

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS

Faded Portraits tells about one aspect in life of Javanese and Indies women, especially those who are married to the Dutchmen. It is undeniable that during Dutch colonization there were lots of Indonesian women who has become the wife or bedmates of the Dutchmen, with or without engaged in marriage institution. In this particular case, the writer wants to discuss about marriage or affair between Dutchmen and Javanese and Sundanese women. It is based on the characters and setting in Faded Portraits, which takes Javanese and Sundanese women as the character and also Java Island as the setting of place. Java Island itself has always been the most densely populated, with about two-thirds of all Indonesians living there. In many ways a history of Indonesia is, primarily, the history of Java (De Nijs, E. Breton: ix). Java cannot be separated from the history of Indonesia, because in that period, one of the cities in Java, named Batavia, is the centre of the government. So, most important activities and decisions of the Government were made in this place.

The author uses West Java as the setting of place in the novel. Javanese/Sundanese are stereotyped as ordinary people. Ordinary means that they are honest and modest in terms what their clothes are not added with various accessories, and they talk and behave politely. They always obey their tradition. Not only pure Javanese and Sundanese who could not leave their own tradition. Some Dutch-Indies people, who are generally ambivalent in their character, also

could not leave their native tradition. As the consequence of mimicry whereas native or and Indies-Dutch people imitated Dutch style and upbringing is they behave as well as *white* or Dutch people. But in reality, Dutch-Indies and native people are still difficult to become pure Dutch because of their physical appearance and their native habits. The writer is interested in delineating about Indies-Dutch, mix-blood people in Indonesia.

The existences of mix-blood were built as the consequence of a marriage between Indies and Dutch people. They are fettered by the social status. Native and some Dutch-Indies as a colonized people has lower social status than Dutch “totok” as colonizer.

In post-colonial societies, the participants are frozen into a hierarchical relationship in which the oppressed is locked into position by the assumed moral superiority of the dominant group, a superiority that is reinforced when necessary by the use of physical force (Aschroft: 172).

In colonial society, native and Dutch-Indies were often to be oppressed by the Dutch. In addition, it continues until the two people become a couple and has children. Usually, the extended family of Dutch disagrees with this kind of marriage. They still think that Indies does not match to be European couple. Moreover, if the Indo-European couple has a baby with native appearance, Dutch family will be disappointed and they like to treat them unseemly.

The main character that will be the focus in this analysis is the character of Aunt Sophie. Aunt Sophie is the mix-blood woman who always considers that the

European style is better and more honourable than Indies. In her daily life, she always acts and claims herself as a woman with European upbringing. She also educates her family, especially her niece, to be a “European,” not the native one. However, Sophie herself is not consequent with her own statement. She often does some native tradition. She also does her native habits secretly. This ambiguous character makes the writer interested in analysing it deeper and in doing the concept of mimicry is to sharpen the analysis.

#### **IV. A. Aunt Sophie and Her Ambiguous Character**

Aunt Sophie is the main character in this novel. She is a mixed blood woman. She is caught up in the conflicts, which happened among some people in the story. Aunt Sophie is a central character. She plays a very important part in building and determining the story. She always claims herself as a European, but on the other side, she still does anything that has native taste. She like “jamus”, “pidjet”, go to “dukun”, she believed the supernatural and also “selamatan” in celebrating happy events, though it is clearly that her religion is Christian. For example when Kitty was born, De Paulys family invite “haji” to lead the occasion. She is still doing native cultures. She thinks that native side as a part of her ambiguous character is just like her mother. She always claims herself that she is one of the women who categorized as European. Sophie does not realize that in reality she is accustomed to native habits and attitude in her life. She often insults her own family who has native appearance. She treats Kitty, Christian’s daughter better than the three Alex’s daughter because Kitty is very beautiful with her

blond hair, light and fair skin, blue eyes and while the three girls are very native, dark with flat nose.

Below is the description of Aunt Sophie's character that shows that she is very native, even though in reality, her life is different from what she claims.

"Oh," she sometimes murmured, "You know, I'm really just like Ma" (58)

This quotation describes what Sophie actually feels toward herself, character attitudes, and habits of her daily life. Sophie is a mixed blood woman. But she thinks that she is more European than native. She always shows people how proud she is with her European upbringing and how hard her efforts are in educating the three Alex's girls to be "European." She does not realize that what she claims is not suitable with the fact. Until the words were out of her mouth unconsciously, "... *I'm really just like Ma.*" She thinks that she is like her mother. She has already run against her own statement and view herself that she is a woman who is European, because if she looks like her mom, she will become very native and is still doing many native or Javanese cultures in her life. And in reality, Sophie is still doing native traditions well.

Because of it, the writer considers Sophie as an ambiguous person. She always makes statements that show about how she underestimates everything about the native culture. However, in reality, she is very native with some of her Javanese habits and tradition that are very difficult for her to leave.

The children must learn to think and feel "European," Aunt Sophie said again in another occasion, but her self consulted *dukuns* and burned incense, practiced conjuring spirit, and believes in lucky

and unlucky days. She ate sweets in her bedroom (The *rudjak* forbidden to the girls). Drank *djamus* and was squeezed *pidjited* for hours by Alimah. (135)

“The children must learn to think and feel “European,” is what Sophie always say on every occasion. Based on her view and principle that Europe is better in everything, she considers that being a European will be more honoured, so then Sophie is very proud of this. This view is grown deeply in the character of aunt Sophie. She influences other people in her family to be exactly she wants. Sophie does not obey her own rules. She did not allow others to do native habits. However, in reality she consulted “dukuns”. It is not synchronize with her own statements that people should throw away the native sense. Consulting “dukuns” is one of native or Javanese traditions in that period. “Dukun” is Javanese for a herbalist, a sorcerer, or one who presides over certain ceremonies and rituals in the Javanese tradition. Native does it in order to get certain purpose. “Dukuns” can, among other things, be specialists at harvest and circumcision ceremonies and at finding lost objects, interpreting dreams, or acting as mediums. Female “dukuns” can be midwives, helpers at wedding ceremonies. (De Nijs: 164) Nowadays, generally people are considering that the activities are not relevant anymore. It is considered as one of illogic habit that crash the mainstream of good religion, because in this ritual, people is propose her wants and expect the help not to the God, but to other man (the “dukuns”), who also help by other power from dead objects or spirit evil power. From this, we should be known that this activity is forbid by every kind of religions. Consulted “dukuns” is still doing by some

people, but it is considered as the old-fashioned and stupid thing today. So then this traditional activity is not suitable for Sophie who always claims herself as a European, while she still consulted “dukuns”.

Besides, Aunt Sophie also believed in lucky and unlucky days. She thinks that all kinds of days are not always good and safe to be used for doing something that is categorized as a celebration of event. Mostly, in Javanese tradition, if they will hold a big event, like circumcision, marriage, house moving, or other important activity they should hold the events in a “good” day. Some Javanese believe that each day has a meaning. What and when they do something will influence the condition in following day. It is also considered irrelevant anymore by people today, because people think that this belief is illogical. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that there are some people who still believe it.

Aunt Sophie often forbids her nieces, the three of Alex’s girls that they may not eat “rudjak”. However, secretly she does that in her private room unknown her nieces. “Rudjak” is one of many kinds of Javanese favourite food. Nevertheless, some of people consider that this kind of food could cause stomachache. This is why she always forbids her nieces to consume this, but she herself does that.

She continued to drink the *Djamus* which, though born in *indies*, she swallowed with disgust, continued to bring flower offerings to the cemetery, and she had *menjan* burned every *malam djumahat*” (the evening between Thursday and Friday) in order to appease the spirit. (106)

From the quotation above, it can be found some native side of Sophie. First, she likes drinking “jamus”. Drink “jamus” is one of the tradition of Javanese; it is the Javanese term for a medicine and usually administered by a “dukuns” to their patients. It was an herbal concoction drunk (De Nijs: 173) It is not correspond with her statements that she is “European.” Dutch people do not know about “jamus”. Javanese people only consume it mostly.

Sophie also had “menjan” and used to burn it every “malam jumat” in order to appease the spirit. “Menjan” is incense, properly benzoin or gumbenjamin. (De Nijs: 174) It is only certain native people who know deeper and familiar about this. Dutch people do not know deeper and familiar with “menjan”. “Menjan” and “malam jumat” are two words that frightened the Indies, especially Javanese. It will arouse the feeling of sacred, and fear. For some groups of people it is considered as an activity that is forbidden by God, because their religion also forbid this activity.. But, there are also people who argue that burning “menjan” is not a sin and bad thing. It is a part of the way to be near with the God that is done by some Javanese people and they choose “malam jumat”, because they think that this day is the best time for doing meditation. “Malam Djumahat” refers to the period from dusk on Thursday evening until sunrise Friday morning. *Malam* means “night.” Orientals often count a week by nights, because they figure the day to begin in sunset. (De Nijs: 166) This act is also one of the heritages of the ancestors of Javanese people.

There are other examples of Sophie’s native side. She also likes “pidjet”. “Pidjet” meant to gave massage, usually done by the female servant of the lady of

the house, and in this occasion was Alimah. “Pidjet” is a kind of massage where the flesh is kneaded and slightly pounded, not rubbed.

“She wore a dark brown satin dress and as usual her grey hair was combed back in *konde* (66).”

This quotation also shows that Sophie likes to arrange her hair in “*konde*” style. “*Konde*” is one of Indonesian woman’s hairstyle. Native women are easy to be identified when she use “*konde*”. “*Konde*” also considered as a traditional style of hair, even it has developed in its form, that it is used for national clothes nowadays. Women who have joined in one traditional or ceremonial occasion have to arrange their hair with “*konde*” style. It shows that, behind the statement of Sophie when she claims herself of having a European upbringing, Sophie doesn’t realize that her appearance also belongs to native style.

Oh Lien, what did I really get out of life? Everything I loved and everything I’ve looked after has died: my plants, my orchids, my animals, and now even Tjen. My hands are *sebel*, Lien, really.  
(106)

The quotation above describes that Sophie thinks herself and realizes then that she always brings misfortune and bad luck for people and anything around her. It seems that she blames herself, moreover after the death of her husband, Uncle Tjen. “My hands are “*sebel*”, Lien.” “*Sebel*” means to be unlucky for Javanese (De Nijs: 175) She shared her feeling about this strange thinking. Undoubtedly, during her marriage with Tjen, she was often blessed with unhappy things. So then she blames herself that her hands are “*sebel*”.



She believed that a person could “attract” good fortune or misfortune, believed in conjuring, putting a hex on people and believed in lucky and unlucky days. It was not only because her hands were *panas* that all this adversity had happened to Aunt Sophie, she had also married on “wrong day.” (106)

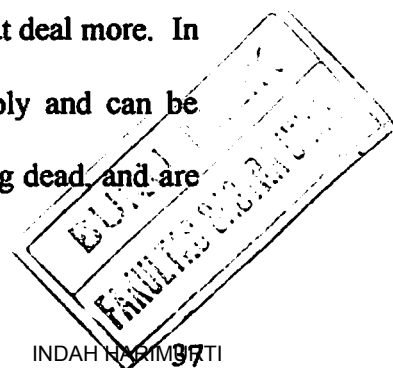
The writer could know more about Sophie’s native side from the quotation above. First, Sophie believes that a person could attract good fortune or misfortune. This good or misfortune not only happened to him or her, but also for people around him or her, for example the family or the husband or wife. She also believed in conjuring, which this ritual was used to do by Sophie every “malam jumat” with burning “menjan”. Usually, the Javanese people do that activity with some expectation, so then after they conjure they will raise their wish. Javanese usually does it. Sophie also believes that she and her husband was married in a wrong day. It is a part of her beliefs of lucky and unlucky days. She thinks that she is married in the wrong day, because of her feeling that during her marriage she never feels true happiness. She feels that her marriage is always blended by sadness and misery.

Really, Fie. You are overwrought. “My mother had only one solution in mind and she pursued it with determination: get away! Not only from her room, but also away from the house and its surroundings where these evil spirits were at work. First they had to be exorcized, and then a big, new *selamatan* had to be held before aunt Sophie would be allowed to return. (146)

The quotation above shows that Sophie and Lien believed that Sophie's house is haunted and could bring badluck. They also believed that there is also the existence of the evil spirit, which makes the atmosphere of that house become different from other houses. They want to held "selamatan". "Selamatan" is one of Javanese tradition, a communal feast of a religious nature. A "selamatan" can be given for the most varied reasons-births, deaths, harvest, bad dreams, and so on, and is held in the evening, only attended by males. The food is prescribed according to the occasion, incense is burned, the host gives formal speech to present the reason for the gathering, and a pray is chanted with each pause punctuated of amien (Amen) by the participants. Then, the food is distributed according to a certain procedure, and each person eats a small portion of it. Most of the uneaten food is taken home (Geertz: 85). Undeniably that Sophie's tradition and orientation of thinking is very native, behind her European upbringing.

But she would never sell any of these *pusakas*; she only needed to express the significance of her possessions in fictitious and ever changing amounts. (51)

This quotation will describe about how Sophie also believes in the effect of "pusaka" toward her life. "Pusaka" is usually translated as an "heirloom" but it can also mean family property or in this particular case, refers to valuable personal property. The concept of "pusaka", however means a great deal more. In many places in Indonesia, "pusaka" means an object that is holy and can be inherited. Such objects are said to contain the spirit of people long dead, and are



venerated. Such objects can be weapons, especially “krisses”, a “sirih” box, or a sunshade (De Nijs:51). In practice a “pusaka” may be any object that has some special significance for a region, ruler, or population as heir of their ancestors. From the quotation above shows that Sophie would never sell any of the “pusaka” she has, because she keeps the religion that “pusaka” must be saved during her lifetime ever after.

#### **IV. B. Aunt Sophie Discrimination toward native appearance and style**

Aunt Sophie is always involved with almost all the family events, love and divorce, inheritances and quarrels, jealousy and devotion. She is the main character of the family chronicle. There are some negative sides of her; one of them is that she always finds it difficult to accept the birth of De Pauly’s children if they are dark. This discrimination is a part of her ambiguous character. She tends to discriminate other people who have native taste and style because of her confidence that she has European upbringing. She also believes in some of the Javanese traditional beliefs. Below, the writer will delineate it based on some data that found in the story of Faded Portraits by some quotation.

Aunt Sophie raced by car to Sukabumi each time one of the children was born, but it was always a disappointment. “Black, Lien, “she reported to Holland,”and not just a little either, but really dark!”

Very different from Kitty, these girls, don’t you think? (101)

This quotation actually describes the disappointment of Aunt Sophie because the baby who is expected to be born with the dark skin and other kinds of native appearance. The baby is not her own baby, but her nieces, the daughter of Alex, Sophie's brother who has sexual relationship with Titi, the native woman. Sophie always considers that everything will be better by having European taste. Her deep orientation of colonizer makes Sophie underestimate anything, which has native taste. Sophie always differentiates her treatment toward her nieces. She loves Kitty more than the girls of Alex. It is because Kitty has blond hair, white and light skin and blue eyes, different from Alex daughter, who were dark, with flat nose, and black skin. Sophie always blames Alex who chooses Titi, the native women as his bedmate. The quotation above describes how disappointed Sophie when she knows that her niece is *dark*. It is not like what she expects that all of her family have European appearance and upbringing.

“That Lex!” Aunt Sophie said when he was gone, “he’s become so much part of the *Indies*. What a shame.” (136)

This quotation describes that Sophie under-estimate not only native people but also Dutchman. In reality, her own brother is also being the ‘victim’ of Sophie. Sophie often mocks her brother that he becomes so much part of the Indies and it become more seriously when Alex makes his family disappointed, including Sophie, because of his “relationship” with native woman, named Titi; moreover when the three girls of Alex were very native, both in their physical appearance and also their upbringing. Alex never married Titi. He enjoys his own

life and adventures without taking care of others' life. He used to live independently. It is one of Alex's characters that is difficult to be changed. Alex's Surabaya daughters lived with Sophie, who had raised them, fed them, clothed them, and taken care of their physical well-being (De Nijs: 14). But, Sophie often mocks them that they are native girls, even if she treats them patiently and diligently. She always taught them a European upbringing, but basically the three girls are very difficult to be changed.

Kitty had become lovely with her beautiful "golden blond hair" and her soft, pale complexion, "And Lien, she wrote, "you wouldn't say so of ten years old, but she is already something of a woman, you know" Tjalie also appeared to be 'nice boy' but it seemed to her that he had become darker and began to resemble Uncle Alex girls. (101)

She meant Kitty is so white and the girls are so dark, with "hidung pesek". They had been in the house for over a year already, but they were still shy in front of other Europeans. They all seemed to be ease with the servants. (132)

From those two quotations above, describes that Sophie often praise Kitty, because of her European physical appearance. Kitty makes Sophie completely proud of herself, different from the feeling of Sophie toward the three girls of Alex. She often feels a shame because of that condition and mocks them. Sophie does not want to understand the consequences of mixed blood family. She always

forces the condition to be exactly the way she wants, including discriminating her own family, Alex her brother and also her own nieces like dishonourable people.

Titi answered everything with “*Saja Njonja*” (“Yes, Ma’am”). She had already surrendered her opposition when Uncle Alex told her that she had been summoned to Batavia. That night she slept with the servants. When she left the next morning, Aunt Sophie gave her money, twenty-five guilders. “*Terima kasih, Njonja*” (“Thank you ma’am”) she said, show in her benefactress the *hormat* she was due. (133)

This quotation describes that Titi as a native woman has to obey and honour Sophie, Dutch-Indies woman. The way Titi call Sophie shows that the two of them come from different class. Titi calls Sophie with “Njonja”, the way servants call their employer. In that time most servants are the natives. Sophie also obliges Titi to sleep with the servants, although Titi is the mother of her three of nieces, Sophie does not really care about that. What Sophie knows only that Titi’s social status is lower than her, and Titi just let herself obey and honour Sophie whole-heartedly. Titi never stayed more than a day or two when she visits her children in Sophie’s house. The main reason is that Titi is always treated and forced into subordinate position.

The conference took place in own Sophie’s room. A *tikar* was spread out for Titi to sit on; her exceptional position entitled her to

that. She behaved as all women from the *udik* do in the presence of their superior or authority: she sat down, crossed her legs, put her hands in her lap and lowered her eyes. Aunt Sophie sat on the edge of a chair, bent forward, and began to talk. (133)

The description above tells that Titi, Alex's "woman" who is a real native woman is treated badly by Sophie. "Tikar" was spread on for Titi to sit on"; these words describes that Titi has to sit on "tikar", a floor mat to sit on. It shows that the position of Titi, as the native is lower than Sophie. Titi has to show her honour through her behaviour. She cannot sit on the chair like Sophie because she considers that her social status is lower than Aunt Sophie. Titi behaves as an "udik" woman. It is different from Sophie who could sit in the chair. She talks with Titi from that position, and Titi cannot move from her position in "tikar". From this we can see the superiority and authority of Sophie toward Titi. It represents other Dutch or mixed blood behaviour and act toward native people. Dutch men or women always claim their position and status are higher than the natives. This class differentiation does not exist anymore in Indonesia. Today, all people can enjoy their life by using the same facilities. They have same rights and status in front of law and the rule of government, without worrying about the different of religion, culture, and race.

#### **IV. C Aunt Sophie's Ambiguity Character Related to Homi K Bhaba's Concept of Mimicry**

Before looking further to Aunt Sophie's action, it is important for us to comprehend how her character is. She is nearly sixty, but she is still very energetic and agile woman. She still walks very quickly through the spacious verandas and rooms of the family house on Salemba Avenue in high-heeled. It shows that she is able to take care of her health. She is a busy, energetic and attentive person and always on the run. She always looks well every time that no one noticed her when she complains about her many aches, pains, nervous, excited, jumpy, with heart murmurs, rheumatism, headaches, and so on. She does not look too well in fact, but none of her family worried about her(13). In her young ages, Sophie likes wearing a spotless white skirt and blouse, which is not very original nor very fancy with a fan held in her left hand. She looks small rather than tall and stiff. Her gaze is serious and she looks straight at the camera and her dark hair hanging loose. (49)

Aunt Sophie is a mix-blood woman, but she was proud to be considered as a European woman. She always claims herself having a European upbringing and appearance. She never realizes that she was still doing many native traditional habits. The writer wants to know deeper about Sophie's ambiguous character. The writer relates it with one theory that she thinks connected to each other, Sophie's ambiguous character with Homi K Bhaba's concept of mimicry. This concept is a part of many theories in Post-colonial criticism.



Some mixed blood people, who are called Dutch-Indies, generally have appearances that are difficult to be distinguished from the Dutch *totok* (Faruk: 12). The mimicry concept of Homi K Bhaba asks the reader to know more about the liminal space between cultures, whereas the separated line between colonizer and the colonized is astatically and unlimited. Both the colonizer and the colonized people are always caught up in ambivalence, which sign their relationship in the certain history context (Bhaba: 89).

As a mixed blood woman, Aunt Sophie must be have a bloodline from both Dutch and native, but she always under-estimate her family who has native appearance and view, mostly for her family who does not have European upbringing and appearance at all. She thinks that being European is more honourable than natives.

In the Colonial time, white people are considered more superior and have higher-class dark skin people, including Eurasian. Sophie also considers that whoever has an attitude and appearance beside European and American are lower than her. She herself is Dutch-Indies, not Dutch “totok”, but she always proud of being herself.

Native or Indo people like to imitate the Western life style. They were proud of being the ones belonging to the western culture. It is because of the discrimination that they accept from white people, in this case the Dutch, toward native or Indies people. It makes native people expect that through imitation toward Dutch people, it will make them considered similar to the Dutch. The way native imitates the Dutch people is called mimicry.

In this thesis, the writer thinks that Sophie who has ambiguous character does an impersonation on European style and upbringing. The reason, which motivates her to do that, is her desire to be considered equal with the Dutch “totok”. Because in her view, it will be more honourable to be the Dutch “totok”, considering that she is only an Dutch-Indies woman, similar with other native who thinks that by imitating the colonizer they will feel safe. Native people are afraid to be the victim of white people’s discrimination, so they decide to imitate White people lifestyle. Sophie who thinks that she is similar with Dutch “totok” and claims that she has European upbringing often discriminate and mock other people who has native taste, eventhough they are her own family.

The writer delineates the ambiguous character of Sophie in her analysis above. She still does native tradition, while on the other hand she always claims herself as pure Dutch woman. She gives the doctrine to her family not to be a native one, especially to the daughters of Alex. Sophie always forces them to obey whatever she wants. While the three girls often find Sophie doing her habit that is still native secretly. For example, when they find Sophie eats “rudjak” in her own room, whereas Sophie used to advise them not to eat “rudjak” because that will cause stomachache and mock them that “rudjak” is the food of Native. This is one of the examples of Sophie’s ambiguity. From this, we know that Sophie broke her own rules; she does something, which she forbids the others to do.

The ambiguity, which is possessed by Sophie, is related to Homi K Bhaba’s theory of mimicry, so the writer applies this concept to analyze the ambiguity character of Aunt Sophie. Mimicry or imitation developed by Homi K

Bhaba is from most contradiction in the narration of post-colonial, especially since the spreading of the education change in the middle of twentieth century. It is a part of the ambivalence of the colonizer toward the imitation that was done by natives. In one hand, the Dutch give chance to the natives to imitate them, especially in their re-education program. But, on the other hand, the Dutch make the rules that native should be accustomed to their own lifestyle. Similar with the colonizer, in this case are Dutch-Indies and native people who incline to imitate Dutch lifestyle. While, actually it is not an easy thing to leave their native tradition and habits. Between the colonizer and the colonized people there are always a group of people who are considered as a mediator. In this case this group of people are the mix-blood people, Dutch-Indies people. This class or a group of people are a class that in the matter of skin and blood is still native, but in the style, taste and intellectual are already completely Europe. For colonizer, the differences of the colonizer and colonized people have to be maintained. Native can be taught to imitate, but for the colonizer this imitation will always be blocked by the capacity of the natives, the omnipotence that will always distinguish between native and Dutch people. For Bhaba, mimicry always shows the relationship of colonizer and colonized people that ambivalence which always ambiguous (Foulcher: 15-16)

Colonialism involved the construction of two different cultures that were pure at the first time, but it becomes ambivalence when the colonized and colonizer culture interact directly each other (King: 399). So then, Bhaba said that no culture or language, both from the colonizer and the colonized can be

represented in the pure form, and the culture and language cannot be separated one another. These facts arouse one hybridity culture, which become the third culture, which is same in terms of validity with the culture of dominant colonial (Gandhi:vii).

The writer applies the mimicry concept, considering the ambiguity character of Sophie. Sophie as one of the mediator group of people, even she can bring herself with European upbringing and intellectual, but she cannot deny her native sense. It proves that she herself cannot leave her native traditions. Like Bhaba said that there are no cultures that can be represented as pure anymore. Sophie can imitate western or Dutch culture and change herself to be “European”, but it is blocked by her capacity as an only Dutch-Indies woman, not Dutch “totok”, so some natives sides are very difficult for her to be abandoned.

# CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSION