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'The past should not affect the children': intergenerational hauntings in the homes of Indo- European families

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ABSTRACT

This article examines how the traumatic experiences of previous Indo-European or *Indische* generations shape future generations' intergenerational family dynamics and practices within home environments. By analysing life story interviews with Indo-Europeans from the first, second and third generation within twenty-one families, we illustrate how intergenerational hauntings are embodied, expressed and negotiated among various generations within home environments. The Indo-European diaspora has multi-generational 'mixed' Dutch-Indonesian ancestry and collective memories of the colonial Dutch East Indies, the Japanese occupation of Indonesia during the Second World War, the Indonesian National Revolution, and families' subsequent repatriation to the Netherlands. Shaped by their alleged success in having silently assimilated in the Netherlands, public narratives often neglect Indo-Europeans' daily realities and histories. We argue that personal and collective histories of war violence, racialized violence and displacement are deeply ingrained in Indo-European intergenerational and gendered family dynamics and practices in home environments. These intergenerational hauntings are imbued in both presence and absence in the various atmospheres and social and physical spaces of home.

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Introduction

This article centres around Indo-European or *Indische* families throughout the Netherlands and examines how the traumatic experiences of previous generations shape intergenerational family dynamics and practices within home environments. By analysing life story interviews with Indo-Europeans

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from the first, second and third generation within twenty-one families, we aim to illustrate how intergenerational hauntings are embodied, expressed and negotiated among various generations within home environments. As such, this article traces the burdens of personal and collective histories on intergenerational family dynamics and practices in home environments. Particularly interesting about the Indo-European diaspora is its multi-generational 'mixed' Dutch-Indonesian ancestry, as well as its collective memories of the colonial Dutch East Indies, the Japanese occupation of Indonesia during the Second World War, the Indonesian National Revolution, and families' subsequent repatriation to the Netherlands. Drawing on Sara Ahmed (2014, 94), we approach Indo-Europeans' generations-long 'mixedness' as involving 'a material and affective geography: affecting the way we gather: bodies, objects, worlds that come together as well as break apart'.

We specifically attend to the atmospheres and social and physical spaces of home, which reveal 'everyday manifestations of trauma caused by past violence' (Dragojlovic 2011, 319). Geographers have increasingly engaged in 'geographies of trauma' to examine the mental and material spaces of trauma (Coddington and Micieli-Voutsinas 2017). Applying a geographic perspective to the Indo-European context allows us to scrutinize the interplay between emotions, bodies and spaces. As advocated by Joyce Davidson and Liz Bondi (2004, 373) in a special issue on emotional geographies in *Gender, Place and Culture*, 'clearly, our emotions matter'. Embodied emotions are intricately connected to specific sites and contexts. This spatiality of emotions highlights not only how mental states are interiorised but, also how emotions reside in both bodies and places. Hence, emotions are 'embodied and mindful phenomena that partially shape, and are shaped by our interactions with the people, places and politics that make up our unique, personal geographies' (Davidson and Bondi 2004, 373).

Rather than analysing trauma in a clinical sense, we focus on 'microhistories' and their legacies on everyday lives (To and Trivelli 2015). We use the notion of trauma to refer to what Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman (2009, xi) define as 'present suffering to past violence. It is the scar that a tragic event leaves', which can be both individual and a 'collective imprint on a group of a historical experience that may have occurred decades, generations, or even centuries ago'. Owain Jones and Joanne Garde-Hansen (2012) infer that memory has a vital role in individual, family and other small collectives, yet, such small-scale dynamics of geography and memory remain neglected due to a tendency to focus on larger-scale collective memories and trauma.

We seek to address this need to engage with the 'specific, intimate, private (and at times banal) memories of individuals and families' (Jones and Garde-Hansen 2012, 6) by examining how the traumatic experiences of Indo-Europeans in the former Dutch East Indies shape intergenerational family dynamics and practices within home environments in the Netherlands

many years later. The current empirical account explores the burdens that personal and collective histories impose on intergenerational family homes. By doing so, we demonstrate various modes in which the affective forces of hauntings can be seen, heard, felt and transmitted among various generations within home environments. We specifically attend to home environments as home can be seen as vital to understanding micro-geographies, given its capacity to capture complex socio-spatial relations, memories and emotions (Blunt and Dowling 2006). Especially in a diasporic context, memory is central in shaping metaphorical and physical geographies of home (Hua 2006). In her analysis of Holocaust survivors and their children, Marianne Hirsch (2008, 112) highlights how intimate embodied spaces of the family are entrenched with the past: 'The language of family, the language of the body: nonverbal and non-cognitive acts of transfer occur most clearly within a familial space, often in the form of symptoms.'

We begin by elaborating on the research context, which is followed by a theoretical review on memory, intergenerational hauntings and home. We approach family homes and relations as gendered spaces through which transmissions of traumatic memory occur (Hirsch and Smith 2002). The research methods are then clarified, followed by an analysis of the empirical data and conclusions. We argue that personal and collective histories of war violence, racialized violence and displacement are deeply ingrained in Indo-European intergenerational and gendered family dynamics and practices in home environments. Participants' accounts reveal how intergenerational hauntings are imbued in both presence and absence in the atmospheres and social and physical spaces of home.

Research context

The Indo-European or *Indische* diaspora originates from the colonial Dutch East Indies, contemporary Indonesia. Indo-European individuals are descendants of the 'interracial' intimacies between European men and Indonesian women that occurred in the 350 years of Dutch colonial presence in Indonesia (Pattynama 2000). Local women cohabitated with European men in private houses or military barracks, as servants, domestic slaves and concubines, referred to as *nyai*, or as legitimate wives (Dragojlovic 2011). If acknowledged by their European fathers, the 'mixed' offspring were legally recognized as Dutch. However, within rigid colonial categories, Indo-Europeans' 'mixed race' set them socially apart from both the 'Dutch' and the 'Indonesian', and racial consciousness and marginalization were often significant in their lives. This ambiguous position was not static within colonial hierarchies, and vast contrasts in economic well-being and social status existed among Indo-Europeans, especially for those with a 'European' appearance or an orientation towards the Netherlands (Captain 2014; Pattynama 2000). By silencing their

'mixedness', Indo-European attempted to conform to the 'belief that entry into a pure identity is the only way of securing a place in the world' (Ahmed 2014, 101).

Collective suffering experienced during two consecutive wars, the Japanese occupation of Indonesia (1942–1945) and the Indonesian National Revolution (1945–1949), are often haunting memories for Indo-European families (Tajuddin and Stern 2015). During the Japanese occupation, European families were torn apart as men and boys over the age of ten were separated from women and children in internment camps. Indo-Europeans could initially remain outside these camps if they both renounced their European status and could prove a desirable degree of Indonesian ancestry, but many of them were later also interned regardless (Dragojlovic 2011). Both Indonesian and European people suffered due to the harsh living conditions inside and outside of the internment camps, as well as from forced labour, torture and executions (Tajuddin and Stern 2015). The period after Japanese capitulation, leading up to Dutch recognition of Indonesian independence in December 1949, can be characterized by mass violence between Indonesian nationalists and Dutch military forces. Both Indonesian and Dutch people suffered extreme brutalities as not only military individuals but also civilians were targeted. The early period of Indonesian struggle for independence, referred to as *bersiap* (1945–1946), remains 'a zone of unspeakability' among Indo-Europeans, as Indonesian nationalists committed large-scale murders of those who remained loyal to the Dutch (Dragojlovic 2011, 330).

Following Indonesian independence, Indo-Europeans were pressured to either adopt Indonesian nationality to remain in Indonesia or leave the country. The majority left the country, dispersing themselves primarily in the Netherlands, Brazil, Canada, the United States and Australia (Tajuddin and Stern 2015). From 1945 to 1967, around 300,000 Indo-Europeans repatriated to the Netherlands, carrying with them memories from war violence, racialized violence and displacement (Captain 2014). Despite their Dutch nationality, the Dutch government argued that Indo-Europeans were 'rooted in the East Indies', incapable of assimilating in the Netherlands and subjected them to racialized assimilation policies (Captain 2014, 57). Many Indo-European families were placed into shelters across the Netherlands to counter clustering and housing shortages, and received 'civilizing' education on how to run a 'Dutch' household. To counter discriminatory practices and receive better housing and career opportunities, Indo-Europeans conformed to these citizenship requirements (Captain 2014). Shaped by their alleged success in having silently assimilated in the Netherlands, Indo-Europeans are often regarded as 'cooperative, non-distinctive Dutch citizens' (Pattynama 2000, 285). However, these public narratives neglect Indo-Europeans' daily realities and personal and collective histories.

Diaspora, memory and intergenerational hauntings

Anh Hua (2006) advocates that memory, as a reconstruction of the past, is significant to the diaspora and closely linked to historical and political struggles. Memory can uncover individual desires, needs, repressions, self-definitions and power struggles, but also the social positions of diasporic communities. Memory can enable the passing-down of traditions, rituals and group histories, and can evoke senses of home, belonging and togetherness (Hua 2006; Pattynama 2012). Hua (2006, 198) differentiates between personal and collective or 'cultural' memories to illustrate that memories are not solely personal but can encompass collectively-constructed memories of multiple generations. Similarly, building on Maurice Halbwachs' work on collective memory, Pamela Pattynama (2012, 178) uses the notion of 'memory community' to argue that Indo-European postcolonial identity formations are shaped by both personal and collective memories.

Memories are not factual but rather distorted by contemporary needs, desires and interests. These can be negotiated, claimed and invented in practices of, for instance, nostalgic yearning, critical remembrance, absences, forgetting, melancholia or suppressions (Hua 2006). Indo-Europeans' engagements with the past are often constructed through romanticized memories of colonial life. This longing for *tempo doeloe*, the good old days in Malay, is represented by carefree colonial life, a tropical climate and relatively fortunate socio-economic conditions (Bijl 2012). Rather than critically remembering indigenous experiences and colonial hierarchies, the romanticized Dutch East Indies and the loss thereof is embraced with strong desire. In line with the narrative strategies of *tempo doeloe*, the collective pains of war violence, racialized violence and displacement are often shaped by secrecy and repression (Dragojlovic 2014, 2020). This secrecy to cope with trauma is not solely an agentic act but can also be the result of a lack of language to address certain issues (Bijl 2012). It can also be linked to 'complicated remembrance', as coined by Pattynama (2012, 185), which emphasizes little recognition and contesting recollections of Indo-Europeans' experiences in the Netherlands.

For following Indo-European generations, it can be challenging to reconcile the contradictions between the widely-held idealized memories of colonial life, the Dutch public narratives, and parents' and grandparents' silent grievances and suffering (Dragojlovic 2014; Pattynama 2012). Azlan Tajuddin and Jamie Stern (2015) illustrate in their study with Indo-Europeans in the United States that repression cannot guarantee full erasure of trauma. Indeed, narratives are crucial to reconstructing experiences, both for trauma to be acknowledged, accepted and communicated and to integrate the past, present and future (Blackman 2012).

Often, it is not the trauma itself but rather the secrecy and lack of knowledge that surround it that haunt descendants and invoke questions

concerning ancestry and silences (Dragojlovic 2015; Tajuddin and Stern 2015). These secretcies can have pervasive effects on later generations and may even create deep personal connections with traumatic family histories. Postmemory, as coined by Hirsch (2008), describes how second-generation Jewish people experience and bear the traumas of previous generations. Rather than being solely mediated, experiences are transmitted so deeply that they become memories in themselves. A significant body of literature is devoted to intergenerational transmissions of loss, shame or trauma in various contexts, centred around the concept of hauntings (To and Trivelli 2015). In *Ghostly Matters*, Avery Gordon (2008, 207) offers a paradigm for 'seeing the unseen', including how to understand 'wounds in civilization' and their concrete impacts on individuals and their conditions of living. This is represented through the act of haunting, 'an animated state in which a repressed or unresolved social violence is making itself known, sometimes very directly, sometimes more obliquely' (Gordon 2008, 16). These hauntings draw us in affectively and blur the boundaries between the past, present and future. Rather than being contained, repressed or concealed, Gordon argues, these ghosts are reminders of lingering trouble and demand our attention.

Home as a haunted, affective space

Home provides an important locale in which daily lives are negotiated, encompassing both a physical and social space (Munro and Madigan 1999). Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling (2006) characterize home as 'politicized' space, imbued with complex socio-spatial relations, memories and emotions. Rather than idealized notions of safety, comfort and belonging, home can also be bound by issues of gender, age, class, 'race' and sexuality. Similarly, David Sibley (1995, 92) draws attention to home as a 'locus of power relations', characterized by exclusion, conflict and strict regulations of time, space and behaviours. Developed as a therapeutic narrative, Belinda Morrissey (2012) describes her childhood home as saturated with experiences of violence, terror and abuse. Yet, despite the painful histories surrounding it, the house was also capable of providing access to her past, enabling her to remember and deal with her trauma in the present.

Thus, the home environment can be a space surrounded by 'everyday manifestations of trauma caused by past violence' (Dragojlovic 2011, 319). As Caron Lipman (2015, 1) illustrates, 'the home as a site of haunting is a realm of complex and shifting emotional, sensual and social relationships, of the co-existence of different types of bodies and encounters'. Affective forces of hauntings can be seen, heard, felt and transmitted in various modes and reveal tensions between presence and absence, the intentional and the unintentional, the material and the immaterial, and singular and collective

memories (To and Trivelli 2015). Certain practices can function as affective carriers of trauma. As Lisa Blackman (2012, 130) illustrates, 'voices, dreams, emotions and feelings can travel across space *and* time, between and across bodies'. Hence, trauma 'materialises in forms far removed from the traumatic event itself, often through sensations, emotions, and unconscious thought' (Cho 2008, 24).

Hauntings can be both present and embodied in absences. Silences or the repression of the past can create a 'fabric of erasure' (Cho 2008, 17) or 'zone of unspeakability' (Dragojlovic 2011, 325), challenging supportive and caring family relationships. Grace Cho (2008) illustrates how unacknowledged trauma can be carried into the Korean diaspora. She illustrates how 'the unintended consequence of such an elaborate system of erasure is that the burial ground becomes all the more fertile for generating ghosts' (Cho 2008, 14). These concealed histories haunt individuals in the next generations through patterns of shame, silence and secrecy, in which little is known of the individual's own origins or the suffering underlying their current lives.

Similarly, Ana Dragojlovic (2020) resists a speech versus silence binary and instead highlights a switching continuum of verbal and non-verbal articulations of violence in Indo-European intergenerational memory work. Individuals can carry 'the strong presence of the past in their bodies', for instance through embodied habits, traditions and rituals (Dragojlovic 2014, 487). Dragojlovic (2015, 325) connects body, psyche and space and illustrates how an '*Indisch* atmosphere' can feel ghostly. Such atmospheres are generated through interactions between human and non-human bodies and the environment. These tend to be contagious but may not affect or involve each individual in the same way not affect or involve each individual in the same way. Grieving individuals themselves can be regarded as embodied space, as they 'become texts of grief, the signs of bereavement, grief and mourning written on mind-bodies' (Maddrell 2016, 176). As illustrated by Hirsch (2008), children of Holocaust survivors remember, through the stories, images, and behaviours among which they grew up, living near the pain, depression and dissociation of the persons who witnessed and survived trauma.

Hamzah Muzaini (2015) draws attention to both embodied and material practices of forgetting, and illustrates how the past may be (involuntarily) invoked through encounters with material environments. While the act of discarding or hiding items related to one's past can be an embodied strategy to forget, for others, objects can be testimonies and memorials of family histories (Hirsch 2008; Kidron 2009). Carol Kidron (2009, 8) uncovers the 'silent yet no less living presence' of the Holocaust in survivors' homes and illustrates how nonverbal and partially verbal traces of the Holocaust are intertwined within everyday family life. Kidron illustrates how the Holocaust is imbued in objects, everyday practices, bodies and emotions in home environments, which are silently transmitted through

object-person interactions, person-person interactions and practices of survival.

We approach family homes and relations as gendered spaces through which transmissions of traumatic memory occur. Remembering, transmitting and re-narrating memories are thoroughly gendered. Thus, 'what a culture remembers and what it chooses to forget are intricately bound up with issues of power and hegemony, and thus with gender' (Hirsch and Smith 2002, 6). As illustrated by intergenerational and familial transmissions of memory of the Armenian Genocide, Öndercan Muti and Öykü Gürpınar (2021, 12) reveal how experiences of violence, as well as the recollections and transmissions of these experiences are gendered and highlight 'the role of women as storytellers and kinkeepers'. They argue that the re-narration of these memories often follow a matriarchal line among Armenian generations.

Methods

Life story interviews were conducted with Indo-Europeans from the first, second and third generation in twenty-one families across the Netherlands. The families were contacted through acquaintances, Indo-European nursing homes and online Indo-European platforms. Participants included sixteen individuals from the first generation (all born in the colonial Dutch East Indies), twenty individuals from the second generation (either born in Indonesia during or after WW2 and repatriated to the Netherlands as children or born in the Netherlands after their parents' repatriation) and fourteen individuals from the third generation (all born in the Netherlands). Notably, in five families, only one individual was interviewed due to either their relatives' inability or unwillingness to participate or family estrangement. The fifty participants varied amongst themselves considerably in age (ranging from 19 to 98 years), gender, socio-economic class, lived experiences, family composition, place of birth and residence.

The interview guide was adapted from a commonly used instrument to collect life stories, developed by Dan McAdams (2008). The interviews covered lifespans chronologically and topics included, among others, family histories and dynamics, major life events and everyday practices in both the Indies and the Netherlands. Photographs, written accounts, official documents and heirlooms served as probes to further evoke memories and meanings (Roberts 2002). The interviews were generally conducted individually, but a few were held with partners, siblings or children together (if requested by the participants). The interview sites mostly included participants' homes, which fostered comfortable atmospheres to talk freely about personal experiences and provided opportunities for probing questions (Elwood and Martin 2000). Participants were encouraged to exert control over their narratives

and thus no direct questions on personal accounts of violence and suffering were posed and were only discussed if raised by participants (Newman, Risch, and Kassam-Adams 2006). During the interviews, as well as the other research phases, we were aware of the importance of reflecting on the principal researcher's positionality as a young, female, Indo-European researcher. Participants often explicitly positioned themselves as Indo-European together with the researcher, which proved conducive to biographical exchanges and co-construction of knowledge (Roberts 2002).

The interviews were thematically analysed using deductive and inductive coding within the software package ATLAS.ti. Several themes emerged from the data, including parent-child relationships, secretcies, atmospheres and material traces. Within data interpretation and contextualization, specific attention was paid to various engagements with the past and how these engagements were embodied, expressed and negotiated in daily lives and home environments, taking into account socio-demographic characteristics. Ethical approval was obtained from the ethics committee of the Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen. Names used have been altered for confidentiality.

Haunted family homes

We utilize Dragojlovic's (2015) conceptualisation of ghostly '*Indisch* atmospheres' to scrutinize intergenerational hauntings within home environments. We begin the analysis by unpacking accounts of the atmospheres in family homes, which operate through interactions between human and non-human bodies, social relations and the environment (Dragojlovic 2015). This is followed by scrutinizing the presence of the past in both the social and physical spaces of homes (Munro and Madigan 1999). Ultimately, we argue that personal and collective histories of war violence, racialized violence and displacement are deeply ingrained in Indo-European intergenerational and gendered family dynamics and practices in home environments, imbued in both presence and absence in the atmospheres and social and physical spaces of home.

Atmospheres and silenced pasts

When asked about the homes and family members among which they grew up, participants from all generations often described a prevalent atmosphere in which 'the grief could be felt'. Participants' recollections of the atmosphere in their homes involved various terms to describe a certain tension, in which they felt they often needed to be vigilant; to 'read the room' and adapt to the silent grievances and suffering of parents. The narratives reveal how atmospheres can both be felt in, and affect, social relations and behaviours

in home environments. Tense atmospheres were often linked to limited communication, coercive parenting, parents' emotional numbness and unpredictability.

Max, a man in his early 50s, born in the Netherlands and who mostly grew up with his Indo-European mother, recollected everyday scenes in his childhood home that revealed his mother's coercive parenting style (see also Dragojlovic 2020), such as her disproportionate anger when she was dissatisfied with his household chores or her nonverbal communication when he was prohibited to meet friends. His mother would tell him with her eyes how to behave: 'Otherwise... war, you could cut the tension with a knife. We did not yell or slam doors, but the tension... As a child, you are very sensitive to atmospheres. It is not comfortable when it is that pressing.' Michelle, born in the Netherlands in the early 1960s to Indo-European parents, strikingly described how she and her sibling would watch through the window as their father walked from the car to the house to read his mood and adjust their behaviour to ensure he would not become furious and aggressive: 'We knew to be invisible or not. We could do that flawlessly.'

Participants often linked such tense atmospheres to traumatic experiences in the Indies. Debbie, who was born in the Netherlands in the early 1960s after her parents' and siblings' repatriation, shared vivid recollections of her childhood home, haunted by war violence and displacement:

I come from a damaged family, we were busy moving on and trying to do better. Why were we damaged? Something happened before my parents came to the Netherlands. Here in the Netherlands, it was a struggle in life; an entirely different life than in the Indies.

Similarly, Nicole, who was born in the Netherlands in the early 1970s to Indo-European parents, associated her childhood home with coercive parenting, limited safety, silences and emotional neglect. Nicole vividly recounted:

My father was very silent. I found him unpleasant. He determined the atmosphere. He always sat at the same spot. We did not grow up with communication. Always silence. My father said nothing. We always needed to check how he felt. Everything was about him. My mother completely adapted.

While both parents experienced war violence in the Indies, Nicole's narrative echoes the prevailing portrayal of *Indisch* family violence centred around the violent *Indisch* father (Dragojlovic 2020). During the interview together with her mother, Nicole criticized her father's silences and was very candid about her experiences and emotions. She reconciled the influences of her family's past on her present through therapy: 'I realized that because I am *Indisch*, I have a different past. I have a past. Not only me but also my parents and ancestors.' She described that she learned how to value and voice her feelings, instead of solely being a 'dutiful daughter' who supports her parents despite the inflicted violence (Dragojlovic 2020, 153). When

asked how her mother felt about this, Marga admitted that she was still learning to deal with her daughter's openness, as she was raised very differently in the Indies in the 1940s: 'You had to put your feelings aside. It was about survival. No complaining, just keep going.'

Thus, atmospheres were often described as saturated with denied and silenced embodied memories. As previous studies support, participants frequently reflected on engagements with the past as mediated through silences and repressions, influencing kinship relations and providing a ground 'fertile for generating ghosts' (Cho 2008, 14; Dragojlovic 2011, 2014, 2020). Often described as 'typically *Indisch*', participants from all generations repeatedly emphasized that silences and repressions to deal with the past in the present were common within their families. First-generation participants in particular revealed both intentional and unintentional narrative strategies in which traumatic experiences from the Indies were concealed, while memories of 'the good old days' were shared more often (see also Dragojlovic 2020). For Debbie, her parents' stories of adventure, carefree times and nature were part of everyday family life after repatriation: 'Nothing was more fun than sitting around the kitchen table with my mum telling stories about the past, what things were like there. Anecdotes about ghosts, family and their adventures. All while eating snacks or peeling green beans.' Her mother was a passionate storyteller, while her father was more silent and emotionally unavailable. While this may reflect gendered parenting practices and gendered familial transmissions of memory, it may also relate to different wartime experiences and gendered expectations in coping with traumatic pasts (see also Dragojlovic 2020; Muti and Gürpınar 2021). Such gendered expectations in familial contexts were also highlighted by Marvin, a man in his 40s who had followed his family's patriarchal line in military careers. If his children posed hard questions concerning his military service, he noted his typical response: 'I try to ignore it or we talk about something else. Or the wife takes over.'

Debbie reveals how traumatic experiences or personal feelings were silenced: 'Unshared and unspoken frustrations. You could not do anything about it, it cut right through my soul. Silences and not willing to talk about it.' Debbie's narratives reveal how such silences shape interactions within the family home, characterized by emotional unavailability and limited communication. Rather than a distant past, these have become a memory in itself for Debbie: 'I felt them, they got under my skin' (see also Hirsch 2008). Debbie reflects, 'For my generation, those silences were very rough.' Yet, she and her siblings were 'not allowed to find it hard' as they were raised in a post-war Dutch society. Interestingly, while she aspires to do differently, her daughter recognized similar practices as her mother was still attempting to reconcile childhood experiences.

Participants from all generations felt that the previous generations engaged in a very limited way with their pasts, a practice which was often continued

across family lines. While some first-generation participants described that they were focused on adaptation and survival after repatriation, others indicated that they could not express with words their experiences to their children, who were raised in another societal context (see also Bijl 2012). First-generation participants also described that a strong hierarchy shaped interactions between parent and child in both the Indies and the Netherlands. While participants from later generations often linked coercive pedagogies to war experiences, Dragojlovic (2020) stresses that coercive pedagogies, serving to whitewash Indonesian influences, were also common before the Japanese occupation. This was exemplified by Henry, a man in his 80s, who lived in the Indies with his Dutch father and Indonesian mother:

I was raised by servants. My parents had a social life. [...] We were not allowed to be part of that as children. When visitors came, the children had to leave the room. That was common in the Indies. You knew your parents but it was very distant.

For Henry and other participants, prevailing hierarchical parent-child relations and care by servants shaped their engagements with the past. The separation of women and children from their husbands and fathers during wartimes strengthened these hierarchies. Strikingly, Tessa, a woman in her late 70s, was born shortly before the Japanese occupation and described that she met her father at age four after he returned from three years of forced labour along the Burma Railway. Other participants shared that they did not feel the freedom to discuss experiences due to long separations from family members, often fathers.

Reflecting changing societal contexts, both the male and female younger second- and third-generation participants described that they often tried to fill the 'zone of unspeakability' (Dragojlovic 2011, 330) by posing questions or engaging in genealogy work. This was often reinforced by major life events, such as first-time parenthood, divorces or travels to Indonesia. However, some struggled with what questions to pose, or simply wanted to respect the emotional boundaries drawn. As Madelon, born in the Netherlands in the 1960s, twenty years after her parents' repatriation describes: 'I think as a child we clearly felt that some things were closed off, which you notice after asking a few times. Only the romantic *tempo doeloe* was shared.' Some third-generation participants described that their grandparents were more open with them than they were with their own children in sharing short fragments from their lives, but the recipients of such stories were often unable to grasp at a young age what hardships those stories reflected.

Social spaces and power

Participants' accounts reveal how, for the families in this study, the home environment is a reoccurring space of complex socio-spatial relations,

emotions and memories. Participants repeatedly emphasized how means other than speech, such as certain behaviours, practices and emotions from themselves or family members, were haunted by past violence. This was often strengthened by the precarious living situations experienced by the first generation and their children in the Netherlands. Due to housing shortages, families were often placed in shelters, in which entire families shared small spaces before being assigned a house. During the interviews, the Dutch living situations were often contrasted to those in the Indies, which were characterized by more space, nature and servants. We discuss four reoccurring modes in which affective forces of hauntings were recognized by participants in social spaces of home.

First, reflecting coercive pedagogies (Dragojlovic 2020), participants often characterized their social homes as imbued with conflict and exertions of power. Sibley (1995) highlights how power within family homes is, for instance, reflected in rigid family regimes, limited communication and regulations of time, space and behaviour. Participants shared vivid recollections of physical and emotional violence, such as physical abuse, disproportionate anger, extensive parental demands and strong boundary maintenance to control the behaviours of children. During the interview, Henry, a man in his 80s, carefully narrated his experiences of internment as a young boy and turmoil leading up to repatriation to the Netherlands. He shared poignant memories of estrangement from his father, hunger in the camp, corpses on the streets during the *bersiap* and his post-war family dynamics: 'We were not close as a family; that was very much influenced by the past.' Henry highlighted that his interactions with his father solely concerned practical matters and that his father's war experiences were centred around silences and tantrums. While Henry voluntarily unburdened himself from his own hauntings during the interview, he described that he, similar to his own father, found it challenging to discuss these topics with his children. He did not want to be pitied and wanted to ensure a less turbulent childhood for them. He reflected on the influence of his past on family life: 'The things you carry with you. The past should not affect the children. But it perhaps did. The silences have perhaps created a distance or strictness or fear from my side that things would go wrong.' With a mixture of sadness, anger and compassion, his daughter Michelle, born in the Netherlands in the 1960s, shared various everyday scenes which revealed her father's coercive pedagogies in which she and her sibling were raised. Michelle's accounts reveal the framing of the family home as haunted by past experiences:

He was so angry and said to me: 'I had to eat snails in the camp!' I said: 'that is not my fault!' I had to eat it. Even when I vomited. I had to eat it all again. I did it all but it took me around three hours. My mother was crying, she could not bear to watch. [...] Looking back, I understand. He did not have enough food and his daughter was complaining... On the other hand, we have enough food now.

Notably, Michelle describes how her father fulfils a dominant position in the house, characterized by control and anger, while her mother is more silent. Michelle often fulfilled the role of 'dutiful daughter', in which she had to mediate between her father and family members. Reflecting prevailing gendered notions of violent *Indische* fathers (Dragojlovic 2020), participants often linked 'angry', 'emotionally unavailable' and 'dominant' to fathers, while mothers were described as more willing to share experiences. This also draws attention to the immaterial and emotional labour of women within homes and thus, the gendered nature of both parenting practices and familial transmissions of memory (Muti and Gürpınar 2021). Indeed, as Henry described: 'My wife took care of the children; I was the provider. There was a division. My wife always told me: "If needed, you should intervene" [...] I was the bearer of bad news.'

Second, for Michelle, the hauntings of her father's hardships were distinctly linked to home: 'At home, we could have enormous fights, but as soon as we stepped outside we automatically put on a smile. I always called it an act. We had to play. I did not know better.' Other participants similarly discussed strong physical and social boundaries between homes and outside worlds. For these participants, the theatrics and sharp distinctions between their behaviour in and outside the home was part of everyday family life. Ivan, who repatriated with his Indo-European parents as a baby in the late 1940s, emotionally discussed how his childhood home revolved around his dominant father. He describes: 'It was all about the outside world. He had a family but we did not count. There could be massive fights in our home. If the bell rang, my father would open the door, kindness itself, until the door closed again.' When asked why his father's hauntings were more prevalent in their family home than his mother's experiences, Ivan linked this to culturally assigned roles of 'macho men' and submissive, adaptive women. Rather than solely gendered, described boundary maintenance and the importance of appearances also reveal hauntings by racialized violence in both the Indies and the Netherlands. Traditions of coercive pedagogies served to whitewash Indonesian influences and to reconfirm claims to 'Europeanness' in the Indies, but also Dutch assimilation policies required Indo-Europeans to behave accordingly both in and outside their homes (Dragojlovic 2020).

Third, Michelle's family scene of eating porridge, as well as testimonials from other participants, draws attention to ambiguous boundaries of war and post-war contexts. As described by Michelle, her father's values concerning food are haunted by his own experiences of hunger. However, as Michelle articulates, 'we have enough food now'. Various examples from participants reflected similar blurred boundaries between times of war and 'peace'. The rules parents established in home environments were often haunted by traumatic pasts, reflecting behaviours, responses and emotions on the part of parents that were distorted, especially in the post-war contexts

in which their children were raised. Ina, who repatriated to the Netherlands in the 1950s with her parents and siblings, shared how her father always urged the children to share their food, rather than to fight over it. Due to limited knowledge and understanding of his experiences of hunger in internment camps, she did not understand what he meant and why that would be relevant. Similarly, Merel, a woman in her late 90s, advised during the interview that focused on her experiences as a young woman during the Japanese occupation: 'I will give you one [piece of] advice: if something happens, go work in a kitchen! There are always leftovers. There are vegetables, you can take them. [...] I could give my younger sister some extra.'

Fourth, specifically related to parenting: while some parents were over-protective and controlling as a response to hardships, others were focused on survival and determined to harden their children for future challenges by incorporating a certain structure and discipline in their homes. Participants described the survival mode they were taught as a result of the world being perceived by their parents as a place of profound unpredictability. As Debbie reveals: 'You needed a certain discipline. You had to be able to survive a war.' Similarly, Ivan noted: 'He tried to harden me. I had to [harden up] because of his experiences.' Bridget, a woman in her 60s and Stan, a man in his 50s separately described how their mother Catharina, now in her 80s, was preoccupied with structure and strict regulations of behaviour and activities. In their small upstairs apartment, their mother urged them to continuously be quiet, even while playing. Catharina did not want them to disturb their neighbours, but she also asserted that she wanted to instil the importance of silence as a tool for survival to her children. During the interview, she described various wartime scenes as a young girl in which she needed to be invisible or silent to hide from Japanese and Indonesian enemies. In addition to silences and depressions, Catharina was focused on domestic tasks and showed little affection, following the coping strategy of her own mother. As Stan reflects: '[You need to be] tough to keep yourself safe. If you let someone in, you will become soft. A war trauma which we also received. Survival instinct.' Such haunted practices may also be linked to the preoccupations of parents with their own victimhood, in which they 'punish' children so that the children can experience the hardships they went through, or simply do not know how to act differently. As Michelle articulates in response to her father's comment on eating snails in the internment camp: 'that is not my fault!' She linked his punishments to hauntings during the interview: 'I think it is because of the camp. He hit us often. I think that was something like: "that is good for you, I had that too"'. In some cases, parents were so preoccupied with their own victimhood that their children fulfilled a more nurturing role, attempting to console their parents, with a desire to repair (see also Dragojlovic 2020; Hirsch 2008; Kidron 2009).

On a final note, some participants felt that their parents or grandparents were not haunted by their past experiences. For some, this resulted from more open communication and understanding of family histories, while others felt that neglect was an appropriate coping strategy to deal with pasts. Even though these participants did not identify hauntings in their home environments, certain practices or behaviours did reflect similarities with other haunted families. For Maud, a woman in her late 50s, the experiences of her mother Heleen did not affect the home dynamics much: 'I think she felt grief, but she has not transferred that to us. [...] We did not notice it. It is well tucked away.' Heleen, a woman in her 80s who experienced the Japanese occupation at a young age, herself admitted that she was in fact haunted by painful memories from wartimes. While cooking and seeing, smelling and tasting particular food, these memories would involuntarily be invoked and to cope with this she promised herself never to cook again (see also Muzaini 2015). While this had visible effects on domestic chores in the family home, Maud attributed this to resistance to normative expectations of *Indische* women to be home-makers: 'She was a feminist. She did not want to be a home-maker, that is why she did not like cooking.'

Second-generation parents often described that they wanted to be different with their own children but in some cases lacked the actual tools to do so. As Ivan sharply described: 'How can my father be a father to me? He cannot. Then, how can I be a father to my son? I cannot. Nobody taught me.' Relating to both the male and female third-generation participants, fewer hauntings could be inferred than in their grandparents and/or parents, which may be related to changing societal contexts and parenting styles. While child-adult relationships were often less hierarchical, these participants described that they still encountered certain topics as being haunted, off-limits or a source of pain or anger. Notably, the youngest participants, all in their early twenties, often reported that their family histories felt more distant to them, which was often reinforced by limited interest and/or knowledge of actual experiences.

Physical spaces and material traces

Apart from haunted social spaces, some participants also described the importance of material traces of the past in their family homes, contributing to '*Indisch*' atmospheres. Notably, during the Japanese occupation, personal property was often confiscated or destroyed (Tajuddin and Stern 2015). In addition, many families could take only limited possessions with them on their repatriation to the Netherlands. While visiting the families in their homes, most participants showed personal items which fostered connections to the Indies; either family heirlooms or souvenirs from visits to Indonesia, such as paintings, small sculptures, *wayang* puppets or *batik* fabrics.

Participants often described that immersing themselves with these items enabled them to feel connected to their heritage and functioned as testimonies and memorials of family histories (Hirsch 2008; Kidron 2009). For some, these material traces of memories fostered conversations concerning the past, while for others these items were discarded or simply there and not a topic of conversation. The various narratives reveal how material traces can enable remembering, sharing and forgetting haunted pasts.

When asked about material traces of the Indies in her home, Madelon, born in the Netherlands in the early 1960s, shared how her childhood home was filled with family possessions from the Indies. These items reflected their socio-economic status and wealth in the former colony, such as engraved silverware and a large statue. Madelon described how her father experienced extreme brutalities in the Indies, which she recognized in his physical scars, mood swings, tantrums and silences, which ultimately caused the family members to drift apart. After estrangement for multiple years, Madelon found a means to communicate with her father through possessions, which allowed her to gain more understanding of family histories and hardships. She would ask about specific objects in her father's house and write down the stories her father shared about these heirlooms: 'It was a mode that worked for us. He liked it. It allowed him to reminisce about happier times; his childhood.' In return, her father shared books and videos with his daughter to communicate his hardships through secondary sources: 'It allowed my father to share his story without actually telling it.' Indeed, Cho (2008) argues that media technologies can enable survivors and their descendants to see and speak the traumas that cannot be seen and spoken by those who actually lived them. After her father's passing, Madelon displayed these items in her own home. Her son in his late 20s, Tim, described how he grew up among what he identified as 'relics from *Indische* times'. He described that as a child these items were simply part of mundane family life, but after he became older, he deemed these items more valuable and inspired him to pose questions.

During the interview, Merel, who was a young woman when the war broke out, presented relics from internment, which she kept in an old transparent bag. Her number patch and drawings from the camp made by another internee enabled her to visualize and describe daily internment life. For Merel, these items were a 'trophy of survival' (Kidron 2009, 12), as she disclosed that it was strictly forbidden to possess papers in the camp. However, she was able to withhold these from the Japanese and ultimately took them with her to the Netherlands. Similarly, Sandra, a woman in her 90s who lived as a housewife in the Indies with her family, described that in her home she felt an inner necessity to display a letter from her husband written in a Japanese internment camp. She described that in every house the family had lived in, the framed letter was centrally placed on the coffee table as a 'therapeutic site of mourning' (Muzaini 2015, 106), to ensure that her

husband's hardships were remembered daily. During the interview, Sandra described how she surrounded herself with objects from the Indies, such as her *batik* fabrics and books. For Sandra, this '*Indisch* atmosphere' (Dragojlovic 2015, 325) gave her nostalgic and warm feelings. Contrastingly, for Ina, the act of discarding a possession related to hardships enabled her to reconcile with her past (see also Muzaini 2015). Her daughter, Petra described how her mother shared how she had to choose between two dolls to take with her on the passage to the Netherlands, which she found terrible as a child. Petra, who was in her late 40s and felt very connected to her matriarchal family histories, disapprovingly described: 'She threw the doll away recently like she was done with that past. But well... if that helps her to empty her mind, fine.'

Conclusions

This article has traced the burdens of personal and collective histories on intergenerational and gendered family dynamics and practices in home environments, as narrated by Indo-Europeans from the first, second and third generation within twenty-one families across the Netherlands. We focused on the atmospheres and social and physical spaces of home to illustrate how intergenerational hauntings are embodied, expressed and negotiated among various generations within home environments. The analysis presented seeks to extend the interdisciplinary literature related to intergenerational hauntings and contributes to, and bridges agendas in, geography and memory studies that examine the meanings and dynamics of diasporic homes, as well as material cultures in home environments and transmissions of traumatic memories across spatial and generational boundaries.

As strikingly exemplified by Henry, 'the past should not affect the children'. Despite intentions 'to leave the past behind', participants from all generations often did recognize the presence of the past in their family homes. What poignantly came across in participants' narratives is how deeply war violence, racialized violence and displacement are ingrained in Indo-European intergenerational family dynamics and practices in home environments. These intergenerational hauntings were imbued in both presence and absence in the atmospheres and social and physical spaces of home.

Participants' narratives indicate how atmospheres can both be felt and influence social relations and behaviours in home environments. These were often related to the strictness, emotional numbness, unpredictability and anger of parents. Participants often described the need to be vigilant and to adapt to the silent grievances and suffering of their parents, which shifted adult-child roles. Atmospheres in which 'the grief could be felt' were often linked to silences and repressions of the past. These silences proved a fertile

ground for hauntings, as participants described that they instinctively felt that traumatic experiences from the Indies shaped their families' dynamics, but the silent grievances and suffering of parents also often proved a 'zone of unspeakability' (Dragojlovic 2011, 330). Notably, generational differences in communication practices can be identified, as both male and female younger second- and third-generation participants described that they more often tried to fill the absences by posing questions or engaging in genealogy work. Furthermore, homes were often spaces of complex socio-spatial relations, emotions and memories. We identified four modes in which these intergenerational hauntings were prevalent, centred around: power and conflict, strong boundaries between homes and outside worlds, blurred boundaries of times of war and 'peace', and parenting. Within these modes, gendered and generational differences played a crucial role in everyday experiences of home environments. The narratives of family violence revealed how the unspeakable pasts were shaped by gendered parenting practices, familial transmissions of memory and coping strategies for individuals and families in general, but also draw attention to larger structures of gendered, classed and racialized inequalities *Indisch* individuals have experienced both in the Indies and the Netherlands (Dragojlovic 2020). Finally, physical spaces encompassed material traces of pasts, which enabled the remembering, sharing and forgetting of haunted pasts.

It is our intention for this paper to offer a channel for 'stories that call for telling' (To and Trivelli 2015, 306). We have engaged with the often silenced and private memories of Indo-European families, as Dutch public narratives have often neglected Indo-Europeans' daily realities as well as their personal and collective histories (Pattynama 2000). We have charted various modes in which the affective forces of hauntings can be seen, heard, felt and transmitted among various generations within home environments.

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