether a *kantráki* could return depended on the extent of financial independency, which was greatly determined by the contemporary sexual and racial ideas and practices. Hoeffte does not, however, support this statement with a quantitative analysis. It would seem to make sense that for example different working conditions had influence on the *kantráki*'s choice to return or settle after their contract period.

Gharietje and Chan Choenni have performed more than 80 in-depth interviews with Hindostani ex-*kantráki* and with second and third generation Surinamese and Dutch Hindostani. Their works from 2012 and 2013 also give some attention to whether Hindostanis returned to India or stayed in Suriname. Based on the 1939 *Surinaamsche Verslag* (Surinamese Report), the authors present an overview of criteria a *kantráki* had to meet if they wanted to settle in Suriname. The authors present this list as relatively strict and as applicable throughout the whole period of Indian indentureship. The problem is that some qualifications are multi-interpretable. Someone lost their right to re-indenture or settlement when one was in any way convicted or had anything to do with any illegal practices; this prerequisite is not much subjected to any interpretation – albeit that the trial and conviction itself were treated with a European and mostly pro-planter perspective.⁴¹ Other aspects mentioned by Choenni and Choenni are more prone to interpretation, where the colonial government and the planters mostly had the right of decision. If an ex-*kantráki* was sick, handicapped, weakened, incapacitated or lazy, the Hindostanis lost their right to stay in the colony. Therefore, it is a challenge to standardise the practice of exclusion of re-indenture or settlement for this particular group.⁴²

In addition, Choenni and Choenni state that in the beginning of the period of indentureship, the number of repatriating Hindostanis was high. The authors do not support this statement with arguments for the low settlement numbers. Hyles, however, states that in the beginning years of the

⁴⁰ Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 140-143.

⁴¹ Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 15-16, 46-47; Hoeffte, 'Control and resistance'; Hoeffte, *In place of slavery*, 32.

⁴² Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 46-47.

indentured labour system, it was not a perfect system. The individuals that were recruited had no experience with or knowledge of agricultural work and they were often not in good health.⁴³

The number of remigrating Hindostanis declined throughout the period of Hindostani contract labour. According to the Choenni and Choenni, this can mainly be explained by the establishment and growth of Hindostani communities – rather than ‘a’ Hindostani community⁴⁴ – in Suriname, improvements in hygienic and living conditions, a growing presence of other indentured labourers and due to the fact that the second and third generation Hindostanis in most cases were born and raised in Suriname without ever seeing India with their own eyes.⁴⁵

In addition, both Hoefte and Hyles point out that the *Koloniale Staten* from 1895 actively sought to reduce the number of repatriation by offering ex-*kantráki* plots of land while still guaranteeing their right to a free return. Those who declined to return, received a premium of 100 florins – which is the equivalent of the payment for men of about 34 weeks and of the wage for women of 58 weeks. In most cases, Hindostanis rented pieces of nationalised land, which was attractive because rent was free for the first six years. In other cases, people could buy a piece of uncultivated land, but they were responsible for the development of the land without the support of the government. The granting of land did indeed reduce repatriation rates, but also kept many *kantráki* from signing a new contract.⁴⁶

This offer of land and a premium did not only lead to a higher percentage of settling Hindostanis as farmers, but also to an increasing importance of *kleinlandbouw* (petty agriculture) by ex-*kantráki*, where ‘the capitalist is also the labourer’.⁴⁷ This development, again, caused a labour shortage on the plantations and consequently to a decline of the of large-scale agriculture. This shift from large-scale plantation agriculture to *kleinlandbouw* was also facilitated by the collapse of sugar

⁴³ Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 46-47; Hyles, *Guiana and the shadows of empire*, 87.

⁴⁴ Due to the different origins of Hindostani people in India, it is rather difficult to state that Indian people by definition belong to the same cultural, political and religious group. Partly due to the loss of the ties to India after the abolition of indentureship in 1916 and a policy of ‘divide and conquer’ in Suriname, a sense of a shared Hindostani background developed. Choenni and Choenni claim that only in the period 1920 to 1960 the process of a shared identity, history, culture and an idea of community began to emerge, resulting in a more clearly defined community in Suriname and the Netherlands at the present day. Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 13-15, 27, 30, 33-35; Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas. An introduction* (Abingdon, 2008), 65-68.

⁴⁵ Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 13-15, 27, 30, 33-35, 46-47; Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 162-163; Lal, ‘Understanding the Indian indenture experience’, 218; Amba Pande, ‘Indian diaspora. Diversities within a common identity’, in: *Economic and Political Weekly* 48:49 (2013), pp. 59-65.

⁴⁶ De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 162-165; Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 56; Hyles, *Guiana and the shadows of empire*, 89; Obdeijn, Schrover, *Komen en gaan*, 248-249; James McNeill, Chimman Lal, *Report of the condition of Indian immigrants in the four British colonies: Trinidad, British Guiana or Demerara, Jamaica and Fiji and in the Dutch colony of Suriname or Dutch Guiana*, II, ‘Surinam, Jamaica, Fiji and General Remarks’ (Simla, 1914), 176-179; Peter Meel, ‘De emigratie van Hindostaanse contractarbeiders naar Suriname 1873-1917’, in: *Groniek, Gronings Historisch Tijdschrift* 92 (1985), pp. 120-138, here: 134

⁴⁷ ‘waar de kapitalist tevens arbeider is’: F. Libertador Ellis, ‘De kleine landbouw in Suriname’, in: *Neerlandia* 7 (1903), pp. 115-117, here: 115.

prices (due to the emergence of beet sugar and the opening of the Suez Canal) and by multiple plant diseases.⁴⁸

Additionally, living conditions seem to have improved during the research period. When looking at the living conditions, anthropometric historian Hans de Beer has shown that between 1870 and 1975 nutritional and health indications improved. The result was, however, only observable in the second half of the twentieth century, but the increase of body height was associated with an increased protein intake and an improved disease environment – reflected by declining infant mortality rates – during earlier periods.⁴⁹

As partly mentioned above, several authors pay attention to sexual differences in the process of indentureship. The migration process itself had a sexual distinction, in which it was customary in India for men to temporarily leave their women for a period of time to work somewhere else. However, some women have done the same according to Gaiutra Bahadur. In Suriname, during and after the contract period this distinction became more evident. For women, the right to obtain land after indenture was limited, especially for unmarried women. Only if women were married – or in any other way dependent on another man and possibly perhaps another independent woman – could women allow themselves to permanently settle in Suriname. At the moment of arrival, approximately 50% of the women were married. At arrival, people who were not married before, had the chance to the solemnization of a marriage in the Paramaribo depot. Therefore, it is to be expected that at least half of the women would have been able to settle themselves in Suriname after indenture.⁵⁰

What stands out in the debate on the demographic development of the life course after a contract period is that Surinamese and plantation-specific circumstances are mostly not taken into account. It has, however, been shown that different crop growth processes are not always comparable in for example its physical labour tasks, the harshness of the working and living conditions, and the amount of money that could be earned. These specifics can influence the physical state of an individual by increasing or decreasing the risk of sickness or accidents leading to injuries, handicaps and incapacitation. Therefore, it seems likely that indentured labourers who worked on sugar

⁴⁸ Hyles, *Guiana and the shadows of empire*, 88, 89; Meel, 'De emigratie van Hindostaanse contractarbeiders', 121; Pitou van Dijk, 'Continuity and change in a small open economy, in: Rosemarijn Hoefte, Peter Meel (eds.), *20th century Suriname. Continuities and discontinuities in a new world society* (Kingston, 2001), pp. 48-70, here: 49, 51; Rosemarijn Hoefte, 'The development of a multi-ethnic plantation economy', in: Rosemarijn Hoefte, Peter Meel (eds.), *20th century Suriname. Continuities and discontinuities in a new world society* (Kingston, 2001), pp. 1-22, here: 6-16; Waldo Heilbron, *Kleine boeren in de schaduw van de plantage. De politieke economie van de na-slavernijperiode in Suriname* (Amsterdam, 1982).

⁴⁹ Hans de Beer, 'The biological standard of living in Suriname, c. 1870-1915', in: *Economics and Human Biology* 22 (2016), pp. 140-154.

⁵⁰ Bahadur, *Coolie woman*, 45, 163-177; Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 35, 52; De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 81-82; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 29, 67-68; Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 102-113; McNeill, Lal, *The condition of Indian immigrants*, 168, 183-184.

plantations – where work is considered harsher and physically more exhausting – had a higher chance of repatriation to India.⁵¹

Altogether, some research has been conducted on the development of the life course after a contract period – repatriation or settlement. However, this research can be described as superficial, as is evident in the next citation by Hoeffte:

‘Many factors influenced decisions about whether to return or to stay. They includes among others the formation of family and other relations in the host country, the power of the caste system [...], a failure of meeting savings goals, or the irregular sailing of return ships [...].’⁵²

Although several authors give a broad scope of possible explanations for the choice to either settle or repatriate, it does not become clear whether or not these reasons were omnipresent or rather an individual consideration and to what extent these explanations were important in the decision to settle or repatriate, be it forced or voluntarily. From literature, it does not become clear if there is any relation between demographic characteristics or external factors from the Surinamese context and whether or not Hindostani indentured labourers settled.

However, following the discussion in literature, it is expected that close relations with family members or within a community contribute to a higher chance of settling at the expense of the share of *kantráki* returning to India. Simultaneously and consequently, it is expected that women settled more often, because it is argued that they were more dependent on other people during and after the contract period than men were. Regarding the development through time, it is expected that the relative share of Hindostanis settling themselves permanently in Suriname, compared to the share that repatriated, increased throughout the research period due to an improvement in working and living conditions and the expanding possibilities and presence of different relationships and communities. Additionally, it is presumed that *kantráki* who served on plantations with heavier and more dangerous work repatriated more often. This would seem to apply mostly to sugar plantations.

⁵¹ Hoeffte, ‘Control and resistance’, 1-3; Alex van Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast. Roofbouw en overleven in een Caraïbische plantagekolonie, 1750-1863* (Leiden, 1993), 11-12, 113; B.W. Higman, ‘The sugar revolution’, in: *Economic History Review* 53:2 (2000), pp. 213-236; Clive Y. Thomas, *Plantations, peasants, and state. A study of the mode of sugar production in Guyana* (Los Angeles, Mona, 1984), 1-26; Walton Look Lai, *Indentured labor, Caribbean sugar. Chinese and Indian migrants to the British West Indies, 1838-1918* (Baltimore, London, 1993), 117-119.

⁵² Hoeffte, ‘Indenture in the long nineteenth century’, 626.

Chapter 2: ‘Dui jati Bharat se aye, Hindu Musalman kahlaye’: the origins of the *kantráki*⁵³

Before looking at the methodology, it is important to understand who arrived in Paramaribo between 1873 and 1916. Therefore, this succinct chapter will explicate an overview of the origin of the *kantráki*, before shedding some light on the process of migration, arrival and allocation to a plantation in Suriname. The aim of this chapter is, however, not to position this thesis in the debate on the moral aspects of the indentured labour system, but rather to contextualise the migration of the 34,000 *kantráki* and to take the first step to analyse the data correctly.

‘Naukari logé?’ The recruitment process⁵⁴

British Indians were recruited by *arkatias* (unlicensed recruiters, translation: ‘cunning seducer’) or by *duffadars* (licensed recruiters), mainly in bigger cities in the northern part of India. These recruiters worked under a sub-agent, who was responsible for the recruitment in a certain area and the sub-depot to which the recruited were sent. The Emigration Agent oversaw the different sub-agents and was the responsible for the transport of the indentured migrants, the head depot in Calcutta and the meeting of the Surinamese planters’ demand for labourers. Although the Emigration Agent had to be approved by the British-Indian government, the nomination was in the hands of the Dutch-Surinamese government, as described in Article II of the Recruitment Treaty.⁵⁵

Following this, potential *kantráki* were approached by *arkatias* mostly in their own district, according to the 1882 Emigration Act, which forbade registration of indentured migrants outside their districts of origin. From there, he or she was escorted to the closest sub-depot, where the recruited signed a contract – which was binding after 1886. Depending on the distance between the sub-depot and Calcutta, he or she travelled by train or by other means to the main depot, located next to the River Hooghli. It is at this place that all soon-to-be migrants awaited their voyage across the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.⁵⁶

Rahman Khan describes the daily life in the depot quite extensively, mentioning the seemingly crumbling of the importance of the caste system and its consequential segregation.⁵⁷ Not only was the physical, esthetical difference between the castes and the difference between Hindus and Muslims faded because everybody in the depot was to wear the same clothes and to eat the same food at the

⁵³ ‘Two communities came from India, they were called Hindus and Muslims’. These are the first two lines of a poem from 1953 by Rahman Khan from his *Doha Shikshavali*. The full translated poem goes as following: ‘Two communities came from India, they were called Hindus and Muslims. Between them existed a great love, like between two brothers of one mother’: Hindorama, ‘Een prominente immigrant. Leraar, dichter en schrijver Munshi Rahman Khan’ (2003), <<https://www.hindorama.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Munshi-Rahman-Khan-HR-3-2003.pdf>> [retrieved on December 23th 2020].

⁵⁴ ‘Do you want a job?’: Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 87.

⁵⁵ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 53-72, 176.

⁵⁶ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 87-94, 105, 115; De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 65; Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 31; Lal, ‘Understanding the Indian indenture experience’, 220.

⁵⁷ The caste system is traditionally a social, economic and political division in society, subdividing its population in five egalitarian segments: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras and the Untouchables. For more information on the caste system, see: Guha, *Beyond caste*.

same place – which was already of great impact due to the importance of these symbolic boundaries in Indian culture⁵⁸ - Khan was baffled by the seemingly acceptance of this disappearing separation. He stated rather surprised that Brahmins ‘[d]espite committing all types of sins, they still claimed to be chaste and pure! This I call the height of hypocrisy!’⁵⁹ This conception is espoused by Brij Lal, stating that the social structures constructed by the caste system were shaken and to some extent broken in the main depot. However, according to Bahadur, one has to keep in mind that these boundaries were not permanently gone: ‘They may have hidden their identities, but they did not disavow them’.⁶⁰

The main depot in Calcutta can be describes as a waiting point in the process of becoming *kantráki*, considering the fact that ships did not sail without a sufficient number of indentured migrants. The waiting time varied, but for example, Khan remained in the Calcutta depot for three months. When finally aboard a ship that is set to sail for Suriname, it could take a period from six weeks to three months before arriving in Paramaribo, depending on whether the voyage was made on a sailed vessel or a steamship. In this period, there were several strict rules imposed on by the British colonial administration which protected the migrants, considering health, food and the medical equipment on the ships.⁶¹

Aboard the ships, there were cases of sea sickness, virus outbreaks and deaths. In order to prevent more diseases and deaths, and to take care of the sick, a European doctor was present on the ship. When arriving in Suriname, because for the need of preventing the spread of diseases, the ship first stopped at Fort Nieuw-Amsterdam on the other side of the River Suriname, where a medical examination took place. When a *kantráki* was sick at arrival, he or she would be send to the Military Hospital in Paramaribo. If there was an outbreak of a disease (for example cholera) on a ship, the ship would be placed in quarantine on the other side of the River Commewijne at Fort Leyden. The healthy *kantráki* were send to the Paramaribo depot, from where they were allocated to a plantation.⁶²

Regarding the allocation to the different plantations, it should be noted that this probably happened in a random method. De Klerk states that, according to the Recruitment Treaty, married couples could not be separated, just as children below the age of fifteen should not be separated from their parents. De Klerk adds to that that the preference of the *kantráki* was taken into consideration, but this is not apparent in the work of Khan. From the passage he describes, it seems that the first allocations were for plantations in the western district of Nickerie: ‘On the first day of such an allocation [...] I sat among the crowd of recruits. Even though people on our ships who had been to Suriname before had warned us not to sit there on the first day, since the place of appointment

⁵⁸ Guha, *Beyond cast*, 1-7, 15-17.

⁵⁹ Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 77-82.

⁶⁰ Bahadur, *Coolie woman*, 43-45; Lal, ‘Understanding the Indian indenture experience’, 222-223.

⁶¹ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 141-147, 213-223; Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 82.

⁶² Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 147-154, 179; De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 74-75, 78-83; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 125-127.

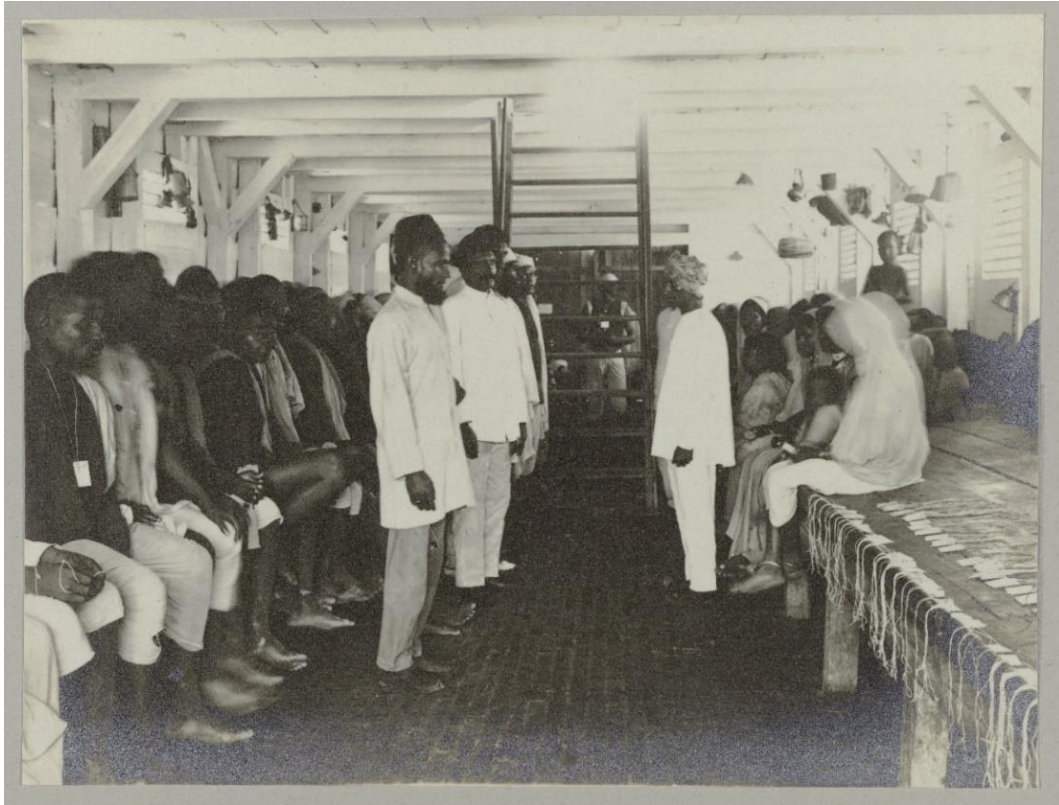


Image 1: Hindostani *kantráki* in the Paramaribo depot. The labels on the right side of the picture and around the necks of the Hindostanis presumably mentioned which plantation the indentured labourer was allocated to work.⁶³

would be Nickeri[e] [...]’ From this, it becomes clear that there was no systematised method in allocation. *Image 1* depicts the moment of allocation and it seems that the *kantráki* were handed a label, which presumably contained the name of the plantation Hindostanis were allocated to. This seems to confirm the idea of a rather random methodology in the allocation. Whether or not there was an unofficial (un)conscious selection by the Agent General (or one of his employees) is not known.⁶⁴

The ‘scum of the earth’? A generalised profile of the *kantráki*

It is often argued that most *kantráki* were recruited in crowded places, where the acts of chaos and surprise – needed and used by the recruiters – thrived. Additionally, authors like Bhagwanbali also state that social control was not present in bigger cities as in villages. In these smaller places, recruiters were more easily scared off by more closely tied-together communities. Another reason mentioned is the forlornness, lack of knowledge and loneliness of the potential recruited in a big, new city. In this situation, recruiters could persuade Indians more easy. This becomes clear in the following

⁶³ Rijksmuseum, ‘Hindostaanse contractarbeiders in het immigrantendepot’, Hendrik Doijer, *Souvenir de voyage V* (1906-1913), <<http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.489776>> [retrieved on December 30th 2020].

⁶⁴ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 181; De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 82-83; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 148; Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 90.

passage in Khan's autobiography, describing his recruitment: 'Such sugary talk swept me off my feet and I forgot everything [...] and believed those evil minded men.'⁶⁵

However, this does not mean that the majority of the *kantráki* originated from urban centres. The bulk of the recruited came from smaller towns and villages, predominantly from the United Provinces (46.5%), the province of Oudh (24.5%), Bihar and Bengal, together encompassing 21.9% of all the Indian migrants to Suriname. The remaining 7.1% represent origins from Punjab, Madras, Bombay and other Indian regions; thus not exclusively provinces in North India, but all densely populated areas. *Image 2* depicts a map of British India.⁶⁶

It has been argued by several authors that, despite the contemporary thought in primarily the earlier years of indentureship, that the immigrants were the 'scum of the earth'⁶⁷, the recruited group represented Northern Indian society relatively well – at least more than some contemporary officials claimed. For example, despite the demand and a preference for lower-caste, agricultural Indians, according to De Klerk and Choenni and Choenni, about 5% of the *kantrákis* were of the highest caste, the Brahmin caste. Bhagwanbali states that this percentage of emigrating Brahmins is higher, with an average of about 15,4% per year. Compared to the relative number of Brahmins in the United Provinces of 11%, it can be stated that to some extent the share of the Brahmin caste among the *kantráki* is rather well represented.⁶⁸

Overall, about 80% of the *kantráki* were Hindus, 15% were Muslims and the rest consisted of Christians, Sikhs and others. De Klerk mentions a slight overrepresentation of Muslim indentured migrants compared to the population of the United Provinces, which he explains by stating that Muslims were overrepresented as recruiters compared to Hindus, and Muslims lived in more urbanised areas than Hindus. Additionally De Klerk claims that Muslims were less held back due to religious

⁶⁵ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 67-72, 87; Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 34-36; Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 73-74.

⁶⁶ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 73-75, 157; De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 48-50; Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 35-38, Lal, 'Understanding the Indian indenture experience', 219.

⁶⁷ '[...] Dutch officials contended that Suriname recruited the "scum of the earth"': Hoefte, 'Indenture in the long nineteenth century', 616. However, Agent General for Immigration C. van Drimmelen (in office 1902-1921) describes in 1910 that the British Indians are known to be agriculturists with outstanding qualities: C. van Drimmelen, *Rapport omtrent de beantwoording van vragen betreffende immigratie in Suriname van Javaansche, Britisch-Indische en andere tropische en sub-tropische gezinnen op groote schaal* (Paramaribo, 1910), 34, <<https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMUBL07:000001910>> [retrieved on January 11th 2021].

⁶⁸ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 100-102; Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 36; De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 91-113; Hoefte, 'Indenture in the long nineteenth century', 616; Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 37-38; Lal, 'Understanding the Indian indenture experience', 218, 221. It has been argued in literature that it is necessary to examine migration in relation with the sending region and therefore not value them in the context of the receiving country. Historians Spitzer and Zimran showed in their study on Italian migration to the United States in the 20th century that the 'seemingly disadvantaged [...] Italian immigrants were indeed 'the best of their class': Yannay Spitzer, Ariell Zimran, 'Migrant self-selection. Anthropometric evidence from the mass migration of Italians to the United States, 1907-1925', in: *Journal of Development Economics* 134 (2018), pp. 226-247, here: 241.

and cultural beliefs than Hindus – which seems to contradict the statements by Guha and Choenni and Choenni that Hindus and Muslims shared many cultural values and beliefs.⁶⁹

According to Choenni and Choenni, *arkatias* were not to recruit men older than 35 or women older than 30 years old. Additionally, the weak, sick or handicapped were also not to be recruited, just as women with two or more children. Next to these criteria, the aim was to recruit about 50 women for every hundred men, and not more than 10% of the recruited could be younger than 10 years old. To what extent *arkatias* really did try to meet these criteria is hard to determine.⁷⁰



Image 2: A political map of British India in 1893.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 100-103; De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 91-113; Guha, *Beyond caste*, 15.

⁷⁰ Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 36; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 98-99. The criterion for the percentage of women among the indentured migrants is also written down in the Recruitment Treaty, Article XVI; Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 180.

⁷¹ Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 60.

After a brief glimpse at the actual group of *kantrákis*, it becomes clear that these criteria were not always met. Bhagwanbali and Choenni and Choenni support their work with percentages, which all show that there were people older than 35 years who migrated to Suriname. According to Bhagwanbali, about 9.5% of all *kantrákis* were 30 years or older, whilst Choenni and Choenni claim that about 70% of the indentured migrants were between the ages of 17 and 35. Bhagwanbali states that about 11.3% of all indentured migrants were between the ages of 0 and 10, which is only slightly too much according to the preferred percentage.⁷²

Before leaving India, there were three medical examinations – at the sub-depot, upon arrival in the main depot in Calcutta and upon departure from Calcutta – aimed at filtering the weak, sick and handicapped people out. Next to these examinations, it was mandatory for indentured migrants to be vaccinated, and sick migrants were given a chance to recover. However, according to Madhwi, the emigration agency for Suriname tended to recruit sick or unfit people more easily than agencies for most British and French colonies, which expresses itself in the arrival of physically weak persons in 1873-1874, resulting in a relatively high death rate. Additionally, Madhwi states that when indentured migrants deliberately want to leave, hiding sickness and fraud were prevalent among emigrants, for the most at the last medical examination before departure. Altogether, it is hard to state that these medical examinations were always able to separate the strong and healthy from the weak and the sick, despite the demand for the first two characteristics.⁷³

After exploring the processes of recruitment, migration and allocation in Suriname, it becomes clear that the group of arriving *kantráki* consisted of a multicultural, religiously varied and socially different composition relatively representative of (Northern) Indian society. This overview causes the start of a better understanding of the migration of Hindostanis to an new, unknown colony, some 15,000 kilometres away from Calcutta. Therefore, it puts the rather quantitative analysis in this research in to a more qualitative perspective.

⁷² Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 135; Choenni, Choenni, *Sarnami Hindostani*, 35.

⁷³ De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 118-121; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 98-99, 101, 103; Meel, 'De emigratie van Hindostaanse contractarbeiders', 131; Madhwi, 'Indentured labour for overseas colonies, circa 1834-1910', in: *Social Scientist* 43:9/10 (2015), pp. 53-68, here: 58, 60-62.

Chapter 3: Constructing the working frame. Source criticism and methodology

In order to answer the research question, it is important to set up a well-constructed framework. In this chapter, first the autobiography of Rahman Khan and the *Surinaamsche Almanakken* will be contextualised, after which it will be described how these sources will be used in this thesis. In the second part of this chapter, the main primary source of this research, the database, will be critically reviewed and in the third section the methodology will be presented.

Two sides of one story. Contextualising the textual sources.

As mentioned in the introduction, the autobiography *Jeevan Prakash* (Light of Life) by Rahman Khan gives a unique insight in the experiences of Indians in Suriname, because this is the only known autobiography of a Hindostani *kantráki*. Khan described his life quite vividly, ranging from his life in the village of Bharkari, in nowadays Uttar Pradesh, until the moment he finished his book in 1943. He even includes a short introducing history of India, to which he refers to as ‘Hindustan’ or ‘Bharat’.⁷⁴

The autobiography is written in four volumes, preceded by a preface and an introduction. Khan described the story of his life in great detail, including not only the life events themselves, but his train of thought too. Throughout *Jeevan Prakash*, multiple fragments are present from where it becomes clear that Khan believed in the fact that Allah decided his destiny. This idea is reflected in the following passage, in which Khan describes his feeling when he was recently recruited in Kanpur:

‘But I did not know about this possibility [to cancel his agreement on signing a contract] and even if I had known I still would have remained there, because Holy Allah had picked me out and I was destined to leave Hindustan and earn a living in Surinam.’⁷⁵

However, as Fokken states, this acceptance of destiny should not be defined as a denouncement of agency, but ‘as a refusal to stage migration as a rejection of the family and community he was leaving behind.’ Migrants were often seen as outcasts, partly due to the abovementioned idea of crossing the *kali pani*. Therefore, according to Fokken, this acceptance of destiny should be seen as an acceptance of the status of migrant.⁷⁶

Despite the amount of meaningful experiences and extensive descriptions, the autobiography is not representative of all the Hindostani *kantráki*. As is apparent from the autobiography, Khan held a rather strong position in Surinamese society among the other *kantráki* and plantation and colonial officials. He was educated to become a teacher in India, could understand and speak at least Hindi,

⁷⁴ Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 3, 15, 27-29; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*; Ellen Bal, Kathinka Sinha-Kerkhoff, ‘Een Hindoestaanse diaspora. India en de moslim-Hindostanen in Nederland en Suriname’, in: *OSO. Tijdschrift voor Surinaamse taalkunde, letterkunde en geschiedenis* 23 (2004), pp. 236-256, here: 236-237.

⁷⁵ Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 74.

⁷⁶ Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 67-68, 72.

Urdu, Nengre, Javanese and English, and taught Hindus – despite the fact that he himself was a Muslim – the meaning of holy texts, for example the Ramayana. When considering that Khan was appointed *sardar* (overseer, leader), it is even more strikingly clear that Khan was not an average person.⁷⁷

Therefore, it seems rather impossible to extract experiences from Khan's life and impose these on the life courses of the other individuals. Despite that Khan's autobiography sheds a limited light on indentureship, it is however a valuable source. Such texts give inside in motives in strategies, which enriches the information provided by quantitative analyses. To use *Jeevan Prakash* as a primary source, the consequences of it being an autobiography have to be taken into account. This means that the story provided is mostly from a sole perspective, and written down several – if not many – years after the different events took place. However, as we will see later, Khan's life story will be useful when criticizing and supplementing the database and when one aims to understand the life courses more precisely.

The other textual sources used in this research are the *Surinaamsche Almanakken* (hereafter: *Almanakken*), printed for the first time in 1819. In 1912, the name changed to *De Vraagbaak* (freely translated: The Question Beacon), publishing until 1954. These documents were produced every year, recording all kinds of information of Suriname. In most years an extensive overview of the different plantations and their cultivated crops is added. This list, differing in extensiveness during the research period, has been used to collect information on the cultivated crops on the plantations. It is important to bear in mind that when the *Almanak* has for example been published in 1917, the information on the plantations is from 1916 – with only a few exceptions. When the data on yields are not from the year before the year of publishing, it is mentioned in the *Almanakken*.⁷⁸

The *Almanakken* are available online, but, unfortunately, not all years of the research period are covered. Information from the *Almanakken* are available for the publication years of 1890-1891, 1893-1897, 1899-1900, 1903-1909, 1914-1915 and 1917. When the information was available, the cultivated crops were added to the individual *kantráki*, based on the beginning of the (first) contract period and the plantation on which they worked.

When the *Almakken* were not available, information on the cultivated crops was retrieved from multiple sources. For the year 1911, an address book (*Adresboek*) is available, which mentions the production of crops on the plantations of the year 1911.⁷⁹ Next to that, the Surinamese newspaper *De West* mentions the production of several crops for two years. The production of coffee, cacao and

⁷⁷ Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 21, 69-72; Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 28-35, 93-95, 106, 133; Michiel van Kempen, *Een geschiedenis van de Surinaamse literatuur IV* (Paramaribo, 2002), 142-146; Michiel van Kempen, *Surinaamse schrijvers en dichters* (Amsterdam, 1989), 67.

⁷⁸ Digitale Bibliotheek voor de Nederlandse Letteren, 'Tijdschrift Surinaamsche Almanak', <https://www.dbnl.org/titels/tijdschriften/tijdschrift.php?id=_sur001suri01> [retrieved on December 23th 2020].

⁷⁹ Jacqs. Morpurgo Dzn, *Adresboek van Suriname 1911* (Paramaribo, 1911).

hevea (rubber) per plantation is written down for 1909 and a 1914 paper mentions the production of cacao and coffee for the year 1899, 1912 and 1913.⁸⁰ Additionally, the work of Philip Dikland, in which he summarises a vast amount of information on Surinamese plantations from their establishment until present day, is used to determine the cultivated crops in several years.⁸¹ Following these sources, information on cultivated crops is found for 86% of all the selected *kantráki* of whom the plantation on which they worked is known (see below).

The quantitative point of view. The database

The database *Suriname: Hindoestaanse immigratieregisters* (hereafter: the database) is the result of merging the information from the immigration registers and a semi-alphabetical index. The registers were kept at the *Immigratiedepartement* (Immigration Department) in Paramaribo and the information in it was written down at the Paramaribo depot after arrival in Suriname and were partly directly copied from the muster rolls. Those muster rolls were drawn up in Calcutta commissioned by the Emigration Agent. The variables recorded in the muster rolls are presented in *Appendix 1*.⁸²

The index was drawn up by Surinamese colonial officials and mentions the names of the immigrants, as well as their contract number, the name of the ship on which they migrated to Suriname and whether the labour migrant repatriated or died in Suriname. The information given by the index is thus limited and only used for individuals who were not registered in the immigration registers at the moment of transcription. In all cases, the immigration records were regarded as the basic and most important source, so that if there was any discrepancy between the two sources, the information from the immigration registers was taken over in the analysis. Due to the use of these two sources, it is however possible that one individual is mentioned twice in the database. This will, however, not be a problem, because the contract numbers can be checked in both sources.

All the other information was being written down and kept to date by the *Immigratiedepartement* in Suriname, presented in *Appendix 1*. All the variables from the immigration registers were standardised in the process of the composition of the database. However, more information was being written down on the different folios from the immigration registers after the first registration at arrival in Paramaribo. This loose, non-standardised information was written down

⁸⁰ 'Binnen onze grenzen 1913', in: *De West. Nieuwsblad uit en voor Suriname*, January 27th 1914 <<https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011090359:mpeg21:p001>> [retrieved on December 23th 2020]; 'Landbouw. Cacao, koffie, hevea', in: *De West. Nieuwsblad uit en voor Suriname*, February 2nd 1910 <<https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011090804:mpeg21:p002>> [retrieved December 23th 2020].

⁸¹ Nationaal Archief, 'Plantages in Suriname en op Curaçao', <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/zoekhulpen/plantages-in-suriname-en-op-curaçao#collapse-7668>> [retrieved on December 23th 2020]; Philip Dikland (ed.), 'Surinaamse Erfgoed Documentatie' (2000-2018), <<http://www.suriname-heritage-guide.com/>> [retrieved on December 28th 2020]. The several documents are available in an open access Google Drive. For the used documents, see the bibliography.

⁸² Nationaal Archief, 'Hindostanen in Suriname'; McNeill, Lal, *The condition of the Indian immigrants*, 190.

in a memo field, resulting in an enormous amount of information not yet classified in variables – in some cases encompassing more than two pages of written text.⁸³

This information is, however, of utter importance for answering the research question. On the one hand because this information can determine the development of the life course of a Hindostani migrant, on the other hand because variables can be used to explain the developments. This information is, however, far from complete, partly due to the fact that memo fields were not added in the original folios and information was not always written down. Additionally, it is known that information on particularly marriages is not only incomplete, but the concept and definition of marriage was itself an issue. The colonial officials did only recognise marriages conducted according to European tradition and therefore traditional Hindostani marriages were hardly recognised – even after a modification of the marriage law in 1907. It was only in January 1941 that Hindu and Muslim marriages were largely recognised. But on the other hand, too, it appears from the autobiography of Khan that in practice, on the plantations, ‘marriages’ were a concept laid upon migrants by the planters and were therefore not recorded in the database. This becomes strikingly clear from this episode, when Khan arrived at Lust en Rust for the first time:⁸⁴

‘We were five men and a woman who was without husband. Seeing this, the manager asked the lady who her husband was. I do not know what happened to this bitch but she alleged that I was her husband. [...] I was stunned and immediately refuted her allegation. But despite all my pleadings, the manager refused to heed to my clarifications and warned me of dire consequences if I refused to lodge with the woman.’⁸⁵

It is important to understand why the information in the database was being recorded. Maurits Hassankhan and Sandew Hira, the historians responsible for the publication of the database, have pointed out that the immigration registers were used in order for the Dutch colonial government to keep track on who was present in the colony. The most evident reason for this is that the Surinamese colonial administration was obliged to report information to the British-Indian government, mainly because of the fact that the indentured labourers were still British subjects. On the other hand, it seems that migrants’ information was gathered in order to recognise and identify the immigrants. That becomes clear when considering the body height, marks of identification and skin colour was mentioned in the registers. However, it is not fully clear if these were the sole reasons for writing this information down.⁸⁶

⁸³ De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 83-87; Nationaal Archief, ‘Hindostanen in Suriname’.

⁸⁴ De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 81-82, 188-191; McNeill, Lal, *The condition of Indian immigrants*, 158-159; Nationaal Archief, ‘Hindostanen in Suriname’

⁸⁵ Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 91.

⁸⁶ Bhagwanbali, *Contracten voor Suriname*, 180; De Klerk, ‘De komst en vestiging van de Brits-Indiërs’, 20; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 83-85, 141.

Probably, information on children and family relations was mentioned not only because of recognition and the obliged reporting to British officials, but it is also possible that this information enabled Surinamese officials to keep track on family relations. Since families were not to be separated, it seems rather useful and helpful to gather and bind this information. Next to that, it would be useful to exactly know who was located at which plantation with whom. However, these explanations are not yet supported by evidence from any governmental or legislative communication.

The richness of the database, however, does not completely compensate for the colonial, top-bottom perspective used by the Dutch officials who recorded the information of the *kantráki*. It therefore has to be kept in mind that although much information seems rather objective, it was still written down with the goals of legibility in mind. This concept of legibility means that the population of the colony was recorded in order for governments to administer and govern the colony. The implication of this is that information of the people was recorded in a number of standardised categories. It is important to take into account what the recorded information implies and the implication of what information was not recorded also has to be prevalent in analysing and using the database in this thesis and in other studies. It is evident that if information is not available, it does not mean that there was no information at all. However and unfortunately, this database is one of the few textual sources left about Hindostani indentureship in Suriname.⁸⁷

Methodology

In order to make sure that the incompleteness of the database and the non-standardised form of the memo field will not be a major problem for this research, it is important to set out a clear and structured method for answering the main question of this thesis. The database is too large to standardise every variable from the memo field – at least, for the time scope of this research. Therefore, a sample has been made, consisting of every first, twenty-sixth, fifty-first and seventy-sixth persons from every hundred persons mentioned in the database. This method has been used to select immigrants throughout the whole research period, avoiding selection bias as much as possible.

Since the year of arrival will be used as the time-bound variable, it is important to ensure as much years of arrival are added to the sample. For a significant number of *kantráki*, it is not known from the database in which year they arrived in Paramaribo, but, it is known on which ship they left India. The arrival dates of all the ships with *kantráki* aboard are known because of the work of De Klerk. For example, the database does not mention a year of arrival for Umair (unknown contract number), but does mention that the name of the ship of arrival was *Zanzibar*. When looking at the overview by De Klerk, it can be seen that *Zanzibar* arrived on August 16th 1878. In some cases,

⁸⁷ Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 46-50; Simon Szreter, Keith Breckenridge, 'Editors' introduction. Recognition and registration. The infrastructure of personhood in world history', in: Keith Breckenridge, Simon Szreter (eds.), *Registration and recognition. Documenting the person in world history* (Oxford, 2012), pp.1-38.

however, the database is rather incomplete in the correct naming of the ships. For example, Parchi (contract number R/514) arrived in Paramaribo on the ship *Lena*, but according to the overview of De Klerk, two ships with that name carried *kantráki* from India to Suriname, in 1892 and in 1902. In these cases, the contract number represents the year of arrival, because the letter in the number represents the year of arrival as well. The letter R stands for the immigration registers of 1889. For cases where no date of arrival, no clear, unique ship name and no contract number is available, it is not possible to determine the year of arrival. Nevertheless, by using these methods, for 2.504 Hindostanis in the total database a year of arrival has been added.⁸⁸

Because of the need for detailed information, the persons added solely from the index are not taken into account. This could mean that there could be a selection bias, since mostly the registers from whole years are lost. However, considering the fact that the loss of these bounded registers happened due to decay and not to selective destruction, and combining that fact that the bounded registers are lost seemingly random, it can be argued this selection is not biased to a great extent. Additionally, due to the selection method, a sample of 1,151 people is of an adequate size since the randomness of the sample and the amount of variables studied in this thesis, albeit only about 3.4% of the total number of Hindostani immigrants that arrived in Suriname.⁸⁹

The information in the memo fields of the selected records has been collected and the information needed for this research are manually added as distinct variables. It was not possible, due to a limited expertise, to extract the information from the memo fields by any standardised or algorithmic search method. This is due to the fact that the richness of information, the differing sequence of the information in the fields, as well as the various manners of phrasing of the different data, let alone spelling mistakes in original writing and in transcribing the database. In this manner, forty-nine new variables have been added to the sample. This seems a high number, but one has to bear in mind that some variables were rather unique. For example, Pryag Jibasia (contract number W/233), has received and relinquished six different plots of land after her contract period, and Sita Ram Khumani Sing (contract number Ii/158) signed a total of six contracts. These examples are, however, rather extreme and rare.⁹⁰ The eventual extracted variables from the memo fields are presented in *Appendix 1*.

The life course outcome as observed in Suriname has been determined by multiple factors. The first step in this determination was found in the information supplied by the index. As mentioned above, the index mentioned whether or not people repatriated or left and therefore, the life course outcome of

⁸⁸ Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantáki*, 327-329; De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 70-73; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*; Nationaal Archief, 'Hindostanen in Suriname'.

⁸⁹ Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 327-329; Nationaal Archief, 'Hindostanen in Suriname', Kris Inwood, Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, 'Selection bias and social science history', in: *Social Science History* 44 (2020), pp. 411-416.

⁹⁰ Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

already 282 individuals in the sample was known. However, whether someone died or not is quite problematic, because there is a significant amount of discrepancies between the outcomes mentioned in the index and the outcomes based on the database. In these cases, the database is assumed to be the most correct and complete. Therefore, in these cases, when considering the development of the life course, the database is the primary source.⁹¹

Secondly, the information from the memo fields have been used to determine the life course outcome on the one hand, and to control the given information of repatriation or decease provided by the index. In determining the outcome, it has to be mentioned that in order to label a migrant as a settler, a period of ten years after the ending of the last contract has to be taken into account. This period has been chosen due to the possibility of migrants to temporarily settle in Suriname, in the words of McNeill and Lal, to ‘make a round of estates and settlements before deciding what they will do in the future’⁹², or the possibility that migrants had to travel back to Paramaribo and had to wait for a ship to take them on the repatriating sea voyage. An example of the latter can be found in the case of Jawahir Rajrania (contract number Kk/1176), who after a period of seven years after the ending of her first and only contract period, remigrated to India in 1920. In cases like Jawahir Rajrania’s, this research assigned the label ‘repatriated’ to these individuals.⁹³

There are examples of Hindostani migrants who obtained a piece of land and received a premium, but afterwards still repatriated – on own expenses or not – after the selected criterion of ten years. An example is Pataie Mulaie (contract number R/1431), who after one contract period rented a plot at the Commisarisweg (south of Paramaribo) between 1903 and 1906, before departing for Calcutta on July 28th 1921. This research would label the outcome of the life course development of Pataie Mulaie as ‘temporal settlement, repatriated’ and has done so for every case which mentioned a return voyage after temporal settlement.⁹⁴

However, to ease the process of the determination of the outcome of the life course ten years after the end of a contract, it is necessary and above all useful to use a different source to determine whether Hindostani migrants chose to settle in Suriname. Therefore, the *Volkstelling 1921* (Census 1921) has been used. This census is available online at the Nationaal Archief and Hindostani migrants are sorted together in one category. Therefore it has been rather easy to link people from the immigration registers to the census. However, mainly due different spellings of names and name changes, it was not possible to link the census to the database based on the individual names. The linkage could only be done by means of the contract number, which only enlarged the chances of a correct linkage. Considering the fact that there has to be a period of at least ten years between the end

⁹¹ Nationaal Archief, ‘Hindostanen in Suriname’.

⁹² McNeill, Lal, *The condition of Indian immigrants*, 169.

⁹³ There were also several ex-*kantráki* who repatriated via Demerara, because of the shortage of return voyages directly from Paramaribo, see: De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 154-155; McNeill, Lal, *The condition of Indian immigrants*, 168; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

⁹⁴ Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

of the last contract and the settlement, not every Hindostani indentured migrant could be taken into account in this method. In cases of no re-indenture, the last end year of contract is 1910; in cases of one extra contract, this year is 1905; in cases of two re-indentures the year is 1900, et cetera. In this way, it is certain to state that the people on whom the above is applicable have indeed settled in Suriname.⁹⁵

When determining whether or not an ex-*kantráki* has settled in Suriname, the last known life event is taken into account. In order to properly determine the last known life event, a decision tree has been produced. This visual description of events during and after indenture enables the possibility to determine whether someone repatriated or settled. Some life events contribute to the determination of the settlement or the repatriation of the *kantráki*, for example the adjustment of a name or the repatriation itself respectively. This decision tree is displayed in *Appendix 2*.

When there was more than ten year between this last life event and the end of the last contract, it is assumed that the Hindostani migrant settled in his or her new home country. It was for example possible to assign the status of settler to some ex-*kantráki* due to the fact that it was possible to change ones name from 1916 onwards. In some cases, the names written down at the moment of registration at arrival were not correctly written. This probably can be explained by either the indifference, ignorance or an insufficient knowledge of Hindi, Urdu or other Indian languages of the clerk in either Calcutta or Paramaribo. For example, Rahman Khan changed his official name on the 11th of January 1956 from Rehman Mahomed Khan to Moenshi Rahman Mohamedkhan; ‘Moenshi’ referring to his status as teacher. When people did change their name more than ten years after the ending of their last contract, it can be assumed they permanently settled in Suriname.⁹⁶

In all other cases, it has been quite clear which variable had to be assigned to the Hindostani *kantráki*, but it is worth mentioning that there were examples of people from whom nothing is known outside the end date of their contract – or sometimes even less. In those cases, it is not possible to decide the life course outcome. Therefore, the category ‘unknown’ has been added to this analysis.

In the end the following outcomes were abstracted from the database: repatriation, settlement (census), settlement (other), deceased during migration to Suriname, deceased before the start of a contract, deceased during contract, deceased after the ending of a contract, deceased during forced labour (as penalisation), deceased (unknown), deserted, left (Cayenne), left (Trinidad), left and came back, temporal settlement and repatriated (more than ten years after the ending of the last contract), and unknown. In the next chapter, these results will be presented using less categories. The aforementioned outcomes and the subdivisions used in the next chapters are displayed in *Appendix 3*.

⁹⁵ Nationaal Archief, *Suriname. Namenklapper Volkstelling 1921*, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/index/nt00445?searchTerm=>> [retrieved on December 22th 2020].

⁹⁶ De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 182-184; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 72; Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 3, 15, 269; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*; Nationaal Archief, ‘Hindostanen in Suriname’.

Chapter 4: ‘A leopard never changes his spots’. The individual demographic influence.⁹⁷

Following the sample, the modal *kantráki* was a Hindu male, 20 years old at arrival, and arriving in 1873 to work on a plantation in the district of Beneden Commewijne. He would arrive without family members, nor would he sign a re-indenture contract. According to the database, he would not marry in Suriname and he would not get children in Suriname. However, he would settle in Suriname after the expiring of his contract.

This generalised image of the *kantráki* is interesting, but not helpful; there is no person in the entire database who fits all these demographic criteria. Therefore, this chapter will dive deeper into the individual demographics and present an explanation of the role of personal information. In order to give a more useful image of the Hindostanis, the demographic features of the sample will be presented using descriptive statistics. In the second part, the outcomes of ten years after the end of the last contract will be discussed, before, in the third part, testing these outcomes on whether or not several characteristics are to any extent statistically divergent, and therefore might have had influence on the post-indenture life course. In the last section, explanations for these statistical results will be presented.

The demographics of the sample

About 61.3% of all the Hindostani *kantráki* was male, 28.8% was female and of 8.6% the sex is not known. The ratio of men-women in the sample seems to meet the criteria for the recruiters to enrol 50 women for every 100 men. When this ratio is considered by year, it becomes clear that this criterion is not always met. It is, however, hard to state anything about the sex ratio per year because of the small numbers available per year. When grouping the data in categories of five years, it is evident that the sex ratio was always around 1 woman for every two men. The ratio varies between 1:1.62 and 1:3, averaging at 1 woman for every 2.13 men.⁹⁸

It is somewhat more difficult to establish the religion of the *kantráki*, because of the fact that from 1880, the castes of Hindus were written down. It is argued that when castes were written down, that person adhered to Hinduism. However, it is difficult to state that in such firm terms. As mentioned before, the caste society was not limited to Hindus only, but also had its effects on the Muslim population of the Indian subcontinent. However, since it is mentioned throughout the period of indentureship whether someone was a Muslim or not, it can be assumed that it was not conventional that the caste was written down for someone adhering to Islam. With this in mind, it is safe to say that about 74.9% of all the *kantráki* in the sample were Hindu, about 14.2% adhered to Islam and of 10.9% the religion is not known. Two Hindostanis were Christian and no other religions were identified in the sample. This seems to resemble relatively well the image drawn by the literature.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 113.

⁹⁸ See Appendix 4; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

⁹⁹ Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*; Nationaal Archief, ‘Hindostanen in Suriname’.

The average age at arrival was 21.6 years, with a range between 0 and 55 years of age. 39.6% of the *kantráki* were between the age of 20 and 24 years, while about 11% was under the age of 10 and 4.3% was over the age of 35. The criteria drafted by the Dutch colonial officials seem to be met relatively well, focussing themselves on the age group of 18 to 35 years, which is applicable to 81.2% of the sample. Regarding family relations, 355 of the *kantráki* in the sample were accompanied by one or more family members when arriving in Paramaribo according to the database. Of those 355 Hindostanis, 168 arrived with their husband or wife and 127 was accompanied by one or both of their parents. This means that probably between 11% and 15% of the *kantráki* migrated with their household. According to the database, 873 of the *kantráki* did not marry and did not become parent in Suriname, but as has been stated, this information is rather incomplete. 104 Hindostanis only got children, 67 only married and 107 were married and got children in Suriname. It is expected that of the 104 people who only had children, a considerable percentage was also married according to religious and cultural values.¹⁰⁰

The outcome of life courses presented

As mentioned in chapter 3 and explicated in *Appendix 3*, the demographic outcomes are partly merged into overarching categories in order to present the results in a clear, structured manner and to execute proper analyses with the variables. In *Figure 1* the outcomes are shown. Which is immediately eye-catching, is the amount of unknown outcomes. This has to be explained by the fact that for 308 *kantráki* it is difficult to establish the development of the life course. The last known life event occurred within ten years after the contract period and therefore it was not possible to determine the outcome of the life course. However, for several people, information on the outcome was added without a date and in combination with the census of 1921, the outcome could be determined for another 75 people.

Additionally, it is worth mentioning that of the 436 settling Hindostanis, 293 were recorded in the census. In the other 143 cases, determining factors ten years after the end of the contract period were used to label that specific case as ‘settlement’. A summary of the amount of last life events used in that determination can be found in *Table 1*.

The third aspect that needs to be looked upon, is the total share of *kantráki* dying before, during or after their contract period. 19% of all the Hindostanis mentioned in the sample have died during their contract period or in the ten-year period after their contract period. This seems to be a high percentage. However, these are deaths recorded throughout a period lasting from the moment of departure from Calcutta until ten years after the end date of the last contract. When considering deceases for 15 years after the arrival of a Hindostani, the average death rate is only 12.1 per 1,000. However, as can be seen in *Appendix 4*, the death rate among the *kantráki* in the sample was especially

¹⁰⁰ See *Appendix 4*; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

high in the first five years after arrival. The death rate in the first contract period ranged from 11.4 to 34.6 per 1,000. When comparing this to data on death rates presented by literature, these numbers seem relatively low, which can be explained by the fact that the deaths at unknown moments are not taken into account in the calculations. In comparison, Emmer mentions an average death rate of 27.37 per 1,000 indentured Hindostanis.¹⁰¹

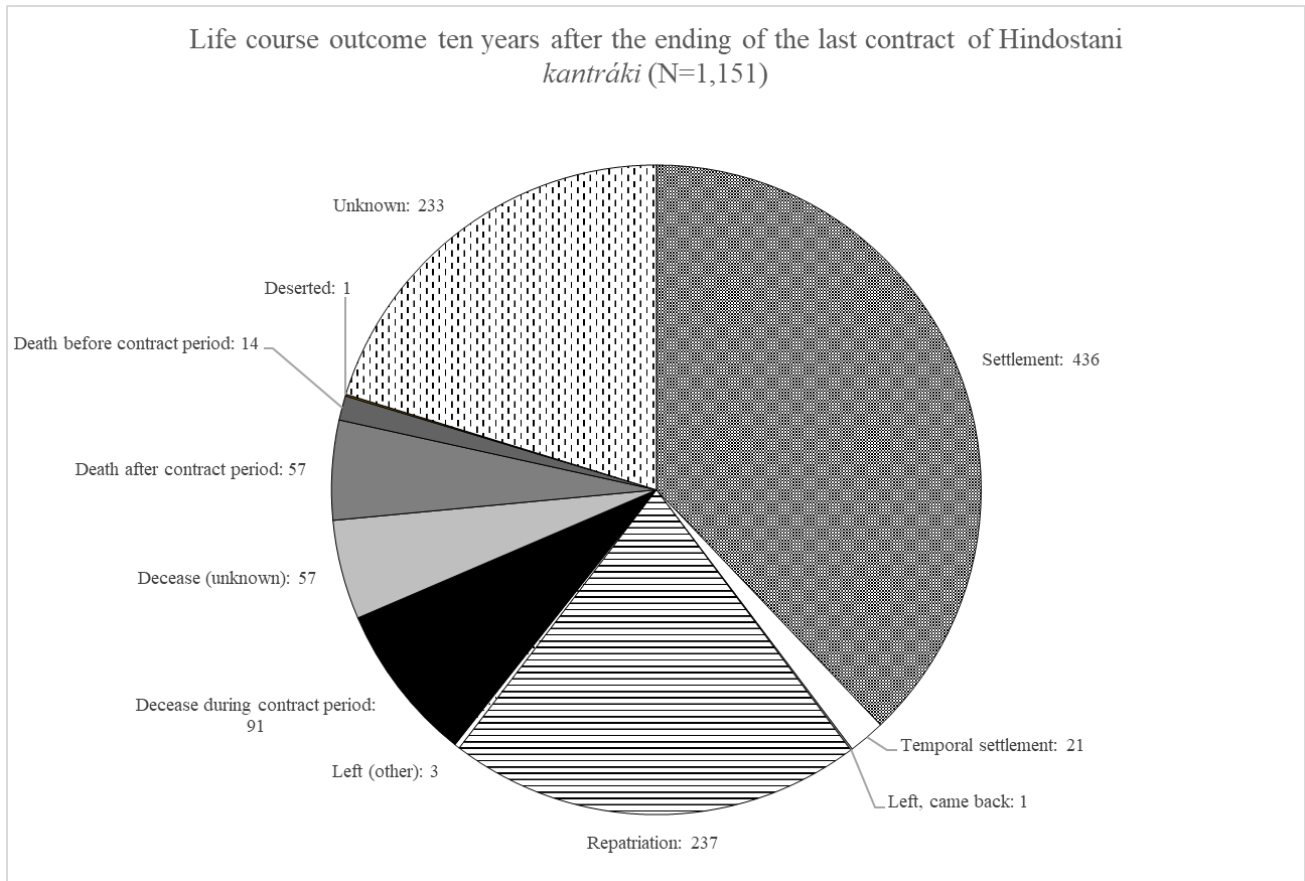


Figure 1: Visual presentation of the distribution of the life course outcomes of Hindostani *kantráki*, ten years after the ending of the last contract (N=1,151).¹⁰²

<i>Life event</i>	<i>N</i>
<i>Decease</i>	84
<i>Adjustment name</i>	28
<i>Premium</i>	11
<i>Birth last child</i>	7
<i>Received land</i>	5
<i>Marriage</i>	4
<i>Relinquished land</i>	3
<i>Divorce</i>	1
Total	143

Table 1: Distribution of the life events used to determine that Hindostani immigrants settled in Suriname.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ For the calculations of the death rate, the unknown cases are not taken into account, because the amount of deceases in this group is unknown. See *Appendix 4*; Emmer, 'The great escape', 262-263; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

¹⁰² Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

¹⁰³ Idem.

Putting the outcomes to the test

In order to analyse whether or not a variable had a significant effect on the choice between repatriation or settlement after a *kantráki*'s contract period, statistical χ^2 and ANOVA tests have been conducted. These tests examine whether or not a given, actual value statistically differs from an expected distribution. When there is a difference, it can be argued that the tested variable indeed influenced the choice. When regarding the χ^2 test, Cramer's V has been used to establish the actual effect of the analysed variable. Additionally, Cramer's V can be used as a comparative measure, since it is a standardised value.

The outcomes are categorised, according to *Appendix 3*, into 'settlement', 'repatriation', 'decease (other)' and 'decease during contract period', 'other and unknown'. The latter is, however, not taken into account, because it is impossible to state anything about this group in a statistical way. Therefore, the sample size in the analyses below will be maximally 913.

When examining the sex of the *kantráki* it becomes apparent that men settled more often than that they repatriated. The same can be stated for women, although the settlement rates were slightly higher than for men. There is no statistical evidence for supporting the idea that men died more often than women. Although the sex of *kantráki* did significantly matter in their choice to stay or to return, the effect of this difference is rather small ($\chi^2 = 17.160$; $p=0.001$; $V=0.143$; $N=843$).

According to a one-way ANOVA test ($F_{(3,834)}=2.824$; $p=0.038$; $N=838$), the age at arrival of those who settled after their contract period ($x=20.81$; $s=7.488$; $N=432$) is statistically lower compared to those who returned to India ($x=22.34$; $s=7.641$; $\Delta x=-1.525$; $p=0.023$; $N=228$) and to *kantráki* who died during their contract period ($x=22.76$; $s=10.002$; $\Delta x=-1.946$; $p=0.040$; $N=91$). There is no significant difference between rates of settlement and the remaining cases of decease. ($x=22.39$; $s=10.508$; $\Delta x=-1.578$; $p=0.101$; $N=87$).

Considering whether or not a *kantráki* signed a contract for re-indenture, it is important to note that due to their resigning, the chances are higher that information is available, simply because for these Hindostanis information was written down more often and at different moments. However, there is no statistical evidence for an influence of re-indentureship on the choice of settlement or repatriation ($\chi^2=3.489$; $p=0.322$; $V=0.062$; $N=913$).

It seems that religion was not a significant variable in the determination of the outcome. This means that differences between religions were not a determinant in the outcome of the life course. ($\chi^2=2.502$; $p=0.475$; $V=0.055$; $N=835$).

Whether someone was accompanied by a family member at arrival seems to have had a small, but significant effect ($\chi^2=10.502$; $p=0.062$; $V=0.096$; $N=913$). The relation between number of family members at the moment of arrival and the difference in settlement and repatriation rates has a significant effect (ANOVA: $F_{(3,909)}=2.714$; $p=0.044$). In this relation it can be stated that the more family members were present at the moment of arrival, the greater the chance of settlement. There is no statistical evidence for a sexual distinction in the influence of the presence of family at arrival. This

analysis, however, only supports the statement that both men and women settled more than that they repatriated ($\chi^2=24.544$; $p=0.004$; $V=0.099$; $N=843$).

When *kantráki* married in Suriname, the chances of settlement are almost two times higher, whilst the likelihood of someone repatriating is lower. This model is significant and has a considerable effect and this relation is stronger than the aforementioned models ($\chi^2=111.203$; $p<0.001$; $V=0.349$), but there might be some bias. As mentioned before, not all marriages were recorded, partly because of the incompleteness and fragmentary nature of the database, partly because the limited official recognition. This could mean that the marriages that were recognised were between Hindostani that relatively accepted the Dutch-oriented laws and values considering marriage. Additionally, there is a considerable divergence between the actual and expected number of decease during the contract period, which can be explained by the fact that the majority of marriages were solemnised after the contract period and, therefore, the possibilities of the passing away of someone who is married are smaller.

Although the information on births is also not complete in the database, children were registered more often than the marriages. Additionally, the variables ‘married in Suriname’ and ‘children born in Suriname’ are to some extent correlated ($\rho=0.471$; $p=0.000$; $N=1,151$). The chances of ex-*kantráki* settling after their period of indenture almost doubles when one or more children have been born in Suriname ($\chi^2=78.383$; $p<0.001$; $V=0.239$).

Despite considerable differences between the body height means per outcome variable of a maximum of 3.1 centimetres, these difference are not statistically significant (ANOVA: $F_{(3,276)}=1.324$; $p=0.261$). It is often argued in literature on body height that, when regarding a population, an increase in body height is related to an improvement in the biological standard of living. This biological living standard is believed to be boosted by, among others, an increasing intake of proteins and a more favourable disease environment. When considering body height as a proxy variable for the biological standard of living, it can be stated that there is no statistical evidence that body height had any influence on the share of repatriation and settlement of *kantráki* whatsoever.¹⁰⁴

Interpreting the findings

It seems from the abovementioned statistical analyses that the relation between the outcomes of the life course and family-related variables are the strongest, followed by the relation between the sex and the outcomes. The other variables seem to have a relatively and absolutely weak relation with the outcomes. It is important to understand why these relations exist and what the reasons were for settling or leaving Suriname.

¹⁰⁴ For the debate on body height as a proxy variable for the biological standard of living, see: De Beer, ‘The biological standard of living in Suriname’; Richard H. Steckel, ‘Heights and human welfare. Recent developments and new directions’, in: *Explorations in Economic History* 46 (2009), pp. 1-23.

When consulting the autobiography of Khan, he clarifies his decision to marry in Suriname. Initially, he wanted to return to India and therefore not marry in Suriname, but his close friend Ashraf (Khan calls him his brother) persuaded him to marry for reasons of stability in the colony. In April 1911, he married Joomenie, whom he does not mention by her name. Khan does not, however, mention whether this marriage was a reason for him to stay in Suriname.¹⁰⁵ Rather, he explains his decision to stay in Suriname permanently by stating the importance of the birth of his first bornson, Suleman Khan: 'Truly speaking, it was this boy who prevented me from returning to Hindostan [...]. By Allah's blessing, this was my first son whose affection has till today made me breath the air of Suriname'.¹⁰⁶ This supports the idea that having a family in Suriname is an important variable in determining the outcome of the life course. This idea is bolstered in the report of McNeill and Lal.¹⁰⁷

Khan spends a considerable share of his words on describing the relations and the extent of the boundaries between Muslim and Hindu *kantráki* as well as between different castes. As mentioned before, he was rather shocked when finding these boundaries were practically vanished in the Calcutta depot, but when he describes these seemingly disappeared boundaries in Suriname, he does not seem to be surprised anymore. He describes how he teaches Hindus about the Ramayana and how Muslims and Hindus lived together. This does seem to fit the earlier statements by Guha and Choenni and Choenni that the amount of considerable cultural differences was limited. However, as Khan describes, in the early 1930s, more hostile relations between the two religious groups start to arise, starting in India and spreading to Suriname. However, this hostility seems to decrease in the second half of the same decade. Thus, during most of the research period, relations between the two religious groups were relatively good and the cultural boundaries happened to be practically non-existent. This does seem to explain why there is no significant difference in the outcome of the life course based on religion.¹⁰⁸

Following the report of McNeill and Lal of 1914, it is evident that women in the period of 1908-1912 earned about 59.3% of what men earned. The authors state that the earnings were low in comparison to the wages of Indians in British colonies, but that the sexual divergence itself was comparable. Combining this with the thought that Hindostanis returning to India wanted to save a considerable amount of money, it makes sense that female ex-*kantráki* tended to return less often. Men earned more money and therefore not only had the means, but also the savings to go back to their country of origin. Regarding the aforementioned quotation from Khan on his alleged marital status when arriving at Lust en Rust and the passage in which he is convinced to marry Joomenie, it becomes

¹⁰⁵ 'I found some truth in their explanation about the necessity of marriage while staying in another country, which would give some stability to my life': Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 99; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

¹⁰⁶ Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 100.

¹⁰⁷ McNeill, Lal, *The condition of Indian immigrants*, 168.

¹⁰⁸ Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 77-81, 83, 90, 94-95, 191-199.

clear that women were more often expected to be married. And, as mentioned before, when someone married in Suriname, the chances of settlement are higher.¹⁰⁹

It is unfortunately not known from Khan or McNeill and Lal, why the age at arrival could have been an important determinant in the outcome of the life course after ten years. However, when considering the fact that the presence of family members at the moment of arrival in Suriname had some effect, it makes sense that among these families, young children and infants were also present. This would lower the average, since about 11% of the *kantráki* was below the age of 10 years. Why re-indentureship or body height were not a significant factor in the life course development is not known yet.

¹⁰⁹ McNeill, Lal, *The condition of Indian immigrants*, 153-154, 176-179.

Chapter 5: Actors in a foreign setting. The influence of the Surinamese context

In this chapter, the external variables will be analysed. These circumstances might have had a considerable impact on where people lived ten years after their contract period – if they were still living. In the first section of this chapter, a temporal distribution will be presented in order to understand and contextualise the external circumstances in a more orderly fashion. Thereafter, light will be shed on multiple selected variables based on the conditions in which the *kantráki* served their contract and lived their post-indenture lives.

The time related analysis

The number of Hindostani *kantráki* per year arriving are presented in *Figure 2*. Several remarks have to be made in order to fully understand this time-bound distribution. First of all, two functions have been added in *Figure 2*, one representing the distribution of the number of arrivals from the sample, the other showing the same for all arrivals present in the entire database. The two lines follow the same, fluctuating trends, which means that – regarding the temporal aspect – the sample seems relatively well representative of the entire Hindostani population.¹¹⁰

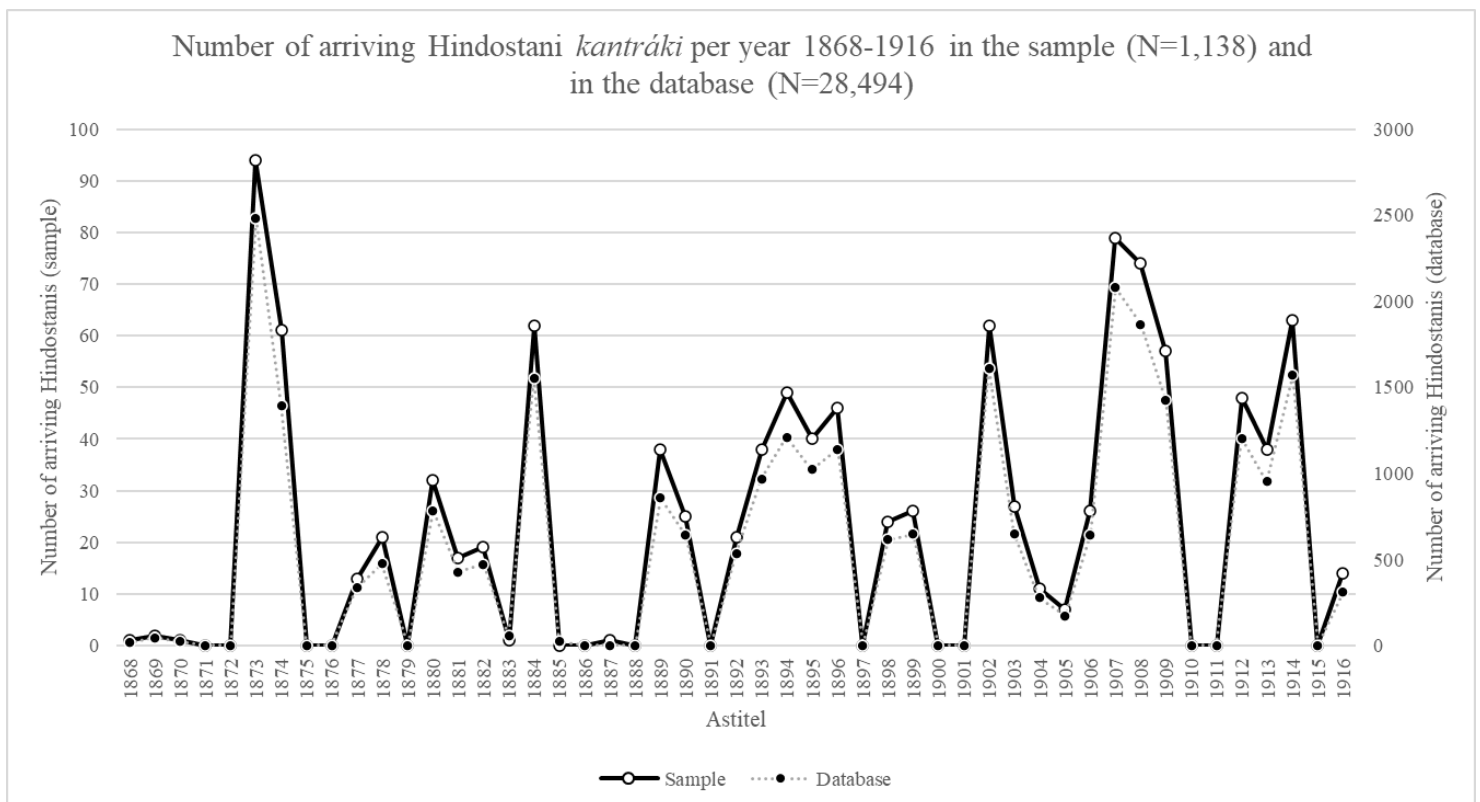


Figure 2: Number of arriving Hindostani *kantráki* per year, 1868-1916, in the sample (N=1,138) and in the database (N=28,494).¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

¹¹¹ Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*; Nationaal Archief, 'Hindostanen in Suriname'.

Secondly, there are several Hindostanis in the sample who started their contract before the official commence of the Recruitment Treaty. These four people did not, however, come directly from India, but already migrated to Barbados, Demerara or St. Lucia, from where they moved to Suriname. In total, there have been at least 88 Hindostani that were indentured before the official instalment of the Recruitment Treaty.¹¹²

Thirdly, there are several years for which no immigrants were recorded in the database. There are two main reasons for the lack of information. First, in August 1875 the migration of Hindostanis was suspended by the British-Indian government, due to a high death rate, the justice system, and bad working and living circumstances. In 1877, after some improvements, the migration recommenced uninterrupted until the abolition of indentureship in 1917.¹¹³ Second, registers of some years are not included in the database due to the loss of the registers.¹¹⁴ It is, however, known from the *Koloniale Verslagen*, that in these years Hindostani *kantráki*s did arrive. For example, in 1910, 478 people from British India migrated to work as indentured labourers in Suriname.¹¹⁵

In order to analyse the effect of the year of arrival on the outcome of the life course, a distribution of those outcomes has to be presented per year. *Figure 3*¹¹⁶ displays these relative partitions, showing a shift during the considered period from a tendency to relatively more repatriations towards a relative domination of the share of settlement. To test whether one of those two outcomes was dominant, a ratio between the share of settling and repatriating *kantráki* has been developed. This ratio indicates that *kantráki* who arrived before 1889 repatriated more after their contract, while people arriving after 1889 settled more. The highest percentage of settlement was among people arriving in 1903, after which the relative share of people repatriating slightly increased.¹¹⁷

This trend towards more settling compared to the rate of repatriation can probably be explained by the aforementioned emergence and gradual expansion and extension of Hindostani communities in Suriname as posed by Choenni and Choenni and Khan. However, there are several time periods in which the settlement-repatriation ratio declined. It is rather difficult, if not impossible, to impose several causes for these downfalls, because of the method used in this thesis. The period of ten years between the ending of the last contract and the determination of the outcome causes that it is

¹¹² De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 71-73, 87, 176-177; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

¹¹³ De Klerk, *De immigratie der Hindostanen*, 121-123; Fokken, *Beyond being koelies and kantráki*, 75; Hoefte, *In place of slavery*, 42; Roopnarine, 'Re-indenture, repatriation and remittances', 250.

¹¹⁴ This is applicable to the years 1875, 1876, 1879, 1885, 1886, 1888, 1891, 1897, 1900, 1901, 1910 1911 and 1915: Nationaal Archief, 'Hindostanen in Suriname'.

¹¹⁵ Het Utrechts Archief, 'Zeister Zendingsgenootschap van de Evangelische Broedergemeente 1793-1962' 48-1.5, *Koloniale Verslagen*, 1909-1912, en *Surinaams Verslag*, 1930, *inzake bestuur en staat van Suriname door het ministerie van Koloniën*, inv.nr. 1406, scan number 163, <<https://www.archieven.nl/nl/zoeken?mivast=0&mizig=210&miadt=39&miaet=1&micode=48-1&minr=2550704&miview=inv2>> [retrieved on January 10th 2020].

¹¹⁶ Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

¹¹⁷ See Appendix 4; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

unsure when people did repatriate and therefore, it is complex to determine the influence several events or trends could have had on the outcome of the life course. However, some first cautious and limited possible explanations will be set out.

The first major downward trend spans the two arriving years of 1895 and 1896. When looking at the end of the contract period and the autobiography of Khan, it becomes apparent that in 1900 there was a dry period in Suriname for nine months. Thereafter, excessive rainfall destroyed the remaining cacao crops, followed by a major cacao disease. Since cacao was one of the major products cultivated in Suriname at that moment, the period directly after the disease was economically destructive for most plantations. Consequently, as Khan describes, the wages of the *kantráki* decreased and were paid later or only partly. It seems logical for people to repatriate more early, for they could build up less savings, causing less financial stability when staying in Suriname. Therefore, a free return passage became more attractive.¹¹⁸

A second downwards trend occurred at the group of *kantráki* who arrived between 1904 and 1907. McNeill and Lal mention an outbreak of malarial fever in 1909, which might have pushed people away from Suriname back to India. Besides that, in 1908 and in 1912-1913 an intestine inflammation called enteritis thrived more than usual, causing diarrhoea, dehydration and fever. However, when the presence of these diseases is regarded as a variable, the death rate of the same group is also expected to be higher. Regarding *Figure 3*, this does not seem to be the case. The absence of a strikingly higher share of deceases does not, however, mean that Hindostanis considered the prevalence of multiple disease as a factor pushing them out of Suriname.¹¹⁹

The third decrease of the share of settlement compared to the share of repatriation commences after 1913 until the abolishment of indentured labour. This period contains among others the events of World War I, the Spanish Flu, a growing aggressivity between Hindus and Muslims in India and Suriname from the end of the 1920s until the 1940s, and the growing influence of Indian nationalism. It is implicitly clear from *Figure 3* that the Spanish Flu probably had its effect on the death rate, in contrast to other diseases. If, to what extent and how these four events and developments influenced the life course of *kantráki* is for this moment impossible to analyse.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 123-127.

¹¹⁹ McNeill, Lal, *The condition of Indian immigrants*, 153; P.H.J. Lampe, *Suriname. Sociaal-hygiënische beschouwingen* (Amsterdam, 1927), 13-14.

¹²⁰ Khan, *Jeevan Prakash*, 191-199; Lampe, *Sociaal-hygiënische beschouwingen*, 13-14; Brij B. Khare, 'Indian nationalism. The political origin', in: *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 50:4 (1989), pp. 533-559.

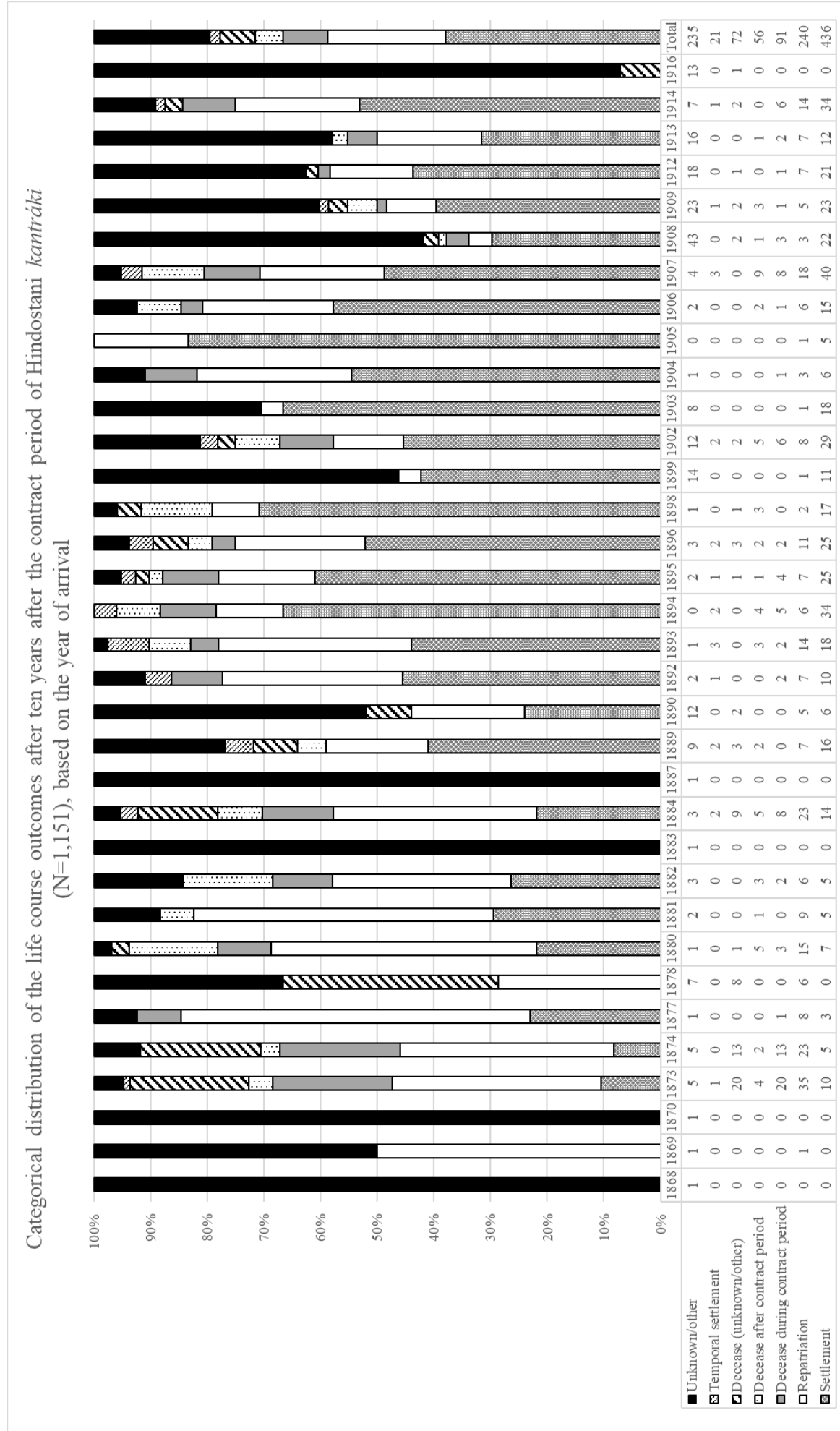


Figure 3: Categorical distribution of the life course outcomes after ten years after the contract period of Hindostani *kantráki*, based on the year of arrival (N=1,151)



Image 3: A 1899 map displaying the northern part of Suriname.

The possible influence of the plantations

In all probability, *kantráki* had little influence in their allocation to a plantation. In order to test if this random distribution of *kantráki* had any influence on their life course, this part will first analyse the districts the Hindostanis were sent to and thereafter the cultivated crops at the time of arrival on the (first) plantation. In *Figure 4*, the plantations where the *kantráki* were allocated to are sorted by district. It is necessary to mention that 1898 is selected as referencing year for the determination of the plantations in their districts. This means that, based on a 1899 map (*Image 3*¹²¹) and a geographical description by one of the makers of the map, every plantation was labelled with one district. When looking at the results, almost half of all the Indian migrants included in the sample worked on a plantation in the geographically small district of Beneden Commewijne and more than three quarters of the Hindostanis worked on estates in a radius of 50 kilometres from Paramaribo. About 12% of the migrants were designated to serve their contract in the eastern district of Nickerie. Because of the too small amount of cases in the other districts, the statistical analysis will only include Beneden Commewijne, Cottica, Nickerie and Beneden Suriname. The consequence of this decision is that the analysis will not fully represent the whole sample. However, it is a first step towards a better understanding of the influence of the geographical location of the *kantráki* on its life course. *Figure 5* presents the distribution of the outcomes, sorted by district.

When conducting a χ^2 test, it is apparent that there are significant differences between the four included districts regarding the outcome of the life course ($\chi^2=34.890$; $p=0.000$; $V= 0.127$; $N=718$). These differences, however, only have a small effect. *Kantráki* serving their first contract in Beneden Commewijne tended to settle more and repatriate less, while the opposite can be stated for Hindostanis in Cottica and Beneden Suriname. For Nickerie, no significant differences have been found, but there is a slightly smaller chance of repatriation and a slightly increased chance of decease during the contract period. This might be caused by the fact that the Dutch colonial government has not paid much of its attention to the western parts of Suriname and therefore, the (mostly British) planters enjoyed less governmental pressure.¹²²

When regarding the cultivation on the different plantations, it can be stated that the relevance of a crop in itself did not have a great influence on the choice between leaving and staying. However, when conducting a χ^2 test for the importance of either monoculture or polyculture, it is proved that when plantations only cultivated one crop, the chances of repatriation are considerably higher, while

¹²¹ J. Wackie, J.F.A. Cateau van Rosevelt, J.F.A.E. van Lansberge, W.L. Loth, *Kaart van Suriname. 1899. Blad A* (1899), <<https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=urn:gvn:SURI01:KAARTENZL-107-22-21A>> [retrieved on December 29th 2020].

¹²² Swaters, *Tegen de grens van emancipatie*; C. van Drimmelen, 'De Corantijne, de westelijke grensrivier van Suriname en haar rechter-zijrivier de Kabalebo, in: *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 10:1 (1929), pp. 49-64, here: 49; H. van Cappelle, *De binnenlanden van het district Nickerie. Lotgevallen en algemeene uitkomsten eener expeditie door het westen der kolonie Suriname in september en oktober van 1900* (Baarn, 1903), 1-3.

Distribution of *kantráki* over Surinamese district (N=1,016)

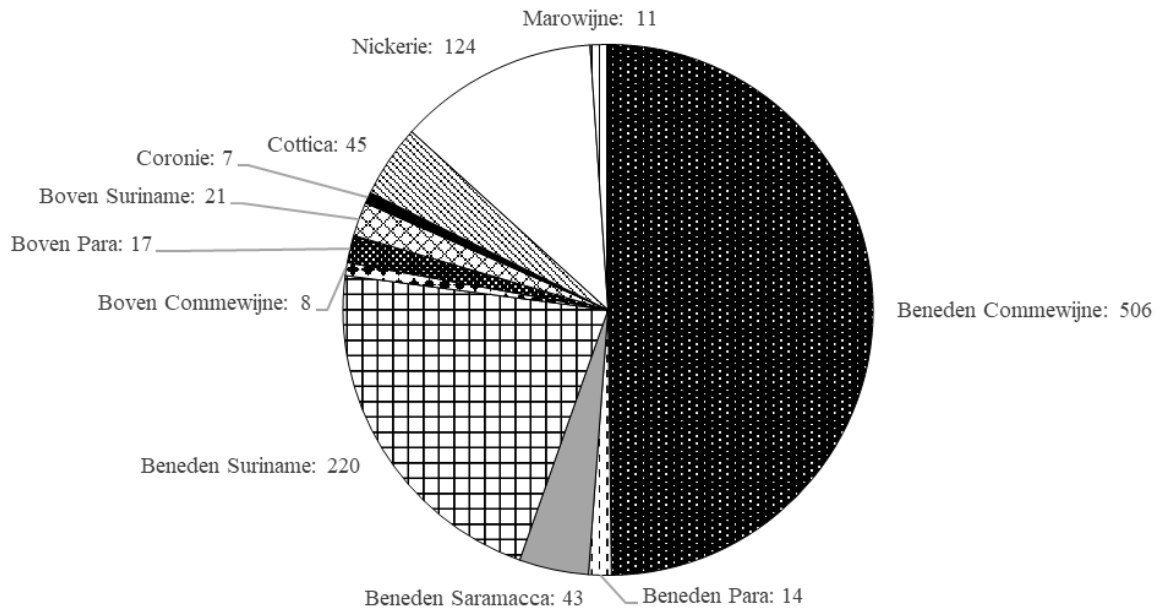


Figure 4: Distribution of *kantráki* over Surinamese districts.¹²³

Relative distribution of the outcome of the life course by district (N=1,151)

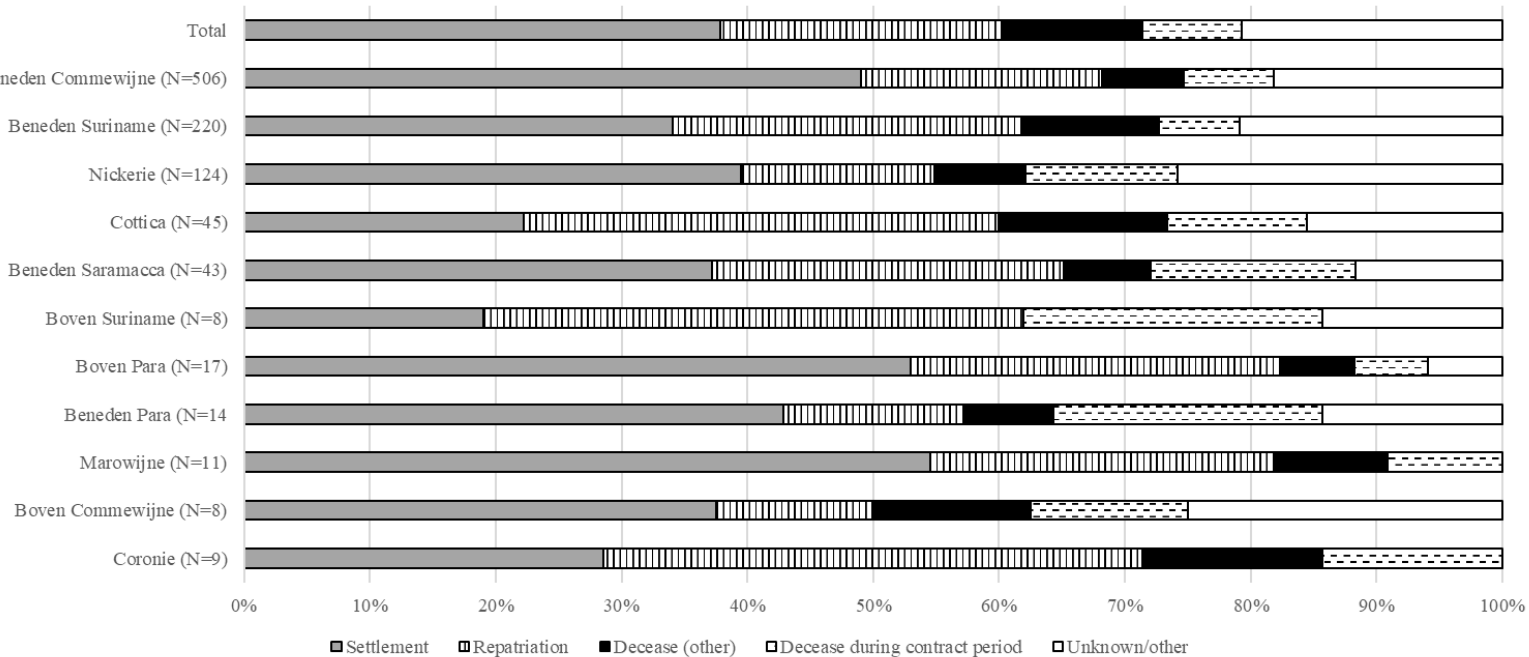


Figure 5: Relative distribution of the *kantráki*'s life course development subdivided by the Surinamese districts (N=1,151).¹²⁴

¹²³ Dikland, 'Surinaamse Erfgoed Documentatie'; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*; Wackie, Cateau van Rosevelt, Van Lansberge, *Kaart van Suriname*; Suriname plantages, <<https://www.surinameplantages.com/>> [retrieved on January 8th 2021]; W.L. Loth, *Beknopte aardrijkskundige beschrijving van Suriname* (Amsterdam, 1898), 15-32.

¹²⁴ Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

when polyculture was the norm, settlement rates were higher ($\chi^2=108.461$; $p=0.000$; $V=0.345$; $N=913$). When conducting an ANOVA test for the amount of cultivated crops ($F_{(3,909)}=28.942$, $p=0.000$; $N=913$), the result indicates a significant positive relation between the amount of cultivated crops and the chance of settlement ($N=436$; $x=2.40$; $s=1.403$). Compared to the chances of repatriation ($N=436$; $x=1.55$; $s=1.545$; $\Delta x=0.834$; $p=0.000$), death during the contract period ($N=91$; $x=1.75$; $s=1.363$; $\Delta x=0.650$; $p=0.001$) as well as other moments of decease ($N=128$, $x=1.28$; $s=1.621$; $\Delta x=1.116$; $p=0.000$), the amount of cultivated crops enlarged the chances of settlement ten years after the end of the last contract.¹²⁵ The importance of polyculture on plantations seems to align with the aforementioned passage from the autobiography of Khan dealing with the cacao disease. It is imaginable that when the harvest of one product disappoints, the cultivation of one or more other crops reduces the risk of making no profit.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ DBNL, 'Tijdschrift Surinaamsche Almanak'; Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.

¹²⁶ D.G. Bullock, 'Crop rotation', in: *Critical Reviews in Plant Sciences* 11:4 (1992), pp. 309-326.

Conclusion

This thesis has tried to shed light on the development of the life course of Hindostani *kantráki* in Suriname by focussing on the choice between returning to India and settling in Suriname. As has been pointed out, much research has been conducted on the processes of indenture, but there has not been a quantitative analysis of this choice and the life course after the contract period of Indian indentured migrants. By conducting this analysis, this thesis contributes to a better understanding of the Hindostanis in Suriname, not only in the period directly after indentureship, but also – to some extent – up to today. This thesis therefore contributes to the relatively suggestive and superficial nature of the debate of the period after indenture.

The research question was: How did individual characteristics and the Surinamese context influence the post-indenture choice of repatriation or settlement of Hindostani indentured migrants in Suriname between 1873 and 1940?’ In order to answer the question properly, the hypotheses will be accepted or rejected. However, some statements will be posed that were not included in the expected results in the beginning of this research.

First of all, it seems that the presence of family members or close acquaintances or friends seem to have a positive effect on the amount of Hindostanis staying in Suriname. This certainly applies for relations that were build up in Suriname. However, the used sample may have had a bias, since not all marriages and children that were born in Suriname were mentioned in the database. However, the fact that the presence of family members at arrival – which information is more complete – also had a positive effect on the share of repatriation, implies that connections did matter. Therefore, the first hypothesis can be accepted with quite a degree of certainty.

The second hypothesis stated that women settled more often than men, who are expected to have repatriated more than women. This expectation also seems to be correct, which can be explained by the female need for dependency both during and after the contract period and the assumption by both the Dutch colonial officials and planters, and the women that female *kantráki* were ought to have been accompanied by a men. However, both women and men present in the sample settled more than that they returned to India in absolute numbers. Altogether, in all probability, this hypothesis can be accepted as well

The third hypothesis stated that the share of Hindostanis repatriating compared to the ones who settled declined throughout the research period. This seems to be partly true, because the balance shifted from more repatriations to more settlements, but Hindostanis arriving after 1903 again tended to repatriate more often. This development has, however, not been fully explained. Again, the role of a growing possibility to connect with like-minded people who migrated before seems to play at least a considerable role. The hypothesis thus can be partly accepted and has to be rejected for the last years of the research period.

Regarding the role of the plantations, it was expected that when *kantráki* served their first contract on estates which cultivated and processed sugar products, the living and working conditions

were more harsh and difficult. Therefore, it seemed plausible that for these *kantráki* the chances of repatriation were higher. However, there is statistically significant evidence for this and, therefore, this hypothesis has to be rejected. Instead, there seems to be a positive relation between the number of different crops cultivated and the chances of settlement. Polyculture seem to have reduce the risk of total crop failure and therefore enlarged the *kantráki*'s chance of receiving full payment. This enabled Hindostanis to build up more savings, which enabled them to a more financially stable life in Suriname.

Next to the hypotheses, some interesting and remarkable conclusions can be drawn from the sample. Firstly, it can be concluded from a statistical analysis that the age of arrival had an effect on the development of the life course. This can probably be explained by the average ages of arriving families, which tended to settle more. How and to what extent this finding had influence on repatriation and settlement rates has unfortunately not been fully explained. Secondly, body height as a proxy for health does not seem to have any influence on the ratio between settlement and repatriation. Additionally, the district to where the *kantráki* were escorted seems to have had an effect on the outcome of the life course. For four districts, there is statistical evidence found supporting the idea that a particular district had impact on the choice of repatriation or settlement. However, in order to make hard statements on all the districts, a larger sample has to be taken into consideration.

When placing this research in the scientific discussion, it appears that, although literature stated there were some rules, requirements and assumptions on the development of the life course, these statements are not always right. The overview raised by Choenni and Choenni on when someone was to leave Suriname does not seem to be applicable to all cases taken into account in this thesis. Therefore, it must be stated that the development of the life course in some cases evolved outside of the legal framework and was rather shaped by individual decisions.

It has become evident that, although this research has endeavoured the specific historical process of the life course after indenture, this thesis has its limitations and therefore poses some recommendations for future research. First of all, this research can also be conducted for the indentured migrants from the Netherlands East Indies. This will improve our understanding of on the one hand indentureship in Suriname and its consequences, and on the other hand will problematise the conclusions resulting from this thesis. Secondly, it seems wise to expand both the information on the *kantráki* (for example on marriages and children) as well as the amount of Hindostanis in the sample. In this way, more extensive analyses can be conducted, which can result in multiple publications on the demography of a large group in Surinamese and Dutch societies. Thirdly, it seems useful to improve and enlarge the database of the Hindostani immigrants by categorising the information in the memo fields for every *kantráki*. These suggestions will therefore enable both the scholarly world and the public to improve their understanding of the life of Hindostanis during their indentureship.

Appendix 1: Variables present in the database and abstracted from the database and other sources.

In the following overview, all variables used in this research are presented, accompanied with the source the variable are based upon and possible remarks. Regarding the sources, this enumeration explains the mentioned sources:

Abstracted	The author has abstracted this variable from other variables present in the database, supplied with a reference containing the number of the variable.
Census	This information is based on the 1921 Surinamese census: Nationaal Archief, <i>Volkstelling 1921</i> .
Index	This information comes from the index which is used in the establishment of the database by Hassankhan and Hira: Nationaal Archief, 'Hindostanen in Suriname'.
Immigration registers	This information comes from the <i>Immigratiedepartement</i> in Paramaribo, which is used in the establishment of the database by Hassankhan and Hira: Nationaal Archief, 'Hindostanen in Suriname'.
Last known life event	This information is based on the last known life event: <i>Appendix 2</i> ; Nationaal Archief, <i>Contractarbeiders uit India</i> .
Map and description	This information is based on the map of Suriname and the geographical description by W.H. Loth: Wackie, Cateau van Rosevelt, Van Lansberge, <i>Kaart van Suriname</i> ; W.L. Loth, <i>Beknopte aardrijkskundige beschrijving van Suriname</i> .
Memo field	This information has been collected from the memo fields in the database: Nationaal Archief, <i>Contractarbeiders uit India</i> .
Muster rolls	This information comes from the muster rolls, produced in Calcutta, which has been added in the immigration registers by the <i>Immigratiedepartement</i> in Paramaribo, which is used in the establishment of the database by Hassankhan and Hira: Nationaal Archief, 'Hindostanen in Suriname'.
Surinaamsche Almanakken	This information has been based on sources mentioning the production of different crops: 'Binnen onze grenzen 1913', in: <i>De West</i> ; 'Landbouw. Cacao, koffie, hevea', in: <i>De West</i> ; DBNL, 'Tijdschrift Surinaamsche Almanak'; Dikland, 'Surinaamse Erfgoed Documentatie'; Munporgo, <i>Adresboek van Suriname</i>

Number	Variable	Source(s)	Remarks
1	IDNR	n/a	
2	Contract number	Index, Immigration registers	
3	Family name	Muster rolls, Index	
4	First names	Muster rolls, Index	
5	Sex	Muster rolls	
6	Age (source)	Immigration records	
7	Age adjusted	Abstracted (6)	
8	Age adjusted (rounded down)	Abstracted (6)	
9	Age (years)	Abstracted (6)	
10	Age (months)	Abstracted (6)	
11	Age (weeks)	Abstracted (6)	
12	Age (days)	Abstracted (6)	
13	Year of birth (presumably)	Abstracted (8, 43)	
14	Muster number	Muster rolls	
15	Status Index	Index	
16	First relation (sort)	Immigration records	
17	First relation	Immigration records	
18	Second relation (sort)	Immigration records	
19	Second relation	Immigration records	
20	Third relation (sort)	Immigration records	
21	Third relation	Immigration records	
22	Child (yes/no)	Immigration records	
23	Body height (source)	Immigration records	
24	Body height (millimetre)	Abstracted (23)	
25	Skin colour	Immigration records	
26	Recognition signs	Immigration records	
27	Caste/religion	Immigration records	
28	Religion	Abstracted (27)	
29	Occupation	Muster rolls	Until 1882
30	Nationality	Immigration records	
31	District	Muster rolls	
32	Police post	Muster rolls	
33	Village	Muster rolls	
34	Place of departure	Muster rolls	From 1873: always Calcutta
35	Ship name	Muster rolls, Immigration records, Index	
36	Date of departure	Muster rolls, Immigration records	
37	Date of departure (day)	Abstracted (36)	
38	Date of departure (month)	Abstracted (36)	
39	Date of departure (year)	Abstracted (36)	
40	Date of arrival	Immigration records	
41	Date of arrival (day)	Abstracted (40)	
42	Date of arrival (month)	Abstracted (40)	
43	Date of arrival (year)	Abstracted (40)	
44	Place of arrival	Immigration records	Always Paramaribo
45	Start contract 1	Immigration records	
46	Start contract 1 (day)	Abstracted (46)	

Number	Variable	Source(s)	Remarks
47	Start contract 1 (month)	Abstracted (46)	
48	Start contract 1 (year)	Abstracted (46)	
49	End contract 1	Immigration registers	
50	End contract 1 (day)	Abstracted (46)	
51	End contract 1 (month)	Abstracted (46)	
52	End contract 1 (year)	Abstracted (46)	
53	Institution of recruitment	Immigration registers	Always Colonial Government
54	Planter	Immigration registers	
55	Plantation	Immigration registers	
56	Plantation 1	Abstracted (55)	
57	Plantation district 1	Abstracted (55), Map and description	
58	Plantation 2	Abstracted (55)	
59	Plantation district 2	Abstracted (55), Map and description	
60	Plantation 3	Abstracted (55)	
61	Plantation district 3	Abstracted (55), Map and description	
62	Plantation 4	Abstracted (55)	
63	Plantation district 4	Abstracted (55), Map and description	
64	Start contract 2	Immigration registers	
65	Start contract 2 (day)	Abstracted (65)	
66	Start contract 2 (month)	Abstracted (65)	
67	Start contract 2 (year)	Abstracted (65)	
68	End contract 2	Immigration registers	
69	End contract 2 (day)	Abstracted (69)	
70	End contract 2 (month)	Abstracted (69)	
71	End contract 2 (year)	Abstracted (69)	
72	Re-indenture (yes/no)	Abstracted (64, 68, 73, 77)	
73	Start contract 3/last contract	Immigration registers	More precise: 119, 121, 123, 125
74	Start contract 3/last contract (day)	Abstracted (73)	
75	Start contract 3/last contract (month)	Abstracted (73)	
76	Start contract 3/last contract (year)	Abstracted (73)	
77	End contract 3/last contract	Immigration registers	More precise: 120, 122, 124, 126
78	End contract 3/last contract (day)	Abstracted (77)	
79	End contract 3/last contract (month)	Abstracted (77)	
80	End contract 3/last contract (year)	Abstracted (77)	
81	Act of resistance	Immigration registers	
82	Certificate of resignation	Immigration registers	
83	Memo information	Immigration registers	
84	Present in Census 1921	Census	

Number	Variable	Source(s)	Remarks
85	Outcome of the life course 10 years after last contract period	Abstracted (among others 15, 84, 111, 113, 115), Last known life event	See methodology
86	Categorised outcome of the life course	Abstracted (85)	See <i>Appendix 3</i>
87	Date of receipt premium	Memo field	
88	Married in Suriname (yes/no)	Memo field	
89	Married with whom	Memo field	
90	Marriage (date)	Memo field	
91	Children in Suriname (yes/no)	Memo field	
92	Receival land 1 (location)	Memo field	
93	Receival land 1 (date)	Memo field	
94	Relinquishment land 1 (date)	Memo field	
95	Receival land 2 (location)	Memo field	
96	Receival land 2 (date)	Memo field	
97	Relinquishment land 2 (date)	Memo field	
98	Receival land 3 (location)	Memo field	
99	Receival land 3 (date)	Memo field	
100	Relinquishment land 3 (date)	Memo field	
101	Receival land 4 (location)	Memo field	
102	Receival land 4 (date)	Memo field	
103	Relinquishment land 4 (date)	Memo field	
104	Receival land 5 (location)	Memo field	
105	Receival land 5 (date)	Memo field	
106	Relinquishment land 5 (date)	Memo field	
107	Receival land 6 (location)	Memo field	
108	Receival land 6 (date)	Memo field	
109	Relinquishment land 6 (date)	Memo field	
110	Sick at arrival (yes/no)	Memo field	
111	Date of decease	Memo field	
112	Cause of decease	Memo field	
113	Date of repatriation	Memo field	
114	Adjusted names	Memo field	
115	Adjustment name (date)	Memo field	
116	Rejected (date)	Memo field	
117	Remarks (memo field)	Memo field	

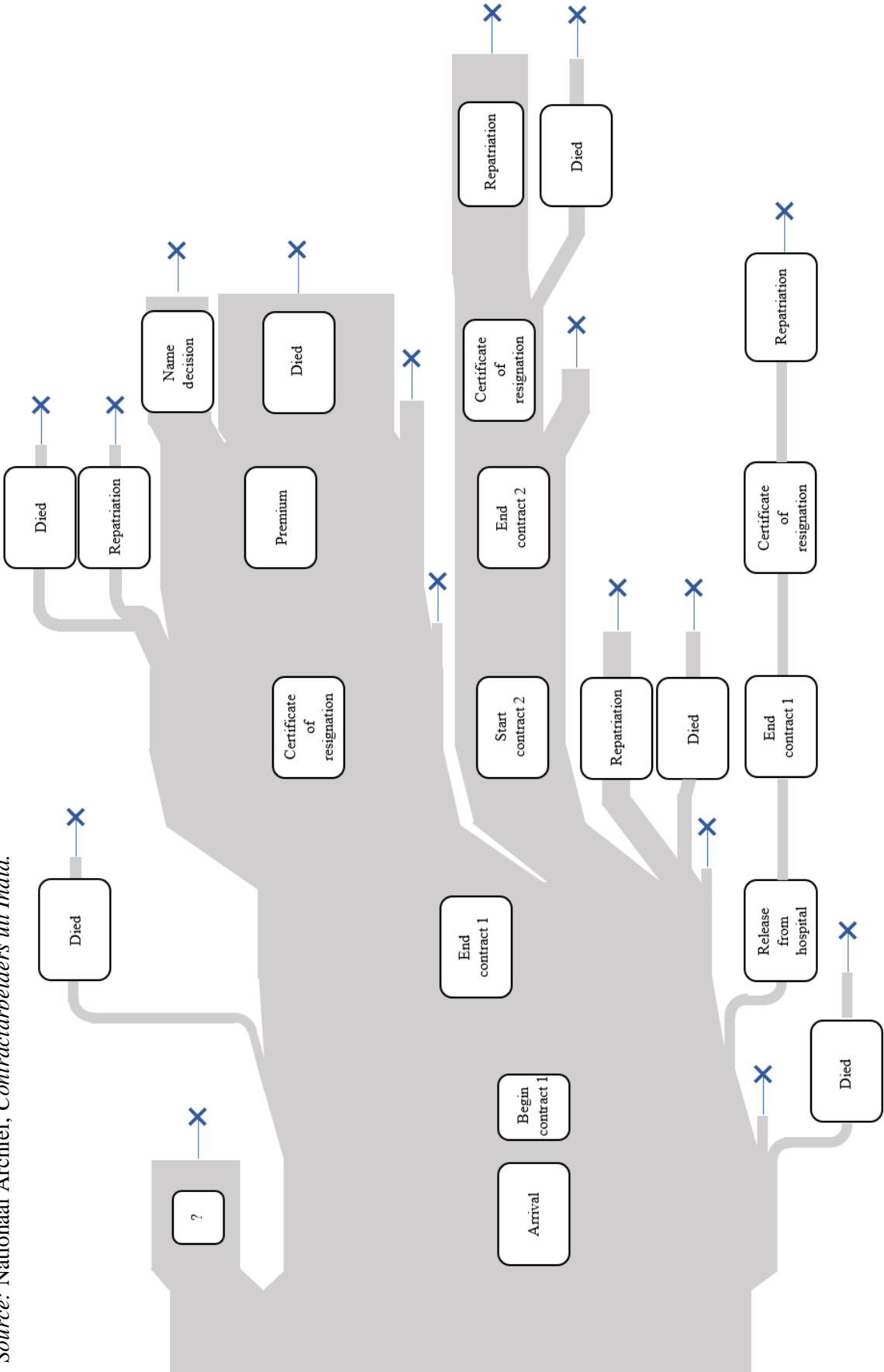
Number	Variable	Source(s)	Remarks
118	Resign from hospital (date)	Memo field	
119	Start contract 3	Memo field	
120	End contract 3	Memo field	
121	Start contract 4	Memo field	
122	End contract 4	Memo field	
123	Start contract 5	Memo field	
124	End contract 5	Memo field	
125	Start contract 6	Memo field	
126	End contract 6	Memo field	
127	Birth first child (date)	Memo field	
128	Birth last child (date)	Memo field	
129	Cultivated crops on first plantation	Surinaamsche Almanakken	

Appendix 2: Decision tree regarding the life events of Hindostani *kantráki* present in the database.

Note: In this display only models with 10 or more *kantráki* are taken into account. In total, there were 380 different life trajectories found based on the available variables in the original database and the variables abstracted from the memo fields. It was however impossible and visually disadvantageous to include all the 380 different trajectories.

The width of the bars correspond with relative share to the total amount of *kantráki*. A blue cross indicates that the aforementioned life event is marked as the last known life event.

Source: Nationaal Archief, *Contractarbeiders uit India*.



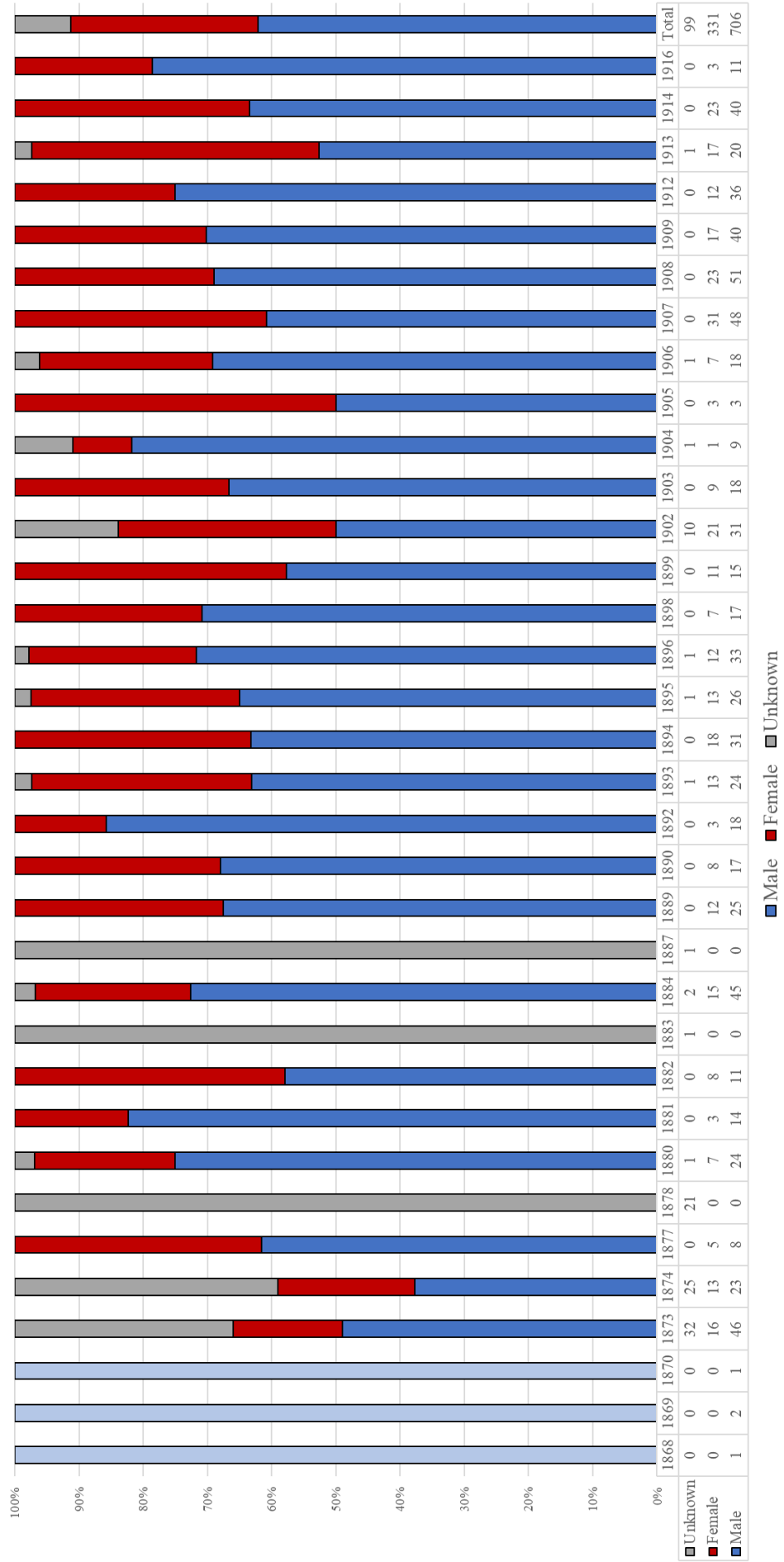
Appendix 3: Subdivision of the categories of life course outcomes ten years after the ending of the last contract in *Figure 1*, *Figure 3* and used in the analysis.

N	All outcomes	Figure 1	Figure 3	Analysis	N
293	Settlement (Census)	Settlement			436
143	Settlement (other)				
237	Repatriation	Repatriation		Repatriation	258
21	Temporal settlement	Temporal settlement			
56	Decease after contract period	Decease after contract period		Decease (other)	128
1	Decease during forced labour				
7	Decease before contract period in Suriname	Decease before contract period	Decease (other/unknown)		
7	Decease during migration to Suriname				
57	Decease (unknown)	Decease (unknown)			
91	Decease during contract period	Decease during contract period			
1	Left, came back	Left, came back	Unknown/other	Unknown/other	238
1	Deserted	Deserted			
2	Left (Cayenne)	Left (other)			
1	Left (Trinidad)				
233	Unknown	Unknown			
1151					

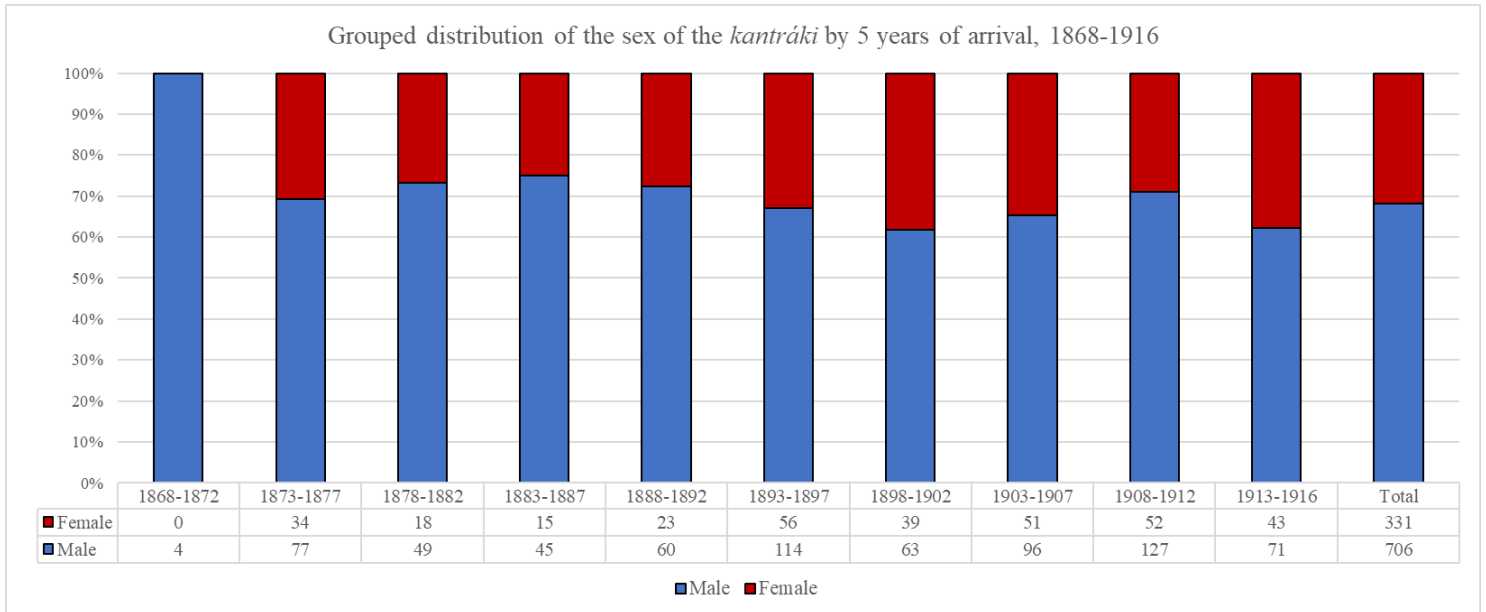
Appendix 4: Graphs and tables

- a. Distribution of the sex of Hindostani *kantráki* arriving between 1868 and 1916 (N=1.151) *Source: Nationaal Archief, Contractarbeiders uit India.*

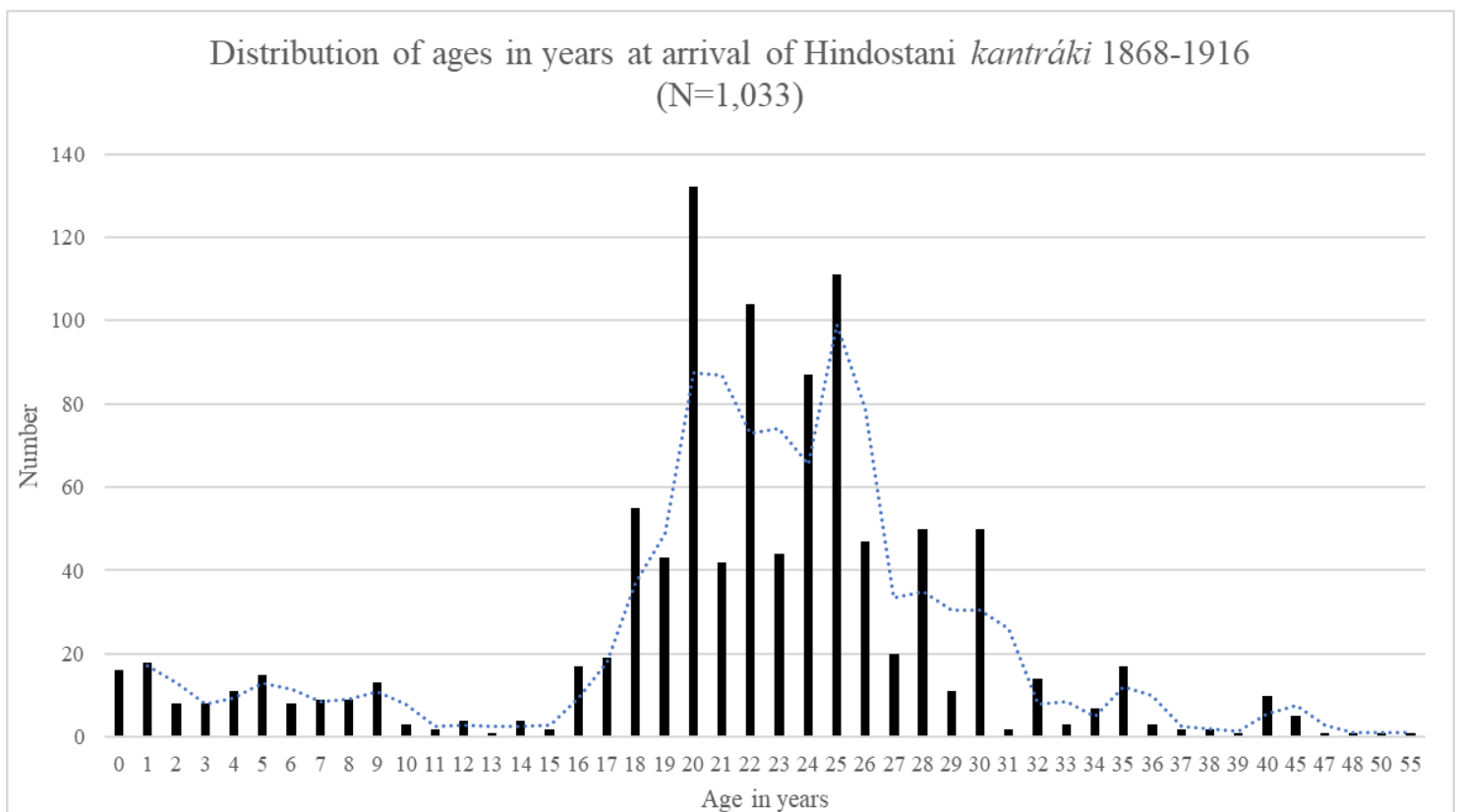
Distribution of the sex of the *kantráki* by year or arrival, 1868-1916 (N=1.151)



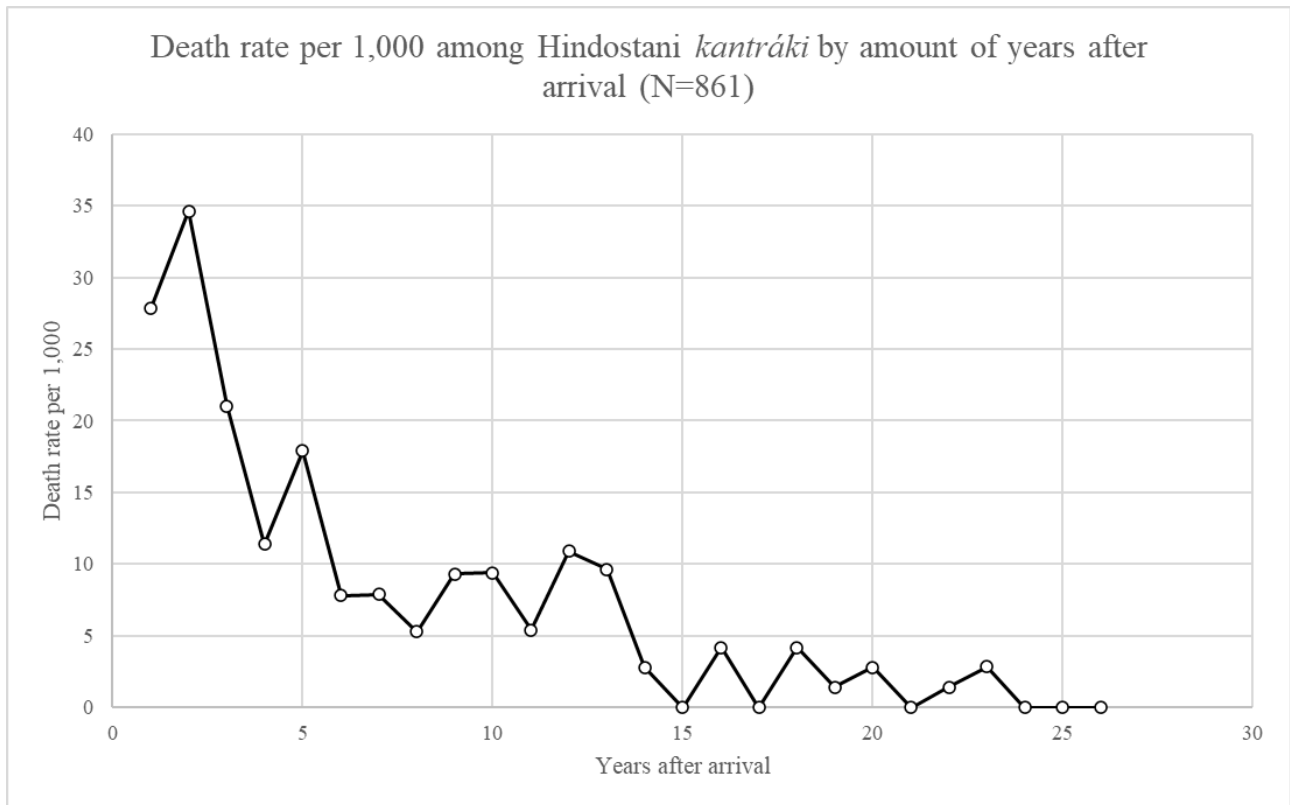
b. Grouped distribution of the relative share of the sex of Hindostani *kantráki* arriving between 1868 and 1916 per five years (N=1,037) *Source: Nationaal Archief, Contractarbeiders uit India.*



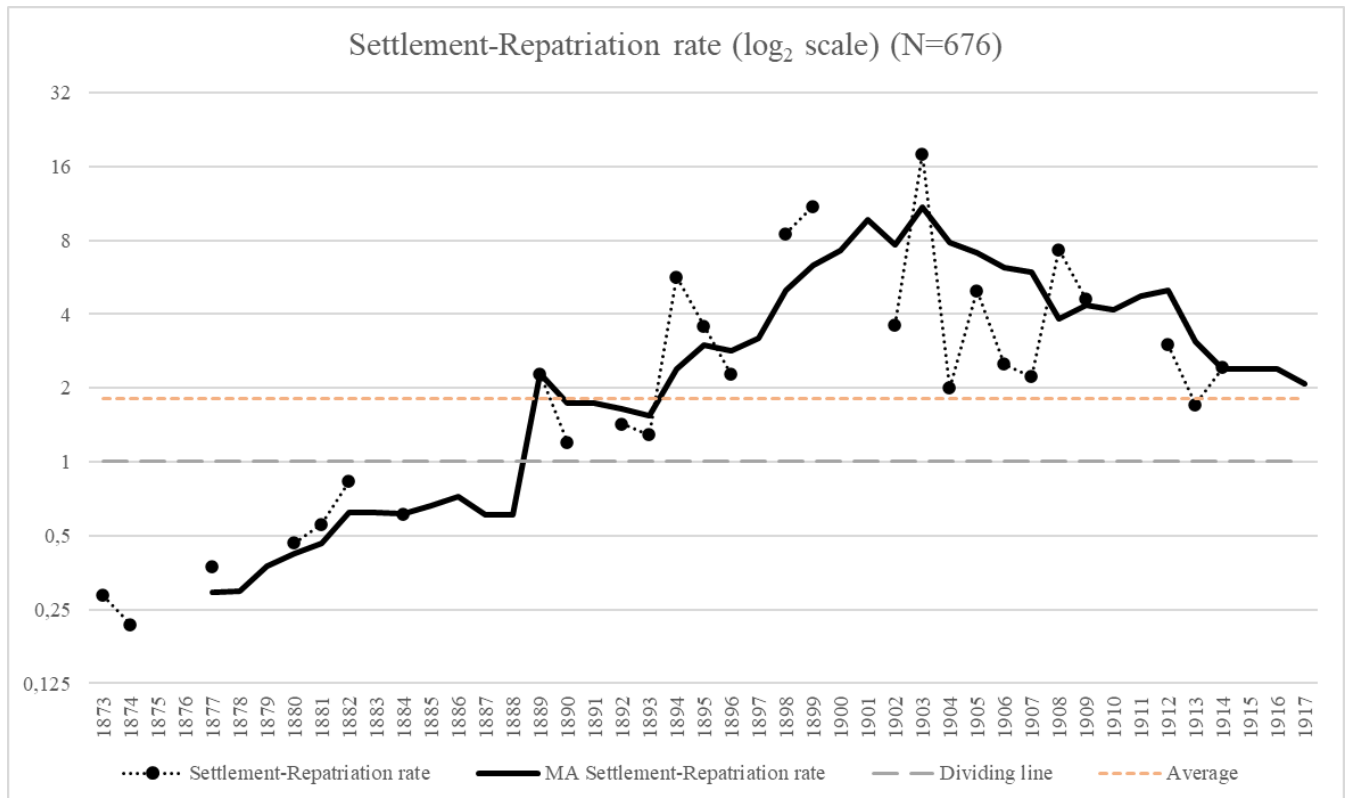
c. Distribution of ages in years at arrival of Hindostani *kantráki*, arriving between 1868 and 1916 (N=1,033) *Source: Nationaal Archief, Contractarbeiders uit India.*



d. Death rate per 1,000 of Hindostani *kantráki* based on the difference in years between the moment of arrival and the moment of deceasing (N=861) *Source: Nationaal Archief, Contractarbeiders uit India.*



e. Settlement-repatriation ratio of Hindostani *kantráki* who arrived between 1868 and 1916 on a \log_2 scale. A moving average (MA) of five years is added (N=676) *Source: Nationaal Archief, Contractarbeiders uit India.*



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‘*’ = subdivision of this source is available at the end of this bibliography

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