Between Bollywood and Suicide

A case study on the limitations of Dutch Tamils' integration processes in the Netherlands

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Acknowledgements

Between Bollywood and Suicide represents how twenty Dutch Tamils experience their integration process in the Netherlands. At the hand of some stories, we will see that the Dutch Tamils' integration experiences go beyond simple statements as formulated by for example Regioplan policy to measure integration and involve various feelings 'between Bollywood and Suicide'. Some Dutch Tamils experience their everyday life in the Netherlands as wonderful, like 'Bollywood films'. For the one's who are traumatized, who strongly feel a loss of home and hearth, or who struggle with their bicultural identity, life in the Netherlands can be very difficult and even brings on suicidal tendencies. In addition, Bollywood films reveal as a kind of medicine: they symbolize a desirable life, and since particularly young women can identify with its main characters these Bollywood films help them to 'escape' their real life. Therefore, Dutch Tamils' integration in the Netherlands can be seen in varying ways *Between Bollywood and Suicide.*

Before I will move on to the first chapter, *Introduction to an/Other perspective on integration*, I want to thank the people in the field, those who permitted me to have a close look at their lives and who conversed towards what they considered the important aspects of their daily lives in the Netherlands. First, I want to thank Mano, who introduced me to the Dutch Tamil community in Den Helder for the second time. Second, I want to thank Samy, who took me several times from the train station to the temple Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga and back. I also want to thank Siva, who helped me to make appointments with the Tamil students. Furthermore, my thanks go out to all young Dutch Tamil women, who extensively related their often very emotional stories and who were willing to answer an endless amount of odd questions that often lasted hours.

Away from Den Helder, many other people have encouraged and inspired me. I owe a sincere and profound debt of gratitude to my family and friends who, in some way or another, have contributed to this study: Loes, Mark, Marieke, Marlous, Sofie, Margreet, Esther, Sanne, Aron, Niels and Peter, thanks. To my dad Theo, who helped me a lot by giving advice and support. And to my friend Carlo for the support, patience and understanding you have shown me. Finally, to Barbara, my supervisor, who even continued supervising, encouraging and inspiring me from the other side of the world. Barbara, I want to thank you for your patience and confidence!

Many scholars and policymakers argue that the integration of different ethnic groups into Dutch society is not successful (Tabibian 1999, Van den Tillaart et al. 2000, Hussein and van den Reek 2003). In general, this assertion relates to the position of the four largest ethnic groups -Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans- and recently to the position of 'new' or refugee groups - (former) Yugoslavians, Iraqis, Afghans, Iranians, and Somalis- as well.

The most recent report, the Annual Report on Integration (2005, 2006) documents that ethnic minorities are increasingly left behind in the labour market and that unemployment and benefit dependency also rise rapidly. Many ethnic minorities fall victim to the current weakness of the economic cycle as a result of their generally low levels of education and their poor command of Dutch. The strong representation of ethnic minorities in crime figures and the unfavourable public opinion of ethnic minority populations add to this gloomy picture. The Annual Report on Integration reports that the social-cultural integration of Turks and Moroccans, in particular, show less progress when compared with other groups. These populations still associate primarily with members of their own ethnic groups, as indicated by the increasing number of neighbourhoods with high concentrations of Turks and Moroccans in the large cities. Another reason for poor integration, according to the authors of this report, is that members of the Dutch population have few contacts with ethnic minorities, particularly with Muslim groups due to cultural and religious differences.

Ethnic groups that are relatively new also evidence an increasing degree of difficulty with integration into Dutch society. Scholars argue, for example, that the integration process, the involvement in Dutch society and social independency of many Somali people is problematic (Tabibian 1999, Van den Tillaart et al. 2000, Hussein en van den Reek 2003). [1] An important conclusion of the Annual Report on Integration (2004, 2005) is that the position of Somali women is particularly unfavourable: of all new groups, the Somali women are the least integrated.

> Mainly the large extent of inactivity is alarming. Somali women stay far behind. They are badly equipped to participate in the labour market and to achieve economic independency. Their position shows similarities to those of the first generation Turkish and Moroccan women. In the case of their language competence and their social and cultural integration the same conclusions can be drawn (Annual Report on Integration 2004: 117).[2]

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[1] The original term of social independency is *zelfredzaamheid*.

[2] Original statement: "*Vooral de hoge mate van inactiviteit is zorgwekkend. Somalische vrouwen blijven ver achter. Zij zijn slecht toegerust om te participeren op de arbeidsmarkt en om economische zelfstandigheid te bereiken. Hun positie vertoont wat dat betreft*

Of all ethnic groups, Turks, Moroccans, Somalis and some of the Antilleans occupy the weakest positions in Dutch society, although heterogeneity within these groups is substantial (Annual Report on Integration 2004, 2005). The overall picture is most favourable for the Surinamese. Of all refugee groups, Iranians are described as the most highly educated and the 'most modern' group.[3] Consequently, they often mix with Dutch people, have a relatively good position in the labour market, and also their children perform well at school. To the contrary, the Iraqis and Afghans occupy a less favourable position in the labour market, partly because of their relatively lower educational level and their shorter length of stay. However, their social-cultural position is most favourable (Annual Report on Integration 2005).

We can see that the integration of various different ethnic groups has become a 'hot' item in popular media.[4] Through the process of globalization, people are more able to migrate and flee unfavourable circumstances in their own countries. Consequently, the process of integration has gained in importance. More and more government officials and publics believe that ethnic groups should demonstrate improved integration into Dutch society.[5] Many researchers, who work under the authority of the government, are concerned with investigating the integration of ethnic minorities. The Annual Report on Integration measures the integration of ethnic minorities under the authority of the government, specifically of the Ministry of Justice. Regioplan policy research conducted work on the social-economic and social-cultural integration of refugees in the Netherlands under the authority of Refugee Work Netherlands (*Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland*).

Since 30 September 1998 a Law, entitled Civic Integration of Newcomers (*Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers-WIN*) has made its mandatory that those newcomers, people who settled after the introduction of WIN and who do not come from European Union (EU) or from European Economic Space (EER) countries- are obligated to report to a civic integration program.[6] The idea is that by means of civic integration programs old- and newcomers alike will be able to lead independent lives in the Netherlands.[7] This means that they will participate more fully in Dutch

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overeenkomsten met die van de eerste generatie Turkse en Marokkaanse vrouwen. Wat betreft hun taalbeheersing en sociale en culturele integratie kan dezelfde conclusie worden getrokken" (2004: 117).

[3] We may ask ourselves what the authors mean by "most modern", as this seems to be a very imprecise designation.

[4] With this, I mean both mass media as well as researchers who work under the authority of the Dutch government. Favell (2003) argues that the latter group cannot be seen as independent researchers.

[5] Since the publication of Scheffer's article called 'the Multicultural Drama,' (2000) failed integration is being discussed.

[6] EU exists of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Denmark, Republic of Ireland, United Kingdom, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania. The EER is an agreement between EFTA and EU including Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

[7] Oldcomers are people who settled before the introduction of WIN and who do not come from European Union (EU) or from European Economic Space (EER) countries.

society, will have a better command of Dutch, and will emancipate more.[8] Incorporation is seen as the first step of integration in Dutch society, and has to be seen in a broad sense: not only learning Dutch, but also orientation to Dutch society, education and the labour market, social activation and pedagogical support.[9] The emancipation and integration of migrant women is highly placed on the political agenda. The goal is that in 2010, 60 per cent of migrant women are economically independent.[10]

Reports on integration, such as the above-described Annual Report on Integration, and the Law Civic Integration of Newcomers, constituted the motivation for this research. The more specific motivation was the perception that the knowledge on integration has evoked more questions than answers and that government reports such as those cited above are highly problematic.

The first question is epistemological: what do researchers and policymakers mean by *integration*? The former minister of Immigration and Integration (Rita Verdonk) described integration as a dialectical process between indigenous (*autochtoon*) people and people with a non-Dutch background (*allochtoon*). Verdonk argues that increasing social contacts will further integration. Two primary questions arise. First, does the former minister's idea of integration as a dialectical process correspond to practice? From the Law on Civic Integration of Newcomers we can conclude that it is members of ethnic minorities who are acquired to adjust to Dutch society, and that the process is more unilateral than dialectical. Second, is the current policy on integration, with its Law on Civic Integration, based in an unexamined assumption that society can be made, in this case by means of certain programs and the 'right' policy? In chapter two, these issues will be examined more closely and we will look more closely at the concept of integration. We will discuss questions such as, what assumption(s) underlie integration policies of 'western' states in general, and the Dutch state in particular? To be able to answer this question, we will focus on how liberal states have accommodated ethnic diversity since World War II.[11] We will see what integration is; who is required to integrate, and why?

A second, methodological question is whether we can or cannot measure integration. We see that there is a trend towards measuring and quantifying results on integration. As described above, SEO and Regioplan Policy do measure integration. However, is it possible to measure the integration of ethnic minorities? When is someone integrated? When you have a job; when you

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[8] The WIN does not clarify what emancipation means. Therefore, we may argue that the lawmakers take the meaning of emancipation for granted.
[9] See website Centre for Work and Income. CWI does not clarify what they mean by social activation and pedagogical support.
[10] See www.kiemnet.nl
[11] Liberal states are states who advocate individual liberty (rights).

have social contacts with 'autochtoon people'; or when you have knowledge about the 'Dutch way of life' (whatever this may be)? On what basis do these researchers decide who is integrated and who is not? And are the results reliable? This research will address these issues.

A third question is geographical: *where* do ethnic minorities have to integrate? Policymakers and researchers speak about integrating into the Dutch society. However, does this mean integration on the nation-state level or on the level of neighbourhoods, communities, cities, networks and so on?

The argument made in this work is that it is important to debate the way(s) policymakers and scholars deal with, and use the concept of, integration, and, even more importantly, that solving the puzzle of integration must place primacy on how integration is viewed from the perspective of those people whose lives immigration policy bears upon. How, for example, do people who migrated or fled to the Netherlands view their process of integration? What associations does 'integration', as a 'western' concept invoke? And, in which ways is their integration related to key variables such as why they migrated to the Netherlands, their former homeland, and where they have settled? Which factors facilitate or impede the process of integration in the Netherlands?

In the following chapter, I first deconstruct the concept of integration by questioning the way(s) policymakers and scholars use it, and then turn to the case study on Dutch Tamils in the Netherlands. The aim of this study is to explore how Dutch Tamils view integration in general and their personal integration in particular.[12] The primary questions this thesis seeks to address are the following: first, what views do Dutch Tamils in the Netherlands have on integration as a general concept and on their particular integration experiences; and second, which factors do they consider as having facilitated and impeded this process? In order to address these questions I first had to establish what associations the concept 'integration' invoked, what their particular integration experiences were, and what opinions concerning integration they had formed. My overall goal is to identify the *spatial and cultural* factors that have facilitated or impeded the process of integration according to the perspectives of Dutch Tamils of different ages and gender. Attention was given to the investigation of factors typically considered important to integration and to the discovery of whether or not, from the perspective of the Dutch Tamils, they were, in fact those considered significant: for example, geographical migration patterns, reasons for migration including (traumatic) experiences of the intra-state conflict in their former homeland, demographic factors such as gender, age and so forth at the time of migration and settlement.

In taking this migrant-centred approach, it is my hope to contribute to the qualitative knowledge on integration in social and economic geography, cultural anthropology and other

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[12] I prefer to speak about Dutch Tamils instead of Tamils, because the Tamils of this research have the Dutch nationality.

disciplines interested in the question of integration. A more specific goal of the thesis is to provide new migrant-centred insights relevant to the current integration debate with the hope of fostering new ideas on how ethnic minority groups, such as Dutch Tamils, might become Dutch citizens and members of Dutch society. These ideas would be based in the experiential knowledge and expertise of Dutch Tamils rather than the perception of Dutch policymakers and government officials.

Case study on Dutch Tamils

Twenty Dutch Tamils of varying ages, both men and women, permitted me to have a close look at their lives and consented to relate their migration (hi)stories to me through written questionnaires and oral conversation. To be able to 'solve' the puzzle of integration, I conversed extensively with the participants during the winter and spring of 2006. While asking specific questions (see Appendix 1 for how the interviews were structured), I directed conversation towards what they considered the important aspects of their daily lives in the Netherlands. This broad focus was elected because, as suggested above, the primary objective of my research has been the discovery of how Dutch Tamils define integration and what *they* think is relevant to their lives as migrants in the Netherlands. Thus, it was my specific intention to avoid defining the concept of integration in advance and then eliciting responses based on this definition. Questions such as the following were asked: How do you define integration? What do you think of the 'western' idea of integration and what associations does the concept evoke? How do you view your own integration and that of Dutch Tamils more generally? Do you as an individual, and Dutch Tamils as a group, think integration is desirable? Which factors do you consider as facilitating and impeding integration? How did, or does, the 'past' influences your integration process? What activities did, or do, you undertake to become accustomed to the Netherlands and to integrate into Dutch society? Questions such as these were designed to facilitate the discovery of what it meant to be a Dutch Tamil in the Netherlands and which factors they considered most important in having to integrate as a non-western *allochtoon* into Dutch society.[13]

The results of this research revealed that processes of integration are not as neatly classifiable or easy to reflect upon as is often portrayed. The process of an individual's integration is complex, changeable, context-dependent and strongly influenced by numerous and diverse factors. As we will see, many things are identified as important: being close to family members,

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[13] Checklist Multicultural Policy of Nijmegen (17-3-2003:3) argues that a distinction between western and non-Western *allochtoon* people is very important, because the latter group is the target group of policy. Non-Western *allochtoons* are people from Turkey, Morocco, Suriname, Dutch Antilles, Aruba, former Yugoslavia, the remaining countries in South- or Central America, Africa and Asia (except Japan, and former Dutch Indies). This definition is used by Ministry of Home Affairs and mentioned in article 3 of the Law 'Together' (*Samen*).

having social contacts, having a job, pursuing a good education, becoming accustomed to the Dutch way of life, living in safety and peace, speaking Dutch, being adaptive, being (un)happy, being a religious person, visiting the Hindu temple, watching and playing soccer, watching Tamil news and films, the conflict in Sri Lanka, the flight to the Netherlands, and so on. What emerged as particularly important regarding how Dutch Tamils experience integration are feelings of belonging, relations between age and integration, gender and integration, and group identification and integration. However, my research also reveals that while these factors are significant, it is neither possible nor desirable to create strongly bounded and unchangeable categories of Dutch Tamils based on age or gender, nor to create strongly bounded and unchangeable views on integration.

Space and time in research

The goal of this thesis is not to describe Dutch Tamil integration processes in general, but to reproduce some Dutch Tamils' life stories.[14] Of all twenty Dutch Tamils interviewed, I selected some stories of i.e. Yovan (man, 41 years), Maan (man, 28 years), Magil (woman, 23 years), Ezhil (woman, 22 years) that reflect an average representation of Dutch Tamils' lives in the Netherlands. At the hand of these stories we will see how their integration processes are perceived, (re)produced and what its limitations are. The reason to prefer describing some detailed stories rather than trying to give a broad sociological, quantitative view of Dutch Tamils' integration processes is multiple. First, I have the opinion that it is not possible to give a representation of how Dutch Tamils experience integration due to the little amount of respondents involved -by interviewing twenty of a population of more than 9000 Dutch Tamils.

The second reason is a consequence of the first; when I would present the views on integration by means of statistic results, their views would become superficial and they even might become unclear. I will give an example. When the statement '*being integrated is very important to me*' is answered with '*I strongly agree*' 80 per cent, '*I agree*' 5 per cent, '*normal*' 5 per cent, '*I disagree*' 10 and '*I totally disagree*' 0 per cent, what conclusions can be made? People may have been given social desirable answers, and may have been not familiar with the terminology 'integration', may have had different views on what integration includes when only answering a statement, or may have wondered what 'very important' means to them. What I try to say is that answering with a 'yes' or 'no' does not say much about what they precisely mean; there is no context in which their answers get its meaning. Their answers lack spatiality, in other words space and time. By reproducing their words spoken during conversations we had, literally reported, we do not only

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[14] I am aware of the fact that I, as a researcher, produce their stories at the same time.

gain an insight into the context, but also into the tempo of the answers given. This is important because, as Bourdieu (1990, 1992) would say, practice is located in space and time.

> "It [practice] is something that can be observed in three dimensions and, necessarily, from moment to moment. Temporality, the inexorable passage of time, is an axiomatic feature of practice: time is both a constraint and a resource for social interaction. More than that, practice is 'intrinsically defined by its tempo'" (Bourdieu in Jenkins 2002: 69).

In line with Bourdieu we will see that also the Dutch Tamils' stories of how they perceive integration are 'intrinsically defined by its tempo'.

Participants and methodology

My interest in Dutch Tamils began during a holiday in Sri Lanka in August 2000. This first confrontation with an intra-state conflict made a deep impression on me and I continued to acquire information in newspapers and articles on Internet about the conflict in Sri Lanka. This led to a first graduation study in Cultural Anthropology, on the Tamil diaspora community in the Netherlands and their support to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in their former homeland Sri Lanka. Fieldwork in the period from September 2002 until July 2003 was carried out to explore if, how and why Tamil diaspora community members, residing in the Netherlands, support the LTTE in their former homeland Sri Lanka. The research mainly concerned the Dutch Tamil community in Den Helder, more precisely, twenty Dutch Tamil members of the Hindu temple association, as representative of the Dutch Tamil community in Den Helder were interviewed.

This second research on Dutch Tamils, upon which this thesis is based, focuses more closely on the Dutch Tamils' connections to the receiving country, the Netherlands.[15] As already described, I will investigate how Dutch Tamils view their process of integration in the Netherlands. A part of this case study took place among the same Dutch Tamil community in Den Helder, however, not the same members involved in the first research project. A difference between this and the first study is that the Dutch Tamils of the Hindu temple association were now relocated to a real Hindu temple called Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayagar, instead of a classroom in a barrack where the former Hindu ceremonies took place.[16] Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayagar is the first Hindu temple in the Netherlands where Hindu people, in practice people with a Tamil

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[15] I prefer 'receiving' above 'host', as the latter suggests a feeling of being welcome that is often not the case.
[16] The address of Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayagar is Annie Romein Verschoorlaan 32 BD Den Helder. www.hindutemple.nl

background, come from afar to attend. This public Hindu temple has been opened since July 6 2003 and, symbolically, this was the last day of the first fieldwork period. In this thesis, we will see whether this socio-spatial change from a barrack to a temple has had an influence on the integration of Dutch Tamils in the Netherlands. A question I address is what does the Hindu temple mean to the Dutch Tamils in the Netherlands?

The temple was an important place of research since here the participant observations took place. I visited the temple mainly during prayers, religious ceremonies and celebrations to honour the Gods such as Murugan, Shiva and Laksmi on Fridays and Sundays. The key-informant of the previous research, Mano, agreed to cooperate with the current research. He introduced me to the Dutch Tamil community (although most persons remembered me) and announced the purpose of this research. I recruited a diverse sample of Dutch Tamils –young and elder men and women who frequently went to the Hindu temple in Den Helder- with the idea of exploring whether there is, as is frequently assumed, a difference in views on integration among, and between, men and women of different ages. To be able to give an answer whether a (possible) difference in perspective on integration is related to age, another part of the fieldwork took place among Dutch Tamil students.[17] These young and highly educated students created a virtual meeting space on the Internet to talk about dating, integration in the Netherlands, the conflict in Sri Lanka, Hinduism, different events –religious, sports, political-, music and film. This group was found on Internet through searching for new information on Tamils in the Netherlands. Since Internet is increasingly used worldwide contacts with Tamil students were easily made, although it took some time to make in person appointments. Preceding these appointments, a large amount of e-mailing took place to build relationships. For example, a summary of the previous research had to be sent before, and on the basis hereof, they made a decision whether or not to participate. Eventually, seven Tamil students, four female and three male, decided to cooperate with this research. I discovered that it is difficult to draw a line between the Tamil students and the Tamils of the Hindu temple, because five of the Tamil students are also members of the Hindu temple. In fact, four of the Tamil students were in the Hindu temple at the time they were asked to participate in this research.

Altogether, twenty Dutch Tamils participated in this research. They were asked separately to fill in a questionnaire called "important aspects of life in the Netherlands" (see Appendix 1). Based on their answers informal meetings were held to discuss the themes they identify as important in their lives. Discussions were dependent upon what they suggested of their own accord related to integration and these discussions took usually two or more meetings. In all cases, I began with

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[17] See www.tamilstudenten.nl

open interviewing to prevent leading questions. At a more advance point in the research process, after I had formed a more general opinion of the participants' views, I asked more targeted questions on integration.

In addition to collecting information from the Dutch Tamils, I interviewed fourteen government and policy experts to widen my view on integration.[18] Some results are used as background information to be able to understand the governmental context in which the Dutch Tamils' views on integration were constructed. I also did an extensive literature review and analyzed existing documents on, for example, integration, migration, intra-state conflict in Sri Lanka, identity, belonging, Hinduism, diaspora, gender, and the role of the researcher.

Several dilemmas presented themselves in the course of the research. These were related to issues concerning gender, ethnic identity, age, generation and, most significantly, the general problem of categorization. In the following sections, I briefly describe these dilemmas before turning to the thesis outline.

Dilemma: how to recruit women to participate?

Baarda, de Goede and Teunissen (1997: 34) describe the ethic behaviour rules and codes that I attempted to follow as much as possible during this research. In accordance with one of these codes, all Dutch Tamils *voluntarily* chose to participate in this research. As described before, I entered the field –the Dutch Tamil community in Den Helder- easily because I already, and still, had contacts with a board member of the temple association. Unlike the previous fieldwork period of 2002-2003, I recruited the participants myself because I presumed that I otherwise only could speak to the Dutch Tamils who were pushed forward by the board members. This was not easy to achieve, because the board members of the Hindu temple association, who are all men, wanted to exercise control over the research. This male dominance and their tendency to control things –people, places and situations- turned out to be an issue of frequent occurrence in this research. I will give here an illustration. When I wanted to interview Dutch Tamils other than those the board members preferred, such as their daughters or relatives' daughters, the choice was to play naïve (pretending not to know there were underlying issues involved) or keep appointments secretly. In almost all cases, the latter option was chosen because this was the women's preference. They did not want their parents to know that they participated in this research, because then "they would be in real trouble": partially because they had participated, but primarily because their parents would not know what they had said. Nevertheless, or in spite

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[18] Three policymakers of the municipals of Den Helder and Nijmegen, two coordinators of the International Women Centres of Den Helder and Nijmegen, three researchers on migration and integration, four teachers of language institutes in Nijmegen, a Hindu expert and a Tamil spokesman.

of this, they really wanted to tell their stories. For this reason, I promised to keep their names anonymous to safeguard their interests. In chapter five, it was decided in this research to describe these women's stories.

Let us turn to the other option of playing naïve to make appointments with women. When I wanted to make an appointment with Ezhil (22 years old), her father hinted that he was not able to be there as well. In other words, he intended that we had to make another appointment *so* he could be present. At the time of interview with Ezhil, I noticed that either her father or her mother was present in the same room. This did not seem to be a coincidence. He purposefully sat at a table some steps away from us and listened to what we discussed, even interrupting our conversation a few times. Although the conversation was satisfactory, the situation was tense and I knew some issues were held back. This 'presence-of-others' has an influence on the research's validity, although I do not know to what degree, and consequently I have to keep in mind that the answers may be social desirable or coloured. This is the reason it was preferable to make appointments with women subjects in secret.

Dilemma of reifying ethnic identity

At the time, I selected a target group with a specific ethnic background to be able to do a case study on integration, particularly 'their' perspective on integration; I faced the dilemma of reifying ethnicity. The fact that I asked Tamils to participate in this research because the integration of this group was not yet studied in the Netherlands, led to the labelling of this group as a different ethnic group. Correspondingly, they were defined –in any case, approached- as Tamils instead of Dutch or Dutch Tamils, despite the fact that most Tamils had already obtained their Dutch nationality. I could not resolve the dilemma of reification, because I selected participants based on their Tamil background.[19] I pre-supposed that the identification of Tamils as a target group to study integration might lead to feelings of exclusion. Nevertheless, none of the Dutch Tamils said they felt excluded because they had been identified as a non-Dutch (*allochtoon*) group. The first reason was that most, in particular the older and very young, Dutch Tamils took this approach for granted; they see themselves as Tamils, because they are Tamils. Some of these Dutch Tamils speak in terms of 'I am a Tamil, because that is my culture, my nation –they speak of *mijn volk* 'my descent'.

We can conclude that people who say this base their identity in ethnic origin. This essentialist view of identity, one that suggests a primordial connection between people (Geertz 1963, 1973

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[19] While knowing that ethnicity is not fixed, bounded but constructed, fluid, and changeable.

and Shils 1980), is a recurrent issue in this thesis.[20] However, the statement 'I am a Tamil' also occurred in a different, less self-identified context. Amutha said that she is a Tamil because other –Dutch- people see her as a foreigner because of her darker skin colour: "*My skin colour tells people that I am a Tamil, so I am a Tamil*". In this case, we see that Amutha developed her ethnic identity in dialogue with her social environment. Other people define her as a Tamil, and consequently she does the same. We can conclude that she looks at ethnicity in a more constructed way, although it appears as though she has not chosen her identity herself. Her identity will possibly change if people's opinions change. The issue of the degree to which identity is self-selected or socially imposed is frequently found in this thesis.

Let us turn to another reason for not feeling excluded when I approached Dutch Tamils as Tamils to start this research. The young and highly educated Dutch Tamils for the most part did not feel excluded (anymore) when I –or because I- explained the dilemma of reifying ethnicity. In first instance, they did not want to be labelled as Tamils, because they see themselves as Dutch. They understand that it is necessary to approach Dutch Tamils as Tamils if you want to do a research on how they view on integration, but, and simultaneously, they want to be recognized as Dutch. We will see by means of the stories of Ulagu, Yovan and Maan that some Dutch Tamil men find it very important to be recognized as Dutch, not only by me, but primarily by the government authorities as "they do their best to integrate as much as possible". Primarily, the government has to approach them as Dutch since they have the tendency to recognize Tamils like other *allochtoon* groups as allochtoon. At the same time, it is also, mainly for young women, very important to be recognized as Tamil, primarily by other Tamils, meaning the Tamils who are members of the Hindu temple. At the hand of Magil's story, the complex relation between self-identification, recognition and integration is described in more detail. However, and what of relevance is here, is that we see that ethnic identities are instrumentally used by people, consciously or not. Neyens (2001: 15) described that the affiliation of an individual with a certain community has according to this view no connection with feelings or nature but with the possibility of gaining practical advantages from it. In other words, the connection of an individual with a community stems from a rational choice. Ethnicity is therefore a flexible and adaptable construction of humans; with changing circumstances, it also changes. In this thesis we will see how Dutch Tamils view, and make use of, their ethnic identity in their lives in the Netherlands, and whether it stems from a rational choice.

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[20] In an essentialist view, it is assumed that people's identities are rooted and based on race, blood, language, religion and that it is hereditary. Clifford Geertz is often cited as the author who introduced the concept of primordial connection.

Dilemma of focus on integration

A second and related dilemma is that this research focuses on the integration of Dutch Tamils. This focus implicitly supposes that *they* have to integrate, because *they* are Tamil. I was aware in advance that the focus on integration might lead Dutch Tamils think that they should, according to me, integrate. It was possible that they internalized this idea, because the integration policy of the former Minister Rita Verdonk and a part of the 'Dutch' population consider them as *allochtoon* people, who should integrate in Dutch society –i.e., others who should integrate into Dutch society. The position taken in this research, as indicated above, is that this assumption should be subjected to critique because integration is not a static quality, but is realized in dialogue between people in society. In other words, people in society produce integration in a continuously evolving and changing way.

When I introduced this study as research on integration, most Dutch Tamils reacted in a manner that was shocked and nervous. This was most likely because they thought their integration would be measured in a normative and judgmental way. I told them that this was not the intention. I explained that the purpose of this research was in the discovery of how *they* view integration, what integration means to them, and what it should be. Their reaction then became more relaxed. However, not everyone seemed entirely convinced by my explanation. Several of the older men remained suspicious and on the alert during the interviews. Different reasons can be given for their behaviour. First, the topic 'research on integration' can frighten them. Second, 'their involvement' in the intra-state conflict in Sri Lanka and their period of stay in an asylum seekers centre possibly had consequences for their suspicious behaviour. This was reflected in the question to me on several occasions: "*you are not a spy, are you?*" Third, the gender of a researcher may have caused this. The fact that I, a woman, asked older men questions concerning their integration could lead to keeping up appearances. However, with patience and by means of careful self-presentation I tried to avoid threatening their identities and their authority and tried to encourage the ones with whom I had facilitated rapport. I also tried to establish and maintain this position throughout the interview situation itself. I frequently told them that there are no good or wrong answers, all answers are good. In some cases, it took a while to uncover their views on integration, but I primarily kept in mind that my goal was to produce knowledge, and preferably by not attracting attention. We will see that many older men gave a very consistent and rationally considered view of integration. Their answers seemed to be discussed together before, as they were almost identical every time I met them. This is in contrast to the young women, who told me 'everything' that was on their minds. They seemed to really trust me. The fact that I am a 'young' woman as well probably played a role.

The methods used to do research are also related to the question of trust. As I described before, making contacts with people –Tamil students, for example via the Internet takes less time and is very easy. However, the number of people responding to the e-mails was very low. I had to send numerous e-mails in which I explained my study. Although many students replied to confirm that they wanted to participate, only three students filled in the questionnaire, and hereafter we made appointments to discuss their answers. These three people were the only people who participated in the research without earlier personal contact (although with one I had many phone calls preceding his participation). In other words, the other students apparently did not feel any obligation to follow up or did not trust contacts made via the Internet. During the study, I coincidentally met four students in the temple, and when I there asked them to participate they reacted positively. We therefore may conclude that gaining trust is one of the most important and time-consuming factors in a case study.[21]

Dilemma of categorization: generations, socialization/ enculturation processes?

As already argued, ethnic identities are flexible and changeable, and differences within ethnic groups occur. Ethnic identities, gendered identities, and identities constructed based on age, cannot easily be reduced to archetypes. Therefore, generalizations cannot easily been made. In this thesis, following conventional categorization procedures, I intended to categorize participants according to their gender and whether or not they were men and women of the first or second generation. However, the distinction between generations turned out to be problematic. The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), for example, defines someone as an *allochtoon* if at least one parent is born in a foreign country. If you *are not* born in the Netherlands you are of the first generation, and if you *are* born in the Netherlands you are of the second generation: if you are a descendent of someone who is born in the Netherlands, you are of the third generation.[22] The problem is that the descendents of the first generation Dutch Tamils are officially, according to the definition of the CBS, also of the first generation, because they are *not* born in the Netherlands. However, they see themselves as second generation Dutch Tamils - i.e. in the questionnaire; they selected the 'second generation' option. Despite the official definition, these younger Dutch Tamils only consider their parents as the first generation, and see themselves as the second generation. How then should I categorize Dutch Tamils based on age given the differences between younger and older Dutch Tamils? I decided to categorize Dutch Tamils based on 'generations', corresponding to their perception of generations since this is less confusing.

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[21] See Hammersley and Atkinson (1993: 141): "Both the participant observer and interviewer need to build rapport".
[22] See www.cbs.nl

Another problem, regarding place in relation to a child's age, occurred by making a distinction between Dutch Tamils who were acculturated in Sri Lanka, and Dutch Tamils who were acculturated in the Netherlands, since it is contested until when someone's socialization and enculturation processes take place.[23] As we will see in the fourth chapter, I chose to categorize Dutch Tamils based on their perception, which is in most cases in accordance with their perception of generations.

This makes it relevant to discuss both socialization and enculturation processes. Dialektopoulos (2003: 75) argues that definitions of socialization are ambiguous. Traditional definitions emphasize influences exercised from a society on a child. In this view, socialization processes have the character of one-way traffic: a child cannot influence the way in which it is socialized by society. Many scholars point to this 'societialized' character of socialization processes (Klaassen 1991: 33). Dahrendorf (1965) was strongly in favour of the idea that socialization is a forced process of alienation by society. He described it as: a process of depersonalization, in which the absolute individuality and freedom of an individual is merged in the control and universality of social roles" (Dahrendorf 1965: 73). I comply myself with Hurrelmann's (1998) dialectic and inclusive view of socialization:

> [Socialization] is the process of the emergence, formation, and development of the human personality in dependence on and in interaction with the human organism, on the one hand, and the social and ecological living conditions that exist at a given time within the historical development of a society on the other. Socialization designates the process in the course of which a human being, with his or her specific biological and psychological disposition, becomes a socially competent person, endowed with the abilities and capacities for effective action within the larger society and the various segments of society and dynamically maintains this status throughout the course of his or her life (Hurrelmann 1998: 2).

Klaassen (1981: 2 and 1996: 13) argued that 'enculturation', an anthropological concept, could not be equated with 'socialization'. Socialization is a process of identity development, and simultaneously, a process of bringing the society into human's nature. Enculturation is a process of transmitting culture, and simultaneously a process of identity development as well. The process of identity development is an active process; individuals create their social-cultural identity under the influence of environmental factors. Viewed from the perspective of an individual, both socialization and enculturation processes contribute to the development of uniform behaviour in his society and to the development of diverse behaviour between societies

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[23] See Pels 1991, and chapter four for more details.

(Klaassen 1996: 13). Dialektopoulos (2003: 79-80) defined socialization as "the process of personality development –nowadays called ego-identity- that takes place in dialogue with its material and social-cultural environment".

From this, we can conclude that the construction of ego-identity is not only influenced by biological factors, but is largely dependent on direct or indirect influences of the social-cultural environment. Changes of someone's social-cultural environment may lead to changes in the processes of socialization and enculturation. In this way, there is a discrepancy between the socialization processes of Dutch Tamil children that takes place in Dutch society, and the socialization processes of Dutch Tamils (at that time Tamil children) that took place in Sri Lanka. However, and as we will see, the geographical location in which a Dutch Tamil is socialized cannot fully explain socialization and enculturation processes since the family is considered as a major socializing/acculturating institution. Dutch Tamil children's socialization and enculturation processes are at least dual; even if a Dutch Tamil child is socialized in the Netherlands the family remains Tamil, and this raises many questions of self-definition Magil for example struggles with the question 'who she is': she feels neither Tamil, nor Dutch, and that makes her feel very lonely.[24] With these complexities in mind, I tried to describe how Dutch Tamils' socialization and enculturation processes have influenced the Dutch Tamil integration processes.

Dilemma of categorization: gendered identities

A final problem exists in relation to gender. Gender is an ascribed identity. Almost no one questions his or her sex (there is a strong difference between sex and gender. Sex is typically considered the biological component, gender the social). [25] However, some people do question the behaviour that 'belongs to' a certain gender. Why exactly is some behaviour typically feminine or masculine? In the nineteenth century, associated with the idea of modernity, traditional female roles and patriarchal institutions began to change in 'Western' countries. This trend has continued with many women arguing for and practicing more diverse role patterns in different areas such as paid employment, housework and childcare. In western countries, equality between men and women is generally taken for granted at the level of law (even if law does not match practice).

However, and as we already saw at the hand of the Annual Reports on Integration, integration is *measured* in terms of gender, while almost no attention is given to *how* gender might effect the immigration or integration process. Research shows that this has negative consequences, for

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[24] Most parents of Dutch Tamil children consider themselves as Tamil. As we will see in the fourth chapter, this does not have to conflict with their Dutch identity, as both identifications mean a lot to them, however often in different contexts.

[25] Although these too are problematic distinctions.

example, for many female asylum seekers. Policymakers of European states often take the idea of 'no distinction between men and women' for granted as based in the principle of equal individual rights. This stance blinds them to gender differences and men and women are not asked, for example, 'why and how *they* fled'. For this reason, Bloch et al. (2000) argue that the policy of European states is falling short as it is developed on the single normative basis of the male asylum seeker:

> There is lack of recognition and understanding of the diversity and the range of experiences which refugees bring with them, including different social and cultural norms. Moreover, European policies do not provide special provisions to facilitate the settlement of refugee women and instead place barriers to their social and economic participation (Bloch et al. 2000: 169).

As this example shows, gender patterns are not taken into consideration by policymakers. I suggest alternatively that gender matters and that a focus by policymakers on the specific experiences of women and their differing integration needs will have a positive influence on their integration. My research reveals that Dutch Tamils have a strong belief of what masculine and feminine roles are. These roles are different from Dutch beliefs –which we can say are equally strong but not the same. Even the idea of equality is a strong gender belief –to say nothing of the fact that equality is an ideal not a reality. The identification of non-European gender inequality deflects attention away from investigation of European inequality that persists in some areas.

We will see that in general men differ in their view of integration from women, and that some factors facilitate men's integration while hindering women's integration. For this reason it is concluded that governments need to pay careful attention to gender when creating immigration and integration law and policy –not only when measuring degree of integration and singly out Somali women, for example, as poorly integrated.

Frame of reference

Throughout this thesis I am concerned not only with presenting the historical background and present status of the concept of integration as a strategy to deal with ethnic diversity in the Netherlands, but with presenting the immigration/ integration experiences of Dutch Tamils in their own words. Sometimes I was gripped by both the tragedy and comedy that emerged when Dutch Tamils described the ways they lived their lives in Sri Lanka and in the Netherlands. I am aware that although I have tried to present situations in the respondents' own words I cannot

escape my frame of reference.[26] In other words, I associate concepts such as 'death and suicide' with tragedy while most Dutch Tamils associate death –and sometimes suicide- with freedom and relief. Although I do not believe that cultures are incommensurable as Benhabib (2003: 135) argues in her book 'the claims of culture', I do believe, maybe more than Benhabib, that it is difficult to understand another framework or worldview. When Benhabib argues, "strong incommensurability is an incoherent position, for if such incommensurability of frameworks and worldviews existed, we would not be able to know it for we would not be able to state in what it consisted" (2003: 135), does she then presumes that a weak incommensurability is a coherent position? In other words, to what extent 'are we able to know' other worldviews?

By means of an example, I will try to illustrate this. Until recently I did not know that when you ask a Dutch Tamil the direction to a certain place, and he or she replies with "at the traffic-light to the right", they mean (according to our worldview) to the left. Because they consider the traffic light as a person as well, which means that I have to place myself in the position of the traffic light and then turn to the right. You can imagine that I went to the opposite direction a couple of times, wondering why I went wrong. Eventually I found out why.

By means of such a practical event, we (Dutch Tamils and I) experienced that our worldviews differ and that we knew from now on that we indicate directions in an opposite way. However, how do we know that we mean the same as it concerns abstract concepts instead of practical events? How do I know for sure that the Dutch Tamils know what I mean when we talk about integration, which is a concept invented and constructed by 'the west'? It is impossible to give an answer on this question, but it is possible to be reflexive, and by virtue of strategies such as the 'objectification of objectification' and 'participant objectivation' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 69) an epistemologically privileged access to the meaning and processes of the social world is possible. [27] We have to be aware that the act of observation, in itself, produces a particular kind of understanding. We, the social scientists, look for explanations of human behaviour that we present as a representation of 'reality', an object of observation and analysis (Bourdieu 1990, de

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[26] It is often argued that those who do fieldwork in their own cultures struggle with the dynamic between intimacy of familiarity and the distance offered by the role of the researcher, and that those who do fieldwork in 'other' cultures face this same tension. However, the latter group has the advantage of not being able to take knowledge for granted and thus being forced to ask more probing questions with the disadvantage of misunderstanding. (Argyrou 1996, Hayano 1979, McLaren 1991, Messerschmidt 1981, Powdermaker 1966, Preston 1994 in Rebhun 1999: 3). I hold the opinion that although I did fieldwork in my 'own culture' I consider myself to the latter group since the people I studied have another cultural background. Consequently, I could easily get away with asking ignorant questions (I was not considered as one of them), and I faced cultural/ linguistic misunderstandings.

[27] Bourdieu's experiment exists of two steps: objectivation of objectivation and participant objectivation. The first step back is from the situation in question –this is when we usually talk about 'objectivity' (Bourdieu 1990: 59-60). The second step back is from the act of observation itself. According to Bourdieu this results in the 'objectification of the act of objectification', that are necessary, because without these steps, it is impossible to appreciate the nature of most social scientifically accounts, such as distant accounts, of social life (Bourdieu 1990: 59-60).

Ruijter 2000). However, we as an observer are a part of this representation of 'reality'. Jenkins (2002: 51) describes that the epistemological break can be made by means of objectifying the position of the social scientist as a competent actor in his/ her own social world(s), as well as the position of the research subjects, it is possible to place both observer and observed within the same epistemological frame. Therefore, cultures may divide people in the world, and in the Netherlands, however in their relation to culture, i.e. how they learn it, modify it, handle it, and draw upon it as a resource, they have more in common than not. Although it is not possible to read others minds, it may be possible to step into other shoes.

Outline

This thesis consists of two parts and a final conclusion: the first part (Chapter 2) concerns a 'top down' approach on how states, the Dutch state in particular, define and deal with integration; the second part (Chapters 3, 4, 5) focuses from a 'bottom up' approach on how Dutch Tamils view and experience integration in their daily lives.

   Chapter two, *State and Integration*, elaborates how from a top down perspective liberal states—and the Dutch state in particular—define and deal with integration. It will be examined that contemporary liberal states, because of the intensifying and ceaseless flows of people who migrate, face 'multicultural' challenges regarding how and where to build an inclusive nation of all citizens who will identify with the liberal state. Many scholars debate on how to build an inclusive multiethnic society on a theoretical level. It reveals that normative laws regarding individual human rights and minority group-rights are conflicting. Subsequently, I will argue that accommodating ethnic-cultural diversity is not easy to accomplish by normative laws. Hereafter, we will see how the Dutch state deals with accommodating ethnic diversity and which strategy has been used to integrate minorities. At the hand of a historical reflection of the Dutch immigration and integration policy we will see that several policy's shifts, from reluctant to multiculturalist to an assimilationist policy, have taken place in order to deal with ethnic diversity. In addition, it will be examined that the Dutch integration policy 'struggles' with how and where to build an inclusive nation. The current Dutch integration policy is based on interventions imposed by the state and many measures and rules to provide non-western *allochtoon's* civic integration in Dutch society. We will see that this policy involves some theoretical and practical complications.

   As a result, chapter three, *Dutch Tamils and Integration*, concerns with how Dutch Tamils, whose lives policy bears upon, view integration. Moreover, their everyday life experiences, opinions and knowledge of integration will be presented with the goal of providing a means for developing a

more inclusive approach concerning non-western *allochtoon's* civic integration processes. It will be elaborated from a bottom-up perspective, how Dutch Tamils define, consider and experience integration. Different statements as to how Dutch Tamils view their integration will be presented in order to assess the value of the different practices that give meaning to their integration. I will argue that their understandings go beyond the Dutch integration policy's requirements and its approach.

In chapter four, *1984 & 1991; different reasons of 'being' here*, this thesis moves on to the dynamics of migration and integration processes of the Dutch Tamils. First, I describe how the Tamils who had to flee from Sri Lanka and arrived in the Netherlands experienced the intra-state conflict, their flight to the Netherlands and their settlement process in the Netherlands, and whether they consider these past experiences to play a role in their current lives. Second, I will examine the differences between the integration experiences of first generation Dutch Tamil men who fled to the Netherlands and the first generation Dutch Tamil women who migrated as brides-to-be. We will see how their integration experiences are differently perceived and are related to feelings of belonging and processes of self-identification. In addition, this chapter aims to illustrate that the integration experiences of the first generation Dutch Tamil men and women are due to their different reasons for 'being here' much more differentiated than the current Dutch integration policy takes into account.

Between Bollywood and Suicide is the fifth and final chapter of this thesis. This chapter investigates the integration experiences of second generation Dutch Tamils, particularly the complexities of young women's, everyday life in the Netherlands. Following some of these stories we will see how they perceive their daily lives and the integration process, which aspects of their everyday lives they identify as important, and how they view, and make use of, their ethnic identity. These stories aim to show that some women long for a totally different life, which I name *Bollywood*; a life without rules regarding their behaviour. I will consider the importance of some practices and beliefs that particularly play a role to cope with the problems, such as *Suicide*, these second generation Dutch Tamil women experience. Since the Hindu temple Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga turned out to be very important, although in various ways, for all Dutch Tamils involved in this research, I will end this chapter with those of its differing meanings and functions that are of concern to Dutch Tamils' everyday life experiences.

The concluding chapter six, *Reflections*, is meant to recapitulate some of the most interesting and significant features of the Dutch Tamils' integration process. It also includes some additional remarks, some words on observations that are left unanalyzed, and suggestions to move towards an inclusive framework of integration.

Chapter Two: State and Integration

Introduction

The linkages in the modern world system have both enlarged and erased old boundaries and distinctions. Appadurai (1990:1) characterizes today's world as a 'translocal' 'interactive system' that is 'strikingly new', because the scale of human movement has expanded dramatically. Contemporary global culture is driven by flows of people, technology, finance, information, images and ideology. Business, technology and the media have increased the craving for commodities and images throughout the world (Gottdiener 2000).

Of most concern for this study is that in today's world of globalization people are more able to migrate or flee to other countries. This is not surprising, because since most conflicts are located within states, characterized by a very high (90 per cent) share of civilian victims (Miall et al. 1998-130), unfortunately a large number of refugees is the consequence.[28] Many people who face an intra-state conflict in their home country flee to western countries to reside. For example, 409526 refugees arrived in Canada between 1979 and 2001 due to an intra-state conflict in their home country.[29] More recently, in 2005, 49700 new asylum applications were submitted in France, 39200 in the United States and 12300 in the Netherlands. Consequently, these countries have been influenced by 'these newcomers' of who most have a traumatic past, different social and cultural habits, practices and customs.

In short, we see that within the context of globalization an analysis of more or less stable places (such as nation-states originally have been considered) has to be renewed, and has to take more into account the intensifying and ceaseless flows of people who by means of for example migration increasingly affect these so-called stable places.[30] Although we know that the idea of a 'nation-state' is theoretically just a state's ideal type, contemporarily states in a globalized and post-modern world face two nation-building challenges.[31] The first liberal state's challenge is *how* to build an inclusive nation of all citizens (of both 'indigenous/ *autochtoon*' and 'foreign/ *allochtoon*' people) who will identify with the liberal state? The second challenge is *where* to build such an inclusive nation in times of people living 'multilocally'?

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[28] In the late twentieth century, there have been only two inter-state wars: Peru and Ecuador, Iraq and Kuwait compared to 61 intra-state conflicts (Gunaratna 1997).

[29] Canadian government estimates this number of refugees, which is 15, 4 % of the population (4025546) who immigrated to Canada (see http://www.cbc.ca/humancargo).

[30] Smith describes a nation-state as "a state whose political boundaries are the same as those of a nation, a state whose population is homogeneous, whose inhabitants are all members of the same nation" (Smith 1981: 12).

[31] Many scholars admit that a nation-state is only an ideal type; practically there can be more nations within a nation-state (e.g. Canada, United States, and the Netherlands), nations can be stateless, and nations can be dispersed to more states.

In this chapter we will focus on which strategies present-day liberal states use, and in particular which strategy the Dutch state uses, to accommodate current 'flows' of 'non-western *allochtoon* people' within its territorial borders.[32] To be able to better understand the current Dutch state policy dealing with these 'multicultural/ multiethnic' challenges, I will briefly discuss *how* liberal states deal with multiculturalism by means of a liberal multiculturalist approach, since believing in liberal multiculturalism is controversial.[33] [34] The debate between defenders and critics of liberal multiculturalism on accommodating ethnic-cultural diversity is relatively new. Political philosophers, as well as scholars from other disciplines as sociology, geography and history considered questions of ethnicity as subordinate. At present, the rights of ethnic-cultural minorities have become an actual issue. Globalization processes, in particular the increasing mobility of people to migrate, have contributed to normative questions concerning nationalism, immigration, civic integration and multiculturalism. Many scholars –for example Bauböck, Kymlicka, Joppke and Okin- deal with the question *how* to build an inclusive multicultural or multiethnic society. I will briefly describe their opposing views on multiculturalism as a political strategy to accommodate ethnic-cultural diversity –Kymlicka, Okin are liberal defenders of multiculturalism, and Joppke criticizes it. First, we will focus on the debate going on among defenders of multiculturalism as a strategy to integrate minorities. We will see that accommodating ethnic-cultural diversity is not easy to accomplish by normative laws.

The dilemma of multiculturalism in liberal states: minority group rights or human rights?
Castles and Miller (1993) argue that a consequence of globalization processes is that almost all today's states are culturally diverse.[35] Kymlicka (1995: 1-2) describes that although most organized political communities throughout recorded history have been multiethnic/ multicultural, Western states have traditionally been silent on approaches to minority rights. For a long time, Western political theorists have worked with an idealized model of the *polis* –in which citizens share a common language, culture and descent- as if these culturally homogeneous *poleis* of Ancient

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[32] Kottak describes a state (nation-state) as a complex sociopolitical system that administers a territory and populace with substantial contrasts in occupation, wealth, prestige, and power. An independent, centrally organized political unit; a government. A form of social and political organization with a formal, central government and a division of society into classes (Kottak 2006: 310).

[33] Multiculturalism refers to a 'state of affairs of multi cultures' (see Barry 2001: 22 and Levy 2000). A liberal multiculturalist approach refers to a 'political programme in which multiculturalism is a goal to be furthered by means of state policy' (see Barry 2001: 22 and Levy 2000).

[34] Defenders of liberal multiculturalism are Bauböck (1994, 2001), Kymlicka (1995, 2001), Spinner (1994), Taylor (1992), Raz (1994), Philips (1995) and Young (1990), and critics of liberal multiculturalism are Joppke (2004), Barry (2001), Sartori (2000), Levy (2000), Fraser (1995) and Bhabha (1998).

[35] See Castles and Miller (1993) for the ever-increasing scale of this diversity. Iceland and the Koreas are commonly cited as two examples of countries that are more or less culturally homogenous (see Kymlicka 1995:196).

Greece provided the essential or standard model of a political community. Smith calls this 'ideal' model a 'nation-state':

> "A state whose political boundaries are the same as those of a nation[36], a state whose population is homogeneous, whose inhabitants are all members of the same nation" (Smith 1981: 12).

The purpose of states throughout history is to build a strong nation by means of nationalist ideologies, because a weak state is a threat for the intra-state security when cultural minorities do not want to recognize it. [37] Governments pursued various policies regarding cultural minorities to achieve a strong nation. Kymlicka describes that some minorities were physically eliminated by mass expulsion or by genocide; others were forced to assimilate by adopting the language, religion and customs of the dominant group. In other cases, minorities were treated as resident aliens; were segregated physically; were discriminated in various ways and their political rights were denied (1995: 2).

Various efforts have been made historically to protect cultural minorities, and to prevent from conflicts between state and minorities. Kymlicka describes that bilateral treaties –for example between Germany and Poland- regulated the treatment of fellow nationals in other countries, but these treaties were inadequate as they 'justified' Nazi German's invasion.

> "For one thing, a minority was only ensured protection from discrimination and oppression if there was a 'kin state' nearby which took an interest in it. Moreover, the treaties were destabilizing, because where such kin states did exist, they often used treaty provisions as grounds for invading or intervening in weaker countries. Thus Nazi Germany justified its invasion of Poland and Czechoslovakia on the grounds that these countries were the treaty rights of ethnic Germans on their soil" (Kymlicka 1995: 2).

It was clear that a different approach to minority rights was needed after World War II, because Nazi Germany abused these minority rights to legitimize their invasion of weaker countries where ethnic Germans resided. Minority rights can thus lead to a dangerous totalitarian regime (see *the Origins of Totalitarianism* of Arendt 1951).

Consequently, a 'human rights' approach was the hope of many liberals. The primary motivation for universal human rights following World War II had to do with ethnic minorities

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[36] Gellner (1983: 7) defines a nation as "two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture" and "two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognize each other as belonging to the same nation".
[37] To achieve a nation-state a state has to build a strong nation. However, state nationalism leads to minority nationalism, as it fails to adapt to the multi-cultural identity of a country. See Danforth (1995) for more details.

that had become stateless during the war. Liberals thought that human rights would protect cultural minorities indirectly by guaranteeing basic civil and political rights to all individuals regardless of group membership. They assumed that no further rights were needed when individual rights –such as freedom of speech, association, and conscience- were firmly protected. Many liberals supported the shift from groups-specific minority rights to universal human rights. They agreed that religious minorities did not need specific protection by granting groups rights anymore, because they were indirectly protected by the separation of church and state, and entrenching individual's freedom of religion. They thought that when religious differences were tolerated, ethno-cultural differences would also be tolerated. Ethno-cultural practices as well as religion were separated of the state, consequently ethnic groups or any use of ethnic criteria in the distribution of duties, resources and rights could not be legally or governmentally recognized (Kymlicka 1995: 3-4).

Kymlicka describes that most post-war liberals rejected the idea of permanent differentiation in the rights or status of disadvantaged groups –with the exception of temporary and remedial measures of affirmative action for some racial groups.

> "In particular, they reject the claim that group-specific rights are needed to accommodate enduring cultural differences, rather than remedy historical discrimination.[…] Post-war liberals around the world have repeatedly opposed the idea that specific ethnic or national groups should be given a permanent political identity or constitutional status" (Kymlicka 1995: 4).

Consequently, minority rights cannot be subsumed under the category of human rights, because the latter principles are unable to resolve some important questions related to cultural minorities. For example, which language should be recognized in the parliaments; or should international boundaries be drawn in such a way that minorities form a majority within a local region?

When we focus on minorities' integration within liberal states, we face some controversial and important questions. Kymlicka argues that the problems of minorities' integration within liberal states are a result of limited human rights principles that are difference-blind for cultural diversity. Hereby he means that human rights principles are not sufficient anymore to deal with minority rights:

> "What are the responsibilities of minorities to integrate? What degree of cultural integration can be required of immigrants and refugees before they acquire citizenship? The problem is not that traditional human rights doctrines give us the wrong answer to these questions. It is rather that they often give us <u>no answer at all.</u> The right to free speech does not tell us what an appropriate language

policy is; the right to vote does not tell us how political boundaries should be drawn, or how powers should be distributed between levels of government; the right to mobility does not tell us what an appropriate immigration and naturalization policy is. These questions have been left to the usual process of majoritarian decision-making within each state. The result, I will argue, has been to render cultural minorities vulnerable to significant injustice at the hands of the majority, and to exacerbate ethno cultural conflict" (Kymlicka 1995: 5).

We see that human rights principles do not give an answer on *how* they can be applied in practice. However, simultaneously we have to admit that minority rights are certainly controversial as well, because they can be used to legitimize dangerous totalitarian regimes, and guarantee no equal rights for people within a minority group. Okin (1999) describes that providing cultural minorities with group rights as a way to preserve them from undue pressure in their ways of life can be bad for women. Intra-group oppressions are sometimes a result of multiculturalist policies.

"It is by no means clear, from a feminist point of view, that minority group rights are part of the solution. They may well exacerbate the problem" (Okin 1999: 22).

When the dominant practices and ideas of a group clash with the idea that men and women are moral equals, we ought to:

"be less solicitous of the group and more attentive to the costs visited on female members" (Okin 1999: 4)….Those multiculturalists –referring to Kymlicka- who make liberal arguments for the rights of groups, must take special care to look at inequalities within those groups" (Okin 1999: 23).

The problem is that in many cultures the subordination and control of women is often informal and private. Okin agrees with Kymlicka that virtually no –minority as well as majority- culture in the world could pass the "no sex discrimination test" if it would be applied in the private sphere (Okin 1999: 22). Yet, therefore, Okin argues we have to address the private and culturally reinforced kinds of discrimination.[38]

"Self-respect and self-esteem require more than simple membership in a viable culture. Surely, it is *not* enough for one to be able to 'question one's inherited social roles' and to have the capacity to make choices about the life one wants to lead, that one's culture be protected. At least as important to the

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[38] Okin criticizes Kymlicka for not directly addressing the troubling connections between gender and culture. In other words, for defending group rights while there is so much intra-group oppression.

development of self-respect and self-esteem is *our place within our culture*. And at least as pertinent to our capacity to question our social roles is *whether our culture instils in us and forces on us particular social roles* (Okin 1999: 22).

As we see, Okin wants us to ask ourselves whether our social roles are culturally embedded, because there is much evidence that in many cultures in which women's basic civil rights and liberties are formally assured, (sex) discrimination practiced against women within the private sphere -by actual or symbolic fathers and older women- not only severely constrains their choices, but also undermines their well-being, and even their lives (Sen 1990). According to Okin (1999), such sex discrimination –whether severe or mild- often has very powerful cultural roots.

In his response, Kymlicka emphasizes to agree with Okin's appeal to focus on intra-group oppressions.[39] They both argue that women's equality cannot be achieved solely by the same set of formal individual rights that men possess. According to them, we have to pay attention to the structure of societal institutions such as the market, state, and family. We also have to focus on the sorts of images and expectations individuals are exposed to in the media and schools, "since they are typically gendered in an unfair way –using the male as norm" (Kymlicka 1999: 33). The same applies to ethno cultural groups. Multiculturalists argue that justice between ethno cultural groups cannot be achieved by the same set of formal individual rights that the majority possesses. According to them, we also have to examine the institutional structure –such as the language, calendar and uniforms that they use. After all, we must examine the content of the media and education, since they take the majority culture as the norm (Kymlicka 1999: 33). We can conclude that both Okin and Kymlicka stand for an egalitarian multiculturalism that recognizes cultural difference, or as Cohen et al. say "a multiculturalism that effectively treats all persons as each other's moral equals" (Cohen et al. in Okin 1999: 1).

In short, they stand for an egalitarian multiculturalism that does not solely focuses on individual human rights, which do not give an answer on *how* to apply them in practice to build an inclusive multicultural society, and also not solely focuses on minority rights, which can lead to intra-group oppressions and to exclusion of people by means of categorization.

Critiques on multiculturalist approach

Until now, we have seen that supporters of liberal multiculturalism believe in an egalitarian multiculturalism as a strategy to achieve the best prospect for minority integration, mainly by

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[39] In fact, he argues that he had tried before to emphasize this point by distinguishing between two kinds of group rights: internal restrictions –the right to restrict individual choice in the name of 'cultural tradition' or cultural 'integrity', and external protections –rights that a minority group can claim against the larger society in order to reduce its vulnerability to the economic or political power of the larger society (Kymlicka in Okin 1999: 31).

cultural recognition of minorities.[40] However, critics of multiculturalism believe the opposite. I will briefly discuss some of their points of critique. According to Sartori (2000) and Joppke (2004), pluralism is emphatically *not* multiculturalism. Hereby they mean that although there are plural cultures in a society it does not mean that there has to be a pluralist (or multiculturalist) policy's approach. In other words, they wonder why the *description* of a pluralist society should result in the *prescription* that the state has to further by means of laws and policies.

> "Pluralism requires voluntary group memberships, multiple affiliations in the context of cross-cutting cleavages, and 'a reciprocal recognition' between conflict parties. These conditions are systematically denied by multicultural politics, as it evokes and mobilizes around voluntary and mutually exclusive statuses, and tends to render 'recognition' a one-sided act by the majority only" (Joppke 2004: 238).

> "Citizenship requires the postulate of neutrality…of the state vis à vis the cultural or ethnic identity of its demos" (Santori 2000: 87).

We can conclude that critics of multiculturalism reinstate notions of universal citizenship and state neutrality rather than a pluralist or multiculturalist approach. They believe that just multiculturalism cannot give an answer on *how* to build an inclusive civil society, as it tends to render recognition as a one-sided majority act and not as a reciprocal recognition. In line with this, Levy argues that we have to take diversity as an inevitable fact, not as a goal to be furthered by means of state policy (Levy 2000 in Joppke 2004: 238). According to him difference-conscious policies may still be the best way to deal with an ethnic-cultural diverse society, but it depends on the circumstances. A policy of 'recognizing' difference as a matter of rights, where Okin and Kymlicka stand for, rather than dealing with it pragmatically, would, according to Levy, in the first place contradict the public order oriented way in which states have actually accommodated most of such claims. Even more, such a policy would be theoretically not consistent: it is based on "the (hardly respectful) assumption that one's pre-existing culture includes the resources for judging all others in the world" (Levy 2000: 32 in Joppke 2004: 238). In addition, Joppke (2004: 239) argues that one could stand for exactly the opposite approach to multiculturalism, by stating that; a "centrifugal society requires centripetal state policies to keep it together". He explains this by referring to the past:

> "Historically the liberal, difference-blind state with its universal citizenship, which is now found fault with, had exactly emerged as a peacemaker to a hyper-diverse society torn by religious wars in

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[40] For example Kymlicka, Okin and Bauböck.

seventeenth century Europe. No convincing explanation has as yet been offered why *this* solution, which Barry calls the strategy of privatisation, no longer works" (Joppke 2004: 240).

Another point of critique on the model of minority integration by means of cultural recognition is that it is logically impossible to recognize all cultures as equal. Barry (2001: 270) explains this by saying that cultures have propositional content. Cultures distinguish between right and wrong, true and false, beautiful and ugly. Not all these judgements can be simultaneously confirmed.

Besides the liberal critiques on multiculturalism, there is radical critique from a public incorporation point of view that focuses on the institutionalisation of multicultural approaches. Back et al. (2002) argue that governments' attempts to institutionalise ethnic diversity are frequently used as simply ad hoc responses to tensions, and imagined or real threats. According to them, these attempts to incorporate ethnic groups into institutions results in an elite formation within ethnic groups, of which these elite pretends to represent its community. Baumann (1996) and van Houtum et al. (2005) describe that the recognition of ethnic communities can be seen as problematic, because attempts to negotiate with ethnic leaders tend to reify 'culture'. Hereby differences between ethnic groups are enlarged and differences among ethnic groups are minimized. Van Houtum et al. (2005) describe that in this context the state dictates what a legitimate identity is, and hereby the state shapes civil society.

> "Ethnic identities are thus incorporated in a way that meets the demands of dominant groups: at the same time ethnic identities are recognized, their subordinate and isolated position is confirmed and consolidated" (Cornell and Murphy 2002 in Van Houtum et al. 2005: 624).

If we turn back to the question :which strategy scholars prefer to use to deal with minority integration within liberal states, we can conclude that defenders of multiculturalism stand for an egalitarian multiculturalism that effectively treats all persons as each other's moral equals. Liberal critics argue that this is logically impossible, and seem to stand for a more assimilationist approach, or at least for a difference-blind, centripetal state. Joppke (2004) criticized the idea of liberal multiculturalism, and even speaks of 'the retreat of multiculturalism in the liberal state'.[41] He argues that immigrant integration through cultural recognition –as supported by Kymlicka- is shortcoming, because the alliance between liberalism and multiculturalism is according to Joppke *not* multiculturalism.[42] It remains however vague how the liberal criticizers of the multiculturalist

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[41] He criticized Kymlicka (1999) in particular, because of Kymlicka's victory sign 'that multiculturalists have won the day' (Joppke 2004: 1). See the title of his article: the retreat of multiculturalism in the liberal state: theory and practice (2004).
[42] Other recent liberal critiques of multiculturalism come from Barry (2001), Sartori (2000) and Levy (2000).

approach, such as Joppke, define a concrete alternative strategy that would work to deal with ethnic minorities integration. They defend themselves by arguing that there are no convincing arguments why a centripetal state policy would not work -referring to the past.

In addition, radical critics of multiculturalism have problems with multiculturalist approaches, only then within institutionalisation processes, as they tend to reify culture. Van Houtum et al. (2005) argue that multiculturalism, due to its tendency to reify culture, is far too static to deal with the multifaceted and dynamic nature of cultural identifications. For this, alternative approaches that offer opportunities for dynamically negotiating ethnic diversity have to be developed. According to them, this challenge will have to be met rather on an urban than national level. However, and as I will discuss later in this chapter in a more detailed way, the shift to an approach directed on the recognition of minority groups on a local level is still in an experimental phase.

In the next section, I will briefly discuss the current Dutch integration policy. We will see how the Dutch state deals with the integration of ethnic minorities, and which strategy they prefer to use to deal with minorities' integration. Does the Dutch state execute a multiculturalist or an assimilationist approach to integrate immigrants within society? Moreover, does the dilemma to choose between minority rights or individual human rights play a role in this? And, where do immigrants consequently have to integrate: on a national or urban level?

However first, a short historical reflection of the Dutch immigration and integration policy will be given to understand the current integration policy.

Beyond theory: Dutch integration and immigration policy

Reluctant immigration country

Historically, the Netherlands has been an immigration country for a long period: from 1550 until 1800. Since 1800, the Netherlands was a country of immigration, however this changed after World War II. Since then, the Netherlands faced considerable levels of immigration from its former colonies (Suriname and Indonesia), labour migration (Turkey, Morocco) and more recently asylum migration (Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka) and chain migration. Although the Netherlands became more and more a country of immigration, it was the perception and the norm that the Netherlands should not be a country of immigration. Immigration was seen as temporary, not permanent (Penninx et al. 2005: 4). Because of this, immigrants were encouraged to stick to their 'own group', because this would make assimilation more difficult. It was presumed that how larger the cultural difference –one supposed that *guestworkers* differ more than immigrants of

former colonies from Dutch society -the more difficult to assimilate. Nevertheless, *guestworkers* were the object of many policies. There was a policy of good reception, and of helping the immigrants to preserve their 'own culture'. Immigrants were allowed to make use of the provisions of the welfare state. Additionally, there were diverse cultural and social facilities, for example, children had special language lessons to preserve their mother tongue. The underlying thought of this policy was to make the transition back 'home' as smooth as possible. Also immigrants were convinced they would return (Entzinger 1999, Ersanilli 2004: 79).

However, the negative consequences of this 'ignoring by tolerating' policy (Burgers et al. 1996: 10) became visible: immigrants lived segregated, spoke little Dutch, faced high unemployment, and knew little about Dutch culture. After all, the immigrants faced racism and discrimination in Dutch society. Dutch policy tended to perpetuate the immigrants' marginality and their dependency of public support instead of facilitating them to become part of Dutch society (Ersanilli 2004: 79). This tendency had to do with the fact that the Netherlands did not consider itself as an immigration country. Consequently, a tension increased between the norm of not being an immigration country and the fact of increasing immigration and permanent residence in the Netherlands. This tension was most dramatically expressed by some terrorist acts (two train hijackings and a school kidnapping) in the early 1970s by Moluccan youth. These actions served as an eye-opener: the Moluccans arrived in 1951 and by then had been 'temporarily' for about 25 years. In other words, there were new permanent groups in the Netherlands that did not form a part of it (Penninx et al. 2005: 4).

Their position in the Netherlands set in motion a policy revision; eventually, it led to a policy that aimed at the integration of immigrant groups. However, this shift of policy towards integration did not imply that the permanency of immigration as such was recognized. It was still seen as a historically unique event; and further immigration was to be restricted or prevented (Penninx et al. 2005).

Ever since the recognition of the need to introduce integration policy in 1980, the Netherlands has been struggling to find the 'right' policy. The decision to form an integration policy was a consequence of the results of a report 'Ethnic Minorities' that was conducted by the WRR (the scientific council for government policy) in 1979. This report acknowledged that immigrants – mainly referring to Surinamese, Moluccans, and Turkish and Moroccan *guestworkers*-, stayed permanent, instead of temporary.[43] A policy should be implemented to facilitate their integration.

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[43] During the economic boom of the 1950s and 60s, there was a labour shortage. Guest workers from Morocco and Turkey were recruited to do mostly low-paid, unattractive and unskilled labour that Dutch people refused to do. They preferred poor or uneducated *guestworker*s to pay them as little as possible (Entzinger 1999, Lucassen and Penninx 1997). Most of them came from small villages in rural areas. Their stay was supposed to be temporary, but became permanent (see for example Castles and Miller 1993).

Their advice was mandated in a period of increasing tensions; the inhabitants of old city neighbourhoods felt threatened by the increasing number of immigrants who settled in these neighbourhoods as well (Penninx et al. 2005, Ersanilli 2004). Over the past decades, several policy approaches have come and have gone.

Beyond multiculturalism in the Netherlands

In 1994 a left-liberal government, the so-called 'purple cabinet' of VVD, PvdA and D66, had abandoned the previous 'ethnic minorities' policy (1980-1994) that stood for cultural recognition and combating social disadvantages and institutional discrimination, and turned instead to a policy of civic integration (Lucassen and Penninx 1997, Entzinger 1999, 2003, Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 20-22).[44] [45]

Several problems with the old minorities' policy, where in the multicultural society was portrayed as an ideal *avant la lettre* (Lucassen and Penninx 1997), led to a turn. First, it was difficult to maintain a policy that clearly divided 'ethnic minority groups' for special treatment, because the number, as well as the internal diversification, of migrant groups increased.[46] A second problem was that the approach of group emancipation -to emancipate different migrant groups within their own parallel institutions- had detrimental effects: it led to segregation and separation from 'mainstream' society. A third major problem was that the minorities' policy did not solve the unemployment and economic marginalization problems among immigrants and their offspring. Consequently, a new 'integration' policy was formulated that focussed on the previously neglected socio-economical dimension of immigrant integration. This policy focussed on individuals instead of on groups. Immigrants had to integrate in mainstream society rather than to emancipate as separate groups in parallel institutions. This policy strongly emphasized to expect more of migrants in the integration process (Joppke 2004: 247-248). However, according to Entzinger (1999), multiculturalism was not completely abandoned; policy makers started to perceive integration as a two-way process, in which both *allochtonen* as well as *autochtonen* should adjust to each other. That immigrant integration has to be a two-way process has been a mantra for many years (Joppke 2004: 248) According to Scheffer (2000) this mantra within the minorities' policy meant that the receiving society had to change while 'no questions' were asked of the immigrants. However, since the civic integration policy was executed this has changed

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[44] The government consisted of the PvdA (Labour party, whose colour is red), the VVD (conservative liberal party, whose colour is blue) and D66 (leftwing liberals, whose colour is green).
[45] Van Amersfoort introduced the term 'ethnic minority' in 1974. He defined it as 'an ethnic group with low socio economic status over a number of generations.
[46] From 1971 to 1998 the number of nationalities in the Netherlands had increased from 28 to 110 (Meurs and Broeders 2002).

reversibly. Since the introduction of the Law on Civic Integration of Newcomers (WIN, *Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers*) in 1998, and even more since the Law on Civic Integration (WI, *Wet Inburgering*) in 2007, the tendency towards assimilation is clearly visible within integration policy. This goes together with the Dutch immigration policy, which is becoming increasingly restrictive since the implementation of the New Aliens Law (*Vreemdelingenwet*) in 2000.

In the following paragraph, I will discuss these laws, concerning integration and immigration, in more detail, to have an understanding of the present-day context wherein the Dutch Tamils have to integrate in the Netherlands.

Law on Civic Integration of Newcomers (1998)[47]

September 30th, 1998 the Law on Civic Integration of Newcomers went into force in the Netherlands.[48] This law establishes the rights and obligations of immigrants (*the literal translation in the law is foreigners*) aged 16 years or older, who arrived after the introduction of this law, concerning settlement or integration programmes.[49] Newcomers were now obliged to take 600 hours of Dutch language (courses Dutch as second language, NT2) and civic lessons (social orientation and vocational orientation). The law was motivated by the ambition to prevent the formation of underprivileged groups by obligating newcomers to participate in a civic integration (*inburgering*) programme to promote their self-sufficiency. Newly arrived immigrants should as soon as possible acquire basic Dutch language knowledge, knowledge of the Dutch society and labour market, because this is necessary to function independently in Dutch society in general, and to participate in further education and the labour market in particular. By means of a civic integration programme, these immigrants should be offered guidance and preparation with their first steps in Dutch society. Newly arrived immigrants are obliged to report for a civic integration inquiry within six weeks arriving in a municipal or receiving a residence permit (a residence permit for a fixed period asylum, VBT, or a regular residence permit). Exemptions are possible on certain grounds.[50] An inquiry is conducted to determine the need for, and content of a civic integration programme. The inquiry takes account of previous knowledge, previous training and work experience, and on the basis here of, a decision is made in which parts of the programme a newcomer's participation is necessary. Within four months after applying for an integration research, the newcomer is required to enrol at an educational institution (for example a Regional

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[47] See for more details: http://www.degeschiedenisvaninburgering.nl/docs/win/factsheets-engels3-02.pdf
[48] Newcomers are people who settled after the introduction of WIN and who do not come from European Union (EU) or from European Economic Space (EER) countries.
[49] I prefer to use the terminology of immigrants above foreigners, because foreigners give me the feeling that these people are very strange, scary, different and alien.
[50] http://www.degeschiedenisvaninburgering.nl/docs/win/factsheets-engels3-02.pdf

Education Centre, ROC) to take 600 hours of Dutch language and civic lessons. Within 12 months after enrolment at the educational institution a final test on NT2, including listening, speaking, reading and writing, and social orientation (MO) has to be made. Based on the test the educational institution issues a certificate attesting the level achieved. In addition to these courses, a general programme coach should personally assist the newcomer, to motivate or counsel if necessary and to provide information about the residence procedure. The total incorporation programme ends no longer than six months after the final test with a referral to the labour market, a follow-up language course or for example a dual trajectory, combining work and study (Fermin 2001: 1-6, website Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom relations).

We see that the law on civic integration for newcomers specifies the obligations of newcomers and municipalities concerning an incorporation programme. Newcomers are obligated to apply for an incorporation inquiry, to register with an educational institution, and participate in language and civic lessons, and to take a final test. If newcomers fail to meet their obligations sanctions, a reduction of benefit payments or fines, will follow. In turn, the municipalities are obliged to ensure that all newcomers are offered an adequate incorporation programme.

Before I will reflect upon the latest Dutch integration policy's changes that are a result of the introduction of the new Law Civic Integration (2007), I first discuss some practical implementation problems concerning the Law on Civic Integration Newcomers.

Even the government recognized in 2001 that the introduction of the civic integration law was not yet successful because of several (interrelating) problems with its implementation on a local level. [51] First, many municipalities had problems with organizing the cooperation of agencies and institutions (for example Centre for Work and Income and Regional Education Centre). Second, the newcomers did not reach within 600 hours of Dutch language lessons enough command of Dutch to refer to the labour market. Here we see that the goal of the policy does not correspond with the practice. A third problem was that municipalities could hardly provide a 'made-to-measure' programme for the diverse group of newcomers. Fourth, municipalities were not in the position to deal with the high rates of drop out and absenteeism. Simultaneously, municipalities hardly imposed on newcomers the sanctions the law stipulates. Many municipalities considered the sanctions as ineffective or as not justified, because their supply was not sufficient. Municipalities preferred positive sanctions to negative sanctions as laid down in the regulations. Consequently, this led to tensions between the national and local authorities, because many

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[51] The first responsibility for implementing an integration policy lies with the local municipalities. However, the national government defines the parameters of the integration policy by means of the law and financial support.

municipalities refused to execute the law (see the local agenda integration policy 2003 and a letter to Minister Verdonk of the 26 largest municipalities 2003, Fermin 2001: 4).[52]

The central government reacted to the above-described problems. Improvements and adjustments of the civic integration newcomers' policy was initiated. First, the government established an integration taskforce to further improvements. In addition, the target group of the WIN was redefined. For example persons who fulfil a social important function, such as clergymen (especially imams), were now also obliged to participate in a civic integration programme. After all, the introduction of the New Aliens Law (*Vreemdelingenwet*) 2000 went along with another change in the target group. From then on immigrants with a temporary permit VVTV (F-status) came also under the WIN (Fermin 2001: 4). In the following paragraph, I will briefly discuss the New Aliens Law that can be characterized as increasingly restrictive.

New Aliens Law (2000)

The essence of Dutch immigration policy developments has been to make legal and policy changes when numbers of immigrants rise significantly. Van Selm (2000) describes that rising numbers signify the traditional types of concern that are related to xenophobia, and potential racism and a perception of a 'flood' of foreigners entailing a loss of sovereign control over admission. However, not only the numbers of immigrants are of concern in policy decision-making, also the question where those numbers of people will be housed is a concern to public, media and politicians.

The reception of the quota refugees was always organized centrally. Spontaneously arriving asylum seekers, whose numbers were increasing during the late 1980s, were located in private local accommodation.[53] It became more and more difficult to find and maintain reasonable and safe accommodation, certainly, when large numbers of Tamils arrived in the Netherlands in 1985. In 1987, the law was changed, and as a result, these Tamil refugees like the quota refugees, in first instance would be located in centrally operated reception centres, and hereafter (up to three months) in specialized housing, the so-called ROA houses. When in the 1990s numbers of refugees increased, a decision was made to link the legal admission procedure to the housing and reception centre. The type of centre refugees were housed in depended on the asylum seekers' position in the procedure (Van Selm 2000: 76-77).

In October 1998 (under the purple cabinet II), the problem of capacity in reception facilities had become urgent. The number of asylum applicants increased to 48000, consequently, the

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[52] http://212.153.37.120/Documenten/Extranet/Sez/WI/lokale%20integratieagenda.pdf,
http://www.kiemnet.nl/binaries/kiem/bulk/publicatie/2003/11/168701.pdf
[53] The number was doubled in 1987 to 13460 asylum requests (Muus 1997a).

Secretary of State decided that tents would be used to house new arrivals temporarily. As housing is related to procedures, the new arrivals in tents (white marquee-like structures usually used for parties) would not enter the asylum procedure but be put on a waiting list. Van Selm (2000: 83) describes that asylum seekers on waiting lists could have an EU level problem if they had applied for asylum in another state –this raised difficulties with regard to the Geneva Convention. Actually, their asylum application could have been thrown into disarray.

A result of many discussions relating to a common slogan of that time: 'anyone who had an answer to this mess should come forward with it (*'wie het weet mag het zeggen'*) was the introduction of the New Aliens Law, implemented on 1 April 2001, that envisioned three major changes referring to the status and procedures for asylum seekers. First, any accepted asylum seekers will receive a temporary status. At the end of three years they will be granted 'unlimited' status if return is impossible (New Aliens Law, *Vreemdelingen Wet,* articles 26-27 in Van Selm 2000: 84).

Second, the grounds on which status is granted will not be clarified to the asylum seeker. Although the question of whether or not status can be withdrawn within the three year period, or converted to indefinite status due to changed circumstances, will vary according to whether or not the person was judged to be a Convention refugee, someone fleeing inhuman or degrading treatment (European Court of Human Rights, ECHR, 1950: article 3 in Van Selm 2000) or a displaced person (*Memorie van Toelichting* 1999:40 in Van Selm 2000). The aim of this is to avoid a situation whereby refugees could grant a status that perceived a hierarchy or injustice, and whereby these people could re-apply.

The last change was that decisions should be taken within six months, unless the Minister of Justice sees a valid reason for extending this period by six months or one year. Such a decision could be based on the nature of circumstances in the country of origin or size of influx (article 41 in Van Selm 2000).

This New Aliens Law reigns confusion as to whether the single temporary status, with the rights attached to Geneva Convention status, should be considered as refugee status or not. This is because, as we can conclude from the above-described second change, all Convention refugees will be granted a three-year status (convertible to indefinite). However, not all people who will be granted a three-year status will be Convention refugees.[54]

Van Selm argues that by abandoning Convention refugee status as such, the Dutch government is fundamentally altering the EU asylum and immigration 'playing field'. The Dutch government

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[54] We see that article 27 (in Van Selm 2000: 84-85) of the New Aliens Law stipulates that not only Convention refugees will be granted a temporary status (art. 27a), but also those who fall under ECHR Article 3 (art. 27b), who can demonstrate other humanitarian grounds for their protection claim (art. 27c), who can not be returned for various reasons (art. 27d) or are rejoining a family member with the same nationality and same claim within three months of the arrival of the first family member (art. 27e).

will have set a new barrier at the EU level, because instead of developing a harmonized interpretation of the definition of a refugee under the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention, which is a central issue in EU discussions, they create confusion (Van Selm 2000: 87).

There are, furthermore, significant changes to the appeals procedures. The New Aliens Law includes various regulations referring to safe countries of origin, safe host countries and the Convention (arts. 28 and 29).

However, the current government has rejected the idea of the previous Minister Verdonk of Foreign Affairs and Integration, who was famous for her strict policy concerning the execution of the New Aliens Law, to deport the 26000 refused asylum claimants. These 26000 people, who had their asylum application turned down but who have been living in the Netherlands for more than 5 years –they submitted an application for asylum under the former Aliens Act (prior to 1 April 2001)-, have now been admitted to stay in the Netherlands by means of a *general amnesty* that entered into force on 15 June 2007.

The new law has not only a bearing on refugee claimants, but also on refugees or immigrants who have become a Dutch citizen and who want to reunite or establish a family in the Netherlands. In order to reduce migration through marriage there are several conditions introduced, for example you must be 21 years or older to establish a family and in the case of family reunification, you must be 18 or older. Besides this, it has been made more difficult to reunite or establish families within the realms of the income norms for the benefits system and are at 100 per cent (1246, 19 Euro p/m.) for reunification and 120 per cent (1495, 43 Euro p/m.) for establishing a family rather than the previous 70 per cent for refugees (Van Selm 2000, website IND). Besides the requirements to raise the income and age, since 15 March 2006 spouses and partners of the so-called foreigners (*vreemdelingen*) must pass a civic integration exam abroad before immigrating to the Netherlands, except for those who come from other EU or EER -member states, United States, Canada, Japan, Australia South Korea and New Zealand.[55]

New Law Civic Integration (2007)

Changes in the juridical field of integration are on foot since the beginning of this year. During the former cabinet Balkenende III, existing of CDA (Christen Democrats) and VVD (Liberal Party), both Immigration and Integration policy felt under the department of the Ministry of Justice. Since the new Cabinet is installed in the beginning of this year, existing of CDA, PvdA (Labor Party) and CU (Christen Union) immigration still falls under the department of Justice and integration under the department of VROM.

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[55] See www.gemeente.nu

However, before the installation, the First Chamber accepted the previous Minister Verdonk's (Foreign Affairs and Integration) amendment to put the new Law Civic Integration (*Wet Inburgering*) in operation since 1 January 2007. This law obligates both new and oldcomers to follow a civic integration programme -before 1 January 2007 only newcomers were obligated. [56] Another difference with the former system is that the obligation to integrate is met when the candidates have passed the integration exam –before 1 January 2007, candidates were only obligated to participate in the programme. The exam tests somebody's Dutch language efficiency and knowledge of Dutch society and it consists of a practical and central part. Civic integration *(inburgering)* is seen as the first step in the integration process. In the outline agreement, the Cabinet has outlined the way in which immigrants have to integrate in Dutch society. The Cabinet therewith invokes the own responsibility of participants in a programme. In other words, they can choose where they follow language lessons and civic lessons. Participants can use financial facilities, such as loans, and compensation when they pass the exam within three years. Municipalities also offer an incorporation facility against a limited fee payable by the participant. They have at the most 3, 5 or 5 years to pass the incorporation exam, if they do not pass the exam within this term due to imputable reasons, an administrative penalty will follow. After all, as from 21 September 2008, the civic integration programme will become a requirement for the granting of residence permits providing a permanent right of residence.[57] The policy, furthermore, subscribes integration as a two-way process.

> "In order to be able to fully take part in Dutch society, the command of the Dutch language and an elementary knowledge of values and principles are essential" (website Ministry of Justice).[58]

We see that the new Dutch civic integration system is more restrictive than the previous system. Major differences are the broadening of the target group, the obligation to pass the incorporation exam and the link of the self-responsibility to facilities.

Strategy of Dutch integration policy

On basis of the above discussion, we can conclude that there has been an increasing tendency towards assimilating ethnic minorities that attend on a restrictive immigration policy since the introduction of the WIN. This is in line with Joppke (2004) who argues that states, such as the

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[56] Newcomers are defined as "foreigners, who settled before the introduction of the WI" and oldcomers as "foreigners, who settled after the introduction of the WI".
[57] They emphasize that foreigners will not be deported if they do not pass their civic integration exam. In case a foreigner did not pass the exam, he/ she did not fulfill the preconditions to get a permanent residence permit. The only other option left is to extend a temporary residence permit (www.gemeente.nu).
[58] See www.dse.nl

Netherlands and Britain, which maintain a multiculturalist policy, in fact, execute an assimilation approach to integrate minorities within society. We see that the description of a multiculturalist society in the Netherlands is not executed by means of a prescription of a multiculturalist society anymore. So, are these so-called multiculturalist policies with their civic integration policy not in contrast to their own liberal values of self-responsibility? Moreover, how can a 'multiculturalist' Dutch policy even defend an obligatory civic integration policy on liberal and moral grounds?

How to legitimize an obligatory civic integration policy?

Both Joppke (2004) and Fermin (2001) question the obligatory nature of civic integration policy, however in a rather different way -Joppke from a liberal, and Fermin from a liberal and moral perspective.

Fermin wonders whether a liberal-democratic government is morally allowed to make participation in newcomer incorporation programmes legally obligatory.[59] He questions whether the legal obligation and paternalistic intervention conflict with the individual responsibility of newcomers, whether the inevitable acculturation effects of the civic integration programme conflict with the norm of recognition for the identity of minority groups, and whether the specific demarcation of the target groups clash with the principle of equal treatment.

After a detailed evaluation of the arguments for and against a legal obligatory civic integration policy, concerning firstly, citizenship as a reason for integration policy, and secondly, paternalistic reasons and respect for autonomy, Fermin concludes that an obligatory civic integration policy for newcomers can be morally justified in terms of the value of citizenship in so far as it furthers civic competencies of immigrants that are essential for the maintenance of the 'thin' core of liberal society: the liberal democratic institutions and liberal public morality.[60] [61]

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[59] This debate mainly concerns obligatory newcomer incorporation programmes and not the even stricter new obligatory programmes, since these are yet implemented.

[60] In his essay, Fermin gives five reasons against a legal obligation to participate in incorporation programmes. First, it forms a serious, although temporary, restriction of the freedom of new citizens by the state. Second, when the restriction is defended in terms of the protection of the welfare of the newcomers themselves, it is a type of paternalistic intervention that clashes with the central norm of respect for personal autonomy. Third, the policy conflicts with the norms of state neutrality because it inevitably furthers acculturation or even assimilation of immigrants. Fourth, specific demarcations of the target group can conflict with the norms of equal treatment and non-discrimination. Too much discretionary power of municipalities can cause arbitrary and unfair treatment that conflict with the norm of equality according to the law. Fifth, such a policy stigmatizes the target group as second-class citizens, especially when the target group is limited in practice to immigrants from non-western countries. He also gives 3 reasons for a legal obligation. First, it promotes, and protects, fundamental interests of the newcomers concerned. Second, it is in the public interest, because it prevents serious social harm, such as inter-ethnic tensions and a dived society, and it furthers important public goods, such as political stability, social cohesion and a tenable welfare state. Third, it can be defended on the notion of citizenship. Citizenship is a reciprocal relationship between citizens and the polity. The rights new citizens require go together with obligations towards the polity (see Fermin 2001: 4-5).

However, the values of citizenship that itself is a highly contested concept put demands and limitations to this policy. [62] According to Fermin,

"Incorporation programmes should effectively further basic civic competencies of immigrants. Government should also guarantee to newcomers who have participated in the programmes real opportunities to take part in the public domain, to practice their competencies and to participate in processes of public opinion forming, and decision-making. Last but not least, native citizens must also learn competencies to handle with the new forms of diversity. Citizenship education in schools has an important task here" (Fermin 2001: 13).

We may wonder whether civic integration programmes really furthers basic civic competencies of immigrants, because these citizenship competencies are not an explicit goal of the programmes, while the current Dutch policy is justified by the authorities primarily in terms of citizenship (see website Ministry of Justice, Favell 2000). [63] It is therefore incongruent that the programmes are directed on the promotion of self-sufficiency and basic autonomy. Besides this, native citizens do not learn competencies to deal with ethnic diversity at school.

Second, how can an obligatory policy be justified on the basis of paternalistic reasons and the value of respect for autonomy? As I described before, Joppke questions the compatibility of obligatory integration with liberal principles. He argues that this depends on how soft or hard the penalties for non-compliance are. Are the penalties only monetary or is legal residence itself made contingent on passing these courses? He answers with at least in the Dutch case the penalties are decidedly on the 'soft' side, but it is by no means certain that it will stay this way as the civic integration policy proliferates across Europe (Joppke 2004: 248-249).

In addition, Fermin (2001), Favell (2000) and Greenhouse (1998) argue that legal paternalism is highly controversial in liberal democratic societies, because it conflicts with their core principle of the respect for individual freedom; restricting someone's freedom is a denial of his human dignity. Paternalism deprives individuals of the positive value of the act of choosing.

However, on the other hand a paternalist obligatory civic integration programme can be legitimized if the government shows that these programmes promote the well-being of the immigrants concerned. This is essential, because there is ample evidence that immigrants have

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[61] A thick concept of citizenship as civic identity and competent participation ought to be combined with a thin concept of citizenship as an equal status that guarantees an entrance ticket for all. This implicates that legal obligations in general are the appropriate means only to secure the minimal conditions for the functioning of liberal democratic institutions, while conditions of active citizenship should be promoted by other means (Fermin 2001: 12).

[62] See for a detailed discussion on citizenship Fermin (2001: 9-13) and an even more detailed discussion Favell (2000).

[63] www.justitie.nl

problems with the Dutch language, and are unfamiliar with Dutch society and its institutions, which can form obstacles to participation and their personal well-being. Nevertheless, and as I described before, the problem is that the Dutch newcomer integration policy did, and still does, not meet the conditions to provide the well-being of immigrants. The implementation of the policy is defective on a local level; municipalities cannot guarantee made-to-measure programmes. An incorporation programme should be, but is not, supplemented by labour market policies to offer newcomers equal opportunities. [64] After all, a right on incorporation programmes should be guaranteed prior to the obligation, because these programmes are essential conditions for basic opportunities and autonomy (Fermin 2001: 7-8). This latter condition can certainly not be recognized in current paternalist Dutch incorporation policy that even obligates immigrants to pass the incorporation exam. Fermin (2001: 14) argues that a general juridical obligation for those immigrants that are settled already for some time, the so-called oldcomers, is not acceptable. Therefore, we may conclude that the new civic integration policy that obligates oldcomers is even more controversial than the civic integration policy directed on newcomers.

Assimilation into 'Western' liberalized citizenship rules?
Joppke describes that the turn to civic integration is perhaps most visible in Britain and the Netherlands, the two societies in Europe that had so far been most committed to official multiculturalism. However, there is a European wide tendency to take multiculturalism as the description of a diverse society rather than as prescription for state policy. Joppke wonders whether this is not simply the rebirth of nationalism, or even racism (as suggested by Back et al. 2002 in Joppke 2004: 253).

   We see indeed that the turn to civic integration is driven by the attempt to bind, by means of obligatory civic integration programmes, 'newcomers' and contemporarily 'oldcomers' as well, to the particular society that is receiving them. By means of these programmes immigrants are made familiar with the 'Dutch' values, the distinctive characteristics of our country and society, and the Dutch way of life. Integration requires a basis of collectivism that can be found in our language, our constitution, and in the rights and duties that all citizens share (Jaarnota Integratiebeleid 2006: 4, 11). However, what does the Dutch policy mean with this vague description? What, for example, are the so-called 'Dutch' values, the distinctive characteristics, and the rights and duties that all citizens have to share? In conformity with Joppke, we may ask ourselves whether these particularisms are not just different names for the universal belief of liberty and equality that

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[64] See http://www.kiemnet.nl/kiem/dossiers/Integratie/Inburgering/Inburgeringalgemeen/Kabinet-wil-kwaliteit-inburgering-verbeteren_1216.html

marks all liberal societies.[65] If we look closer, there is nothing particularly 'Dutch' about the principles that immigrants are to be committed and socialized into (Joppke 2004: 253).

We can agree with him on basis of the following, one of the most concrete descriptions of Dutch integration policy's goal: [66]

"[S]hared citizenship, which means that one: participates in all facets of society and contributes to this in an active way, speaks Dutch and keeps to common Dutch norms, such as the respect of freedom of speech, the equality between man and woman, and the obligation to comply with the constitution" (TK 2003-2004, 29203 nr.1, p9).

According to Zolberg and Long (1999: 21), the only national particularism in this is language, but then 'the state necessarily engages in linguistic choices'. On the basis of this we can conclude that the Dutch civic integration policy is more directed towards the socialization of immigrants into (post-national) 'Western' liberalized citizenship rules than, except the Dutch language, on Dutch particularisms. And precisely the state's engagement in linguistic choices can be seen as controversial towards its own liberal values. We then may ask ourselves, whether it is clear for immigrants 'when in the Netherlands, do as the Dutch do'? How do they have to interpret the so-called 'Dutch' liberal values, which are even controversial towards their own liberal content? I hold the opinion that it is therefore problematic to determine whether an immigrant is integrated or not. In the following paragraph, we will see whether the Dutch state deals with this controversial question or not. In other words, how does the Dutch integration policy ascertain when integration is achieved?

When is integration achieved?
As I described before, the Dutch integration policy's goal is shared citizenship. This means that first of all, one participates in all facets of society and contributes to this in an active way, second, speaks Dutch and third, keeps to common Dutch norms, such as the respect of freedom of speech, the equality between man and woman, and the obligation to comply with the constitution" (TK 2003-2004, 29203 nr.1, p9). On the basis of this description it is established that an integrated group will have the following conditions: first, good command of the Dutch language, second, to proportionally participate in structural social fields (employment, education,

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[65] For example the respect of human rights and freedoms, the uphold of democratic values: e.g. right to privacy, property, equality before the law, freedom of speech, assembly and religion.
[66] The Dutch government is not very clear, not concrete, about what they mean with 'integration'. Definitions have also been subject to change over years (see also Ersanilli 2004: 10).

housing and hygiene), third, to keep interethnic contacts, and fourth, the members are subject to the basic rules and norms of the Netherlands (Integration monitor 2006: 1).

Since 2004, the Scientific Research and Documentation- Centre (WODC), who work under the authority of the Ministry of Justice, developed together with the Netherlands' Institute for Statistics (CBS) an integration monitor. This monitor presents a view of the position of minorities in different social fields, and the developments in time. According to this report, a better insight into the process of integration is created, and to be able to measure integration, concrete social fields have to be distinguished.

The concept of integration in the Netherlands, pursuant to their report, is understood as a process of acquiring citizenship and participating in society related to three spheres or dimensions: legal/political dimension, socio-economic dimension and a socio-cultural dimension (Entzinger and Biezeveld 2003).

"Integration must be seen as an interaction between 'allochtonen' and 'autochtonen' in society. Allochtonen exert them to create and utilize opportunities to achieve a position in society. In their turn, the receiving society creates chances to make this possible, but makes demands and imposes restrictions as well" (Integration monitor 2006: 3).

As I described before, different social fields have to be distinguished to be able to measure integration. Labour market participation and participation in education are often seen as the most relevant structural social fields in the process of integration. In addition, housing and the use of healthcare are sometimes included. With regard to the socio-cultural and political dimensions the amount of interethnic contacts, the amount of political participation and the amount of orientation on, and the identification with, the Dutch society are considered as relevant for integration. Besides the actual participation and the obtained successes in these varying fields, there are also preconditions made concerning integration. An example is the level of the Dutch language. Language proficiency is seen as a necessary condition for success, for example on the labour market. A negative indicator of integration is crime. Crime can be considered as an expression of a weak connection to society or as a lack of social-economic integration (Integration monitor 2006: 5).

In sum, the WODC/CBS selected five fields, as described above (results in education, labour market position, social contacts, use of healthcare and crime), which exist of thirteen indicators such as success rates of secondary school pupils in final examinations; the number of mixed marriages; level and rate of labour market participation; marriages with partners from the country

of origin; and recidivism, on the basis whereof they 'measure' integration.[67] In view of the above, their conclusion is:

> "that the progress made in the social-economic and social-cultural integration of individuals from non-western ethnic minorities in Dutch society is hopeful in a small number of areas, but that huge discrepancies in other fields remain" (Integration monitor 2006: 83).

Based on this hardly positive statement, we can conclude that the integration monitor is actually meant to measure the integration of non-western ethnic minorities by comparing the indicators with 'autochoon' people, and nót integration itself (pursuant to their definition, see above), which is the mutual interplay between 'allochtonen' and 'autochtonen'. I hold the opinion that this is controversial. Furthermore, it remains vague what this 'interplay' is. In other words, they do not clarify which chances the receiving society then creates to make 'this' possible? This is also problematic, because it is already known that the Dutch civic integration policy still does not meet the conditions to provide the well-being of immigrants.[68] We may wonder whether it is justifiable to conclude that integration is "hopeful in a small number of areas, but that huge discrepancies in other fields remain". Besides this, we may wonder whether this conclusion says something about the integration of 'non-western allochtonen', or says something about the (lacking) conditions that should provide the well-being of immigrants.

Another discussion is how reliable the measurements themselves are, and how the indicators are analyzed to be able to measure integration? An answer on these questions is difficult, because the integration monitor 2006, as well as the previous Annual Report on Integration 2005, gives no insight into the analysis of the (mainly) quantitative information. Both reports describe (vague) outcomes such as "ethnic minorities are on benefits twice as often as 'autochtonen', which difference increases with age" (2006: 2, 31, 83). What precisely can we conclude from such a statement: that those people are little or not integrated? This conclusion indeed is made by the authors of the report: "with regard to the four largest non-western ethnic minority groups the picture is anything but positive for those who find economic integration essential" (2006: 2, 83).

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[67] The other eight indicators are extent of entry into higher education; choice of course of study in higher education; graduation from higher education; the use of social benefits by newcomer cohorts; trends in labour market participation; composition of residential areas according to the proportion of individuals from ethnic minorities within them; suspects being questioned by the police; type of offence; (and since 2006 added) more data on migrants' participation in secondary education; school drop out; participation in vocational training; number of migrant employees in different branches of industry, trade and the public sector; social contacts between Dutch and immigrant populations in schools and at the work place; utilisation of primary health care and use of medicine.
[68] The implementation of the policy is defective on a local level; municipalities can not guarantee made-to-measure programmes (see http://www.kiemnet.nl/kiem/dossiers/Integratie/Inburgering/Inburgeringalgemeen/Kabinet-wil-kwaliteit-inburgering-verbeteren_1216.html)

I believe that it remains vague how they come to this conclusion. Furthermore, the report does not include the reasons and motives of ethnic minorities themselves.[69] Therefore, we do not know their reasons for not having a job. Their explanation could be that discrimination on the labour market restrains them to have a job. However, no further details are given in the integration monitor.

To the contrary, a previous report Integration Barometer conducted by Regioplan policy is more transparent in the (regression)analysis of their data on integration. This barometer exists of different statements that measure integration. In the report is described that a small amount of statements is suitable to measure the concept economic integration. More statements measure social integration, but say little about real behaviour (Regioplan 2005: 54). To be able to measure economic integration all respondents (refugees) are presented with the statement: do you have a job and/or do you follow education? Hereafter they are asked whether they have a regular or temporary contract. The respondents who do not a have a job are asked if they want to work. Based on these questions, Regioplan measures the economic integration of respondents.

Social integration is measured at the hand of five statements: do you consider yourself as integrated?; I am well informed about the Dutch rules, habits and welfare facilities?; I mainly have contacts with people of my own country?; I feel at home in the Netherlands?; I do not like it in the Netherlands? These statements are a combination of the respondents' self-judgment of integration, knowledge about the Netherlands, about the acquaintanceship with countryman and about feeling at home in the Netherlands. Based on these statements, Regioplan measures the social integration of the respondents. However, here we may wonder whether their actual social integration is measured. The fact that a refugee mainly has contacts with 'countryman' could be a consequence of the fact that 'autochtoon' people do not (want to) meet them. Alternatively, when a refugee answers that he or she does not feel at home in the Netherlands, their reason could be that he or she feels discriminated or unwanted. The same can go for the latter question as well. In sum, although this report gives insight into their data analysis, it remains according to me difficult to measure integration, certainly, as long as motives and explanations of the people who, according to the policy, have to integrate are lacking.

In addition, Prins (2004) argues that integration is not measurable. According to her, the vignette method, another method used to measure integration, is a form of market research in which the 'allochtoon' is a jar of peanut butter. "The most delicious jar is allowed to stay". Prins argues that integration is measured at the hand of people's characteristics: "the job they have, with whom they are married, and which friends they have determine how integrated they are.

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[69] For example: why they are on benefits? Their explanation could also be that discrimination on the labour market restrains them to have a job.

But, integration is not a characteristic of a person; it is a characteristic of the relation between people in society" (2004).

I believe that this latter remark -"integration is a characteristic of the relation between people in society"- shows more similarity with the common definition of integration. Prins describes that integration can only take place in a society in which several groups change a bit. This is what the term integration supposes. "If only a certain group of people have to undertake actions, while no further things change….That is no integration, but assimilation" (2004). On this basis, we may wonder why the different research institutes, who work under the authority of the Ministry of Justice, only measure ethnic minorities' integration in Dutch society, and not the interaction between 'allochtoon' and 'autochtoon' people. In conformity with Bauböck (2001), its answer could be that the Dutch government, who represents the (democratic) Dutch majority, has no self-interested reason in tying their hands in this way. The government knows there will be little guidance for how to win majority support for this task, because the majority will never themselves be in the position of the ethnic minority. In other words, they will never be obliged to pass a civic integration exam.

Correspondingly, Prins argues that the only thing that the vignette research measures is how Dutch people think of integration, since the vignettes are presented to an average group of Dutch society that classifies the level of a participant's civic integration. Hereby, the complexity of integration is reduced to an addition sum (Prins 2004). Moreover, the logics of market research are applied to a political problem. If a participant of a civic integration programme does not show enough significant characteristics of integration, he or she does not pass the test. Would 'autochtoon' people then do pass the exam?, Prins wonders. "If a Moroccan is married with a Moroccan woman, it means little integrated. If a Dutchman is married with a Philippine woman, is he then also less integrated? Do we deport him then as well?"

We know that an answer on these questions is no. Dutch people and other people from 'western' countries do not have to follow civic integration programmes. The Dutch integration policy considers these people beforehand as integrated.[70]

In conformity with Prins (2004) and Joppke (2004) we can conclude that the way how people live determines whether they are integrated or not. Is this not controversial in a liberal state, which assumes that people may decide themselves how they shape their lives? Joppke illustrates this by means of an example given by a minority activist:

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[70] Citizens of the European Union may not be obliged, pursuant to international treaties, to participate in civic integration programmes (Fermin 2001: 2).

"(t)elling established British communities whom they should or should not marry is quite abhorrent. This would send exactly the wrong signal to these predominantly Asian communities that they are not part of the British community norm" (Joppke 2004: 251).

Joppke argues that this remark invokes a liberal norm: that the state should not intervene in an individual's marriage choice.

In sum, we see not only that measuring integration is controversial, but also we see again, by means of how civic integration exams are assessed and how integration is measured, that the liberal state is assimilationist and controversial towards its own tenets.

Beyond Dutch particularism

We may argue that when the Dutch policy concludes that the integration of immigrants is not successful this may have to do with the fact that they do not actually 'measure' immigrants integration –as described above-, but 'measure' other things. For example, the (lacking) conditions of the policy itself, or how Dutch people think of integration, or immigrants' adjustment to the so-called 'Dutch' liberal values. As I already described, the interpretation of the so-called 'Dutch' liberal values may be vague, since they are more universalistic –referring to the convention of human rights- than Dutch particularistic. In times of globalization, the question *where* to build an inclusive nation remains unanswered. Is it not that contemporary 'Dutch' are polyglot places, in which the ties that bind are increasingly procedural and ('Western') universal, and not based on Dutch particularisms?

This latter question brings me to a recent discussion that has changed its focus from *how* to deal with immigrants' integration on a national or on a larger 'Western' liberal societies' level to *how* to deal with immigrants' integration on an urban level. Although the nation-state still remains an important site to deal with ethnic diversity, in times of people living 'multilocally' "the city is becoming increasingly salient as a site for generating, managing, negotiating and contesting cultural and political identities" (Van Houtum et al. 2005: 622).[71] Previous (essentialist) paradigms of collective belonging that are based on so-called national particularisms, a shared ethno-national identity and citizenship, have to be revisit by an alternative approach that views ethnic identities as hybrid, dynamic, multifaceted and fluid. In line with their view, Wikan (2001) argues that:

> "Ethnic membership does not coincide with national membership, as it often is presumed, nor need it be embraced as constitutive of personhood. Ethnicity is a constructed difference and, as such, variable both in its salience and its boundaries" (Wikan 2001:165).

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[71] See also Amin and Thrift 2002, Isin 2002 and Purcell 2003 and Kottak 2006.

Van Houtum et al. focus on the urban level, on Amsterdam, as an emerging site of multicultural integration, because this is contemporarily seen as the most promising site for the negotiation of ethnic identities. [72] Policymakers in Amsterdam have tried to devise an alternative approach, by means of a diversity policy rather than an assimilationist or multicultural policy that aims to encourage inter-ethnic dialogue and takes into account ethnic identities. [73] Van Houtum et al. describe that:

"in contrast to what we would expected from multiculturalism, the diversity policy does not seek to give a voice or specific rights to groups and it is aimed at negating rather than reproducing group identities. The institutional and subsidy relationships reflect this difference to both assimilationism and multiculturalism: there is a council that concerns itself with ethnic diversity but does not consist of ethnic representatives and there are subsidies but they are meant to undermine rather than support organization along ethnic lines" (2005: 631).

According to them, however, the 'new regime' in Amsterdam will also lead to new problems and discrepancies concerning the negotiation of ethnic identities.[74] For example, a diverse policy that promotes intercultural dialogue and high-quality projects will most likely benefit and include well-positioned groups rather than marginal ethnic communities and organizations that represent them, because the first group find it easier to have access to public funding and other benefits.

Although experimentation with new discourses and institutional structures appears to be far more developed on a local level than on a national level, it is not yet entirely clear how to accommodate ethnic diversity. Especially on the national level, the discussion has not yet led to a clear policy direction (Van Houtum et al. 2005: 628).

We therefore may conclude that it seems very difficult to find 'a best' strategy how to deal with ethnic minority integration on both a national as well as urban level in current liberal states such as the Netherlands, where people live 'multilocally' and where ethnic identities are fluid, negotiable and constantly changing. Bauböck describes that liberal states *themselves* have to transform profoundly and have to give up many of their traditional powers and identities in order to "cure against the erosion of state sovereignty" (2001: 5). [75] According to Bauböck,

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[72] They argue that post-multicultural literature nowadays view the city as the most promising site (Van Houtum et al. 2005: 623).

[73] This policy stresses that identities are highly complex and contentious, constantly changing and varying from one individual to another (see Van Houtum et al. 2005: 631).

[74] See for a detailed discussion Van Houtum et al. 2005: 631-637.

[75] Hereby he refers to the current dominant response in Europe: a majority nationalism that is no longer engaged in constructive nation building but instead blames immigrants for the irretrievable loss of sovereignty (Bauböck 2001).

"An alternative answer would try to restore democratic self-government by extending the scope of political community to those spaces and populations that already have been tightly connected through transnational interaction. This would involve policies for democratising international organizations, for strengthening federal citizenship within the European Union, and for making the diversity that results from immigration a defining element of a European public culture" (2001: 13).

This idea may be answer on how to deal with ethnic diversity in contemporary times of globalization, however, this is according to me still an utopia as long as liberal states do not want to give up their traditional powers. For now, I suggest that before the Dutch state introduces more restrictive and assimilationist laws concerning immigrants' integration we have to look to the dynamics of migration and integration processes of the immigrants itself rather than considering only a theoretical or top-down point of view on how to deal with ethnic diversity on a national or urban level. A bottom-up approach will give us insight into how people who have to integrate experience this. Moreover, their daily life experiences, opinions and knowledge of integration can help us to formulate an extensive framework of integration processes. Therefore, the following chapter will deal with how *Dutch Tamils* define, consider and experience integration. At the hand of different questions and statements concerning integration, we will see what their perception of integration is and which practices give meaning to their integration.

Introduction

A lot is written about what integration is. Definitions have also been subject to change over times. Integration is often seen as an ambiguous phenomenon and process. However, by many scholars also considered as an essentially contested concept.[76] Kymlicka (1998) describes integration at the hand of three indices: first, the inter-ethnic marriage rate; second, the perceived significance of political institutions; and third, the sense of loyalty to the host country. Fermin (1997) and Penninx and Slijper (1999) focus on three other aspects of integration which are to some extend interdependent. These are socio-cultural aspects (norms and values), socio-economic aspects (education, housing and labour market) and political-juridical aspects (rights). Correspondingly, the concept of integration in Dutch integration policy, as I discussed in previous chapter, is understood as a process of acquiring citizenship and participating in society related to a legal/political, socio-economic and a social-cultural dimension. Labour market participation and participation in education are hereby often seen as the most relevant structural social fields in the process of integration (See Integration monitor 2006, Burgers et al. 1996, Dagevos 2001, Vermeulen and Penninx (2000). Valianpour (1999) and Brink et al. (1996) hold the opinion that success (socio-economic integration) has influence on whether immigrants feel at home, in other words are socio-culturally integrated.

In view of the above, we can conclude that socio-economic integration is seen as the hegemonic form of integration. First, because socio-economic integration implies a certain degree of success, second, it is seen as structural integration and third it determines socio-cultural integration.

Until now, I have discussed the ways policymakers and scholars deal with, and use the concept of, integration, however it is even more important to explore how integration is viewed from the perspective of those people whose lives policy bears upon. This chapter therefore goes about how *Dutch Tamils* define, consider and experience integration. By means of different questions and statements concerning integration, I try to unravel their perception of integration in order to assess the value of different practices that give meaning to their integration. Although different practices will be mentioned in this chapter, its value will be mainly illustrated at the hand of some Dutch Tamils' stories about integration in chapter four and five.

In the following paragraph, we will see whether Dutch Tamils are familiar with the concept in order to discuss how they define integration. To be familiar with the concept is according to me

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[76] See for example the Integration Monitor of Nijmegen 2005.

not self-evident, because integration is a 'western' concept, in this particular study considered as a Dutch *cultural understanding.* [77] Hereafter, we will see whether the Dutch Tamils define integration conform to the definition of the Dutch integration policy. Do the Dutch Tamils consider a good command of the Dutch language, having a job or study, having social contacts with 'autochoon' people as even important for their integration process as the Dutch integration policy? We will also see whether they consider themselves as integrated, how important their integration is to them, and what they think of integration and the Dutch integration policy. Also the relation between integration and the civic integration programmes will be discussed. I will end this chapter with the questions about what they consider important to their lives as migrants in the Netherlands, and which practices give meaning to their integration.

Dutch Tamils' familiarity and definition of integration

As I already described in the first chapter, it was my specific intention to avoid defining the concept of integration in advance. Instead, I directed conversations towards what they viewed to be the important aspects of their daily lives. Integration was one of the aspects we talked about, and I asked them questions about this topic to be able to understand what integration means to them, and what associations it invokes. In line with my opinion described in the first chapter, I will only use quantitative information -the answers on the statements of the questionnaire- to give general background information of the respondents, and as a start point to discuss the *quality* of the answers given. In contrast with the Dutch integration policy, it is clearly not my intention to 'measure' the Dutch Tamils' integration.

Based on the conversations I had with the Dutch Tamils, it became clear that the concept of integration is not self-evident. [78] Amar (male/first generation/41 years) could not explain what integration is. He said, "*It (integration) had something to do with religion*". Oris (male/first generation/61 years) tried to avoid the subject. When I later asked him what integration according to him is, he was silent. He said, "*Not to know where I was talking about*". Also Yazh (female/first generation/48 years) did not know what integration is: she told me a story about wearing sexy clothes. However later, she said, "*that it is normal now (for her) that people wear that type of clothes. I got more used to the Dutch way of living. That is important, otherwise it is not pleasant (literally: gezellig) in the Netherlands*".

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[77] Cultural understandings, also called schemata, are according to Quinn and Strauss (1997: 49) collections of elements that work together to process information at a given time. Cognitive scientists have traditionally used the term *schema* to refer to generic knowledge of any sort, from parts to wholes, simple to complex, concrete to abstract. Thus, there can be a flannel-shirt schema as a part of a lumberjack schema, or a beer schema as part of a television commercial schema. Many schemas are cultural: you share them with people who have had some experiences like yours, but not with everybody.

[78] In the transcribed interviews, there are spoken errors that are left in the text since they are authentic.

We can conclude that these people were not (very) familiar with the concept of integration –at least not in the same way as the Dutch integration policy defines it.

Hereafter, I asked whether the Dutch Tamils could subscribe, or define, what integration according to them is. Since this is an essential question of this study, I choose to reproduce all (of both men and women of the first and second generation) subscriptions given. [79]

Ulagu (male/first generation/49 years): "*Integration is different for us. We have to try to assimilate in the Netherlands. Where (the place) we go to, we have to integrate. That is a precondition to live together, here. Yes, there are a lot of differences between our and the Dutch culture. For that reason, we have to integrate. In the Netherlands, you have to make appointments with people. You do not have to make appointments in Sri Lanka with people: you just go to people's houses if you want to visit them*".

Nesan (male/first generation/47 years): "*Integration is to get the Dutch nationality, to vote, to gain rights and to build a future in the Netherlands until there is peace…however, the war is never ending, it is like the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, it is insecure for years now. Therefore, I am building my life here*".

Yovan (male/first generation/36 years): "*Although you meet all requirements (having a job, speaking Dutch, having social contacts, adjust to Dutch culture), you can still be different. It remains vague when you exactly are integrated. However, according to me it is that you take other people in consideration. It is something (a sphere) between people. That the relationship between people is good. So, consider other people's feelings, and to live in harmony with the things and people around you: your neighbours, colleagues, people at the market, and people in the train*".

Vaiko (male/second generation/25 years): "*Integration is not to be a Dutch person, but you have to know how to cope with the Dutch society, while keeping your own culture. For me is integration a mix of my Tamil culture and the Dutch culture*".

Erran (male/second generation/22 years): "*Integration is accepting your own culture and the Dutch culture and to find a middle way between them*".

Maan (male/second gernation/28 years): "*Integration is that you accept the norms and values of the country, and doing your best to accept that Holland is your new homeland. The first (older) generation has to accept that this is their homeland. They will never leave this country, because they have an excellent life here….. A couple of years ago, I advised them to return, because they were always talking about their better life there… they hate*

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[79] See question 57 in the questionnaire.

winters in Holland. But then, when they go to Sri Lanka…they really miss their children and return after a couple of weeks. I do not believe they will return to Sri Lanka: their children live here, it is safer here, the social facilities are much better and the life standard is higher…. Integration is something you have to recognize. You have to adjust to the country where you live and where your future is. However, the Netherlands may not force people to integrate. People themselves have to recognize that they have to integrate, that is important. It has to be a choice. If your are ambitious and want to achieve something in life, then in some cases you have to let go your own traditions".

Nila (female/first generation/35 years): "*Integration is that we have a good life together*" *(referring to allochtoon and autochtoon people).*

Sita (female/first generation/32 years): "*Integration is that you learn Dutch things*".

Ezhil (female/second generation/21 years): "*Integration is that you are used to the Dutch way of living, and the way how you deal with people. There is a difference between immigrants who just arrived in the Netherlands and people like me, who are born here, or live here for a while. I am open, and talk to everybody (like the Dutch). Yes, integration is getting used to it*".

Sasika (female/second generation/21 years): "*Integration is living according to Dutch rules. Therefore you have to have a good command of the Dutch language*".

Kadal (female/second generation/19 years): "*Integration is that you have a good command of the Dutch language. That you know to communicate with Dutch people and not only with people of your own country*".

Magil (female/second generation/23 years): "*Integration is at least that you learn the Dutch language. You have to remove some of your habits to become part of the Dutch society*".

Neela (female/second generation/17 years): "*Integration is that you know how things work: learning the Dutch language, being independent (you need nobody in daily life), adjustment, wear pants, watch Dutch television, and go to school*".

Onania (female/second generation/28 years): "*Integration is that you learn the Dutch language and culture*".

Malar (female/second generation/18 years): *"Integration is that you live according to the Dutch rules and law. That you respect the people living here, and that they respect you"*.

We see that the Dutch Tamils give many different definitions, and mention many different aspects of integration. Most of the Dutch Tamils define integration as "that you learn how things work, that you get used to the Dutch way of living, and that you learn Dutch things, norms and values and live according to Dutch rules and laws", in other words to be integrated is to adjust, or to assimilate. They see integration as something *they* have to undertake to become part of Dutch society. Having a good command of the Dutch language plays hereby an important role.

Some Dutch Tamils emphasize that integration does not mean that *they* have to give up 'their' culture totally, but that integration is a mix between Dutch and Tamil culture. Another aspect often mentioned is that integration is 'something', a good sphere or relationship, between people. To be integrated is "that you have to take other people in consideration, that you know how to communicate and how to deal with people".

If we analyse their answers on a semantic level, we see that nine Dutch Tamils subscribe integration by using the words "their own culture", or words to that effect, in contrast to the Dutch culture.[80] Therefore, we may argue that they associate themselves with the Tamil culture. For some of them, integration follows from just this difference. We also see that only four Dutch Tamils do give a subscription of integration that is not applied to their own situation. In other words, it is rather common to refer to your own situation.

It is striking that nobody specifically mentioned that integration is a reciprocal process. Besides that 'Dutch' people have to respect you, the Dutch Tamils did not mention 'things' that 'Dutch' people or 'Dutch' society has to do. From this, we can conclude that it is, or that it has become, self-evident that the Dutch Tamils have to undertake things to integrate. This is in line with the Dutch integration policy's view.

However, there are also some differences between the Dutch integration policy's and the Dutch Tamils' definition of integration. Only one Dutch Tamil mentioned the political/juridical dimension of integration; that integration is to get the Dutch nationality and to vote, and gain rights. Another difference is that none of the respondents equates integration with having a job. Also another important policy's integration measurement: 'being independent' is only mentioned once. Can we because of this conclude that the respondents consider these factors as less important integration indicators than the policymakers do? In the following paragraph we will first return to the most transparent, and therefore the most comparable, integration measurement

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[80] See Yovan who refers to "you can still be different", or Magil who refers to "remove some of your habits", or Ezhil who uses the words "like the Dutch".

instrument, the integration barometer, and apply its different statements to the Dutch Tamils to see whether they would meet the integration requirements (pursuant to their approach). The reason for applying its different statements to Dutch Tamils is to demonstrate in practice that those accepted methods are lacking, as indicated in previous chapter.

Comparing Dutch Tamils' views with policy's integration checklist

If we focus on the answers given by Dutch Tamils on statements whereby integration is measured, we see that the Dutch Tamils meet a lot of requirements. The question to measure economic integration (pursuant to the integration barometer): do you have a job and/ or do you follow education?, is by all respondents answered with 'yes'. [81] The five statements to measure social integration are answered as following:

(1) I consider myself as integrated, is sixteen times answered with 'yes'.

(2) I am well informed about the Dutch rules, habits and welfare facilities, is by all respondents answered with 'yes'.

(3) I mainly have contacts with people of my own country, is answered with 'yes', and continued with 'what do you mean?'

  - This statement is considered to be ambiguous, because what does the barometer mean by 'people of my own country'? Since the Dutch Tamils are Dutch, do they mean other Dutch people? Or do they imply by using the words 'my own country' people from their original country Sri Lanka, thus other Dutch Tamils? Alternatively, do they even imply with 'having contacts with people of my own country', having contacts with people in Sri Lanka? According to me, this statement is suggestive and ambiguous-

(4) I feel at home in the Netherlands, is answered with 'yes' or 'uhhh…..yes'.

  - The respondents who doubted said that the Netherlands as a 'place' to feel at home is too broad. They feel more at home in e.g. the city of residence, at their workplace, in the temple or in their house-.

(5) I do not like it in the Netherlands, is answered with 'no'.

  - However, this statement is also considered vague and too broad.

We can conclude that answering statements with a simple 'yes' or 'no' may give a distorted view of what the respondents actually mean. Therefore, we may wonder what the Dutch integration policy would conclude based on these answers.

  However, more important in this study is what these simple answers say about the actual integration of Dutch Tamils, since these answers lack insight into the Dutch Tamils' interpretations and motives, and do not measure the values attached to these integration requirements. I believe that personal satisfaction and an assessment of a person's integration

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[81] See for this statement Integration barometer 2005 conducted by Regioplan policy.

success goes beyond simple and measurable indicators, such as economic status and having social contacts, and includes *qualities* and the *context* of practices that give, according to Dutch Tamils themselves, meaning to their integration.

Can we then conclude that the above instrument is not useful at all? I do not think so, however only as a 'scheme' to start with. Consequently, the first statement 'do you have a job and/ or do you follow education' will be used to explore whether the Dutch Tamils consider these aspects important in their integration process. The five statements that are used to measure social integration will not be used in the same way, since these are ambiguous and vague and say little about the Dutch Tamils' real behaviour. Of those statements only the statement 'I consider myself as integrated' will be used as a starting point to explore what their integration experiences are, and to unravel aspects of their integration to which Dutch Tamils attach value. We will see that integration experience go beyond answering six simple questions, and is far more complex than the instrument shows us.

By means of an extensive questionnaire, I tried to gain insight into the aspects that are of most concern in Dutch Tamils' daily lives. [82] As described in the first chapter, I asked more targeted questions on integration at a more advanced point in the research process that lead to detailed information of Dutch Tamils' integration experiences.

In the following paragraphs, we will see how Dutch Tamils view integration, and whether they consider integration as an important aspect of their daily life. I will also discuss which other aspects they consider important in their daily life, and whether these practices give meaning to their integration. Before I turn to these questions, I will firstly discuss the indicator to measure economic integration in more detail. We will see whether the Dutch Tamils attach value to their jobs and education, and whether these practices give meaning to their integration.

Indicator: having a job/ or following an education

As I already described, all Dutch Tamils have a job, or follow education and hereby meet the requirement of economic integration. The following table presents the number of Dutch Tamils who work and/ or study. We see that half of the respondents have a job, and the other half follows an education. None of the Dutch Tamils is unemployed. The jobs Dutch Tamils have, vary from banker (3), concierge until teacher and mechanic. Most respondents are highly educated: seven Dutch Tamils follow a study at the University (law, pharmacy, or economics).

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[82] I preferred to start with an extensive questionnaire directed on their lives in the Netherlands, instead of a questionnaire directed on integration experiences to avoid leading and suggestive questions.
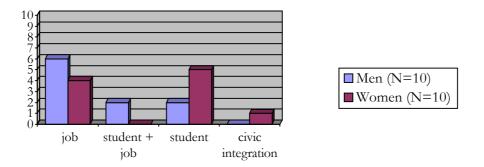
Table 1 Number of Dutch Tamils who work and/ or study

Besides the fact that the Dutch Tamils have a job, or follow education, I am interested in how important this job or education is. Do they consider having a job or following education as important in their daily life?

It is striking that all respondents of both generations attach great value to education. "*Education is most essential in life*", I often heard. Both boys and girls are raised with the idea that it is good to study a lot. "*Then, you have the opportunity to do what you want to do in life*", or as Sasika said: "*without education you do not have a future*". A good education is seen as a precondition to get a good job.

Both education and work are considered very important for Dutch Tamils. In accordance with Tyyska (2006: 6), I hold the opinion that education ranks highest among Dutch Tamils parental concerns. When we discussed whether their children have to study as much as they can, all first generation Tamils indicated that they strongly agree.[83] For some of them, it is even their greatest wish in life. Besides their greatest wish, it is also their expectation that their children are good in school. In general, Dutch Tamils have the conviction that they (as a nation) are good in studying. The following statement illustrates this: "*we (Tamils) are proud that we are good in studying…. During the colonial rule we were rewarded for our educational skills*".[84] After all, they see their educational skills as a gift of which they have to make as much use as possible. If you fail to do this, they consider this as a loss of status: "*it is our duty to make the most of one's opportunities, otherwise you are a nobody*", Yovan (man/ first generation) said.

We can conclude that there is an essentialist tendency among Dutch Tamils who argue that "they, as a nation" are good in studying. To be good in studying is seen as an important condition to achieve status. Status does not only characterize a person, it characterizes the family and even the community. A sense of self-respect is related to the success of Dutch Tamil children at school. In all conversations we had, this aspect was emphasized.

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[83] See question 86 in questionnaire.
[84] This is a statement of a man of the first generation.

In contrast to their parents, some second generation Dutch Tamils have a more mild idea of their (future) children's study. Both Erran and Malar hold the opinion that it is important that their children study as much as they can, but eventually they have to decide what they want. "*It is not good to force them*".

Geetha (2006) describes Tamils as hardworking and inventive. "*Its members contribute a great deal to metropolitan life*". On basis of the above, we can conclude that Dutch Tamils are indeed hardworking. They all have a job and/ or follow a study. "*Unfortunately, most first generation Dutch Tamils have a job under their level of education*", Yovan said. This has mainly to do with the fact that their certificates of the studies they have completed in Sri Lanka are not recognized in the Netherlands. [85] Some of them chose to follow an advanced study in the Netherlands, which made it possible to continue their work they had in Sri Lanka. However, this was not an option for all first generation Dutch Tamils due to Dutch language problems or due to the fact that their jobs do not exist in the Netherlands. Oris intimated that he was an operator in a Sri Lankan cinema, and these cinemas work "*so totally different than here in the Netherlands…Therefore, my skills are useless,…. unfortunately…However, I found a job as a concierge at a primary school*".

One of the reasons that the first generation Dutch Tamils attaches great value to their children's education has to do with this; they know how it is to have an under-qualified job, and consequently, they want their children to have the opportunity to do what they want to do. "*A good education is a precondition*", Ulagu said. It was striking that all first generation Dutch Tamils talked about their children: how good their children are at school, and how proud they are of them. They hardly spoke about themselves, about their current jobs. An explanation could be that they are not very proud on the jobs they have. "*My job is just a job…But, I earn money to sustain my family….Do not misunderstand me…You do not hear me complain…I am the Netherlands very thankful, for giving me the opportunity to build a new life*", Amar acknowledged.

We see that Dutch Tamils attach value to the above described indicator of having a job/ or follow an education, however on the basis of their definition of integration and their stories told about their jobs and education, we see that they did not immediately relate this indicator to their integration. With this, I mean that when I asked them to give a definition of integration, they did not mention having a job, or following an education as an aspect of integration, and when we talked about their jobs and education they did not mention integration. However, in the following paragraphs we will see that having a job and following an education actually are important conditions of integration. We will see whether they consider this as important practices

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[85] See question 79 and 80 in questionnaire.

that give meaning to their integration. Before we will see which practices give meaning to their integration, I firstly discuss whether they consider themselves as integrated, and whether integration is important to them.

Statement: I consider myself as integrated

When we talked about integration, I was curious how the Dutch Tamils consider their own integration. The question: do you consider yourself as integrated?, is ten times answered with "*I strongly agree*", four times with "*I agree*", four times with "*I do not know*", one time with "*at this moment I follow a civic integration programme*", and one time with "*this is a difficult question*".[86]

I will discuss some of the explanations given by the Dutch Tamils who (strongly) agree:

Erzhil (second generation) *was laughing, "I have contact with everybody, I am born here……"* Also Erran (second generation) considers this integration as self-evident: "*Uhhh…(amazed)…I spent the largest part of my life here*". Vaiko, Magil and Neela (all second generation) explained their answer by mentioning various indicators of integration, in conformity with the requirements of the Dutch integration policy: "*Because I almost live a life like a Dutch person. And I have the same rules like everyone in the Netherlands*"….."*I am raised here…I speak fluently Dutch and, I go to university. I incorporated the Dutch rules, habits and customs, and I am always in touch with Dutch peoples*". Moreover,…"*I can speak with everybody, everybody understands me. I know how things work in the Netherlands, what the holidays are, and so on*". Maan's (second generation) explanation is related to the way he identifies himself: "*I see myself more as a Dutch man than a Tamil*".

Most Dutch Tamils of the first generation consider their integration as less self-evident than the second generation does. Some of them did not know how to answer the question, or replied with "*what a strange question to ask*". Two men of the first generation said to feel uncomfortable to give an answer on this question. As a result they answered the question with "*I do not know whether I am integrated or not*". Yovan explained why it, according to him, is a difficult question. The following conversation illustrates this.

I: Do you think you are integrated?

Yovan: "*this is difficult to answer. When am I integrated? How do I know…..(asking himself) How do I measure?….. What is the starting-point?….Having a job? Yes, I have…Speaking Dutch? Yes, I do. Eating herring? No, I do not*".

I: Do you think eating herring is a starting-point for being integrated or not?

Yovan: "*I do not know. I really do not*".

I: But what is **your** view of integration?

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[86] See question 55 in questionnaire.

Yovan: (silence)…. *"uhh….having contacts with people is important. But, I also go to the Hindu temple, and I celebrate Tamil New Year and other Tamil holidays"*.

I: Do you think integration is a question of deciding between, I call it, Dutch culture, and Tamil, or Hindu, culture?

Yovan: *"I do not know. I can not put aside my Tamil life"*.

(Asking me….) Am I integrated when I celebrate Tamil New Year?

I: It is not up to me to decide.

Yovan: *"Yeah, no, it is not. However, I still do not know whether I am integrated or not. I have a job, I speak Dutch and I have contacts with both Dutch and Tamil people. However, I have more contacts with Tamil people and culture"*.

We see that Yovan struggles with the question whether he is integrated or not. Although he meets several integration requirements (pursuant to the definition of the Dutch integration policy), he still does not know if he can say that he is integrated. For him this has to do with the fact that he cannot put aside his Tamil life. According to the definition of integration, this is not a necessary requirement. His explanation of his integration is more in harmony with the question whether he is assimilated enough. On basis of this, we may argue that he is confused about what integration exactly supposes, as he equates integration with assimilation. This is not uncommon, since the Dutch integration policy is more and more directed on an assimilationist strategy.

According to me, only an answer on the statement, 'I consider myself as integrated', does not say much about the value Dutch Tamils attach to integration. Therefore, we have to examine whether being integrated is important to them.

Statement: being integrated is very important to me

Ten Dutch Tamils told me that being integrated is very important to them.[87] Five said that being integrated is important, "*just like other aspects in daily life*", and five Dutch Tamils replied "*not to really mind*" or "*not to really know, because it is just a concept that is not really interesting*". I will give some illustrations to explain why integration is very important. Erran, as well as Onania, Nila, Oris and Neela said, "*Integration is very important in order to have a good society in which people live together in harmony*". Vaiko and Sasika said, "*That it is difficult to live in a country without having a good command of the Dutch language*", and "*people have to be able to communicate in an understandable and acceptable way*".

Magil as well as Maan replied, "*To be able to participate in society it is at least important that you speak the Dutch language. Yazh answered that integration is very important "*otherwise a good sphere between people is not possible*". Yovan said, "*You have to speak the language, to be able to have a job. Job is status, it gives a

[87] See question 58 in questionnaire.

positive impression. If you do not have a job, you are a nobody... And integration is important, because contacts with people go with more flexibility. You can better respect each other and each other's character".

In sum, we see that all Dutch Tamils explain the importance of integration by mentioning preconditions; integration as a precondition to have a good society or to have a good sphere between people. However, it is also the other way around; there are also some preconditions that make integration possible. An important condition is to have a good command of the Dutch language in order to integrate, and participate. Communication is important because then you can understand each other, and respect and accept each other better. Having a job is also an important condition –here fore you have to speak Dutch-, because "it gives a positive impression". In other words, you have to show that you invest in your self, by means of learning Dutch and having a job, in order to contribute to a 'good' Dutch society.

Besides the fact that Dutch Tamils consider integration as important, it is also relevant to explore whether they want to integrate. [88] Their willingness to integrate is related to how Dutch Tamils view their settlement in the Netherlands. Nesan (first generation man), for example, said that he does not know whether he really wants to integrate. "*This is difficult….When I just arrived, I wanted, but now….I strongly have the idea to return to Sri Lanka. I made this decision, an appointment with myself, a long time ago, and I will keep to my promise*". We see that Nesan's willingness to return to Sri Lanka makes integration less important: "*why would I invest so much….is it useful*"?

The Dutch Tamils who settle permanently related that they really want to integrate in the Netherlands. Some Dutch Tamils of the second generation indicated that because their settlement in the Netherlands is so self-evident since they live here for many years –especially for the Dutch Tamils who are born in the Netherlands-, the question whether they want to integrate is redundant, because they take it for granted. To the contrary, other Dutch Tamils, mainly first generation men who want to settle permanently, emphasized that it is self-evident that they really want to integrate. Yovan intimated that he is the Netherlands very thankful that he got the opportunity to build a new life. "*It is self-evident that I do my best to make use of the chances I get. If you had to flee from your country, and you get a new chance, you take it with both hands*". Consequently, I asked him whether it is actually difficult to integrate. He replied with "*in the beginning it was (silence) difficult… However, it is so logical. As I said, I got the chance to lead a normal life, without fear, without being discriminated, and without constantly be on the alert….It is difficult to subscribe. My life there was so very different. I became paranoid….I mean, you do not know whom to trust…That is different here. Integration is then such a little requirement*".

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[88] See question 60 in questionnaire.

I also asked the other respondents whether it is difficult to integrate. [89] It is striking that all first generation Dutch Tamils said that integration is not difficult: "*you got used to live here*", "*you have to, there is no other option, so it is quite simple*", while their descendants indicated that integration is difficult. Moreover, Magil, Sasika and Onania emphasized that integration is very difficult for the first generation Dutch Tamils. Onania said, "*That it is very difficult for adults to integrate... They are used to other habits and customs. You can hardly expect that they can change and adjust easily...that is an utopia*". Sasika's explanation was almost identical: "*integration is certainly difficult for our parents....They are older...so learning a new language goes slowly...Besides this, they incorporated other (Tamil) norms and values, which they do not let go....Their values are fixed and mean a lot to them*".

Integration is, according to the second generation Dutch Tamils, not only difficult for their parents, but also for themselves. Erran said, "*There is a culture clash that makes integration difficult*". Maan intimated that "*at some moments, it is difficult....It is then very difficult to be between two cultures. Because, on the one hand you should show some consideration for Tamils –mainly for the elder Tamils-, and on the other hand you should show consideration to the outside world [Dutch society]*".

In contrast to my expectation, the Dutch Tamils of the first generation agreed with the statement: integration is not difficult. It seems paradoxical; since their children emphasized that, their parents have difficulties with integration. Their examples will be described in the fifth chapter in more detail. We may wonder whether the first generation Dutch Tamils is really convinced that integration is easy. It could be that they have another perception of what difficult is. Such as Yovan indicated, integration is quite simple, in comparison to his fearful life in Sri Lanka. Another explanation could be that they did not want to complain, or expose their feelings: maybe they remained suspicious about whether I would measure or judge their answers. Another possibility is that they wanted to be polite by giving social desirable answers.

Statement: everybody who lives in the Netherlands has to integrate

Almost all respondents agreed that everybody who lives in the Netherlands has to integrate. [90] Magil, Maan and Onania strongly agree, "*We have to learn the Dutch language, the Dutch norms and values*". To the contrary, Nesan, Vaiko and Erran emphasized that integration cannot be obligatory: "*people have to decide themselves if they want to integrate or not, it is their own choice*".

Ezhil is the only respondent, who interpreted the question from another point of view. "*That also 'Dutch people' have to integrate?...... No, no obligation.... There are lots of Dutch people who are interested in the temple. Friends of me do want to know my country*" (referring to Sri Lanka). I believe this is a revealing answer. First, we see that Ezhil takes it for granted that 'non-Dutch people' have to

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[89] See question 66 in questionnaire.
[90] See question 68 in questionnaire.

integrate. Secondly, she associates 'Dutch' integration with having interest in the temple. In other words, the temple is seen as an important and typical element of Tamil culture. After all, it is striking that she uses the words "my country", since she is born in the Netherlands and has never been to Sri Lanka.

We may conclude that not only Ezhil takes 'non-Dutch people's integration' for granted. In fact, none of the other Dutch Tamils mentioned 'autochtoon' people in their answer. In sum, 'everybody' is mainly equalized with people who migrated to the Netherlands.

The question whether it is necessary to integrate follows naturally from this line of thought. [91] Thirteen Dutch Tamils agreed, or strongly agreed with the statement that it is necessary to integrate. At the hand of Maan's answer, I will illustrate this: "*I strongly agree that it is necessary. Otherwise, there will be conflicts between people of different cultures. You live here and have to adjust to this place to achieve your goals. The Dutch mentality is very different from the Tamil mentality. Dutch people work hard, they want to be the best in things they do, besides this, they are very organised, Tamil people are not….. Dutch people are objective, independent, self-responsible and more self-consciousness. To the contrary the Tamils are collective, dependent on their family and community, conformist, naïve, easy to influence and very hospitable. Tamils live more day-to-day, and do not think about what they will do about a year. In the Netherlands, time is very important; time costs money. Everything is planned and well organised, with the consequence that if something goes wrong everybody is frustrated, because they did not expect it. Most Tamils do not make appointments when they want to visit someone. They just go,... And then they see whether people are at home. In the Netherlands this is not a common thing, we do make appointments when we are planning to visit someone. The thing is,… if you want to reach something, and if you want to be somebody in life, you have to adjust to this way of thinking and use it in daily life. I think this is the key to success in the Netherlands.*

We see that according to Maan adjustment is very important, in order to be successful in the Netherlands. He approaches adjustment in an instrumentalist way: it is a, for Dutch Tamil a different, way of thinking that is useful in the Netherlands. You have to incorporate this way of thinking; otherwise, there will be conflicts between people with different cultural backgrounds. According to Maan, integration facilitates, it is even necessary to achieve, this 'way of thinking'.

This 'way of thinking' is flexible. Magil and Maan voice this as follows: "*Times change, and people change. Society changes, and as a result its norms and values change. Integration is thus an ongoing process, it never finishes*". Eleven other Dutch Tamils agreed that integration never ends. [92] It is striking that the second generation Dutch Tamils strongly hold this opinion. Only Yovan has the same opinion: "*integration is a process that continues…More and more people are coming from other countries, therefore*

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[91] See question 70 in questionnaire.
[92] See question 72 and 73 in questionnaire.

integration will constantly change". The other first generation Dutch Tamils do not know whether integration is an ongoing process. During our conversations this did not come up, therefore I asked them whether they think integration is an ongoing process. Amar replied with *"strange questions you are asking…I am not thinking about integration in such a way. It is just that I have a job, and have a life here"*. In addition, Ulagu indicated that *"integration is just present…For me it is important that I have a save life, I am busy with my daily life…I have a job, and a family, and lots of other things to do…I never thought about these things (referring to my questions about integration)"*.

During discussing whether integration is an ongoing process or not, Maan, Magil, Onania and Yovan indicated that although integration is a continuing process, it is also bounded to a particular time and a particular place. Yovan's story illustrates this: *"Years ago, when I entered the Netherlands, people within society thought different about integration. There were no civic integration programmes, only Dutch language lessons. We were not obliged to follow programmes; instead, many people helped us to learn Dutch, and helped us to preserve our culture. In 1991, the municipality of Den Helder made available a classroom where we held our Hindu ceremonies, meetings and celebrations. At that time we got funding for our activities, today we pay it ourselves"*.

We see that according to Yovan the discourse on integration changes over time. As I discussed in the previous chapter, several policy approaches have come and have gone. However, not only the ideas of integration are place and context bounded, the same obtains to integration itself.

As already described, Yovan views integration as a certain sphere between people. When I asked to explain this, he replied: *"If you have a good understanding (contact) with your colleagues for example, then you are integrated in this context. If you respect them and they respect you. If you consider other people's feelings"*.

I: Is integration place and context bounded?

Yovan: *"Yes, it is…. If you feel at home at your work, and have good contacts with your boss and other people working there, then you are integrated here"*.

I: So your sphere of work is a place of integration?

Yovan: *"Yes, it is. Here takes integration between people place"*.

I: In what way?

Yovan: *"You talk with people, you get to know them….. Communication is very important. Language is important, otherwise you can not communicate"*.

I: Oh ok. However, what is integration in Dutch society then?

Yovan: *"Yes, that is a difficult question. I do not know whether I am integrated in Dutch society, or not"*.

I: Oh, can you explain this?

Yovan: *"uhhm…. I do not know what it is to be integrated in the Netherlands. I know some places where I feel at home, but the Netherlands as a whole? It is a too large place"*.

I: So you have to feel at home in a certain, littler, place?

Yovan: *"Yes, if I do not know the place and people, then I am not integrated there".*

I: Ohh ok. So you have to be familiar with people or a certain place?

Yovan: *"Yes, I think so".*

I: And how is this in Sri Lanka? Let me say it in another way.... What do you think about your integration in Sri Lanka?

Yovan: *"It is the same, in some places or contexts I am integrated, in other places not".*

Yovan holds the opinion that integration takes place between people, for example at work. A condition is that you have to be familiar with people or a certain place. Integration means to Yovan that he feels at home among people he knows and/or feels at home in a certain place he knows. In addition, the second generation Dutch Tamils told me that integration takes place in places where they feel comfortable. These places vary per person, for example at university, at school, at a sport club, at work, among friends and family, in the temple, and on the internet. Magil said that integration takes place in more places, for example among different groups of people at work, in the temple, on internet or at home. *"Integration has in each place a different meaning. At school there are lots of people with a different background....Here we learn about each other, and we talk about other things than in the temple".* She follows with *"for me integration takes mainly place at work, and at the university. As a result, it is something different than for a first generation Dutch Tamil woman who is more at home, and visits the market and the temple more often".*

In sum, we see that Dutch Tamils have different ideas about what and how important integration is. Integration is more complex and differentiated than the integration measurement instruments show. The Dutch Tamils' interpretation and understanding of the concept, as well as their argumentation and explanation are important to be able to understand how they view integration, and what integration means to them. Besides this, we see that integration takes place in different places and contexts, and as a result, its meanings are multiple and vary per person. In the following chapter, I will try to show that the backgrounds of Dutch Tamils have influence on the meanings and views of integration, and their integration experiences. I will also discuss the places where Dutch Tamils feel at home, and where integration according to them takes place, in more detail in chapter five.

However, in order to understand their view of integration more clearly, I will firstly discuss whether they are satisfied with the current integration approach and the Dutch integration policy at the hand of the statement: integration has to be seen differently.

Statement: integration has to be seen differently

According to six Dutch Tamils integration, which is often interpreted as the Dutch integration policy, has to be seen differently. [93] Erran and Ezhil indicated, "*Integration should come from both sides, it is too one-sided nowadays*". Ezhil follows with "*also the decision whether you are allowed to stay in the Netherlands should be made quicker. Nowadays you have to wait for years to hear whether you get a residence permit or not. That is ridiculous… And if you are going to immigrate or marry somebody who already lives in the Netherlands, you can follow a civic integration programme in your home country (before you come to the Netherlands)…. That is possible, and I think necessary, because if they are here, they do not follow a programme anymore (she does not know that newcomers are obligated to follow a programme, and have to pass a civic integration exam)…However, this is difficult for refugees. How can they ask of them to follow a civic integration programme in advance? I think this aspect has to change…*"

Nila has difficulties with the fact that some people are send back, while everybody knows that it is unsafe in their home country. "*How is it possible that they deport these people?*"

Nesan made a similar argument and added "*researchers who make the decision that a certain country is safe do not know whether this counts for refugees who fled from this country. Those people did not flee for nothing….Look at the refugees from Congo who were said to be safe,… and when they were send back…they were killed. This is a real mistake of Rita's integration policy*".

According to Vaiko integration takes time, and has to be less forced. "*You (Dutch integration policy) have to try to stimulate people to learn Dutch, by convincing them instead of forcing. They have to face that speaking Dutch is important in order to be independent. I think that making a decision yourself is important for one's sense of own dignity*".

To the contrary, Uluga, Maan, Magil and Oris hold the opinion that the way integration is defined does not need to change. "*It is normal that people living in the Netherlands speak Dutch, have contacts with Dutch people, and have a job*", Magil said.

It is striking that when I asked if they are satisfied with the Dutch integration policy eight Dutch Tamils said to (strongly) agree, and six Dutch Tamils indicated to (strongly) disagree), if we know that, simultaneously, eleven Dutch Tamils would change some aspects of the policy. [94] Yovan indicated: "*I am totally not satisfied. Those language courses you can make abroad will never be a success. Many people are limited in their mobility. They can better focus on the quality of the courses today. They have to control and guarantee the quality. There are many differences between the Dutch integration policy at the time I arrived as a refugee, and the Dutch integration policy right now. My wife who recently migrated has to follow a civic integration programme. These programmes are lacking*". Consequently, he holds the opinion that: "*I would do it differently, language courses do have to improve, civic integration programmes have to include more*

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[93] See question 64 in questionnaire.
[94] See question 74 and 76 in questionnaire.

knowledge about the Dutch way of life. Newcomers have to learn what you should respect and what not. They (Dutch integration policy) have to know….that people really come from other cultures. We think differently, and have another, habit of thought. For example, for us is a gay marriage really weird. And I think, you may be against it personally, however, you have to respect it…. You live here".

Also Nesan also mentioned that civic integration programmes have to be more extensive. "*It is important to learn people about the country, politics and culture, otherwise you can not participate. Otherwise living here is very difficult…..I was really scared, when the alarm went of on a Monday….I thought that we would be attacked…It was like the war in Sri Lanka…It was the same noise, yes, I was afraid……Therefore, you have to know about this siren (every first Monday of the month, 12 a.m. municipalities test their alarm system), otherwise all refugees will be scared*".

We see that very practical knowledge about for example the siren can prevent people like Nesan of memorizing a traumatic experience. According to him, Dutch integration policy should be more taking into account such knowledge.

Erran holds the opinion that the policy's focus on integration is exaggerated. "*Exaggerated in the sense that people are obligated to neglect their own culture….at least that is my impression….It is important that a foreigner knows about the Dutch culture, and understands it, but to force them to assimilate….that goes too far. Maybe this is not directly recognizable in Dutch policy, but this impression many people have….Integration has to come from both sides….Therefore Dutch people should know something about foreign cultures, not obligated, but more in dialogue…Then, they better understand us*".

Nesan acknowledged that he is not satisfied with the current Dutch integration policy at all. [95] He gave the example of Minister Verdonk and Taïda, a girl from Sarajevo (Bosnia) who has to pass her VWO exam in the Netherlands this year, but now she suddenly has to leave the country. Nesan said, "*This kind of decisions, I can not understand, this is not an advantage for the Netherlands. It is bad for the country, bad for its reputation. It is too extreme. Nobody wants this Minister. Verdonk is a very strict woman, however she has to permit Kalou and Taïda. Kalou can make his civic integration exam not until June 3, while Marco van Basten has to announce all Dutch soccer players, who participate in the Dutch team of the World Championship, June 9. In other words, Verdonk made it impossible to organize arrangements in time*". Nesan said that it has to be possible to make exceptions for such an exceptional football player: "*he will get a Dutch nationality any way, why is it not possible to accelerate the procedure?…. Verdonk measures with two different standards, in the case of Maxima, the whole procedure was finished within three days*".

We can conclude that Nesan would change some aspects of the Dutch integration policy. According to him, the procedure to get the Dutch nationality has to be more flexible in

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[95] The policy under the authority of Minister Verdonk, during the fieldwork period in 2006.

exceptional cases. According to him, it is an advantage to have people who can contribute to Dutch society; with their help, we can build a 'good' Dutch society.

We see that Nesan does not look at individual persons, but at what is best for Dutch society. In addition, Maan, who is satisfied with the Dutch integration policy, would, despite of this, change some policy's aspects. He told me that none of the Dutch Tamils (referring to the first generation) is really going back to Sri Lanka. "*So they have to accept that Holland is their new homeland…I do not see any positive influences of the first generation. They are still focused on Sri Lanka, and some of them do not speak Dutch at all*". However, he holds the opinion that it is useless to push older people of sixty to follow civic integration programmes. "*They do not learn anymore, it only costs them a lot of money, and according to me, we can not obligate people to follow these courses. The policy can better be focused on the second generation. They are the future….the policy should do more for them*". Magil is for a different reason not satisfied: "*the policy could improve…They could be stricter than they are now. I think it is right to obligate civic integration programmes for people who apply because of economic reasons for a residence permit. However, I am not well informed about the current integration policy*".

In sum, the Dutch Tamils who would change aspects of the Dutch integration policy indicated that language and civic integration programmes have to improve or have to be stricter. Besides this, integration has to be two-way directed, voluntary arranged and the policy should be focused on the second generation. After all, the procedure to get the Dutch nationality has to be more flexible in exceptional cases; at least the time to wait for a residence permit has to be equal.

To the contrary, Sasika and Malar, for example, are satisfied with the Dutch integration policy. Sasika explained that the current Dutch integration policy is doing well. "*I would not change it. Besides this I do not know much about the Dutch integration policy, so I do not know what to change*". It is striking that the Dutch Tamils who said that they would not change aspects of the Dutch integration policy, mitigated their opinion by continuing that they are not well informed about the current policy.

In view of the above, we see that Nesan and Yovan are not satisfied with the current civic integration programmes. Although only Sita had to follow a civic integration programme, I discussed these programmes with all Dutch Tamils to find out whether they consider these courses as a first step to integration such as the Dutch state does. Despite the fact that some Dutch Tamils are not satisfied with the current civic integration programmes, they agreed that these programmes are an important step to integration.[96] Onania said, "*A civic integration exam does not exist of difficult questions. It just tests some general knowledge about the Netherlands…normal things, you have to know….. I helped somebody with preparing, and I think that it helped her to integrate*". Also Neela

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[96] See question 54 in questionnaire.

indicated that "*those programmes help you to learn about the country, how you have to buy and arrange things. That is important; otherwise you do not know what to do in a foreign country*". Erran acknowledged that civic integration programmes are an important step to integration: "*if somebody wants to settle in the Netherlands you have to have a good command of Dutch. Those programmes help people to learn Dutch*". In addition, Ulagu mentioned that these programmes facilitate learning Dutch. "*If you want to stay here for a long time, such as the partners who come over, then you have to follow a civic integration programme. You learn Dutch here…This is important, otherwise living together is very complicated, and integration will never come….However, when you live in an asylum seekers centre you have no status. Then, it is nonsense to follow these courses. Currently, these courses are seen as a precondition to get a residence permit. But, as far as I know, asylum is a right of a refugee (he refers to the protocol)….They (referring to the IND) do not know how it is to be a refugee in practice….They should decide on the basis of your asylum procedure, instead of making a decision on the basis of your language fluency, whether you get a permit*".[97] (Uluga tells a lot of his stay in the centre, and his past in Sri Lanka)…He follows then with, "*firstly, you have to know whether you may stay or not. A decision has to be made as soon as possible. With this I mean, that you do have to wait for three years before you know you are allowed to stay. If their decision is positive, then you have to follow a civic integration programme. This is necessary in order to integrate*".

We see that Dutch Tamils consider civic integration programmes as a useful first step to integrate, because you learn to speak Dutch. We also see that this question evoked Uluga to talk about his past; it reminded him at the time he was a refugee in the Netherlands and at his life in Sri Lanka. I will discuss his story in the next chapter in more detail.

Let us turn to what the Dutch Tamils actually think of civic integration programmes. Ezhil indicated, "*It is good that people have to follow a course, because lots of Tamils do not really speak Dutch. They do not have to speak Dutch fluently, but certainly a little, when they go to a shop they have to calculate and ask for things they want to buy. Just like my mother…..I think that is enough, to be self handy…..Because at this moment, some people can not speak Dutch at all. Nothing at all. They pretend as if they can not do anything*".
I asked her whether these people are possibly afraid to fail. "*No, I do not think they are afraid to fail. No, they do not want to, they do not want to speak Dutch. And with such an civic integration test, they have to. And they want to, because they have to learn to get a residence permit. And then they do their best for it. According to me, this is better for them*".
Also Maan holds the opinion that civic integration programmes are important. "*Certainly, for the young generation. They have to internalize the Dutch norms and values. They have to know how you have to adjust….. You will come further in life when you adjust to Dutch culture than when you hold on to Tamil traditions*".

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[97] The Immigration and Naturalization Service, at the time he was living in an asylum seekers centre.

In harmony with Maan, Nila believes that incorporation courses are important: "*those courses are a good thing of the Minister. When you decide to live in the Netherlands, then you have to follow these courses….. By doing this, you show that you really want to live here. You show you are interested….. Besides, you are more independent when you are able to speak the language. Therefore, it is for your own sake, for your own feeling, for your own dignity and development. It is not a good thing when women are dependent; if they do not speak Dutch. You have to speak the language. When you go to the primary school of your children and you have to take somebody with you to translate…. Then you have a problem. I would feel ashamed…. You are dependent, and when you become dependent of your children they do not take you seriously…..Sometimes, I have to translate for other women, and then this dependency…. Personally, I do not want that. A few years ago, when my boy started his swimming courses, I also started. I wanted to know what he was doing, and besides, I did not want him to have a mother who can not swim. So then, I took swimming lessons, and now every week, I go swimming with them or with colleagues. A few months ago, my boy started skating, and so did I*".

I asked her whether she does not want to stay behind or whether she wants to control her children. She replied that she really wants to know what her children are doing, she wants to stay connected with them, otherwise, there will be a gap between them. "*Do not understand me wrong….I want to give my children the freedom to express them. And I want to share this with them. I just want to stay connected, not really to control them. But, ok, they are still young. I do not know what I will do about a couple of years. I only know that I want my children to develop…that they have a Dutch life with some Tamil ingredients. The mix is not definitely established yet….I take care of myself. I do almost everything on my own. I am 90 per cent of the time with the children, my husband only ten (because of his shift work). I take the children to football, and swimming lessons. That is important to me*".

We see that civic integration programmes are seen as important. Ezhil considers these courses as necessary; otherwise, people do not feel the need to start learning Dutch. Maan holds the opinion that these courses facilitate adjustment, which is important to be successful in life. For Nila these courses are important in order to be(come) independent. The fact that she said "it is not good for women to be dependent" implies that this is seen as more common for women than for men. This is in line with the view of the Dutch integration policy, since the dependency of women is seen as one of the most important goals. [98]

When we talked about the civic integration programmes, the fact that these courses are obligatory came up for discussion. According to thirteen Dutch Tamils, it is a (very) good idea to obligate civic integration programmes. [99] Four Dutch Tamils indicated that it is inconsistent with people's own choice and self-responsibility. Erran indicated, "*Forcing people to follow these courses is*

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[98] See the first chapter.
[99] See question 53 in questionnaire.

immoral, especially in a liberal country as the Netherlands. People can decide themselves what is best for them. Many people managed themselves to carry on for years, without having a good command of Dutch. They just lived their lives, and there was no problem. Currently, it is seen as problematic. Why?.......In whose interest are those obligated courses? In the interest of people, or in the state's interest? I think the latter.....What is its goal? I mean, not everybody can pass those tests. That is unrealistic". I asked him who, according to him, could not pass the tests. He answered: "*analphabetic people, and old people..... He followed with....a better approach is, I think, to focus on what people want and need*". I asked: to focus on their skills? "*Yes, yes, what people can do, and want to do....Not everybody wants the same....And another important question is: what makes people happy?.....I think they (the Dutch policy) have to think about these aspects.... I do not think forcing people to follow courses makes them happy*".... (He started laughing).

Ulagu agreed with the idea to obligate civic integration programmes, but first refugees have to get a residence permit. As I discussed before, he stands for "*first a status and then a course, not the other way around*". Yovan indicated, "*In theory these courses are a good idea, but not in practice really. My wife followed a one-year trajectory. This is finished now. After a year, you are able to answer questions as: what is your name?, how are you doing?, I want to order a bread.... She is now on the way to level two. Sita has to go on to finally pass the NT2 test (more or less level four), because then she gets a Dutch passport. Nowadays, you have to pay and choose your course material yourself. The pattern of study has changed as well; there is much more self-study. Actually, I do not prefer those civic integration programmes, but it is a formality. The quality of these courses are lacking... Your Dutch is not good enough (Sita passed only level one), if you only follow a course at a ROC (Regional Education Centre). Therefore, I arranged language lessons at a private institute. We hired a freelancer who educates eight people in a centre in the neighbourhood*". I asked him whether it is good to obligate these courses. He replied with "*if the quality is guaranteed and if the participants practice their command of Dutch in shops, on the market, in schools, instead of learning it behind their computers.....Then yes, it is not a problem to obligate, because people get something in return... Besides, it is already obligated...thus, my opinion does not matter*".

To the contrary, Onania said that it is not a problem that courses are obligatory. "*People have to learn the Dutch language, you live here. You can not always be dependent on other people..... I know many Tamils, who are older, and who live here for a long time, and they do not know anything here, and that is why they still need the help of other people. You live here for a while, and I think: just start learning the Dutch language!.... You live here a long time now, and know that you will stay here. Therefore, according to me, it is not possible not to speak a word... Your future is here, so it is easier for yourself. You have to do it for yourself, not for somebody else. Then you are not dependent on somebody else*".

I asked her: do you think that everybody can learn to speak Dutch? Or is it impossible for some people?

Onania: *"Yes, of course, everybody can"*.

I: And older people?

Onania: *"Yes, if you can just say something, it is enough, when you need some help, for example. You have to speak a little bit of Dutch"*.

I: Do you think the rules are too strict in the Netherlands?

Onania: *"No, not too strict. I think that is ok for the future. The Netherlands is a small country, and there happen many things. I think it is a good idea that they introduced a test. I can not exactly give a reason why I hold this opinion….. However, I do think that the costs are too high. Therefore, people have to pay it themselves, and that is a lot of money for them. This is not reasonable. However, the test itself is acceptable. The quality has to be guaranteed. However, that is the problem of today. This is not currently happening….The quality of those tests have to be better. It is too much directed on self-study. But, you are not going to learn a language behind your computer. You have to speak with others, in groups. Nowadays, they have too little contact with other people during these courses. It is more difficult now.*

…….And another thing…If you want your wife to come over. Then she has to learn the Dutch language in her homeland. However, how is this possible? How can you learn Dutch in Sri Lanka? I do not know. It is vague…. However, this is not something that occupies my mind. I do not know anybody who is in this process, and I already live here for a while…..I have a job and study. So, I have a lot other things on my mind".

We see that according to Onania it is not a problem to obligate civic integration programmes. It helps people to be(come) independent in the Netherlands. It is in people's own interest to speak Dutch and to be independent. Therefore, it is rather strange that people do not choose themselves to start learning Dutch. We also see that she is not very satisfied with the quality and the costs of the current programmes. After all, she said that thinking about these programmes is not something that occupies her. She is not the only one who said that other things are more important in their daily lives. Even Sita, who followed a civic integration programme rather talked about her marriage and her pregnancy.

Moreover, during the discussion on integration or on the civic integration programmes all Dutch Tamils changed subject. Some Dutch Tamils, such as Onania, Ulagu and Amar made explicit remarks that other things such are their jobs, or the fact that they live in safety are of more importance in their current lives. Others changed the conversation more implicitly, by means of association, or by applying the subject to their own situation. For example, Magil told me a long story about her relationship with her parents; how her parents influence her life and

how she struggles between the "Tamil" and the "Dutch" culture. Yovan, for example, preferred to talk about the Hindu temple, where he spends a lot of time. Moreover, Maan, talked a lot about the website he runs for Tamil students. On this website, Tamil students virtually meet to discuss topics that concern their daily lives.

According to me, their stories, which are an average reflection of the Dutch Tamils lives, give us an insight in the *context* of the practices that give meaning to the Dutch Tamils' integration. Besides, it gives an idea in which *contexts* their integration takes place. Therefore, their stories will be told in the following chapters, however firstly I will briefly analyse what we can conclude based on their perceptions of integration.

Analysis of Dutch Tamils' perceptions of integration

Discussing the Dutch Tamils' perceptions of integration in theory resulted in talking about their daily life experiences. As I described in the introduction, the goal of this chapter was to unravel their perception of integration in order to assess the value of different practices that give meaning to their integration. At the hand of different statements, we saw how Dutch Tamils consider integration. Integration turned out to be a very flexible concept. We saw that most but not all Dutch Tamils are familiar with the concept. Some Dutch Tamils perceive integration as a clear, however others as a vague, concept. Some Dutch Tamils take their integration for granted, while others do not. For some Dutch Tamils integration is considered to be very important, for others it does not play a role at all. Some Dutch Tamils are satisfied with the current approach of integration, and with the current Dutch integration policy, others would change many aspects of the Dutch integration policy and are not satisfied at all.

In other words, we can conclude that integration is multifaceted, and that its meaning varies per person. As I briefly indicated, integration takes place at different places: for example at work, at school, and in the temple. Moreover, it gets most meaning in places where Dutch Tamils feel comfortable. As I described above, I think that an understanding of the ways in which integration takes place, shows to full advantage when we focus on the *context* of the practices that give meaning to the Dutch Tamils' integration experiences. The reason for preferring some detailed stories about their current lives, instead of asking them to give an answer on the question 'which practices give meaning to your integration', is that this question seemed to be too abstract for many Dutch Tamils. Besides, other Dutch Tamils acknowledged that this question does not apply to them, because they are already integrated. By means of reproducing their stories, we will see how Dutch Tamils shape integration, and which problems these people face. I want to attach a face at these stories, because these stories expose practices different from the practices that are

generally seen as relevant for integration, such as for example speaking Dutch, having a job, having contacts with Dutch people, adjustment to Dutch norms and values. Moreover, the focus will be directed at more hidden and invisible factors that strongly influence Dutch Tamils' daily life.

The following chapter will be about the migration, and settlement experiences of e.g. Yovan, Ulagu and Pon. As I described in the previous chapter, focussing on the dynamics of migration of the Dutch Tamils itself helps us to understand the Dutch Tamils' integration experiences. We saw that Ulagu explicitly said that it is important for him that he has a safe life in the Netherlands. The question whether he thinks that civic integration programmes are an important step to integration, evoked him to talk about his past; about his life in Sri Lanka, about the flight to the Netherlands, about his arrival and settlement in the Netherlands. In addition, Yovan talked a lot about the life he led in Sri Lanka, and about how thankful he the Netherlands is that he got the opportunity to build a new life. They are not the only ones, all Dutch Tamils who fled from Sri Lanka told that they cannot forget their past, their life and the conflict in Sri Lanka.[100] Consequently, I will try to show at the hand of their story that the backgrounds of Dutch Tamils influence their meanings and views of integration, and the way they experience integration. The reason for their current life, and integration, in the Netherlands follows from their past in Sri Lanka.

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[100] See Appendix 2 for who fled from Sri Lanka.

'Why are you here in Europe?' I asked. 'How many Tamils are there in Switzerland?' He replied. 'About 24000', I answered. 'Then there are 24000 reasons why I am here' (Mc Dowell 1996: 19).

Yovan related that the Tamils who fled from Sri Lanka arrived in the Netherlands in two flows; the first flow of Tamils arrived in 1984 and the second in 1991. Personal reasons in combination with the historical background; the events of 1983 in Sri Lanka and the conflict with the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF), played a decisive factor for the first flow of Tamils to flee from Sri Lanka. The second flow is a result of the second Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) insurrection around 1987-1989, or of the insurrections of Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE) that followed hereafter. [101]

To further understand the impact of this intra-state conflict on the contemporary lives of the Dutch Tamils who fled from Sri Lanka, I will briefly describe the Sri Lankan intra-state conflict in the following paragraph. We will see that the democratic system introduced by the British rulers during the colonial period resulted in a beneficial position for the Sinhalese majority in the post-colonial period as compared with the Tamil minority. The Tamils felt discriminated against by the state, since it has failed to adapt to the multi-ethnic identity of the island, which served to alienate the Tamils and contributed to the escalation of violence. Consequently, many Tamils fled from Sri Lanka to abroad; the Tamils who fled to the Netherlands are of this study's particular concern.

The aim of this chapter is fourfold. First of all, I hope to contribute to a better understanding of how the Tamils who had to flee from Sri Lanka and arrived in the Netherlands experienced the intra-state conflict, their flight to the Netherlands and their settlement process in the Netherlands, and whether they consider these past experiences to play a role in their current lives. Secondly, it will give insight into the differences between the integration experiences of first generation Dutch Tamil men who fled to the Netherlands and the first generation Dutch Tamil women who migrated as brides-to-be. Thirdly, it contributes to a better understanding of how their integration experiences are differently perceived and are related to feelings of belonging and

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[101] Because of the failed socialist programme and state welfare of the strong nationalistic SLFP (Sri Lanka Freedom Party that aimed at the traditional Sinhalese elite, a nation-wide recession began. Consequently, ethnic tensions started with Sinhalese Marxist uprising JVP, supported by activists and students who faced few job opportunities. The first insurrection in April 1971resulted in 5000-10000 deaths. The second insurrection (1987-1989 and resulted in 70.000 deaths) took place because there were concessions made to the Tamils and because of the presence of the IPKF. This insurrection was more serious than the first. The JVP became embroiled in a culture of casual political killing. The reactions of the authorities were extremely violent: corpses hung from lampposts or floated ashore from rivers and lakes (See Verhallen 2004: 48, Senaratne 2000: 2 and http://news.bbc.co.uk).

processes of self-identification. Moreover, while knowing that integration experiences are situational and vary per person, I hope to illustrate that the integration experiences of the first generation Dutch Tamil men and women are, due to their different reasons for 'being here', much more differentiated than the current Dutch integration policy takes into account.

Sri Lankan intra-state conflict

First, we need to know that Sri Lanka has experienced unprecedented levels of intra-state conflict since the 1970s (Senaratne 2000). Since the riots of July 1983, which are known as Black July, Sri Lanka was said to be in a condition of an identity-secessionist intra-state conflict at least until 2002.[102] Since the unravelling of the 2002 ceasefire in April 2006, we see Sri Lanka in a condition of intra-state conflict again. This conflict is being played out between representatives of the island's Sinhalese majority, who make up 74 percent of the population and who are mainly Buddhist, and several Tamil-speaking groups, who make up 18 percent of the population and who are mainly Hindu. The idea of the Sinhalese is to unify Sri Lanka. The vast majority of Sinhala people consider Sri Lanka as primarily 'belonging' to them; they believe that Sri Lanka is the country of the Sinhalese and in this worldview there is little place for non-Sinhala people.

In the post-colonial period (until 1948 Sri Lanka was a colony of Britain), the Sinhala people have become highly politically mobilized and so have the Tamil groups. Sinhalese resentment towards these groups that are the competitors for resources, and the reactions of the Tamil groups, make for ethnic competition and conflict on the island. The Tamil people from their side strive for an autonomous area. The Tamils claim the Northern and Eastern provinces as an exclusive Tamil homeland: Tamil Eelam. The Tamil language and culture are the constituent elements of Sri Lanka Tamil identity –I prefer to call this Tamilness.[103] The Sri Lankan Tamils were, even before the Independence, apprehensive of the political dominance of the Sinhalese. However, during British rule both Sinhalese and Tamils had no or little influence and had to adapt to English language. The Tamils adapted to the English language and British cultural mores more readily than the Sinhalese. Therefore, the British rewarded them with important jobs in the colonial bureaucracy. Since the British rulers maintained a ´divide-and-rule´ policy, many Tamils were prejudiced against the Sinhalese. It is said that this led to the dissatisfaction of the Sinhalese majority (Sprang 1993, 2000). After colonial rule, the Sinhalese asserted a dominant role in society

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[102] The incident that led to an intra-state conflict was the raping of a Tamil girl by Sinhalese soldiers. In return for this, the LTTE killed thirteen soldiers (Sprang 2000: 15). See Miall et al. (1998: 30) for the definition of identity-secessionist war.

[103] I prefer to use the term Tamilness instead of a limited concept like Tamil identity, ethnicity or culture. Tamilness is omnipresent and multiform. It comprises thoughts, actions, and institutions, and is both dynamic and contextual (de Kruijf 2006: 18).

because of the effects of the *Donoughmore Constitution*. The British rulers introduced the transition to a democratic system, based on universal vote and citizen rights, in 1931. After colonial rule, this system gave the Sinhalese majority the opportunity to put an end to the British 'divide-and-rule' method that favoured the Tamil population, since their majority vote automatically led to changes in their advantage (Fuglerud 1999: 28). An example of this is that the Sinhalese majority could manipulate the electorate as their political parties propagated a populist religious ideology. Particularly, the Sinhalese Buddhist majority wanted to get more cultural and political power. The situation of the Tamils was different; because of their minority status and their lack of a common ideology, they engaged in inward directed interaction and lost control of the political situation (Fuglerud 1999: 29-31).

In light of this situation, the Tamils believe that the Sinhalese introduced six rules after colonial rule that were decided through the vote of the Sinhalese majority. [104] The first rule is the 'Sinhala Only' policy that was introduced in 1956 by Premier S. Bandaranaike of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). This meant that Sinhalese was made the island's single official language. Consequently, many jobs, in mainly public offices, became inaccessible for Tamils because most Tamils spoke English or Tamil. The second rule 'the colonization policy' made it possible for landless Sinhalese peasants and slum-dwellers to settle within what Tamils regard as their homeland. As far as Yovan is concerned, the Sinhalese government used this policy to create a Sinhalese majority in 'Tamil' districts. Sinhalese people were exported by the government to Tamil areas to get a majority vote. According to Yovan and Ulagu the government still uses this method of population management, mainly in the district Trincomalee. The third rule, initiated in 1972, dealt with university admissions and triggered a particularly intense reaction among Tamil students. The government introduced the so-called 'standardization' of examination scores between language media, with the result that persons taking the examination in the Tamil language were required to achieve a higher score than those taking the examination in Sinhala in order to be permitted to the university. De Silva argues that the consequence was that the proportion of Tamil students at universities dropped dramatically (de Silva 2000). With this policy, the government tried to undo the Sinhalese under-representation in higher education. The fourth rule was about public safety. The army and police were comprised almost completely of Sinhalese people; as a result, Tamils felt intimidated and unsafe. In addition, Ulagu said that police and army did not to protect him in Sri Lanka. He got this feeling again during his request for asylum in the Netherlands since some police officers were hostile. Ulagu experienced his interrogation by Dutch police officers as a criminal investigation. "*I did not see any difference between*

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[104] Four rules are mentioned by Mc Dowell (1996: 70) and Kearney (1978: 527-534), three by Fuglerud (1999: 31-33) and all six by Sprang (1993: 25).

Dutch and Sri Lankan police at first instance; this made me feel frightened, angry, alienated and inferior. I did not understand what I did wrong and as a result I did not want to be in the Netherlands".

A fifth rule concerned the religious domain. The constitution of 1972 placed the Buddhist religion in 'the foremost place' of all religions. The state had the duty to promote and protect Buddhist religion. A last rule had to do with employment. Because of the positive discrimination in favour of Sinhalese applicants, Tamil youth with higher education were hardly able to get a governmental job, while there was a large demand for higher educated people. Pon said that she and her husband could not find jobs that suited their educational level. *"It was very difficult for young highly educated Tamils to find work, we felt excluded and discriminated against. We did not get a job, because we are Tamil, and Tamils are, as far as we know, in their perception too ambitious, too hard working and that makes them jealous and insecure"* (see for these rules Sprang 1993: 15-25, Fuglerud 1999: 31-33, Kearney 1978: 527-534 and Mc Dowell 1996: 70). Brown argues that these rules by the state and state institutions discriminated against the Tamils in Sri Lanka for decades, serving to alienate the Tamils and functioning as the breeding ground of intra-state conflict (2001: 217).

Analysis of Sri Lankan intra-state conflict

First of all, we see that both Sinhalese and Tamils create(d) their nationalistic myths about a shared past. Tamils claim their Tamil Eelam, the Sinhalese claimed a Sri Lanka unity state in which Tamils ought to assimilate. By creating a 'We' versus 'They', a dichotomy is made in which 'They' are seen as the enemy. This process of *ethnicization* played an important role at the beginning of the conflict, but is certainly made increasingly important during the conflict.

Another very important reason that gives rise to the breeding ground of the conflict is the failure of state-formation. We see that through a lack of protection of the Tamil minority, which, in turn, led to minority nationalism, the state disintegrated. Klem describes this as follows: *"even though the democratic structure has been in place in Sri Lanka, the state has failed to adapt to the multi-ethnic identity of the country, which has contributed to the escalation of violence"*. He follows this with: *"In effect, the state has failed to create strong defences against ethnic exclusivity in politics"*(Klem 2002: 12). Also Ayoob argues that many intra-state conflicts in 'the third world' exist through the process of *state-making*, which then lead to *state-breaking* and *state-failure* (Ayoob 2001: 130). In accordance with Klem we see that although Sri Lanka is a democratic country, it fails to function properly. Because of the violation of human rights, the repeated usage of electoral violence, it has not succeeded in solving the manifold ethnic problems in its society (see Verhallen 2004: 55).

The current situation of the Sri Lankan conflict

Both the Sinhalese and the Tamils committed and still commit extreme acts of violence -for example in their 'fight for freedom' the LTTE still makes use of suicide squads to blow up buildings, child soldiers, and has assassinated several ministers. The government armies in their turn also blow up buildings, have hung the corpses of Tamils in trees to frighten others, and have raped Tamil women. [105] Both parties have been accused of being funded by outside emergency assistance; the LTTE by its diaspora members from abroad and the Sinhalese government by raising money from Europe and North America (Gunaratna 1997:1, TECAN).[106] [107]

At present, there seems to be no resolution or compromise for their opposite interests, despite the fact that the LTTE and the government signed a 'permanent' cease-fire agreement with the help of Norwegian assistance in February 2002. We may argue that this 'permanent' cease-fire agreement is abolished since both parties returned to extreme violence ever since April 2006.[108] Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan deplored this extreme violence and called on both sides to stop fighting and resume talks (UN News 16 August 2006). [109]As a result, tens of thousands of Sri Lankans, mainly Tamils, have been forced to flee their homes. The UN refugee agency said that many more people have probably been displaced but cannot be reached by humanitarian aid organizations because of the continued fighting (UN News 16 August 2006). The current situation has not changed; both parties continue fighting. A result of the government's self-declared successes in Thoppigala and Vakarai is that tens of thousands of Tamils have fled from the eastern coastal areas. [110]

Tamil refugees

Kaldor and Vashee (1997: 7-19) characterize the intra-state conflict in Sri Lanka as an example of 'new wars' that have been acknowledged worldwide with the collapse of Yugoslavia and the civil

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[105] The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was formed in the late 1970s. It is the only Tamil rebel movement, since they won the combat amongst Tamils. The attacker was mainly the LTTE, who considered other Tamil movements not radical enough. The active number of 'Tamil Tigers' is estimated at 9000-10000 (Sprang 1993: 27, de Silva 2000: 409 and Senaratne 2000: 13). The LTTE sees itself as freedom fighters, while in India, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and since May 2006 in the European Union, the LTTE is seen as a terrorist organization.

[106] Gunaratna describes that it is ironic that a part of the war budget of the LTTE is raised from Europe and North America, "the guardians of human rights and the proponents of democracy". Also paradoxical is that weapons and explosives used to kill hundreds of thousands of men, women and children are being produced in the West.

[107] See for TECAN; Tamil & Eelam Cultural Association in the Netherlands.
www.members.tripod.com/~tamilned/tecan

[108] http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/country_profiles/1166237.stm

[109] Attacks; including the assassination of a Government peace official Loganathan, the killings of 17 Tamil aid workers, a bomb attack in Colombo on 14 August 2006, and the dozens of children killed in a school as a result of government air strikes in the northeast of Sri Lanka on 14 August 2006.

[110] See http://news.bbc.co.uk on 17 November 2007.

wars in Africa and Indonesia, at the end of the twentieth century. [111] A consequence of this new type of intra-state conflict is that it leads to large numbers of displaced people, refugees and civilian victims. Miall et al. (1998: 130) pointed out that in the 1990s more than 90 per cent of war-related deaths were civilians. The intra-state conflict in Sri Lanka is said to have resulted in deaths varying between 65000 and 100.000 (Lewer & William 2002, Baxter et al. 2002: 374).

In addition, calculations of the number of Sri Lankan internally displaced people, and refugees, varies largely. [112] The UNHCR argues that before the latest outbreak of fighting, more than 362,000 people had been displaced within Sri Lanka since 1983, of which 50,000 people in the period April 2006- August 2006. [113] To the contrary, *Hinduism Today* already reported in 1997 that 800.000 Tamils have been internally displaced since the conflict started. [114] In 1991, about 1.7 million people from all major ethnic groups, Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim, were reported to have been displaced.[115] The majority of the displaced people were Tamils.

We see that the number of internally displaced people changes over time with the fluctuating intensity of LTTE military activity and government counter-action. Internally displaced people are sometimes resettled only to be displaced again. Fuglerud argues that the Tamils displaced, mainly from the Northern Province, can now be found on every continent (Fuglerud 1999).

The 700.000 Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members, now spread over fifty countries, mostly sought refugee status in the West (Gunaratna 1997, Fuglerud 1999 and Senaratne 2000). This is one third of Sri Lanka's entire pre-war Tamil population. Of these, between 9612 and 20.000 Tamils have settled in the Netherlands. [116] A result of the 'renewed' intra-state conflict in Sri Lanka in April 2006 is that more Tamils requested asylum in the Netherlands during 2006 and 2007. Despite the increased number of asylum requests –respectively, 93 requests in 2005, 147 in 2006 and 180 in 2007-, the official number of Tamils in the Netherlands decreased from 9827 in 2005 to 9612 in 2007 due to return migration.[117]

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[111] See Kaldor and Vashee's six characteristics that differ from traditional intra-state conflicts in the domains of external support, political goals, ideologies, forms of mobilization, modes of warfare and war economy (see for more details Verhallen 2004).

[112] Controversy surrounds all figures since the insurgent movement LTTE, the government, pro-government parties and anti-government parties all have a stake in giving accounts that are beneficial to them. Human rights organizations try to rectify the balance. We have to take into account that the information provided is inexact too.

[113] See http://www.unhcr.org

[114] See Special Report, Hinduism Today, April 1997 and www.hinduismtoday.com.

[115] This is based on official Ministry of Rehabilitation figures released in 1991. This was about 10 per cent of Sri Lanka's total population of 17 million at the time.

[116] The first number is registered by the Central Bureau of Statistics on 15/11/07; the second is estimated by Dutch Tamils themselves: see http://www.tamilnation.org/diaspora/netherland.htm. We see that these numbers vary largely. As a result, the question remains what the exact number of Tamils living in the Netherlands is. According to Yovan and Ulagu there are a lot of illegal Tamils in the Netherlands who are not counted in official statistics. Therefore, they estimate the number of Tamils higher than the registered number.

[117] www.cbs.nl.

Figure 1: Global Sri Lankan migration between 1983 and 1991 (Mc Dowell 1996:5).

When we apply Mc Dowell's (1996) statement cited in the epigraph to this chapter to the Dutch Tamils, "then there are at least 9612 reasons for why a Tamil is here in the Netherlands". Of these "at least 9612 reasons" many are directly related to the intra-state conflict. Twenty of the forty Dutch Tamils interviewed for this study and an earlier study fled from Sri Lanka to the Netherlands, because of the intra-state conflict. [118] In Table 2, we see that in both studies more male than female Dutch Tamils fled from Sri Lanka. In the following paragraph, I will describe their motives for fleeing from Sri Lanka during the flows of 1984 and 1991.

Table 2 Number of men and women who fled from Sri Lanka to the Netherlands in this study.

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[118] This is the total number of respondents in both studies: Living Apart Together (Verhallen 2004), Between Bollywood and Suicide (Verhallen 2008).

Motives for fleeing from Sri Lanka

Ulagu related that he was a chemistry teacher in Sri Lanka for several years. The school where he worked stood on a mountain, and on top of the mountain, at 2000 meters, there was a big television transmitting station protected by the government armies. One night, in 1983, the LTTE destroyed 'everything' and killed six or seven government fighters. The day after, the army visited the school; there was a Hindu festival at that time. "*Fortunately, at that moment, I was in Jaffna, because they said: 'somebody from Jaffna, who works here at school, helped the LTTE'. It seemed that they suspected me, because I had a key to the gate, which led to the transmitting station…. This army called the director 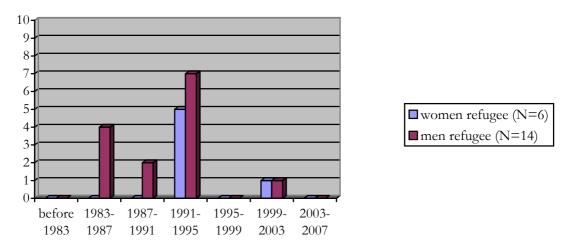of the school…. two Tamil colleagues were caught, and they came to my house…. After this happened, I stayed six or seven months with other people. When I eventually returned to my house, I heard that the army was searching for me all the time…. They came every few days, to see whether I was there….. I knew this would not stop, until they would find me…. So, I was hopeless…. I did not know where to stay and what to do anymore. I did not want to be on the run all the time, and living in fear. Therefore, I decided to leave the country in 1983*".

Deva said he worked in a limestone factory in Jaffna peninsula. In this factory, they made huge mines. "*There was never security in our factory and much was stolen. One day in 1983 a truck was blown up and the police arrested a friend of me. I knew that it was possible that he would give information to the police about me….. And as you will know….. At that time, the police can put you in jail for nothing. The army can shoot you for nothing. And there is no judge or lawyer to help you. Thus, I knew I was not safe anymore and that I had to flee to Colombo. In the meantime, I heard, they had come to my house. Therefore, I stayed in Colombo…..Actually; they went on visiting my house, so I kept staying in Colombo. After four months, I decided to leave, because they were still looking after me*".

Many young male Tamils have fled from Sri Lanka since *Black July* in 1983. After a bomb attack of Tamils near Jaffna, Sinhalese insurgent movements attacked Tamils within the whole island. In this period Tamil shops and companies were burned to the ground and Tamil citizens lynched. At that time, many Tamils were on the run from Sinhalese insurgent movements, Sinhalese government armies or the police. The Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) made it possible to pick up Tamils randomly (Sprang 1993: 26). [119] Consequently, more than hundred thousand Tamils fled from Sinhalese areas to the North, and outside the country.

Yovan told me that a second flow of Tamil refugees arrived in the Netherlands around 1991. Sri Lanka was said to be the most violent country in the world at that time; more than fifty people were killed each day (Interview Yovan 2003, 2006, Sprang 1993: 34). Amar's reason to flee from Sri Lanka was that his house was bombed and destroyed by Sinhalese government armies in 1991. At that time he had no properties left, and he was very afraid. *"Did they want to kill me, or did*

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[119] The PTA is introduced in 1979 to prevent the island for terrorism.

they 'only' want to destroy my house?….. However, I did not wait any longer, I immediately decided to leave". He fled alone; his wife and two children fled and followed him six years later. His flight took seven days, four days across Sri Lanka and three to arrive in the Netherlands. Also Murugan told me that his two farms were bombed in 1991. *"I had nothing anymore; therefore, I decided to leave. My flight took nine months….. In Sri Lanka I was fleeing from the government armies of both Sri Lanka and India, they were looking after me. When I arrived in Colombo, I took an airplane to Istanbul. From here, I fled to Albania. Via Sweden and Italy, I arrived in the Netherlands"*.

Pon said that she had a hard time living in Sri Lanka. *"It was very difficult for just married young Tamil people in Jaffna. Besides, we could not get a good job, the army thought that we were LTTE sympathizers. No, I have to say it differently….. Both India and the Sri Lankan government thought that we were terrorists. The armies came a couple of times to our house and beat my husband and me.* Then she cried, and showed her back and shoulders (I saw big scars and healed wounds of cigarettes that were put out on her skin). She followed: *"they caught me, beat me and threw me on the floor…..(long silence), they raped me…….When this happened I knew that I had to leave, forever."* She fled together with her husband in 1991, it took two months to exit Sri Lanka and three weeks to arrive the Netherlands via Italy.

Fleeing from Sri Lanka around 1991 was a consequence of the escalated violence between the Indian army and the LTTE in 1990-1991, and the second JVP insurrection which took place because concessions were made to the Tamils with an Indo-Sri Lankan agreement and because of the presence of the IPKF.[120] The violence between the Indian army and the LTTE was a consequence of the failed Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) that was called up by the Indian government in 1987 to maintain peace in Sri Lanka during the cease-fire, but their neutral role resulted in a conflict with the LTTE. [121] Eventually, Indian troops left the north because they became stuck in fighting. The assassination of Indian Premier Rajiv Gandhi by the LTTE in southern India led to seeing the LTTE as terrorists.

The husband of Vanji became sympathetic to the LTTE during his study. Despite this, he did not want to fight for the LTTE. *"Many students were recruited for their strife"*, she said. *"It was everyday*

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[120] See http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/shrilanka/document/papers/indo_srilanks_agreement.htm
[121] India had according to Sprang (1993) three reasons to intervene. First, India wanted to guarantee the safety of the Tamil population in the northern part of Sri Lanka. Secondly, India wanted to keep Sri Lanka united. India was afraid for Tamil separation, because the nationalism of the 50 million Tamils in the southern part of India could develop and led to one big Tamil State. Thirdly, India tried to stay in close contact with Sri Lanka, because India lost its influence in western countries since 1977. To achieve the first two goals Sri Lankan rule according to this plan had to be decentralized. The nine areas to be formed would have to become partly autonomous with their own parliament. The (Tamil) North and East areas would form one ruling unity; this was also a claim for the LTTE. However, the Sri Lankan government feared that now the country would fall apart. The Sri Lankan army had to leave the North and East areas and the Tamil groups disarmed. India decided to send the IPKF to maintain peace in Sri Lanka during this 'cease-fire'. However, the LTTE did not let go their claim for an independent state. They did not hand in their weapons to the IPKF. Consequently, the LTTE had to be disarmed by force and the neutral role of the IPKF, as a liberation army, ended into an occupying army.

a surprise how many students were present. And we saw them never coming back to school. After his study, my husband still did not want to fight for the LTTE. However, they were looking for him, and eventually he decided to flee in 1989”. Two years later Vanji fled with their two little children as well, *“the LTTE had it in for us now”*. Via Moscow, they arrived in the Netherlands.

The stories described above illustrate the Dutch Tamils' reasons to flee from Sri Lanka. We see that all refugees lived in extreme fear, danger and with uncertainties about their future. Many of them lost a family member, their properties and had traumatic experiences. The horror of living in a conflict situation led them to flee from Sri Lanka. Most Tamils fled across Sri Lanka for a certain period before they left the island –some for a few days, others for almost a year.

Being a refugee

In many areas of the world, there is the possibility for a refugee to become 'official', to register with the UNHCR and wait in transit camps for Western delegations to come and select candidates for resettlement. According to Fuglerud, this is not an option in Sri Lanka, because displaced Tamils are not refugees according to the law (Fuglerud 1999: 60). As a result, as Fuglerud argues, there are two legal options to choose from; firstly, to apply to embassies for a visa that will rarely be granted, secondly to go to one of the camps on the outskirts of the combat zone. The third possibility is the illegal path, used by thousands of Tamils, the 'journey' to Western countries. Fuglerud describes this “as the path between and through bordered spaces reached by breaking international regulations” (Fuglerud 1999: 60).

If you choose this path, you are dependent on a guide whom you give your trust and money to. All Dutch Tamils of these researches who fled from Sri Lanka chose this risky path knowing that they would be dependent on a guide, because there were hardly other alternatives. Yovan related that he would rather take the risk and fail, than to 'sit and wait' and become 'unfree': *“Because of this, I became a 'do-er' rather than a 'done' to-er”*. We may argue that choosing this path is an act of independence against outside forces of restraint. All Dutch Tamils who had to flee argued that their wish to 'be free', despite its high risk of failure, is more important than to be expectant even if it is more safe. None of them considered themselves as passive and dependent, because they made the *choice* to flee.

Refugeeism or refugeehood is commonly described as “dramatically disruptive of normal life, social relations and meanings” (Al-Rasheed 1993: 91): as a “condition of terminal loss caused by a discontinuous state of being” leading to a “collapse of social worlds” (Marx 1990: 189) in which individuals find themselves in a state of “liminality…nothing but memories of escape and hardship” (Al-Rasheed 1993: 92-93). Hammond describes that there is a prevailing view that sees

flights as producing stress, trauma and dislocation and leaving individuals as passive and dependent (Hammond 1993: 106). We may argue that Hammond's view seems to contradict the Dutch Tamils' flight experiences. Escape from immediate life threatening situations often leads to many different psychological problems, which have long lasting effects and affects a person's capabilities and willingness to adjust to new social environments. All Dutch Tamils who had to flee from Sri Lanka confirmed that their flights produced stress, trauma, dislocation and disruption of their normal life with family, friends and work in the Netherlands. As we have seen in the previous chapter this resulted for some first generation Dutch Tamil men in a strong desire to integrate; to build a new life in the Netherlands "that gave them the opportunity". The fact that they describe as if their integration was a rational strategic choice can be explained by strategies for coping with cultural trauma. Aarelaid-Tart (2006) studied the cognitive ability of people who experienced sharp and radical social changes, culminating in the dissonance between old and new value worlds. She argues that while an actor cannot change whatever social reality has already developed, as an active subject he or she still desires to control his or her present and therefore future. To achieve that goal even traumatic and unpleasant social events are in later periods of life reinterpreted as a usable past (2006: 19). As we saw, Yovan 'used' his past experiences of being paranoid, of living in fear and being discriminated against in Sri Lanka and during his flight, as a coping strategy to deal with integration in the Netherlands. In comparison with his experiences in the past, "integration is then such a little requirement". He made a 'rational' decision by "just doing it", and if you just do it, then it is not difficult. We may argue that when you decide that integration is not difficult, you then gain a sense of control over your present and future.

As far as I am concerned, the traumatic experiences of Dutch Tamils or of refugees in general, are underexposed in the discourse on integration. As we saw in the second chapter, Dutch policymakers are focussed on how integrated –by measuring various requirements concerning having a job, social contacts, and so forth— minority groups are in Dutch society. Their focus does not take into account the well-being of those people whose lives policy bears upon, despite the fact that extreme trauma might strongly influence someone's integration experience. In sum, the Dutch integration policy should pay more attention to the traumatic experiences refugees face in order to facilitate the integration process.

Choice of destination?
In view of the above, we may argue that refugees' flights balance between elements of choice and force with respect to their decisions about how and where to flee, and how to reach their (choice

of) destination. Crisp (1999: 4) argues similarly that "people fleeing an immediate danger commonly have clear preferences in relation to their ultimate destination, and their migration is often facilitated by means of transnational social networks". Also van Hear's (1998: 50-51) view is likewise: "one type of migration can –and often does- transmute into another, sometimes as a matter of strategy, sometimes by chance or circumstances".

Fuglerud (1999: 61) describes that from the perspective of a Tamil migrant certain places rank higher as migration destinations than others. The top three are Canada, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, followed by Denmark, Norway and Switzerland, and further down the list are Germany, Italy and Greece. He argues that the country where you wish to settle is normally not possible, certainly, since Western states maintain a stricter immigration regime.

On the basis hereof, I wanted to explore whether the Dutch Tamils did favour certain destination places more than others, and why they chose the Netherlands as a place to flee.

Table 3 Preference of Tamil male and female refugees to settle in the Netherlands by year of entrance.

We see that the first flow – between 1983 and 1991- of Tamil refugees did not have a distinct preference for the Netherlands as their migration destination. When I asked them which place of destination they preferred to flee to, they answered that their first interest was to leave Sri Lanka. In other words, they arrived the Netherlands 'coincidentally'.

Based on this we can conclude that fleeing from Sri Lanka was more important than fleeing to the Netherlands. They said that they had no distinct preference for fleeing to the Netherlands, because they did not know any other Tamils already living in the Netherlands. This is logical when we know that they were the first group of asylum-seekers in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, two Tamil men, without acquaintances in the Netherlands, specifically mentioned that their purpose was to go to the Netherlands since they had a positive view of the Netherlands because of stories heard at school in Sri Lanka. Nesan told me that he was well informed about the fact

that Sri Lanka was a former colony of the Netherlands. They told him about the dikes and the Dutch history at school. Therefore, he was curious and interested in the Netherlands. When he fled from Sri Lanka, he chose to flee to the Netherlands. His choice was based on his memories originated at school combined with his current attachment to the level of Dutch humanitarian aid. "*I preferred this small country with its highest level of humanitarian aid*", he said.

We also see that the Dutch Tamils, who fled from 1991 on, all preferred to flee to the Netherlands. The reasons of the six female Tamil refugees to prefer the Netherlands as a country of destination was that their husbands, or some acquaintances, already lived in the Netherlands. Also all Tamil men who fled during this period chose to flee to the Netherlands for the same reason. They mentioned "my brother", "my uncle", "or some of my friends" as options of people who already lived here. When I asked them whether they had another destination, they would like to flee to; all Tamils answered "Canada". This is logical when we know that around the 100.000 Tamils fled to Canada.

At first sight – when we look at Table 3- we would conclude that only four of the twenty Tamils who fled from Sri Lanka did not prefer the Netherlands. Consequently, the Netherlands would have a high rank on the list of migration destinations; however, as we have seen, their preference for the Netherlands had more to do with other people living in the Netherlands than with the place itself.

Arriving in the Netherlands

The Dutch government and its immigration policy played an important role on the integration process of Dutch Tamils. Penninx and Slijper (1999) describe that the position of newcomers is not only a consequence of their own characteristics. It is also "the structure of a society, the way it functions and responds to newcomers (which) is often of bigger influence on the result of the settlement process than the characteristics and efforts of newcomers themselves" (Penninx and Slijper 1999: 3).

The Dutch Tamils who sought asylum said they felt dependent on the Dutch government and its immigration policy because they had to wait, in some cases for more than five years, on a decision to stay or leave. Ulagu said, "*They saw me as an economic migrant, because I could not prove my persecution*" and Yovan described that he was seen as an upper-class refugee, because "*in their perception I can afford it to leave Sri Lanka*". All Dutch Tamils disliked being refugees because they felt inferior.

Ulagu told me that police officers often were hostile at the time of arrival between 1984 and 1986. Their interrogation was perceived by him as a criminal investigation. Siva thought at first

instance that there was no difference between the police in Sri Lanka and the Dutch police. He related this experiences following his arrival by plane in Amsterdam at the beginning of 1984. He was very scared to flee from Sri Lanka. "*I was scared to death that I would not make my flight, because I did not know whether my agent was trustful. I was very relieved when I made it…...When I arrived in the Netherlands, I was told to go to Amsterdam*". During his train trip from Rotterdam to Amsterdam his passport and papers were stolen. He went to the police on his way to *Vluchtelingenwerk* (refugee work) to explain that he fled from Sri Lanka and that his passport and other things were stolen. Instead of helping him, they put him in jail together with somebody else. The police would not listen to him for a couple of days. He wrote an emergency letter to Amnesty International to help him; he was put in jail without a lawyer. As a result, the jail guard was angry, because he found his letter. Ulagu had to be moved to another prison where he was alone. Nobody came by to bring him food or drinks for a couple of days. "*I did not know what would happen… Then, some police officers came and brought me to a van. I was transported and I thought that they were going to kill me….. After a while, the van stopped at a train station. The police officers bought me a train ticket to the Belgian-French border… In France, I got out. I met a French woman and 'tried' to ask her what I had to do now. She understood me; in spite of our language problem….It was funny… She got angry about what happened to me, and told me to go to The Hague. She gave me money for my train trip back*".

As a result, *Vluchtelingenwerk* and the police had a quarrel, because what happened with Ulagu was against the law, a big mistake of the police. All together, it took nine months before the Department of Justice solved it. A year later, he got his A-status.

At the end of December, about 500 Tamils requested for asylum. In the beginning of 1985, the number of Tamil asylum seekers increased to 3500. The Dutch government decided to send all rejected Tamils, regardless of the situation in Sri Lanka, back to Sri Lanka. Amnesty International and the UNHCR held the opinion that these Tamils could not be sent back to Sri Lanka.[122] Despite this, the policy ever since has focused on discouraging Tamil asylum seekers to flee to the Netherlands (Janssen 1996: 16, Bronkhorst 1990: 73).

A part of this discouraging policy under leadership of Brinkman was a new arrangement; *Regeling Verzorgd Verblijf Tamils* also known as the '*bed-bath-bread-arrangement*'.[123] As a result, all Tamils were confined to rooms in pensions that they had to share with others. The problems of the Tamils and the discussion about refugees in the Netherlands dominated the news broadcasts

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[122] The Dutch government held a different view. In the beginning of 1986 they sent a mission under the leadership of H. Wijnaendts to Sri Lanka. They reported that the situation in the Southern part of Sri Lanka was safe enough to legitimise the return of the Tamils (Bronkhorst 1990: 73).

[123] Tamil asylum seekers did not have the right to receive public assistance, as was usual for all asylum seekers. Instead of this, they got food-parcels, a bed and had to share sanitary facilities and got twenty guilders a week and black labour was strictly forbidden (Janssen 1996: 16 and Bronkhorst 1990: 73).

for a considerable time. [124] Böcker describes this, as "the group that caused a lot of commotion in the Netherlands was the Tamils" (Böcker 1998: 3).

In April 1986, Tamil groups started a fire in their pensions and caused havoc. Many Tamils all over the country started a hunger strike to get attention for their hopeless situation they were in. These incidents led to a rapid search for better housing. [125] Within a couple of months, the VVN (Association for Refugees in the Netherlands) found a house for about 1000 Tamils. In September 1986, the '*bed-bath-bread-arrangement*' stopped, and instead 1100 guilders each month could be spent per Tamil; more than 600 guilders went to the municipality and the asylum seeker could spend the rest. This arrangement led to the beginning of the ROA (Arrangement Taking Care of Asylum seekers) that from the end of 1987 on would apply to all asylum seekers (Bronkhorst 1990: 72-78). [126]

The continuous fear of being expelled however, did not diminish and most Tamils decided to move to other countries. Of the more than 3500 Tamils who stayed in the Netherlands in the beginning of 1985, only 100 were left at the end of 1987 (Janssen 1996: 20).

In the period 1985-1996, more than 16000 Tamils requested asylum. At the end of this period, there were only 2000 Tamils who achieved such a status (Böcker 1998: 8). [127]

According to Spijkerboer (1990 in Böcker 1998) and Bronkhorst (1993: 77), the Tamils probably went to other countries to request for asylum. In France, for example, the Tamils had a larger chance of being granted asylum seeker status. Oris described that he requested asylum in the Netherlands in 1984. "*But there was no reception centre, instead of this….. I had to rent one room with three friends in Amsterdam for five months ('bed-bath-bread-arrangement)… We almost slept on each other….. On 27 May 1985 the first 'Tamil' asylum seekers centre was set up in Callantsoog.* [128] *At this time, there were about 5000-6000 Tamils in the Netherlands, I suppose. The situation was very bad in the asylum seeker centre; therefore, I went with other Tamils to minister Brinkman. We spoke with him about our situation and encouraged the German system…. Hereafter.. (I lived until 15 December 1986 in Callantsoog)….. They offered me a ROA-house in Den Helder, because I behaved well and was disciplined. They offered only houses in Den Helder. I lived here about nine months when I achieved an A-status… I liked it here and was used to this place and decided to stay in Den Helder…. It went the same way with a lot of other Tamils, therefore a lot of Tamils live here*".

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[124] A discussion started when in January 1985 a group of 45 Tamils, en route from Sri Lanka to East Berlin, were arrested at Schiphol and sent back to Colombo. Amnesty International blamed the Dutch government for this.

[125] See also chapter two.

[126] See for more information ROA (Bronkhorst 1990: 111- 112).

[127] In the previous chapter, I already described that the Dutch asylum policy maintains a stricter policy the last decades. In 2003 there were 13400 asylum applications in 2002 18700 and in 2001 32500. The number of complaints about the treatments increased from 5465 in 2002 to 8198 in 2003 (Dutch Immigration and Naturalization service).

[128] In this centre only Tamils lived.

The fact that Den Helder has a good reputation has to do with how the local authorities treated the Dutch Tamils. In their view, they were welcome in Den Helder when they arrived. According to the Dutch Tamils, this is rather different from the way the Dutch government treated them. It is striking that the Dutch Tamil men, who arrived in the Netherlands at that time, filled in the questionnaire for this study indicating that they did not "really" face any problems at their time of arrival. [129] Instead, they responded in that they were treated "well", or "normal". However, and as we see, their stories reflect a rather different view: it was difficult, tough and insecure at the time they arrived in the Netherlands. In line with Aarelaid-Tart (2006), we can conclude that although the Dutch Tamils cannot change the social reality of their unpleasant past, as active subjects they still have the desire to control their present by reinterpreting their past as usable. With this, I mean that although Ulagu's arrival in the Netherlands was traumatic, and Oris' stay in a rental room unpleasant, they still held the opinion that they did not face any real problems. We may conclude that they can better use a "positive" reinterpretation of their arrival in the Netherlands in their present life. Their opinion that integration was "quite simple" may be reinterpreted in the same way.

Settlement in Den Helder

As told by Oris, on 27 May 1985, the first and only 'Tamil' asylum seekers centre was set up in Callantsoog by the Dutch government. Because of the bad situation in the centre, Tamils were assigned to ROA-houses in Den Helder. The municipality of Den Helder offered many of these houses to the Tamil population. Many Tamils were used to Den Helder and started to like it. When they got an A-status (residence permit) in the Netherlands, almost all Dutch Tamils decided to stay in the Den Helder municipality. Oris told me "*it was an easy decision to stay here…This place was the only place I knew, and I felt at home here…Besides, there were many other Tamils living here, who became my friends*". We see that the Dutch asylum policy played a decisive role in the settlement patterns of Dutch Tamils in the Netherlands. A result of the assignment to ROA-houses in Den Helder is that the largest Dutch Tamil community, around 400 people of a total population of 60000, settled here. Yovan told me that although many Dutch Tamils live in Den Helder, the total Dutch Tamil population is spread over the Netherlands, because of the Dutch asylum policy. He explained that "*there were, as far as I know, nine asylum seekers centres, spread over the country… After their period in the centre, most Dutch Tamils have settled in the neighborhood of the centre, because there they started to rebuild their lives, and there they knew the social landscape*". He follows with "*in other countries this is different….there, they have mainly settled in one place….The Tamils in Canada, live almost*

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[129] See question 19 in the questionnaire.

all in Toronto…In France, they live in Paris, and in England, they live in London. But, although we spread over the country, we all know each other, mainly via the Hindu temple".

As I described in the previous chapter, in 1991 the municipality of Den Helder made available a classroom (temple), where the Dutch Tamils held their Hindu ceremonies, meetings and celebrations. As Yovan already indicated, the Dutch Tamils were helped to preserve their culture at that time. "*We wanted to feel at home in the Netherlands, and to get rid of our traumas…. The temple helped me against homesickness, and loneliness, I got strength by praying to Murugan*".

The temple helped many Dutch Tamils to build a new life in the Netherlands. Den Helder became more and more their home. At the time the Dutch Tamil men arrived as refugees in the Netherlands, all of them thought they would stay for a temporary period. [130] Yovan said that he had the idea that "*when the conflict is over, I will return*". Currently, twenty years later, only three of them still have the idea to return to Sri Lanka, "someday".[131] Although they all indicated that, this is their wish on a long term. Ulagu related, "*Currently, the conflict still continues and besides… my family lives here as well. My wife arrived in the Netherlands in 1994…Ten years after me…Those ten years without her were very difficult…I was very homesick…I felt awful; I tried to kill myself a couple of times. Nowadays, it goes a little bit better with me…Although my depression influenced my family very badly…It is still difficult to cope with everything from the past, and to rebuild a new life…But, my children have their lives here…It is important that they feel happy, that they have a future, and that they stay here…Here is their future…Not in Sri Lanka…But personally, I do not know….I miss my former life, although I know, it will never be the same…I have to accept it, but that is difficult…Fortunately, I am not the only one with those feelings and problems…We all have…Sometimes we (Dutch Tamils) talk about those feelings, however most of us pray to the Goddess in order to free our minds…My religion is very important to me, it helps to cope with everything*".

All Dutch Tamils felt homesick and alienated at the time of settlement in the Netherlands.[132] Ulagu is the only refugee who said that he tried to commit suicide. His most important reason was that he had to live in separation from his wife for ten years. He had an insecure life in the Netherlands: no permanent residence permit, no permanent job or house. Also the other first generation Dutch Tamil men had a very difficult time in the Netherlands. The difference is that only Ulagu had to leave his wife in Sri Lanka, when he fled away. The other Dutch Tamil men were all single at the time of fleeing from Sri Lanka and settling in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, they all indicated that they felt awful and lonely, and simultaneously, happy and safe. We see that they had mixed feelings at the same time. The fact that they could practice their religion in the Hindu temple in Den Helder made their lives more bearable. They had a place to go to and to

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[130] See question 12 in the questionnaire.
[131] See question 29 in the questionnaire.
[132] See question 21 in the questionnaire.

focus on by, for example, organizing meetings and activities. This distracted them from being alone after work. Besides, this place gave meaning to their lives; it became a place what was theirs, and where they felt at home. After all, it became a place where they could meet other Dutch Tamils; they knew that there were always some other people hanging around in the temple. In other words, the first generation Dutch Tamil men created a place where they always could go to, in order to feel at home in the Netherlands, particularly in Den Helder. In the next chapter, I will discuss the functions of the temple in more detail.

Let us turn to the process of migration and settlement in the Netherlands itself. We see that it was the men who made the initial move to flee from Sri Lanka. This is in line with Gonzalez (1992) who describes this as 'chain migration'. The early migration in 1983 is part of a larger pattern of Tamil migration to Western countries. Often a younger male makes the initial move overseas, followed by other family members, who migrate or flee later (Gonzalez 1992). The first flow of Tamils to the Netherlands was around 1984. [133] A couple of years after the young Tamil men arrived; family members (wife and children) migrated or fled to the Netherlands as well around 1987-1991.
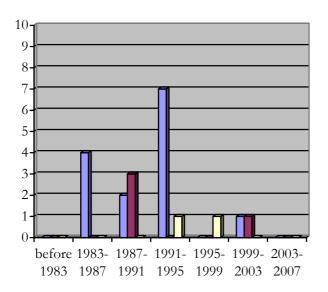

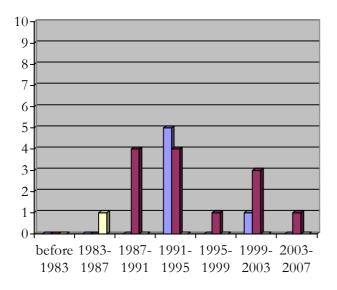Table 4a Men's way of arrival in the Netherlands per time period

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[133] One of the men fled with his pregnant wife, and got a daughter in 1985.

10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0

before 1983 | 1983-1987 | 1987-1991 | 1991-1995 | 1995-1999 | 1999-2003 | 2003-2007

■ women refugee (N=6)

■ women migrated (N=13)

□ women born in the Netherlands (N=1)

Table 4b Women's way of arrival in the Netherlands per time period

A second flow of Tamil refugees arrived in the Netherlands around 1990-1992. We see that this flow of people is more differentiated: men who fled alone, husbands and wives who fled together, women who fled with their children, or alone, to reunite their families since their husbands fled before. No other family members came after the arrival of the women to the Netherlands. We already saw that these Tamils chose to come to the Netherlands because their relatives already lived here rather than selecting the Netherlands per se as a place of destination.

In the following paragraph, I will discuss the differences between the integration experiences of first generation Dutch Tamil men who fled to the Netherlands and the first generation Dutch Tamil women who migrated as brides-to-be. I choose to discuss this group of first generation Dutch Tamil women since all first generation Dutch Tamil women of this study migrated to the Netherlands as brides-to-be.[134]

Integration experiences of first generation refugee men vs. migrant women

We already saw that the first generation Dutch Tamil men felt homesick, depressive and alienated at the time of settlement. However, simultaneously they had a strong feeling of being safe and happy, since they had a chance to build a new life. Integration was a logical consequence; they wanted to make the best of the opportunities they got. In comparison with their past experiences "integration is then only a little requirement". Their perception of integration and their everyday life in general, was influenced by their past experiences: for example, their life in a conflict, their flight from Sri Lanka, their arrival in the Netherlands and their settlement process.

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[134] As we see in Appendix 2, five of the six female refugees were respondents in my first research during 2002-2003. The only female refugee of this research considers herself a second generation Dutch Tamil.

How do the first generation female migrants consider their settlement process, since their reasons to go to the Netherlands differed from their bridegrooms-to-be? Many first generation women migrated to the Netherlands because of their husbands, or their impending arranged marriages. The three first generation Dutch Tamil women of this study migrated as brides-to-be. Sita explained how happy she was to migrate to the Netherlands at the end of 2004. "*Eventually, it was my time to marry (arranged marriage)…My parents saved a lot of money in order to be able to pay the dowry. I was nervous, but also happy of course. We (Yovan and Sita) had a nice wedding in Colombo; all our family members were there…Sisters, brothers, aunts and uncles… Yovan, of course, came over from the Netherlands….And after a few weeks of holiday he went back to the Netherlands…A couple of weeks later I followed him and definitely migrated to the Netherlands*". Sita related that she was a 'bride-to-be' when she arrived in the Netherlands for the first time in July 2004. "*I was confused when I arrived. I could not say the time…It was summer and still very light in the evenings….Besides, the whole community (Tamil) was at Schiphol when I landed…It was a real surprise*". When she migrated to the Netherlands, she knew that her whole life would change. "*I remembered from the first arrival in the Netherlands that everything is different in the Netherlands…No parents around me, no work in a shop…Just nothing familiar…Besides, Yovan of course…*"

Despite the fact that first generation Dutch Tamil women's reasons to be in the Netherlands differ from their partners, they also said to they felt alienated and homesick at the time of settlement. Homesickness is still a strong feeling of these women. Yazh indicated she was homesick: "*I miss the family culture in Sri Lanka, the climate, the smell, and the food. I miss my hearth and home…My husband had to flee from Sri Lanka…..for me it was not necessary….But, I did leave my family…That is difficult for me, I miss them*".

Nila indicated that she really misses her family and her friends in Sri Lanka as well. "*We really have a strong family culture in Sri Lanka. People take care of each other. In the Netherlands, people are more individual oriented and concerned about their privacy…. Often they do not know who their neighbours are. People close their curtains at night, so nobody can see what is going on behind the curtains…This is very different in Sri Lanka. Everybody walks in and out. People do not make appointments when they want to visit somebody. They just go there. This is quite uncommon in the Netherlands. Dutch people do not like unexpected visits. Personally, it is difficult to make friends with Dutch people. They are friendly, and I meet them in public life, but not really in private life*". Nila said that the fact that she does not have many friends makes her feel lonely and isolated. Besides, she indicated that she often becomes very homesick "*because I take care of the household…as a consequence I am more connected to our house…Especially since we have kids. I cannot totally express myself. I do not meet a lot of people…I cannot speak Dutch fluently …That is why I feel isolated in the Netherlands, and cannot get used to the Netherlands, and why I long to Sri Lanka*".

We see that the first generation female Dutch Tamil migrants feel strongly the loss of their family and their hearth and home. The fact that 'Dutch family culture' is perceived as very different from Tamil culture (individual vs. family oriented) strengthens their homesickness; they are not used to 'distant' manners which make it difficult to become close to Dutch people. Their difficulty in becoming close to Dutch people has to do with the individuality of Dutch people on the one hand, and with their own limited command of Dutch and on the other hand with the fact that they are mainly connected to their house due to their children. We see that these factors are interrelated and ally in a feeling of not getting used to, and not feeling at home in, the Netherlands. Based on the comments we can conclude that their perception of integration is in disarray, or at least to be interpreted in a different way than before, since these women admitted earlier that integration is not difficult at all. [135]

A result of not getting used to, and not feeling at home in, the Netherlands is that many women feel very connected to Sri Lanka. They maintain many contacts with family members in Sri Lanka and abroad. Yazh, Sita and Nila phone their family members a lot, mainly at special occasions: at birthdays, funerals, weddings and when people in Sri Lanka have a difficult time. "*But also just for fun, to hear their voice and to chit chat*", Yazh said. "*I want to know what is going on in Sri Lanka and how it goes with the people I care about*".

To the contrary, many men indicated that they do not have much contact with friends and family in Sri Lanka, because it is hardly possible. "*Telephonic contact is impossible…Sending letters is a possibility, but they are at least a month underway, if they arrive…. I never tell the truth in letters, because it is too risky. If I send a letter to my mother in Jaffna this letter may be opened by both the Sinhalese authorities and the LTTE authorities*", Yovan said. Also Ulagu admitted never telling the truth in letters and not sending them anymore, "*they open your letters and you got one back half a year later, so why sending them?….But, in principle writing letters is the only way of keeping in contact with family and friends in Jaffna, because hardly anybody has a telephone in Jaffna*". It is striking that men and women have a different perception of whether it is difficult to contact family and friends in Sri Lanka. However, having no contact does not automatically mean that Dutch Tamil men have no strong connection with their family members or friends. Ulagu said, "*I do feel a strong connection with my family and friends… However, I cannot go there…. Besides, my life is enacted in the Netherlands…I try to forget my former life*". Yovan explained that he would like to forget all memories about Sri Lanka, because "*this makes my life much easier in the Netherlands*".

We may argue that both Ulagu and Yovan try to 'suppress' their feelings in order to have a less complicated life in the Netherlands. In other words, that they bend their current feelings and past

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[135] See chapter thee.

experiences in a useful way. This is in line with Yovan's integration experience: "that integration is quite simple". We may argue that when you believe that integration is quite easy - particularly when compared to 'former' life experiences- then it actually becomes quite easy. We see that men strongly focus on achieving what is important to their current lives in the Netherlands; this may be integration, having a (good) job, practicing Hinduism in the temple, meeting friends in the temple, and having their loved ones around them. In order to achieve these things they try to forget memories about the past.

To the contrary, women of the first generation deal with their feelings in a different way; they do not (want to) forget Sri Lanka. Moreover, they want to maintain their nostalgic view of Sri Lanka. However, their nostalgic view goes hand in hand with feelings of homesickness; they long for the collective way of living together in huge family bonds, the good weather and the beautiful landscape. In sum, they long for their hearth and home. Since these important aspects are not present in their current life, they say they must deal with feelings of homesickness. Sita intimated that this is just the way it is. "*I came here a few years ago. I chose to migrate to the Netherlands, because of Yovan. I am happy with him and with our children. But I also miss my family…There is nothing to do about it…That is just the way it is…I have to cope with it*". I asked her whether there are ways or aspects that help her to cope with her homesickness. She replied that the temple plays an important role to reduce her homesickness. "*In the temple I feel as if I am in Sri Lanka… I can practice my religion and meet some friends as well. Yes, the temple helps me to reduce my feelings of homesickness…. I am very happy that I can go to the temple*". Also Nila and Yazh indicated that the temple is important to them. "*Here we feel at home*", Nila said.

In sum, we see that the temple helps these women to reduce their homesickness and helps them to feel more at home in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, we see that homesickness still plays a role in first generation Dutch Tamil women's everyday lives and that this is largely a consequence of their feeling of not being at home in, and used to, the Netherlands. To my opinion, the Dutch Tamils' homesickness, both of refugees and migrants in general, is underexposed in the discourse on integration. Instead of focussing on how integrated minority groups are in Dutch society, Dutch policymakers should pay more attention to underlying feelings that limit integration experiences that could help to facilitate integration processes. The Dutch integration policy could provide for arrangements that facilitate migrants to, for example, come closer to Dutch people. These arrangements should be made attractive for both participating groups since 'Dutch' people are less motivated to take part in (long-term)

activities.[136] In order to achieve this, integration activities should be less focused on 'allochtoon' people solely –unlike the Integration Nota 2007-2011 that assumes that 'allochtoon' people have to take part in activities -, but should include 'autochtoon' people as well.[137]

With the foregoing, I hope to have illustrated that the integration experiences of first generation Dutch Tamil men and women are different and are related to feelings of belongingness. In the following paragraphs, I will try to show that their different integration experiences are also related to the process of self-identification. We will see that the way Dutch Tamils experience their daily life and integration in the Netherlands influences the way they see themselves, and vice versa; the way they identify themselves influences their everyday life and integration experiences. First, I will discuss how identification of first generation Dutch Tamils takes place.

Identity: a process to self define or to be defined

Fuglerud argues that the complexity of exile life is experienced as social fragmentation. He suggests that political discourses on identity are a consequence of two processes. The first process is external, one described as "identity-labeling" in the 'host' society; the second process is internally enacted and can be described as the transformation and cultural redefinition among Tamil people (Fuglerud 1999: 82, 91). First, I will just glance at what, in the eyes of Dutch Tamils, 'others' think of them.[138]

All first generation Dutch Tamils indicated that the municipality of Den Helder welcomed them by offering ROA houses and a place where they can practice their religion. Ulagu related, "*The way Den Helder treated us facilitated our integration process in the Netherlands. We were welcome here… and they gave us the opportunity to feel more at home by giving us a place where we can practice our religion, and meet each other*". To the contrary, and as we already saw, the first generation of men said they felt unwelcome by the Dutch government at their time of arrival in 1985. "*They (the Dutch government) did not want us, and as a consequence the media was very negative about us*", Ulagu said. "*However, that changed…Presently, we are not in the news anymore, and I think no news means that they think positive about us….I mean… today's media is focused on Muslim people, and we are not Muslim*".

[136] See www.kiemnet.nl and www.ivc.nl. The report on integration describes that 52 percent of the 'autochtoon' population never has contacts with people of 'allochtoon' origin (2007: 167).
[137] See Integration Nota 2007-2011 for steps that 'allochtoon' people have to undertake in order to make their integration successful. The title of this nota illustrates this: 'Provide that you belong to the Netherlands!'
[138] I am aware that it is impossible to describe the ins and outs of both identity formation processes, since identity is a complex and comprehensive concept. Therefore, it is my aim to 'just glance at' both processes, since identity plays a role regarding the Dutch Tamil's perception of integration, and every day life.

Most Dutch Tamils intimated that the attitude of Dutch people towards them is positive. [139] Despite this, six Dutch Tamils have experienced discrimination in past several years. Three of them experienced discrimination when applying for a job. *"There will always be people who discriminate; everywhere…I mean in every country, people discriminate. Sri Lanka is a good example of this (referring to the six rules introduced by the Sri Lankan state)"*, Yovan said.

Yovan remembered some unpleasant situations: *"the other day a female Dutch colleague was telling me that she 'had not much to do with all those foreigners', forgetting me… Then she realized I also was, or am a foreigner, and she turned red, and I saw she felt embarrassed…... What also happens, if the weather is bad here, is that people say 'in your country it is certainly warm?'. So, it is obvious that those people do not see me as Dutch. This is difficult: in Sri Lanka I am seen as an outsider, because I am westernized, and in the Netherlands people ask me frequently 'where do you come from?' While I live here for more than twenty years now, speak perfectly Dutch, work more than 40 hours a week, I have a Dutch passport and maybe most important of this all, I feel Dutch…. Apparently, I am not able to choose. It is not possible to become a Dutchman as I wish"*.

Also Ulagu indicated that the separation between 'autochtoon' and 'allochtoon' people in the Netherlands makes it difficult to become *"an insider"*. *"How do we have to convince people that we also are Dutch and integrated?"*

We may argue that yet this is a(nother) reason why first generation Dutch Tamils say that integration is quite simple. If they 'convince' people that they are integrated, they may be recognized as Dutch. However, the question is: will they ever be recognized as Dutch? As long as the Dutch integration policy emphasizes a difference between 'allochtoon' and 'autochtoon' people, people of whom at least one parent is born in a foreign country –and also their descendents- will never be 'Dutch'.[140] In sum, if official language only allows two choices, 'autochtoon' (native) and 'allochtoon' (foreign), then 'foreign' people must forever count themselves as foreign. In other words, in the official labeling they will never be 'Dutch'. The Dutch policy seems not to recognize that its assimilationist strategy is paradoxical towards its own tenets.

In sum, we see that Dutch Tamils stumble on the limitations of integration. If other people (for example Dutch policymakers) interpret integration in a manner different from Dutch Tamils, then it is, in fact, impossible to be integrated in terms of these other standards. The same goes for becoming recognized as Dutch; if other people do not consider you as Dutch, then it is impossible to become a Dutch person, regardless of how hard you try.

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[139] See questionnaire question 161.

[140] You are considered to be an 'allochtoon' if at least one parent is born in a foreign country. If you are born in the Netherlands but at least one of your parents is not, then you are considered to be a second generation 'allochtoon'. And if you are a descendent of someone who is born in the Netherlands but at least one of his/her parents is not, then you are considered to be a third generation 'allochtoon' (see definition Central Bureau of Statistics).

In sum, we see that external processes of identity labelling in the Netherlands have a large influence on the way Dutch Tamils identify themselves and experience integration.

Transformation and cultural redefinition among Dutch Tamils

In this paragraph, I will briefly discuss the internally enacted process of identity formation as related to the Dutch Tamils' enculturation processes. Schräder et al. (1979) argue that people who emigrated after their sixth year finished their enculturation process in their country of origin. According to them, these people form an unambiguous cultural basis personality who identify with their home country and their own ethnic group.[141] They suppose that these people always cherish the wish to return to their homeland.

Pels (1991: 52) criticized their view in several ways. Firstly, she questioned why the process of enculturation would finish at the age of six, while the process of socialization would always continue. [142] Secondly, she concludes that the term 'cultural basis personality' assumes no differences within a culture. A third point of critique is that Schräder et al. give no attention to the possible differences between men and women in their theory. This latter point turns out to be an important conclusion of many researchers (See Weische-Alexa 1978, Walz 1980, Wilpert 1979 in Pels 1991). After all, Pels argues that migration does not necessarily lead to a dramatic break in enculturation. Families and ethnic communities have too much binding power for that.

We can indeed conclude that Schräder et al.'s enculturation theory starts from an essentialist view of culture. They consider 'culture' as a natural fact that could be clearly distinguished from other cultures. Important for this study, and not explicitly mentioned by Pels, is whether the Dutch Tamils who are acculturated in their homeland Sri Lanka still identify with their homeland and its 'nation' and still cherish the wish to return. [143] It remains ambiguous however to determine for how long Dutch Tamil's enculturation processes take place. As a result, I choose to put this

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[141] Schräder et al. (1979) label this as cultural basis personality.

[142] Pels questioned the idea that the first phase would not be culture-specific and the phase of enculturation would be decisive for a basis personality. She argued that also before the enculturation period culture specific influences take place and, besides, that the culture role of the individual yet also after the age of six can develop. She questioned why socialization would be a lifetime process, and why the process of enculturation would only take four years –from two until six. Adaptation and learning of new behavior are always necessary and possible during human's life.

[143] I did not want to pin down to the age of six, because this is contestable (see Pels 1991).

question directly to them. [144] Ten women and thirteen men interviewed can be said to have had their enculturation process in Sri Lanka.[145]

Although all of them come from Sri Lanka, they emphasized that they did not identify with Sri Lanka, but with Northern Jaffna Island.[146] The fact that they do not identify with the whole island Sri Lanka has to do with the Sinhalese dominance and discrimination by the state. Instead, all Dutch Tamils strongly identified with 'their nation', the Tamils who live in Northern Jaffna Island. In line with Anderson (1983), we may argue that these first generation Dutch Tamils identify with 'an imagined community'; a group of people to whom they feel to belong.[147]

As we have seen in previous paragraphs, identity is not the fixed and given character of a person, or of a group.[148] It is rather a dynamic process, a changing perception of the self and the other, constantly acquiring new meanings and forms through interactions with social contexts. Since the Dutch Tamils have settled in the Netherlands, they also identify themselves, to a more or lesser degree, as Dutch. Five first generation men identify themselves to a greater extend as Dutch more than Tamil. This has primarily to do with the fact that they feel at home and happy in the Netherlands, consequently they do not really long for their homeland anymore. At this moment, Yovan feels more Dutch than Tamil: "*I live in the Netherlands for more than twenty years. I am a Dutchman, I mean…I have a Dutch passport, I have a job, I speak Dutch, I am used to the Dutch habits and thoughts, and I like it here….The few times I went to Sri Lanka, I strongly felt that I have changed. People live a very different life and think differently. Some of their thoughts do not correspond with mine anymore. Therefore, they do not see me as a Tamil anymore; I am too much westernized….. However, it is not that I do not feel Tamil anymore….I mean, I do not put aside my Tamil life; I practice Hindu religion and Tamil culture. Most of my friends are Tamil, because I often go to the temple, and meet my friends there. Maybe, it is that I am a Tamil in my private life and a Dutchman in my public life. However, my Dutch identity is becoming stronger over the years. I think that is logical, my life is here*".

We see that Yovan considers his Dutch identity as a dynamic process that makes his Dutch identity to increase over the years. Through interactions in different social contexts his self-

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[144] Firstly, I subscribed the concept of enculturation and asked them whether they could indicate where (until when) their enculturation process takes place. All first generation Dutch Tamils indicated that they were acculturated in Sri Lanka since they grew up in Sri Lanka. Three of the second generation Dutch Tamils had difficulties to answer this question since they were not really young (respectively eleven, twelve and fifteen years old) at the time they migrated to the Netherlands. Despite, they take the view that their enculturation took largely place in the Netherlands. As a result they were, in contrast with Schräder et al.'s view, not counted to the group who had their enculturation process in Sri Lanka.

[145] These women were between 21and 66, and the men between 20 and 38, when they left Sri Lanka.

[146] This is the part where they come from.

[147] As Anderson puts it, a nation is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (1993: 6).

[148] See Geertz (1963, 1973) who argues that people's identities are rooted and based on race, blood, language and that it is hereditary.

perception changes. In Sri Lanka, he sees himself as different, as more westernized, as Dutch. Also in his public life, for example at work, he feels Dutch. To the contrary, in the Hindu temple, and what he calls his private life, he feels Tamil.

Unlike Yovan, none of the first generation women considers themselves as more Dutch than Tamil. Although they all indicated that, they also feel (a little bit) Dutch, but not as much as they feel Tamil. This has primarily to do with two interrelated reasons; first of all, they strongly long for 'things' in Sri Lanka, and secondly, they do not really feel at home in the Netherlands. As we already saw, it is difficult for women to get used to and to feel at home in the Netherlands. If these women would feel more at home in the Netherlands, they perhaps would feel more Dutch as well. The fact that they strongly identify themselves as Tamil could make it more difficult for them to feel at home, and integrated, in the Netherlands.

Yazh indicated that "*maybe, this (referring to her perception of integration and identification) is just a matter of time….If you would ask me these questions in a few years, I would perhaps give totally different answers…(she started laughing)*". On the basis of this, we may conclude that it is possible that she would feel more Dutch whenever she feels more at home in the Netherlands. Maybe then, she would feel more integrated as well.[149]

When we return to the enculturation theories we see, in contrast to Schräder et al. (1979) and in line with Pels (1991), that Dutch Tamils have not formed "an unambiguous cultural basis personality".[150] First, we see that although all Dutch Tamils identify themselves as Tamil, they do not identify with their home country Sri Lanka. Besides, they also identify themselves as Dutch and Hindu. Some first generation Dutch Tamil men even consider themselves as more Dutch than Tamil. As a result, we may conclude that Dutch Tamils have articulated a 'doubleness identity' or a so-called transnational identity. In line with Bhabha (1994b) I prefer to speak about 'the doubleness of identity' rather than 'multiple identities', as the latter term suggests a voluntary choice between a collection of identities.[151] We already saw that Dutch Tamils, such as Yovan and Ulagu, face limitations when identifying as Dutch; some Dutch people keep identifying Yovan as Tamil, while in Sri Lanka he is often seen as Dutch. Despite that, other people define his identity, he indicated that "*maybe most important of this all, is that I feel Dutch…. Apparently, I am not able to choose. It is not possible to become a Dutchman as I wish*".

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[149] Yazh and Nila indicated that they do not know whether they consider themselves as integrated.
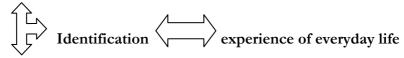[150] See Schräder et al. (1979) for this terminology.
[151] He shows that identity may be about negotiations of identifications, but the whole process itself is ambivalent. "When I speak about the doubleness of identity, I do not mean two: I mean to suggest the negotiated iterability of identity, its constant repetition, revision, relocation, so that no repetition is the same as the preceding one" (Bhabha 1994b: 198).

In sum, we see that external identifications can contradict internal identifications. This has to do with the power of space and time; in a sense that within a specific historical context, certain identities become dominant, and certain identities can be imposed on the individual by dominant discourses and cultures as well.

The fact that Yovan doubts his integration has to do with this. As I already described in chapter three, Yovan is confused about what exactly comprises integration. His perception of integration corresponds with the assimilationist view of the Dutch integration policy. A consequence of the dominant discourse on integration, he cannot judge whether he considers himself as integrated. Ulagu has a rather different view; he intimated that the separation between 'autochtoon' and 'allochtoon' people in the Netherlands makes it difficult to become "*an insider*". Despite this, he sees himself as an insider, as Dutch and as integrated. Consequently, he is concerned about the question: "*how do we convince people that we are Dutch and integrated too?*"

In sum, we may conclude that the processes of external and internal identification are interrelated and influence the way Dutch Tamils identify and perceive themselves. Their experiences of everyday life and integration influence their self-perception, and their self-perception, in turn, influences their integration- and everyday life experiences. The following scheme is a simplified illustration of the relation between self-identity and the experiences of everyday life in the Netherlands. At the hand of the Dutch Tamils' stories I tried to show that the processes of identity formation and integration are not only interrelated, but also are complex, changeable, subjective and situational.

Internal Identity formation

Identification ⟺ **experience of everyday life**

External Identity formation

Schräder et al. (1979) suppose that first generation refugees, such as first generation Dutch Tamils, always cherish the wish to return to their homeland. However when asked, we see that only a few Dutch Tamils cherish the wish to return to Jaffna: only four women and six men. It is striking that although many women have a strong feeling towards their homeland, they do not know whether they really want to return. They said they face a dilemma; on the one hand, they admitted that this has to do with their children and their husbands. Their children do not want to return to Sri Lanka since they feel at home in the Netherlands. In addition, their children's education is seen as very important; all the more so because they did not have the chance to

follow advanced education due to the Sinhalese domination. In addition, their husbands' jobs and their husbands' possible problems when returning to Sri Lanka restrain women from wanting to return. Consequently, staying in the Netherlands is the best option for both their children and husbands, and thereby for them. On the other hand, the first generation women indicated they were homesick and long for their family life in Sri Lanka. Besides, they do not really enjoy living in the Netherlands. Yazh illustrated this as follows: "*it is very difficult to adapt and to get used to the Dutch way of living…..But, maybe it is just a question of time….Anyway, returning is currently not an option; our children are young and they like it here, and besides, the conflict is still going on…This is a major reason for my husband*".

Also some men admitted to facing a dilemma. They have mixed feelings about their possible return as well. As we saw in the previous chapter, Nesan has the idea to return to Sri Lanka. His feelings for returning make his integration currently less important than before. Despite this, he knows that his children do not want to migrate to Sri Lanka. "*They never went to Sri Lanka, so why should they want to go?….They like it here, and so do I, but still, I want to return to Sri Lanka. I made this appointment with myself, that I am going back, one day…I do not know when, in any case I do not return within the next few years; my children have to be grown-up first*". Oris said that although he likes his life in the Netherlands, he does not yet know whether he want to stay. "*I am still homesick, but I am also afraid to return….I am afraid for the changes that took place in Sri Lanka, and I cannot judge whether I am welcome there. I mean, I am afraid to get into touch with my old problems again….Anyway, it is too dangerous to return right now*".

All Dutch Tamil men who cherish the wish to return said that they do not want to return at this moment, since it is still too dangerous. They only want to return if it is safe and peaceful, and when there are equal rights and chances for their children to study.

Based on the above, we may conclude that, in contrast to Schräder et al.'s theory, not all Dutch Tamils who said to have had their enculturation process in Sri Lanka cherish the wish to return to their homeland. Eight of the thirteen Dutch Tamil men and six of the ten Dutch Tamil women who had their enculturation process in Sri Lanka said not wanting to return to Sri Lanka. The Dutch Tamils who want to return still face some dilemmas. We may also conclude that migration does not necessarily lead to a dramatic break in enculturation –whatever this dramatic break would have been. Mainly the stories of the women illustrate that their family and their 'imagined nation' have too many binding factors; despite their migration, they still feel Tamil. In contrast with some decades ago, the period in which Schräder et al. developed their theory, people are nowadays more able to forge and sustain social relations over distance by means of, for example, the internet. We may argue that globalization explains the different relationships of migration and

enculturation, and therefore between migration, self-identification and the experiences of everyday life.

My aim in this chapter has been to illustrate that the integration experiences of Dutch Tamil men and women are, partly due to differing reasons for being in the Netherlands and length of stay, much more differentiated than the current Dutch integration policy takes into account. As argued before, Dutch policymakers should pay more attention to traumatic experiences and underlying feelings, such as homesickness, that limit integration experiences in order to facilitate integration processes. The difference between men and women in their social environment particularly affects their integration possibilities, their feelings and their attitude towards integration.

The following chapter will focus on the integration experiences of second generation Dutch Tamils. We will see that other aspects and other complexities play an important role in their lives. Following the stories of six individuals – among others, Magil, Onania and Maan– we see how they perceive their daily life and integration process, which aspects they identify as important in their everyday lives and how they view, and make use of, their ethnic identity. We see that there are certain 'rules' for women regarding their behavior that strongly influence many young women's everyday lives and integration experiences.

"It is for some young women, including myself, good to talk with a psychologist. It is not easy to have to live between two totally different cultures. At a certain moment, you do not know what is good and bad anymore. I often feel that the things I want are totally unacceptable within Tamil culture. I feel restricted, and I do not know what to do anymore. I am two different persons in one body; I do not know how to cope with it" (Interview Magil, 23 years old)

Magil is one of the four young Dutch Tamil women who indicated that living in the Netherlands is a struggle; a struggle between who you want to be and who you ought to be. This feeling makes her, and these other women, very lonely, unhappy and misunderstood.

To the contrary, second generation Dutch Tamil men, such as Maan, do not feel restricted in the things they want to undertake in their everyday life. We will see that therefore their perception of everyday life differs from these female peers.

This chapter will investigate the integration experiences of second generation Dutch Tamils, particularly the complexities of young women's, like Magil's, everyday life in the Netherlands. Following some of these stories we will see how they perceive their daily lives and the integration process, which aspects of their everyday lives they identify as important, and how they view, and make use of, their ethnic identity. We will see that some women long for a totally different life; a life without rules regarding their behaviour. We will see that some practices and beliefs particularly play an important role to cope with the problems these second generation Dutch Tamil women experience. Since the Hindu temple Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga turned out to be very important, although in various ways, for all Dutch Tamils involved in this research, I will end this chapter with those of its differing meanings and functions that are of concern to Dutch Tamils' everyday life experiences.

First, as an introduction to their stories, we will recap how the second generation Dutch Tamil women consider their integration.

Perception of integration

Most second generation Dutch Tamils migrated or fled to the Netherlands at a very young age, some of them were born in the Netherlands. [152] Consequently, they have a rather different perception of their life in the Netherlands than their parents have; they were still young at the time of arrival and they did not have to make a decision to flee or emigrate from Sri Lanka. As we already saw in the third chapter, the second generation Dutch Tamils consider their integration much more self-evident than their parents do. Ezhil had to laugh about the question

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[152] See appendix two.

whether she considers herself as integrated, since she was born in the Netherlands, and has not yet been to Sri Lanka. In contrast to some first generation Dutch Tamils, all younger Dutch Tamils strongly consider themselves as integrated. [153] In conformity with the requirements of the Dutch integration policy, they reproduced its criteria for being integrated; "[e.g.] *because I speak fluently Dutch, and go to University… I incorporated the Dutch rules, habits and customs… and I am always in touch with Dutch people, and I have the same rules like everyone in the Netherlands*".[154]

We also saw that the second generation Dutch Tamils, in contradistinction to first generation Dutch Tamils, holds the opinion that integration is difficult; "*mainly for the first generation, but also for us*", Maan said.[155] Magil also intimated that it is very difficult for parents to integrate. "*They are used to other habits and customs. You can hardly expect that they can change and adjust easily*". We may argue that because even the second generation indicated that integration is difficult, they cannot imagine that integration is not difficult for their parents.

All second generation Dutch Tamils indicated that they 'live between two cultures' which are completely different.[156] We will see that the way in which second generation Dutch Tamils perceive this how 'living between two cultures' differs, and also influences how they deal with these perceived large cultural differences.

Meeting Magil

When I met Magil in the temple for the first time, she emphasized that she really wanted to talk with me about her life in the Netherlands. She knew via Yovan that I had been researching Dutch Tamils before and that I had started new research on the integration of Dutch Tamils in the Netherlands. She told me that such a research could be very difficult here in the temple, because the people coming here are 'traditional'. "*They are not modernized and do not speak Dutch very well. They are only interested in their family and have the opinion that the Netherlands is too liberal*".

She asked rhetorically whether I would interview 'the Tamil students' as well. She was already informed about my request to talk with them. "*They are able to tell you a lot about integration, about the Netherlands and things that happen in their lives….The website is doing well; lots of students make use of the website….We discuss all kind of things…That is really nice*".

I asked her whether the Tamil students have a place to meet other than virtually on the website. She said that she does not know. "*There are four webmasters and about sixty students. However, I do not know the exact number of students, because some people have three different names….. I really want to meet other*

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[153] See question 55 in questionnaire.
[154] In the transcribed interviews, there are spoken errors that are left in the text since they are authentic.
[155] See question 66 in questionnaire.
[156] See question 172 in questionnaire.

Tamil students, "however it is difficult for girls to meet somewhere", she said. My parents, like the parents of other Hindu girls, are very strict to their daughters".

After this first meeting, I was very curious about what she really meant in her suggestion that parents, like hers, are very strict to their daughters. What are the consequences of her parents' strict criteria for female behaviour for Magil's everyday life in the Netherlands, and how might these rules influence her perception of first generation Dutch Tamils' integration? Drawing upon the long conversations I had with Magil I will try to reproduce her perception of integration and everyday life in the Netherlands.

Magil's perception of integration

"*I think that I am integrated well enough, but if I look at the Tamil adults, I think they are not.*[157] *When I hear them talk about how they perceive Dutch people, then they say that Dutch people are much too liberal....They can not empathize with Dutch people. They can not accept that they have different habits, and different norms and values*". I asked her what she exactly means by Dutch people being too liberal.

Magil: "*Liberal in the sense that Dutch people allow girls to go out to a bar, cinema or disco. In our culture we are not allowed to have male friends. I am not allowed to have a relationship. I am not allowed to choose my partner. And we are not allowed to go out. Mainly girls are totally not allowed to go out. I never went to a bar or disco... and I am 23 years old*".[158]

I: What would happen if you would go out?

Magil: "*My parents are really strict, and not representative. In my case, I would not be allowed to leave our house anymore. I would be punished*".

I: Is it not possible to say what you want and not want to do?

Magil: "*Until I was eighteen, I did everything my parents expected of me. Afterwards, I started to give my opinion. But, they just say how things are, and if I oppose them, then they do not take me seriously. According to them, children do not know a thing about the world. They know what is good for us, they always know things better. Thus, if I give my opinion...It does not occur to them that we are adults, and have an opinion as well*".

I: When, I mean, on which moment, can you give your opinion then?

Magil: "*On the moment that you are married. On the moment that you are given in marriage to a Tamil.*[159] *But, I am going to choose to live for myself. Most girls choose to be given in marriage. I would be the first who is going to live on my own. My parents would really mind. But this... just can not go on anymore*".

I: Do your parents already know that you are going to live on your own?

Magil: "*Yes*".

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[157] See question 55 in questionnaire.
[158] See question 177 in questionnaire.
[159] See question 123 in questionnaire: 16 Dutch Tamils said not to be able to choose a partner different than Tamil.

I: And what was their reaction?

Magil: *"They do not believe it. They try to convince me to stay with them, and that it is not good to live on my own".*

I: Why do they say this?

Magil: *"Because living on your own is not the way it belongs….. Because other Tamils are condemning it…They are afraid that other Tamils are going to say that their upbringing failed; a girl living alone, that is not honourable, is it?…It is obvious that it is very important to them what Tamils think of it…. But, I have the urge to set free. I do not understand the idea behind my culture. Some things that girls are not allowed to do, and boys are. And arranged marriages…. When I ask why we are given in marriage, they cannot even explain... It is just it belongs like that, but why? It does not make any sense… that is a pity. My culture is also mine!…."*

Magil explains how arranged marriages function. *"First of all, the priest looks whether the horoscopes of both people fit. Secondly, they look at whether both people are from the same caste. And finally, they look at the social environment of both people. Then, the parents of the woman give a dowry to the family of the man, since she is going to live at his family, and therefore she has to bring something with her. At present, most men do not prefer dowry, but their parents do".* I asked her with whom should you marry?

Magil: *"With a Tamil, but he does not necessarily have to come from Sri Lanka. But it has to be a Tamil. I can say no, if I do not want to marry a certain candidate. I refused two already. Then, they are angry, but after a while they put it aside. Some parents make you feel guilty, and as a result some girls are then going to marry".*

I: Are there many girls who are in the situation you subscribe?

Magil: *"Yes, I think so".*

I: And how do they feel about it?

Magil: *"I think, they feel the same as I do. NOW, they do. Most girls of twenty and older feel the same as me".*

I: How do most male peers think about this?

Magil: *"That is difficult….Most Tamil boys have Dutch girlfriends, but they prefer to marry a girl from Sri Lanka; a girl from Sri Lanka is quiet, honourable, and knows our culture….they dó know the rules very well…and she would not do difficult….The first generation Tamils are very traditional and preservative. They keep strict to the rules of our culture. Qua clothing they adapt a bit….. The new generation will have lots of difficulties. I mean….I am raised with the idea of our culture. But the young kids, who are born in the Netherlands, will have a lot of problems in future. I think there will be a huge generation conflict. Not yet, but about a few years…. My peers do take our parents' views into account ….Maybe, it is easier for them ('new generation') to oppose their parents…because they are with a larger group. At this moment, I am the only one. And this is really troubling me. I feel that I am two totally different persons in one body. It is very difficult to live with this. At school, I am a totally different person. There, I am really extravert and emancipated, and I give my opinion. And at home, I have to shut my mouth and do what they say. I feel very lonely at home, and it is as if my*

life is useless. At school, I am really being occupied with serious matters, and thére I feel worthy. I really need to talk to a psychologist. I cannot live like this anymore. It is very difficult to live between two totally different cultures[160]. I do not know what to do anymore….I tried to kill myself a couple of times before. That is how I feel. And I am not the only one. I know that some of my friends also tried it. We just do not know what to do….."

Meeting Sasika and Kadal

When I met Sasika and Kadal, they also indicated that they attempted suicide. Their story is very similar to Magil's. They also feel very restricted by what their parents, and the Tamil community, want of them. They want to behave like Dutch peers; go out to the cinema, to a bar, and *"just make some fun"*. *"It is very difficult for us, young Tamil women, to feel happy in the Netherlands….. I have enough of being a chameleon. When I am with Tamils, I behave as a 'good' Tamil girl. I mean, I do what they want me to do….And when I am with Dutch people, I behave 'Dutch'…But I feel restricted, I cannot go out, and cannot be friends with boys….A friendship between girls and boys is not accepted within Tamil culture; our parents just do not know such a friendship…If you talk with a boy and have some fun, they think that you have a love-relationship….. In our culture, marriages are arranged, so choosing a partner yourself is inappropriate. Parents do not accept it, and renounce you"*, Sasika said.

Both Kadal and Sasika indicated that there are more differences between Dutch and Tamil culture. *"Tamil women do not have many contacts outside school"*, Kadal said. [161] *"I only meet my female friends in the temple. I am not allowed to meet them in my spare time….This is very difficult, and it often makes me feel very lonely…In general, I only have contacts with my family"*.

Sasika intimated that it is easier to be a Tamil boy in the Netherlands. *"They have fewer rules than we have. They can go out, and are even allowed to come home late! They can just do what they want: they can drink alcohol and smoke. If I want to do something, then my parents have to join me. I hate that"*.

In contrast to Magil; Sasika and Kadal are allowed to take part in sport activities. Sasika admitted that her parents are strict, but not as strict as some of the other girls' parents. *"I am allowed to sport, so therefore I dance, and play badminton"*. Unlike Magil, Sasika and Kadal do not feel the need to leave their parents' house. Sasika said, *"Maybe later, I just do not know how to discuss this with my parents, and which steps I have to undertake"*.

Kadal related, *"Everything (she does, and wants to say) is just só difficult….I am raised in the Netherlands, therefore I feel connected to Dutch culture. I prefer Dutch culture. [162] Within Tamil culture, many things are not allowed…. Among Tamil people, I cannot be myself. I have to pay attention to the words I use. Sometimes, I shut my mouth, because I am afraid to say something wrong. They change their opinion about you, when you say that*

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[160] See question 172 in questionnaire.
[161] See question 118 in questionnaire.
[162] See question 175 in questionnaire.

you walked with a boy in the city….So, they only have to see you walking with a boy…and then they think different about you. Therefore, you just cannot go to the city centre with a boy from school, without fearing that somebody sees you, and talks negative about you. I really wish that these kind of things were different". Sasika described her feelings very explicitly. "*The thing I do not like of my life is that I do not have much freedom!!!! I dream of a simple life with lots of friends, family, happiness and freedom*".[163]

Although Sasika and Kadal feel more or less the same as Magil (they all experience living between two very different cultures as very difficult) they did not mention to move out like Magil. Both Sasika and Kadal do not (yet) feel 'the need' to undertake action, and presently, they choose to cope with their feelings in a different way; they choose to fantasize about a more free life.

However, and as Magil said, her situation is not representative for all second generation Dutch Tamil women, since her parents are very strict; she is not even allowed to take part in sport activities. We may argue that these kind of restrictions make Magil the only girl who wants to 'break free', by going to live on her own. She told me that she would be the first Tamil girl who takes this step. She admitted that she tried to live on her own before and said that she already rented a room somewhere, but that she had not even attempted to dare to go to the property. "*This time, I really want to prepare myself….That is why I want to speak with a psychologist first. I have to feel strong when I am going, and I need some advice and reflection of somebody who is objective. Last time, when I wanted to go, I almost turned crazy…. I just could not do it, yet…I constantly had previsions in my mind that I would have no family anymore; no contacts with my parents anymore*".

I asked her whether there are no other girls who want to live on their own. Magil intimated that there are more girls, but they do not dare. They wait until one girl goes and then they undertake action. "*So that would be me, I really have to prepare myself very well, because I know how my mum is going to react. But, I did everything they wanted for 23 years now, and I just want to choose for myself now…..I want to get rid of the feeling that I am doing bad things, which are (according to her) not…And I do not want to be suicidal, because everything seems hopeless*".

We see that girls like Magil, Sasika and Kadal perceive their daily lives in the Netherlands as limited. The rules of 'Tamil' culture, in which they experience several Tamil customs and habits as rules, conflict with the way they want to live. They see their Dutch- and their male Tamil peers having fun, and wonder why they are not allowed to do the same kind of things. In contrast to their parents they do not consider going out to a bar or cinema as 'bad for women'. As Magil said, she does not want to have the feeling that the things she wants are bad. The fact that her

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[163] See question 177 in questionnaire.

parents, according to her, do not take her feelings and opinion into account and perceive "all the things she wants to do as bad" makes her feel misunderstood, unhappy and lonely. She also feels guilty because she hurts her parents when she tells them about her plans, but by doing what her parents and the Tamil community expect of her, she hurts herself. Therefore, both choices seem hopeless, and this hopelessness led to suicide attempts in the past. However, at this moment she is older and an adult herself, and it still does not seem that the choices she wants to make evolve naturally. Therefore, she sees no other solution than to choose for herself. She does not want to live the way she ought to live anymore, but wants to decide her own path and destiny in life.

According to Rambaran (2005), the large pressure of Muslim or Hindu communities is a main reason that Turkish and Hindu girls much more often attempt to commit suicide than *autochtoon* girls. [164] "They have to be of blameless behaviour; otherwise they are not a good suitor. Within the Hindu community '*manai ka boli*' (what will other people say) is very important. Talking about the social pressure these women experience is impossible. The problems accumulate, until they see no other solution anymore". In line with this view, Boedjarath (2005) argues that the most important reason for the relatively high rate of suicide among Hindu girls is the difference in culture between the freedom of 'public life' and the strict family life. [165] In addition, Kerkhof (2005) and Rus (2005) describe that too little attention goes to suicide among young adolescents in the Netherlands, particularly in relation to the cultural-religious background that plays an important role.[166] The rate of suicide attempts of Muslim and Hindu girls is five time higher than of *autochtoon* girls, and the number of successful suicide attempts is twice as high.[167]

Based on the above we may conclude that Dutch policy has to focus more on the psychological well-being of Muslim and Hindu girls, particularly their problems experienced regarding the cultural differences between public and private life have to be taken in serious consideration.

Onania's story

When I met Onania, she admitted that she was glad to meet me. She told me that she had experienced a very difficult time last year. "*I was married, for several months, but we divorced some months ago…I want to tell you about it, but you have to promise me that you will not use my name, because it is not common and accepted in Tamil culture to divorce*".

I said that I would change some general information about her and some aspects of her story in order to guarantee her anonymity.[168] Onania intimated that she was married with a Tamil…

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[164] See www.hindustani.nl and www.premtime.nl
[165] See www.hindustani.nl and www.premtime.nl
[166] www.lsp-preventie.nl
[167] www.trouw.nl (29-9-2005)
[168] As a result, the following interview does not reflect everything said during our conversation.

"We got many problems in regard to my behaviour….Since I live in the Netherlands; I have adapted lots of Dutch habits and thoughts. I am also raised more free than lots of other Tamil girls….I am, how do you say, given in marriage, bút with my permission…I had the time to get to know him…And at that time, he was very nice and easy going. We never had problems….He knew that my study and job were very important to me and that I was ambitious….That was ok at that time".

I: Ohhh, ok…. And when and why did it go wrong? Do you want to tell me about it?

Onania: *"Uhh, yes…Where do I begin?…. His family was controlling me… They kept an eye on me and I had to behave as a 'good' Tamil woman. Besides, I had to dress in a way I did not want…I mean, I have a good job and I did not want to go to work in a way they wanted…So, I said no, I am not dressing like that!….And they, of course, did not like that….And so, there were more things like this…. I also had no privacy at all….It got worse and worse…For example, his family did not want me to have contact with my family…And he became more and more jealous….This had to do with that I did not dressed the way he wanted…He was afraid that other men looked at me… I felt really restricted and suppressed….Eventually, we divorced…I did not want it, but there was no other option….My parents felt really sorry for me…They thought that he was a good husband, and that he fitted our family….But, it turned out differently…..At that time I thought about suicide…I also said to my parents that I could not live like that anymore….I could not deal with the pressure, and with all their negative talk about me and my family….They wanted me for their family, I mean, I had to make a choice…But I did not want to choose between them and my own family…It was a horrible time, I was not happy at all….I was really broken-hearted….Yes, I was… Now I am talking about this quite easily, but some months ago….I could not even speak…..Through all these problems I became tougher and more extravert, like a Dutch girl (started laughing)….Before, I was really sweet, very modest and reserved….I am fighting for myself now…I do not let a man ruin me…..You have to know, that after we divorced he told so much horrible things about me….You do not want to know… I ask myself whether I was really married with this man; I mean I am deeply ashamed. Yes, I really am ashamed….No, this is really difficult for me…..Everybody, the whole Tamil community, has an opinion about it…. It is such a small community, they may not know me, but via via, they think they know me…According to them, I am very extravert, a 'bad' woman who makes a fuss and who lost her honour…He blames my parents for everything…."*

I: Retrospectively, do you think it is good that it is all over?

Onania: *"Yes, yes".*

I: How do you think about a new relationship?

Onania: *"I do not know…I am totally broken-hearted. I cannot think about a new relationship. I wonder whether I could ever trust another man…It became that bad…."*

Later we talked about the time she wanted to attempt suicide. She indicated that she had serious thoughts about committing suicide, but her religion helped to restrain her. *"My parents are there for me in difficult times, but not the same way, as 'God' is. During this period I experienced so many bad things…If I did not have my religion, I would have committed suicide during this period of my divorce….That's how it is!. 'God' gave me the power and strength to go on. It is difficult to explain… It is a feeling. Therefore, I am very happy that I believe. I know my parents and friends are there for me, but they will not be there forever. 'He' is with me…."*

I: Do you also talk with 'him'?

Onania: *"Yes, I do. 'He' gives me a strong feeling of being safe, and protected. I propound my problems to 'God'. Then, we discuss about the things to do, or not to do. He keeps me on good terms with my conscience. I live according to his will….Strict religious talk, eh?…You never heard something like this before, do you?"*

I: Yes, yes, I have, though.

Onania: *"But not among the Tamil community, did you?"*

I: Uhhm…Some Tamils are also very religious.

Onania: *"But in a different way, I guess…"*

I: Yes, most Tamils are Hindu.

Onania: *"I think most of them are submissive and have to fulfil certain roles".*

I: I do not exactly know whether Hinduism dictates certain roles…

Onania: *"Yes, maybe it is not like that…. But, I can practice my religion in my own way. I do not have to accept everything uncritically. 'God' is the only one I follow, by propounding to him my problems, and by discussing my problems with him…I accept his answer as the truth…As I said, he helped me to continue, and he told me that it is not worth killing myself".*

We see that, according to Onania, 'God' gave her the strength and power to cope with her problems. Her belief in 'God' and in 'his' words restrained her to commit suicide. We therefore may conclude that her religion is very helpful, since it gives her strength in difficult times. In addition, Magil, explicitly said that her belief in Hinduism helps her to cope with her problems. *"Going to the temple Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga is very important to me. Here, I can relax and forget everything; my problems with my parents, the things I feel guilty about. It is a sort of meditation… I can clean my brain and heart, and afterwards, I feel fresh again. I really enjoy going to the temple… Also because this is the only place where I can go to, and where I meet my friends. In the temple I can be myself; I can think what I want to think, I can pray if I want to pray, and I can pray to whom I want to pray… Most of the time I pray to Saraswathy (the God who gives you strength to study) and Durka (the God who gives you power). Both Gods give me strength and help me to empower myself in order to be able to undertake steps in future".*

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We see that Magil's belief in Hinduism strengthens her; particularly the temple fulfils an important role.[169] This is a place where she can be 'free'; something where she longs to be. Literally, since she is allowed to go to the temple and meet her friends here, and figuratively, since she is able to freshen and strengthen her body. According to her, the temple has an "unlimited" function; "*everybody can go to the temple, nobody is excluded, and in this place, people can free their minds*".

Not only religion, but also Internet, Bollywood and studying seemed to play an important role in coping with the problems that the second generation Dutch Tamil women experience.[170] Magil, Sasika and Kadal intimated that because they are not allowed to meet their friends outside they meet them inside "on the computer". "*Via Internet I meet my friends…. I have a webcam and make use of hyves and msn… By means of Internet I can talk to them…I also chat with other students on the Tamil students' website….We often talk about the problems we have to cope with…It is nice that there are people who feel the same as I do. We share our experiences and give each other advice what to do*", Sasika said.

Magil indicated that she watches a lot of television. "*After school, I have to go home…After dinner, I can do two things: I can study or watch television. My study is really important… If I study a lot now, then I have more freedom in future. With good credentials, I make a good chance to get a good job and to become independent. But of course, I can not study the whole day… So watching television is relaxing. I watch a lot of news programs but also Bollywood films. I like these films. I can identify myself with some main characters. Their lives are like mine: they have to behave as good Tamil women, they are given in marriage, they think about suicide, they long for more freedom and friends…That kind of stuff…Some of these films are very romantic….My life is not, unfortunately…But, it are just movies of course…*".

In particular, Sasika and Kadal indicated that these films symbolize their desirable life. "*These films are full of romance, beauty, dance and music….I wish I had such a life… It (these films) is not all about happiness, but life is not only nice and beautiful…. But still I wish my life was like that*", Kadal said. Sasika told me that Bollywood films make her feel happy. "*These films make me feel good…I mainly watch them if I feel unhappy and lonely….It is like, I then can escape my real life…I mean these films are like a dream or fairy tale. I like the beautiful landscapes, the love, and desire in these films. They are full of dance and music. Sometimes, I imagine that my life was the same*". In addition, Ezhil and Malar intimated they watch many Bollywood films. "*I like Devdas, Aishwarya Rai, Kal Ho Naa Ho, Fanaa, Andaaz and Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham….Yes, I like Shahrukh Khan (famous actor)…*, Malar said. She follows with "*I like to paint in the style of Bollywood. (She shows me some drawings), and I also like to dance with some friends on Bollywood music*". Ezhil wants to open a shop with these kinds of clothing (referring to Bollywood costumes). "*We like to wear these kinds of clothes. However, they only sell them in Amsterdam. They are quite*

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[169] See question 134 in questionnaire.
[170] See question 134 in questionnaire.

expensive, so I am thinking about making them myself…..Then, I can sell them here in Den Helder….At this moment I make Tamil pies, and sometimes with Bollywood characteristics on top…I give them at birthdays".

We see that these Dutch Tamil women like to watch Bollywood films.[171] As indicated before, Magil, Sasika and Kadal fantasize about a life of freedom, a life without restrictions regarding their behaviour. Bollywood films act as a kind of medicine: they symbolize their desirable life, they can identify with main characters and by watching these films, which often last for hours, they can escape their real life. It is very important to these women to believe in something, which gives them strength to continue and to forget their problems. For Malar and Ezhil, Bollywood has a different meaning. They just like to watch Bollywood films, and they watch them a lot. We see that they use their interest in Bollywood creatively; for Ezhil it almost becomes a lifestyle.

Meeting Ezhil

When I met Ezhil in the temple, her father was there as well. He hinted that he was not able to be present during the whole interview. As I described in the first chapter, it seemed that he intended that we had to make another appointment so he could be present as well. However, Ezhil and I left and went to her house. At the time we arrived, her mother (and later her father as well) was present in the same room where we were talking. Consequently, I cannot judge whether the answers she gave reflect her perception or to a certain extent her parents' point of view.

Ezhil told me that she is happy and satisfied with her life. "*I am born in the Netherlands, and I have always lived in this house… I feel at home here…*". As I already described in the third chapter, Ezhil started laughing when I asked her whether she considers herself as integrated. "*Of course I am integrated… I am born in the Netherlands, and I have contacts with everybody… I never had to get used to the Netherlands, like other Tamils had… I learned both Dutch and Tamil when I was a little kid….My mum really had to learn it (Dutch), like most other Tamils. It is good that people have to follow a course nowadays, because lots of Tamils do not really speak Dutch. They do not have to speak it fluently, but certainly a little, when they go to a shop they have to calculate and ask for things they want to buy. Just like my mother… I think that is enough, to be self handy*". Ezhil indicated that civic integration tests are a good idea, because then people have to learn Dutch and become self handy. "*Otherwise people do not want to learn Dutch and pretend as if they cannot do anything*". According to Ezhil this is not how it should be.

She told me how proud she is to have a nice job. She is ambitious and wants to study more in order to get promoted. When she is in the temple, she prays to *Saraswathy* (the God of study). This God gives her strength to develop her skills. Her religion turned out to be very important to

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[171] The first generation Dutch Tamil women and men did not talk about watching Bollywood films.

her.[172] *"Until your tenth you do not understand a thing of Hinduism… From my twelfth I frequently go the temple and got involved…I know a lot about my religion, that fits me…I love my religion…It is also that everybody takes part, that is why it gives me a sense of belonging".* I asked her whether she lives according to 'the rules' of Hinduism.

Ezhil: *"Yes, I do…I have to be a virgin when I marry. That is how it ought to be. That is very important…"*

I: And, anything else?

Ezhil: *"(silence) I hear of everybody… Being a vegetarian. When you go to the temple then you could not have a meal before with fish or meat. And when you have your period (menstruation), then you are also not allowed to enter the temple. And after eight months of pregnancy you are not allowed as well".*

I: Ohh ok.. Do you often go to the temple, and is the temple important to you?

Ezhil: *"I go once a week, and yes, the temple is very important to me… I like to go there, I see my friends there…I like to help in the temple, but most things are organized and arranged by older men….Also my dad assists in the temple and for the Tamil community…"*

I: What exactly do you do in the temple?

Ezhil: *"Praying of course, and ehh…dancing, I follow Tamil language lessons, and sometimes I play music…And preparing food... Just little things…"*

I: Do you speak Tamil very well?

Ezhil: *"Yes…."*

I: When did you learn to speak Tamil?

Ezhil: *"Ooh… I speak it my whole life…But if you look at the Tamils who live in England…They feel ashamed to speak Tamil. They (Tamil parents) also want their children to speak English. When these children visit Sri Lanka, they cannot speak Tamil at all. I think that is…uhh,…those parents do this consciously….But, of me they can….(She clearly does not agree with these parents)"*

I: Does it often occur?

Ezhil: *"Yes, I hear that very often… In England and Germany lots of Tamil children do not speak Tamil….I think that is strange".*

I: Do you want your children to speak Tamil?[173]

Ezhil: *"Yes, of course…That is how it ought to be. It is very important that they know the Tamil culture and that they speak Tamil. If they would go to Sri Lanka, they have to speak Tamil".*

I: Is it important to have contact with Tamil people?[174]

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172 See question 25 in questionnaire.
173 See question 99 in questionnaire. Mainly second generation Dutch Tamils hold the opinion that it is very important to teach their children Tamil.
174 See question 120 in questionnaire.

Ezhil: *"Yes, it is very important… I have a lot of contact with my family in Canada (cousins), and with my family in England (nieces) and India (uncles). My family spread all over the world, (she tells me about who is living where)".*

I: Your uncle in Canada, for example, is he married with a Canadian woman?

Ezhil: *"Ohh, no. That he could marry a Canadian woman? (She is looking curious).. No…That does not occur. Everybody marries a Tamil".*

I: Do you think that it makes a difference to you which nationality your future partner has?[175]

Ezhil: *"Yes, sure! It has to be a Tamil, yes (she laughs) it has to be a Tamil…That is what I know for sure".*

I: Because?

Ezhil: *"Everybody asks me this…. It is not that I do not like Dutch people, but it is just….He has to have the same ideas as I do, he also has to be Hindu like me….I do not want to switch over to Catholicism or another religion….I want to stay within Hinduism…And with a Tamil husband".*

I: With somebody from Sri Lanka or the Netherlands?

Ezhil: *"From the Netherlands, that would be the best option…. I mean I studied here, and I have everything here".*

I: Could he be somebody of the temple?

Ezhil: *"Yes, that is a possibility".*

I: Are there a lot Dutch Tamil men (second generation)?

Ezhil: *"Yes, quite a lot".*

I: And could he be a Tamil from Sri Lanka?

Ezhil: *"Uhhhm…He is a Tamil, so qua communication it is possible. But how I live here, and he there…I think that is a big difference, and that would be difficult….Certainly in the beginning, because I would work and he would go to school…Most Tamil men do not accept that….That he would stay at home, and goes to school, and that I go to work… Therefore, I do not prefer this… Or I could go to Sri Lanka: that is another option".*

I: Why would you go there?

Ezhil: *"To work…In English… that is possible… But, I think, this is also not the best option".*

I: Do you often think about this?

Ezhil: *"No, not really… But I do think about arranged marriages…."*

I: Ohh, and what do you think then?

Ezhil: *"uhhm… That I do not mind to be given in marriage…. I mean the priest is a specialist, and they (parents, family and priest) try to find the best partner who fits me… The priest looks at your birth horoscope, and at his, and when they make a good combination…That is the first step…Then they look whether you are both of the same caste and whether he will be a good husband…. So, it is not that they do not think about it… They do*

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[175] See question 123 in questionnaire.

their best to find a good partner… Besides, I can always say no, if I do not like him… So, no it is not a problem…I like this tradition".

I: Ohh ok. Can you tell me more about your daily life? What do you do, or not do? And what is most important to you?[176]

Ezhil: *"I work every day, I like my job…. Uhmm, I live with my parents, and I like to walk with my mum in the neighbourhood… I also like to watch Bollywood films, to dance (Tamil dance), to decorate pies, to make clothes, and to go to the temple….Uhm, … I do not have a relation, I am still virgin… That is very important to me… I want to save it until I am married… And, I do not go out to bars or parties; that is not accepted… I also do not drink or smoke; I do not want to… And, I have no friendships with boys… But, I do not mind… Boys are allowed to do everything, and girls are not… My brother, for example, listens to English rap music, and he goes out to parties with his friends, and sometimes he smokes and drinks, and he does not go to the temple….He does not want to… So, we have a very different life, don't you think? ….But I prefer my style, Tamil culture… (she laughed)…My important values are that I am strict, honest, honourable, helpful and docile…Our family (Tamil) values are very important to me".*[177]

I: Don't you miss anything?

Ezhil: *"No no, my life is fine…I like my life"*

We see that there are many differences between how Ezhil perceives her life and the way Magil, Kadal, Sasika and Onania perceive their lives. Ezhil, in contrast to Magil, Kadal, Sasika and Onania, does not perceive her life as limited. Moreover, she wants to live in conformity with the way she ought to live. Her family (Tamil) values are very important to her. She intimated that there are differences between men and women within 'Tamil culture', but that she prefers to live in line with the way a Tamil woman should behave. It is important to her to be honourable, and docile. As we already saw, a honourable woman determines the honour and prestige of a Tamil family and community. If Tamil women drink alcohol, smoke, go to bars, do not marry as a virgin and with a Tamil man, do not learn their children to speak Tamil, divorce or decide to live on their own it is seen as a disgrace for the family, and for 'the Tamil community' as a whole. If women, such as Onania, divorce they damage their honour. In the case of Onania, her parents felt sorry for her, and did not mention her or her family's honour. We may argue that because Onania is not raised as strictly as most other Tamil girls, her parents care less about the honour of the family and care more about what is good for their daughter.

   If women, such as Magil, are going to live on their own the honour and prestige of the family is harmed. Both Magil's personal as well as her family's reputation will be damaged. Although Magil

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[176] See question 129, 131 and 134 in questionnaire.
[177] See question 154 in questionnaire.

does not want to damage her parents' reputation, she also does not want to live in conformity with 'Tamil culture's' expectations since it harms her; she even attempted to commit suicide.

Perception of life related to integration

We will see the way in which second generation Dutch Tamil women perceive their lives influences their perception of integration. Since Ezhil does not experience her life as limited bút wants to live in accordance with the 'Tamil values and principles' she does not consider her and the first generation Dutch Tamils' integration as limited. Oppositely, Ezhil strongly considers herself as integrated, because she is born in the Netherlands. For her, her 'Tamilness' and her preference for Tamil culture do not conflict with her integration.[178] She also did not mention that first generation Dutch Tamils would be not, or less, integrated because of their strict fulfilment of Tamil principles. According to her, integration is that people get used to the Netherlands and are self-handy; with the precondition that people "certainly speak a little bit Dutch".

To the contrary, Magil, Sasika, Kadal and Onania experience their lives as limited by the rules of 'Tamil' culture concerning women's behaviour since these rules conflict with the way they want to live. Consequently, they intimated that the way a woman ought to behave limits integration. Magil said that "*the fact that I am not allowed to join my friends to parties, activities and the cinema, makes me feel that I am less developed than they are….When I am with my Dutch friends at school and they talk about all the activities they are planning to undertake… I feel less worthy… It is very difficult for me to deal with this… I know that I do not have to feel that way, but I just feel like that… I just experienced so little compared to them… I can not join conversations, I am so inexperienced*". In addition, Sasika indicated that her parents to not allow her to go out. "*Sometimes I miss that so much… I would like to go to the disco with my friends. They always ask me to join them, and I feel bothered to always say: NO I CAN NOT*".

We may argue that the rules concerning women's behaviour do not only limit integration in general, but also their own experiences of integration. As a result, they consider their parents as little integrated. Onania said that the caste system limits integration. "*Most Tamils really hold on to the caste system….This is really outdated… We do not live in the Middle Ages anymore*". Particularly Magil, considers the first generation Dutch Tamils as little integrated: "*Too much Tamils are just…. I have the idea that most Tamils are underdeveloped. If you look at Dutch people, of course you have less developed Dutch people… But within Tamil culture, is it just that they prefer to follow the herd instead of giving their own opinion. They just do not give, or have, an own opinion. I think that this is partly a consequence of their underdevelopment; they cannot easily adjust to the Netherlands…. According to me, most Tamils are backward. I do not mean this insulting, but just backward in the sense that they just do not know a lot, and they even do not realize this….*

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[178] See question 175 in questionnaire.

Maybe it is because of their command of the Dutch language?…However, it is still important to adjust to Dutch culture, at present their backward ideas are just not possible anymore…." ….. "*I heard that girls in Sri Lanka are more free than we are. They can go to the cinema, and have some fun. Here, people react very strict if a girl wants to go out. That interests me…Why they hold on like grim death to all rules?…Also the caste system, I do not know how people in Sri Lanka deal with the caste system nowadays. But here… mainly the first generation, and also some younger Tamils, really hold on to the caste system. I heard some young Tamils say that they consider the caste system as really important. Personally, I do not understand this…*"

Magil indicated that not only first generation, but that also some second generation Dutch Tamils hold on like grim death to all Tamil rules. "*Around fifteen girls of my age visit the temple in Den Helder, but I cannot talk with all those girls about the fact that it is ridiculous that we have so little freedom… I think they are all aware of how they are actually treated….But, the other day there was a girl of twenty-four who is given in marriage and pregnant, and she kept telling me that it is really important that the Tamils maintain their good name, and that it is something we all should strive after. And that we do not have to undertake bad things… With bad things, she meant just having a male friend, or having a relationship before marriage…She intentionally said these kind of things, a girl of 24! I really do not understand…HOW can she say such things? She just holds on to our culture, that is normal for her….*" I asked her whether she (the girl of 24) really believes this or not? Magil interrupted me and said, "*NO, this is just the way she is raised, by repetition and repetition*". I asked her whether there are also some Dutch Tamils, of whom you maybe do not expect, who think the same as you? Magil reacted surprised: "*What first generation Dutch Tamils?*"
I said that it could be that first generation Dutch Tamils have the same opinion as you.
Magil: "*Yes, there are some liberal Tamils…But not in Den Helder, in Rotterdam there live some Tamils who have adjusted to Dutch culture, but Den Helder remained behind… First, because many Tamils live here. And secondly, since they see each other a lot… I think then you do not feel the need to meet a lot of Dutch people…That is also why I want to move to another city, I do not like it in Den Helder, because here live too much Tamils and there is so much social control here… As long as I live in a city where a lot of Tamils live I can not lead a quiet life. Tamils gossip too much*".

Not only Magil, but also Onania and Sasika want to move to another city because of the same reason.[179] "*Maybe then, I can live more free, and do not feel restricted anymore…There is so much social pressure and control here…. Lots of Tamils speak scandals about each other*", Sasika said. Onania said that she

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[179] See question 126 in questionnaire.

already does not have many contacts with Tamil people, and "*I do not want to, because I prefer Dutch culture…*" [180]

We see that these second generation Dutch Tamil women's perception of integration inclines to adjustment to Dutch culture, at all events since some 'Tamil values and principles' conflict with their integration and with the integration of the Dutch Tamils who strongly hold on to these Tamil principles. According to them, Dutch Tamils who strongly hold on to Tamil principles are underdeveloped and backward. For these women a preference for Tamil culture cannot go together with integration. Consequently, holding on to 'Tamil values and principles' is by these women considered as less privately separated from integration than for example for Ezhil. Magil said that integration could only be achieved as the differences in cultures minimize. With this she meant that the strict Tamil private life, in which women face restrictions and social pressure regarding their behaviour, has to change into freedom in both private and public life.

Perception of life related to self-identity and integration

As we already saw, Ezhil prefers Tamil culture to Dutch culture in contrast to Magil, Onania, Sasika and Kadal.[181] It is striking that despite the difference in preference all second generation Dutch Tamil women similarly identify themselves. Ezhil, Magil, Kadal, Sasika, Malar and Onania identify themselves as both Tamil and Dutch.[182]

Although all women identify themselves as both Dutch and Tamil and consider it all-important to be accepted as Tamil by Tamil people, we will see that the difference in self-identification stems from the fact that for the women who experience restrictions concerning their behaviour it is far more important to be accepted and seen as more Dutch by Tamil people than for women, such as Ezhil, who do not feel restricted.[183] Magil indicated, "*All the social pressure and control do not make me feel to be Dutch solely. My Dutch friends consider me as Dutch, but I still feel Tamil…I want to be seen as more Dutch by Tamil people…*"Also Onania and Kadal said that the 'Tamil principles' restrict them to feel Dutch solely. "*Therefore, it is important to me that I am accepted as more Dutch by Tamil people*".

On basis of the above, we may conclude that these second generation women expect to experience fewer restrictions concerning their behaviour if Tamil people would accept them as more Dutch. Moreover, according to this logic, if they could experience their lives as free in both

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[180] See question 120 and 175 in questionnaire.
[181] Besides Ezhil also Neela and Malar, two younger second generation Dutch Tamil women, prefer Tamil culture. See question 175 in questionnaire.
[182] Onania, Magil, Ezhil, Sasika and Kadal said to agree with the statements 'I am Dutch' and 'I am Tamil', see question 147, 148 and 150 in questionnaire.
[183] See question 157and 158 in questionnaire.

private and public life then their experience of integration would also be unlimited which, in turn, could make them feel solely Dutch. Therefore, we may argue that these women work with polar opposites: freedom is equated with 'Dutch' and unfreedom with 'Tamil'.

To the contrary, Ezhil and Malar do not hold the opinion that it is important to them to be accepted as Dutch by Tamil people. Ezhil replied with "*why would it be important to me to be accepted as Dutch by Tamil people? I do not want to be seen as Dutch, I want to be seen as Tamil!*" Ezhil is the only woman who said that it is also totally unimportant to be accepted as Dutch by Dutch people.[184] "*I do not expect that Dutch people see me as Dutch, therefore it is totally unimportant to me*". Despite the fact that Ezhil has stated that it is unimportant for her to be recognized as Dutch by both Dutch and Tamil people, she still identifies her self as much Dutch as Tamil. "*As you know, I am born in the Netherlands and I am Dutch…. I have a Dutch passport, I speak Dutch fluently, I am used to the Dutch way of living and I talk to everybody (like the Dutch)…...It is obvious that I am integrated*". In the case of Ezhil we already know that she does not question her integration, since she was born in the Netherlands. As we saw before, her 'Tamilness' can easily go together with her integration that she ascribes to her 'Dutchness'. She, in contrast to the other women, does not think in absolutes; integration for her includes both 'Tamilness' and 'Dutchness'.

In the following paragraph, we will see how second generation Dutch Tamil men consider their lives and the integration process in the Netherlands.

Meeting Maan: perception of life related to self-identity and integration

When I met Maan in a bar he told me that he is very happy; he has a good job, has a lot of friends, and his website www.tamilstudenten.nl is doing well.[185] He is very proud of what he already has achieved in life. We saw in the third chapter that he perceives integration as something you have to recognize. According to him, people have to adjust to the country where they live in and where their future is. "*It has to be a choice, bút if you are ambitious and want to achieve something in life, then in some cases you have to let go your own traditions*". According to Maan adjustment is very important in order to be successful in the Netherlands. We may conclude that Maan considers himself as adjusted since he sees himself as successful, and besides, he explained his integration by the way he identifies himself; more as a Dutchman than a Tamil.[186] He considers Dutch people as more developed than Tamil people, because "*they (Dutch people) work hard, they want to be the best in things they do, and besides this, they are very organized, Tamil people are not… Dutch*

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[184] See question 155 in questionnaire.
[185] See question 104, 107 and 115 in questionnaire.
[186] See question 55 in questionnaire.

people are objective, independent, self-responsible and more self-consciousness".[187] He follows with "*European people in general, are further than Tamil people, because of their mentality… They do not have negative characteristics (he refers to collectivism), people choose for themselves and do not hold on to their traditions.*"

We see that Maan thinks in terms of success and development; he perceives the Dutch mentality as 'better' than the Tamil mentality, at all events, the 'Dutch mentality' fits him more than the 'Tamil mentality'. It seems that Maan is not proud on his Tamil origin since he perceives the Tamil culture as inferior. It seems that he thinks in polar opposites as well; he ascribes 'positive' characteristics to 'Dutchness' and 'negative' to 'Tamilness'. He does not seem to recognize that he reifies culture, and that he sees the world through the lens of white supremacy −internalized racism, as for example Fanon (1967) and hooks (1992) describe. Then he followed with, "*But I still feel that I have to show consideration for the Tamil community… I mean… although I choose for the Dutch way of life, I cannot say that it is always easy. I think we all live between two cultures, but you can choose how you deal with it*". I asked him whether he could explain this. He said, "*Yes…everybody who comes from a totally different background experiences cultural differences…. Little differences, like in weather, landscape, food, clothes etcetera… But also large differences…. Differences in mentality, religion, language, daily life patterns, and social manners. I think everybody, to a larger or lesser degree, can choose how to deal with these differences. You can choose to direct at the Tamil mentality, language, social manners and religion or to direct at the Dutch way…*"

Ok, I understand, I said….But, what do you mean by a larger or lesser degree?

Maan: "*Uhh, I mean not everybody can choose in the same degree…. People, who are older, are so much used to the Tamil way of living…. It is impossible for them to totally adjust to the Dutch way of life…Their opinions and habits are deeply incorporated…. I think, it is not easy to change these kind of patterns….I mean, everybody lives according to certain patterns, of which one is unaware…most of the times*".

I: Can you maybe give an example of what you mean? Which patterns are not easy to change, according to you?

Maan: "*Uhh, for example the role patterns of men and women…These role patterns are totally different here. Sometimes, these patterns really conflict with the Dutch ideas. Men and women are more equal here, more emancipated. In Tamil culture women have to behave as 'a real woman', if you know what I mean…. Tamil culture is a men-culture. However, it is changing: second generation women are emancipating, and that is a good thing. I am motivating and stimulating it. I also say to my wife: 'drink wine with me'!... But, she does not allow herself…. In her heart, I think, maybe she wants… but she does not drink because of the outside world. This will be outdated in twenty years… However, the caste system will disappear with difficulty. Tamils marry people from their own caste. The social control is enormous…..So, I think it is also more difficult for young Tamil women to*

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[187] See chapter three, page 61.

choose for a 'Dutch' way of life…. For me and my friends, it is easier; we do not face real limitations (like women)".

Maan indicated that integration is not always easy, because he experiences his life as living between two cultures. However, while he still has to show some consideration for other Tamils, he intimated that he is able to choose for the Dutch way of life simultaneously because he is male. Maan makes no secret of the fact that he prefers 'Dutch' mentality and considers himself to be a Dutchman.[188] According to him, some aspects of the 'Dutch' and 'Tamil' culture are at odds with each other, such as gender roles. He favours the emancipated Dutch gender roles: "*it is good that there are so little differences between men and women… Women are allowed to live on their own, drink alcohol and can choose their boyfriends*". According to him, it is for the first generation Dutch Tamils difficult to adjust to this kind of liberal ideas, since patterns often are deeply incorporated and naturalized. According to Maan, such changes take time; it may take twenty years. He acknowledges that the 'traditional' Tamil role patterns affect the younger Dutch Tamil women's way of live. His female peers are less free to choose what they want to do; they face expectations of how they ought to behave. To the contrary, Maan and his friends can choose more easily "for a Dutch way of life", since they do not face "real limitations".

However, I was still curious about how Maan deals with his choice regarding the cultural differences he experiences. The fact that he and his friends can choose more easily to direct themselves towards the Dutch way of life made me wonder whether, and to which, aspects of 'Tamil' culture he is attracted. Maan explained that although he sees himself as a Dutchman and has a 'Dutch' mentality he would always be "a little bit" Tamil as well.[189] "*I am very much directed towards the Netherlands…. I am much more Dutch than I am Tamil, but how much I am integrated in the Netherlands and feel at home here, Sri Lanka is a beautiful country where I am born….If my life would fail here, I can go to Sri Lanka and be as happy as I am here now*". Why exactly would you choose for Sri Lanka then? I asked Maan. *"Uhhh, because I am Hindu, not really religious, but it is a part of me… Because I speak the language and feel familiar there".* I asked him how important these aspects are to him in his life in the Netherlands. Maan: *"My religion, Hinduism, is a part of my life in the Netherlands. I visit the temple not very often, but I celebrate important holidays like Chirithira theer of ratham. The Tamil language is not really important to me…I would not teach my children to speak Tamil, for example… It is NOT useful to teach my children Tamil.[190] They can better learn English, Spanish, or Chinese…. You do not have to learn a language if you only use it three weeks a year. That is a waste of energy and time….But; I speak Tamil with the*

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[188] See question 147 and 175 in questionnaire.
[189] See question 148 in questionnaire.
[190] See question 99 in questionnaire.

older Tamil people since they do not speak Dutch very well... The new generation children have to develop Dutch norms and values. If you adjust, you will come further than if you hold on to Tamil traditions…If you are well educated than you know it is useless to teach your children Tamil. Some second generation Dutch Tamils hold on to this kind of traditions. They argue that it is important to teach their children Tamil…It is very important to them to transmit the language and traditions. They also hold on to their Tamil identity…I mean, it is very important to them to be seen by other Tamils as Tamil….I think that has to do with their honour…. They are very proud to be Tamil and they are convinced that they live the right way (in conformity with Hindu manuals)".

I asked Maan whether it is important to him to be seen as Tamil by other Tamils.[191] He replied that it is not really important to him. *"Not totally not important, but I just do not mind, I am who I am, and I am Dutch….A few years back I probably would have said that it was important…I mean I also married a Tamil woman….I saw myself more as a Tamil. But nowadays, I do not mind anymore (also referring to the fact that he could marry a Dutch woman)".*

I: Ohh, ok, and is it nowadays then important to you to be seen as Dutch?

Maan: *"Yes, that is really important… I mean, I want to be seen as Dutch. Dutch people are really straightforward and down-to-earth, Tamil people are not broad-minded… I have adjusted to Dutch culture, and I do not want to be seen as a stranger, a foreigner".*

I: Do I understand you right that you want to be seen as Dutch by Dutch people? [192]

Maan: *"Yes, that is what I mean".*

I: And are you seen as much Dutch as you want?

Maan: *"Hmm, I do not know. At my work, yes…There are little, how do you say… allochtoon people… I hate that word!... That word makes you feel allochtoon, not Dutch!"*

I: Sorry, I cannot totally follow you…What do you exactly mean?

Maan: *"I mean that people use that word: allochtoon….In particularly, the government…and that does not help people to feel Dutch".*

I: Ohh, do you think it limits your identity, and integration?

Maan: *"That is difficult… I feel Dutch…..So, I would say no…"*

I: But? (I saw him hesitating)

Maan: *"…If the government would not emphasize ethnicities so much… Then, and that is my opinion; many people would feel more Dutch than they feel now….Muslim people for example… So maybe it limits feelings of identity and integration…(He started laughing)…But I already feel Dutch and integrated…Maybe then, I would even feel more Dutch and integrated….(He started laughing again)".*

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[191] See question 158 in questionnaire.
[192] See question 155 and 156 in questionnaire.

We see that Maan, in contrast to most of his female peers, is more able to choose for a 'Dutch' way of life, since he "does not face real limitations". Based on the above, it seemed that the only limitations he faces have to do with the fact that he, like most Dutch Tamils, lives between two cultures. Nevertheless, Maan seemed to have an answer to this; he cán choose to be directed towards 'Dutchness'. Since this is what he wants, he does not mind, in contrast to the first generation Dutch Tamils and his female peers, not to be seen as Tamil by other Tamils. Since Maan considers himself as adjusted to the Dutch culture and mentality and identifies himself as Dutch, it is much more important to him to be seen as Dutch by Dutch people. Maan suggested that many people, who have become Dutch, do not identify themselves as Dutch. According to him, this is a consequence of the fact that the Dutch government emphasizes a difference between 'autochtoon' and 'allochtoon' people within its integration policy and its public appearance. "*This could limit the sense of identification of many people, who have become Dutch, as Dutch*", Maan said. In line with Hall (1990) and hooks (1992), we may argue that the field of representation remains a place of struggle. Hall describes that:

> "The ways in which black people, black experiences, were positioned and subjected in the dominant regimes of representation were the effects of a critical exercise of cultural power and normalization. Not only, in Said's "orientalist" sense, were we constructed as different and other within the categories of knowledge of the West by those regimes. They had the power to make us see and experience *ourselves* as "Other"… It is one thing to position a subject or set of peoples as the Other of a dominant discourse. It is quite another thing to subject them to that "knowledge", not only as a matter of imposed will and domination, but by the power of inner compulsion and subjective conformation to the norm" (Hall 1990).

When we apply Hall's view to the above-described story of Maan, we may argue that Maan has internalized an inferior view of 'Tamilness' and a superior view of "Dutchness". This can be seen as a consequence of what Hall states as being subjected to the hegemonic knowledge of the West, and the power of inner compulsion and subjective conformation to this norm. The fact that the Dutch integration policy emphasizes a difference between 'autochtoon' and 'allochtoon' people, and follows an assimilationist strategy to integrate ethnic minorities into Dutch society could lead that Maan and Magil, for example, react against their Tamilness and accept 'Dutchness' with open arms. I hold the opinion that a more inclusive approach towards integration, which does not distinguish 'autochtoon' from 'allochtoon' people and which gives people space for developing a transnational identity, could lead to a stronger, however not an exclusive, Dutch

identity and a stronger sense of belonging, which, in turn, could contribute to a stronger sense of integration.

As I elaborated in the previous chapter, we may also conclude based on the above-described stories that Dutch Tamil identities are negotiated within the context of integration. We see that both external and internal identification processes influence the way second generation Dutch Tamils perceive themselves. In line with van der Veer and Vertovec (1991: 149) and Bhabha (1994b: 198) we can conclude that also second generation Dutch Tamils' identities are neither unchanging nor infinitely flexible. Their identities are acquired through social practice and, as such, constantly negotiated in changing contexts.

Unlike the first generation Dutch Tamils, all second generation Dutch Tamils consider themselves as integrated, bút what we see here is that when external identification processes conflict with internal identification processes -the fact that many second generation Dutch Tamil women are seen as Tamil by Tamils but want to be seen as more Dutch by Tamils- their self-perception gets disturbed, and that consequently limits their experiences of everyday life and integration. According to these women, their (perceived) limited everyday life experiences, i.e. the strict 'Tamil community's' rules regarding their behaviour, limit their integration experiences and harm their self-perception. Therefore, we may argue that being bicultural, or transnational, is difficult in a society that in its policy still struggles with the question how to accommodate ethnic diversity. As described in the second chapter, essentialist paradigms of collective belonging that are based on so-called national particularisms, a shared ethno-national identity and citizenship, have to be revisited by an alternative approach that views ethnic identities as hybrid, dynamic, multifaceted and fluid, particularly in the present era of globalization.

Socialization process, identity and integration

Pels (1991: 2) argues that the socialization process of children whose parents come from another county –who are *allochtoon*- is problematic, in comparison to children whose parents are Dutch of origin. On basis of the above stories we see that the integration of some second generation Dutch Tamils in Dutch society is perceived as complicated, because their parents, uncles and aunts are raised in a cultural context that "totally differs" from the context where these Dutch Tamils mix with at school, at street, at institutions and with friends. Pels (1991) describes that the socialization processes of *allochtoon* children become yet more complicated and difficult, because of variable economic, social, political and ideological factors in Dutch society. Gibson and Ogbu (1991: 367) call this process 'subtractive acculturation'. With this, they mean the process of

cultural change that children experience by migration and their forced adjustment to the new cultural and societal environment.

We saw that all second generation Dutch Tamils experience life as living between two cultures and that in the cases of Magil, Onania, Sasika and Kadal this has led to serious difficulties in determining who they are and to which social-cultural context to direct themselves towards and adjust to.

Damanakis (1989) developed, on the basis of a study on Greek children and adolescents in Germany, a theoretical typology of how *allochtoon* adolescents socialize in bicultural environments. [193] Damanakis identified four types of behaviour. First, individuals who focus on their ethnic-cultural minority group and who look for safety in their family and ethnic community. Second, individuals who focus on the receiving society, who accept its social norms and assimilate its values, and who identify with, and practice its social models and prescriptions. These people gradually alienate themselves from their own ethnic-cultural minority group, maybe from their family, and assimilate into the dominant cultural system. Third, individuals who halt between the two cultural systems of the home- and host country and who live in a marginal position without choosing for one of the systems. The fourth groups exists of individuals who identify with both social-cultural systems and who form one whole of it, with the consequence that they create an identity that corresponds with the social-cultural circumstances of their socialization, in other words a bicultural identity. According to Damanakis the latter group of children forms the ideal type of socialization (Damanakis in Dialektopoulos 2003: 93-100, 107-108).

On the basis of the second generation Dutch Tamils' stories we can conclude that there are indeed different ways of socialization. Ezhil, for example, focuses much more on the 'Tamil culture' than Maan. However, to distinguish the ways of socialization in four types is a simplification of reality, since the relation between identity formation processes, everyday life and integration experiences turned out to be much more complex. Besides, Damanakis' theory focuses on the behaviour of individuals, while we may conclude at the hand of the stories that the behaviour of the second generation Dutch Tamils does not necessarily reflect their perceptions and desires. Kadal and Sasika, for example, behave as a 'good' Tamil girl among Tamil people and as 'Dutch' among Dutch people and besides, they want to be (seen as) more Dutch than they ought to be. In other words, which type fits them?

After all, Damanakis' theory does not take into account that identities are neither unchanging nor infinitely flexible. Since identities are acquired through social practice, they are constantly

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[193] I prefer the term multicultural environment.

negotiated in changing contexts. The four types of socialization do not open up possibilities to view identities in such a way.

Let us turn to two important contexts that gave and still give meaning to the Dutch Tamils' everyday life and integration experiences. First, I will briefly discuss the meaning of the Tamil students' website that recently has come to play a role in the second generation Dutch Tamils lives, and secondly we will see how the temple gave and gives meaning to both the first and second generation Dutch Tamils.

Bollywood: www.tamilstudenten.nl

Maan told me that he started a forum on the Internet, some years ago. "*Since four years it is a website….It is really doing well now… The goal is that Tamil people (students) can make contacts with each other, and discuss everything they want to discuss. It is also a dating site…. It is funny, because this is the place where I met my wife. When you see a girl, as I did, you can easily make contact via this website… We put photos on the website, and if you see somebody you like, you start talking….This is the way appointments are made…. It is important that you can be anonymous on the internet… Mainly women prefer to be anonymous, because they are afraid that other people will know that they use the website for dating purposes. If their data would be available for other people, they would not want to join… I mean, there is so much social control within the Tamil community; they do not want to be controlled and told what they have, or not have, to do…That is why everybody can, and chooses to, be anonymous*".

I asked him whether many Tamil students join the Tamil students' website. Maan: "*Yes, around the eighty students join the website nowadays, but it is difficult to determine the precise amount of people since people can be anonymous… Some people use three different names on the website*".

I: What kind of topics do you discuss on the website?

Maan: "*All kind of things… we discuss the news, the conflict in Sri Lanka, football, but also how it is to live in the Netherlands… I see that people talk about integration and the difficulties they experience*".

I: What kind of difficulties do you mean?

Maan: "*uhh… for example, the problems women face, such as I told you before…. The fact that they cannot share their feelings with their parents, and that they have to behave according to the rules of Tamil culture…. Some of them do not know how to cope with this (the rules) and they ask other people for advice… I think it is good that people can discuss these things by means of the website… I see that people give serious advice and are open to share experiences… Yes, I am glad that the website is used to talk about integration and the difficulties they experience*".

As we briefly saw before, Magil, Sasika and Kadal are some of the girls Maan talks about, since they intimated that they make use of the website to discuss their everyday life experiences and to

ask for advice regarding the problems they face. The Internet turned out to be important for those women who said they have no other option than to meet their friends in virtual space or in the temple Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga.

Bollywood: Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga

We saw that the functions of the temple change over time and vary per person. As I described in the fourth chapter, the Den Helder municipality made in 1991 a classroom available where the first generation Dutch Tamil men could practice their religion and pray to the Gods. The 'temple' helped the first generation Dutch Tamil men to integrate in the Netherlands and in Den Helder in particular. From then on, the first generation Dutch Tamil men had a place to go to after work and on weekends that distracted them from being alone. Yovan indicated that the temple helped him to cope with his problems regarding his integration. "*The temple is a place where we (first generation Dutch Tamil men) can get rid of our traumas....The temple helped me against my homesickness and loneliness. I got strength by praying to Murugan…. It (the temple) helped me to cope with everything*".

In short, the classroom helped many first generation Dutch Tamil men to feel more and more at home in Den Helder; this place gave meaning to their lives, it was 'their' space that they could shape in the way they wanted.

Picture 1 A converted classroom into a Hindu temple

In the above picture, we see that the classroom was converted into a 'Hindu temple' full of altars and altarpieces. Every single altar is seen as a separate temple directed towards a particular God;

in Sri Lanka each temple is directed towards a particular God. Since the Dutch Tamils have only one classroom at their disposal, all the different Hindu Gods have to be placed in this 'small' space. Nevertheless, the Dutch Tamils were satisfied with their 'multi-God temple' since its meaning was in no way inferior to a 'real' temple. This 'temple' was their meeting place; they knew that there were always some other Dutch Tamils hanging around.

During the 1990s, the number of Dutch Tamils that arrived in the Netherlands, and who settled in Den Helder, increased. As a result, the number of Dutch Tamils who went to the 'temple' increased. It was not only the first generation Dutch Tamil men who went to the temple but also first generation Dutch Tamil women and second generation children. They soon noticed that the temple had to be extended in order to fulfil the needs of Dutch Tamil women and children too. The municipality of Den Helder supported the Dutch Tamil 'community' financially so that they were able to arrange a variety of activities. Activities for little kids, 'traditional' Tamil dance and music lessons and Tamil language lessons were arranged to preserve 'Tamil culture'. The temple had become a place where all Dutch Tamils felt at home. For some Dutch Tamils it was a place where they could practice their religion, for others it was both a religious as well as social-cultural place.

In the late 1990s, some first generation Dutch Tamil men started an 'official' Tamil temple association. Yovan explained why he and some friends started an association. "*To feel more at home in Den Helder…The goals of the association are to continue the Tamil culture, language and religion in the Netherlands…Thus, to have our roots here…This is realized with the underlying thought that when the conflict is over our children are raised with Tamil culture. Then, the Tamil children are less alienated from Sri Lanka…Another reason is that we want to express our belief, our hope and faith in a peaceful Sri Lanka…We pray a lot for peace…And finally the Tamil association is established to have a place to meet other people after work…It is good to meet lots of people, and to have a good sphere between people…It is good to feel happy and at home*".

I: So you felt more at home in Den Helder because of the 'temple' and its association?

Yovan: "*Yes…And certainly since the new, the real temple opened in 2003. This is a real Hindu temple like we have in Sri Lanka. It is very nice to have a real temple…. We are very proud and happy to have our place to meet each other and to honour our Gods…And now we almost finished another building, near the temple. This is a place where we are going to organize and practice our cultural and social events. It is also an information centre… Visitors can get information about Sri Lanka, and about Tamil culture. And it is a sort of hotel; I mean, visitors can stay the night. Language and dance lessons will also be held there. And our office (of the temple association) will be located there. So then, the office does not have to be that little room in the middle of the temple anymore. (He laughed)*".

We see that from 1991 onwards the Dutch Tamils got more space in order to shape their 'Tamilness'. Some first generation Dutch Tamil men started their 'temple' in a classroom. Since the number of Dutch Tamils settled in Den Helder increased during the 1990s, the demand for a larger temple and more activities also raised. Consequently, an official Tamil temple association, which consisted of twelve members, was established in order to promote the Dutch Tamil interests with the policymakers of the Den Helder municipality. Hereafter, negotiations between the Tamil temple association and the Den Helder municipality took place. They agreed that the Den Helder municipality would grant them a parcel on the condition that the Dutch Tamils would finance the temple. Yovan told me that the Tamil temple association, which exists on a voluntary basis, got donations from private individuals and from our own members. "*We all gave money to build our new temple and to organize activities….We also got donations from people abroad*".

In the early 2000s, the board of the Tamil temple association increased from twelve to twenty members, since the building of a new temple involved a lot of political, constructional and financial organization. The Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga celebrated its opening ceremony on July 6 2003.

Picture 2 Young boy in the temple Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga

This *Ganesh* temple is widely considered as the first and certainly the best-known Hindu temple in the Netherlands. On an average Friday or Sunday, more than eighty people are present at the ceremony.

Summarizing, we see that the temple plays an important role within the Dutch Tamils' process of homebuilding, of a feeling of being at home, in Den Helder. This process of homebuilding takes place mainly in the private sphere and creates a feeling of security, familiarity, community and a sense of possibility (Castells 2000: 130). At the same time, we see that Dutch Tamils have re-territorialized spaces within Den Helder, by establishing a Hindu temple and a social-cultural centre in the public sphere. The neighbourhood, South Den Helder, is reformed in such a way that it better fits the Dutch Tamils' values and needs. As part of the place-making process, the temple and centre spatialize Dutch Tamils' social relations and practices that produce 'Tamilness'. By means of the temple, Dutch Tamils have been able to adapt to Den Helder in order to attain their social, cultural and physical aspirations (see Nasser 2003).

Paradoxical meaning of Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga

As we already saw, both the old and particularly the new temple mean a lot to the first generation Dutch Tamil men. First, because the temple facilitated their integration and made them feel at home. In order to be able to build a temple these men had to learn the juridical and socio-political landscape of the Netherlands and of Den Helder in particular. Therefore, this centre can be seen as a token of integration. All first generation Dutch Tamil men spent a lot of time and energy in the construction of both the new temple and the centre. Ulagu said that he often went seven times a week to the temple site during the construction of the new temple from 2001 until 2003, and during the construction of the information centre in 2005 and 2006. "*I very often go to the temple, that is because of the projects…. I am one of the twelve members of the management of both the new temple and the centre… Therefore, almost all my leisure time goes to activities and meetings related to these projects. We have to arrange everything….But this is only temporary, when the construction of the centre is finished, I think that I had enough for a while*".

For the first generation Dutch Tamil men the temple is also a place to feel responsible for, a place to practice 'Tamilness', a place to free their minds, a place to feel recognized, and a place to meet each other.

It seems paradoxical, as we saw in the third chapter, that the temple helped Yovan to integrate, however, the fact that Yovan visits the temple often and cannot put aside his Tamil life makes him doubt whether he considers himself as integrated. In sum, it seems that the temple not only facilitates Yovan's integration, since he attains his 'Tamilness' in the temple, it could also limit his integration as well.

The temple is not only important to first generation Dutch Tamil men; also to women, it is important. Nila indicated that she likes to go to the temple because there she meets other Dutch

Tamil women. "*It also helps me against my homesickness, and loneliness…When I am in the temple then it is as if I am in Sri Lanka…. And of course, the temple is important to practice my religion…But that is logical, is not it?*" Yazh said that the temple is important to first generation Dutch Tamil women "*since it is a place they can easily go to… It is also important for asylum seekers…They are always welcome*".

For these women we see that the temple has a slightly different meaning; it reduces feelings of homesickness and loneliness, it is a place to practice their 'Tamilness' and it is an easily accessible meeting place. In general, all first generation Dutch Tamils said that the temple is an important place to transmit Tamil culture. They all hold the opinion that it is important that their children are raised with Tamil culture and learn the Tamil language.[194]

The temple is also important to most second generation Dutch Tamils. Most of them go twice a month or once a week to the temple.[195] Second generation Dutch Tamil women especially like to go to the temple. As we already saw, the temple is very important to Magil. She can relax and forget the problems she has. Moreover, the temple is the only place she can go to, and where she can meet her friends.[196] Also Ezhil likes to go to the temple. "*My religion is very important to me.. The temple is thé place to practice my religion. I am quite serious about that*". Although religion is very important to Sasika and Kadal, they indicated that the main reason they go to the temple is that they are allowed to go out. "*My parents allow me to go to the temple, that is why I go*", Sasika indicated. She follows with "*But it is ok, I see my friends there*". In sum, we see that for second generation Dutch Tamil women the temple has a different meaning as well: in the temple they practice their 'Tamilness', but simultaneously we see that it is also a place where they, according to their own terminology, practice their 'Dutchness' in the sense that it provides them with some degree of freedom and autonomy. It seems paradoxical that most second generation Dutch Tamil women feel at home in the temple, while in the mean time they are obliged to visit the temple. However, since these Dutch Tamil women experience restrictions regarding their behaviour, it is the only place where they can meet their friends. Another apparent paradox is that these women like to visit the temple since they can practice their religion, however simultaneously, they do not like it that in the temple there is "so much social control, pressure and gossip". In addition, it seems paradoxical that they visit the 'Tamil' temple to free their minds from problems caused by 'Tamilness'. In other words, they want to escape from the 'rules' of the Tamil community, however, they (have to) go to the temple to get rid of their problems concerning these 'rules' among people who hold on to these 'rules'.

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[194] See question 99 in questionnaire.
[195] See question 24 in questionnaire.
[196] See question 129 in questionnaire.

In general, the temple is least important to second generation Dutch Tamil men since they "*sporadically go to the temple*".[197] "*At special occasions, like Chirithira theer of ratham, we visit the temple*", Maan said. He follows with "*In general, we have other things to do than visiting the temple*". As we already saw, second generation Dutch Tamil men, unlike women, can choose to visit the temple and since most of them have a 'western' lifestyle they are less interested in visiting the temple.

We may conclude that the meaning of the temple strongly differs per generation and gender due to the Dutch Tamils' different needs. Since their needs change over time, the meaning of the temple changes as well. As the temple played an important role within the first generation Dutch Tamil men's process of homebuilding in the early 90s, the temple is currently seen as an important place to practice their cultural and social events. In line with this, many Dutch Tamils consider the temple to be an important place to preserve a strong Tamil communal sense, whose members share the same 'how-to-live-righteous' manuals. If the strong Tamil communal sense and 'how-to-live-righteous' manuals suits you, as for Ezhil and the first generation Dutch Tamils, then it makes you to feel at home and gives you a sense of belonging that consequently may facilitate your integration process in the Netherlands -as in the case of the first generation Dutch Tamil men. However, many second generation Dutch Tamil women perceive this Tamil communal sense and Tamils' 'how-to-live-righteous' manuals as a sign of not being integrated in the Netherlands, mainly since these aspects limit their joy in life, makes them confused about who they are, and hereby limit their integration experiences. Therefore, we see that what benefits the one, harms the other.

We cannot finish this chapter without discussing one of the most important Dutch Tamils' annually held events in Den Helder: Chirithira theer of ratham. This turned out to play an important role in many Dutch Tamils' lives; they look forward to it for months, and thousands of people are invited, including hundreds of Tamils from abroad. Maan invited me to join him at this festival, where I came across Magil. As a result, we will see how these second generation Dutch Tamils experience such a holiday. In addition, we will see that this occurrence turns out to reflect many aspects of their everyday life experiences as discussed before.

Chirithira theer of ratham

In the period from 17 until 28 June 2006, the temple held their annual festival. The ceremonies consisted of prayers and religious practices as well as cultural events. The religious ceremonies were executed by a High priest from Sri Lanka. He together with artists from Sri Lanka presented the cultural program. The festival ceremonies were held in mornings and afternoons. The

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[197] See question 24 in questionnaire.

morning ceremonies started at 10 a.m. and ended with a vegetarian lunch. The afternoon ceremonies started at 17 a.m. and consisted of short speeches, traditional music presentations and a procession of Lord Ganesh around the temple. Also these sessions ended with a vegetarian meal.

The most important aspect of the festival was to drag along the carriage: *Chirithira theer of ratham* on June 25 2006. The procession started at 12 a.m. and finished at 14 a.m. Ganesh was pulled by lots of religious Hindu people through the streets of Den Helder, in the neighbourhood of the temple site in the southern part of Den Helder. Men bare-footed dragged the heavy carriage with Ganesh and the priest on top of it, and lots of women and children walked behind the carriage.

Picture 3 Chirithira theer of ratham was dragged through the streets of Den Helder

I talked with Maan about the procession. He asked me whether Dutch people would perceive this event "*as something really strange*", or not. "*See all these people at the side of the street watching us. There are many people present today…. Would they think we are really backward and crazy, walking bare-footed? They probably think: See…. all women walk behind, not in front of the carriage…. How strange!….Yes, that is different for them. But, it is like it is in Sri Lanka*".

Maan is visibly worried about what "Dutch" bystanders think of the procession, and of the role of women in particular. He likes it that a lot that people from Den Helder show interest by visiting this event, but he is also worried that the Dutch perception of Tamils, in his eyes as backward and traditional, would be confirmed. His reaction was paradoxical. On the one hand,

he really wanted to show me a part of 'Tamil culture'. That is why he invited me to come to see the procession today, and it was also true that he was talking about the procession in an enthusiastic and detailed way. However, I also felt that he distanced himself from the procession as well. He was dressed in jeans, and not in 'traditional' Tamil clothes. He was wearing shoes, and was walking sideways, not nearby the carriage. Sometimes he was very irritated by the yelling noise people made and the way they behaved: "as idiots", and he apologized for their behaviour. Thus, he was proud and not proud at the same time, and waited for my reaction. I knew that my reaction would play a decisive factor in his judgment; therefore, I tried to avoid giving my opinion by uttering neutral remarks. It was striking that for him my opinion counted, and for my research, his attitude gave me an insight in how Tamils view themselves.

When we arrived at the market with a wide range of Tamil and Indian products, I met Magil.

Picture 4 The Little India market near the Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga temple

We looked for different spices and Tamil cookies that I tasted. She tried on some Bollywood dresses, while I gave comment upon them whether they fitted well or not. We had great fun. After she bought one, we went to a 'shop' where Bollywood films were for sale. She told me the ones she liked most, the romantic ones, and which were "terrible", the more violent ones. However, almost all Bollywood films seemed to be "very romantic" and "nice". She told me that most of her female peers are very fond of these films as well. "*We play them when we are together; we know the lyrics and dances by heart, because we practice them at home, or during meetings in the temple. Most of the girls, like me, dream of having a life like in these films. But we have not!*" And then her happy face

turned into its normal state again, while saying: "*today,… this procession and here at the market, it is as if I am at home!…..*".

For me these few words: "it is as if I am at home", meant a lot [again she has localized her unfreedom in the space of home], because she and I knew that she, like many other girls of her age, really looks forward to events like this. For them, this is not just a holiday, but also one of the few days a year when they are free to do what they want to do. Paradoxically, this occurs in the proximity of the temple. Days like this, like the Bollywood films, can be seen as metaphors for the lives they would like to live. However, these days are not a reflection of a normal day, and the films are just a dream. She knows that her real life is different. Her real life is not a life in which she feels at home.

Chapter Six: Reflections

The aim of this study was to explore how integration is viewed from the perspective of people whose lives immigration policy bears upon, in this particular case study twenty Dutch Tamils. The primary questions this thesis sought to address were, first, what views do Dutch Tamils in the Netherlands have on integration in general and on their integration experiences in particular; and second, which factors do they consider as having facilitated and impeded this process. In the thesis, I first presented a review of integration theories and the Dutch state's integration policy, followed by an extensive field study amongst Tamil immigrants. By taking into account the Dutch Tamils' perspectives, experiences and understandings of integration, the intention was to provide new migrant-centred insights relevant to the current integration debate regarding how to integrate ethnic minority groups into Dutch society. In this last chapter, a conclusion on the Dutch Tamils' views of integration and their integration experiences will be made. Finally, I will give some policy suggestions towards a more inclusive approach of integration based on the experiences and stories told by Dutch Tamils.

After an introduction to this study, we saw in the second chapter, how from a top down perspective liberal states—and the Dutch state in particular—define and deal with integration. It is shown that contemporary liberal states, because of the intensifying and ceaseless flows of people who migrate, face 'multicultural' challenges regarding how and where to build an inclusive nation of all citizens who will identify with the liberal state. Globalization processes, in particular the increasing mobility of people, have contributed to normative questions regarding nationalism, immigration, civic integration and multiculturalism within liberal states. Consequently, many scholars (for example Joppke 2004, Kymlicka 1995, Okin 1999) deal with the question on how to build an inclusive multiethnic society on a theoretical level. We saw that among scholars there is no consensus concerning the contemporary liberal state's strategy (egalitarian multiculturalism vs. assimilationism) to accommodate contemporary 'flows' of 'non-western allochtoon people' within its territorial borders. This study's specific concern has been how the Dutch state deals with accommodating ethnic diversity and which strategy has been used to integrate minorities. At the hand of a historical reflection of the Dutch immigration and integration policy we saw that several policy's shifts, from reluctant to multiculturalist to an assimilationist policy, have taken place in order to deal with ethnic diversity. In general, we saw that accommodating ethnic diversity is not easy to accomplish by normative laws. In addition, it is shown that the Dutch integration policy 'struggles' with how and where to build an inclusive nation (see van Houtem et

al. 2005). We saw that although the Netherlands maintains a multiculturalist policy, they, in fact, execute an assimilationist strategy to integrate minorities within society, a strategy which is even controversial towards its own tenets (see Joppke 2004). In addition, Fermin (2001), Favell (2000) and Greenhouse (1998) argue that legal paternalism, as practiced by the Dutch state, is highly controversial in liberal democratic societies, because it conflicts with their core principle of the respect for individual freedom; restricting someone's freedom is a denial of his human dignity. Paternalism deprives individuals of the positive value of the act of choosing.

Currently, the Dutch integration policy is based on interventions imposed by the state and many measures and rules to provide non-western *allochtoon's* civic integration in Dutch society. We saw that the Dutch integration policy approaches integration as a one-way process, instead of a mutual interplay as per their definition (see Integration Monitor 2006). The current approach turns people into objects, or as Prins (2004) argues "into a jar of peanut butter", rather than approaching them as people with a voice. Moreover, integration is measured in terms of people's characteristics, while integration is not a characteristic of a person, but a characteristic of the relation between people in society. Consequently, I suggested that before the Dutch state introduces more restrictive and assimilationist laws concerning immigrants' integration we have to look to the dynamics of migration and integration processes of the immigrants themselves, rather than focusing on a theoretical or top-down point of view on how to deal with ethnic diversity on a national or urban level.

Therefore, the third chapter was concerned with how Dutch Tamils, whose lives policy bears upon, view integration. In addition, their everyday life experiences, opinions and knowledge of integration were presented with the goal of providing a means for developing a more inclusive approach concerning migrants' or refugees' integration processes. We saw, from a bottom-up perspective, how Dutch Tamils define, consider and experience integration. Different statements as to how Dutch Tamils view their integration were presented in order to assess the value of the different practices that give meaning to their integration. We reported that their understandings go beyond the Dutch integration policy's requirements and its approach. First, it became clear that the concept of integration is not self-evident. Some first generation Dutch Tamils seemed to be unfamiliar with the concept of integration, at least not in conformity with the Dutch integration policy's definition. Second, we saw that most Dutch Tamils define integration in conformity with the current Dutch integration assimilationist strategy and not with its definition. According to most Dutch Tamils, integration is something they have to undertake to become part of Dutch society. In other words, to be integrated is to adjust, or to assimilate. Third, although the Dutch Tamils meet many requirements on the basis of which integration is

measured, it became clear that simple answers on the six Dutch integration statements, formulated by Regioplan policy (2005) to measure integration lack insight into the Dutch Tamils' interpretations and motives, and lack understanding of the values attached to these integration requirements. Through conversations, it was discovered that integration was a very flexible concept; it is multifaceted and its meaning varies per person. In general, Dutch Tamils feel most integrated in spaces where they feel comfortable or at home: for example, at school, at work, in the temple and among their loved ones.

In sum, we see that integration goes beyond simple measurements, and therefore a better insight into the context of the practices that give meaning to Dutch Tamils' integration experiences is required. In order to have a better understanding of Dutch Tamils' integration experiences I chose to let the Dutch Tamils speak about their current everyday lives and integration experiences, since the question 'which practices give meaning to your integration' seemed to be too abstract.

In the fourth and fifth chapters, I reported some stories that exposed other practices than those that the Dutch integration policy considers relevant for integration. We saw that the first generation Dutch Tamil men arrived in the Netherlands around 1984 and 1991 because of the intra-state conflict in Sri Lanka. Their past traumatic experiences during the Sri Lankan intra-state conflict, during their flight, and for some Dutch Tamils during their settlement in the Netherlands played an important role in their integration process in the Netherlands. First, we saw that their past experiences led to a desire to integrate in the Netherlands, since they were given the opportunity to build a new life in the Netherlands. Second, we saw that the first generation Dutch Tamil men have the tendency to reinterpret their past in order to cope with integration in the Netherlands. Although they acknowledged that they did not 'really' face any problems at their time of arrival and that their integration was quite simple, their stories reflect a much more difficult, tough and insecure view. However, compared to their traumatic experiences, integration is, according to the first generation Dutch Tamil men, 'such a little requirement'. Since the Dutch Tamils do not easily indicate that their traumatic experiences limit integration, it is likely that the Dutch integration policy will not take into account these experiences within its policy. Until now, traumatic experiences are underexposed in the discourse on integration, although they might strongly influence someone's integration experiences. Therefore, I suggest that the Dutch integration policy should pay more attention to the traumatic experiences refugees face in order to facilitate their integration process.

We saw that most first generation Dutch Tamil women migrated to the Netherlands to 'follow' their partners or bridegrooms-to-be. It is paradoxical that although these women, like the first

generation men, indicated that integration is not difficult their stories illustrate that they have difficulties in integrating into Dutch society. These women reported feeling lonely and homesick in the Netherlands, since they have difficulty becoming close to Dutch people for a variety of reasons: the Dutch people's emphasis on individuality, their own limited command of Dutch and their connection to their households due to their children, and their strong feelings of loss of their home and hearth. On the one hand, we may argue that their homesickness is strengthened by the fact that they cannot get used to, and feel at home, in the Netherlands which results in feeling more connected to Sri Lanka. However, on the other hand, the fact that they do not (want to) forget Sri Lanka and maintain a nostalgic view of Sri Lanka strengthens their homesickness and that consequently leads to feelings of not getting used to and feeling at home in the Netherlands. In order to facilitate the first generation Dutch Tamil women's integration process the Dutch integration policy should pay more attention to underlying feelings of, for example, homesickness that potentially limit integration experiences.

In addition, in the fourth chapter it is shown that these women's different reasons to come to the Netherlands and the different social environment and situations they are in presently mean that they experience and perceive their integration very differently from men. Consequently, the Dutch integration policy should take into account gender differences within its integration policy; men and women are in different situations and social environments and have different feelings, perceptions, experiences and needs. The Dutch integration policy should also take into account that people, whose lives policy directly effects, do not easily indicate that integration is difficult. However, after extensive conversations they intimate that integration is not as easy as they conveyed. Therefore, I would suggest that policymakers should converse more extensively with people in order to understand their perceptions and accompanying needs.

In the fifth chapter, the second generation Dutch Tamils' integration experiences are described. We saw that these Dutch Tamils, who were born in the Netherlands or arrived in the Netherlands at a very young age, have a different perception of integration than the first generation men or women. First, they hold the opinion that integration is difficult; mainly for their parents since they are used to other habits and customs that makes adjustment difficult. However, the second generation Dutch Tamils indicated that integration is difficult for them too, since they feel that they live caught between two completely different cultures. We saw that the second generation Dutch Tamils believe that they have to show consideration for both 'Tamil culture' and 'Dutch culture'. Second generation Dutch Tamil women have to show more consideration for Tamil culture than their male peers. As a result, women like Magil experience life in the Netherlands as a struggle; a struggle between who they want to be (more Dutch) and

who they ought to be (Tamil). The social pressure and restrictions regarding women's behaviour limit several women's well-being; four women even attempted to commit suicide. Therefore, I would suggest the Dutch policy should focus more on the psychological well-being of Hindu girls, particularly the problems they experience regarding the cultural differences between public and private life. These must be given serious consideration. According to women like Magil, their 'unfreedom', which they associate with 'Tamilness', limits their integration experiences. They want to be seen and accepted as more Dutch by Tamil people, because then they "could experience their lives as free in both private and public life". We saw that these women think in polar opposites; freedom is equated with 'Dutch' and restraint with 'Tamil'. It seems that they do not perceive that they are actually one person with a set of behaviours. For these women it seems that once they go to, for example, the disco they cross the threshold into 'Dutchness' –which is named freedom-, and once they enter their house they cross over into 'Tamilness', or unfreedom. This corresponds with their conviction of living as two different persons in one body. We therefore may argue that the problem of 'integration', what they call: "their limited integration", has less to do with being or becoming Dutch than with the interior polarization (unfreedom-Tamil versus freedom-Dutch) that haunts them. We might say that this schizophrenic psychical life takes them apart, that they gave it the name and localize it as "two cultures".

Furthermore, we saw, somewhat paradoxically, that their religion and the temple Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayaga turned out to play an important role in these women's well-being since it gives them strength to continue and to forget their problems. In addition, Bollywoods films were revealed as a kind of medicine; they symbolize women's desirable life, and since women can identify with its main characters these Bollywood films help them to 'escape' their real life. Not all second generation women perceive their life as limited and long for more freedom. Ezhil, for example, is happy with her life and does not experience the 'rules' regarding women's behaviour as limited. For her, her 'Tamilness' can easily go together with her integration and her 'Dutchness'. She, in contrast to other women, does not think in absolutes; integration for her includes both 'Tamilness' and 'Dutchness'. Therefore, we may argue that it seems that she has achieved a psychical integration.

In the fifth chapter, it is also discussed how second generation Dutch Tamil men view their lives and the integration process in the Netherlands. Maan's view of integration corresponds with an assimilationist view of integration. For him, adjustment is integration. *"Integration has to be a choice, bút if you are ambitious and want to achieve something in life, then in some cases you have to let go your own traditions".* He related that it is for him and his male peers easier to adjust to "a Dutch way of life" than for women. Dutch Tamil men, in contrast to women, face "no real limitations

regarding their behaviour". Maan and his friends, in contrast to most Dutch Tamil women, have more opportunities to act freely. Despite this, Maan indicated that integration is not always easy since he, like others, feels caught between two cultures. Since Maan sees himself as Dutch, not as Tamil, it is very important for him to be recognized as Dutch, mainly by Dutch people. He does not want to be seen as a stranger, as a Tamil, because he views the 'Tamil' culture as an inferior culture. According to him, Dutch people are more developed than Tamil people. Therefore, it seems that he derives his self-respect from his willingness to be 'Dutch' since he cannot derive his self-respect from 'Tamilness'. Like Magil, Maan thinks in polar opposites; he ascribes positive characteristics to 'Dutchness' and negative characteristics to 'Tamilness'. Again, we may argue that the problem of 'integration' has less to do with being or becoming Dutch than with the interior polarization (the fact that for him inferiority is equated with Tamilness and superiority with Dutchness) that haunts him. An example that illustrates that Maan is in discord is the way he behaved during Chirithira theer of ratham. We saw that on the one hand, he really wanted to show me a part of 'Tamil culture' but on the other hand, he was ashamed of the way Dutch Tamils behaved: "as idiots". The fact that Maan internalized an inferior view of 'Tamilness' and a superior view of 'Dutchness' can be seen as a consequence of what Hall (1990) states as being subjected to the hegemonic discourse of the West, and the power of inner compulsion and subjective conformation to this norm. The fact that the Dutch integration policy emphasizes a strong difference between 'autochtoon' and 'allochtoon' people, and follows an assimilationist strategy to integrate ethnic minorities into Dutch society could lead that Maan and Magil, for example, react against their 'Tamilness' and accept 'Dutchness' with open arms. Although Maan and Magil have different lives, and are so different in expressing their 'unheimlich' feelings, it seems that they share a profound sense of unease that operates across gender, which gives the feeling of being out of place whichever place they are in. Since being bicultural, or transnational, turned out to be difficult to deal with, I suggest that essentialist paradigms of collective belonging that are based on so-called national particularisms, a shared ethno-national identity and citizenship, have to be revisited by an alternative policy approach that views ethnic identities as hybrid, dynamic, multifaceted and fluid, particularly in the present era of globalization. It is likely that in the future more and more people will share a bicultural identity that consequently could become the new norm.

In this thesis, I have attempted to show that personal satisfaction and an assessment of a person's integration goes beyond simple and measurable indicators, such as economic status and having social contacts, and includes qualities of practices that give, according to the Dutch Tamils

themselves, meaning to their integration. An integration process is not as neatly classifiable or easy to reflect upon as is portrayed by many researchers who work under the authority of the Dutch integration policy. An individual's integration process has been revealed as complex, context-dependent, changeable and influenced by numerous and diverse factors. An important result is that although the Dutch integration policy addresses many of the requirements mentioned by Dutch Tamils as important for their successful integration process, it does not take into account the well-being of Dutch Tamils, and others whose lives are directly effected by policy; Dutch policy, in fact, can limit their integration experiences. The traumatic experiences of mainly first generation Dutch Tamil men, the feelings of homesickness among mainly first generation women, the social pressure and restrictions regarding women's behaviour among several second generation women and the emotional struggle that most second generation Dutch Tamils have with their transnational identity, turned out to limit their well-being, and as a result, their integration experiences.

It is striking that the Dutch integration policy measures integration in terms of gender and age, while no attention is given to how gender and age actually affect the integration process. I attempted to show that certainly the young women have lives that are more severely circumscribed. Therefore, policymakers should take the well-being of these women into account. Since their problems seem to have less to do with integration than with being bicultural, I would suggest that more attention is paid to psychological integration. Another important result is that several Dutch Tamils stumble on the limitations of integration because of the Dutch integration policy's assimilationist strategy. I hold the opinion that as long as the Dutch integration policy emphasizes a difference between 'allochtoon' and 'autochtoon' people in official language, 'allochtoon' people will never be Dutch. The fact that some Dutch Tamils do not feel integrated, doubt their integration or have developed an inferior view of their 'Tamilness' has to do with the hegemonic 'assimilationist' discourse of the Dutch, and the power of inner compulsion and subjective conformation to this discourse. I think it is important to provide Dutch Tamils, and non-western 'allochtoons' in general, with a framework for an active (re)production of life in the Netherlands. In line with Korac (2001), I argue that a successful and desirable integration policy should provide non-western 'allochtoons' a legal and institutional framework within which they are given room for agency. In other words, they require space for the functional adaptation of their attitudes and for developing skills necessary for entering the receiving society as social actors. Such a framework should provide flexibility, which means that we have to take their age, gender, educational and socio-cultural environments into account by allowing differentiated strategies for non-western allochtoon's integration. I would suggest that in order to provide

Dutch Tamils a framework for an active life in the Netherlands, the Dutch integration policy should gain more in-depth knowledge of their 'Tamilness'. I hold the opinion that when we know what distinguishes people; we are able to move towards an inclusive framework of integration. It is shown that 'Tamilness' is shaped and reshaped by Dutch Tamils' actions in Dutch society, and therefore structures Dutch Tamils' integration processes in Dutch society. Local Hinduism, like Sri Varatharaja Selvavinayagar in Den Helder, develops differently from Sri Lankan Tamil Hinduism because it is influenced by internal cultural processes particular to the Dutch 'multicultural' environment and transnational cultural processes particular to the Tamils in diaspora. It is shown that the Hindu temple plays an important role, although in various ways, in the Dutch Tamils' lives. Certainly, the first generation Dutch Tamil men have been able to adapt to Den Helder by means of the temple in order to attain their social, cultural and physical aspirations (see Nasser 2003).

The temple has a different meaning for most second generation women; they can practice their 'Tamilness', and according to their own terminology their 'Dutchness' in the sense that it provides them with some degree of freedom and autonomy. The meaning of the temple strongly differs per generation and gender due to different perceptions and needs. 'Tamilness' comprises systems of interpretations that are produced and reproduced in Dutch environments. These systems are the outcome of people with a 'shared' past, for example living in an intra-state conflict, fleeing to the Netherlands, staying in an asylum seekers centre and a 'shared' process of settlement and integration in the Netherlands. It is shown that 'Tamilness' and 'Dutchness' are produced by Dutch Tamils' specific life experiences and its meanings are sensitive to activity in a particular context. Emotions and motivations of Dutch Tamils, linked to personal experiences, clearly make a difference in how integration is conceded and steer Dutch Tamils' responses. For some Dutch Tamils integration is presently equated with 'Dutchness', for others it comprises both 'Tamilness' and 'Dutchness'.

In addition to the view of the Dutch Tamils on how to relate to Dutch society, the 'autochtoon' attitude regarding integration is equally important. It is shown that 'Dutch' people are little motivated to take part in integration activities. Moreover, 52 percent of the 'autochtoon' population never has contacts with people of 'allochtoon' origin (Integration monitor 2007). To my opinion, 'autochtoon' people should undertake steps as well in order to make integration successful. Until now, the reciprocal role played by 'autochtoon' people has not been adequately identified. In the end, integration is still a dance that requires partnering.

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Appendix One: Questionnaire Life in the Netherlands

Beneath, the questionnaire used to discuss the Dutch Tamils' lives and integration processes. The answers on quantitative statements are marked in red.

Thank you for your help with my research on how Tamils see their lives in the Netherlands. This questionnaire has 180 questions. You must not answer them all, only the ones that applies to you. Some of these will be discussed extensively. As you will see, a part of the survey consists of statements. There are no right or wrong answers, it is about how you view and experience certain aspects of life. Another important aspect is that you will be anonymous; as a scientific researcher, it is important to safeguard the interests of the participants.

Gender, age and marital status

1.   Date of birth: ……/……../…….(month/ day/ year)

2.   Gender:
   o   Male and first generation   5
   o   Male and second generation   5
   o   Female and first generation   3
   o   Female and second generation   7
   o   Other …………………………………………..

3.   Marital Status:
   o   Single (never married)   10
   o   Married   9
   o   Widowed
   o   Separated   1

4.   Do you have children?
      o   Yes   8
      o   No (go to question 6)   12

5.   How many children do you have, and of what age?   ………………………..

6.   Where are you born?
   o   In Sri Lanka   Place:…………………   18
   o   In the Netherlands   Place:…………………   2
            (go to question 7 and then to 22)

7.   If you have a partner,
         what is her/ his country of birth?   …………   Sri Lanka

Questions for people who left Sri Lanka

8.   When (what year) did you arrive in the Netherlands?   ………………

9.   When did you leave Sri Lanka? ……………………..

10.   What was the reason for your permit application?
   o   Refugee   6
   o   Partner   2
   o   Family   10
   o   Skilled worker
   o   Business
   o   Student
   o   Other ………………born   2

11.   How long did it take to get a permit application?
   o   I had a permit upon arrival
   o   It took me ……………..months

o   Other…………….

12.   When you came to the Netherlands, did you plan to:
o   Settle here permanently   6
o   Live here for a while and return to Sri Lanka   9
o   Live here for a while and then move to another country
o   Maintain residence in both the Netherlands and another country
o   Other …………………don't know   5

13.   Did you choose to flee or migrate to <u>the Netherlands</u>?
o   Yes, it was a choice, (explanation)………   3…(fled)……12 (migrate)
o   No, it was a coincidence, (explanation)…   3…(fled)
o   I do not remember
o   I do not know
o   Other,…………….   2 born

14.   When you arrived in the Netherlands, how did you find your way?

15.   Did you need any help?
o   Yes
o   No

16.   Did you get any help?
o   Yes
o   No

17.   If you got help, who helped you and with what?

18.   If you did not got any help, what was the reason?

19.   Did you face any problems at the time of your arrival? Can you give an explanation?

20.   How did people treat you?
o   Bad,……………………….
o   Well,……………………….
o   Normal,……………………

21.   How did you feel? (you are able to mark more)
o   Sad   3
o   Safe   6
o   Happy   6
o   Discriminated
o   Angry
o   Free   6
o   Homesick   18
o   Alienated/strange   18
o   Lonely   8
o   At home   2
o   Not welcome
o   Other……stress   11

Religion

22.   What is your current religion, if any?   Hindu 18, Christian 1, None 1

23.   What was your religion in Sri Lanka?   Same

24.   How often did you –on average- participate in religious activities or attend religious services/ meeting in the
      past 12 months?
o   Twice a week, or more   6
o   Once a week   4

o	Twice a month	6
o	Once a month	3
o	A few times a year	
o	Not at all	1

25. Is your religion very important to you?
   - o Yes, it is very important   14
   - o Yes, like other aspects   4
   - o A little   1
   - o No, it is not very important
   - o No, it is not important at all   1

26. Would you please give an explanation of your last answer?

27. Do you live according to the rules of your religion?
   - o Yes, very much   7 (women) 2 (men)
   - o Yes   1 (woman)
   - o Sometimes   5 (men)
   - o In my own way   2 (men) (2 women)
   - o No   1 (man)

28. Would you please give an explanation of your last answer?

Situation in the Netherlands

29. At this moment, are you planning to:
   - o Settle here permanently   12
   - o Live here for a while and return to Sri Lanka   3
   - o Live here for a while and then move to another country 1
   - o Maintain residence in both the Netherlands and another country
   - o Other …………do not know   4

30. Where do you live in the Netherlands?   In …………………….

31. Since when do you live here?   Since………………..

32. Did you live somewhere else in the Netherlands before?
   - o Yes   18
   - o No (go to question 35)   2

33. Where did you live before?

34. How long did you live here?

35. Do you like living in the Netherlands?
   - o Yes, because   20
   - o No, because
   - o Sometimes, because

36. Do you like living in your place of residence?
   - o Yes, because………………………   16
   - o No, because ………………………   2
   - o Sometimes, because ………………   2

37. How do find your way in Dutch society at this moment?

38. Do you need any help of other people?
   - o Yes
   - o No

39. Do you get any help of other people?

- o Yes
- o No

40.   If you get any help, who helps you and with what?

41.   If you do not get any help, what is the reason?

42.   Do you have a Dutch passport?
- o Yes, since……………   17
- o Yes always, I am born here   2
- o No   1

43.   If you do not have a Dutch passport, do you have a temporary status?
- o Yes, what kind of status do you have?…   F
- o No

44.   Do want to have a Dutch passport?
45.   Is it important for you to have a Dutch passport?
46.   (What) are the preconditions to get one?

Incorporation Courses

---

47.   Did/do you have to follow an <u>inburgeringscursus</u> (incorporation course/ traject)?
- o Yes, I did
- o Yes, I follow a course at this moment   1
- o Yes, I will follow a course in the future
- o No   19
- o Other……….

48.   Can you tell me about your incorporation experiences. What did/ do you have to do and what do you think of it?

49.   Did/ does an incorporation course helps you?
- o Yes, it does
- o No, it does not
- o A little   1

50.   What did/ do you learn?

51.   Did /do you learn what you expected?
- o Yes
- o No
- o A little   1
- o Other

52.   Do you like these courses? And why (not)?
- o Yes
- o No
- o Sometimes   1

53.   'It is a very good idea to obligate these courses'
- o I strongly agree   9
- o I agree   4
- o Normal   4
- o I disagree
- o I totally disagree
- o Do not know   3

54.   'Inburgerings courses is an important step to integration'
- o I strongly agree   7
- o I agree   10

- o   Normal
- o   I disagree
- o   I totally disagree
- o   Do not know   3

Integration

---

55.   'I think I am integrated'
- o   I strongly agree   10
- o   I agree   4
- o   Normal
- o   I disagree, not yet   1
- o   I totally disagree
- o   Do not know   5

56.   Why do you see yourself as integrated, or why not?

57.   What is integration in your view? (Can you subscribe it?)

58.   'Being integrated is very important to me'
- o   I strongly agree   10
- o   I agree   5
- o   Normal   3
- o   I disagree
- o   I totally disagree
- o   Do not know   2

59.   Why is it important (or not important) to you?

60.   'I really want to integrate'
- o   I strongly agree   9
- o   I agree   2
- o   Normal   3
- o   I disagree
- o   I totally disagree
- o   Do not know   6

61.   Why do you want (or not want) to integrate?

62.   'I think the idea of integration is stupid'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree
- o   Normal
- o   I disagree   18
- o   I totally disagree
- o   Do not know   2

63.   Why do you think it is stupid (or not)?

64.   'Integration has to be seen differently'
- o   I strongly agree   2
- o   I agree   4
- o   Normal   4
- o   I disagree   4
- o   I totally disagree
- o   Do not know   5

65.   What should integration be?

66.   'Being integrated is very difficult'
- o   I strongly agree   4

- o I agree   4
- o Normal   5
- o I disagree   5
- o I totally disagree   2

67.   Why is integration difficult (or not)?

68.   'Everybody, who lives in the Netherlands, has to integrate'
- o I strongly agree   3
- o I agree   8
- o Normal   4
- o I disagree
- o I totally disagree
- o Do not know   5

69.   Why does everybody (or not) have to integrate?

70.   'I think integration is necessary'
- o I strongly agree   7
- o I agree   6
- o Normal   4
- o I disagree
- o I totally disagree
- o Do not know   3

71.   Why do you think integration is necessary (or not)?

72.   'I think integration is never ending'
- o I strongly agree   4
- o I agree   7
- o Normal
- o I disagree   1
- o I totally disagree
- o Do not know   7

73.   Why do you think integration ends (or not)?

74.   'I am satisfied with the current Dutch integration policy'
- o I strongly agree   4
- o I agree   4
- o Normal   4
- o I disagree   4
- o I totally disagree   2
- o Do not know   2

75.   Why are you satisfied (or not)?

76.   Would you change some aspects of the Dutch integration policy?
- o Yes   11
- o No   5
- o I do not know   4
- o Other

77.   Why (not) and what would you change?

Education and diplomas

---

78.   If you have lived in Sri Lanka, what is the highest level of education that you successfully have completed in Sri Lanka?
- o None at all
- o Elementary school   4

- o High school   6
- o University   2
- o Ph.D.
- o Other

79. Do you have experienced difficulties having your educational credentials (such as certificates, degrees and diplomas) from Sri Lanka recognized in the Netherlands?
- o Yes, a lot of problems   5
- o Yes, problems but these are solved   3
- o No
- o Other

80. What is the most advanced level (certificate) of study you completed in Sri Lanka that is recognized in the Netherlands?
- o No level is recognized   (immediately)   8
- o Elementary school
- o High school
- o University
- o Ph.D.

81. Did or do you study in the Netherlands to obtain additional education?
- o Yes
- o No

82. What kind of education did or do you follow?

83. What is the highest level of education that you successfully have completed in the Netherlands?
- o No level completed
- o Elementary school   4
- o Vmbo
- o Havo   3
- o Vwo   5
- o Mbo
- o Hbo   1
- o University   3
- o Ph. D.

84. 'Education is very important'
- o I strongly agree   20
- o I agree
- o Normal
- o I disagree
- o I totally disagree

85. Why do you think education is very important (or not)?
86. 'My children have to study as much as they can'
- o I strongly agree   13
- o I agree   3
- o Normal   1
- o I disagree
- o I totally disagree
- o Do not know   3

87. Why do you think your children have to study as much as they can?

Language

88. What is your mother tongue? Tamil   20

89. What languages do you speak? Dutch (level varies) 20, English 16, Sinhalese 3

90. How fluent are you in Dutch at this moment?
   o I can read, speak and write it well.   12
   o Good level   1
   o Moderate level   3
   o I understand people   2
   o I have little understanding of what people say in Dutch 2
   o I cannot understand it at all.

91. Do you think it is important to speak, write, listen and read Dutch?
   o Yes
   o Yes, some aspects are important
   o No, not really
   o Other

92. Why is it important (or not) to you?

93. Which language(s) do you speak at home?
   o Dutch
   o Tamil   10
   o English
   o Dutch and Tamil   10
   o Other

94. Which language(s) do you speak with your friends?
   o With Dutch friends Dutch, with Tamils Tamil, (with other's English)
   o Dutch
   o Tamil
   o It depends on which language other people speak
   o It depends on which language I speak
   o Other

95. Which language(s) do you speak with your colleagues?
   o With Dutch colleagues Dutch, with Tamils Tamil, (with other's English)
   o Dutch   18
   o Tamil
   o It depends on which language other people speak
   o It depends on which language I speak
   o Other   2

96. 'Speaking Dutch is very important to me'
   o I strongly agree   16
   o I agree   4
   o Normal
   o I disagree
   o I totally disagree

97. 'Reading and writing Dutch is very important to me'
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree
   o Normal
   o I disagree
   o I totally disagree

98. 'Understanding Dutch is very important to me'
   o I strongly agree   16
   o I agree   4
   o Normal
   o I disagree
   o **I totally disagree**

99. 'It is very important to learn Tamil to my children' (why/ why not)
   o I strongly agree   11

162

- o I agree   6
- o Normal   2
- o I disagree
- o I totally disagree   1

Job

---

100.   What is your current work status? (you may mark more than one answer)
- o Fulltime paid worker   6
- o Part time paid worker   5
- o Self employed   1
- o Unemployed
- o Unable to work due health
- o Household   3
- o Retired
- o Student   10
- o Freelance
- o Other

101.   What kind of job do you have and for how long?

102.   If you come from Sri Lanka, what kind of job did you have?

103.   Did you like your job in Sri Lanka?

104.   Do you like your current job? (what you do?)
- o Yes, very much   5
- o Sometimes   5
- o No
- o Other
- o I am looking for a new job   2

105.   'I liked my job in Sri Lanka more'
- o I strongly agree   2
- o I agree
- o Normal   3
- o I disagree
- o I totally disagree

106.   'My current job allows me to make full use of my education'
- o I strongly agree   2
- o I agree   2
- o Almost   5
- o I disagree   2
- o I totally disagree
- o Do not know   1

107.   'My job is very important to me'
- o I strongly agree   9
- o I agree
- o Normal   3
- o I disagree
- o I totally disagree

108.   'I am satisfied with my job'
- o I strongly agree   5
- o I agree   4
- o Normal   1
- o I disagree   2
- o I totally disagree

109. Compared to the average Sri Lankan income, my income is
    o A lot more
    o More
    o Same
    o Less
    o A lot less

110. Compared to the average income of Tamils in the Netherlands, my income is
    o A lot more
    o More
    o Same
    o Less
    o A lot less

111. Do you earn enough money to have a decent living?

112. How much money do you earn in a month?

113. Compared to the average income of other migrants in the Netherlands, my income is
    o A lot more
    o More
    o Same
    o Less
    o A lot less

114. What was your income in Sri Lanka compared to other Tamils?
    o A lot more
    o More
    o Same
    o Less
    o A lot less

Contacts with other people

115. Do you have a lot of friends and acquaintances (social contacts) in the Netherlands?
    o Yes, a lot   12
    o Yes, some good friends   4
    o Normal
    o No, not much   4
    o No, nobody

116. With whom do you have contacts?

117. Who are your friends or acquaintances?

118. What do you do with your friends and acquaintances?

119. 'I would like to have more friends and contacts' (why/ why not)
    o I strongly agree
    o I agree
    o Normal
    o I disagree
    o I totally disagree

120. 'It is very important to have Tamil friends and contacts' (why/ why not)
    o I strongly agree   7
    o I agree   5
    o Normal   8
    o I disagree
    o I totally disagree

121. 'It is very important to have Dutch friends and contacts' (why/ why not)
   o I strongly agree   5   (4 Dutch more important than Tamil)
   o I agree   10
   o Normal   5
   o I disagree
   o I totally disagree

122. 'It makes no difference which nationality a friend has' (why/ why not)
   o I strongly agree   4
   o I agree   16
   o Normal
   o I disagree
   o I totally disagree

123. 'It makes no difference which nationality my partner has' (why/ why not)
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree   3
   o Normal   1
   o I disagree   14
   o I totally disagree   2

Residence

124. 'I like the house where I live in' (why/ why not)
   o I strongly agree   5
   o I agree   12
   o Normal   3
   o I disagree
   o I totally disagree

125. 'I like the neighbourhood where I live' (why/ why not)
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree   20
   o Normal
   o I disagree
   o I totally disagree

126. 'I like the city where I live' (why/ why not)
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree   16
   o Normal   1
   o I disagree   3
   o I totally disagree

127. 'I like the country where I live' (why/ why not)
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree   20
   o Normal
   o I disagree
   o I totally disagree

128. 'If I could choose I would move to another house/ neighbourhood/ city/ country' (why)
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree   6
   o Normal
   o I disagree   14
   o I totally disagree

Daily life and Leisure

129. Can you subscribe your daily life? (what do you do on a normal day?)

130. In my spare time I like to do…………………..?
(sport/ watch television/ computer/ music/ meet people/ read/ walk/ make diner/ have contacts with Sri Lanka/ café/ politics/ film/ religion/ family/ do nothing and so on…..)

131. Why are these things important to you?

132. 'If I had more time I would like to…………..'

133. 'If I had more money I would like to………..'

134. The most important aspects of my life in the Netherlands are………..

Feelings

---

135. 'I feel familiar with the Netherlands'
   o I strongly agree 2
   o I agree 16
   o Normal
   o I disagree 2
   o I totally disagree

136. 'I wish to return to Sri Lanka'
   o I strongly agree 3
   o I agree
   o Normal 2
   o I disagree 7
   o I totally disagree 6
   o Do not know 2

137. 'I have a strong feeling to Sri Lanka'
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree 10
   o Normal 2
   o I disagree 8
   o I totally disagree

138. 'I have a strong feeling to the Netherlands'
   o I strongly agree 1
   o I agree 15
   o Normal 3
   o I disagree 1
   o I totally disagree

139. 'I feel lonely in the Netherlands'
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree 5
   o Normal 5
   o I disagree 10
   o I totally disagree

140. 'I feel homesick in the Netherlands'
   o I strongly agree 5
   o I agree
   o Normal 3
   o I disagree 10
   o I totally disagree 2

141. 'I feel happy in the Netherlands'
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree 15

o Normal 4
o I disagree 1
o I totally disagree

142. 'I feel unwelcome in the Netherlands'
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree
   o Normal 5
   o I disagree 12
   o I totally disagree 3

143. 'I feel safe and free in the Netherlands'
   o I strongly agree 10
   o I agree 9
   o Normal 1
   o I disagree
   o I totally disagree

144. 'I feel a stranger in the Netherlands'
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree 3
   o Normal 7
   o I disagree 10
   o I totally disagree

145. 'I feel a stranger in Sri Lanka'
   o I strongly agree
   o I agree 3
   o Normal
   o I disagree 10
   o I totally disagree
   o Do not know 7

146. 'I feel enriched to have two countries where I belong'
   o I strongly agree 1
   o I agree 7
   o Normal 8
   o I disagree 3
   o I totally disagree 1

Identity

147. 'I am Dutch'
   o I strongly agree 3
   o I agree 6
   o Normal 6
   o I disagree 5
   o I totally disagree

148. 'I am Tamil'
   o I strongly agree 5
   o I agree 10
   o Normal 5
   o I disagree
   o I totally disagree

149. 'I am Hindu'
   o I strongly agree 11
   o I agree 5
   o Normal 2
   o I disagree

| | o | I totally disagree | 2 |

150.   'I feel Dutch and Tamil at the same time'
- o   I strongly agree   2
- o   I agree   14
- o   Normal   2
- o   I disagree   2
- o   I totally disagree

151.   'I feel not Dutch and Tamil, I feel both an outsider'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree   3
- o   Normal   6
- o   I disagree   2
- o   I totally disagree   5
- o   I do not know   4

152.   I feel otherwise……………………..

153.   I would subscribe my character as ………………………

154.   My most important values are ………………………….

Acceptation

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155.   'To be accepted as Dutch, by Dutch people, is very important'
- o   I strongly agree   2
- o   I agree   7
- o   Normal   8
- o   I disagree   3
- o   I totally disagree

156.   'To be accepted as Tamil, by Dutch people, is very important'
- o   I strongly agree   2
- o   I agree   8
- o   Normal   6
- o   I disagree
- o   I totally disagree   1
- o   Do not know   3

157.   'To be accepted as Dutch, by Tamil people, is very important'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree   3
- o   Normal   3
- o   I disagree   3
- o   I totally disagree   3
- o   Do not know   8

158.   'To be accepted as Tamil, by Tamil people, is very important'
- o   I strongly agree   5
- o   I agree   10
- o   Normal   3
- o   I disagree
- o   Do not know   2

159.   'In the Netherlands I feel at home'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree   17
- o   Normal   1
- o   I disagree   2
- o   I totally disagree

160.   'The attitude of most Dutch people towards immigrants in general is very negative'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree   3
- o   Normal   10
- o   I disagree   7
- o   I totally disagree

161.   'The attitude of most Dutch people towards Tamils is very negative'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree
- o   Normal   4
- o   I disagree   16
- o   I totally disagree

162.   'In the Netherlands, ethnic background is never a source of discrimination'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree   3
- o   Normal   11
- o   I disagree   6
- o   I totally disagree

163.   'In the Netherlands, religion is never a source of discrimination'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree   2
- o   Normal   7
- o   I disagree   11
- o   I totally disagree

164.   'In the Netherlands, skin colour is never a source of discrimination'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree   3
- o   Normal   10
- o   I disagree   7
- o   I totally disagree

165.   'In the past years I have experienced discrimination'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree   6
- o   Normal   3
- o   I disagree   9
- o   I totally disagree   2

166.   If you feel that you have been discriminated. What do you think was the reason for your unfair treatment?

167.   'In the past years, while at work or when applying for a job or a promotion I have experienced discrimination'
- o   I strongly agree
- o   I agree   3
- o   Normal
- o   I disagree
- o   I totally disagree

168.   If you feel that you have been discriminated. What do you think was the reason for your unfair treatment?

Respect/ difference and dream

169.   'By most Dutch people, my cultural background is not respected'
- o   I strongly agree

- o I agree
- o Normal
- o I disagree   16
- o I totally disagree   4

170.   'By most colleagues, my cultural background is not respected'
- o I strongly agree
- o I agree
- o Normal
- o I disagree   10
- o I totally disagree   10

171.   'By my boss, my cultural background is not respected'
- o I strongly agree
- o I agree
- o Normal
- o I disagree
- o I totally disagree

172.   'My culture and Dutch culture are completely different'
- o I strongly agree   15
- o I agree   3
- o Normal   2
- o I disagree
- o I totally disagree

173.   'My values and beliefs, compared to those of Dutch people in general, are completely different'
- o I strongly agree   2
- o I agree   7
- o Normal   6
- o I disagree   3
- o I totally disagree   2

174.   'I do not like Dutch culture'
- o I strongly agree
- o I agree
- o Normal   1
- o I disagree   15
- o I totally disagree   4

175.   'I prefer Tamil culture?
- o I strongly agree   4
- o I agree   6
- o Normal   4
- o I disagree   6 (second generation)
- o I totally disagree

176.   The things I do not like in the Netherlands are ………………

177.   The things I do not like of my life in the Netherlands are……..

178.   The things I do like in the Netherlands are ……….

179.   The things I like of my life in the Netherlands are ……..

180.   I dream of ………………………..

Male respondents of research 2002-2003:

Name	Arrival	Age of arrival / generation	Year	Nature
A	fled	37/ first generation	1994	alone
C	fled	31/ first generation	1984	alone
D	fled	11/ second generation	1994	mum
E	fled	26/ first generation	1994	alone
F	fled	21/ first generation	1999	alone
G	fled	30/ first generation	1993	alone
H	fled	30/ first generation	1990	alone
I	born	second generation	1994	
J	fled	33/ first generation	1993	wife
L	fled	20/ first generation	1991	alone

Male respondents of research 2006:

Name	Arrival	Age of arrival/ generation	Year	Nature
Nesan	fled	25/ first generation	1986	alone
Amar	fled	23/ first generation	1989	alone
Yovan	fled	20/ first generation	1991	alone
Ulagu	fled	26/ first generation	1984	wife
Oris	fled	38/ first generation	1984	alone
Erran	migrated	5/ second generation	1990	mum
Vaiko	migrated	7/ second generation	1989	mum
Jutha	born	second generation	1994	
Uthan	migrated	6/ second generation	1999	mum
Maan	migrated	8/ second generation	1987	mum

Female respondents of research 2002-2003:

Name	Arrival	Age of arrival/ generation	Year	Nature
A	fled	12/ second generation	1994	mum
B	fled	34/ first generation	1994	daughters
C	migrated	21/ first generation	1998	As bride
D	fled	66/ first generation	2002	alone
E	migrated	27/ first generation	1999	As bride
F	migrated	3/ second generation	1987	mum
G	migrated	1/ second generation	1987	mum
H	migrated	32/ first generation	1987	daughters
I	fled	25/ first generation	1994	Alone[198]
J	fled	33/ first generation	1993	Husband

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[198] Her husband fled before.

Female respondents research 2006:

Name	Arrival	Age of arrival/ generation	Year	Nature
Ezhil	born	second generation	1985	
Sita	migrated	29/ first generation	2004	As bride
Magil	migrated	4/ second generation	1989	mum
Onania	fled	15/ second generation	1994	mum
Kadal	migrated	5/ second generation	1993	mum
Sasika	migrated	7/ second generation	1993	mum
Nila	migrated	21/ first generation	1994	As bride
Yazh	migrated	32/ first generation	1992	As bride
Malar	migrated	9/ second generation	1999	mum
Neela	migrated	9/ second generation	1999	mum