

Research Article

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The Black Archives: Exploring the Politics of Black Dutch Radicals

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Abstract: In this article, the authors introduce "The Black Archives"—an alternative archive consisting of more than 8,000 books, official documents and artefacts. The archive is a critical intervention, challenging dominant historical narratives, which tend to downplay histories of colonialism, slavery and their legacy. The authors explore how archival research and art can be used to make visible the histories that have been marginalised in dominant historical narratives. This is done with a case study: an exhibition based on archival research on two Black radicals, Hermina and Otto Huiswoud. The research reveals the history of the black and Surinamese activism in the Netherlands which intersects with global histories of the black radicalism.

Keywords: alternative archives, black radicalism, Surinam, Netherlands, black art, slavery, heritage, activism

The archive is not a neutral space. Oftentimes, archives are merely seen as storehouses of documents related to a specific institution: local or national government. However, several scholars, such as Derrida and Foucault, challenge this traditional view of archives by emphasising that archives reflect power relations and specific systems of order. Stoler (2002) writes how these archives in particular, and the knowledge they constitute, should be critically interrogated.

Building upon the work of Derrida (1998) and Foucault (1972), Powell (2018) states that the archive "is a system governed by those who have the power to choose what gets archived and therefore produce meaning through that discursive formation" (26). Powell uses queer and feminist approaches to archives as examples of how to ask what has been excluded from an archive, as traditional archives tend to record the views and perspectives of those in positions of power and authority. Powell proposes an "alternative ledger" theory (30), which recognises the incompleteness of traditional archives and historical narratives and provides space for additions, interactions and questions. Recognising the incomplete form of traditional historical records and archives paves the way for counter-histories and narratives. We suggest that The Black Archives can be seen as an "alternative archive" which encapsulates counternarratives to the dominant Eurocentric narrative.

To enhance the public programming of the archive, which includes the development of the exhibition "Black & Revolutionary: The Story of Hermina and Otto Huiswoud," the authors of this article invited three Surinamese-Dutch artists, Raul Balai, Iris Kensmil, and Brian Elstak to create art based on their archival research on the history of the Huiswouds and to show how their struggle is related to the present. The exhibition was open from November 25th 2017 to July 2018 in the Nola Hatterman Gallery, a space that was historically used to provide a platform for Surinamese artists in the building of "our Surinam." The exhibition and the public related program were visited by more than 2,500 visitors with different cultural backgrounds and gained a significant amount of attention in the Dutch media. In October 2018 The Black

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Archives won the Amsterdam Art Prize, the Jury stated the following in their report: "They are difficult to pin down. Because it is an art institution, a historical archive, a place where activists come together or a debate centre? It is all of this and that combination—at the intersection of several disciplines—makes this initiative so special" (Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunsten).

The exhibition contained panels with historical information on the life of Hermina en Otto Huiswoud divided into six chapters. The historical information was accompanied by murals by the artist Brian Elstak showing several people who were included in the story, like Hermina and Otto Huiswoud, Marcus and Amy Jacques Garvey, Langston Hughes, Anton de Kom, W.E.B. and Shirley Du Bois. The artist Iris Kensmil drew portraits of black activists who have been demonstrating peacefully against the Dutch blackfacing tradition "Zwart Piet" since 2011. The designer and the artist Raul Balai developed a video installation, wallpapers based on the FBI-file on Hermina and Otto Huiswoud and on a correspondence between Hermina and Langston Hughes. He designed the exhibition in a visually artistic manner to make it attractive to the audience, who would otherwise not necessarily become interested in topics such as these. Most of the historical sources came from the literature based on The Black Archives and the Hermina Huiswoud papers. In addition, a series of events consisting of lectures, dialogues and tours were organised weekly in relation to the exhibition. This usage of the archive can be thought of as a case study on how black people and people of African descent in Europe use alternative archives as spaces to challenge unequal power relations in writing about the past and the present.

Black People in the Netherlands

The Netherlands was one of the major colonial empires involved in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. This history has left behind traces in the contemporary Dutch society, and yet it is underexposed in the Dutch public memory. One legacy of this colonial past is the current number of people from the former Dutch colonies in Surinam (351.681 people) and the former Dutch Antillean islands Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Saba, St. Maarten and St. Eustatius, to the Netherlands (157.114 people). In addition, there are significant groups with a migrant background who came to the Netherlands as "guest labourers" from Turkey (404.459 people) and Morocco (396.539 people) (Statistics Netherlands 2018). The majority of these people migrated to the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s. Furthermore, approximately 250,000 people from several African countries live in the Netherlands, most have migrated recently for economic reasons and as political refugees. Both in a public debate and in academic research the emphasis is put on the lack of social, political, and economic integration of ethnic minorities. Within this dominant narrative, issues of racism and discrimination are often denied and downplayed by a dynamic network of academic researchers and policy makers, which Nimako and Essed call "Dutch minority research industry" (284).

In public discourse, it has been and arguably continues to be, a taboo to address racism (Nimako and Willemsen 2011 and Weiner 2014). The history of slavery, colonialism, and its legacies conflict with the dominant self-image based on the values of tolerance, democracy, and freedom that the (white) Dutch hold near and dear. In her book White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race (2016) anthropologist Gloria Wekker describes this concept as:

A strong paradox that is operative in the Netherlands and that, as I argue, is at the heart of the nation: the passion, forcefulness, and even aggression that race, in its intersections with gender, sexuality, and class, elicits among the white population, while at the same time the reactions of denial, disavowal, and elusiveness reign supreme. (4)

Accessing a cultural archive, built during over 400 years of Dutch colonial rule, Wekker fundamentally challenges Dutch racial exceptionalism by undermining the dominant narrative of the Netherlands as a "gentle" and "ethical" nation (17). Wekker's theoretical position is based on her perspective of the concept "the cultural archive," which was developed by the postcolonial scholar Edward Said (Wekker 2). A concept he referred to as a storehouse of "a particular knowledge and structures of attitude and reference" (Said qtd. in Wekker 2), which was embedded in the self-image of Europe's imperial nations, encompasses the structures of inequality not just in the institutions, but in people's thoughts and feelings based on race.

Furthermore, Wekker builds on the work of Stoler (2002), who carried out research on the archives of Dutch colonialism in the East Indies and wrote about these archives as a "repository of memory," which is defined as being "the memories, the knowledge, and affect with regard to race that were deposited within metropolitan populations and the power relations embedded within them" (Wekker 19). Thus, Wekker positions the "cultural archive" more as a metaphor than an actual physical archive; to which she also suggests that the "cultural archive" may, in fact, overlap with the colonial archive. The paradox of this dominant self-image is that the Dutch colonial and imperial past is largely erased from the public memory in the Netherlands (Weiner 1).

Developing the Black Archives

The Black Archives is a historical archive with a unique collection of books, documents, and artefacts, which are the legacy of Black Dutch writers, scientists, and activists. It documents the history of Black emancipation movements and individuals in the Netherlands. Currently, the archive consists of more than 8,000 historical books, documents, photographs, films, and artefacts about Surinamese and Black history in the Netherlands. Central topics from the archives, such as racism, slavery, and information concerning former colonies and the Black emancipation are underexposed; even though everyone should possess knowledge about this part of the Surinamese, Caribbean, African, and Dutch history. In an attempt to remedy this widespread lack of knowledge, The Black Archives provides book collections and literature which are not, or rarely, discussed in schools and within universities (Weiner 2014). In this way, black literature, knowledge, and information are made accessible for study and research. The archives aim to inspire conversations, activities and literature from black and other perspectives that are often overlooked elsewhere, and to make black Dutch history accessible to a wide audience.

The Black Archives is managed by the New Urban Collective (NUC), which is a network of students and young professionals with the mission to empower young people with ethnic minority backgrounds, in particular of African descent. The NUC aims to strengthen the position of young people from diverse cultural backgrounds by stimulating their personal development, raising their self-awareness and advocating on their behalf (New Urban Collective, Missie & Visie). The collective organises symposia, conferences, debates and mentoring programs in the areas of education, career, cultural diversity and anti-racism. With around 40 volunteers and a network of 2000-2500 youth, students and young professionals, it aims to bridge the gap between the local community, grassroots organisations, private institutions and (local) government.

In 2015, New Urban Collective was approached by Thiemo and Miguel Heilbron, the sons of the Surinamese sociologist Waldo Heilbron, who passed away in 2009. Waldo Heilbron had left behind a significant collection of books which his sons inherited. In honour of their father, who had been active inside and outside of the academy on the issues of slavery, colonialism and emancipation, they wanted to make the collection available for the public, in particular for Black and Surinamese students and scholars. They ended up donating half of the collection to the Anton de Kom University in Surinam, and the other half they shared with the NUC. Waldo Heilbron was a sociologist at the University of Amsterdam who studied post-colonialism, the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and its legacy, racism and historiography. In his book *The Future of the Past: Reflections on Dutch History of Slavery and its Legacy* (2006) Heilbron wrote:

The Trans-Atlantic slave trade and slavery left deep traces; in society and in the individual lives of many who are heirs of this history. In the public debate about the Dutch history of slavery, that rose at the end of the last century; it is this part of the history that is largely the "silenced past." A lot of what is concealed is forgotten. ... In deepening the knowledge about us? "concealed past," new ways of thinking and research are needed. (my translation; 6).

It was Heilbron's mission to develop new perspectives within the historiography and social sciences by contributing to alternative methodologies and critical perspectives. Besides his work at the university, he was active at Vereniging Ons Suriname (Association "Our Surinam" or VOS) and set up the Surinam Museum in 1995. Together with the Heilbron brothers, the NUC made the collection available by opening the New Urban Café in Amsterdam North, space where the book collection could be accessed, and small-scale events

such as dinner and lunch discussion were organised. However, due to gentrification, the New Urban Café had to move from its location. In 2016, the NUC's it was relocated to the premises of VOS on the east side of Amsterdam (The Black Archives, Over Ons). The association had been co-founded on January 18th, 1919 by Julius Jacob Gemmel, a Surinamese civil servant who studied in the Netherlands. It was established to bring unemployed Surinamese people into contact with one another and became a cultural association. Throughout its history, the association developed an expansive archival collection of books, documents and artefacts about the Surinamese community in the Netherlands in relation to an international context.

As the New Urban Café moved to the building of VOS, the different collections of books and documents were brought together. Furthermore, several collections of books were donated by black intellectuals, individuals and movements. The Black Archives grew out of these different collections coming together at VOS. The Black Archives is able to document the history of The Black emancipation movements and individuals in the Netherlands and its international network. It is also able to map the theoretical frameworks and knowledge production within the Black Dutch context.

The family of Glenn Willemsen (1948-2008) donated an important book collection as well. Willemsen studied Social Sciences at the University of Amsterdam and obtained his doctorate in 1980. He was also the first director of the NiNsee (National Institute for the Study of Dutch Slavery and its Legacy). In his last book Dagen van Gejuich en Gejubel [Days of Cheers and Jubilation; my trans.] he described how the abolition of slavery on July 1st 1863 was experienced in the Netherlands and the Dutch Caribbean (The Black Archives, Willemsen Collectie).

The collection of Hermina and Otto Huiswoud is the oldest book collection in The Black Archives. It exposed a silenced history of Black Dutch radicalism. These Dutch-speaking Caribbean activists were part of the early Black radical networks in the interwar period from the late 1910s to the 1940s. Hermina preserved articles, documents and books about her life and her husband Otto's and the fight against colonialism and imperialism. Hermina passed away in 1998 in Amsterdam. Her collection forms an essential basis for The Black Archives. The archive shows a connection between the lives and work of Hermina and Otto Huiswoud, the independence movement in Surinam and contemporary generations of anti-colonial and radical movements of the Surinamese and the Black people in the Netherlands.

The Black Archives serves as "witnesses" of a history that has largely remained invisible to the large public. To make this history more visible The Black Archives uses art and public programs such as debates, dialogues, movie screenings and exhibitions. Examples of public programming include a book presentation by Gloria Wekker, after the Dutch translation of her book White Innocence had been launched in January 2018. Dr Philomena Essed gave a book presentation after a new edition of her book Everyday Racism was re-published in February 2018.

Within the exhibition, The Black Archives offered a special program and tours around themes involving the story of the Huiswouds. In December 2017 Hakim Adi, the author of the book Pan-Africanism and Communism, gave a lecture on his book and engaged in dialogue with local activists and students about the relevance of understanding this history to engage in the contemporary struggle against inequality. In May 2018, the renowned scholar, activist, icon of the Black power movement and former member of the Communist Party of the US, Angela Davis, visited The Black Archives. In her lecture at the VU University, she connected the history of the Huiswouds to her own history in the Black radical movements and the necessity to connect it to contemporary global struggles against imperialism, authoritarianism and racism (Davis 20188).

Black & Revolutionary: An Exhibition about the Lives of Hermina and Otto Huiswoud

To make the history of colonialism, slavery, its legacy and resistance against it more accessible for a broad audience the decision was made to develop an exhibition based on the lives of Hermina and Otto Huiswoud. Complex concepts and histories such as imperialism, colonialism and communism were translated into texts which were understandable and relatable for diverse audiences of different generations and cultures.

The authors of this article did research in the archives of the Huiswouds in The Black Archives and at the Tamiment Library of the New York University where the archives of Hermina can be found.

The Black Archives, the exhibition "Black and Revolutionary" and the related program were visited by more than 2,500 visitors and gained a significant amount of attention in Dutch media. Within the exhibition of 200 square feet, the visitor was guided by six chapters and its panels with historical information on Hermina and Otto Huiswoud and their struggle for the Black liberation since the early 1920s as communists. Each panel represented a thematic part in their lives as professional revolutionaries who travelled across the globe. As a result, guests were taken on a chronical journey of the Black Dutch radicalism and its intersection with African American/Caribbean history and communism. The story-line was illustrated through displays with historical information, archival images combined with contemporary art which gave insights into how issues from this past still occur in our everyday lives.

Because the legacy of slavery and colonialism are complex histories with various highs and lows, a timeline facilitated a guide to understanding how the past led to a contemporary context. In this sense, the exhibition was also intended to raise awareness around issues such as social exclusion, discrimination and racism, and current Black movements. With the collaboration with artists Raul Balai, Iris Kensmil and Brian Elstak, the exhibition identified links with the past through artworks. In the next sections, we will provide a reflection and summary of the historical storyline of the Huiswouds in the exhibition through six chapters in relation to contemporary issues.

Migration from the Guyanas to New York

The first chapter showed how the story of Hermina and Otto Huiswoud originates from a long history of colonialism in Guyana's. Their birth countries, British Guyana and Suriname, formerly known as Dutch Guyana, bordered on the Northern coast of South America, were occupied since the seventeenth century by the European colonialists. The colonial powers developed plantation economies-based labour of enslaved and indentured after the abolition of slavery (Nimako and Willemsen 4).

Otto Huiswoud was the second child in a family of five. He was born on the 28th of October, 1893 in Paramaribo, Suriname. His father, Rudolf Francis Huiswoud, lived until the age of ten in slavery in the City of Paramaribo. At the age of sixteen, Otto became a sailor. Travelling to Amsterdam from Surinam he left the ship in New York because the captain was drunk. New York would remain his home for the subsequent years (Turner and Enckevort).

Hermina Alicia Dumont, alias Hermie, was born on 8th October 1905 in New Amsterdam, British Guiana, which is now known as Guyana. Hermina and her mother decided to move to New York in 1919. After the young Hermina was able to work in Harlem, she was exposed to political ideologies and networks that would inspire her activism at a later stage in life (Turner). This first part of the exhibition was designed in this way to challenge dominant narratives of migration about Surinamese and other Caribbean people. It shows different patterns of migration in the period after the abolition of slavery. In addition, it fostered discussions about parallels about current flows of migration between former colonies in the Caribbean and metropoles such as New York and Amsterdam.

Black Co-Founder of the Communist Party of the USA

Within the exhibition, the time period around the 1920s played an important role in their growth of becoming the Black Dutch Radicals. Otto and Hermina ended up in Harlem during a period of artistic, political and social explosion known as the Harlem Renaissance (1920-1937) (Turner). This movement partly arose out of "the Great Migration" of hundreds of thousands of African-Americans escaping the racial segregation and white supremacist violence in the South of the United States and the migration of the Caribbean people to Harlem, New York. In this context of intellectual and artistic development, Otto came in touch with socialist and communist ideologies via organisers such as Hubert A. Harrison. He became an active member of the Socialist Party of America (SPA) in 1916. After the Bolshevik Revolution tension arose within the socialist

party, the left-wing of the party split off the organisation and founded the Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA) in 1919. Otto was the only black person present during the founding the CPUSA and would play an important role in the subsequent period by articulating the issue of race within the Left (Adi 2013; Turner and van Enckevort).

One of the panels of this second chapter revealed the relationship between Otto Huiswoud and Hermina Dumont through their marriage certificate. It was after meeting Otto Huiswoud in Harlem in 1923 when the seventeen-year-old Hermina Dumont became politicised since her arrival in the United States. Although she was less politically active than Otto during her early years in Harlem, she was aware of social problems through her mother's interest in the politics of Guyana (Turner). When she married Otto Huiswoud in 1926, her marriage and involvement with Otto's politics accelerated her passion for social change and a life-long commitment to political action. In 1928, she became a member of the Communist Party as she believed that communism could provide solutions for the socio-economic issues faced by the working class (Turner). This second chapter reflected different ways that people became politicised and fostered discussion on how people had become aware of social and political issues in contemporary society. Otto Huiswoud became aware through his contact with socialist newspapers and soapbox speakers on the streets of Harlem and because of the racism he was confronted with in the US. During tours, a parallel was made with the role of social media in contemporary society which fosters the growth of political and social awareness around issues such as institutional racism and socioeconomic inequality.

Caribbean Radicals during the Harlem Renaissance

In the third chapter, the Black communism was at the centre; it was divided into two parts. The first part presented the ideology of the Black communists such as Otto. According to Bergin, one of the reasons communism spoke to the Black and Caribbean members of the ABB was Lenin's publication The Right of Nations to Self-Determination, which tied anti-colonialism to anti-capitalism. In 1922 Otto Huiswoud was selected as a delegate of the Workers Party to go to the Fourth World Congress of the Comintern, the international communist organisation with a membership of national communist parties promoting world revolution. The exhibition included a picture of a young Otto Huiswoud and the Jamaican poet Claude McKay. In his speech to the delegates of the Congress, Otto addressed the situation of the black working class in the US, the Caribbean and Africa and ended with four resolutions emphasising the need of mobilising black people for the world revolution (van Enckevort).

International Trade Union Committee for Negro Workers (ITUCNW)

The second part of the third chapter displays one of the main organisations where Otto and Hermina Huiswoud were active, International Trade Union Committee for Negro Workers (ITUCNW). The ITUCNW was first led by the African-American communist James Ford from 1928 to 1931. He was succeeded by George Padmore in 1931. After Padmore was expelled from the communist movement in 1933, Otto Huiswoud became head of the ITUCNW (Adi, van Enckevort 2008). He held this position until the organisation's dissolution in 1937. The ITUCNW did not have a mass following. However, through its publication *The Negro Worker*, it was able to reach activists and the Black workers in different parts of the world. In the publication, the Black activists and organisers published articles about issues such as imperialism, colonialism, and racism in different countries on the African continent, in the Caribbean, the United States, and Europe. In the exhibition, several texts and images from The Negro Worker were reproduced. Furthermore, in the exhibition, the role of the Black women to communism was addressed through the story of Hermina. Hermina assisted with editing, publishing and distributing The Negro Worker (Turner and Weiss). Under the pseudonym Helen Davis, she published several articles between 1934 and 1937 showing that the Black women played an important role in the Black emancipation movement as well.

This section, especially the adventurous story of the young Otto travelling to Moscow, spoke to the public because it challenged dominant narratives on communism and the Black emancipation. The majority of visitors,

for example, were familiar with the Black emancipation movements such as the US-based the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power movement symbolised by dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X but they had never heard about the Black communists. During events with scholars Hakim Adi in February 2018 and Keeyanga Yahmatta Taylor in April 2018, the history of the Black radicals, such as the Huiswouds was related to contemporary issues. One of the legacies of colonialism is racism which manifests itself in the form of discrimination on the labour market and income inequality (Nimako and Willemsen). By placing contemporary issues, such as these, in this historical context of black communists and black radicals, the discussion about racism was broadened to include intersections with capitalism, class and gender. A discussion arose among students and activists after students of a student movement at the University of Color had organised an intervention at the University of Amsterdam in December 2017. They questioned why no Black woman was included in the academic event in which the work of Black women was the central topic. Esajas wrote an article titled "Lessons from the hidden history of the Black Radical tradition" in which the intervention was placed in the historical context of the Black radical tradition which included Hermina and Otto Huiswoud.

The Travellings of Professional Revolutionaries

As advocates for a world revolution, Hermina and Otto Huiswoud travelled across the globe. The fourth chapter was translated into an interactive part of the exhibition by artist Raul Balai. Visitors were invited to move blocks with short stories about the places the Huiswouds visited on a large printed world map to make them aware of many places they had visited as "professional revolutionaries" (van Enckevort).

In 1929 Otto was sent on this trip to recruit Caribbean representatives for an international congress of Negro workers which was planned in July 1930, in Hamburg (Post). A year later the couple visited Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba, Columbia, Curacao, Venezuela, Trinidad, Barbados, and British Guyana and Suriname. During the journey in 1929, Otto Huiswoud had a debate with Marcus Garvey, the co-founder of one of the largest Black emancipation movements Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Garvey's vision was based on the principles of economic self-reliance, race pride and repatriation "Back to Africa." The UNIA set up laundries, grocery stores, doll making and printing companies, the "Black Star" shipping line and other businesses. The organisation had millions of followers and hundreds of chapters across the African diaspora, and on the African continent, Initially, the Black communists such as Huiswoud and Domingo attempted to cooperate with Garvey by trying to influence him and his followers (Turner). As these attempts failed, tension and rivalry between Garvey and the Black communists arose. This was one of the reasons why Otto Huiswoud was sent as a delegate of the American Negro Labor Congress (ANLC) to the UNIA convention in Jamaica. Garvey challenged Huiswoud to a public debate on the motion "the Negro problem can only be solved by International Labour cooperation between white and black labour" (Post 3). Huiswoud, defending the affirmative based on his Marxist ideas, stated that the "Negro problem was definitely a class problem, fundamentally a class one and not a race one" (Post 3). As Garvey is a relatively well-known figure within the African Diaspora, artist Brian Elstak created a mural of Garvey and his wife Amy Garvey across the one of the Huiswouds. Similarly, to the second chapter of the exhibition, this story allowed us to place contemporary debates about the Black emancipation and structural inequality in a broader, historical context. It challenged the visitors to the exhibition and the public to think and discuss strategies of emancipation and solidarity. Huiswoud advocated solidarity between working class people from a different cultural background as opposed to a focus on solely Black People. This historical debate was echoed in discussions that took place about the need for solidarity in contemporary society. As a response to a question about "the importance of a politics of solidarity, of seeing the Black liberation struggle as bound up with a class struggle against capitalism" the scholar responded as follows: "There actually has to be a political argument articulated for solidarity, and not just solidarity because it is good and makes us feel better about ourselves, but because it is an indispensable political strategy for us to defend what we have, let alone to mount a movement for reform" (Taylor). During the event with Taylor in April 2018 discussion were held about the need for solidarity in the face of the upcoming election of Donald Trump in the US and extreme right-wing movements across the globe.

Labour Rebellions in the Caribbean and Anton de Kom

Another historical figure that was featured in the fourth chapter was Anton de Kom. Artist Brian Elstak made a mural about him. The financial crash of 1929 and the subsequent world economic crisis had its impact on the Caribbean region. Grievances among the population of workers caused a wave of labour rebellions which hit the Dutch colony Suriname as well. In October 1930 a group of unemployed workers rebelled in Paramaribo, Suriname, led by Louis Doedel (Meel 257). Two years later the unrest among the workers and the unemployed came to the surface again. Anton de Kom, who was born in Surinam in 1898 but moved to find work in Haiti, Curacao, and eventually the Netherlands, had returned to Suriname. Although he never was a formal member of the Communist Party, he was sympathetic to socialist and communist ideas. Aware of the miserable conditions many workers had to deal with, Anton de Kom started a consultancy for workers in his parent's house in the capital Paramaribo. Attracting large numbers of workers, the colonial authorities saw him as a threat and arrested him on February 1st, 1933. Large numbers of people demanded his release and gathered in front of the office of the Attorney General on February 7th 1933. Rumour had it that de Kom would be released, but the crowd refused to disperse. The police opened fire, 30 people got wounded, and two people were killed. Anton de Kom was deported to the Netherlands without a trial in May 1933. In the Netherlands, he wrote and finished his book Wij slaven van Suriname (We Slaves of Surinam; my trans.), in which he elaborately criticised the miserable conditions the masses of the people in Surinam had to live in, because of the colonial policies of the Dutch authorities in Surinam. In 1934 de Kom met Otto Huiswoud in Amsterdam, they attended the meeting of the Anti-Imperialist League in Paris. Otto also asked him to write for The Negro Worker, which led to the 1934 piece "Misery and Starvation in Surinam" by de Kom. In this article, he criticised the harsh conditions and poverty under which the workers class in Suriname lived: "Workers, organise and fight against exploitation, unemployment and starvation! Close ranks in struggle for the emancipation of the colonial toilers! Demand the independence of Dutch Guiana!" (De Kom 19).

The life of Anton de Kom is more recognised within the collective memory than the Huiswouds due to the work of Surinamese activists in the 1970s. Therefore, The Black Archives organised a series of events to (also) push for recognition of the history of Hermina and Otto Huiswoud to expand Surinamese history. One of the events was organised around the annual commemoration of Anton de Kom in February 2018. In addition, author Karin Amatmoekrim wrote an article in a series of articles which were published with the theme "silenced history" on the Dutch media platform "De Correspondent" in cooperation with The Black Archives and urban radio station FunX. Amatmoekrim wrote: "Silencing is an active happening; you have known something and decide not to tell it further. Because you think that awareness about it is dangerous or unimportant, or it distracts from a subject which you would prefer the conversation to be about" (Amatmoekrim). The series of articles, the events and exhibition can be seen as an intervention in the dominant Eurocentric narrative by making histories visible which had remained silenced for a long time.

WOII—Imprisonment and Separation

After the period in which Otto and Hermina travelled as professional revolutionaries around the world, a time of uncertainty was discussed in the fifth chapter. Therefore, this panel was displayed through two separate pieces to mark the physical distance between Hermina and Otto in this period. In 1941 Otto was advised to recover in a tropical climate from a kidney surgery and pneumonia, so he travelled to Suriname. One day after his arrival in Paramaribo, he was ordered to be arrested and incarcerated by the governor Kielstra. Huiswoud was incarcerated, together with the suspected members of the National Socialist Party, suspected Nazis, (Jewish) Germans and other Surinamese people accused of being a communist. After Otto was released in August 1942, he was forced to sign a "statement of non-activity." This forced him to declare that he was not a member of any political party and that he acknowledged the Government. Otto was banned from attending political meetings, and he had to be at home by 10 p.m. every day. The arrests of both Anton de Kom and Otto Huiswoud by the Dutch colonial authorities in Surinam saw the movements of workers, especially those with ties to the communist parties as a threat which had to be repressed.

One of the panels showed how the authorities intercepted letters which were exchanged between Otto and Hermina, who was still residing in New York during Otto's imprisonment. Despite the long imprisonment of her husband, she continued her work and political activities in the United States (Turner). The imprisonment of Otto Huiswoud in Surinam during the war, which was translated into a visual installation by artist Raul Balai, provided an alternative way of remembering the Second World War. Wekker argued that the dominant "white innocence" narrative around the remembrance of the Second World War is focused on the Dutch as victims of aggression and not on what happened in the colonies. This specific part of the exhibition challenged this dominant view by focusing on the ways in which Dutch authorities engaged in different forms of aggression during the war as well.

Amsterdam: Vereniging Ons Suriname (VOS)

In the sixth and last chapter, the narrative centred on the Netherlands from the 1950s onwards. After the war, Hermina and Otto moved to Amsterdam where they spend the remainder of their lives. In 1947 Otto Huiswoud became a member of the vereniging Ons Suriname (VOS, Association "Our Surinam"). In 1954 Otto was elected as its chairman. Due to his experience with being arrested because of his membership in the Communist Party and the anti-communist sentiment, Otto and his wife Hermina did not openly talk about their communist past, but they did bring their experiences, knowledge and network with them. Under Otto's leadership, the association became a hub of anti-colonial and intellectual exchange and mobilisation.

Anti-colonial Movement at VOS

One of the important initiatives under the leadership of Otto was the creation of the monthly publication *De Koerier* (The Courier; my trans.) which the visitor could view via a reproduction in the exhibition. Hermina and Otto knew the value of producing and distributing an independent paper. In October 1954 the first edition of *De Koerier* was published. With *De Koerier*, VOS attempted to create awareness around issues of colonialism and freedom in an international context. It contained articles on the developments of Surinam but also on anti-colonial struggles across the African continent and in Asia and the ongoing civil rights movement in the United States.

Hermina and Otto built a great network due to their work as professional revolutionaries for many years. They maintained contact from Amsterdam with activists from their political past. In 1954 W.E.B. Du Bois, the prominent African-American sociologist and pan-Africanist, who had become a member of the Communist Party of the United States, visited "Our Surinam" association (Corsten). Du Bois was the co-organizer of the first Pan-African Congress in 1900 and the co-founder of the civil rights organisation National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909. The Huiswouds and DuBois have been in contact since the 1920s.

Within this VOS network, working groups were formed to organise activities, such as lectures and an annual Keti Koti event. Keti Koti, the commemoration of the abolishment of slavery in the Dutch Kingdom on July the 1st was an important moment. Together with organisations such as Wie Eegie Sani and the Surinamese Students Association, VOS used Keti Koti to mobilise people and share views on anticolonialism and independence. Today Keti Koti has become an important moment of public remembrance of the history of slavery, colonialism and its legacy. After a prolonged struggle, mainly by Afro-Surinamese and Afro-Caribbean people, to establish monuments in honour of their ancestors who had lived through, resisted or died during the period of slavery, a national monument was revealed in Amsterdam in 2002 (Willemsen and Nimako).

In addition, the NinSee was founded, an institution with the task to conduct research, disseminate knowledge and information around this history and its legacy. One of the main activities NinSee organises,

together with 529 Productions, is the annual commemoration of the abolishment of slavery through the Keti Koti festival in Amsterdam, It has attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors between 2013 and 2018. During Keti Koti 2017 The Black Archives launched a crowdfunding campaign to raise funds for the development of the exhibition. Within a few weeks, more than €20.000 was collected by more than 700 donators, reflecting the broad support and need for these kinds of "alternative archives."

The Huiswouds and the Dutch Black Radical Tradition

Otto was dealing with health issues at the beginning of the 1960s. From his deathbed, he still gave instructions for a protest, for the murder on a Congolese freedom fighter Patrice Lumumba. In February 1961 Otto passed away. Until the end, he was committed to the emancipation of the Black People. Hermina stayed active within the association, and she maintained contact with active (board) members and her international network. One of her missions was to secure the story of her husband Otto Huiswoud so it could be told. Based on the papers and documents that Hermina left behind, The Black Archives was able to share this history that had remained silenced.

The exhibition aimed to show how Hermina and Otto Huiswoud can be seen as part of a tradition of the Black radical thinkers and organisers. In addition, we aimed to show how contemporary Black Activism in the Netherlands is a part of a longer tradition of the Black resistance, a history which has been silenced. Coming from countries under the colonial rule of European powers. Caribbean migrants were confronted with dreadful conditions the masses of Black People faced in the United States: racial segregation and discrimination, and economic insecurity. A number of these Caribbean migrants were drawn to socialist ideas of class struggle and revolution, especially after the October Revolution in the Soviet Union in 1917. Their experience in the Caribbean colonies and being racialised as the Black in the United States, however, forced them to think and organise around the issues of race as well as to create a dynamic interplay between the "emancipatory ideas" and "militant action" about race and class (Stevens 3). Robinson states that these Black political activists drawn to socialism, communism and Marxism constituted "the black radical tradition," which could not be analysed from the European models of history:

Black radicalism, consequently, cannot be understood within the particular context of its genesis. It is not a variant of Western radicalism whose proponents happen to be Black. Rather, it is a specifically African response to an oppression emergent from the immediate determinants of European development in the modern era and framed by orders of human exploitation woven into the interstices of European social life from the inception of Western civilization" (Robinson 97).

In Robinson's book Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition the author illustrates his arguments by describing the development of Marxism in Europe and Black resistance against colonial oppression. He exemplifies this by describing how these traditions influenced Black thinkers W.E.B. Du Bois, C.L.R. James, and Richard Wright. Stevens, however, refutes the idea that Black radicalism is a "tradition of great men," as this approach neglects the role of collective organisation and black workers as a class. In addition, Davies and McDuffie write about the pivotal role women played in these Black radical movements by bringing gender into the equation besides the issues of race and class.

Through the exhibition's public programme which ended with a summer school on the Black Radical Thought with dr. Tony Bogues, The Black Archives made an important contribution to the historiography of the Black radicalism besides the intervention in dominant historical narratives.

With the interpretation of Surinamese-Dutch artists, the exhibition shows how black radical thinking is still relevant to understand contemporary issues that Black people in the Netherlands face from a historical perspective. Especially the artwork of Raul Balai and Iris Kensmil shows how the history of Hermina and Otto Huiswoud intersects with present-day challenges as the fight against the Dutch blackfacing tradition Zwarte Piet. The drawing of the Black activists and their slogan "Zwarte Piet Is Racism" was her artistic interpretation of connecting the history of the Black radicalism and the Huiswouds to the contemporary movement against Zwarte Piet (Helsloot). In the video installation of artist Raul Balai, the imprisonment of Otto Huiswoud was visualised with the unlawful arrests of anti-Zwarte Piet activist who were jailed. Black activists fighting against contemporary forms of racism and anti-blackness such as Zwarte Piet were invited to use the space for their meetings and gatherings as one of the few places they could meet. In an article titled "Colonialism," the editors of *The Courier* which was being led by Otto Huiswoud wrote:

The upbringing is aimed directly against the history of the people, historical facts are being falsified, the history of the people is completely suppressed by that of the motherland, or it is simply concealed. National heroes become criminals and terrorists while the colonists are presented as paternal, humane and highly developed, and sometimes they are even elevated to national heroes. (Vereniging Ons Suriname 2)

Huiswoud edited a paper in which this process of the suppression of historical narratives was being discussed. Ironically, he became subject to this process, his life and the life of his wife Hermina has remained hidden for a long time. This exhibition of The Black Archives is an example of how 'alternative archives' can be used to make hidden histories visible again, challenge dominant narratives which tend to downplay or deny histories of slavery and colonialism and its legacies such as the narrative of "white innocence" (Wekker 18). An archive is not a neutral space, and an 'alternative archive' itself will not necessarily change dominant structures of knowledge and public memory. It is the engagement with the archive through public programmes and the dynamic interplay between activists, artists, educators and institutions that sparks change.

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