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Introduction

Paul Bijl and Grace V.S. Chin

This volume offers the first book-length study of the circulation and appropriation of Raden Ajeng Kartini (1879–1904, henceforth Kartini), a young Javanese woman whose influential writings emerged during the colonial Dutch East Indies, and who is now recognized as an iconic feminist and nationalist figure in Indonesia and, after Anne Frank, the most well-known Dutch-language author in the world. Spanning across the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries in both Asian and Western contexts, this volume maps and interprets how varying state, social and cultural actors and institutions have appropriated her thoughts to articulate their views on the position of women, race, class, civil rights, nationalism and other subjects in (post)colonial and global Indonesia, Europe and North America.

The world has known Kartini since the publication of a selection of her famous letters in 1911 titled *Door duisternis tot licht* (Through darkness into light) (Kartini 1911). Before that, she was mainly known in Dutch colonial circles, as can be glimpsed from almost one hundred newspaper articles during her lifetime and in response to her death in 1904.¹ Since 1911, she has been translated into numerous languages, including Arabic, Sundanese, Javanese, Japanese, Russian and French, but most influentially into English as *Letters of a Javanese Princess* in 1920

(Kartini 1920) and into Indonesian as *Habis gelap terbitlah terang* (When darkness ends, light appears) for the first time in 1922 (Kartini 1922, 1938). Between 1911 and Indonesian independence in 1945, Indonesian and Dutch newspapers devoted thousands of articles to her and to the “Kartini schools” named after her. Since then, hundreds of books, theses and scholarly articles analysing her life and letters have been produced (Delpher). In the 1960s, she was taken up by the UNESCO Collection of Representative Works, with a foreword for the English edition by Eleanor Roosevelt and by Orientalist Louis Massignon for the French edition (Kartini 1960, 1964; see also Bijl in this volume, Chapter 3). In Indonesia, President Sukarno established Kartini’s birthdate, 21 April, as Kartini Day (*Hari Kartini*) in 1946 and made her a national hero in 1964, while under the New Order of President Suharto, Kartini Day was transformed into an annual event that is still celebrated across the archipelago (Sears 1996; Rutherford’s Chapter 5 in this volume; Robinson’s Chapter 6 in this volume).

Kartini is the most well-known figure in Indonesian history: all school children in Indonesia encounter her at a young age on Kartini Day and every cab driver in Indonesia’s capital, Jakarta, can sing the “Kartini song” entitled *Ibu kita Kartini* (Our mother Kartini). The internet and social media are full of creative remediations of Kartini’s texts and imagery, including the admonishing meme of *Pergi gelap pulang terang* (Going out in darkness, coming home at dawn), which shows the supposed decline in the morals of Indonesian women doing all-nighters. Women’s groups and feminist movements have broadly embraced her, including Poetri Mardika in the 1910s, the communist women of Gerwani in the 1950s with their journal *Api Kartini* (Kartini’s flame), and the current transnational gender research network “Kartini Asia” (Blackburn 2004; Martyn 2005; Robinson 2009; Wieringa 2002; Chin’s Chapter 4 in this volume). Several films have been made about her life, including the New Order movie *R.A. Kartini* (1983) and, more recently, *Surat cinta untuk Kartini* (Love letters for Kartini, 2016), and *Kartini* (2017). In Indonesian literature, she inspired biographies, including Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s *Panggil aku Kartini sadja* (Just call me Kartini, 1962) and Sitisoeemandari Soeroto’s *Kartini: Sebuah biografi* (Kartini: A biography, 1977; see also Rutherford 1993, reprinted in this volume, Chapter 5) and is a role model for one of the main characters in Y.B. Mangunwijaya’s *Burung-burung manyar* (The weaverbirds, 1981). Kartini has even been picked up by Indonesian advertising companies to both attract female customers and celebrate

nationalist culture. The 2015 billboard “Come Celebrate Kartini Day with Mitsubishi”, for instance, not only displayed a portrait of Kartini but also the Indonesian flag to suggest that buying a Mitsubishi on the birthday of a national hero also meant contributing to the nation. In the Netherlands, the memory of Kartini remains fairly strong in particular corners, evinced by the annual Kartini prize, awarded to those working for the emancipation of migrants and women in the city of The Hague, and the Kartini Wing of the Museum of the Tropics in Amsterdam, which opened in 2004 (Bijl 2015, reprinted in this volume, Chapter 7).

Looking at the history of Kartini as an appropriated figure, we are struck by the rich diversity of appropriative acts as well as by the significance of the roles played by actors and institutions in producing and claiming their “versions” of Kartini. Not only were they involved in the reconstruction of Kartini as a historical figure in cultural memory but they also engaged in contestations and debates that involved the polemics of—broadly speaking—modernity and tradition, religion (particularly Islam) and secularism, colonialism and anti-colonialism, writing and fighting, feminism and sexism, elitism and popularism, Java-centrism and regionalisation, national and regional history, racism and multiculturalism. This list is by no means exhaustive, but it does provide us an insight into the apparent ease with which Kartini has been troped in the past century, and how her life and ideas have lent themselves to multiple, differing interpretations, contestations, and appropriations. It is this very multiplicity or plurality of Kartini as a “floating signifier” (Robinson’s Chapter 6 in this volume) that has given rise to this volume, which seeks to show how her symbolism has been used by varying actors and institutions across the twentieth and twenty-first century colonial and postcolonial world.

Despite the multiplicity of Kartini as a cultural, national and feminist discourse, research on her rich afterlife remains lacking, nor has there been an attempt to place her on a transnational scale. As a historical figure, Kartini has been thoroughly examined by one of our authors here, Joost Coté, who has published translations of her letters, notably *Letters from Kartini: An Indonesian Feminist, 1900–1904* (Kartini 1992), *On Feminism and Nationalism: Kartini’s Letters to Stella Zeehandelaar 1899–1903* (Kartini 2005), and *Kartini: The Complete Writings, 1898–1904* (Kartini 2014) as well as the letters of Kartini’s sisters, *Realizing the Dream of R.A. Kartini: Her Sisters’ Letters from Colonial Java* (Coté 2008). Apart from translations, studies on Kartini—both local and international—also focus on her historical or

colonial context (Hawkins 2007; Taylor 1976, 1989, 1993, 2010; Watson 2000) and her advocacy of rights and justice especially in relation to women's equality, marriage and education (Blackburn 2004; Muttaqin 2015). Other studies examine the relevance of Kartini as a national figure (Mahy 2012; Rutherford 1993, reprinted in this volume, Chapter 5) as well as her silences (Bijl 2015, reprinted in this volume, Chapter 7; Woodward 2015). However, the majority of essays or books mention Kartini only in relation to their research into other areas of Indonesian life; this particular trend manifests strongly in studies on Indonesian women or on gender and sexuality in Indonesia, and includes Wieringa's *Sexual Politics in Indonesia* (2002), Siapno's *Gender, Islam, Nationalism and the State in Aceh* (2002), Martyn's *The Women's Movement in Postcolonial Indonesia: Gender and Nation in a New Democracy* (2005), Robinson's *Gender, Islam and Democracy in Indonesia* (2009), and Nurmila's *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia* (2009), among others. As a result, actual studies on Kartini alone are, in fact, limited. Our volume aims to fill these gaps in the research field and to offer, for the first time, a focused volume of essays on Kartini.

Mapping more than a century's worth of appropriative acts of Kartini's life and writings, this volume explores their influence across varying temporal, spatial, and linguistic contexts, from Dutch colonial imaginaries, postcolonial Indonesian nationalism and the cultural policies of UNESCO in the 1960s to twenty-first century European multiculturalism and contemporary Indonesian labour relations. Significantly, this volume interrogates the discursive underpinnings of the multiple appropriations of Kartini by exploring the ways in which the ideologies and practices of power, both formal and informal, shape how she is remembered by Indonesia and the world. The memory of Kartini has been strategically deployed to cement as well as to undermine existing power structures. Furthermore, appropriations of Kartini tap into underlying political, social, and cultural investments and agendas which can be viewed as responses to the needs or anxieties of those constructing her. Thus, the study of these varying appropriations will provide necessary insights into the complexities of remembrance and representation as well as the intersectional dynamics of gender, race, class, sexuality, religion and (trans)nationality that enter the discursive constructions of Kartini as an icon, a point that is instructive in the study of (post)colonial Southeast Asia, national and cultural memory as well as world literature.

Kartini's Life and Writings

The daughter of Raden Mas Adipati Ario Samingun Sosroningrat, the Regent (*bupati*) of Jepara, and Ngasirah, Sosroningrat's secondary wife,² Kartini was born on 21 April 1879 into the *priyayi* or native ruling administrative class in Java. As the fifth child and second oldest daughter among eleven children, Kartini owed her early exposure to Dutch education to her father, a relatively progressive man of his time. Sosroningrat received Dutch education while growing up, and was one of the few regents fluent in Dutch at the turn of the century. Like his own father, he decided that his five sons should receive European education but took it one step further when he allowed his six daughters, among them Kartini, to attend the local free primary school reserved for Dutch and Eurasian children. It was in this manner that Kartini learned how to speak and write fluently in Dutch.

After six years of schooling, Kartini was taken out of school by her family. Having reached puberty, she was expected to, in her words, "enter the 'box'" (Kartini 2014, p. 70), a practice also known as *pingitan* (seclusion). In her letters to Stella Zeehandelaar, her Dutch pen pal, Kartini railed against *pingitan*, revealing how *priyayi* girls were taught to conform to their place in the private domestic realm, and subjected to corporeal forms of training that encouraged bodily and vocal restraint, comportment and etiquette³ while speech took place in high Javanese. These historically entrenched ritual customs rigidly observed the strict hierarchies, boundaries and privileges accorded to age, gender and rank within the family and wider *priyayi* community. Arranged marriage and polygamy—two feudal practices criticized by Kartini—were a prescribed way of life according to *adat* (customary law), and cloistered *priyayi* daughters, titled Raden Ajeng, had one sole purpose in life, that is to become, as Kartini lamented, a Raden Ayu. Although Kartini was taught by *adat* to prepare for married life as a wife and mother, she resisted and begged instead for her father to allow her to continue her education. But she was refused; it was too big a break from tradition. Moreover, what initially seemed like support from the side of the Dutch also fell apart in the end. For four years, Kartini stayed within the confines of her home while her brothers continued with their education in high school at Semarang. Her letters revealed this period to be a difficult one, marked by frustration, anger and resistance as well as a passionate yearning for freedom and autonomy. When her period of seclusion ended,

Kartini and her sisters were allowed to attend celebrations held outside her home; however, this uncharacteristic breach with gender traditions drew criticism from within the *priyayi* circles.

It was also during this time when Kartini met several important Dutch figures, notably the Abendanons, Jacques—the Dutch colonial equivalent to a Minister of Education—and his wife, Rosa Abendanon-Mandri, Marie Ovink-Soer, the wife of Jepara’s Assistant Resident from 1891 to 1899, as well as Nellie van Kol, the wife of Henri van Kol, a parliamentarian and leader of the Social Democratic Workers’ Party. These encounters proved fruitful to Kartini whose own feminist thoughts and articulations of ambition and independence found sympathy and encouragement in these colonial friendships. In 1899, Kartini met another like-minded spirit in Stella Zeehandelaar, a young Dutch progressive woman who replied to Kartini’s request for a pen pal in a Dutch feminist magazine.

Through Kartini’s correspondences with her Dutch friends, we have been offered rare insights not only into the restricted, private world of *priyayi* women but also the ongoing class- and race-related politics of colonial society. The *priyayi* occupied an ambivalent position as the subordinate allies of the Dutch (Pemberton 1994; Sutherland 1979) and as upper-class rulers among the native Javanese. Kartini’s letters thus reveal how she straddled the two worlds of European modernity and colonial Javanese society, a hybrid space that helped shape her unique voice and perspective on her identity and position as a woman of colour in the Dutch Indies (Hawkins 2007): on the one hand, she boldly appropriated European feminist ideas in her fight for women’s rights to education and freedom but on the other hand, she also criticized its feminist orientalism by exposing the plight of “brown women” who were doubly colonized by both Dutch and Javanese patriarchal, sociopolitical institutions (Bijl 2017). Kartini’s embrace of European ideals of emancipation while rejecting its racist discourse, as well as her later “rediscovery” of Java, sometimes read in terms of (Javanese) nationalism (Coté 2014), should be seen as radical and transformative, for they have opened up discursive spaces for the contestations and appropriative acts by many, a phenomenon that is still ongoing.

Rich and multifaceted, Kartini’s invaluable legacy of writings reveals a keen mind at work and an intuitive grasp on how to wield the pen to her advantage. She produced writings in different genres such as personal letters, short stories, ethnographic writing and educative memoranda, and

was influenced by a variety of styles and genres that she encountered in her broad range of readings which included newspapers and journals, socialist, feminist and pacifist novels, feminist polemics, Orientalist writings, Dutch colonial scholarship as well as modern and religious poetry. Furthermore, she addressed her writings to a variety of readers and addressees, including friends of her own age, much older mentor figures, people working in colonial government or engaged in politics and scholarship (ethnography, linguistics, politics) as well as activists for women's rights, socialist causes and temperance movements. Indeed, the richness of Kartini's writings can best be approached by remembering the etymology of the word "text", which is derived from the Latin *texere*, or weaving. A brilliant author, Kartini wove together strands from countless discourses, genres, styles and social spheres, including such seemingly diverse practices as Islam, law and literature. She also changed and developed her perspectives in many ways, perhaps most famously in her gradual yet incomplete turn from European modernity as she increasingly looked towards Java. This coming together of differing viewpoints, discourses, genres, styles and addressees was, although unstable and contradictory, also productive, generating new ideas, viewpoints, and tropes that helped enrich the field of debates and contestations surrounding Kartini.

At the same time, however, her legacy has also been complicated by censorship, selective editing, and inaccurate translations in the past. The 1911 Dutch edition was, for instance, heavily edited with the excision of many details from her family life, while *Letters of a Javanese Princess* excluded dozens of letters from the 1911 edition and was even criticized for the quality of its translation. As a result, scholars working on Kartini's writings had to rely on incomplete data for several decades. As Taylor points out, the fact that Kartini was "raised in a polygamous household ... was not known to western scholars until the 1960s" (1993, p. 159). Scholarly efforts to reclaim Kartini's "lost" letters began in 1987, when a large portion of her letters emerged into public space (Kartini 1987); this was followed by the publication of updated translations (Kartini 1992, 2005). In 2014, Kartini's collection of complete writings, painstakingly curated and translated by Joost Coté, was published. With these new additions to the scholarship on Kartini, both readers and scholars have also had the opportunity to reassess her life in light of the new revelations that have emerged, including her confession to Rosa Abendanon-Mandri about her birth mother, Ngasirah, as well as her emotional distress at the news of her marriage.

At the end of the day, Kartini's writings can only carry us so far in the analysis of her rich afterlife. We also have to consider the significant role played by the actors and institutions involved in the construction and reproduction of Kartini as a discourse, and its attendant representations and meanings. Most actors, including scholars, pulled out specific threads from her texts and recombined them with their own concerns and needs as well as with the discourses that had shaped them. They looked to what others before them had made of her and borrowed, adapted, or rejected earlier representations; in so doing, they also made Kartini a point of social encounter and a site to battle out points of contestation that went well beyond the confines of her own writings. As the section below shows, acts of appropriation—and the ensuing contestations and debates—do take on a life of their own, feeding on and responding to each other even as they shape and reshape Kartini's legacy and memory.

Contestations and Debates

Mentioning the name "Kartini" often evokes strong emotions. During informal conversations for this volume in Indonesia and the Netherlands, we have had many encounters in which Kartini was both vilified and lovingly embraced. A few examples will show how she is a highly contested figure. An Acehnese soccer team with members in their late teens who were visiting Jakarta in 2015 strongly rejected the project on Kartini which eventually resulted in the current edited volume. Why not investigate Cut Nyak Dhien or Cut Meutia, two Acehnese women who had become Indonesian national heroes in the same year as Kartini (see also Siapno 2002)? More surprisingly, several Indonesian feminists we spoke to over the years also rejected Kartini as soon as we mentioned her. It turned out they were critical of the Kartini who had been shaped by patriarchal state discourses, particularly Suharto's New Order regime; however, they embraced what they saw as the historical, feminist Kartini who stood up for women's rights. On numerous occasions, Kartini's status was questioned by many Indonesian women who had set her up in competition with other historical female figures. What about other women like Dewi Sartika (1884–1947), also a pioneer for education, but who is felt to have undeservedly stood in Kartini's shadow? What about Marsinah (1969–1993), a labour activist and not an elite *priyayi* like Kartini? What about, again, Cut Nyak Dhien (1848–1908) who took up arms against the Dutch instead of sitting behind a desk writing

letters? In the Netherlands, Kartini has had a long history as an object of “ethical” care and as a hero for Indonesian women (Vreede-de Stuers 1960), but some Dutch scholars of Indonesia, though acknowledging her importance as a historical figure, had nevertheless whispered in our ears that she was basically a “colonial suck-up”. This sentiment was echoed by one of the authors who declined to write for our volume as she felt Kartini sounded like “a Dutch bureaucrat”. In the Netherlands, response to Kartini in general can be divided into two categories: 1) people who know little to nothing about Kartini are surprised and interested to hear about a Dutch-language author who is common knowledge to all Indonesians and published by UNESCO, but who nevertheless has almost been forgotten in the Netherlands, and 2) Indonesianists who feel that the subject of Kartini has been endlessly published on and does not need further exploration. Indeed, if there is one figure in Indonesian history who is over-exposed, over-mediated and over-analysed, it would be Kartini. Nevertheless, the range as well as the highly contradictory and contested ways in which she is remembered are what make her a thoroughly unique figure through which the central tensions in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia and Europe can be read and understood.

This volume comes at a timely moment in Indonesia where, as Mary Zurbuchen writes, the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998 has brought with it the decline of its “military-backed monopoly over the production and interpretation of the nation’s history” and new possibilities for “[d]ivergent perspectives, controversial events, and critical voices [that] were not allowed to compete alongside the official record” (2005, pp. 4–5). According to Yatun Sastramidjaja, “[i]n Indonesian official history the colonial past has long been stifled as a humiliating episode which had to be un-remembered from the landscape of national memory” (2014, p. 446). However, “the omitting of historical facts [also] creates an opening” (Sastramidjaja 2014, p. 446) for alternative memories to arise. Since 1998, there has been an explosion of appropriative acts, both critical and playful, when it comes to Kartini’s symbolism and representation; such acts have been fuelled by the internet and social media, and can be seen interacting with an older albeit strong image of Kartini that had been shaped by Suharto’s New Order government. As a result, Kartini has emerged as a flash point in the last two decades, one that reflects how Indonesians are taking issue with, in particular, New Order ideas on the role of the state, gender identities and relations, relations between different regions, and many more issues. A case in point is the cultural

centre *Rumah Kartini* in Jepara, formed by a group of scholars and artists as a contrast to the state-established R.A. Kartini Museum (based on the unreconstructed New Order narrative), which seeks to open up Kartini's image through art works, meticulous reproductions of artisan objects from Kartini's time (such as a gong and specific batik cloths) as well as guided tours to the many historical sites from Kartini's life in and around the town. A crucial part of the group's endeavours is to build an elaborate research library replete with primary source materials and scholarly studies on Kartini and other aspects of Jepara's history that have been either skipped over or selectively interpreted by official history.

The Chapters

The chapters in this volume are multidisciplinary in their approach to the appropriations of Kartini, with experienced historians of Indonesian and European (post)colonial history, cultural anthropologists as well as scholars of literary, gender and memory studies who offer unique insights and analyses that attest to the multifacetedness of Kartini as a discourse. Of the eight chapters here, six provide new analyses while two are reprints of older publications. We have decided to include the latter here as their perspectives help develop the scope of our study and enrich the debates contained within this volume. We have also broadly arranged the chapters along the colonial-postcolonial trajectory in order to provide a better sense of not just the different kinds of appropriations that take place within specific temporal settings, but also how, very often, these different settings speak to and engage with each other in the discursive revisions and reproductions of Kartini's legacy and memory.

We begin after this Introduction with Joost Coté's "Crafting Reform: Kartini and the Imperial Imagination, 1898–1911" in Chapter 2, which investigates colonial reforms and attitudes towards the Native ("*Inlandsche*") arts and crafts from 1898 to 1904, and how Kartini was appropriated by progressive elements of contemporary metropolitan and colonial Dutch society who wished to showcase her as the face of "Native arts and crafts" for a Dutch readership. Documenting Kartini's place in the interconnection between the turn-of-the-twentieth century Dutch arts and crafts (*Nieuwe Kunst*) movement, with its discourses on *nijverheid* (industry) and *kunstnijverheid* (arts and crafts), and the contemporary agenda for colonial reform as

well as the activities of the Dutch feminist movement, this chapter argues that this moment in colonial history has relevance for our understanding of how Kartini “had straddled two primary themes in this early articulation of a new imperial discourse: an emerging curiosity about the Native other, and the need to give expression to a new sense of Dutch nationalism” (p. 38).

Chapter 3, Paul Bijl’s “Hierarchies of Humanity: Kartini in America and at UNESCO”, offers a different perspective on colonial discourse by analysing critical Western appropriations of Kartini in the ideological articulation of modern “human equality and human inequality” (pp. 57, 69), with examples drawn from key publications of Kartini’s letters in America and Europe, including her selected letters in *Atlantic Monthly*—an influential American journal—in 1919 and 1920, the 1920 publication of Symmers’ translation titled *Letters of a Javanese Princess* by Alfred A. Knopf, the American publishing house, and the inclusion of her letters in French (1960) and in English (1964) in the UNESCO Collection of Representative Works. Examining the paradoxes and contradictions presented by the people involved in the (re)publications, ranging from translators (Symmers) to publishers (*Atlantic Monthly*, Alfred A. Knopf) and writers who wrote the Introduction (Couperus) or Preface (Massignon, Roosevelt), Bijl argues that their liberal views and attitudes towards peoples of colour are invariably undermined by prevailing concepts of race and cultural hierarchies that are reflective of human inequality.

The next few chapters situate the study of how Kartini has been appropriated in Indonesia by exploring colonial and postcolonial contexts, often by straddling the two. In Chapter 4, Grace V.S. Chin’s “Ambivalent Narration: Kartini’s Silence and the Other Woman” critiques Kartini’s silence about lower-class women—represented by the *selir* (secondary wife) and peasant women during the colonial era—and how it reflects a class entitlement that is seldom touched on in Indonesian feminist scholarship. Chin argues that Kartini’s silence about the Other woman reveals class-related complicity and conformity that can be traced into the postcolonial patriarchal contexts of the Old Order and New Order, during which the elite women continued to be empowered while subaltern femininities, such as the unskilled female labourers, remained silenced and disenfranchised. Calling this Kartini’s “ambivalent legacy of progress and subjection” (p. 76), Chin analyses the twists and turns it has taken in both colonial and postcolonial discourses, and how it is reflected in Indonesian women’s politics through the hierarchical relationships and divisions among women.

We then move to Danilyn Rutherford's "Unpacking a National Heroine: Two Kartinis and Their People" in Chapter 5. First published in 1993, Rutherford's analysis of Kartini—referred to multiple times in the volume by different authors—still bears much relevance for our understanding of the historical ways in which Kartini has been appropriated and revised to fit the state narrative of its time. Referring to two Indonesian biographies on Kartini, namely Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Panggil aku Kartini sadja* (1962) and Sitisoesmandari Soeroto's *Kartini: Sebuah biografi* (1977), Rutherford reflects on how Kartini was used to legitimize the state ideologies and national narratives of the time: whereas Pramoedya locates Kartini and her people in a history of struggle of post-independence Old Order Indonesia, Soeroto places her within the "naturalized categories and boundaries" (p. 105) of the New Order state, thereby revealing the ideological difference between Old Order and New Order Kartini. In so doing, Rutherford also shows how both biographers attempted to construct their version of the "real Kartini behind the myth" (p. 106) for the Indonesian public.

Chapter 6 presents Kathryn Robinson's "Call me Kartini? Kartini as a Floating Signifier in Indonesian History", which explores Kartini's multifaceted symbolism as a "floating signifier" in Indonesian history, with particular focus on *Hari Kartini* in the post-New Order era through the social media movement known as "*Kartini jaman now*". Drawing on a range of representations of Kartini as a symbolic icon, Robinson provides fresh insights into the appropriations and restatements of Kartini's ideas in a varied range of mediums, including newspaper accounts, academic and artistic works, social media sources as well as interviews with feminists and university students. The rich variety of appropriations, celebrations and even repudiations of Kartini by different generations of Indonesians, including contemporary youth, reflect how "Kartini" as a floating signifier absorbs these fluctuating and often competing meanings.

The following Chapter 7, Paul Bijl's "Kartini and the Politics of European Multiculturalism", moves back to the Western world by showing how the transnational Kartini connections that had been developed during Dutch imperialism still "echo" in postcolonial Netherlands. The second republished article in our volume, this chapter examines colonial and postcolonial silences related to Kartini's memory in the Netherlands, notably within the context of European discourses on multiculturalism. Bijl investigates the ways in which Kartini—the

representation of a colonized voice—is rarely heard of in the Netherlands. Calling for a different way of looking at Kartini, Bijl points out that Kartini has (unexpectedly) popped-up in particular spaces such as the Amsterdam Museum of the Tropics, and whose name has been invoked to promote multiculturalism, notably seen in the establishment of the Kartini prize in The Hague in 2000, also known as “foreign women prize” (p. 165) since it focuses on Dutch migrant women of different colour. Providing an analysis of the discourses surrounding the Kartini prize, Bijl unpacks the complex race, cultural and (post)colonial politics that have been perpetuated in Kartini’s name, and how these discourses continue to be reflected in contemporary struggles faced by Dutch women of colour.

We wrap up the volume with the Afterword—a fitting finale to our volume—from Jean Gelman Taylor, which reflects on the volume and its place in Indonesian historiography and Western/European (post) colonial discourse. In illuminating the finer points of each chapter and how they are linked to a broader history, Taylor observes that the act of appropriation is in fact deeply psychological; it is “about us, whether we are Europeans or Indonesians. It is a fascination with ourselves” (p. 184). She also reminds us that appropriation works to detach “individuals from their family, society and times” (p. 184) and that behind Kartini the icon lies a real person with a rich emotional life composed of relationships and correspondences that have continued to develop long after her death. Taylor asks us, as scholars and historians, to go beyond the textual Kartini and contemplate the contextual factors that had shaped her as a pioneer, as well as the women—such as her maternal grandmother, a *Hajjah*, and other historical women like Aceh’s Cut Nyak Dhien and sultanahs—who continue to represent the subaltern, silenced voice in history. All in all, Taylor’s Afterword is a timely reminder that there is much more work to be done in order for us to have a fuller understanding of how Kartini has played a vital role in the shaping of modern Indonesia and Indonesian women.

NOTES

1. We base this number on the Dutch digital text database called Delpher: www.delpher.nl (Delpher).
2. Chronologically-speaking, Ngasirah was Sosroningrat’s first wife but was considered a “secondary” wife due to her non-*priyayi* status. See Chin’s

Chapter 4 and Taylor's Afterword for more information on women's positions during Kartini's time.

3. For details, see Kartini's letter to Stella Zeehandelaar dated 18 August 1899 (Kartini 2014, pp. 75–78).

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