

DUTCH STUDIES

Restitution

by Marjolein van Pagee, Lecturer



discussed in light of Dutch Islamophobia today. Students discovered that there is no “empire talking back” from the east due to the language barrier (Indonesia did not inherit the Dutch language) and underrepresentation of Indonesians in Dutch society. The Dutch East Indies colony remains a tropical paradise in the collective Dutch memory rather than the apartheid regime that it was.

stark contrast of Indonesia being forced to pay 4.5 billion for its independence, described in new research by Michael van Zeijl.

I invited Pondaag and Van Zeijl to speak to students, bringing decolonial activism into class. Pondaag told them: “We can talk about the Netherlands, but you are colonial too, your country does not belong to white people, your country belongs to the Native Americans!” After one month of teaching, I am impressed by the students’ ability to analyze oppression and their own settler privilege. It is giving me a lot to think about as the Netherlands stubbornly attempts to maintain its colonial innocence.

Jeffry Pondaag, an Indonesian living in the Netherlands, has been changing this memory by putting the topic of reparations on the public agenda. His foundation assists Indonesian victims of Dutch war crimes in their successful suing of the Dutch State. Students learned about his work and will examine the

Left
Jeffry Pondaag (middle)
in court, The Hague.

This fall I had the opportunity to teach and shape one month of Dutch culture courses at U-M. Students studied current racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in Dutch society and considered them in light of the historical roots of colonial injustice. How did colonialism shape Dutch identity? How did the

Netherlands become one of the wealthiest nations today?

Being specialized in Dutch colonization of Indonesia, I asked students to consider why Indonesia, 54 times larger than the Netherlands with 261 million inhabitants and the largest Muslim population in the world, is not

Indigenous Perspectives

by Annemarie Toebosch, Director of Dutch and Flemish Studies

This summer, Mark Charles from the Wooden Shoe People, from the Waters that Flow Together, and from the Bitter Water Clan became the first Native American Dutch-American candidate for U.S. President, and the only native candidate in 2020.

His candidacy inspires me to ask: Does our program tell

Dutch-American history from the perspective of native peoples?

I was given one such perspective at the annual conference of the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME 2019) where Dutch Studies was invited to discuss the difference between teaching about

racism and decolonial teaching that positions itself inside an antiracist movement. In a discussion with American Indian people, the idea of “trade nation” was redefined when I learned that the Dutch were the first to commodify scalping in the Americas. 30 years after Amsterdam invented the first central bank, the Netherlands turned

existing gift exchanges for scalps into currency.

As Jeffry Pondaag asked our students hard questions about their place on this land, the Dutch program asks itself how to include indigenous perspectives 400 years after New Amsterdam.



**DEPARTMENT OF
GERMANIC LANGUAGES
AND LITERATURES**

**NEWSLETTER
WINTER 2020**



lsa.umich.edu/german

**Department of Germanic Languages
and Literatures**

812 East Washington Street
3110 Modern Languages Building
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1275
(734) 764-8018 • www.lsa.umich.edu/german

Cover Images

Top Left: Deventer Skyline with Reflection. Bart Ros

Bottom Left: Charlottenburg Palace, Berlin, Germany.
30DaysReplay on Unsplash

Right: Lofoten Being Moody. Kym Ellis

Table of Contents Image

Detail from Rackham Graduate School. Photo by Sarah Nesbitt.

Chair: Andreas Gailus
Asst. Editor: Jennifer Lucas
Layout: Michele Dimond

The Regents of The University of Michigan

Jordan B. Acker
Michael J. Behm
Mark J. Bernstein
Paul W. Brown
Shauna Ryder Diggs
Denise Ilitch
Ron Weiser
Katherine E. White
Mark S. Schissel (ex officio)

German Day February 21, 2020



We look forward to welcoming hundreds of high school teachers and students to campus for German Day 2020! This year's theme—'Vielfalt gewinnt!'—is intended to explore the theme of diversity in German society and beyond. What aspects of diversity do you find most fascinating? What does diversity mean to you? What are your experiences and expectations with living in a diverse society? We invite you and the students to explore these questions.