“Lifting the Low Sky:” Dutch Australians - Assimilationists or Accommodationists?

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Han van der Horst (1996) in his best selling analysis of the Dutch psyche entitled, *The Low Sky*, concludes in his final paragraph,

> Beneath our dykes, under our low sky, we feel safe against the raging waters and the angry world around us. Here, in our small country, we try to make sure that everything is organised as well as possible. In the last instance, the Dutch are not a nation of adventurers. They prefer to stay at home, where they are in control and it is safe. Perhaps that is our main character trait, from which all others follow. (van der Horst, 1996: 299)

The Australian Dutch did not stay home; wherever they ventured to across the world, all overseas Dutch have never been captives of an enclosed ethnicity in their diasporic settings. Their urbanity and cosmopolitan disposition are much admired. Yet van der Horst’s comments together with the kernel of truth in the enduring stereotype of the ‘proud and stubborn Dutchman’ provide a spur to analyse the specific position of the Dutch Australian community, the core values they brought with them, their persistence over time and through generations, the incorporation of members of immigrant communities into the host society and the dynamic interaction of ethnic persistence and incorporation into a society such as that of Australia.

The scant literature on the Dutch Australians has noted their alleged invisibility. (Duyker, 1987; Grüter & Stracke, 1995) Perhaps it is preferable to say their presence is muted and under-recognized rather than invisible. Because of their high rate of intermarriage, more and more Australians of majority and minority ethnicities have a

Dutch uncle or grandparent. Just as Australians do not realize that the Dutch, according to present evidence , were the first Europeans to live permanently on the Australian continent, so contemporary Australian society does not fully recognize how pervasive is the Dutch presence. It is a presence by osmosis and quiet subversion. As well, over the past twenty years the Dutch presence has declined in relative terms. In 1976, Dutch was the fourth most widely spoken language whereas by 1996 its place has declined to fifteenth position.

Dutch immigrants played only a very minor role in the First Golden Age of Migration during the Gold Rush to Australia of the 1850s. But they were to become a notable part of the Second Golden Age from the late 1940s to the early 1950s when Australia embarked on its huge post World War II programme to increase its population. This was in response to security concerns following the defeat of the Japanese and to the Asian allegation of 'much space, few people'. Populating the empty spaces of the vast and ancient Australian continent was thus considered necessary. An additional reason was to provide sufficient workers for Australia's growing secondary industry following on the decline in the birth rate during the 1930s.

Their arrival from a Netherlands, struggling to recover from the trauma of World War II, coincided with the influx of large groups from the United Kingdom and other non-English speaking countries notably from Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta and Poland. The arrival of the European groups was to occur more than 20 years prior to the arrival of the Asian groups in the 1970s following the collapse of the White Australia policy, the Indonesian take-over of East Timor, the refugee exodus after the end the of Vietnamese War and the huge Chinese influx since the mid 1980s.

This chapter aims to examine the Dutch Australian presence more from a contemporary perspective, juxtaposing their settlement profile and experience with the other immigrant groups noted above and, secondly, to re-examine the assimilationist hypothesis with suggests that first- and second generation Dutch have been anxious to escape their ethnic moorings and reject their cultural heritage. The Dutch have perennially held up as the permanent assimilates. It was claimed they were the perfect migrants who through their very high intermarriage pattern and the shift from their first language across to English have retained their ethnicity only in a symbolic way. The Dutch themselves have worried about whether they are headed for assimilationist extinction. (Grüter & Stracke, 1995)

The Dutch Australian Community in Comparative Perspective

In his seminal work on ethnic relations, Barth (1969) argued that the fundamental process involved in ethnic/immigrant group formation is the construction of identifiable social boundaries, though he saw the production and transmission of social boundaries of an ethnic group as a two-way process with the mainstream and other minority groups. His vision of ethnicity is that it is situationally defined. However, it has been subsequently broadened to incorporate the importance of history. But history in two senses: (i) one's ethnic identity as an ongoing process insofar as the expression of one's cultural self modifies and changes in the context of day-to-day process of events which constitute the "here-and-now" of yesterday, today and tomorrow; (ii) ethnicity as a deeply ingrained primordial trait based on core values of the root culture or generations-old streams of tradition - these values are

deeply resistant to change even in context of great change such as in immigration. Hence for Barth, ethnic group boundaries and social identity are negotiable and subject to constant flux. Cornell (1986) more recently has suggested that ethnic group attachment and collective identity vary continuously along the three dimension of shared culture, shared interests and shared institutions depending on what they share and the social circumstances they encounter.

Yinger (1993) in his theory of ethnic relations insists on the need for multi-variable explanations of how ethnic groups form and how they generate strength. Hence, reductionist models such as traditional Marxism and sociobiology which focus mainly on one explanatory variable hinder more than help analysis. Theories such as labour market segmentation and internal colonialism are valuable analytical tools but they underemphasize the critical cultural and historical factors buried deep within a group's cultural baggage. As well, these theories neglect the individual differences the exist between immigrant groups in how they adapt to a society and how they form themselves into cohesive entities. Yinger's model of ethnic strength postulates three interactive elements in group formation:

a) Primordial or "general culture" factors
b) Interest or stratification factors
c) Characterological factors

In his model of ethnic strength , Yinger nominates fourteen factors that increase the salience of group membership for immigrants:

1. Large group size
2. High residential concentration
3. Shorter length of residence

4. Ease of home return
5. Speaking a language different to the mainstream or official language
6. Different racial characteristics
7. Different religious tradition
8. Entering a host society as a result of forced migration such as in refugee movements
9. Emigrating from culturally different societies
10. Attraction to economic and political developments in the homeland
11. Homogeneous in class and occupation
12. Low levels of education
13. Experience of high amounts of discrimination, and
14. Residing in a society with little social mobility rather than an open society.

The Dutch, together with their fellow immigrants from English-speaking and Continental European countries, entered an Australia vigorously embarking on its post-War reconstruction. It was an open society where social mobility was very possible even though the Australian elite severely restricted entry to its WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) ranks. They came from a society, notwithstanding the difference between the Dutch and English languages, more similar to Australia than any other of the continental European countries. Their physical characteristics, while identifiably different from mainstream Anglo-Australians in many cases, were such that they, especially their blond blue-eyed members, were publicly held up by Australian political leaders during the 1950s as exemplars of the perfect immigrant. And so in the political and media discourse that followed they were alleged to have become such.

This public trumpeting was to facilitate acceptance of the overall immigration programme and offset attention upon the many more numerous Southern Europeans whose darker complexions together with their pietistic cultural Catholicism or enclavic Orthodoxy made them more suspect. The religious profile of the Dutch with its Catholic-Protestant pluralism fitted congenially into its new context.

The Dutch experienced some discrimination, but certainly less than other non-English groups. In was mild both in nature and extent. What was experienced resulted more from ignorance and insensitivity than overt prejudice. Unlike the Italian and Greek groups who became the two largest non-English speaking groups in the Australian multicultural mosaic, the Dutch like the German, Maltese and Polish, were a middle-sized group.

However, the essential point of the Dutch population movement was that it was a concentrated wave, framed within a relatively short time span of about a decade. It was not extended over a much longer period as occurred with the Mediterranean and later Asian waves. For example, even in the first part of the 1970s, the Maltese after Malta's independence and the gradual wind down of the British administrative and military presence, were still arriving. However, as Blauw documents in this volume, there were later Dutch waves but they were mainly aftershocks. The Dutch-born population has been in gradual decline from its 102 134 peak in 1961 to 94 692 thirty years later. The 1950s Dutch wave was not renewed as occurred, for example, in the case of the Polish with the significant Solidarity wave of the early 1980s rejuvenating the vitality of the Polish Australian community.

Unlike the Turks who even almost thirty years after their arrival beginning in the late 1960s remain largely uncommitted to Australia (Keceli 1998) the intention of the Dutch was always permanent residency though the option to return was readily available. It was in fact exercised by many, more so than other comparison groups. Estimates (Harvey, 1978; Duyker, 1987; Overberg, 1988) suggest that at least a third

returned. Visits back home were easy when financially possible. In levels of education, both the Dutch and German groups, reasonably well-educated for people born before World War II, were closer to the Australian norm than the other continental European groups (See Table 1), and both groups also had greater heterogeneity in terms of social class background and especially of occupation because of the technical skill they brought. (See table 2)

(Tables One and Two about here)

In their settlement and current residential patterns, the groups from Greece, Italy and Malta were initially concentrated in the poorer inner suburban areas of the large metropolitan cities, before moving outwards into the middle-ring and outer-ring suburbs in wedge-like movements. The Dutch were quite different, their pattern militating against group salience and cohesion. Their settlement has been one of dispersal and scattering, not only within States but across States. The Dutch are a significant minority group in all eight Australian States and Territories. But there is a peculiar feature: Queensland and Tasmania have been the two States with the lowest overall populations of immigrants, yet in both the Dutch have been the largest non-English immigrant group. As well the Dutch have a high rate of mobility, not unlike the general Australian population and in contrast to the Mediterranean groups. Hugo (1999) has recent drawn attention to the movement of the Dutch from the eastern States to the State of Western Australia.

Within States, they settled more in rural areas than other groups, suggesting that their farming skill, especially dairy farming, were more adaptable to the Australian context

than the skills that the Greek and Italian peasants brought with them. However, one of their most distinguishing characteristics has been their residency in outer-suburban areas in hilly and mountainous areas on the fringes of the capital cities. It was as though this group, specifically and in a calculated manner opted to acquire land in areas in direct contrast to the flat lowlands of their mother country. In Tasmania, they settled especially at Kingston to establish "Little Groningen" whereas in South Australia they settled in Wilunga and Noarlunga. Victorian Dutch people settled in areas such as Dandenong, Knox, Frankston, Berwick and in the Dandenong Ranges as well as at Creswick near Ballarat. In New South Wales, they tended to settle near or in the Blue Mountains such as at Penrith, Colo and Blacktown.

Hence this analysis using Yinger's framework suggests that the Dutch, in comparison to other immigrant groups, exhibited low to moderate ethnic strength and that group affiliation has remained relatively unimportant. Their high inter-marriage rate and high language shift have further accompanied and accentuated this. But, the question must be asked: *have the Dutch in Australian rejected their ethnicity? why did the Dutch adopt a seemingly assimilationist strategy? what were the key factors that influenced the settlement process?*

In answering these questions, we need to re-examine the assimilationist hypothesis through return to the primordialist position and the characterological features of the Dutch Australian tradition and to Barth's stress on the importance of history in its twofold aspect. *What were the cultural core values that the Dutch brought and the cultural software of their minds that were the key factors in their adaptation strategies?*

(a) Alienation from the Home Country

To some extent all voluntary immigrants become alienated from the social, political or economic changes within their home country, otherwise the motivation to "take up thy bed and walk" would be insufficient. It is important to note that, despite the urgings of the Dutch government to embark for distant shores, only a small minority did actually depart. Migration implied not only the original decision to move, pushed out of a post-War Holland still recovering from the Nazi trauma, it also requires the periodic re-affirmation of the decision. Luthke and Cropley (1989) draw our attention to the notion that deeper, perhaps darker, reasons can underpin the move overtly expressed as an aspiration of a bright future for children and for employment opportunities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some Dutch immigrants felt in the immediate aftermath of the War they had not been properly recognized or recompensed for their War efforts and that jobs were given to non-partisans rather than the anti-Nazi partisans who had risked their lives fighting for the freedom of the Dutch people.

From the mid 1950s onwards the Netherlands participated in the economic rebirth of Europe so much so that the Dutch in the Netherlands now enjoy a higher standard of living than the Dutch in Australia. The decision to remain committed to Australia was based not only on the family roots that were planted in Australian soil. Anecdotal evidence suggests also influential was the contrast of borderless, spacious open-air Australia with the smallness and flatness of the mother country, its lack of space and its claustrophobic over-crowdedness.

At the same time, the delicate question must be posed: do the ageing Australian Dutch feel double-crossed and hoodwinked by the fact that since over-population was proffered as one major excuse why they ought to leave, the population of the Netherlands has close to doubled in the intervening years since the late 1940s? No research exists to answer this question. Probably it is unanswerable. Certainly they have felt consistently neglected by the Dutch government. Perhaps it has made them suspicious of all government and bureaucracy.

(b) No Defining Experience during Settlement

All European immigrants had experienced during their formative or young adult years the ravages of the Depression and the Second World War. Upon arrival in Australia, some immigrant settler groups have been galvanized into cohesive action by some defining event or series of events. The Dutch were not present in any numbers in Australia prior to the War and nor were they aligned with the Axis powers. The small pre-War German and Italian communities were to be shaped by their prison internment as a defining event. The effect was for their leaderships to adopt a low public profile, certainly in the case of the German community. The Italian community, as the largest of the non-British groups, gradually emerged from its wartime cocoon to find a niche mainly through business and commerce and, to a far lesser extent, through the Catholic Church. Their image is now so positive that in 1997 an Italian-born immigrant was appointed Governor of Victoria. However, since the late 1950s, it had to contend with Mafia-type criminality in its own ranks that at times compromised its evolving image. For the Dutch, there was none of this.

The Greek community has utilized the routes of public administration and political participation, mainly from the left wing of politics. Their strategies was formulated by intellectual community activists, though their sense of cohesion was also galvanised by such events as the right-wing coup in Greece in 1967 and the 1989 Greek social security scandal where fraud allegations were mostly found to be without foundation. For the Poles, the Communist domination culminating in the Solidarity period focussed the attention of the Polish community more on the homeland saga even to the extent of neglecting the problems the community was experiencing in Australia. (Drozd & Cahill 1993)

For the Dutch adaptation went smoothly - political life in the Netherlands was uneventful in nature. In Australia, the Dutch did not use the political route overtly though they were not without political links. Only one Dutch Australian made his mark - Peter Spyker, a boilermaker, became Minister for Ethnic Affairs during the 1980s in the Victorian Labor Government, but his strongly leftist ideology was not the taste of a middle-class community often engaged in small business. It was, compared to other communities financially viable, competent in organizing and helping itself, and never in a way which gained much publicity. Well known Dutch Australian were surprisingly few, and the best-known, Anita, partner of the former Prime Minister, Paul Keating (1991-1996) has taken no interest in Dutch community affairs, much to the chagrin of her compatriots.

(c) Core Cultural Baggage of the Dutch

The primordialist thesis suggests that core cultural values and practices that each cultural group brings impacts upon their adaptation as does the cultural and linguistic distance between the home and host societies. The Dutch, firstly, brought with them the values of openness, hospitality and generosity, especially towards oppressed persons, for which they are widely admired. Gert Hofstede, a world pioneering cross-cultural psychologist and himself Dutch, draws attention to this trait with his image of the Dutch as innkeepers. (Hofstede 1987, 1991; see Stracke 1995) In Australia they allowed themselves to interact freely and frequently instead of encapsulating themselves within an ethnic enclave. This led to a high intermarriage rate though this was also propelled by the gender imbalance - in 1954, the ratio was 158 males for every 100 females in the 20-34 age cohort, and at the 1961 census, the imbalance (143:100) was still very marked. Hence Anglo-Australian were receptive of the Dutch presence - their ethnicity came to be, not a liability nor a stigma, but a social resource.

Associated with this openness was the social value of the acceptance of structural pluralism, the so-called pillarization or the practice of 'living apart together'. It reinforced also the compartmentalization of public and private life. The Dutch social contract was built on a consensus between the four major ideologies of Catholicism, Protestantism, Liberalism and Socialism. In contrast to Germany, no ideology could be dominant, and hence the strategy of accommodation was required by all. This compromise culture was transferred and easily adapted itself to the Australian context.

The pillarization tradition was applied by the Dutch reformed Church in establishing an emerging group of Christian community schools and establishing their own churches after becoming dissatisfied with the Presbyterian and Methodist churches. They formed the core group in the organization known as the Christian Parent Controlled Schools for "the method of school government that was adopted was a parent-controlled model, based on a Dutch Reformed understanding of parental responsibility and Abraham Kuyper's view of sphere sovereignty and 'common grace'". (Long, 1996: 124) In 1995, these schools were educating over 20 000 students in 72 schools around Australia. The CPCS has been the core driving force behind the formation of other Christian biblical schools founded on the inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible which is educating more than 60 000 in 300 schools.

An addition element in the psychic software of the Dutch immigrants was a tolerant cosmopolitanism based on liberal Enlightenment values together with other factors such as the work ethic of Protestantism, the concrete need, as a small, heavily populated, resource-poor nation, to be international commercial traders and lastly, their experience as colonializers. Nineteenth century Social Darwinism which suggested a hierarchy of human beings based on race and level of civilization was never strong in Dutch intellectual or political circles. Howard has developed the notion of Enlightenment Imperialism which seems applicable to the Dutch as distinct from ideologies that underpinned the rapacity of other colonial powers such as Spain. He suggests it reached its initial expression during the French Revolution. It believed in the essential homogeneity of all human persons who have the same basic needs, aspirations and rights by virtue of their common humanity. The emphasis on homogeneity and equality meant it was disrespectful of cultural differences.

Enlightenment imperialists thus considered their task not only to subordinate their colonial subjects but also to transform them, bringing to them the delights and riches of civilization as defined by the Europeans and liberating them from ‘ignorance and superstition’. In doing so, it was assumed and accepted that their cultural traditions would be destroyed but on the premise that all ought be equal and equally civilized.

Hence, in analysing the Dutch Australian experience, we need to ask whether the literature has described the full range of ethnic complexity, especially in a world increasingly globalized and in nation states increasingly containing culturally diverse populations. Perhaps in the case of the Dutch, their identity, in a seeming paradox, is best expressed as *a pluralist and cosmopolitan ethnicity* - their ethnic identity, securely entrenched in its sense of Dutchness, is permeated with a global and transcultural consciousness. As a consequence, their instincts are firmly counter posed to varieties of ethno-nationalism or ethno-centrism as distinct from ethnic pride and cultural loyalty. Hofstede includes the role of trader and traveller among his eight roles, which has led to this strong internationalist orientation. One sign of this was that until recent times, it was normal for newspapers in the Netherlands to print foreign news on the front page rather than the home news. (van der Horst 1996)

The Second Generation Dutch Australians

The great enigma of the Dutch Australian presence has been the second and third generations. It is often assumed in ethnic community discourse that subsequent generations are clones of their immigrant parents, but they have not had to make the

hard decision to leave their country, and may have been very unhappy about leaving it if they were born as young children in their home country. In their growing up, the family and social pressures have been quite different. They are simply the products of a different generation and a different personal history. *How successful have they been in educational and occupation terms?*

Table Three shows the educational qualifications of those Australian-born with at least one parent born in the Netherlands compared to those born in Greece, Italy, Germany, Malta and Poland. Certainly in terms of postgraduate degrees, the Dutch have out-performed the Maltese whose educational performance has been a source of concern for several decades; their performance is similar to the German group but behind that of the Greek, Italian and Polish groups. In terms of university undergraduate degrees, the Dutch percentage for both sexes is lower than for all groups except the Maltese.

(Table three about here)

What is striking is the high proportion of second-generation Dutch males in the skilled vocational category. Because of this, the Dutch males compare very well with the other groups in having some qualifications whereas the Dutch females do not compare nearly so well except that they are well ahead of their Maltese counterparts.

Table Four shows another striking feature, a feature that confounds the assumption about the presumed educational mobility of all immigrant groups. In the case of both the Dutch and the Germans, the immigrant parents are better educated than their

offspring whereas the Greek, Italian and Maltese have shown considerable educational mobility over the generations though the first-generation group have a lower education base. The Polish group has outperformed the other comparison groups, though the Polish figures include a sizeable Jewish cohort who have always had a high educational participation rate and the figures are compounded for comparison purposes by the very significant Solidarity group of the early 1980s.

(Table four about here)

What accounts for the relatively poorer educational performance of the second-generation Dutch Australian group? Four reasons suggest themselves. Firstly, bilingual acquisition model (Cummins, 1979; Cahill, 1985) suggest that when linguistic groups do not maintain their first language, many of their children do not learn the second language nearly as well as those competent in their first language because of linguistic interdependency. Secondly, financial pressures upon families do not explain the differences because this factor would have applied to all groups. Rather a mechanism was operating within the community during the early decades of settlement which impelled the Dutch to take up trade qualifications rather than advancing through to university. Thirdly, the Dutch, more than other groups, were residing in rural areas where educational opportunities were less. Lastly, many of the Dutch children attended Catholic schools which during the 1950s and into the 1970s received no financial assistance from the government. Existing only on fees paid by often impoverished parents, religious brothers and nuns battled as best they could to provide an adequate education despite having up to 100 children in their classes.

Inevitably there were victims, especially those from non-English speaking families whose needs were too great to be adequately met.

Does this educational profile relate to unemployment and income levels. Birrell and Khoo (1995) have provided the most sophisticated analysis of selected second-generation by focussing on those aged 25-34[1] Their results show that the Dutch male unemployment rate is just below the Australian norm (15.5 per cent compared to 16.2 per cent) but the proportion of Dutch unemployed is higher than Cypriot (11.6 per cent) Italian (13.3 per cent) Maltese (14.4 per cent) and Chinese (11 per cent) male rates. The Dutch female employment figures relate to women in the peak of their childbearing years.

In terms of income for each of the occupational categories used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Dutch male second-generation group received annual salaries above the Australian average, on par with the German group, consistently below the English-speaking immigrant groups (UK, NZ and Ireland) Eastern European groups (Hungary and Poland) except for Yugoslavia and generally well below the Chinese and Egyptian groups (except in the trade area). In the all important trades area, their median income was towards the top of the range, being considerably above the Australian median by 2.5 percent. Female income levels for this 25-34 age cohort were generally also above the Australian median except for the professional and clerk categories. Their income levels were consistently below all the other second-generation immigrant groups studied by Birrell and Khoo (1995) especially in the professional area.

Regarding intermarriage, the analysis of Price (1994) has shown that only 6.9 percent of Dutch second generation males and 6.1 percent of the females were marrying within their own ethnic group compared to high rates for the Lebanese (72.5 per cent of brides, 52 per cent for grooms) Turks (66.2 per cent, 41.9 per cent) Greeks (65.6 per cent, 60.4 per cent) and Italians (50.4 per cent, 46.5 per cent).

No evidence suggests that the second-generation group are a disenchanted group even though one might have expected a higher level of education. Virtually none has gone to the Netherlands to live permanently. The financial returns have been sufficient though they have not launched into large-scale commercial ventures - the trend has been towards small business based on technical skill acquisition.

The Dutch and the Assimilationist Hypothesis

The assimilationist hypothesis applied so frequently to the Dutch as the alleged ‘perfect immigrants’ and also known as Anglo-conformist or replacement hypothesis, assumes that Australian society and its underlying values have remained unchanged and that the Dutch have changed completely. In measuring the impact of the Dutch, insufficient study has been devoted to how much Australia has changed and to its failure to agree on the content of its identity (e.g. that failure to cast aside the British link) and its core values.

The research literature on immigrant adaptation and inter-ethnic contact nominates six possible scenarios:

i) **Annihilation** whereby the dominant group so swamps and oppresses the ethnic minority group and it disappears.
ii) **Assimilation** whereby the ethnic group is absorbed into the dominant culture which remains basically unchanged.
iii) **Amalgamation** whereby the incorporation of an ethnic minority group leads to hybrid culture founded on hyphenated ethnicities (Vietnamese Australian/ Javanese Dutch) and high mixed ethnicities; it is sometime known as melting pot theory popular in the USA during the 1920s which saw America as God's great crucible.
iv) **Accommodation** where the ethnic group, which retaining its ethnic distinctiveness, makes changes to its social and language structures as does the mainstream dominant group.
v) **Segregation** whereby an ethnic group separates and isolates itself from other majority and minority groups, perhaps dominating them.
vi) **Ethnic re-organization** whereby an ethnic group undergoes a re-organization of its social structure, redefines its ethnic group boundaries in response to dominant demands - sometime known as dissimilation (Yinger's term) or ethnic renascence.

Whilst the annihilation and segregation scenarios clearly do not apply to the Dutch presence, the evidence is mixed in respect to the other four scenarios. The assimilation scenario is not totally applicable because, while the high intermarriage rate and the high level of language shift may appear to support it, the Dutch immigrant group have retained their ethnic distinctiveness even if it is in the private and ethnic community forums rather than celebrated and upheld in a publicly visible manner.

Underlying this is the role that the Dutch community has played in the formation of a culturally diverse, pluralist society. Dreidger (1993) draws our attention to three ideal types of immigrant communities: (i) the tradition directed community (ii) the marginal community and (iii) the broker or middle person community. The Dutch have clearly played the role of broker, the bridge or link community in the delicate period of the 1950s and 1960s when the foundations of multicultural Australia were being laid. It was not intended as a deliberate strategy. Nor has it been a celebrated and recognized role. It was played out very much at the grassroots level, and it was based upon their

pluralist and cosmopolitan values implicit in the cultural baggage they brought to Australia which they further developed as they made their accommodation to the socially evolving Australia. As the most acceptable of the non-English speaking groups, they helped to facilitate and mediate the transition from a fundamentally WASP (with an Irish add-on) society to a society that in the late 1970s accepted the reality and benefits of multiculturalism though at various times, in 1984, again in 1988 and especially in 1996 with the Pauline Hanson phenomenon, a backlash has been in evidence. A similar backlash against immigration has occurred in the Netherlands, especially amongst manual labourers, self-employed and lowly-educated people and amongst young people and persons on average income rather than the unemployed and low income people. (Scheppers, Schmeets & Felling 1997)

A reading of van der Horst's popular analysis of the Dutch mentality reveals a similarity in thinking between the Dutch and Australian peoples; a restraint in behaviour, an openness to pluralism, the tall poppy syndrome, an aversion to injustice, the calculated expression of emotions, the ambivalence towards ID cards, supportive of democracy but distrustful of politicians, an aversion to verbal diarrhoea and a love of pragmatic reality and finally, encouraging of initiative and entrepreneurship. Proxemic behaviour is similar. In both countries, there is a reluctance to change what functions effectively - as the Dutch themselves say, "if you chop down trees watch for flying splinters".

In both histories, as there probably are in all national histories, there is a darker side: the slave trade in the case of the Dutch, the genocidal strategies against its indigenous peoples in the case of Australia. The internationalist and multicultural orientation of

both countries comes from an understated nationalism and submerged cultural sense that regularly breaks out into intense soul-searching about the content of national identity. It is interesting to note that in the Netherlands there are very few Dutch restaurants (van der Horst 1996) as in Australia there is no agreement on an Australian cuisine - residents of both countries have a choice of a bewildering range of multicultural restaurants. The two countries are contrasted by their physical environment. Yet in the very contrast lies similarity. The Dutch emphasize 'water management' in the situation of the threat of the overwhelming surfeit of water held back by the dykes. Australia, the world's driest continent, suffers form lack of water, and the management of its water resources is central to its well-being. If the Dutch are fearful of ocean flooding, Australians are fearful of drought and bushfire. Both countries are continually locked into the struggle with nature.

Their location on opposite sides of the world has meant that the peoples of the two countries do not fully recognize the links and the similarities. The opportunity to highlight these links that present themselves with the Dutch wife of Paul Keating, who both as Treasurer and Prime Minister from 1983 to 1996 dominated Australian politics, was mostly missed.

These deep seated similarities imply the adaptation strategy of the Dutch immigrant group was essentially accommodationist. It is not assimilationist because the Dutch have been as much Dutch as they wanted to be. From the moment of entry into Australia, their social boundaries were very elastic. The similarities led to their unintended role as brokers of the whole immigration programme in the critical period when Australian public opinion had to be won over to the acceptance of the non-

English speaking stranger. Their ethnic strength was of moderate strength, their group membership only moderately salient because of their cosmopolitan ethnicity, built on the deep strands of Dutch culture. The second-generation group are amalgamationists in their orientation, and the sense of Dutchness will be transmitted with some pride but without overwhelming passion as to its salience. In the coming decades, as families research their histories, the Dutch links will be noted and recorded, and eventually they will pass into the mists of history.

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Table 1. Educational Qualifications of First Generation Immigrant Groups (per cent)

Level of Qualification	Country of Birth													
	Netherlands		*Greece*		*Italy*		*Germany*		*Malta*		*Poland*		*Australia*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Higher Degree	1.4	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.1	2.1	0.9	0.3	0.0	4.4	3.5	1.1	0.4
Post Graduate Diploma	0.7	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.7	1.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.8	1.3
Bachelor Degree	4.5	3.3	2.0	1.5	1.9	1.1	5.1	4.3	1.6	0.8	4.4	3.7	6.2	4.9
Undergraduate Diploma	3.5	6.2	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.0	3.2	5.5	0.8	1.2	1.9	4.1	2.2	5.8
Associate Diploma	1.6	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.2	1.5	1.0	0.9	0.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	1.2
Skilled Vocational	27.8	2.6	10.1	2.1	17.0	2.2	37.9	5.5	17.3	0.9	16.8	3.6	19.2	2.2
Basic Vocational	3.7	4.4	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.6	3.6	5.4	2.1	1.6	2.3	2.4	2.5	4.2
Other [a]	15.2	17.5	9.1	9.0	10.5	10.5	14.3	21.0	10.2	11.3	21.8	22.4	8.9	11.1
Total Qualified	58.4	36.1	24.2	15.6	32.8	17.0	68.3	44.8	33.5	16.6	52.8	41.1	42.5	31.0
No Qualification [b]	41.6	63.9	75.8	84.4	67.2	83.0	31.7	55.2	66.5	83.4	47.2	58.9	57.5	69.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Comprises Level of Attainment Inadequately Described and Level of Attainment not Attained
(b) Includes Persons still at School and Not Sated

Source: *Community Profiles*, Bureau of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Population Research

Table 2: Occupational Status of First Generation Immigrant Groups (per cent)

Occupational Status	Country of Birth													
	Netherlands		*Greece*		*Italy*		*Germany*		*Malta*		*Poland*		*Australia*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Managers-Administrators	19.1	10.5	11.7	7.8	15.0	10.1	16.5	8.7	9.7	6.9	9.8	5.1	16.0	8.2
Professionals	11.6	11.1	4.6	4.6	5.0	5.6	12.2	13.7	4.2	4.2	17.2	15.6	11.8	13.3
Paraprofessionals	6.9	7.8	1.8	1.8	2.8	1.7	7.0	6.8	3.8	2.7	6.3	9.7	6.6	7.2
Trades Persons	24.0	3.7	20.2	5.3	26.8	6.4	28.1	4.7	20.6	3.5	24.2	5.4	20.6	3.5
Clerks	4.5	24.6	2.8	10.1	2.9	18.4	4.9	26.6	5.2	21.3	3.4	14.8	6.2	28.2
Salespersons-Personal Service Workers	7.8	18.8	10.0	15.7	6.9	16.3	6.5	16.9	4.1	15.9	5.8	.12.5	9.1	21.7
Plant-Machine Operators-Drivers	9.5	2.8	15.2	13.4	11.8	9.1	8.8	2.8	20.2	6.2	13.4	7.3	10.3	1.8
Labourers	9.7	13.5	23.4	29.9	18.8	20.6	9.4	12.7	23.5	31.0	11.3	20.2	12.9	9.9
Inadequately Described-Not Stated	6.7	7.4	10.3	11.8	9.9	11.7	6.5	7.2	8.6	8.4	8.4	9.4	6.5	6.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: *Community Profiles*, Bureau of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Population Research

Table 3. Educational Qualifications of Second Generation Immigrant Groups (per cent)

Level of Qualification	*Country of Birth*											
	Netherlands		*Greece*		*Italy*		*Germany*		*Malta*		*Poland*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Higher Degree	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.1	2.5	0.9
Post Graduate Diploma	0.7	1.3	0.7	2.3	0.6	1.5	0.6	1.3	0.3	0.7	1.6	3.3
Bachelor Degree	5.9	5.4	9.1	8.3	7.0	5.8	6.1	5.5	2.8	2.6	13.6	10.8
Undergraduate Diploma	1.7	6.0	1.7	3.6	1.5	3.7	1.6	4.5	0.9	2.5	2.8	6.9
Associate Diploma	1.5	1.2	1.9	1.6	1.7	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	0.8	2.1	1.5
Skilled Vocational	21.8	2.6	12.6	3.5	20.5	4.5	18.5	2.3	22.7	2.4	19.8	2.1
Basic Vocational	2.5	6.0	2.0	6.4	2.1	5.8	2.3	4.8	1.9	4.7	2.9	6.1
Other [a]	6.4	8.1	7.6	11.2	7.2	10.3	7.4	9.6	6.6	10.2	7.0	9.7
Total Qualified	41.0	31.0	36.2	37.2	41.1	32.9	38.9	29.5	36.3	23.9	52.1	41.4
No Qualification [b]	59.0	69.0	63.8	62.8	58.9	67.1	61.1	70.5	63.7	76.1	47.9	58.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Comprises Level of Attainment Inadequately Described and Level of Attainment not Attained
(b) Includes Persons still at School and Not Sated

Source: *Community Profiles*, Bureau of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Population Research

Table 4. Educational Qualifications of First and Second Generation Immigrant Groups (per cent)

Level of Qualification	*Country of Birth*												
	Netherlands		*Greece*		*Italy*		*Germany*		*Malta*		*Poland*		*Australia*
	First	*Second*	*First*	*Second*	*First*	*Second*	*First*	*Second*	*First*	*Second*	*First*	*Second*	
Higher Degree	0.9	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3	1.5	0.7	0.2	0.1	4.0	1.7	0.7
Post Graduate Diploma	0.8	1.0	0.4	1.5	0.3	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.3	0.4	0.5	2.4	1.0
Bachelor Degree	3.9	5.7	1.7	8.7	1.5	6.4	4.7	5.8	1.2	2.7	4.1	12.2	5.5
Undergraduate Diploma	4.8	3.8	0.7	2.6	0.9	2.6	4.3	3.1	1.0	1.7	3.0	4.9	4.0
Associate Diploma	1.2	1.4	0.4	1.7	0.4	1.4	1.2	1.2	0.6	0.9	0.8	1.8	1.4
Skilled Vocational	15.9	12.3	6.2	8.2	10.1	12.6	21.4	10.3	9.6	12.8	10.3	10.9	10.4
Basic Vocational	4.0	4.3	1.3	4.2	1.6	3.9	4.5	3.6	1.9	3.2	2.3	4.5	3.4
Other [a]	16.3	7.2	9.1	9.4	10.5	8.7	17.7	8.5	10.7	8.3	22.1	8.3	10.0
Total Qualified	47.9	36.0	20.0	36.7	25.5	37.0	56.3	34.1	25.5	30.2	47.1	46.7	36.6
No Qualification [b]	52.1	64.0	80.0	63.3	74.5	63.0	43.7	65.9	74.5	69.8	52.9	53.3	63.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Comprises Level of Attainment Inadequately Described and Level of Attainment not Attained

(b) Includes Persons still at School and Not Sated

[1] For this analysis, Birrell and Khoo included the following groups: New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland, Cyprus, Greece, Italy , Malta, Yugoslavia, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Hungry, Poland, USSR and the Baltic States, Lebanon, Egypt and mainland China and India.