

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

Transnational Lives and their Boundaries: Expatriates in Jakarta, Indonesia

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the lives of Euro-Americans expatriates, who are posted by multinational companies for a period between 1 to 5 years to the city of Jakarta, Indonesia. The main argument of this thesis is that expatriates' transnational lives are marked by boundaries. The prevalence of boundaries contrasts with current discussions on migration and transnationalism, which emphasise notions of fluidity. I suggest that expatriates' construction, maintenance, and transgression of boundaries characterises their relations with Indonesia. This is played out in especially in the domains of race and gender, interconnected with the body, the use of space, and socialising. Gender and race are among the most persistent of categories, which reconfigure especially expatriate women's experience of Indonesia, although they can never quite be transcended. The centrality of these categories, of race and gender, is not reflected in research on transnationalism. I argue that although expatriates lead 'transnational' lives, their practices are marked by boundaries more than by flows. The notions of flows and boundaries are not conceptualised as opposites, but as necessarily presupposing each other. I suggest, though, that the role of boundaries in transnational lives has so far been disregarded. The study of expatriates thus adds a crucial dimension to theories of transnationalism. It also carries political relevance, as expatriates represent 'transnationalism from above', counterbalancing the existing research on unskilled labour migration movements. As expatriates have hardly been investigated at all, this study then fills a significant gap in terms of ethnography.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

'Plenty of expats live in the 'expat bubble'. They spend outrageous prices buying pre-packaged foods like they eat in their home countries. Some of them do not even learn to speak the language. 'Expat Bubble' expats usually live in apartment buildings, which are skyscrapers. The walls are concrete, so noise is not a big problem. If you live in the 'expat bubble' you may be pretty safe on a day to day basis' (posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by Linkh@bigfoot.com, 23/01/01).

1.1 Initial Stages

I first became interested in foreigners living in Indonesia during a semester teaching German language at a Teachers' Training College in Yogyakarta in 1997. Sitting on the porch of a spacious, elegant house of a British expatriate family, we were looking out on a fenced-in garden with a swimming pool, with mango trees in the background. An Indonesian maid was serving tea, while a nanny looked after the family's little daughter. I was struck by this almost colonial scenario - the spacious housing, household staff and comparative luxury in rather poor surroundings - of which the expatriate family seemed to have been oblivious. It mirrored how many visiting family members or friends first encounter the 'expatriate world', and their first reactions, like mine, are a mixture of intrigue, disbelief and ready acceptance of its advantages. After I had finished my teaching stint in Yogyakarta, I was left with the distinct feeling that this was a strange and peculiar situation worth examining more closely. At that time, however, I was unable to pinpoint what exactly made for this 'peculiarity'. As I started researching the topic, it slowly became clear that one aspect of it was living in an 'expatriate bubble', as the introductory quote suggests. During my fieldwork, expatriates' Western-oriented

and secluded lifestyles seemed to corroborate this, so that the metaphor of the 'bubble' seemed quite appropriate. It was only while writing up my ethnographic material that I realised what had struck me again and again was the pervasive importance of boundaries. Wherever expatriates were, whatever they did, boundaries seemed the key to understanding their lives. There were boundaries between the orderly insides of their homes and the chaotic streetlife, between expatriates and Indonesians, between Western food served at home and street vendors' fare outside, and between the almost exclusively Western expatriate communities and the city of twelve million Indonesians surrounding them.

The main theme of this thesis is how expatriates' transnational lives are marked by boundaries. Expatriates' construction, maintenance, and transgression of boundaries characterises their relations with Indonesia. This is played out especially in the domains of race and gender, interconnected with the body, the use of space, and their social lives. Gender and race turn out to be the most persistent of categories, which reconfigure especially expatriate women's experience of Indonesia, without ever quite being transcended. The centrality of these categories is not necessarily reflected in research on transnationalism. More in general, the prevalence of boundaries contrasts with current discussions on migration and transnationalism, which emphasise notions of fluidity. I argue that although expatriates lead 'transnational' lives, their practices are marked by boundaries more than by flows. The notions of flows and boundaries are not conceptualised as opposites, but as presupposing each other. The concept of boundaries fundamentally relies on the existence of flows, and vice versa. I suggest, though, that the role of boundaries in transnational lives has so far been disregarded. The study of expatriates thus adds a crucial dimension to theories of transnationalism. It also carries political relevance, as expatriates represent 'transnationalism from above'.

counterbalancing the existing research on unskilled labour migration movements. As expatriates have hardly been investigated at all, this study then fills a significant gap in terms of ethnography.

1.2 Methodology

Having charted the conceptual course of my research, this section focuses on aspects of my methodology. I first describe my research sites, subjects and some of the methods I employed. I then more closely examine my own role as researcher in relation to my subjects, and the implications this might have had on my fieldwork. This also addresses the ‘violence of fieldwork’ as Hastrup (1992) has called it. In section 1.3, I discuss the terminology chosen here, which evaluates a range of usages of the term ‘expatriates’.

Research Sites

My fieldwork was conducted mainly in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, a city of about 12 million inhabitants located on the Northwestern tip of the island of Java. Initially, I spent about three months in Yogyakarta in central Java before moving to Jakarta.

During my stay in Yogyakarta, I visited Jakarta frequently, and used these stays to gather information about expatriates living there, as compared to those in Yogyakarta.

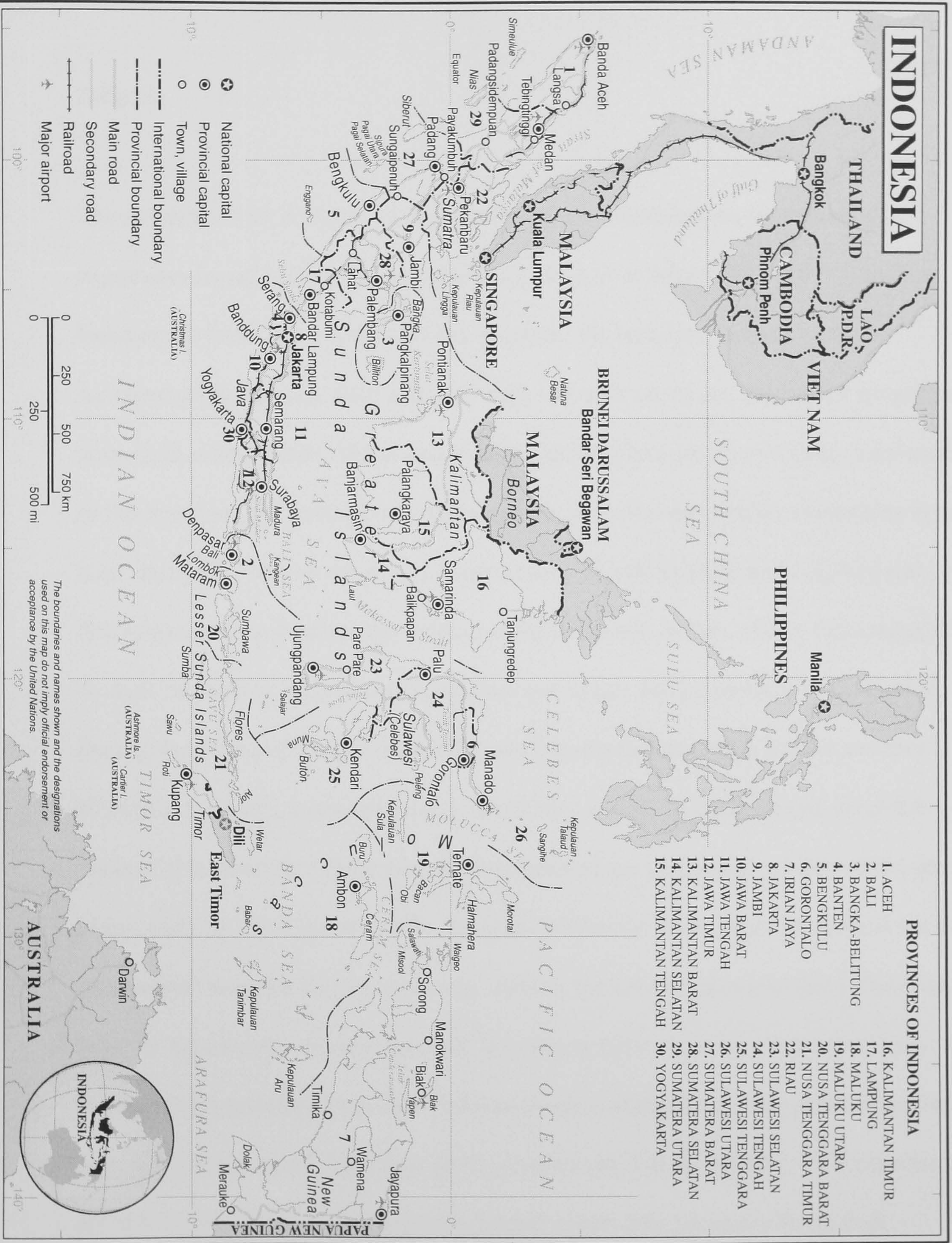
After this initial period, I decided to concentrate on expatriate communities in Jakarta, as their lifestyles seemed to be even more salient and striking than of those in

Yogyakarta. This was due to a number of factors, one of which was their sheer numbers. Although there are quite a few foreigners living in Yogyakarta, they amount only to several hundred, whereas the foreign population in Jakarta consists of several thousand within the Euro-American communities alone. In addition to living in Jakarta

INDONESIA

PROVINCES OF INDONESIA

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. ACEH | 16. KALIMANTAN TIMUR |
| 2. BALI | 17. LAMPUNG |
| 3. BANGKA-BELITUNG | 18. MALUKU |
| 4. BANTEN | 19. MALUKU UTARA |
| 5. BENGKULU | 20. NUSA TENGGARA BARAT |
| 6. GORONTALO | 21. NUSA TENGGARA TIMUR |
| 7. IRIAN JAYA | 22. RIAU |
| 8. JAKARTA | 23. SULAWESI SELATAN |
| 9. JAMBI | 24. SULAWESI TENGAH |
| 10. JAWA BARAT | 25. SULAWESI TENGGARA |
| 11. JAWA TENGAH | 26. SULAWESI UTARA |
| 12. JAWA TIMUR | 27. SUMATERA BARAT |
| 13. KALIMANTAN BARAT | 28. SUMATERA SELATAN |
| 14. KALIMANTAN SELATAN | 29. SUMATERA UTARA |
| 15. KALIMANTAN TENGAH | 30. YOGYAKARTA |



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

for nine months, I spent short periods of time with expatriates on their holidays, such as on weekend trips to Bogor and Puncak on the outskirts of Jakarta, or to a resort on the south coast of Java, and made a brief trip on the island of Bali.

Subjects

The subjects of my research, or my informants and collaborators, were mainly expatriates living in Jakarta. A crucial issue, then, is to what extent and in what way Indonesians were also a subject of this research. As becomes obvious, aspects concerning Indonesians, their relations with, and their views on, expatriates are not very prominent in this thesis. While one could regard this as a serious omission, I am aware of this situation, but have taken a deliberate decision to conceptualise expatriates in this way. Initially, I had set out to make Indonesians as well as expatriates equally part of this research. The guiding idea when starting fieldwork, in fact, was to focus especially on their interaction, and to investigate their exchanges and perceptions of each other. During the course of fieldwork, though, as I became more familiar with expatriates' lifestyles in Jakarta, it emerged that I would have to make clear decisions about the focus of this research. Three main reasons induced me to place expatriates at the centre of my analysis. The first and most important reason for bracketing Indonesians out of my research was that this, in some way, reflects the kind of relevance that Indonesians have for expatriates. As emerges from the ethnographic material, expatriates' lives are in many ways secluded from their Indonesian surroundings, and their personal contacts with Indonesians, apart from their staff, are minimal, if at all existent. Few expatriates are able to speak Indonesian beyond a limited vocabulary necessary to conduct everyday household affairs. This does not imply that Indonesians are in fact irrelevant. On the contrary, one could argue that a major part of expatriates' practices are

motivated by the wish to exclude Indonesians from their lives as much as possible. In that sense, Indonesians are obviously not peripheral to expatriates' lives, but rather central.

Reframing the question, it might then be necessary to qualify in what way Indonesians are important for expatriates. I suggest that often, Indonesians - as adult individuals - whom expatriates engage with are in fact irrelevant, simply because these forms of engagement, although desirable, are rare. Instead, I argue that the undeniable importance that Indonesians assume is not as human individuals, but rather in the form of a discursively constructed collective Other. It is this Other that expatriates might want to distance themselves from, and against whom they draw boundaries in terms of personal and social identities. Indonesians are thus relevant in the form of a stereotyped Other, whose relevance for expatriates' lives is characterised by its enforced absence, as if looming over their lives as a threatening shadow.

Having thus characterised the role of Indonesians, it becomes clear that placing Indonesians in the background within this research mirrors the way expatriates try to exclude them from their lives. This would obviously be highly questionable if the thesis did not address the issues at the basis of this. While the text performs the 'absence' of Indonesians from expatriates' lives, it also problematises expatriates desire for distance and seclusion, and places that at the centre of analysis. Throughout the text, expatriates' attitudes towards Indonesia, which only seem to appear as a negative silhouette, are discussed critically. The concept of boundaries, separating Indonesians from expatriates, becomes a central perspective from which expatriates' lives are viewed. I appreciate that a different kind of analysis, focusing on their interactions, or on Indonesians' viewpoints, would be very valid and desirable. However, after deciding to

concentrate on expatriates themselves and the role of boundaries, it served the purposes of coherence and focus to discuss less Indonesians' perspectives, but rather investigate their absent presence in expatriates' lives.

Having established expatriates at the core of my research, in the following I describe these 'subjects' in greater detail. Jakarta's foreign population consists predominantly of corporate expatriates. They are usually posted, that is, sent by their employers, often multinational companies, to Jakarta. Most work in industry sectors with considerable foreign involvement, such as the oil and gas industry, natural resources like mining and logging, manufacturing, especially the textiles, chemical, and pharmaceutical sectors, as well as in banking, accountancy, market research and consulting. In addition, there are more foreigners who work in the non-corporate public sector. This includes non-governmental as well as government development organisations and educational and cultural institutions with offices in Jakarta.

Estimates of the number of foreign residents in Jakarta vary greatly, for two reasons. First, while foreign residents are theoretically required to register with their respective embassies, not all of them do, so that the embassies' data do not indicate actual numbers. Secondly, the number of expatriates almost halved after the crisis of 1998, as president Suharto was ousted. Many expatriates then left the country, of which some later returned. In the following economic crisis, many foreign companies closed their offices in Indonesia and called back their employees, so that exact numbers are difficult to obtain.

I have referred to foreigners or expatriates as the subjects of this study. In a formal sense, I define 'foreigners' as non-Indonesian nationals. For this thesis, I decided to

focus on European and North American citizens. This excluded foreigners from other Asian countries, such as Japan and Korea, as well as India, Malaysia and Singapore (of which quite a few live in Jakarta), together with nationals from the Near and Middle East, as well as African countries. I decided not to look at these foreigners, because their ways of 'being foreign' in Indonesia differ so widely that it would have been neither possible nor sensible to group them together. This rests partly on the assumption that being a foreigner of Asian or African origin in Indonesia has different implications than to being a white foreigner.

For several reasons, I decided to look at 'Westerners', a term used synonymously for 'white person' [*bule*] among Indonesians and non-Indonesians alike. I decided against including Australian nationals, because I assumed that they experience their stay in Indonesia differently from European or American nationals. Although they can be described as 'Westerners', I assume that their previous exposure to Indonesia has influenced their attitudes towards it in certain ways. They might be more familiar with Indonesian culture and society, because of their geographic proximity, the immigrant Indonesian population in Australia, and through exposure to Indonesia through their media, schools, and their own experiences as tourists. Their experience of residency might also be influenced by having more opportunities for trips to home. Since it takes four hours to fly from Jakarta to Perth, people can afford to go back not only once a year as some Europeans, but several times. This is not to say that Australian nationals have an entirely different experience of Indonesia, but that their situation seemed specific enough to exclude it, even though I do include some material from Australian informants.

I need to point out some specifications of my informants, especially in terms of age, gender, marital and income status. I did not set out to study women, but it turned out that many of my conversations and interviews were conducted with women. This was partly due to the fact that the majority of foreign women in Jakarta were 'accompanying spouses'. This implied that they were usually legally unable to work and therefore had the most time for, and interest in, socialising. A large part of my research time was spent with them rather than their families or husbands. This holds mainly for 'family expatriates', married couples with or without children. In terms of the unmarried young professionals between roughly 25 and 35 years of age, this gender difference was absent since these women were in Jakarta 'independently', with their own visas and jobs. This meant that they did not have more time than their male counterparts, so I saw both these women and men in their free time at lunch breaks, evenings or weekends.

As far as age is concerned, I tried to balance my research between different age groups. That there are limits is due to the demographic profile of expatriates. Since I was interested in people who were 'living and working' in Indonesia, this excluded the very young. I have already mentioned that there are 'family expatriates', married couples, some of whom have children of school age or younger. I had some contact with the children, partly through the international schools. I also talked to some of the few elderly foreigners (60 and older). These older foreigners were often not posted, but had carved out existences for themselves, which allowed their ongoing stay, and they tended to reside in Yogyakarta rather than in Jakarta.

Another characteristic of informants is their income status. Although my contacts did not only include people with an 'expatriate package', the majority of foreigners in Jakarta probably belonged to that category. An 'expatriate package' is shorthand for

contracts offered to employees of multinational companies when posted abroad. These packages vary, but they often comprise an increased salary as compared to the one received in the home country, relocation costs for flights, moving and storage, a rather generous housing allowance, insurance, annual home leave, fees for international schools, a car and driver, and can also include initial exploratory visits prior to the posting and costs of temporary accommodation, such as hotels, before permanent housing is found. Not all 'Westerners', though, receive such high salaries. Many foreigners on local wages battle with this misconception. This social differentiation and its role within the expatriate communities deserves a separate discussion, and will resurface in the course of the text. The income level and social status of expatriates were also relevant for my own status as a researcher, as they created great differences between us. This had consequences for the relations between us, as I discuss below.

Methods

My most important research method was participant observation. It was complemented by interviews, questionnaires, formal and informal conversations, as well as material gathered from the Internet. The possibilities for participant observation were slightly more limited than in 'traditional' anthropological research situations concerned with small communities in rural settings. This was partly due to the fact that research in Jakarta constituted urban anthropology. Although expatriates' housing was clustered in certain areas, as were their social activities, in a city of 12 million residents and several thousand foreigners this still meant a considerable spatial distribution. Although I met people by chance in shopping malls, cinemas and restaurants, I usually made appointments or attended events to meet people. This somewhat restricted opportunities for participant observation. It is also indicative, though, of how expatriates lived. If

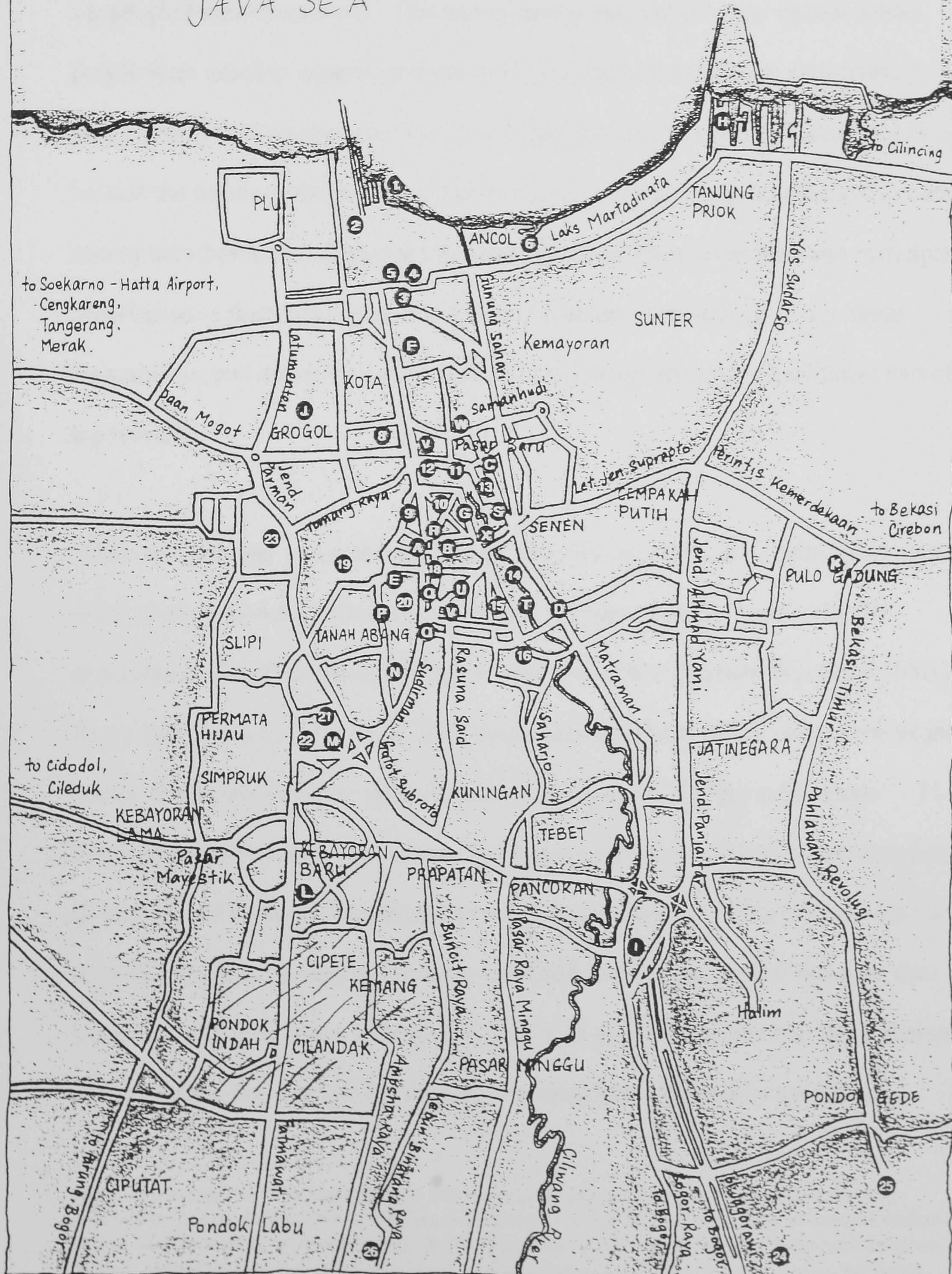
they wanted to socialise, they had to make efforts, and in that sense, my situation mirrored theirs.

Housing was a relevant aspect. I did not live in an 'expatriate' house or apartment complex. In one way, this limited my opportunities for participant observation, but it also extended them in others. It allowed me to interact with different kinds of expatriates as well as with Indonesians. Since my research was spread out in terms of space, this implied that some people I talked to were not in contact with each other, and were not necessarily aware of the others' existence. This was relevant, as I had to make efforts to 'blend in' with different groups, which was sometimes easier if they were ignorant of my housing situation, which was considered 'cheap' and 'local' by many expatriates' standards. Living apart from other expatriates reminded them less of the differences between us, an issue that at times could become problematic.

The urban lifestyle and the Jakarta traffic also opened up possibilities. Since places were so spread out, people often spent a lot of time travelling between home and work, or social venues, or shops in different areas. I thus got to spend a lot of time with people in their cars, or while sharing a taxi. When travelling to suburban areas, this could mean spending up to two hours each way together. Even within Jakarta it could take 45 minutes and more to get from central to south Jakarta. This provided opportunities for conversation, especially when several people were sharing a ride, and the driving was taken care of by the expatriates' driver. Apart from these more informal conversations, I also conducted 46 structured and semi-structured interviews, which were usually semi-structured and mostly took place in expatriates' homes. I use these interviews widely in addition to my fieldnotes, and they are the main source of my informants' views quoted throughout the text.

JAKARTA

JAVA SEA



In addition to participant observation and interviews. I designed an Email-survey to assess how foreigners were using Email and the Internet as part of their lives abroad. While I usually included questions about this in my interviews, I did not want to spend too much interview time on technical details, and therefore employed this survey to gather additional information. I deliberately only distributed it among my informants, i.e. people I knew personally. This survey also contained an 'open' section where people were asked to expand on the role of Email and the Internet in their lives. I subsequently used some answers to these 'open' questions. Overall, I chose not to include the details of the survey in this thesis, as it emerged that the quantitative data merely corroborated insights that I had already gained from interviews and participant observation. I therefore regard it as a valuable quantitative back up to my initial assumptions, and quote from some answers, but overall rely on the qualitative part of my research.

Additional material was gathered from the Internet. In a way, my research had already started before entering Indonesia, as I started visiting a website specifically for expatriates living in Indonesia, <<http://www.expatriates.or.id>> [updated November 2001]. Apart from practical information and advice, listings of community organisations and stories, the website features an open discussion forum on 'Living in Indonesia'¹. I have been observing this forum since late 1998 and regard it as a seminal resource, and draw on it in several sections. In addition to that, I became involved with this website during my stay in Jakarta through doing some voluntary work in the form of updating their Community Organisations Listing. This not only gave me insights into the organisation of the website, but also into the internal structure of the community associations.

¹ I quote postings made by expatriates to this forum throughout this thesis. Due to its relatively anonymous nature, discussions on the forum tended to be more intense, especially as far as sensitive issues, such as racism, were concerned. In the following, quotes taken from the forum will be identified by their sender's name and/or Email address, and the date on which they were posted on the forum.

Since I frequently employ material from the Internet, I briefly point out some methodological considerations. I specifically quote postings on the 'Living in Indonesia' forum to vividly illustrate certain issues that have arisen during my 'non-virtual' fieldwork. The reason why these postings particularly lend themselves to these purposes also constitutes caveats against using them. The most important reason is that people contributing to this forum often voice their opinions, especially on sensitive issues, in a much more free and poignant way than in real-life discussions. Through using nicknames, authors retain a certain anonymity (although I knew some of the participants personally). One could object that using this kind of material is problematic, since the 'sincerity' and 'authenticity' of these postings is questionable and cannot be taken for granted.

It must be made clear that I do not regard this forum as a 'microcosm' of expatriate life in Jakarta. I do not assume the opinions expressed there as necessarily representative of anything. This holds for both the selection of participants and the way the anonymity of the Internet shapes, exacerbates, and probably distorts expatriate discourses as compared to everyday life conversations. I regard some of these postings, though, as intensified and magnified expressions of sentiments and beliefs that I encountered during fieldwork, but which people were reluctant to express as candidly in my presence. Controversial issues are discussed differently on this forum than in real life. This concerns especially gender relations between expatriate men and Indonesian women, and expatriate women, but also opinions of 'Indonesians', and in general racist or xenophobic attitudes. It constitutes a methodological caveat, that the Internet as a medium influences the discourses conducted through it. This implies that information gained from it must be critically reflected on and related to its context - as indeed must be any other ethnographic material. I maintain that embedding these postings into my

real-life fieldwork, while recognising their limitations, enables me to exploit their epistemological potential.

No Husband, No Money: My Position as a Researcher

Having outlined my main research methods, I turn to the position of the fieldworker. In the following, I aim to capture some of the nature of the relations between me as the researcher and expatriates as my informants, and the consequences this might have had for my fieldwork. That the researcher influences the fieldwork has been widely acknowledged (Hymes 1972; Scholte 1972; Asad 1973; Okely 1975; Hastrup 1992; and Said 1978, 1989). Incorporating the fieldworker into ethnographic analysis has been criticised as apolitical. On the contrary, though, one can argue that this reflexivity makes explicit for example underlying power relations, and is thus highly political. As Callaway (1992) maintains, 'reflexivity ... can be seen as opening the way to a more radical consciousness of self in facing the political dimensions of fieldwork [so that] the practice of a reflexive anthropology confronts the politics of representation' (1992:33). Taking reflexivity seriously, it becomes an indispensable part of ethnography itself to elucidate the conditions of its production. Since ethnographic material is created in exchanges between the subjects and the researcher, the positionality of the researcher shapes, if not determines, the nature of this material. As Hastrup (1992) puts it, 'fieldwork is situated between autobiography and anthropology', referring to the fact that the field is not, 'the unmediated world of the 'others', but the world between ourselves and the others' (1992:117). The results are thus, 'deeply marked by this betweenness' (Hastrup 1992:117). It is imperative to trace the ways in which this betweenness affects the fieldwork experience and its results.

While acknowledging the relevance of the fieldworker, one could suspect that the full extent of these consequences can be hard to identify and might eventually elude the critical reflection of the researcher. As a minimal effort, though, issues have to be pointed out that the fieldworker suspects might have been influential. Callaway (1992) suggests that apart from gender as her main concern, other factors such as, 'nationality, race, ethnicity, class and age ... affect the anthropologist's field interactions and textual strategies' (1992:33).

The importance of the 'gendered fieldworker' has been stressed by Ardener (1986); Strathern (1987); Caplan (1988); H. Moore (1988); Abu-Lughod (1990); and Karim, Caplan and Bell (1993). This pertains to fieldwork and to ethnographic writing, which risks the, 'obscuring of gender through the continuing convention of the transcendent authorial voice' (Callaway 1992:30). The 'gendered self', though, can also constitute a resource. As Callaway (1992) puts it, 'a deepening understanding of our own gendered identities and the coded complexities of our own being [offers] the best resources for gaining insights into the lives of others' (1992:30). Consequently, I position myself within the frame of my research and outline the implications of this.

During my fieldwork, and through having contact with a whole range of expatriates, different sets of characteristics became relevant depending on my respective informants. This touches on questions of difference and sameness. As Caplan (1993) puts it, a question is, 'the extent to which there are differences and similarities between ethnographer and subjects. To what extent can such differences be transcended? ... Should ethnographers ... be stressing difference or sameness - or both?' (Caplan 1993:21). In the following, I highlight aspects of the respective sameness and differences between my informants and myself.

In Jakarta, I differed from most Jakarta expatriates on many counts. Married people working in Jakarta and their spouses were mostly between 35 and 55 years old - the 'family expatriates' - and I was usually much younger than most of them. A few people were older than 60. The other important age group comprised 'young professionals', who were posted or employed by multinational corporations or organisations. Apart from them, there were people in the same age group between 25 and 35 years - who were earning much less and who I was probably closest to in many ways. Some of them had university degrees in Southeast Asian-related subjects, and the purpose of their stay was often to gain work experience and knowledge of the country. They were specifically interested in working in Indonesia, and held jobs that were paid in 'local wages', i.e. in Indonesian rupiah rather than US dollars.

As discussed above, gender was another crucial dimension of my fieldwork. I outline the relations my gender produced in the field, mainly in respect to women, but also to men. The relative separation of female and male lives meant that my gender played a more important role than if the gender situation had been different. My access to women does not imply an overall advantaged situation. My contact with foreign married men, for example, was more limited. Being female did not provide a privileged position, but influenced my interactions. The 'facilitated access' to women did not indicate a carefree relationship between us. It compounded things as I was supposed to be similar to them, as a white woman living in Jakarta, but in many ways, I was not.

Age and Gender

First of all, at 29 at the beginning of my fieldwork, I was younger than many of them, since most women were more than 35 years old, this being the stage when their husbands' careers had progressed to senior expatriate positions. A few women were between 30 and 35 years old, but were in the minority. This meant that at social occasions, such as women's coffee mornings, I was usually the youngest there.

Secondly, I was neither married nor had children. Even expatriate women of my age who did not have children were at least married - the reason for their status as 'accompanying spouse', which set us apart. This became obvious as I was often asked: '*what my husband did.*' As I explained that I was unmarried, their reaction often expressed bewilderment, inquiring: '*then why I had come to Jakarta at all?*' This seemed to indicate their assumption that one would not possibly have a reason to be in Jakarta by oneself and by choice.

Motherhood was another decisive factor. It was certainly stressed much more in Indonesia than in similar social groups in their home countries. Compared to this heightened importance of marriage and motherhood, my single, non-mother status stood out all the more. The reactions to this varied. First, in many ways, it alienated me from these women. I was unable to share experiences of marriage and having children, which made social interaction, and also trust, more difficult. Secondly, my position might have been inconvenient, reminding them of possible alternative lifestyles; although in many cases they might just have pitied me. This would not have mattered if their situation had not been so peculiar. Quite a few women were not content with their status as 'accompanying spouses', brought about by consenting to support their husband and to take on the role of homemaker. I probably represented an existence free of these

ties, although devoid of its benefits, too. While I could not ultimately determine what impact this had on our relationships, it certainly remained a source of ambiguity.

Two other aspects related to gender are worth mentioning. First, being an unmarried Western woman in Jakarta, and staying there independently, figured in my relations with Western men; this was somewhat unusual. This became apparent when arranging a meeting over the phone with a German expatriate man, whom I had not met before. As we agreed to meet in a hotel bar, he asked how we would be able to recognise each other. As it occurred to me, I replied that, *'I will be the only single Western woman my age walking into that place'*. On the date, it turned out this was the case; the bar was filled with Indonesian men, couples, and Western men, highlighting the usual clientele of these places, and of many expatriate venues in general. Even among young professionals, women were in the minority. At parties, for example, guests would consist of mostly Western men, some Indonesian and a few Western women, with almost no Indonesian men. Single Western women in Jakarta were sidelined in terms of numbers, but also in a social sense. Their position was influenced by the gender dynamics between Western woman, Western men and Indonesian women. Western women, it seemed, did not have a place within this constellation. This was felt by many Western women, who claimed that, *'When you go to a bar, Western men are all interested in the bargirls, nobody pays attention to you. There is no place for you there.'* This implied parallels between me as a Western woman and as a researcher. Secondly, I was a 'genderless' observer, and outside the relations between Western men and Indonesian women. Being sidelined as a woman and a researcher provided space and distance, which can also constitute a danger. As Bourdieu (1977) points out, if the, 'virtues of the distance secured by externality simply [transmute] into an epistemological choice, ... the ethnographer is condemned to see all practice as

spectacle' (1977:1). Hastrup (1992) maintains, though, that, 'the ethnographer cannot remain external to her object of study' (Hastrup 1992:119). Distance can preclude insights that arise only from personal involvement, 'taking participation seriously, and exploiting the paradox of fieldwork as intersubjective mode of objectivisation, transforms the ethnographer from spectator to seer' (Hastrup 1992:119). While I could change little about my irrelevance as a woman, the observer position of the ethnographer is not fixed. Hastrup (1992) points out how this position is mutable and depends on the person of the ethnographer. Finally, the disinterest of western men was also useful, as it facilitated conversations about their relations with Indonesian women, and possibly encouraged them to regard me as an honorary male. This mirrors experiences of female expatriates, as discussed in chapter 3.

Social Status

Doing fieldwork among expatriates in Jakarta meant 'studying up' (Nader 1972; Guterson 1997). This refers to a situation where most of my informants were in economic and social positions much more superior to mine. This has implications regarding 'studying up' within anthropology as well as interaction with my informants, the material I obtained and the issues that emerged. As Nader (1972) points out, at the centre of this is the issue of 'power' and anthropology's relation to it. In an argument that has since become a mainstay of some anthropological theorising, she asks:

'whether the entirety of fieldwork does not depend upon a certain power relationship in favour of the anthropologist, and whether indeed such dominant-subordinate relationships may not be affecting the kinds of theories we are weaving. What if, in reinventing anthropology, anthropologists were to study the colonisers rather than the colonised, the culture of power rather than the

culture of the powerless, the culture of affluence than the culture of poverty?’
(Nader 1972:289).

This has been taken up in terms of the power of representation in ethnographic writing, as in Clifford and Marcus (1986) as well as Marcus and Fischer (1986). It has been much less pursued in terms of a shift in the actual subjects of study. In that sense, I suggest that studying expatriates literally takes up Nader’s (1972:289) imperative to study the ‘colonisers rather than the colonised’. As Nader (1972:289) points out, this does not imply a disregard for studying down, but rather aims to achieve this through a different, but complementary route. She argues that an understanding of the ‘ghetto’ is only fully achieved through taking the wealthy strata of society into view as well. In the case of expatriates in Indonesia, this points towards the fact that both Euro-American expatriates and Indonesians are enmeshed in a globalising market economy, wherein the cheap labour of the latter, in a way, gives rise to the affluent existences of the former. In general, ‘studying up’ has not been much favoured within anthropological research, although it is changing in the case of expatriates (see F. Moore 2000 and O’Reilly 2000). The rarity of ‘studying up’ is especially striking with respect to studies of migration and transnationalism. Questions arise as to why this is the case; they are discussed below in section 2.1. First, I outline what ‘studying up’ entailed for my fieldwork.

In Jakarta, my social status was undetermined. This arises from the social situation among expatriates. Women’s social status is often defined by their husbands’ position. Since this was not possible with me, and I did not have a job to classify me, I was often introduced as a ‘student’, which was adequate, and seemed the most suitable category. The problem was that although I was much inferior in terms of age, income, and

number of children, my status as a PhD-student seemed to matter to some people. It seemed to suggest some special academic status, and people felt unsure how to assess this. In most cases, though, people were rather removed from academic worlds, so that this did not seem to be very important.

Another important aspect was income, and in connection, housing, lifestyle, and attitudes in general. While many understood that I was on a 'student's budget', it was not always clear what this entailed. Some were unable to imagine a life much different from theirs. For example, I was often asked whether: *'my university was paying for my housing, if I was living in my own apartment, who prepared breakfast for me and if I was provided a car to get around.'* While I did not lie about my circumstances, that is, living in a shared house with Indonesian women, and not having servants or a car, I usually tried to downplay the differences. Since it was unlikely these women would see how I lived, and they probably could not imagine what it looked like, it was possible to leave these things vague.

The fact that I was sharing a house with Indonesians was another aspect to make them wonder, and suggested different relations with Indonesians than they had. I usually described my housing situation in such a way as to make it more acceptable for them without being false. I avoided these topics and tried to 'blend in' by not detailing my circumstances to them. Significantly, many women for example did not want to know too much about this anyway, possibly in order not to be reminded of their privileged positions. The idea of a different lifestyle seemed to bewilder or even irritate them. That it was possible to live in non-air-conditioned houses, use the bus, eat Indonesian street food, and go out by night alone seemed to set me apart, and questioned the idea that: *'you can only live in Jakarta on an expat package.'* It becomes clear why I might

have appeared strange to them - seemingly similar, but different in ways that could be problematic. The most salient aspect was my being in Jakarta by myself, without a husband or a job, and by my own choice. The repeated questions of '*what my husband did*' rather estranged me. Significantly, it was European women, rather than Indonesians who asked this. While the latter seemed more at ease with me being there voluntarily, this was incomprehensible to some expatriate women. Being an unmarried Western female also influenced relations with expatriate men. As indicated above, gender relations among expatriates were influenced by the role of Indonesian women. Interaction with Western men was therefore different than in a Western country. As single Western women were a minority, my presence could be seen as 'odd' by expatriate men as well.

While this was mainly relevant with 'family expatriates', one could assume there to be fewer problems with 'expatriates' of my own age, the 'young professionals', who came from similar social and educational backgrounds. While there were fewer differences in many ways, the disparity in income remained. My housing and lifestyle set me apart. For example, most of these young professionals' accommodation costs ranged between US\$ 1000 to US\$ 3000 a month, most of which was provided by their 'expatriate package'. In comparison, my rented room cost about US\$ 80 a month. Their comparatively high disposable income, company cars, and frequent trips abroad further separated us. Most of them were more aware of these differences, although not always to the full extent. I used to avoid these topics, although they frequently became visible. While most of them did not seem to think much about this, very few enquired about my housing situation or expressed the desire to visit it.

This might have been intentional in the way of not wanting to be reminded too much of their privileged positions, and the differences between us. My existence might have been ‘uncomfortable’ for them in these ways. For the expatriate wives, I showed it was possible to live in Jakarta without an expatriate package, and not be a ‘victim’ of the situation there. Sometimes people put me in a different category, such as that of Indonesians who also *‘do not need air-conditioning’*, as if they were humans with different physical requirements. I once shared an unlicensed and therefore potentially unsafe taxi with two young women who both usually chose a prestigious, more expensive, ‘safe’ taxi company. As we had not managed to get any other taxi, it was agreed it would take us to the next hotel to change to a ‘safer’ company. At the hotel, only two ‘safe’ taxis were available, so I offered to stay in the ‘unsafe’ one, so they could both change taxis. They both quickly agreed without being too bothered - as if I had different safety requirements than them.

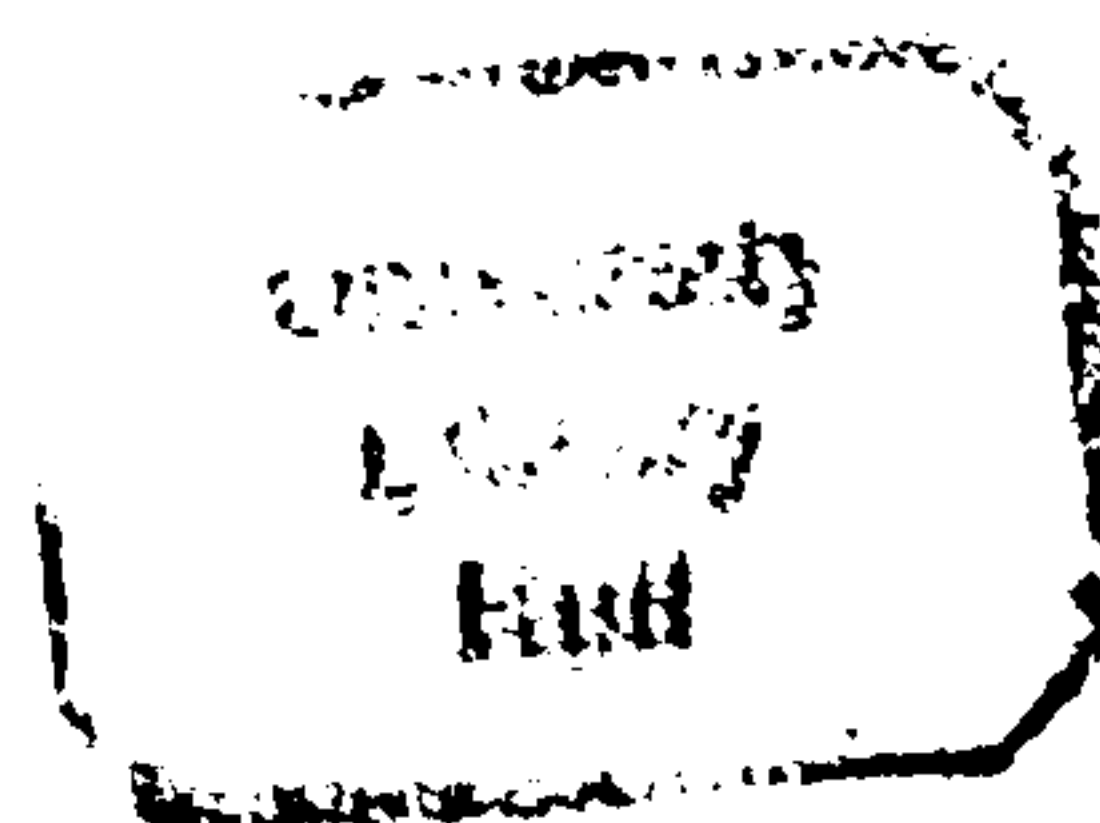
Nationality

Apart from income and lifestyle differences, my nationality definitely shaped my research in Jakarta. I had not planned to focus on a particular national group, apart from the choice of Europeans and North Americans. It turned out that my nationality mattered more than I expected. This was due to expatriate life partly being organised along national lines. This was especially true for women’s organisations, as well as family-oriented clubs like the American Embassy Recreation Association, the ‘Belgium-Luxembourg Club’ and others. At the start of my research, I visited American and British, as well as German women’s organisations. In the course of my fieldwork, it turned out that access to events and people was easier within the German community than with the others. This might have been due to the more exclusive

character of American women' groups, but did not explain the difference between British and German groups. While my nationality did not matter much to me, it was important to my informants. I did not necessarily expect to have better contact with German women, but on the one hand my nationality seemed to make it easier for them to interact with and help me with my research. Since I had limited time, I took advantage of this, and consequently spent more time with German women. On the other hand, my position between national groups was ambiguous. My affiliation with a university in the U.K. puzzled some German women, who might have been unaccustomed to, or uncomfortable with non-Germans. Interacting with non-German expatriates might have also caused estrangement from, or discomfort for German women. They were not necessarily used to this kind of interaction across national lines, and it might have intensified differences between us. This 'nationality effect' did not pertain to all aspects of my research and certainly mattered much less with young professionals.

The 'violence of fieldwork'

Finally, I want to examine more closely what Hastrup (1992) has called the 'violence of fieldwork', and discuss in what ways this was present in my fieldwork. Hastrup (1992:122) speaks of the 'violence inherent in fieldwork'. She suggests that the, 'apparent symmetry at the level of dialogue is subsumed by a complicated asymmetry: the ethnographic project systematically violates the other's project' (Hastrup 1992:122). This is a rather important point, which is rarely expressed directly or admitted by ethnographers. It certainly captures some aspects of the relations between me and the people I talked to, my 'subjects'. It might pose the question whether 'studying up' relieves the fieldworker of some moral implications that doing fieldwork and writing



ethnographies inevitably bring about (see Clifford and Marcus 1986: Marcus and Fischer 1986; and Clifford 1992).

Instead of contesting Hastrup's (1992) notion, I aim to complement her observations through highlighting an additional aspect. These potentially violent interactions can be instrumental, not only for the fieldworker, but also for the subjects. This became apparent with some expatriate women, and is connected to their special status as 'expatriate wives'. Many regarded being an accompanying spouse in an expatriate setting as a peculiar situation, with specific problems. Consequently, much of their conversation focused on their situation as expatriate women. Some seemed in a state of constant psychological stress, which was partly relieved through sharing their experiences with others. This also happened in conversations and interviews with me. They used these conversations, which were potentially exerting violence on my part, to relieve some of these pressures. This could happen in everyday conversations, which could trigger complaints about household staff or the unavailability of certain foods. It could take a more extreme form in interviews. Hastrup (1992) suggests that, 'making other people tell their story may be extremely wearing to them, and symbolically imply their death' (1992:123). In my situation, these interviews could sometimes attain functions akin to therapy sessions. In some cases, I did not even ask for an interview, but was summoned to listen to their stories. After having performed this listening service, I was dismissed, with little interest on their side to continue any relationship between us.

Based on ideas like Hastrup's (1992), I had initially assumed that the power position would be mine, through my asking them for stories and taking them away. I gradually realised that they also exerted a certain power. This was performed through making me

listen to their stories, and me taking them away. This did not constitute a loss to them, but was seen as disposal and relief. This does not imply that these sessions were actually functioning like therapy sessions. On the contrary, the constant complaints about their situation might have not done them any favours or brought about improvement. A psychotherapist working in Jakarta suggested that expatriates seemed to have an 'instant solution' attitude, which made them reluctant to work through their problems, but instead expected instant relief and disposal of the problems instead. This willingness, sometimes almost eagerness to 'give me their stories' could be seen as advantageous, since it facilitated access and initial conversations. On the other hand, there was the danger of being offered clichéd, ready-made representations of their lives and experiences. The fabricated form - shaped by the discourse within the expatriate community - of these conversations could prevent me from getting greater insights. While some people were eager to talk to me, others were rather reluctant. I assume that this was because interviews threatened to unearth many issues that they would rather not think about too much. In our conversations, many women systematically avoided certain topics. This concerned especially their position as 'dependent women', and possible doubts about identities and their self-worth. It also related to potential adultery and the constant threat posed by Indonesian women. Independent of the groundedness of these fears, this undermined their confidence as women, and they talked about this only indirectly, and even more guardedly with me.

Their position as accompanying spouses, without paid work and few genuine projects of their own, constituted a rather threatening situation. Keeping a balance was thus for many women a daily struggle. It could not be talked about too much or too explicitly, as this might have threatened to unsettle that balance. Here, the 'violence of fieldwork' reappears. My presence and questions reminded them of their precarious situation,

possibly forcing them to face it, which was antithetical to maintaining this vital balance. My project, without any bad intention on my side, could thus, ‘systematically violate the other’s project’ (Hastrup 1992:122). Regarding the question whether ‘studying up’ negates the moral doubtfulness of fieldwork, it seems that it does not liberate fieldwork from its problems, and does not necessarily lose its violent potential.

1.3 Terminology

In this section, I take a step back to examine terminology already employed above. I have used the terms ‘foreigners’ as well as ‘expatriates’ to describe the people I wanted to study. Here, I outline some definitions and meanings of ‘foreigners’ and ‘expatriates’. This addresses a methodological necessity, but also incorporates issues debated among my informants as well, including the discourse among ‘expatriates’ about who is and is not an expatriate.

In terms of etymology, ‘expatriate’ derives from the Latin term *ex*, meaning ‘out of’, and *patria*, meaning ‘fatherland’, referring to a person being outside their native country. It has often been used to describe rather wealthy migrants who live more or less voluntary outside their own country, on a semi-permanent or permanent basis. It has been applied to artists, such as Americans in Paris (e.g. Earnest 1968), but is also used to refer to colonial officers and missionaries (Morrison 1993; Griffin 1978). The term ‘expatriates’ appears in fictionalised accounts (Challinger 1994; de Bruijn 2000). The term is also used in the media to denote corporate employees on international assignments, as exemplified by article series in the *Financial Times* and *International Herald Tribune* (Wendtland 2000; Snee 1999).

Who is an Expatriate? Ascriptions and Self-Ascriptions

In this context, the etymological origin is less relevant in that it does not provide the 'real' meaning of the term expatriate. Instead, the usage, ascription, and self-ascription of this term is at issue here. People's use of the term 'expatriates' is often related to their self-identification as foreigners in Indonesia. One can identify two different aspects, a 'social' and an 'economic meaning'. The social meaning defines expatriates as people permanently or semi-permanently living and working in a country outside of their country of birth or citizenship.²

In contrast, the economic meaning describes expatriates as employees of multinational companies who are posted from their 'home country' to a 'host country' on a limited-term assignment with a specific remuneration scheme, the 'expatriate package'. As such, this term is widely used within the field of human resource management (Brewster 1991, 1993). These definitions, which are only two out of many possible interpretations of the term, neither draw clear boundaries nor are they necessarily made explicit.

Consequently, people describe themselves or others as 'expatriates' stressing either its social or economic aspects, or both. In the following, I outline some aspects of these usages.

In terms of ascription or self-ascription, 'expatriate' is used for different ends: to identify and to justify oneself; to identify through distancing oneself from it; and to seek inclusion into a group that one might feel excluded from. The people who most readily describe themselves as 'expatriates' are expatriates in the economic sense. This refers to people on a company assignment, often together with their spouses and children.

² I realise that this can already be problematic, since there are increasingly more individuals whose country of birth is not the country of their nationality, or what is conceived of as their 'home country' or country of permanent residence.

Although the term seemed especially common among the native English-speaking communities, it had become known and was used among other Europeans, like the French, German and Dutch communities.

Positive Identification

Positive identification with the term 'expatriates' probably constitutes the most common usage. In this sense, 'expatriate' does not seem to have any negative associations. It is widely employed in Jakarta to describe the people on a posting or 'corporate expatriates' and their lifestyles. It is also employed with respect to 'expatriate community organisations' and denotes a fairly circumscribed group of people: the 'expat community'. This usage appears throughout the self-ascribed 'expatriate community', in 'websites for expatriates', and in social organisations.

The term also becomes important in justifying the relatively luxurious lifestyles of corporate expatriates. One element of the economic definition of expatriates is the 'expatriate package', which includes a salary, often in US Dollars, higher than the one received at home. An indication of expatriates' lifestyles and living costs is given in surveys by PT Price Waterhouse Sutanto (1995) and Mann (1997b). The 'expatriate package' also includes other benefits aside from an increased salary, such as a generous housing allowance, provision of a car and driver, children's international school fees paid, moving and storage costs, as well as a certain number of flights home. Since this is in rather stark contrast to many Indonesians' lives, there is some uneasiness and feeling of guilt among expatriates. People then seem to use the term 'expatriates' to justify their lifestyle to themselves and others. This gets played out by stressing that one is officially, by company policy, an expatriate, thus relinquishing responsibility for

the situation. This usage implies that, *'it is not our fault that we are paid so much'*, pointing to the fact that one is part of the 'expat scheme', without control over or responsibility for social inequalities that may result.

Justification

In addition to that, people use the term 'hardship post'³ to justify their situations, which connects to the social definition of expatriate as someone out of their 'home country'. This suggests that by being abroad, expatriates are in a position of deprivation - being unable to enjoy many of the things they regard as indispensable for their quality of life. These are not necessarily material goods, but things like *'air quality'*, *'space'*, *'being able to go for a walk'*, as well as social disadvantages, such as *'being far away from family and friends'*, *'not being able to go down to the pub'* etc. In many ways, 'deprivation' or 'hardship' is defined as *'not being able to live like in Europe'*, which counts for numerous shortcomings of living in Jakarta. Within this framework, the 'expatriate lifestyle' of many 'corporate expatriates' is sufficiently self-justified. In addition to justification, two further aspects emerge. I have mentioned the usage of the term expatriate in international management. In these contexts, the term has a 'technical' meaning. The logic of 'expatriatism' is maintained within management frameworks (Brewster 1991, 1993). First, this assumes that for employees sent abroad on an assignment, this situation is demanding in terms of life quality, which then requires sufficient compensation. I pursue the relevance of this further in chapter 2, in the section on business literature. Secondly, 'expatriates' become a target for business interests. Expatriates have been discovered as potential customers, and the Internet makes it possible to exploit such markets. These companies mainly provide goods and

³ This is humorously reflected in the title of a collection of short stories about expatriate life in Indonesia, called *A Hardship Post* (Mann 1997a).

services, selling expatriates goods from their 'home countries', which can be ordered over the Internet and delivered to their home in Jakarta. The goods include grocery items as well as newspapers and magazines. These companies are distinct from general e-commerce enterprises, in that they are specifically geared towards expatriates and their 'needs'. The items offered are usually easily obtained in their home countries, but might be hard to buy in Jakarta. Sites such as <<http://www.britishexpat.com>> [updated November 2001], <<http://www.expatesentials.co.uk>> [accessed November 2001], and <<http://www.homezick.com>> [accessed November 2001] are examples. A growing sector of financial services is geared towards expatriates, focusing mainly on taxation, but also on investment and insurance, such as <<http://www.netexpat.com>> [accessed November 2001], or <<http://www.financialexpat.com>> [accessed November 2001]. Commercial sites offering 'help and advice' also abound. These are often maintained by expatriates or ex-expatriates, as for example <<http://www.expatexpert.com>> [accessed November 2001], and <<http://www.expatspouse.com>> [accessed November 2001]. These enterprises obviously have an interest in furthering the idea of 'expatriatism' and thus reinforce a certain notion of what it means to be an 'expatriate'.

Negative Identification

So far I have discussed people ascribing the term 'expatriates' to themselves or others as a positive identification or justification. However, the term can be used negatively as well. While one distances itself from 'expatriates', the other indicates an inclusion into a group that some people feel is denied them. In contrast to the above, numerous foreigners in Jakarta and especially Yogyakarta would vehemently deny being 'expatriates'. These are foreigners living in Indonesia, and as such the social meaning of 'expatriates' would apply to them. They would not, however, define themselves as

such. They interpret 'expatriates' in the economic sense, people posted to Indonesia on an expatriate package, in a non-voluntary, job-motivated situation, as opposed to themselves as 'resident foreigners'. The foreigners who dissociate themselves from this term do not form a homogenous group. As they ascribe the term 'expatriates' to others contemptuously, they do so for different reasons. They distance themselves from 'expatriates' as they do from 'tourists', expatriates being the equivalent of the tourists. There seem to be several reasons for this. One reason is that 'expatriates' are characterised not only by their incomes and lifestyles, but their negative attitudes towards Indonesia. 'Resident foreigners' assume that expatriates do not come there out of interest, but out of job necessity, and not voluntarily. They are seen as having little interest in the people, hardly any language and social skills, and an arrogant attitude towards life in Indonesia in general.

'Anti-expatriates' thus do not want to be seen as sharing any of those characteristics, but see themselves as fundamentally different. In contrast to 'expatriates', they live in Indonesia voluntarily, have an interest in, and social competence with respect to Indonesians, the language, and life there in general. This attitude is shared by people on quite different levels of income. Most foreigners living in Yogyakarta do not consider themselves 'expatriates', as their income and lifestyle usually differs greatly from the Jakarta-based expatriates. At the same time, some foreigners in Jakarta were leading an 'expatriate life' economically and socially, yet begged to differ. At one coffee morning a well-dressed, middle-aged French woman, Monique, distributed leaflets promoting her business, a gallery and furniture shop. She explained that, *'I am not an expatriate. We want to live here, we have our business here and we are thinking of adopting an Indonesian child.'* While she was obviously aware of the 'expatriate community', and

used it for her own ends, she insisted on being different in terms of motivation, attitude and general outlook, which, she felt, set her apart.

In a slightly different vein, there are foreigners who are in Indonesia for work-related reasons, but who would not like to describe themselves as expatriates either. These are for example people working in development, for non-governmental or other development organisations. While quite a few people work for 'local wages' in this sector, there are also positions that provide people in development with salaries and benefits similar to a corporate expatriate package. While some are happy to regard themselves as 'expatriates', the ambiguity of who is an 'expatriate' is greater in the development sector than in the corporate sector. Some 'posted development workers' regard themselves as different from corporate expatriates in terms of their intentions and motivations. There is sometimes a distinction between people working 'for the development of Indonesia' versus those working for 'companies exploiting it'. While there is a range of attitudes, the difference between these groups seems to be decreasing, as development work becomes increasingly 'professional', with rising salaries and better working and living conditions. At the same time, some international corporations stress their commitment to 'develop' Indonesia, such as setting up in-company training programmes and scholarships for Indonesian nationals. These boundaries are thus becoming increasingly blurred. Nevertheless, some people working in development, although on high salaries, are reluctant to align themselves with expatriates, as they consider their motivations as fundamentally different from people in the corporate sector.

Some do not call themselves 'expatriates', for fear of claiming something they do not feel entitled to. These are people employed locally in Indonesia with comparatively low

salaries. This corresponds to the difference made by companies between 'local hire' and 'expat positions', denoting more financial than social differences. Many institutions, such as cultural institutes and international schools, distinguish between foreigners hired with a 'local wage for foreigners' and foreigners with an 'expatriate package'. Some of these 'locally hired' foreigners might not want to call themselves expatriates, for this might imply a better financial and lifestyle situation than they actually have.

Inclusionary Identification

Apart from these, there are also foreigners who describe themselves as expatriates, in spite of their suspicion that this might be denied them by parts of the 'expatriate community'. One group includes foreign women married to Indonesians, who work for local salaries. Their lives are often very different from corporate expatriates', depending on the social status and income of their husbands. In contrast to this, foreign men seem to maintain their initial social status, since they are usually 'on a posting' when they get married to Indonesian women, and often remain corporate expatriates. This is summed up by Julie, a British woman married to an Indonesian, and working for a local salary, *'Of course I am an expatriate, because I live and work outside my home country, right? I might not earn as much as the others, but that does not make me less of an expatriate.'* Her statement points towards tendencies among corporate expatriates to exclude people such as Julie from the 'expatriate community'. By using the term 'expatriate' for herself, Julie disputed this, claiming membership of a group she felt she belonged to. It also highlights attitudes towards foreign women married to Indonesian men, who are sometimes seen as not part of the 'expatriate community'. Women who

‘marry out’ are often seen as ‘lost’ for the expat community, while men, despite ‘marrying out’, stay in it.

Finally, another group of people almost spitefully sometimes describe themselves as expatriates, despite what they sense is a judgement made against them within the ‘expatriate community’. An Indonesian woman for example, Panca, had lived in Germany for more than twenty years while married to a German. She had been working in Germany in the textile management sector and had been posted by her German company to oversee their Indonesian operations in Jakarta. Although she was divorced now, she explained, *‘I feel like a foreigner here in Indonesia - I am an expatriate! I have been sent here. My family in Sumatra think I am too westernised, and do not really accept me any more.’* This sentiment was also pitched against attitudes in the German Women’s Association, called *Brücke* [bridge], that Indonesian women, however close their links to German, could never quite be accepted - even if they claimed to be ‘expatriates’ themselves, which was probably met with misunderstanding or resentment.

‘Expatriates’ - the Making of an Object?

The above categorisation highlights a range of meanings of the term ‘expatriate’, and makes clear in what ways it is problematic. There is not a single, circumscribed definition of the term, but a multitude of meanings, which are already embedded in and entangled with the main question, how people relate to the term ‘expatriates’ and use it to express their affiliations. While this is insightful, it confounds the possibilities of employing this term for research purposes. A risk inherent in using this term is the making of ‘expatriates’ as an object, precluding possibilities for further exploration.

Assuming 'expatriates' as a bounded, homogeneous group disregards its ambiguous character with its multiple meanings and associations. As part of an 'expatriate discourse', it is already bound up with the issues I aim to examine. Using 'expatriates' could involve assumptions that could be inadequate as well as limiting.

At the same time, it is necessary to use some descriptive terms to refer to my informants. Ideally, this would be a term that presupposed as little as possible, while being specific enough for the present purposes. Two other terms I have used so far are 'Westerners' and 'foreigners'. 'Westerner' invokes associations of what is seen as 'typically Western' behaviour and attitudes, and is rather value-laden. I therefore choose to avoid the term 'Westerner', as notions of the 'West' are rather complex and diffuse, and eventually unproductive. 'Foreigners', as well as 'Westerners', stresses features that people might not see as relevant, or would rather disregard; their 'foreignness', being different, white, alien or Other. Similarly, I chose not to use the term 'foreigner', as it seems insufficiently specific. It would refer to all non-Indonesian nationals in Jakarta, and not only the Euro-Americans I am focusing on here. There is obviously no optimal solution as no term is 'neutral' or free of connotations.

Therefore, I suggest it is possible to employ the term 'expatriates' for this research, while trying to avoid its pitfalls. This is possible through not casting expatriates as a homogeneous, unified group, but allowing the term to have a wide, and partly conflicting, range of meanings, such as those outlined above. I suggest that expatriates in the broadest sense are Euro-Americans living and working in Jakarta for a limited period of time. They widely differ in terms of income, age, marital status, motivation, and lifestyles. I suggest, though, that this internal diversity need not only be acknowledged, but can also be harnessed for research purposes. The key is that

differences and interstices between different kinds of 'expatriates' contribute to a fuller, more complex picture of what it can mean to be an 'expatriate'. This is possible because these expatriates' lives not only differ in many ways, but also share some characteristics and experiences. This ultimately justifies employing the term, enabling meaningful research on 'expatriates'.

Partial Connections

This concept of relating 'groups' that are internally diverse, yet showing significant connections, is best exemplified by Strathern's (1991) concept of 'partial connections'. In the following, I briefly outline this. It links to the discussion concerning comparison within anthropology (Fardon 1990). Without being able to outline the details of her framework, it is sufficient to say that in order to treat different people within one theoretical framework, these people need not form one coherent group or share a majority of potential 'group characteristics'. Instead, as Strathern (1991) suggests, different situations can be linked by meaningful relations, which invite the researcher to explore these links and make visible possible interconnections. Strathern (1991) gives as an example the idea of 'village'. In her case, these would be three different settlements in Britain, which share certain ideas about the 'village', but which cannot be subsumed in one single model of 'villageness': 'but there is no proportion between them, no encompassing scale or common context that will make these places units of a comparable order' (Strathern 1991:24). She maintains that, 'I cannot compare [them], but I must also do more than simply juxtapose them in my mind' (Strathern 1991:24). A possibility is to take up Tyler's (1986) figure of the journey which, as Strathern suggests, 'might work as an imaginative device through which to think about connections if we could dispense with its attendant presumption of integration taking

place within a single entity' (Strathern 1991:25). This might not sound immediately instructive, yet I argue this concept of partial connections turns out to be rather useful for the case of expatriates.

I aim to apply this to the whole range of people who could be regarded, or regard themselves as 'expatriates', even though they might differ from each other in terms of age, income and a number of other aspects. Acknowledging the differences between them might render a fuller understanding of aspects, and contestations, of the term 'expatriate'. In particular, I aim to differentiate between genders and age groups. I discuss the gender differentiations in detail in chapter 2. Here, I briefly explain in what ways 'age' might make for crucial differences. I argue that expatriates in Jakarta roughly fall into two generations or age groups, the 'family expatriates' and the 'young professionals'. 'Family expatriates' refers to corporate expatriates with their families, who are typically between 35 and 55 years old. In this generation, the husband is almost always the breadwinner, while his wife has the status of an 'accompanying spouse', which makes it difficult for her to work legally. 'Family expatriates' often have school-age children, who attend international schools in Jakarta. The husbands are mostly on a posting working for multinational companies. The wives have not chosen to come to Indonesia themselves, and tend to socialise only with fellow expatriates, often within their own national expatriate community. In contrast, there is the generation of 'young professionals', who are between ages of 25 and 35, and are mainly single. They often work for multinational companies, but some of them have not been posted and come to Indonesia deliberately to look for work. Many of them are on expatriate packages, some of them are paid in US dollars, and some are on slightly more than local salaries. They often see themselves as 'global professionals' with an international outlook in terms of jobs, places of residence and social networks. They

have rather mobile lives, and ‘cosmopolitan’ tastes in terms of lifestyle, housing and socialising, as I discuss in more detail in chapter 7.

This only indicates some broad differences between these groups. It demonstrates that these two age groups differ on several central counts. Yet, I suggest, they also share some connections between them. They are both faced with living and working in Indonesia as foreigners, dealing with its social and cultural implications. They have to face living in Indonesia as a white person, forming relations with Indonesians, and dealing with their position as privileged people in comparatively poor surroundings. The connections between these two groups of expatriates might be partial and fragmented, but they exist and are meaningful. Here, the concept of ‘partial connections’ becomes relevant. It implies investigating both family expatriates as well as young professionals and their existences in Jakarta. In many cases, where they share similar experiences, I will not differentiate between these age groups. However, as their attitudes and practices vary with respect to certain issues, I will chart their respective experiences, highlighting differences compared with the other group. Among these differentiating issues is gender, as expatriate wives’ lives are very different from young, single, female professionals, as becomes clear in chapter 3. Similarly, in the case of food practices, beauty treatments and ways of socialising, young professionals make entirely different choices from their older counterparts. Email and the Internet also become relevant for each group, and are used by them in different ways. At the same time, many issues are shared by older and younger expatriates alike, such as the relations to Indonesian women, where there is a gender divide, bodily experiences of space, and the discomfort with being stared at, the gaze of the Other, all of which I discuss in chapters 4 and 5. I will, where appropriate, highlight these differences, while implying shared experiences otherwise. Most importantly, I argue that, these

differences notwithstanding, the notion of ‘boundaries’ is equally relevant both for young professionals and family expatriates, even if it plays out in their lives differently.

In summary, I indicated why researching expatriates addresses significant gaps both in terms of theory as well as content, and why, therefore, they constitute a necessary and desirable object of study. With respect to methodology, I mainly employed participant observation and interviews, which are complemented by material gathered from the Internet. In section 1.2, I place specific emphasis on the role of the fieldworker. I explore in what ways my interactions with my informants have shaped the ethnographic material. This refers especially to the fact that I was ‘studying up’ and how my informants and I were negotiating my position within an expatriate community.

Another crucial aspect, apart from status and age, was gender, which might have facilitated my access to expatriate women, but also posed specific problems in terms of the differences between us. Addressing the ‘violence of fieldwork’, I ask whether studying up might reduce this potential violence. It turns out that although my informants might have used me in several ways, my imposing questions about their lives, which especially some expatriate women felt unhappy about, potentially caused emotional disruption. Although I tried to minimise this, it was possibly not entirely avoided.

In section 1.3, I discussed the difficulties involved in employing the term ‘expatriates’. I emphasise its multiplicity of meanings through tracing expatriates’ own usages of the term. By outlining forms of ascription and self-ascription, I make clear that I do not assume a fixed meaning of the term, but acknowledge its fluidity. This provides the background for using this term as a central concept of analysis. Relating to the diversity of ‘expatriates’, I address the generational gaps between expatriates I studied. Instead

of downplaying these differences, I suggest viewing them within a paradigm of ‘partial connections’, which allows for diversity while still recognising connections. Having made explicit my methodological presuppositions, in chapter 2 I turn to the theoretical frameworks of this study. This entails surveying existing research, and subsequently establishing a notion of boundaries, which I argue is a key concept for expatriates, and provides a basis for my own analysis.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Frameworks

Researching expatriates poses a challenge because 'expatriates' as a topic sits rather uneasily within, or between, current theories of migration, transnationalism and cosmopolitanism. At the moment, there does not seem to be one coherent field of research specifically aimed at researching expatriates. Expatriates have been studied within a range of diverging and partly unrelated disciplines. Anthropology so far has not figured very much in it. In the following, I tentatively attempt to locate 'expatriates' as an object of study within anthropology.

In reviewing the existing ethnographies and literature on expatriates in section 2.1, it turns out that they might be less instructive in terms of theory or content, but are rather indicative of the problems that researching expatriates poses. This concerns especially conceptualising expatriates within current frameworks of transnationalism and migration research. I therefore include research on expatriates from other areas such as business studies. The review of the state of research thus rather indicates the diversity of previous studies, and emphasises the necessity of developing an original, adequate approach to the study of expatriates within anthropology.

In section 2.2, I critically discuss current theories of migration and transnationalism, which provide possible frameworks for researching expatriates. It emerges that these theories of migration mainly focus on low-skilled labour migration from 'Third-World' to 'Western' countries, which gives rise to a very specific representation of transnational processes. Subsequently, theories of transnationalism foreground the 'flows' inherent in transnational practices, as well as stressing their politically subversive potential. This emphasis on 'fluidity' and 'hybridity' ties in with a similar

emphasis in current theories of globalisation and cosmopolitanism. Based on my research on expatriates as privileged, skilled labour migrants, though, I suggest that 'flows' only partially characterise transnational processes. On the contrary, I argue that the sustained presence of boundaries constitutes a key characteristic of these processes, as is demonstrated throughout the thesis. Studying expatriates also explores another dimension of transnationalism, as they constitute a form of 'transnationalism from above', that has so far been neglected. Furthermore, I place specific emphasis on the aspect of gender, which has similarly received little attention.

Placing 'boundaries' at the centre necessitates discussing existing notions, and establishing a specific concept of boundaries as the basis for my own analysis. This is performed in section 2.3. Starting with Barth's (1969) work, I emphasise that the construction and maintenance of boundaries is as important as their negotiation and transgression. Boundaries are not seen as solid and given, but as constructed, contested and porous. Differing from Cohen's (1985, 1986) approach, I include boundaries with respect to individuals as well to collectives. Special attention is paid to the symbolic as well as material dimensions of boundaries, presenting them not as a dichotomy, but as being interrelated. This also holds for the relation between flows and boundaries in general, as they are not opposites, but mutually dependent. I then more specifically discuss the core domains of race and gender, from which many of these boundaries arise, and which turn out to be central throughout the thesis. I then summarise the need for research on expatriates within anthropology, and suggest reasons for the lack of it. In the chapter conclusion, I argue that the study of expatriates can challenge existing transnationalist frameworks and direct attention to the limiting potential of transnational processes.

2.1 Ethnographies and Literature

The main feature - and problem - with anthropological research on expatriates is its paucity. It seems that few studies are specifically devoted to expatriates, and of those which are, many struggle to position 'expatriates' within adequate theoretical and ethnographic frameworks, or side-step the problem by focusing on related issues (e.g. O'Reilly 2000; Amit-Talai 1998; Haour-Knipe 2000; Griesshaber 2000; Moore 2000; Beaverstock 1996). Therefore, instead of undertaking an in-depth review of the rather heterogeneous literature, I discuss the research situation in terms of the lack of studies and apparent difficulties with conceptualising this subject. The study of expatriates is probably most appropriately characterised as an emerging, diverse field rather than an established body of research. This is substantiated by the fact that although recently several projects on expatriates have been initiated (e.g. <[http:// www.forarea.de](http://www.forarea.de)> [updated October 2001]; <[http:// www.lboro.ac.uk/gwac](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gwac)> [accessed November 2001]), so far there seem little dialogue and theoretical connections between these projects. This makes it difficult to position my own research in relation them, compounded by the scarcity of anthropological approaches to this subject. Consequently, I also survey literature from areas such as business studies as well as looking at the 'advice literature' directed towards expatriates.

In terms of anthropological research, one of the most comprehensive ethnographies on 'expatriates'⁴ is O'Reilly's *The British on the Costa del Sol* (2000). She examines British nationals who settle on a permanent or semi-permanent basis in Southern Spain. She traces processes of community building, as well as focusing on issues of ethnicity and identity. The situation of these migrants seems characterised by ambivalence

⁴ O'Reilly (2000) prefers not to call them expatriates because she regards it as a 'value-laden term implying power, privilege and choice' (2000:142), although she admits that the British themselves use the term.

towards 'Spain'. O'Reilly (2000) observes that many permanent migrants see themselves as part of Spanish society, although they were hardly integrated at all (2000:116). The British are described as 'betwixt and between'. In trying to determine their position, O'Reilly (2000) describes them as 'marginal', while she concludes that 'all the time they remain essentially British' (2000:166).

O'Reilly's (2000) study might be instructive in terms of her problems rather than her insights. One could argue that her approach exemplifies the difficulties that researchers of expatriates are faced with. One of the main problems seems the conceptualisation, and theoretical positioning, of 'expatriates'. O'Reilly (2000) attempts to solve this by adopting a framework of migration research. This turns out to be fraught, since the British retiree migrants do not easily fit this scheme, as their patterns of movement are much more diffuse and diverse than many theories of migration allow for. This becomes especially obvious as O'Reilly (2000) painstakingly tries to categorise their migratory processes as 'returning residents' and 'peripatetic' or 'seasonal' visitors (2000: 53) in order to capture the variety of their practices. As a result, one assumes that abandoning these schemata altogether might have been more beneficial. In general, O'Reilly's (2000) indecision in casting the migrants as 'essentially British', 'marginal' or 'betwixt and between' signals the difficulties of relating 'retiree migrants' to established concepts of 'migrants', and identifying adequate frameworks to analyse them. I further discuss this in relation to expatriates in general in chapter 2.

While expatriates, as migrants to developing countries, are thus still under-researched, studies on skilled labour migration within Western countries are increasing. Much of this research concerns male business expatriates, and relates mainly to interactions in their work environment. Both F. Moore (2000) and Beaverstock (1996a, 1996b, and

1996c) focus on business expatriates employed in the financial sector. F. Moore (2000) studied German business expatriates working in the London branch of a German multinational corporation. She looked especially at the 'adaptation strategies' of the expatriates in the workplace, which included creative usage of national stereotypes in a business environment. She suggests that 'identity and culture under the current phase of globalisation are considerably more flexible than traditional studies of these suggest' (Available at: <[http://www. redrival.com/nyder](http://www.redrival.com/nyder)> [accessed July 2001]).

While F. Moore (2000) employs an anthropological framework, expatriates are also being researched within human geography, such as in the *Globalization and World Cities Study Group* to be found at <<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gwac>> [accessed November 2001]. Beaverstock (1996a, 1996b, and 1996c) focuses on British expatriate transnational communities in global financial centres, such as in Singapore and New York City, which he regards as part of 'transient professional migration flows' (1999 GaWC Research Bulletin 8: "'Transient" Professional Migration Flows in International Banking' [Internet], Loughborough, University of Loughborough. Available from: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/rb/rb8.html> [accessed November 2001]). He places special emphasis on the 'embedded cultural life experiences' of expatriates. Like F. Moore (2000), Beaverstock is interested in the specific knowledge that people acquire, utilise and transform during their stay in an international workplace.

The differences to the current topic of expatriates are apparent. On the one hand, F. Moore's (2000) and Beaverstock's (1999) studies share with business studies a focus on work performances and the workplace culture. This usually limits the subjects to work in a corporate environment and also mostly men. While the focus on skilled migration in business studies is a welcome addition, it reproduces the focus of business studies' on male migrants. Conversely, gender-aware migration research mostly deals with

unskilled migration to industrialised countries. This leaves a gap in gendered research on skilled migration, which includes non-working spouses as well as working women. Furthermore, both F. Moore (2000) and Beaverstock (1996a, 1996b, and 1996c) appreciate the 'flows', echoing a celebratory tendency in transnationalist research, which will be reviewed below. F. Moore (2000) emphasises the 'flexibility' of expatriates' cultural practices, while Beaverstock (1996a, 1996b, and 1996c) focuses on the 'transnational flows' that financial expatriates are part of. Research on skilled migration thus perpetuates the emphasis on 'fluidity' that is present in transnationalist theories of unskilled migration. As I will argue below, it seems advisable to aim for a more comprehensive picture, which has not been undertaken with respect to either skilled or unskilled migration.

Since the anthropological analyses of 'expatriates' are scattered, it might be advisable to refer to literature in disciplines such as business studies, which has extensively discussed expatriates, albeit with a focus on their management and on intercultural business communication. 'Expatriates' have also figured prominently for example within human resource management research. Studies of expatriates' management partly overlap with intercultural communication studies, such as Choi (1995); Chaney (1995); Hoecklin (1995); and Joynt and Warner (1996). Much of the literature on intercultural communication is instructive. It aims at raising awareness among expatriates involved in cross-cultural management. Human resource management, on the other hand, specifically deals with managing expatriates, that is, optimising their performance in different cultural environments. Examples of this are Brewster (1991, 1993) and Conway (1996). Intercultural communication texts are relevant insofar as they provide expatriates with certain ideas of 'living overseas', as well as perpetuating often stereotyped ideas of 'locals', and suggesting formalised ways of interaction. The

human resource management perspective is interesting in its sustaining of a 'deprivation model'. This regards expatriates as a valuable human resource indispensable for managing overseas operations. It also assumes that their postings deprive expatriates of many basic amenities, and they must therefore be recompensed accordingly - hence the concept of the 'expatriate package'. These attitudes have supported the discourse among expatriates of a posting in Indonesia as a hardship, which justifies its high remuneration. The theoretical value of these analyses for an anthropological account is limited. They reinforce the overall impression of a gap in social science research on expatriates, but indicate the kind of discourses used by expatriates to conceptualise their own situation. These discourses are also reflected in the expatriate advice literature, to which I now turn.

While anthropological literature on expatriates is scarce, advice literature in general and on Indonesia in particular abounds. Among the most popular works are Draine and Hall (1991); Bacon (1999); the American Women's Associations' 'Introducing Indonesia' (1998); and Berninghausen (1996), and examples of advice literature date from the early 1980s (e.g. Young 1983). In addition to these, there are specific guides concerning intercultural communication in a business environment in Indonesia, such as Brandt (1998); Sinjorgo (1997); and Mann (1994). There are advice books geared specifically towards expatriate wives, dealing with overseas postings and how to support families abroad, such as Pascoe (1997); Pascoe, Thogersen and Herzog (2000); and Salobir (1988), and several websites which I discuss in more detail in chapter 3. The value of the advice books lies in the insights they offer, in that they are often authored by former expatriates, and thus reflect as well as influence expatriates' discourses. They are also relevant as they showcase one of the major dissonances between actual expatriate life

and the 'ideology' of being an expatriate. This concerns the issues of 'culture shock' and the 'myth of adjustment'.

Many advice books are based on the assumption that the main difficulty for expatriates is the adjustment to 'Indonesian culture'. A large part of the 'advice literature' (Bacon 1999; Berninghausen 1996; Draine 1991; Pascoe 1997), academic works (Holden 1998), as well as introductory written material by community organisations presuppose that expatriates will experience a 'culture shock' when entering Indonesia, and they will have to adjust to 'Indonesian culture'. Since many expatriates' exposure to 'Indonesian' life is limited, these concepts are at best misleading. I argue that many expatriates, through lack of exposure, never have to adjust to 'Indonesian' culture, but instead to 'expatriate culture', which is quite different. Most of the advice literature is thus founded on an inadequate representation of expatriate life, which indicates the self-interest of the 'culture shock' industry. The concept of 'culture shock' has to be maintained in order to justify the own agendas of their authors, as the 'myth of adjustment' helps to create a need for their services.

The advice literature reveals that people have to adjust not to 'living in Indonesia' as such, but to 'living in Indonesia as an expatriate'. Adjustment to 'expatriate culture' is not necessarily easier than adjustment to 'Indonesian culture', but certainly different. An American psychologist told me in personal communication that in her experience, many of the 'adjustment problems' of women spouses were not so much caused by being confronted with 'Indonesian' culture, but rather by the social atmosphere prevailing within some expatriate women's circles. This also relates to issues of recreating national identities in Indonesia, which is discussed in chapter 6.

This mistaken assumption of 'adjustment' also underlies some academic works. For example, Holden (1998) specifically discusses expatriates' cultural adjustment to living in Jakarta. Although this is welcome as a study focusing specifically on Jakarta, its theoretical value is restricted by its premises. Holden (1998) also employs the rather outdated sociological concept of adjustment, which is geared to a situation where migrants have to 'adjust', disregarding that corporate expatriates often do not have to adjust to 'Indonesian culture' at all. To maintain the concept of adjustment, one would similarly have to argue that expatriates have to adjust to an 'expatriate culture', as opposed to experiencing an 'Indonesian culture shock'. Holden's (1998) study is therefore of limited use in the present context.

As has emerged from the literature review, there is a distinct lack of systematic studies of 'expatriates', which successfully relates them to current theoretical frameworks. This apparent paucity of research raises the question as to why this is the case. I suggest several possible reasons, as well as indicate potential benefits to be gained from undertaking such studies.

First, a deterrent could be the comparative 'sameness' with one's subjects. This sameness - as opposed to assumed differences to the Other - could reveal the 'violence of fieldwork' much more directly. Studying one's 'peers' can heighten awareness of the intrusiveness of fieldwork, which might seem less conspicuous when studying Others. Secondly, it might be a matter of 'studying up' versus 'studying down'. While studies of expatriates in 'third-world countries' are rare, a greater number are concerned with European expatriates who are posted to other Western countries. Researching expatriates in developing countries could be uncomfortable for Western anthropologists because it invites parallels between the expatriates and themselves - up to the point

where one could suggest that anthropologists, for the duration of their fieldwork, could be regarded as expatriates as well. It might force anthropologists to acknowledge their complicity in a global system that works to their advantage, and to the disadvantage of a large part of the host country population. This fact is of course similarly present, but less explicit and therefore less troubling, in fieldwork situations where the subjects are cast as Other. Doing research with disadvantaged subjects might contribute to the anthropologists' sense of moral worthiness, blurring the underlying power and economic imbalances. The apparent preference to 'study down' thus has a dubious side to it. It possibly involves disenfranchised people, who might be victims of systems from which anthropologists themselves are beneficiaries. 'Studying down' seems to increase anthropologists' moral capital. Although this kind of research can have beneficial effects for the subjects concerned, it also allows anthropologists to de-emphasise their own position in it.

The rationale for researching affluent skilled migrants, like expatriates, in a developing country would thus be to question the scope of some transnational frameworks. This would first present an important corrective and complement to the situation presented so far. Secondly, it would need to introduce a gendered perspective to a field, which has so far mainly focused on male business migrants, seeing women only as part of unskilled migration movements. Thirdly, it points towards changing patterns of transnational existences. While expatriates' existences in their present form might be on the decline, new forms are developing. This is substantiated by the generation of 'young global professionals', which might gradually replace the traditional 'family expatriates'.

An overview of research on expatriates within the social sciences reveals a rather sketchy picture, characterised by a lack of systematic analyses. While O'Reilly (2000) provides interesting ethnographic material, she struggles to accommodate 'expatriates' within frameworks of migration. Holden's (1998) work rests on the misguided assumption that expatriates have to adjust to Indonesian culture and is therefore not instructive. F. Moore (2000) and Beaverstock (1996a, 1996b, and 1996c) research skilled migration, but perpetuate the emphasis on male expatriates as well as the preoccupation with the 'fluid' aspects of transnationalism. Literature from business studies as well as advice manuals are of lesser theoretical relevance, but provide insights into attitudes that sustain and reflect expatriates' discourses. The apparent lack of research hints at a reluctance of anthropology as a discipline to 'study up', which could reveal anthropologists' complicity in a world order that disadvantages their comparatively less privileged subjects. I stressed that the study of expatriates could make valuable theoretical and ethnographic contributions. In section 2.2, I aim to establish a more systematic analysis by relating 'expatriates' to theories of transnationalism and migration.

2.2 Migration and Transnationalism

Migration

Although the literature on migration is burgeoning, 'expatriates' hardly, if at all, figure in it. Neither Kearney (1986) nor Castles (2000a, 2000b), nor Castles and Miller (1998) mention any studies focusing on expatriates, let alone discussing the term. This points towards the fact that 'migration' studies have been less concerned with 'migration' in general, but with quite specific kinds of migration, which usually do not include

expatriates. Much of the research focuses on groups of migrants of specific geographical origins, directions of migration, economic and skill levels as well as motivations for and duration of migration. In concrete terms, migration research usually deals with low or unskilled labour migrants from 'industrialising' or 'developing' countries, who migrate to 'Western industrialised countries' with the aim of improving their lives. The economic, political and legal situation of these migrants is often difficult, as are often their positions in the host country. The duration of migration is unspecified. It ranges from permanent settlement in the host country to eventual return to their 'home countries' after different lengths of stay in the host country. Expatriates differ from those kinds of migrants on almost all counts. Expatriates often seem to move in the opposite direction, that is, from 'Western industrialised countries' to 'developing' countries. Their economic, political and legal situation is far from precarious, but rather privileged. Expatriates might be labour migrants, but they are highly skilled ones, and their length of stay in the host country is usually limited, instead of being indefinite or 'for life'. Regarding these basic differences between 'migrants' studied so far and 'expatriates', the question arises as to whether expatriates can or should be reasonably regarded as 'migrants' at all. From a theoretical perspective, one could probe the relevance of this question. In the first instance, it does not seem crucial to the study of expatriates whether they can legitimately be subsumed under the category of 'migrants' or not. It matters, though, in terms of their epistemological value. If one wants to claim their possible theoretical contribution to migration research, this is predicated on them representing a legitimate object of migration studies.

As indicated above, research on migration has consistently favoured certain types of migration over others. This is invariably reflected in and influences the theoretical

paradigms of this research. Recognising expatriates as legitimate ethnographic subjects and including them in migration research could change this. In terms of the study of migration, this would represent an addition to its body of ethnographic material. Acknowledgement of the existence of expatriates as migrants would complement and enlarge understanding of this, and help to redress the current imbalance, which is mainly concerned with poor, unskilled migration. More importantly, their incorporation into migration studies would have theoretical reverberations. These would be couched in the framework of transnationalism. This theoretical framework has recently gained prominence within migration research, and is also one in which anthropology as a discipline is particularly engaged. However, before considering these theoretical consequences, I will analyse if expatriates can indeed claim a legitimate research status as migrants.

In a survey of migration in the Asia-Pacific region, Castles (2000) establishes several categories of migrants, among them a group he calls 'highly qualified migrants'. He specifically employs the term 'expatriates', and states, 'much highly qualified migration consists of executives and professionals sent by their companies to work in overseas branches or joint ventures, or experts sent by international organisations to work in aid programmes' (Castles 2000:107). More specifically, Castles (2000) discusses contract labour migration. He acknowledges that the boundaries of this category may not be easily drawn, but stresses its increasing importance:

'today, contract labour arrangements are to be found in many parts of the world. and their scope and range are increasing... Many highly skilled workers, such as managers, financial experts, and technicians migrate on temporary employment contracts. It is hard to draw a precise line between the privileged 'professional

transients' moving within international labour markets and vulnerable low-skilled migrants.' (2000:102)

This definition seems to fit perfectly the Western expatriates in question here. It is interesting to note that this definition was not developed with 'Western' expatriates in mind - for example migrating to Asian countries - at all. Castles (2000) explicitly describes persons of Asian origin migrating to countries like the USA, Canada or Australia.

This illuminates two key points. First, it is exemplary of the fact that many migrant researchers do not recognise 'Western expatriates' as migrants - even when their descriptions of migrants seem especially designed for this purpose. Secondly, it brings to a head the question whether expatriates can be described as migrants at all. It is worth examining the characteristics that Castles (2000) lays out for 'labour migrants'. It turns out that 'Western expatriates' fulfil several of his criteria when describing labour migrants. Castles (2000) talks about contract labour migrants who can be highly skilled or qualified. He also notes that this kind of migration is often limited in time. Castles (2000) concedes that 'many highly skilled workers, such as managers, financial experts and technicians migrate on temporary employment contracts' (2000:102). The only differences concern the people involved - 'Westerners' as opposed to, in this case, 'Asians', and their direction of movement - to 'Western industrialised countries', or away from them.

While these differences might seem incidental, they imply a major difference; the level of economic, political and legal security of these movements. What sets Western expatriates apart, it seems, is the fact that their migration, though for labour reasons, is

comparatively privileged. They could be described, as Castles (2000) does for their Asian counterparts, as privileged 'professional transients' (2000:102). Their privileges, though, might not constitute a sufficient reason to disregard their migration or movement. In connection with this, one could speculate as to why anthropologists have so far paid little attention to such privileged migration. This could be linked to the fact that studying expatriates represents a form of 'studying up' and as such is less popular, as discussed in section 2.1. In conclusion, 'Western expatriates' can justifiably be regarded as migrants or 'professional transients'. More specifically, they are highly qualified temporary labour migrants on an individual or contract basis. As such, they constitute a rather neglected segment of the migration population. Their study makes a genuine theoretical contribution to migration research, especially to theories of transnationalism, which I now turn to.

Transnationalism

A large part of the literature on transnationalism, cosmopolitanism and globalisation has been celebratory, stressing 'global flows' and the emergence of 'hybridities'. I suggest that this representation is misleading, in that it fails to acknowledge the persistent relevance of boundaries, which obstruct and even preclude these 'global flows'. These boundaries can be based on economic, political, and social differences. I will therefore first present some of the 'celebratory' concepts, and then turn to more critical positions. I draw on these critical positions, such as Smith and Guarnizo (1998), and relate my own research to them.

The chorus of hailing 'movement' as a liberating phenomenon has many voices.

Clifford (1986) sets the tone, 'there are no traditionally fixed, spatially and temporally

bounded cultural worlds from which to depart and to which to return: all is situated and all is moving' (1986: 22). Min-ha talks (1994) about the 'fluidity [of time and space] and individuals' continuous movement through them' (1994:14). Hannerz (1992) has variously emphasised the omnipresence of 'cultural flows in space' (1992:68). Rapport and Dawson (1998) discuss 'the universal way in which human beings conceive of their lives in terms of a moving-between - between identities, relations, people, things, groups, societies, cultures, environments, as a dialectic between movement and fixity' (1998:33). The present, they all conclude, is 'fluid'. Praise of movement, spawning metaphors of the 'liquidation' of culture, abounds. The basic reasoning implies that globalisation enables increased mobility of just about everything: capital; technology; goods; and people. In the wake of this, immaterial goods start moving as well: ideas; ideologies; or as it is often put, 'culture'. This has been seen as a challenge to traditional concepts of culture as a bounded entity, which might have to be replaced. While the postulated increasing fluidity, specifically of 'culture', is not the main issue here, the 'global movement' Rapport and Dawson (1998) praise also includes the movement of people, which has traditionally been dealt with in migration studies. In the context of globalisation research, studies of 'transnationalism' have emerged. These are based on the assumption that, in contrast to earlier migration, movement of people is increasingly characterised by the maintenance of relations and networks spanning two or more countries. Migrants, it appears, are becoming 'transnationals'- which is where anthropology comes in. As Smith and Guarnizo (1998) note, 'culture studies scholars have been at the forefront on the analysis of transnational practices and processes' (1998:4).

Among researchers of transnationalism, especially Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc (1992, 1994, and 1995) have developed the transnationalist paradigm to a full

extent, mainly in terms of its political implications. Apart from this, the term has gained wider currency in more general anthropological research such as in Appadurai (1991); Kearney (1995); Vertovec (1998); and Smith and Guarnizo (1998). Hannerz (1990, 1992, and 1996) has developed a concept of cosmopolitanism, which I discuss below.

Main proponents of one concept of transnationalism are Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc (1992, 1994, and 1995). According to these authors, transnationalism is 'the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement' (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc 1994:7). An 'essential element of transnationalism is the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants sustain in both home and host societies'. They claim that their:

'definition of transnationalism allows us to analyse the "lived" and fluid experiences of individuals who act in ways that challenge our previous conflation of geographic space and social identity' (1994:8).

Situated in the framework of 'globalisation' and increasing interconnections, transnationalism studies share with the mentioned authors a sense of celebration and liberation. Movements of people tend to be less conceptualised as forced displacements implying hardship and loss, but are more seen as potentially liberating processes. Transnational practices can then even become, "counter-narratives of the nation" which continually evoke and erase their totalizing boundaries' (Bhabha 1990:300). 'Flows' are also a key notion for Appadurai (1991). He develops the concept of different 'global scapes', such as an 'ethnoscape' which relates to the movement of people:

‘By ‘ethnoscape’, I mean the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guestworkers and other moving groups and persons constitute an essential feature of the world’ (Appadurai 1990: 297). These ‘scapes’ constitute the conditions ‘under which current global flows occur: they occur in and through the growing disjunctures between ethnoscaping, technoscaping, finanscaping, mediascaping and ideoscaping’ (Appadurai 1990:301). Likewise, Kearney (1995) stresses the ‘the significant contemporary increases in the volume and velocity of such flows for the dynamics of communities and for the identities of their members’ (1995: 547).

As emerges from these positions, much of the research on transnationalism revolves around notions of movement, flows, fluidity, and boundaries being transgressed, subverted or becoming obsolete. Everything, it seems, is in flux, progression, and possibly changing for the better. The abundance of celebratory metaphors, however, should give rise to some suspicion and theoretical caution. There are critical voices such as Tsing (2000), who asks if ‘the newness and globality of movement mean [s] that once-immobile “local” places have recently been transcended by “global” flow?’ (2000:346). Similarly, Smith and Guarnizo (1998) contend that ‘the totalizing emancipatory character of transnationalism in these discourses is questionable’ (1998:5). The fixation on ‘flows’ has thus come under critical scrutiny. I briefly outline three main directions of criticism.

Tsing (2000) assesses anthropology’s recent occupation with ‘flows’ and relates it to anthropology’s heritage. As she points out:

‘the “old” anthropology ... describes cultures so grounded that they could not move out of place. This anthropology imprisons its objects in a cell;

interconnection and movement in the form of “global flows” are thus experienced as a form of liberation ... these flows fit most neatly inside the discipline when, in deference to past teachers and conventions, the boundedness of past cultures goes unchallenged; global flows can then take the discipline, and the world, into a freer future. This “freeing up” variety of globalism is both exhilarating and problematic’ (2000: 339-340).

This suggests that recent research developments within anthropology are not only incited by actual changes in the world, but gather additional momentum from the discipline’s own history. Anthropology’s present predilection for ‘flows’ can thus partly be explained by a tradition of being concerned with objects conceptualised as ‘bounded’. This theoretical predilection and focus on ‘movement’ harbours its own risks and one has to be wary of neglecting the polymorphous and ambivalent character of movements. Tsing (2000) warns that, ‘new Orientalisms will define who is in and who is out of circulation, just as frameworks of race, region, and religion defined those excluded from the idea of progress’ (2000:346). A model emphasising flows between centre and periphery, such as Hannerz’s, might result in ‘a globalist anthropology of movement [that] would reign at the centre’ (Tsing 2000:346).

This does not only reflect a concern in methodological terms, but also represents a political problem. An occupation with movement could easily disregard the fact that many people’s movements are still rather limited. As van der Veer (1997) reminds us, ‘free movement of persons and commodities, a dogma of economic liberalism, was in many places restricted to the enlightened, Western coloniser’ (1997: 91). Kearney (1995) criticises Appadurai for not being political enough. He reckons that ‘quite

insightful, but somewhat theoretically detached from political economy, is Appadurai's notion of the global spaces in which current cultural flows occur' (Kearney 1995:553). These concerns have been forcefully put forward by Smith and Guarnizo (1998), who take them as a starting point for their research agenda. They suggest that this celebratory sense has been imported from 'cultural studies' to transnationalism. This gives rise to:

'the tendency to conceive of transnationalism as something to celebrate, as an expression of a subversive popular resistance 'from below'. Cultural hybridity, multi-positional identities, border-crossing by marginal 'others', and transnational business practices by migrant entrepreneurs are depicted as conscious and successful efforts by ordinary people to escape control and domination 'from above' by capital and the state. Authors celebrating the liberating character of transnational practices often represent transnationals as engaged in a dialectic of opposition and resistance to the hegemonic logic of multinational capital' (Smith and Guarnizo 1998:5).

Instead, they maintain that 'the dialectic of domination and resistance needs a more nuanced analysis than the celebratory vision allows' (Smith and Guarnizo 1998:6). Their agenda is, 'to bring back into focus the enduring asymmetries of domination, inequality, racism, sexism, class conflict, and uneven development in which transnational practices are embedded and which they sometimes even perpetuate' (Smith and Guarnizo 1998:6).

This takes into account the inequalities that seem to get overlooked in much of the appreciative writing on transnationalism, an imbalance which research on expatriates could aim to redress as well. Before outlining the potential theoretical contribution of

this kind of research, the question arises as to how the concept of ‘cosmopolitans’ relates to ‘expatriates’. In the following, I will present Hannerz’s (1996) model of cosmopolitanism, critically evaluate it and determine whether this captures the notion of ‘expatriates’ more adequately than models of transnationalism or migration.

Cosmopolitanism

Hannerz (1996) proposes a concept of ‘cosmopolitans’ as intellectuals who are, ‘somewhat footloose’ (1996:104). They frequently and intentionally move globally, and, ‘want to immerse themselves in other cultures’ (Hannerz 1996:105).

Cosmopolitans are *connoisseurs*; they are affluent and ‘open-minded’, feel free to engage or disengage in local scenarios and add or delete parts of ‘other cultures’ from their personal repertoire at their choice. They maintain social networks all over the world; crucially, they never seem forced to anchor themselves in any environment they would not choose. Hannerz (1996) hails them as ‘the new class’, whose main characteristic is their ‘decontextualised cultural capital’ (1996:108).

What kind of relation, if any, does Hannerz’s (1996) model of cosmopolitans bear to ‘expatriates’? Hannerz (1996) discusses the question briefly:

‘the concept of the expatriate may be that which we will most readily associate with cosmopolitanism. Expatriates (or ex-expatriates) are people who have chosen to live abroad for some period, and who know when they are there that they can go home when it suits them. Not that all expatriates are living models of cosmopolitanism; colonialists were also expatriates, and mostly they abhorred “going native”. But these are people who can afford to experiment, who do not stand to lose a treasured but threatened, uprooted sense of self’ (1996:106).

While detecting some similarities between them, Hannerz (1996) ultimately rejects the idea that expatriates are cosmopolitans - or at least that they are not very good examples of it. They lack the connoisseurship, as well as the deliberate intellectual sampling of cultures, which distinguishes the cosmopolitan, for whom this is a lifestyle.

Hannerz's (1996) model has been subjected to widespread criticism, mainly for being elitist and being based on a centre-periphery model of 'global flows', while perpetuating the dichotomy of 'global' and 'local'. Schein (1998) sees 'the notion of cosmopolitanism as nothing but a circumscribed site of privilege from which 'free-floating intellectuals' reproduce their elitism through assertions of universality' (1998:292). Similarly, Tsing (2000) stresses that ultimately, despite their seemingly 'global' outlook, cosmopolitans are engaged in affirming the centre, 'the projects they endorse enlarge the hegemonies of Northern centres even as they incorporate peripheries' (2000:343-344). Going beyond Hannerz, this links to two issues raised above. First, the notion of 'cosmopolitans' reintroduces the relevance of power and privilege in the context of transnationalism. Secondly, it poses the question of cosmopolitans' engagement with culture.

Clifford (1992) points out that:

'travellers move about under strong cultural, political and economic compulsions and that certain travellers are materially privileged, other oppressed. These different circumstances are crucial determinations of the travel at issue - movements in specific colonial, neo-colonial, and postcolonial circuits, different diasporas, borderlands, exiles, detours and returns' (1992:108).

Hannerz, like many of the researchers on transnationalism, does not problematise cosmopolitans' privileged position. His way of conceptualising 'cosmopolitans' and his monopolising of the term have not gone unchallenged. Beyond criticising the

shortcomings of Hannerz's model, another strategy is to widen the scope and make the term 'cosmopolitans' available to a broader theoretical field. Instead of discussing a single notion of cosmopolitanism, several authors suggest multiple 'cosmopolitanisms'. This allows for the addressing power imbalances and restrictions of movement. Clifford (1992) suggests the notion of '*discrepant cosmopolitanisms*' precisely because, 'the notion that certain classes of people are cosmopolitan (travelers) while the rest are local (natives) appears as the ideology of one (very powerful) traveling culture' (1992:108). Schein (1998) proposes a similar strategy, suggesting that, 'cosmopolitanisms, in their multiple incarnations, ought instead to be thought of as processual and as potentially renegotiating precisely that nexus of privilege and constraint that conditions them' (1998:293).

This discussion also addresses the tacit assumption that 'cosmopolitans' and, more generally, people who move - transnationals - are inherently 'open-minded', and are willing to engage actively with whatever environment they find themselves in. This is partly constructed out of a dichotomy between 'globals' and 'locals', in which each has a prescribed position and characteristics, 'migrants and transnationals are cosmopolitans, while those who stay behind are parochials. This perspective is at least partly shaped by the predilection of those who comment on these matters' (van Hear 1998: 253). Instead, as van Hear (1998) points out, 'by no means all, or even most, transnational populations are thrusting cosmopolitans. On the contrary, many are rather parochial transnationals - people with transnational networks or links, but with a parochial outlook or world-view' (1998:255). Lasch (1995) attributes this parochialism to the fact that cosmopolitans are never genuinely engaged or actually responsible, and therefore the, 'cosmopolitanism of the favored few, because it is uninformed by the practice of citizenship, turns out to be a higher form of parochialism' (Lasch 1995:47).

Tsing (2000) follows a similar strategy with the notion of 'globalism'. Instead of assuming one unified concept of globalism, which does not acknowledge the potential diversity of its referents, she suggests that one should: 'reestablish the potential for appreciating multiple, overlapping, and sometimes contradictory globalisms' (Tsing 2000:342). These different globalisms 'need to be interrogated as an interconnected, but not homogenous, set of projects' (Tsing 2000:353).

The discussion so far strongly suggests that, 'the image of transnational migrants as deterritorialized, free-floating people represented by the now popular academic adage 'neither here nor there' deserves closer scrutiny' (Smith and Guarnizo 1998:11). The agenda could be defined as at looking at how transnational practices affect, 'power relations, cultural constructions, economic interactions, and, more generally, social organisation at the level of the locality' (Smith and Guarnizo 1998:6). Attention must be not only paid to flows between centre and periphery, which assumes smooth transmissions between fixed points, but also on the disruptions and disjunctions, and other forms of transnational interaction and exchange. Tsing (2000) reinforces this: 'where circulation models have tended to focus only on message transmission, one might instead investigate interactions involving collaboration, misunderstanding, opposition, and dialogue' (2000:348).

While the introduction of different 'cosmopolitanisms' and 'globalisms' might be regarded as a welcome widening of the scope of research, it is not clear whether this would be necessary or even advisable. This could contribute to a proliferation of these concepts, where each 'cosmopolitanism' is seen as a bounded, autonomous concept, which is not necessarily related to other notions of cosmopolitanism. To avoid a multitude of such reified, separate notions, it might be more adequate to maintain one

term for 'cosmopolitanism', albeit one that allows for diversity. This would be able to accommodate Hannerz's (1996) version of 'intellectual cosmopolitanism' as well as Schein's (1998) wholly different 'oppositional cosmopolitanism'. This would not restrict the notions of 'cosmopolitanism' or 'globalism', but rather comprise a varied and contradictory range of issues. In the context of research on expatriates, this implies not introducing yet another 'transnationalism' or 'cosmopolitanism', instead including expatriates in a transnationalist research agenda would contribute to a more heterogeneous notion of what it can mean to be 'transnational'.

In summary, the theories of transnationalism reviewed above certainly alter the scope of migration research by acknowledging sustained relations and practices extending between 'countries of origin' and 'host countries'. This marks a departure from previous dichotomising accounts, which seem to separate existences 'at home' and 'abroad', instead of acknowledging the links opening up between them. They also rightfully point out the subversive potential this has, for example in political terms with respect to the nation state, as demonstrated in the work of Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc (1992, 1994, and 1995). The tendency of transnational theories to accommodate flexibility, change, and movement can only be welcomed, as exemplified by Clifford (1992, 1997) and emphasised by Rapport and Dawson (1998). The focus on movement could be regarded as a precondition for theorising of a seemingly 'globalising' world. Appadurai's (1991) work on ethnoscaapes could be such a seminal basis for further research.

It is partly in the wake of this paradigmatic shift from anthropology's traditional concern with static situations to embracing change, as pointed out by Tsing (2000), that the valid appreciation of movement turns into its potentially uncritical celebration. As

Tsing (2000) rightly warns, a 'global anthropology' might end up defining the West as its centre. Hannerz's (1996) notion of privileged cosmopolitanism would certainly be an example of this, while Appadurai's (1991) notion of ethnoscapas for example might be too politically unaware. The enthusiasm fuelling these accounts is mistaken in the assumption that physical movement necessitates 'mental' movement. This is crucially linked to the level of privilege and comfort on which movement takes place. It is in the way of a corrective, and to render a fuller picture of what transnationalism can entail, that I emphasise boundaries rather than flows in the context of expatriates.

I presented a range of positions which regard 'transnationalism' as liberating, notably Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc (1992, 1994, and 1995); Kearney (1995); Hannerz (1996, 2000); and Rapport and Dawson (1998). I outlined some possible reasons for this widespread enthusiasm, both contained within the discipline and related to wider political concerns. In contrast to this, I suggested that this celebratory attitude is both politically uncritical and empirically inadequate. Following Smith and Guarnizo (1998), I argue that the implicated subversive potential of transnational practices has to be critically evaluated. Smith and Guarnizo (1998) set out to examine 'transnationalism from below' in order to assess this. Taking their position as a starting point, I propose to widen the scope by looking at 'transnationalism from above' - that is, at privileged forms of transnational existences. The objective is to take the whole range of transnational practices into view. This must include transnational practices which are not necessarily subversive, but, on the contrary, possibly affirmative. The case of expatriates represents the 'affirmative' and yet still reactionary potential that transnationalism also contains.

One could object that emphasising the limiting aspects of transnationalism instead of the liberating, stressing the boundaries instead of the flows, constitutes a rather reactionary political move. I would argue that the opposite is the case. I highlighted the risks involved in taking an unequivocally positive stance towards transnational practices. Focusing solely on their subversive potential and praising the global flows implies disregarding the persistent obstacles, boundaries, and non-movements. This kind of negligence amounts to a lack of critical awareness in political terms. Focusing on 'flows' reiterates a rhetoric of cosmopolitanism, which is embodied by Hannerz's (1996) model of affluent, unrestrained 'cosmopolitans'. Focusing on boundaries - not only including those that people are subjected to, but crucially those which they are constituting and perpetuating themselves - aims to render a fuller, more critical and politically aware perspective on transnational existences.

2.3 Notions of 'Boundaries'

Invoking notions of boundaries, I briefly specify the concept as employed here. One of the most prominent uses of the term has probably been Barth's *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969). Hannerz (1996) believes that 'the word 'boundaries' even came into more frequent use in anthropology' after Barth's publication (Hannerz 2000:7). Barth (1969) focuses on 'social boundaries' between 'ethnic groups'. He stresses that, 'the boundaries to which we must give our attention are of course social boundaries, though they may have territorial counterparts' (Barth 1969:15). He discusses the various ways in which these groups erect and maintain these boundaries. These social boundaries, however, are linked to 'culture'. Barth (1969) asserts that, 'ethnic groups only persist as significant units if they imply marked difference in behaviour, i.e. persisting cultural differences' (1969:16), which becomes relevant when encountering

people of other cultures, for this is when 'boundary maintenance' has to be performed. Cohen (1999) points out the relational aspects of Barth's (1969) concept. As he puts it, 'Barth took two prior theoretical postulates - the bounded ethnic group, and the tactical management of ethnic identity - and brought them together, showing that both are dynamic and subject to modulation according to circumstances' (Cohen 1999:3). Cohen (1985, 1986, 1994, and 1999), like Barth (1969, 1999), is concerned with boundaries between communities. Cohen (1986) discusses the symbolic constitution of boundaries, in that case between various communities on the British Isles. Although Cohen is inconclusive about their 'symbolic' nature, he distinguishes between a 'public' and a 'private' mode in the presentation of difference. On the one hand, 'the community boundary incorporates and encloses difference and ... is thereby strengthened' (Cohen 1999:1). On the other hand, he admits that the, 'symbolisation of the boundary from within is much more complex ... the boundary as the community's public face is symbolically simple; but, as the object of internal discourse, it is symbolically complex' (Cohen 1986:13). Cohen (1999) later also adds that, 'the social identity of a group may also be contested within the group itself' (1999:1).

Hannerz (2000) also employs the notion of boundaries. In keeping with his view of the world as a 'global flow chart', Hannerz invokes this notion of boundaries mainly in order to refute it. He refers to 'cultural boundaries', although in his view, cultural boundaries are there to be transcended, if they exist at all. Boundaries are something, 'across which contacts and interactions take place' (Hannerz 2000:7). In a world of global cultural flows, boundaries are merely 'channelling participation in social relationships' (Hannerz 2000:7). When everything is thus fluid and in motion, the notion of boundaries becomes hard to maintain. He contends that by now, boundaries might be a case of 'now you see it, now you do not'. and have to be thought of as. 'a

zigzag or a dotted line' (Hannerz 2000:8). At this point he has to abandon the metaphor; in his concept of global flows, boundaries become increasingly fluid and must finally dissolve.

It is against these backgrounds that I position my use of the term 'boundaries'. Following Barth (1969), it becomes clear why the notion of boundaries lends itself especially as an analytical tool on the 'expatriate situation'. For this might be, in Barth's terms, a situation where 'people of different cultures' encounter each other, referring to encounters between expatriates and Indonesians. I suggest, though, that boundaries refer to a whole range of differences, and are not only drawn between people of different cultures. In the following, I outline the notion of boundaries I employ here. Pellow (1996), in her edited volume *Setting Boundaries*, formulates the central questions concerning boundaries, 'how do people and cultures create and represent boundaries? Negotiate and contest them?' (Pellow 1996:220). She identifies a range of notions that characterise boundaries: they are 'physical, social, conceptual, symbolic, permeable, negotiable, created, maintained, dismantled, unifying, separating, divisive, inclusive' (Pellow 1996:1). In the following, I take up her suggestions and discuss these characteristics, starting with the permeability and negotiability of boundaries, followed by their maintenance and transgression, as well as their unifying/separating and divisive/ inclusive characteristics, and finally clarifying issues concerning their 'physical, social, conceptual and symbolic' dimensions.

Boundaries: Permeable and Negotiable

First of all, I take up Pellow's (1996) assumption of boundaries being permeable and negotiable. A crucial aspect of boundaries concerns their role as sites of mediation. As

Cohen points out, boundaries do not assume a specific function or significance, but these can vary among cultures (Cohen 1999:7). As Cohen (1999) formulates it, boundaries, 'do not necessarily entail the distancing of a group from its neighbour or interlocutor but, rather, may connect them and may thereby provide opportunities for social engagement 'across' the boundary' (Cohen 1999:7). De Certeau (1984) expresses the same insight, 'this is a paradox of the frontier: created by contacts, the points of differentiation between two bodies are also their common points. Conjunction and disjunction are inseparable in them... The theoretical and practical problem of the frontier ... [is that] it has a mediating role' (De Certeau 1984:127). De Certeau (1984) and Cohen (1999), too, point to the 'permeability' of boundaries, and the diffusion, leakage or spillover from one bounded realm into another. This is also reflected in Stoler's (1997a) notion of 'frontiers', pointing out their ambivalence, 'a frontier locates a site both of enclosure and contact and of observed passage and exchange' (1997a:199). As Cohen (1997) emphasises, though, this permeability does not determine how people conceptualise it, either as welcome points of contact or dreaded sites of leakage. Both De Certeau (1984) and Cohen (1999) stress its 'mediating role'. I argue that in the situation of expatriates, the opposite is the case. Expatriates recognise the permeability of boundaries, but this is rather a cause for concern than for celebration. Since many of their practices are aimed at maintaining these boundaries, leakages are accidents they seek to prevent. This does not exclude the transgression of boundaries on their part; crucially, these transgressions are rather controlled and orchestrated acts. They appear in chapters 4 and 6 with respect to the body, and relations with Indonesians.

Boundaries: Creation, Maintenance and Transgression

This leads to Pellow's (1996) second point, about the creation, maintenance, and transgression of boundaries. This presents boundaries not as natural, or essential, but as a product of active social practices. They are not given and static, but constructed and contested. I suggest that expatriates are engaged in complex processes of erecting and maintaining various boundaries. A major part of expatriates' lives revolves around the negotiation and defence of boundaries. This becomes important with relation to ethnography, as many of their practices can be conceptualised as boundary making, maintaining or negotiating in some form. Boundaries thus become a key metaphor, which structures much of their transnational existences.

It has been pointed out above that boundaries are not solid and insurmountable and can thus be permeated and transgressed. Both aspects are relevant with respect to expatriates. As explained, leakages often occur, but are usually avoided and feared. These leakages refer especially to spatial and bodily realms. As far as transgressions are concerned, I argue that they take the form of deliberate appropriations of the Outside, and controlled encounters with Others. They hint at a willingness or even desire on the side of expatriates to relate to the Other. As becomes obvious, though, these encounters crucially have to take place on the expatriates' terms, as they become unpleasant and threatening experiences otherwise. This will be demonstrated in chapter 6 with respect to social boundaries.

Connected to the creation and maintenance of these boundaries, the question occurs as to what kinds of 'boundaries' are implied in these concepts. Both Barth (1969) and Cohen (1999) as well as Hannerz (2000) discuss boundaries mainly as 'cultural'

boundaries. For my analysis, I see this as too reductive. Instead, I take boundaries to refer to a range of dimensions not restricted to the broadly 'cultural', but incorporating more differentiated levels of analysis. In the case of expatriates, I aim to trace boundaries not only in terms of race and ethnicity, but notably in terms of gender, nationality, age, and other dimensions such as class, since they all become relevant in individuals' negotiations of boundaries between the self and the outside world. This obviously does not abandon the notion of cultural or social boundaries, but translates them into a more flexible and detailed analysis. It also takes seriously the internal divisions of communities such as 'expatriates' and acknowledges that in some ways boundaries between the community and the outside are less important than the boundaries within, such as gender differences. In a further step, I argue that it is especially the intersections of these different boundaries that fundamentally structure expatriates' existences. The focus thus shifts from viewing boundaries in isolation, to considering their interaction with each other.

I thus assume boundaries not to impact on people's lives in isolation, but to intersect and interact with others. The field generated by these multiple intersections, contestations and contradictions is the context in which many expatriates' lives are set. In the following chapters, I will try to elucidate and disentangle some of these complexities. These become especially relevant concerning race and gender. As McClintock states (1998), 'race, gender and class are not distinct realms of experience, existing in splendid isolation from each other... rather, they come into existence *in and through* relation to each other - if in contradictory and conflictual ways' (1998:5, original emphasis). These domains are not 'reducible to, or identical with, each other; instead, they exist in intimate, reciprocal and contradictory relations' (McClintock 1998:5). This provides a basis for the following analysis. Expatriates' lives are

regarded as unfolding in the field opened up by these intersecting relations. This mutual implication is also formulated with respect to race and sex, as in Zack (1997). As Miles (1997) puts it, 'this is the disturbing reality behind the coincidence between race and sex; they are inextricably bound up in each other as signifiers that seep through the constraining boundaries of rationality by virtue of evoking responses that are more visceral than rational' (Miles 1997:138).

Pellow (1996) describes the ambivalence of boundaries as unifying and inclusive as well as separating and divisive. This refers to stronger bonds within a community, for example expatriates' communities, as well as emphasising differences from other communities. However, ambivalence does not only occur on the level of communities, but also on the individual level. It points to a further difference between Cohen's (1999) notion of boundaries and the concept I employ here: the focus on collective or individual identities.

Cohen (1985, 1986, 1994 and 1999) is mainly interested in the boundaries between communities. In particular, this refers to, 'the qualitative character of social and cultural boundaries, and ... how they are implicated in the formation, articulation, management and valorization of collective identities' (Cohen 1999:2). He later puts the self, or self-consciousness, at the centre of his theory of identity, but does not spell out in greater detail the role of boundaries in this (Cohen 1994). In the analysis of expatriates' situations, boundaries between communities are relevant. They include boundaries between 'expatriates' and 'Indonesians' as well as between different national expatriate communities. I trace the efficacy of these external and internal boundaries through different social arenas.

As explained above, I also explore boundaries with respect to individuals. They become apparent as individuals negotiate relations with their Indonesian environment, with people of the other sex, or other members of expatriate communities. They are especially relevant with respect to the body. Food practices or beauty treatments, although they are influenced by collective attitudes, are individual decisions on managing bodily boundaries. Similarly, bodily experiences of space, and the drawing and transcending of spatial boundaries, to some extent, are individuals' experiences and practices. In the following analysis, I examine both individual and collective boundaries. As discussed above, they are not seen as separate, but as both overlapping and intersecting. Chapters 4 and 5 are specifically concerned with individual boundaries, while chapter 6 foregrounds collective ones.

Boundaries: Material and Symbolic

In relation to Cohen's work (1985, 1986), his use of the term 'symbolic' is also relevant here. Cohen (1985) employs it to describe 'symbolic boundaries', but does not either explain this notion in greater detail or critically discuss it. This leads back to Pellow's (1996) final point concerning the 'physical, social, conceptual and symbolic' characteristics of boundaries. These arguably constitute core dimensions, as reflected in theoretical discussions surrounding boundaries. The 'physical' on the one side, and the social, conceptual, and symbolic on the other, have long been conceptualised as related, but separate dimensions. The physical, or material boundary, is taken to signify the conceptual or meaningful. The relation between the physical and the conceptual is akin to that between the linguistic *signifier* and the *signified*. Cohen (1985, 1986) talks about boundaries 'symbolising' differences between communities in this way. Before further discussing this separation, it is probably useful to recall why this conceptual dichotomy

was introduced in the first place. In 1966, Mary Douglas argued that the material and the symbolic have to be separated in order to de-naturalise these boundaries and make visible their symbolically constructed nature. In that sense, this dichotomy served a certain purpose; more recently, though, this separation has come under criticism.

Probably in parallel to the Cartesian split between mind and body, the separation of the physical and the conceptual or symbolic is potentially harmful as it might obscure the undeniable interconnectedness of these dimensions. While it is beneficial to point out the arbitrariness of the symbolic, this has often resulted in a problematic reduction of the material as given, essential, and being unaffected by social constructions. A next step would be to bringing the physical back into the equation by 'denaturalising' it - in the sense of liberating it from the realm of the purely natural, and exploring possibilities of conceptualising the intersections between the physical and the symbolic.

With respect to this, most notably Csordas (1994, 1996) has formulated suggestions aimed at this objective. He argues that especially in relation to the body, the dichotomy of the physical and the symbolic is misconceived. He rejects their separation, and aims to collapse this duality. The 'concept of the body of 'being-in-the-world', which links back to Heideggerian notions, intends to annihilate the dichotomies between the 'subjective and objective, meaningful and material' (Csordas 1994:13). This seems a seminal approach with respect to theories of the body, as well as to spatial experiences. One could argue that although Csordas (1994) intentions are clearly visible, it is less apparent exactly how such a collapse of dualities could be achieved. While the uncomplicated separation of the 'physical' and the 'meaningful' is unproductive and problematic, relapsing into a contrastive use is not easily avoided. In Csordas' defence, it can be said that he does not claim to provide an instant solution, but rather articulates the need for collapse of these dualities, and sketches a conceptual itinerary that might

lead in the desired direction. I therefore employ Csordas' (1994) notion of embodied experiences as much as possible, while probably not entirely being able to overcome these dichotomies.

Finally, I want to relate back to Cohen's (1985) emphasis on boundaries between collective identities as opposed to individual ones. This highlights another important connection; of that between boundaries and identities, which point towards a crucial aspect of the nature of boundaries. So far, especially in relation the discussion on the transnationalism, it might have appeared as if the relations between flows and boundaries were represented as a simple dichotomy. The situation, however, is more complex, as the concepts of flows and boundaries only exist in interrelation, and are not oppositional, but complementary. They are conceptually dependent on each other, since the existence of boundaries is predicated on the presence of flows, and vice versa. It is important to keep in mind that contestations of boundaries are crucially concerned with determining what lies on either side of the boundary. Boundaries are inevitably defined by what they include or exclude. This intertwinedness of flows and boundaries becomes especially apparent with relation to identity. Notions of identities are always based on a notion of difference, the Other, or what lies beyond the boundaries. Hall (1991) has described this as the 'necessity of the Other to the self' (1991:48), the importance of difference for the definition of identity. This is especially relevant in the case of expatriates identifying themselves vis-à-vis the Indonesian Other. I discuss this further in chapter 6 in relation to boundaries of identities.

In summary, I argue that 'boundaries' constitute a key metaphor for expatriates' existences. How they relate to, construct and transgress boundaries reflects and shapes their lives abroad. This has theoretical implications. Hannerz (2000) saw boundaries as

increasingly transcended and eventually vanishing. As I demonstrate, this concept is inadequate with regard to expatriates, as boundaries assume central importance for them. The resulting agenda for analysis is consequently to ‘underline the ... boundedness of transnationalism by the opportunities and constraints found in particular localities where transnational practices occur’ (Smith and Guarnizo 1998:12).

The concept of boundaries used here casts them as constructed, intersecting, porous and contested. They are linked to a range of differences which people use to distinguish themselves and others. In particular, they are constructed around concepts of race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and, to some extent, class, and age. As Smith and Guarnizo (1998) declare, a fundamental assumption is that, ‘the maintenance and reproduction of relations of power, status, gender, race, and ethnicity become inextricably enmeshed in the reproduction of transnational social fields’ (1998:19). The objective is to examine closely the interplay of those relations, as they present a major key for elucidating expatriates’ transnational practices.

In the course of the text, I trace these intersections through a range of social arenas. In particular, I look at the body, space, social relations and communities, as well as at consumption practices and the use of Internet communication technologies. Some of these issues consistently reappear, such as those related to gender and ethnicity or race, while some, such as nationality and age, only become relevant in certain arenas. The process of following these issues through different social arenas provides the grid for chapters 3 to 6.

The Role of Metaphors

Before turning to the intersections of race and gender, I want to draw attention to the role of discourse and discursive practices, especially the use of metaphors, which can constitute the ‘symbolic dimensions’ of boundaries. They are relevant in that they are indicative of, as well as productive for, processes of the making and negotiating of boundaries. The role of metaphors in expatriates’ lives, and thus their epistemological value, is not to be underestimated. Therefore, I will throughout the text trace the use of metaphors as they arise in specific contexts, and explore their significance. I argue that these metaphors can reflect expatriates’ understanding of their own situation, such as the often-used image of ‘living in a bubble’. At the same time, metaphors are of paramount importance for expatriates, as it seems that their practices are increasingly influenced by these discursive practices. I suggest that this intensified impact of metaphors arises from the specific expatriate situation. As they have been placed in an environment that is often rather alien and unknown to them, it seems that they tend to rely on discourse within the expatriate community to guide their actions and influence decisions concerning their lives in Indonesia. Expatriates would thus be a specific case of the formative impact on metaphors, as Lakoff and Johnson have described it:

‘Metaphors have entailments through which they highlight and make coherent certain aspects of our experience ... Metaphors may create realities for us, especially social realities. A metaphor may thus be a guide for future action. Such actions will, of course, fit the metaphor. This will, in turn, reinforce the power of the metaphor to make experience coherent. In this sense metaphors can be self-fulfilling prophecies’ (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:156).

The use of metaphors is thus connected with processes of boundary making. This becomes especially visible in relation to what could be called 'Jakarta urban myths', referring to purported events, which circulate among expatriates, as well as an 'ideology of impossibility'. I suggest that this ideology, while being maintained and perpetuated especially by expatriate wives, also works towards limiting them in several ways. The 'ideology of impossibility' denotes activities that are deemed 'impossible' or at least not desirable to engage in, such as 'driving a car yourself', 'taking the bus', 'eating food on the street', 'getting by without household staff' or even 'going out alone after dark'. Constantly referring to these practices in a mode of 'being impossible' contributes to maintaining the borders of their existences, although some expatriates might eventually feel restricted by this. I will return to these discursive practices later.

As well as having a productive role, metaphors also reflect some of the expatriates' beliefs. Specifically, it turns out that several metaphors resonate with my claim about the salience of 'boundaries' in expatriate lives. As I will illustrate, many of the metaphors that expatriates employ with respect to their situation are related to, or directly express, notions of boundaries. Most notably, one of the most salient metaphors is that of 'living in a bubble', such as invoked in the introductory quote in chapter 1. A 'bubble' draws attention to the difference between Inside and Outside, a clearly demarcated boundary. It also expresses a sense of being in this bubble partly involuntarily. Even more pronounced is the image of a 'golden cage' that many expatriate wives invoke to capture their situation. This refers to their position as 'kept' women surrounded by material affluence, while being restricted in their movement and activities. Again the notion of borders and limits is prominent. In a different vein, some women speak about their lives as reminiscent of 'frontiers' - in the sense of Jakarta being a place on the border of civilisation, with scarce resources and hardship.

where their task is to manage this frontier existence as well as possible. A young professional described his feeling about his life in Jakarta as being ‘in Disneyland’. This does not only imply his life being ‘unreal’ in some way, but also a world unto itself, which is sharply distinguished and cordoned off from its outside surroundings.

Boundaries: Race and Gender

As indicated above, major intersections are constituted by boundaries based on concepts of race and gender. Although other boundaries, along the lines of race, ethnicity, and nationality will become important in other contexts, I outline the race-gender field here in greater detail. Yet more boundaries will be highlighted, as they become relevant in the respective chapters, such as those concerning the body, space, and social life.

Issues concerning race with respect to gender have been widely explored. Here, I delineate the web of connections, conditions, and differences that characterises the situation of expatriate women. I first outline their connections with colonial women, and discuss the ‘double bind’ that white women can find themselves in. Relations between the ‘home countries’ and Indonesia are investigated, along with the question of why ‘white women in Asia’ remain a curious blind spot within current theoretical discussions.

Relations between gender and race have been constructed in various and sometimes conflicting ways. In the case of Asia, or the Orient, a connection is typically established between a male West and a feminine Orient. As Manderson and Jolly (1997) point out, ‘the colonising subject is typically imagined as male - in masculinist tropes of penetration of dark interiors or the virile extension of male members into foreign places’ (1997: 7). As Manderson and Jolly also point out, in Said’s *Orientalism* (1978), ‘the

Orient is portrayed as passive and female, prone to the masculine penetration of the West' (Manderson and Jolly 1997:7).

Things turn out to be even more complex. This becomes obvious as soon as one moves away from the simple axis between the male Western coloniser and a feminised Orient, and allows Western women into the picture. They are caught within a 'double bind': on the one hand, colonial women - and expatriate wives today - enter the 'Orient' as members of a supposedly dominant group. Western women were also colonisers - or expatriates, which positioned them in a relation of perceived superiority to the colonised Other. At the same time, their status is fractured: they themselves are subject to patriarchal rule. Western women can thus be conceptualised as both colonisers and colonised, dominant and submissive, being the 'same' to Western men in terms of race, but 'different' in terms of gender. Western women, as well as the Orient, are subject to Othering; while the 'Orientalized Other' is cast as 'feminine', Western women are, 'the other-within' (Lewis 1996:18).

This double bind precludes any straightforward positioning of Western women in these contexts. Their situation, their relations with Western men as well as Indonesian men and women, and their experiences must be ambivalent and contradictory. Lewis (1996) considers, 'women's relationship to Orientalism and imperialism as a series of identifications that did not have to be either simply supportive or simply oppositional, but that could be partial, fragmented and contradictory' (1996:237). As McClintock (1998) puts it:

'colonial women were ... ambiguously placed within this process. Barred from the corridors of formal power, they experienced the privileges and social contradictions of imperialism very differently from colonial men ... whether

they served discreetly at the elbow of power as colonial officers' wives, upholding the boundaries of empire' (1998:6).

This also prevents portraying them as either perpetrators or victims. While Western women might be victims of a patriarchal system, they are also beneficiaries of a colonial or Western-dominant one:

'The rationed privileges of race all too often put white women in positions of decided - if borrowed - power, not only over colonised women but also over colonised men. As such, white women were not the hapless onlookers on empire but were ambiguously complicit both as colonisers and colonised, privileged and restricted, acted upon and acting' (McClintock 1998:6).

Although McClintock's (1998) verdict is aimed at colonial women, it seems curiously appropriate for the situation of expatriate women. The combination of powers given and denied, of possibilities for agency opened up and restricted lies at the basis of expatriate women's existences in Indonesia. In the following, I will trace the possibilities, contradictions, and limitations, which this double bind produces, and illuminate how this plays out in expatriate women's lives.

In terms of ethnographic research, early attempts to investigate specifically the situation of expatriate wives are Callan (1975) and Ardener (1984). A wife of a diplomat herself, Callan describes the lives of 'diplomats' wives' within the British Foreign Service. Callan (1975) recognises that within the British Mission, a wife, 'is committed to an institution from whose central operations she is necessarily excluded' (Callan 1975:98). Her account signals an awareness of the 'paradoxes' of expatriate wives' existences. Similarly, Ardener (1984) explores the concepts and implications of being an 'incorporated wife', the supporting spouse of a corporate expatriate husband. She

illustrates this in the case of 'Shell wives', whose husbands are on postings for the Shell Corporation. Although these studies do not necessarily develop or employ sophisticated frameworks to analyse expatriate wives' situations, they represent pioneering and valuable attempts to conceptualise this subject. Both Ardener (1984) and Callan (1975) touch upon a range of issues that are further explored in chapter 3.

Also relevant for the situation of expatriate wives is another question, which pertains to the theoretical relations between the 'colonies' - or the sites of the overseas posting - and the Western 'home countries'. In the first instance, it seems that social systems in the colonies had their roots in and were imported from the 'home countries'. However, Stoler (1995) demonstrates that colonial ideologies and practices were not merely a product of an emerging bourgeoisie of the 19th century Europe, but played a crucial role in their constitution. Drawing on Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (1985), she demonstrates how Foucault failed to incorporate links between racial discourse, empire building, and the emergence of the bourgeoisie. She argues that, 'racism was part of the formation of a modern, sexualised, bourgeois subject' (Stoler 1995:53) and that it was 'a racialised notion of civility that brought the colonial convergence of - and conflict between - class and racial membership in sharp relief' (Stoler 1995:97). Stoler's (1997a) main thesis states that racism was instrumental in forming the middle classes as, 'there was no bourgeois identity that was not contingent on a changing set of Others who were at once desired and repugnant, forbidden and subservient, cast as wholly different but also the same' (1997a:45).

Stoler's (1995, 1997a, 1997b) ideas are instructive in several ways. First, she reinforces the conviction, by now received wisdom, that proceedings in the colonies cannot be viewed at all separately from the situation in Europe at that time. At the same time

Stoler (1995) makes clear that these relations do not suggest simple transfers from the home countries to the colonies. Neither were the colonies merely a product of situations in the home countries with purely affirmative feedback on them. Instead, their interrelations were characterised by complex patterns of perpetuation, affirmation, challenge, and subversion. Again, although Stoler (1995) develops her analysis in a historical context, her main ideas pertain to the situation of expatriates.

This provides an additional framework for exploring the situation of expatriate women. It crystallises into questions about the relations between their lives in Indonesia and 'at home' and in what ways their existences in Indonesia can be seen as affirmative or subversive vis-à-vis the state of gender relations in their home countries. Looking at many expatriate women's lives, it soon emerges that the prevailing gender relations are the products of patriarchal systems in place in Western industrialised countries. This is manifest in the fact that the majority of posted corporate expatriates are still male, while the majority of expatriate women in Jakarta are 'accompanying spouses', who are legally unable to work and are thus confined to a position of homemakers and supporting partners. At the same time, the number of expatriate professional women is rising, reflecting changing patterns in women's employment in Western societies. While the gender state of things in expatriate Indonesia can be traced back to Western societies, it cannot be reduced to it. The expatriate situation in Indonesia is clearly not its isomorphic representation.

Instead, I argue that expatriate gender relations in Indonesia can be seen as altered versions of gender relations 'at home'. Certain markers of gender relations 'at home' are selected and intensified in expatriate situations, resulting in situations which are, while recognisably related, more extreme, distorted, and more archaic than in their

home countries. An example is that with Western women's wages and types of employment now rather approximating men's, though still far from being equal, the expatriate situation magnifies these relatively small differences. This leads to situations where men, even if they had been earning only marginally more than their professional wives, are catapulted into the expatriate role of sole breadwinner, while the expatriate set-up confines formerly professional women to unpaid homemakers.

This points towards a more general theme. In many ways, it would be inadequate to frame expatriates' existences exclusively in terms of their home societies. It is important to acknowledge connections between these societies and their expatriate lives, and expatriates certainly are not situated in a social or spatial vacuum. While expatriates' lives cannot be fully understood without reference to Western societies, it seems equally vital to recognise their situation in its own right. This becomes especially salient when dealing with national or ethnic identity - which refuses to be subsumed by an idea of, for example German expatriates as being like 'Germans in Germany'. Instead they perform, as I illustrate in chapter 6, a version of being 'German in Indonesia', which also attests to the relevance of Indonesian locality for their situation.

Linking this back to Stoler's (1995) concerns, recognising expatriate situations in Indonesia 'in their own right' translates into carefully assessing their potential for both affirmative and subversive practices. Stoler (1995) prefigures the ambiguity of life in the colonies with regard to the bourgeoisie in Europe: the former supports the latter, but it also threatens to undermine it. Colonial life always contained possible, 'subversions to the bourgeois order' (Stoler 1997b:44). As in the colonial situation, expatriate women's lives are not easily mapped out in terms of their affirmative and subversive potential, stasis or progress, being 'archaic' or 'avant-garde'. Issues of affirmation and

subversion also link back to the debates reviewed in chapter 2. I pointed out that current theories of transnationalism tend to focus on the subversive potential of transnational practices, and that expatriates are a reminder of the affirmative and reactionary potential which transnational practices also enable. In the following, I take these issues as epistemological guidelines when exploring expatriates women's lives.

Finally, this is where Indonesia as the setting for expatriates' existences comes in.

While expatriate set-ups seem to foster certain affirmative practices in terms of gender relations, their location in Indonesia also affords possibilities for subversion. I will present these in more detail below. These possibilities, though, should be viewed with some caution. I argue that the 'subversive' potential in gender terms can be predicated on racial differences and advantages. When Western *women* can experience greater agency in Indonesia, this is often enabled by their position as *Western* women. Their disadvantages in terms of gender are overridden by advantages in terms of race or ethnicity. This might not cancel out actual personal gains from these subversive practices, but it limits their impact as theoretical arguments. In response to transnational theories, one has to ask what status gender-subversive practices have, if they are also based on racial inequalities. These intersections also remind of the initial tenet that transnational fields are intersected by more than one category: it is not just nationality, ethnicity, race, class or gender alone around which potentially subversive practices can evolve, but they often emerge from the gaps and interstices between them. This sustains the view that expatriate women occupy a theoretically interesting position. It is curious to note, then, that 'white Western women in Asia' do not figure prominently in current research. This is odd, for, as McClintock (1998) claims, 'gender power was not the superficial patina of empire, an ephemeral gloss over the more

decisive mechanics of class or race. Rather, gender dynamics were ... fundamental to the securing and maintenance of the imperial enterprise' (McClintock 1998:6-7).

Kearney (1995) notes the lack of a gender focus within migration research (1995:560). In addition to that, the migration studies undertaken mainly focus on 'migrant and immigrant women in low level labour markets' (Kearney 1986:348). Early examples of gender-specific research, among others, are Nash and Fernandez-Kelly (1983) and Sassen-Koob (1984). Only literature in business studies acknowledges the importance of expatriate wives for their husbands' effectiveness on an overseas posting (see Conway 1995; Black and Stephens 1989). Research on sex tourism in Asia, on the other hand, seems to focus exclusively on male desire, leaving Western women out of the frame of analysis. Manderson and Jolly's *Sites of Desire* (1997), like works on sex tourism (Murray 1991; Seabrook 2001) is mainly concerned with male fantasies of Asia. This produces a situation experienced as highly problematic by Western women who, as expatriates, are forced to be part of this. This representational imbalance will be addressed in the following chapter.

Stoler (1995, 1997b), on the other hand, while relating race to Foucault's account of sexuality and the bourgeoisie, ultimately remains uninterested in issues of gender. One suspects her main concern is with the making of the bourgeoisie under conditions of empire, and women only become important insofar they are part of this (Stoler 1995, 1997b). While Stoler (1995) seems overall more interested in issues of class and race, McClintock (1998) fills this gap. She fully recognises the role of women in the imperial enterprise, but refuses to privilege, 'one category over the others as the organising trope' (McClintock 1998:8), thus envisaging gender as one among several other 'tropes', such as class and race. Since McClintock's (1998) work concerns colonial

times, it must be asked why this historical account captures the situation of expatriate wives more effectively than current analyses of oriental fantasies or transnational migration. This might again be linked to the possibility that past imperial enterprises are more appealing to research than their contemporary equivalents. In the following chapter, I will therefore address this imbalance by taking Western women as the focal point of analysis.

In summary, this chapter has surveyed some of the existing literature on expatriates in section 2.1. It emerged, however, that much of the research so far had been diverse and too much hampered by conceptual difficulties to be instructive for the present study. As a consequence, in section 2.2 I examine more closely theories of migration and transnationalism, in order to embed expatriates within a productive framework. Having established that expatriates can be regarded as skilled labour migrants, it becomes clear that much of the migration and transnationalism research focuses on unskilled labour migration to 'Western' countries, and thus does not easily accommodate the case of Euro-American expatriates. This disparity of data or ethnographic subjects is connected to theoretical implications. The focus on 'transnationalism from below' has favoured theories that stress the changes and flows inherent in transnational processes. In contrast to this, I argue that expatriates' transnational practices are marked by boundaries rather than flows.

Subsequently, in section 2.3 I set out to establish a notion of boundaries as a conceptual basis for the following analysis. I identify central characteristics of boundaries, such as boundaries being constructed, contested and permeable. Processes of boundary maintenance are as relevant as those of negotiation and transgression. Furthermore, I make explicit connections between the physical and symbolic dimensions of

boundaries. In terms of symbolic boundaries, the role of metaphors becomes important, as they not only reflect expatriates' attitudes, but also function as a guide for action, which can then reinforce those boundaries. Two of the most important sets of boundaries are based on race and gender. I stress that processes of interrelation and interaction between them provide an epistemological guideline, especially for the analysis of the situation of expatriate wives. These women, whose position seems in some ways paralleled by that of colonial women, are subjected to a 'double bind': while they might gain power by virtue of being a Western woman in Indonesia, they are subject to (Western) male control and dominance, which created their situation as accompanying wives in the first place. Investigating Western women in Indonesia fills a gap in research on 'Westerners in Asia', which has often concentrated on male experiences. I therefore focus specifically on expatriate women in chapter 3. Before proceeding to this next chapter, I give a brief summary of the following chapters 3-7. It makes explicit their position within the theoretical framework, the basis of which has been outlined in the present chapter.

2.4 Chapter Outline

In the rest of the thesis, I outline how the notion of 'boundaries' is played out in a range of arenas such as gender, space, the body, social lives, and in the younger generation of expatriates. Chapter 3 focuses on how boundaries of race and gender transfigure the experiences of expatriate women. Westerners find themselves in a 'double bind', as they are both 'colonisers' and 'colonised'. As many expatriate women are faced with a loss of identity as well as agency, I outline some of the possibilities available to them, ranging from 'misery at the pool' to becoming 'avantgarde women'. I then examine

women's use of the Internet, through which kinship relations are reproduced. although the Internet use is not confined to this alone.

Chapter 4 looks at the way boundaries become relevant with respect to space.

Expatriates' spatial experiences and practices reflect and produce their relations not only with the physical cityscapes of Jakarta, but with 'Indonesia'⁵ in general. A major distinction consists between the Inside and the Outside, which becomes visible in expatriates' housing practices. Expatriates often attempt to exclude the Outside, when moving through public spaces, in order to escape the 'gaze of the Other'. This gaze also reinforces the changed importance of the 'Western body'.

Chapter 5 analyses the role bodily boundaries play in expatriates' lives. Concepts of purity and pollution become relevant, as expatriates reject, or incorporate, certain 'Indonesian' substances into their bodies. As with spatial practices, bodily practices encompass physical as well as symbolic dimensions. Expatriates' use of Javanese beauty treatments, clothes, and food are examples. The heightened significance of the 'Western female body' vis-à-vis the 'Asian female body' also effects changes in expatriate gender relations, as Western women's identities shift from 'body' to 'mind'.

Chapter 6 focuses on expatriates' social lives, and how boundaries of race, ethnicity, nationality, class and age are drawn between expatriates and Indonesians, as well as within the 'expatriate community'. Expatriates social lives are constituted by the interplay of identities, boundaries and representations of Self and Other. Performances of national identity become especially visible at events such as women's Coffee

⁵ I use quotemarks with the term Indonesia here to refer not to the geographical entity, but specifically to expatriates' representation of the country with its associations of 'chaos' and 'non-civilisation'.

Mornings and national days. I discuss specifically the Day of German Unity as an example.

Chapter 7 asks whether the young generation of expatriates are able to escape the 'bubble', which many family expatriates live in. Although young professionals regard themselves as cosmopolitan, many reproduce a form of 'Western internationalism', which similarly excludes 'Indonesia'. Young professionals could be regarded as an emerging class, being based on both economic and cultural capital. While foreigners in Yogyakarta distance themselves from corporate expatriates, they are unable to avoid the political and economic inequalities their lives are based on either.

Chapter 3: Expatriate Women

In this chapter, I explore the ways in which boundaries based on race and gender shape and reflect expatriate women's lives in Jakarta. I trace processes of boundaries being constructed as well as contested and transgressed. These processes are conceptualised as ambiguous; their impact on expatriate women can be both limiting and liberating.

With respect to many transnationalist theories' preoccupation with flows, it is mandatory to make the pervasive role of boundaries in expatriates' lives visible in the first place. Furthermore, these theories' claims for subversion also need to be investigated. As discussed, this does not deny the ambiguous potential of boundaries, but asks for a careful assessment of what seem to be both subversive and affirmative practices. This links to an equally important feature of expatriates' transnational practices; their conspicuous potential for affirmation. This refers to their perpetuating of long-established social practices based on the hierarchies of race and gender, which becomes nowhere as evident as in relation to expatriate women. The question of how boundaries impact on women's lives can be translated into what kind of space 'Indonesia', as an expatriate location, provides for them. Taking this as a framework, in section 3.1 I outline some of the main aspects of expatriate women's lives with respect to their 'archaic' or 'avant-garde' potential. In section 3.2 I discuss how Internet communication technologies perpetuate conventional gender practices, and to what extent they enable expatriate women to transgress these boundaries.

3.1 Expatriate women's spaces

As indicated above, I focus on expatriate women for several reasons. One is circumstantial; during the course of my research, I found myself spending a large part of

my time with women. This was neither planned nor anticipated by me, but evolved with the research process. It was mainly due to the fact that many expatriate women, insofar as they were accompanying their husbands, were not legally allowed to work in Indonesia and had a position of 'accompanying spouse', confining them in some way to the role of 'housewife'. As a consequence, many women had ample time on their hands, which they often spent at social events with other expatriate women, in which I also participated. In addition to this, these women were more available for interviews and conversations.

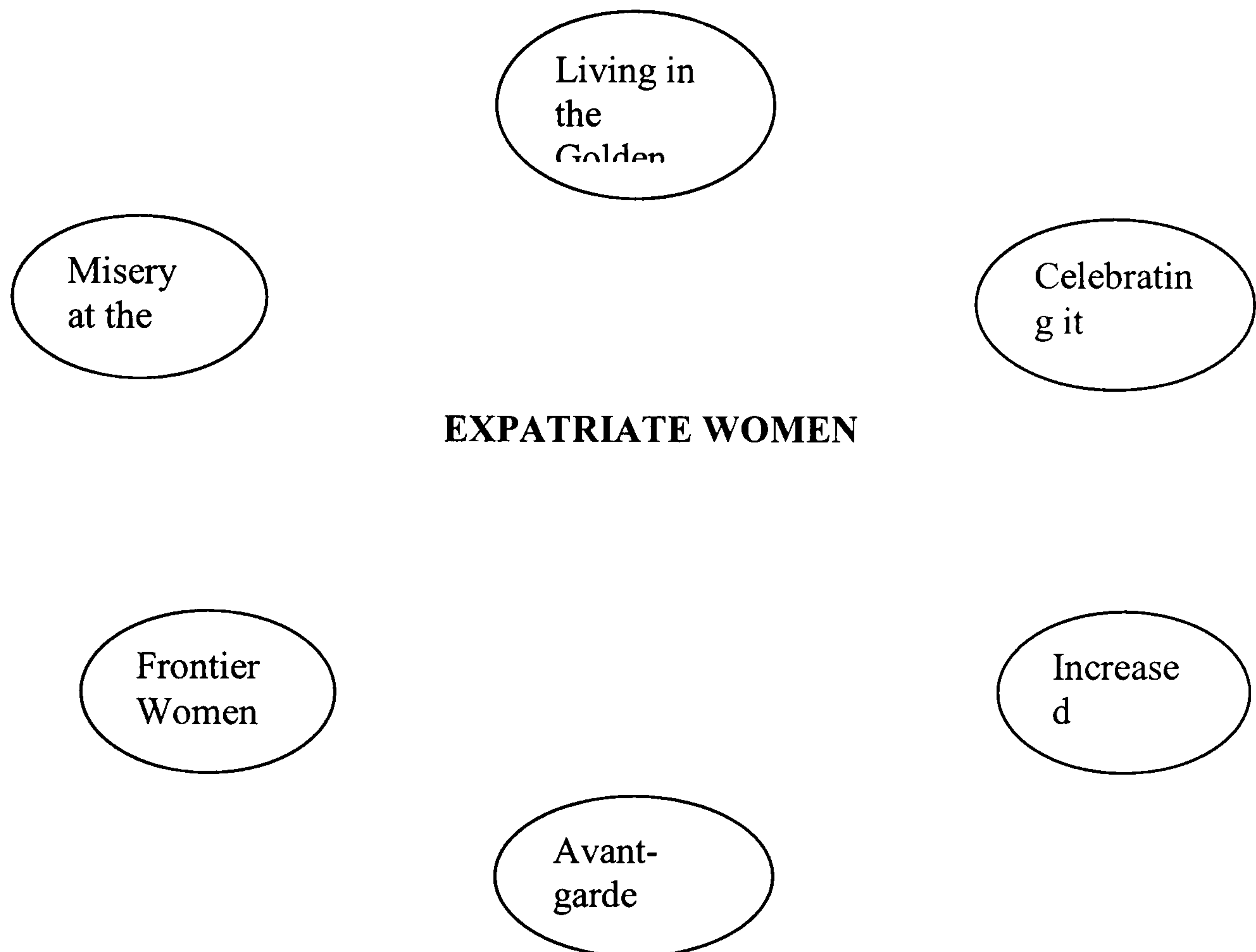
These practical matters are linked to the topical reasons for focusing on women. I argue that life in Indonesia for expatriate men is in many ways less different from life in their home countries than it is for expatriate women. Consequently, women's lives in Jakarta encompass and reflect a much greater range of possibilities and problems involved in residing abroad. This was due to the fact that expatriate men's lives in Jakarta revolved - to a greater extent than in their home countries - around work. Increased responsibilities implied longer working hours, frequent travelling with long periods away from their families as well as longer commuting times. While I do not suggest that their work practices were left unchanged, their corporate environment provided a familiar framework. In addition to this, long-term expatriate colleagues or Indonesian middle persons, such as their secretaries, often mediated possible frictions with Indonesian colleagues or staff.

In contrast, for expatriate women, little stayed the same. While they were in a position of mainly 'housekeeper' and 'childcarer', performing these roles in Jakarta required rather different skills than in their home countries, as for example managing domestic workers, and reproducing a Western lifestyle under Jakarta circumstances. Most

importantly, it was not only the altered practical circumstances, but also the assumption of the role of 'expatriate accompanying wife', which proved a much more acute change than anticipated. Many women found becoming an 'expatriate wife' rather difficult - several described it as undergoing an 'identity crisis'. They were unable to work and yet even at home had a reduced role, because housework and childcare were largely taken over by domestic staff. Establishing life in a foreign country, and getting used to an expatriate lifestyle with its social constraints were seen as major transformations, which were not always managed successfully. Also, as women pointed out, it was often their task to negotiate the 'real Indonesia' - in contrast to their husbands, who were sheltered from dealing with everyday matters like gardeners, maintenance people, neighbours, finding one's way through Jakarta and doing the shopping. There is thus a limited spectrum of what kind of spaces Indonesia can provide for expatriate women, which I explore below.

What kind of space is Indonesia for expatriate women?

BEING AN ACCOMPANYING WIFE IN INDONESIA



The above diagram indicates some of the possibilities available to expatriate women, which I further elaborate on in this section. The kind of spaces shown above are almost inevitably determined by a basic precondition, that is, being in Indonesia as an expatriate wife accompanying her husband. From this stems an overarching

characteristic, the image of 'living in a golden cage'. The resulting spaces available to women can be regarded as different responses to this framework.

The first scenario is captured by the expression 'misery at the pool'. It has to be pointed out that this term, unlike the notion of the 'golden cage', was not used by the expatriate women themselves. I employed it as it seems to poignantly characterise the situation of many expatriate women, but who might be reluctant to describe themselves in these terms. 'Misery at the pool' describes the situation of the accompanying wife, who does not have a great interest in the country they were posted to and who spends her days at the swimming pool being miserable. She does not regard her financial and time resources available as sufficient compensation for loss of her old life, and views her existence in Indonesia as that of being a victim. A second, related scenario is the more decisively upbeat reaction of 'celebrating it'. This refers to women who consciously embrace their position, and attempt to 'make the most of it' with a hedonist twist. They are often stereotyped in male accounts as 'typical expat wives having gin and tonics at the pool'.

In a third scenario, which embodies 'increased agency', women are subjected to the same constraints, but try actively to engage with their situation and turn it to their advantage. Accepting the necessity and not questioning the overall decision for their stay abroad, these women often try to 'make a virtue out of necessity'. They participate in social and charitable activities in expatriate women's communities, which provide a space for their own personal development. In this case, Indonesia is not limiting, but can contribute to extending one's self. A similar way of gaining agency is a fourth scenario, which I called being a 'frontier woman'. This refers to women casting life in

Jakarta as lived on the 'frontier' - a frontier of civilisation, but also related to the position of pioneering women, or women coping with hardship in times of war.

A final scenario is represented by 'avant-garde women'. I used this term to describe the position of women who might have come to Indonesia as accompanying wives, but were professionals in their home countries and obtained independent jobs in Indonesia, or who were posted themselves, and might even be accompanied by their non-working husband. This might include single women who came to Indonesia on their own initiative and women married to Indonesian men as well as younger-generation single professionals. They do not see their stay as limiting, since the move was often their own decision. As I will discuss, 'Indonesia' can offer opportunities unavailable to them in their home countries. Especially in the first two cases, one could argue that the 'axis of oppression' of the expatriate-wife position also represents an 'axis of liberation', as the boundaries of their situation also present possibilities for transgressing them, and thus gain social capital as well as agency. A caveat is that the activities of the 'pool-wives' are embedded within the framework of a 'trailing spouse', a role not entirely of their own choice. This could be seen as devaluing their liberating experiences. While independent expatriate women are more able to use 'Indonesia' to their advantage, this is made possible by their being *Western* women - their advantage of being citizen of a 'Western' country overriding gender disadvantages. These women are able to employ global inequalities to overcome gender inequalities present in Western societies. The issue is thus not only how Indonesia's potential gets utilised, but also to what extent these liberating practices are limited by being based on racial or gender inequalities.

Living in a Golden Cage

The first of the scenarios outlined above demonstrates the restrictions placed on women, as a result of their status as accompanying wives. The first scenario of 'misery at the pool' represents what others refer to as 'life in a golden cage'. Michelle, a British woman whose husband worked in the oil industry, summed up her feelings, '*The day that I got the stamp in my passport saying ikut swami [following the husband] was probably the most depressing day of my life.*'

Most of the women I encountered in Jakarta were 'expatriate wives'. This simply denotes their position as being married to someone who has been posted by their company to Indonesia. According to Indonesian legislation, the wife of an expatriate who holds a working visa is not allowed to work herself, unless she obtains a job that provides her with a separate work permit. For this reason, and because expatriates' pay packages are rather generous, it is both legally difficult and often financially unnecessary for wives to work. Provided with more money and time on their hands than ever before, one could assume that life as an expatriate woman could be quite enjoyable. However, many women claim to be dissatisfied, unhappy and lonely - their 'tropical paradise' turns out to be a 'misery at the pool'. In the following, I disentangle some of the elements and discourses constituting and reflecting the concept of the 'expatriate wife'.

A typical day for an expatriate woman begins at around 6am, when their staff arrives, her husband is getting ready for work and the kids ready for school. By 8 am, the husband has left with the company car, and the kids have been picked up by the school bus, and the wife is left with the servants, who set about cleaning the house. She might

go out to some expatriate women's associations' activities, which are typically scheduled between 9am and 2pm, to allow her to carry out her family duties, and help her fill the morning hours. She might play tennis, then have lunch with friends, and then go shopping. Some time in the afternoon, her children will be back from school. For women without children, more time is available for committee meetings, charity work, or shopping trips for antiques or furniture. She organises her busy social diary via her mobile phone, while sitting in the chauffeur-driven car. From her committee meetings, she calls up her household staff to instruct them on the preparations for dinner. Her husband might be back late from work to have dinner at home, or she might join him in town for drinks with friends or at social gatherings in hotel restaurants and bars. They return late, going straight to bed for a next day's early start.

Limitations

While this might sound like an enviable lifestyle, many expatriate wives experience it as severely limiting and depressing. Mathilde for example, a German woman in her late fifties, had been an expatriate wife for more than ten years. She had spent the past few years in Jakarta, where her husband had successfully established the branch of a major German insurance company. In contrast to his rather rewarding life, she felt that for her, things had stayed the same throughout their various postings. On one occasion, she was hosting a meeting of women's group at her home, which was followed by a lunch. Soon afterwards, the younger women excused themselves and headed home to take care of their children, while the older expatriate wives remained. After some more chat and coffee, one declared half-heartedly that '*I really ought to go home now*', to which the hostess almost pleadingly responded, '*no really, just stay a bit longer*'. There was a sense of sadness, as both women were obviously facing a rather empty afternoon. There

was neither the need for the guests to leave, nor for the hostess to attend to other urgent matters. As we were overlooking the sun-filled garden and the swimming pool, Mathilde remarked *'I might go and sit at the pool later on'*, accompanied by a little helpless laughter. It seemed to imply that, having spent so many empty afternoons at the pool over the years, the whole idea had become ridiculously futile, and deeply depressing. Situations like these probably express most poignantly what it can mean to be *'miserable at the pool'*.

Expatriate women's situation is exacerbated as they feel that their unhappiness is neither recognised nor shared by their husbands, or their relatives at home. As Michelle recalls when she first got to Jakarta:

'It was a shock for me how much my husband didn't understand how difficult it would be for me, but he didn't. But everybody's husband was the same, and that was the main complaint: that the husbands do not understand. They say, what's your problem? They say, there is a safe full of money, go shopping! But I never liked shopping! I never shopped! And we live in a hotel where we can't put any household stuff, so what can you buy? Batiks and gongs and puppets...'

and her voice trailed off. As she was explaining this to me, we were seated in an immaculate hotel suite on the 11th floor, which had been Michelle's and her husband's home for the last year. Since they did not have children, they reckoned that this was the most appropriate lifestyle for them. It also meant that, after her husband had gone to work, Michelle was left to herself with barely anything to take care of. Consequently, she had established a strict schedule, which included regular tennis sessions, playing board games with other expatriate wives, and committee duties at the British Women's Association. While she certainly enjoyed some of these activities, she made clear that her main motivation was *'just to get out of the house. I know that I won't do myself a*

favour if I stay in, and I would probably go mad. The main rule which we tell newcomers is always: get yourself out of the house, no matter what'.

Beth, an American woman whose husband was with an oil company, described her situation in similar terms: *'My husband says, "you do not have to work, you do not even have to do housework, and you've got spending money - what's your problem?" And I am like, you do not get it - you do not get it!'* In an admission of the limitations of this, Beth also added, *'you can only spend so much time shopping for furniture or antiques or something.'* Kirsty, a Scottish woman, adds, *'and you can only spend so much time in the fitness court or doing sports, after all.'* This reaction by the husband was, Michelle explained, known as 'husband jealousy'. I had the impression, though, that this concept might also be instrumental. Since it casts the role of the wife as enviable, it saves husbands from facing fundamental questions about the 'supportive wife' in the expatriate context. This is also supported by the fact that most 'accompanying husbands' seemed to have great difficulties with the role of a 'trailing spouse' as well.

Loss of Identity and Agency

A major feature of many women's lives was the loss of their identity as well as agency. As a consequence of the expatriate situation, which involved their loss of job, many experienced a threatened sense of identity as professional women. This was coupled with a feeling of disempowerment through limited agency. What McClintock (1998) describes for colonial women applies here, too, 'marital laws, property laws.. and the intractable violence of male decree bound them in gendered patterns of disadvantage and frustration' (1998:6).

To give an indication at how many women were affected by a loss of job, one could take the members of the German Women's Association as an example. According to my research, of about 50 women members, many of whom were active in committees. more than half, i.e. nearly 30, had professional qualifications and had held a job for some time before giving it up to follow their husband on his posting. Since Jakarta was not necessarily their first posting, many women had not had a job for several years, for the duration of their life abroad as an accompanying wife. It seems that many of these jobs had been within 'traditionally female' sectors such as education, healthcare and the service industry. In addition to this, among the women who had never had a job apart from being a homemaker, many had finished a form of professional training or held a degree in higher education.

The most important aspect, however, are differences according to age. I estimate that among the 'younger' members of the German Women's Association, i.e. those between 35 and 45 years old, the percentage of women having left a job was much higher, probably near 80%, while virtually all of them had had some professional training. This situation was parallel among members of the American and British Women's Associations. My impression was that the proportion of professional women having given up a well-paid job was especially high among American women. The increased likelihood of women having given up a job is linked to changes in Western societies, as younger women are more likely to have degrees and professional training. In contrast to this, the proportion of older women between 45 and 60 who gave up a job was much lower. This indicates possible future changes within the expatriate community. While the number of female corporate expatriates is still low, it should increase over the next few years. It seems, though, that female corporate expatriates are much less likely to be accompanied by a 'trailing' family, or even a 'trailing husband'.

This background indicates the frequency of interrupted careers that many of the expatriate women I spoke with were quite familiar with. For example Michelle, Lisa, Beth, and Hope had all held jobs before deciding to follow their husbands on their overseas posting. Several issues fuel their sense of frustration about their situation as expatriate wives, intensified by their husbands' inability to comprehend it. One of the main problems is a loss of identity. It is a loss on several levels; in the form of leaving one's own job, of not being 'homemaker' in the way they used to be, and as a person in general - being dislocated and disconnected, stripped of all markers of social and personal identity that used to furnish their lives before. As Hope, an American who used to work as a civil engineer, put it:

'no matter what a woman did at home, once you come here and you're not working any more, your identity vanishes immediately. What you did before doesn't matter under the circumstances here. People do not know, they do not ask, and it doesn't show ... it is just wiped out, and you cannot retrieve it.'

Hope pointed out that she had been working until a week before they left Texas for Indonesia. Similarly, Beth had worked for years with a bank's customer service department before moving to Jakarta. Both had liked their jobs and regretted giving them up. Being stripped of what were elements of their identity, the expatriate situation seems to have submerged their identities under that of their husbands. This became clear to Beth one morning soon after their arrival when jogging in her compound:

'I suddenly realised that my Indonesian neighbours were greeting me with "Mrs Michael", that's my husband's name - they weren't using my own name. I smiled and was nodding back, but inwardly I thought - oh my god, am I not a person by myself anymore, is that what I am now - Mrs. Michael?'

This concern with one's own career as part of a woman's identity points back to social changes in their home countries in the last couple of decades. That many expatriate women regard their job - and its loss - as a key element of their identity indicates the extent to which women's careers have replaced other 'female occupations', such as motherhood or homemaking, as providers of identities. Although this seemed a common problem, I also encountered other responses to this situation, reflecting different attitudes towards the changed relevance of work. For example, Elspeth, a rather ambitious, hard-working medical doctor, said that, '*back in Scotland, work was my whole life. It was the most important thing for me - maybe too much so. So when Tim wanted to go abroad for a while, I thought a change would be good.*' While this might have been a genuine thought, a few months later it turned out that her stay in Indonesia seriously jeopardised her medical career in the U.K. New legislation had just been passed in the UK, which severely limited the number of doctors who could become consultants, a career option that she had always wanted to pursue. By her stay abroad, it seemed that she was going to be excluded from this, which she was very worried about. A similar ambivalence seemed present in the case of Gillian, who had been working for 10 years for a consulting firm in the UK and pronounced she was '*looking for a bit of a break now*' and had already started to learn to play golf. She admitted, however, that she was looking for possibilities for doing 'little jobs' through tele-working for her old company.

One could regard these different responses as signs of a backlash - the idea that it is 'not good' for a woman to become too occupied with one's paid work - or else, as a welcome respite from the demanding everyday realities of working life in the UK. To what extent a forced 'break' in Indonesia is actually welcomed, or employed as an

'excuse' for oneself and others to justify one's career break and to silence possible self-doubts is difficult to determine. Gaining 'personal identity' through paid work is only one possible model, albeit a highly relevant and contested one for expatriate women. A different model was put forward by Helga, a German trained as a GP and psychotherapist. She pointed out the possibility of, *'just being yourself - what we call your 'persona'. It shouldn't matter what kind of a job you have or do not have - there is this idea that your life could be very fulfilled just trying to be yourself, to live your 'persona' to the full.'* But even these theoretical concepts did not seem to make Helga immune to self-doubts. She had given up her own surgery to allow her husband, a doctor with the German Foreign Office, to take up posts abroad instead of being tied down by *'mind-numbing'* administrative tasks in the Berlin headquarters. Although she pointed out this had been a deliberate decision on her side, frustration seemed to crop up frequently. Like many other women, Helga sometimes remarked with latent, only half-hidden bitterness how she liked to spend time with Wolfgang, her husband, at home, *'whenever I get to see him - which is not very often.'* A similar struggle became apparent in a young mother's plea, Alexandra. She was heavily engaged in charitable activities with the German Women's Association, having given up her job at home. However, it bothered her that nobody seemed to regard her charitable volunteer work as a serious activity - such as a 'real job'. As a response, she stated that, *'whenever people ask me what I do now, I do not say: "I do not work." I say: I do not do PAID work, which doesn't mean I'm not doing any work.'* This relevance of paid labour in the contestations of gender relations, and women's struggles to come to terms with its absence, is echoed by McClintock (1998). She stresses the, 'intimate relations between imperial power and resistance; money and sexuality; race and gender' (McClintock 1998:5), of which this situation is a rather poignant example.

The possibility for expatriate wives to obtain work in Indonesia points towards two crucial issues: the role of the Indonesian government in restricting women's opportunities on the one hand, and the complicity of expatriate women in their own situation on the other. I have indicated above that expatriate wives are 'legally unable' to work, as their visa is tied to their husband's working visa, and stipulates that the accompanying wife is not allowed to take up work herself. The regulations allow women to work, though, if they are able to gain an independent working visa through a prospective employer. Strictly speaking, it is therefore not entirely impossible, but made comparatively difficult for women to achieve this.

This makes clear that one of the boundaries limiting women's lives is erected by the Indonesian state. These visa regulations actively discriminate against women, since the overwhelming majority of 'accompanying spouses' is female. One could argue that the political economy of the Indonesian government is obviously aimed at keeping women 'in their place', through legally confining them to an existence as housewives. The attitudes of the Indonesian government thus emerge as rather patriarchal. The situation of expatriate women is thus obviously severely restricted by these political attitudes.

At the same time, though, expatriate women are noticeably complicit in their own domination. The key point is that it is theoretically possible for them to obtain independent working visas, but that it requires substantial determination and tenacity. As they are forced to find suitable employment within Jakarta, their possibilities are more limited than their husbands, who were specifically posted to Jakarta because there was a need for them there. In addition, not many women seem to have professional qualifications that easily translate into an Indonesian working environment. Many have been teachers or health professionals, so that the few jobs available are mainly located

within the expatriate communities. An important aspect is their financial situation. As mentioned above, male expatriates usually earn a higher salary than in their home countries, so that with the added benefits, expatriate families often exceptionally well-off in financial terms. This can provide a further disincentive for expatriate women to seek employment, as they weigh up the benefits of having their own job against the costs of long commutes into the city, less time for their children, and generally a more stressful life. This is exacerbated by the fact that if these women are hired 'locally', for example by international schools, they are paid a much lower salary than anybody who was posted there from their home country. Local institutions and companies thus take advantages of women's restricted situation, as it provides them with comparatively cheap, but highly skilled labour.

Apart from these considerations, the influence of the expatriate wives' community on women's decisions is not to be underestimated. The way in which the topic 'employment' is discussed within these communities reveals its highly sensitive and contested nature. In general, discourses within these communities are permeated by what could be called the 'expatriate wife ideology', which I discuss in more detail below. This refers to the concept that women should support their families without question, and put their own possible interests second. This ideology certainly discourages women from seeking out possibilities for work. At the same time, though, deep-seated insecurities and ambiguities concerning this topic constantly resurface. They become especially apparent when a member of a women's association, who previously professed to be content with her role as supportive wife, finds a job, and leaves the wives' community and its lifestyles behind. Such a departure obviously threatens the much-repeated idea that 'it is not possible to work'. It demonstrates that there are indeed alternatives, and, at least partly, reveals women's complaints about

being victims as carefully fabricated myths. Instead of facing their partial responsibility for their situation, many women seem to prefer to ignore such incidents. Consequently, such departures were rather curtly remarked on with women's communities, and that person's choices and its implications were often not discussed any further.

As indicated above, the perceived loss of identity can take place in several ways. Apart from loss of identity as a working woman, the expatriate situation is difficult even for women who were 'housewives' before coming to Indonesia, because these capacities are to some extent taken away from them. This refers to the fact that most expatriates employ domestic staff, often 3-5 people, who take care of most of the housework, childcare, cooking, gardening, maintenance and security work. Often the 'only' tasks left to expatriate women are supervising the staff, some childcare, and doing the shopping. While managing staff presents its own difficulties, it probably does not involve the same amounts of time and energy as running a household without domestic help might require in their home countries. Irrespective of how much work is actually required, though, their situation is compounded by the perception - of their husbands and friends in their home countries - that they are left with virtually nothing to do since 'everything is done for them'. It is assumed that their only duties consist in giving orders to staff, living an idle life otherwise. Crucially, the role and perceptions of 'household manager' in Jakarta are different from 'homemaker' as defined in Western countries. Even if the work does not disappear, the kind of work and its status certainly changes. This consequently brings about transformations of 'identities' that were tied up with being a 'homemaker'.

At the core of this is their loss of 'personal identity'. Expatriate women feel cut off from and bereft of their social environment in their home countries, consisting of family

members, networks of friends, neighbours and colleagues, who were engaged in constructing and reflecting one's identification. As Beth puts it, *'in my job at the bank in Houston, I knew many of my customers, and they knew me. We always used to have a chat. I knew my neighbours and I had my colleagues. Here in Jakarta, all this is suddenly gone.'* These old social networks are to some extent replaced by the 'expatriate wives' community'.

Before discussing this community, I want to suggest that the perceived 'loss of identity' is connected with and compounded by a loss of agency, which manifests itself on several levels; the most basic being their residence in Jakarta, after having agreed to follow their husband on his posting. One could argue that all ensuing possibilities for agency are limited by this framework, and by not questioning its underlying decision. Furthermore, loss of agency is caused by loss of the women's jobs and social networks. It also entails loss of a society where they are competent actors, as opposed to the 'idiots' they sometimes feel reduced to in their Indonesian environment. The absence of a traditional homemaker's role contributes to it, as well as an increased dependency on staff, and on the expatriate wives' community. Many women's comments about 'loss of agency' focused on immediate concerns, such as not being able to drive themselves. While those are important, I suggest they also mask a loss of agency in a more general sense.

Especially for American women, the 'impossibility' of driving by themselves contributed to their feeling of dependence. As Beth pointed out, *'it is difficult to go out spontaneously somewhere by car ... you always have to ask the driver, and make a schedule in advance, really tiresome. I can't go off by myself, like I could in Houston, and I really miss it!'* In addition to that, many women felt they were at the mercy of

their husband's company. They regarded the power companies exerted over their families' lives and futures as threatening and inhumane. A German woman, Barbara, described their situation, *'We've been in Jakarta for half a year now, we just settled in. But now Peter's company is talking about changing plans, so that means, we might be out of here in a couple of weeks. Or stay another year, we just do not know. The way that companies deal with people here is really unacceptable.'*

The 'Expatriate Wife Ideology'

In chapter 2, I briefly discussed the relevance of discursive practices for erecting 'mental boundaries'. This includes the 'logic of impossibility', of which the 'impossibility of driving' is an example. Many of the restrictions and boundaries described above are subsumed in a more general discourse, that of an 'expatriate wife ideology'. This ideology reflects and sustains many of the limiting practices performed by and forced upon expatriate women. It encompasses the idea of a woman supporting her husband and family under all circumstances, especially on a posting abroad, avoiding and solving conflicts, putting their personal interests second place in order to reproduce the family abroad. If that sounds like a rather traditional concept of women's positions, it shows in what ways expatriates' lives abroad can be seen as a time-warp, re-enacting gender relations which in many Western countries are regarded as questionable and out-dated.

In expatriate wives' communities in Jakarta, this ideology did not only underwrite much of their existence, but was also expressed explicitly. One German woman angrily recounted the behaviour of some German women in China, who had complained so much that it diminished their husbands' productivity and ultimately forced them to

abandon their posting, '*These women obviously haven't quite grasped the necessities,*' she said, with exasperation. In keeping with this ideology, Michelle admitted to deliberately engaging in behaviour that would save her husband trouble, '*People would ask me, "you must like playing Mah Jong very much, since you go so often!" But I am like no, I do not - but if I stay home all day, I will be in a bad mood when Jim comes back from work, and I want to avoid that - it's not good for us.*'

The small-scale expatriate wives' communities, while also providing support, often form closed social spaces, with strict rules of social interaction. After the loss of 'work identity', women often feel that they are ranked by others according to their husband's job position. In addition to this, the role of motherhood and children attains a heightened significance. Being stripped of other identity markers, children sometimes unintentionally seem to take over the space previously filled by women's jobs. This situation, which often gives rise to misery and loneliness, is exacerbated by women's impressions that their 'sacrifice' is not adequately acknowledged. One aspect is their husbands' absences due to work commitments; another is what is regarded as the ever-present temptation of the 'Indonesian female'. Adding to the loss of identity as *working* women is their undermining of identity as *women* - pitching their bodies against a hostile environment of 'Asian females', in which many feel they are bound to be defeated.

In this situation, guidebooks such as Pascoe's *Living and Working Abroad: A Wife's Guide* (1997) become relevant. These guidebooks extol the virtues of the suffering, but supportive expatriate wife, acknowledging difficulties, but ultimately casting the 'good expatriate wife' as an ideal. While Pascoe (1997) tries to convince expatriate wives of the usefulness and desirability of charity work, these attempts are flawed. Most women

are aware that a different logic is applied to men's work. Knowing all too well that it was the financial value of their husband's work in a capitalist labour market that brought them to their Indonesian posting, reveals the double standards employed. A place in this labour market, they are being told, is not what they should aspire to. More often, this question is carefully circumvented. This is also mirrored in expatriate wives' websites, which are discussed in section 3.3.

The situation is compounded by the 'myth of impossibility'. This refers to the 'fact' that expatriate women 'can't work'. While this is true in a general sense, it disregards the fact that, given qualifications and determination, expatriate women can obtain their own working visas, as I have discussed above. Taking up employment is made difficult by low rates of pay for 'locally hired' jobs, which contributes to the unattractiveness of hunting for a job under any circumstances. Most women are aware at least of the theoretical possibility, though, and it repeatedly occurs that members leave a women's association to take up a job outside. As explained above, these incidents rather threaten the laboriously upheld 'expatriate wife ideology' which 'confines' them to inactivity.

While I do not intend to downplay the potential for depression for these women, their propensity to present their situation as miserable must be put into context. It links to the political and economic conditions of expatriates' existences. Their suffering as women is tied up with feeling guilty as Westerners admitting to their luxurious, carefree existences which forces them to admit to the inequalities on which it is based. In that sense, complaining about the strains and problems of an expatriate lifestyle does not only express a personal concern, but becomes a political necessity. In order not to face their domination and benefits, they discursively turn to a victim-culture. Stressing one's

sacrifices as a wife contributes to this. As a result, expatriate wives' lives are presented as a tough and unrewarding job, which somebody has to do - as they have agreed to.

Life on the Frontier: Housewives as Pioneers

Although expatriate women's lives can be perceived as confining in physical as well as symbolic terms, women respond to this in different ways. Many accept this role and its limitations, and cast themselves as victims. Another possibility is to accept this framework, but exploit it within its limits. This is expressed in phrases such as 'making the most of it', or 'making a virtue out of necessity'. In an ideological and discursive shift, women turn from a 'victim culture' to redefining themselves as 'frontier women'. This metaphor curiously binds together notions of boundaries - in the sense of 'frontier' as a border - with a potential for agency. In the 'living on the frontier' scenario, Jakarta is an outpost of civilisation, in which the women have to master rough, basic tasks such as providing for the family under difficult circumstances. Given that the aim of many expatriates is to recreate a Western lifestyle, this becomes a necessary and time-consuming task. It is comparable to the lives of pioneers, or women in wartime Europe, recreating and maintaining 'civilisation' from scarce resources. Expatriate women take over the tasks - and agency - of 'pioneer women'. Marie, a young British expatriate, captured this sense of duty in assuring me that, *'you know, expat women's life is not all Gin and Tonics at the pool.'*

At one newcomer's coffee morning, Katharina, a German housewife, expressed her view of this, *'I am actually quite proud of myself, the way I am managing all this. My husband is away so often, and I'm by myself, and that is often not recognised - but I think, we have quite managed to build something here.'* Katharina was running a rather

well-organised house, which was lovingly decorated with flowerpots and curtains in countryside-style, and drawings evoking rural European idylls. Her children, who were 5, 7 and 10 years old, took part in various extracurricular activities, and Katharina herself was an active member of a parents' committee at her children's international school, as well as heading a subsection of the German Women's Association. It was most important to her, it seemed, to maintain the model of a well-functioning middle-class family in Germany even under the adverse circumstances of Jakarta city life.

Katharina's friend Ursula shared her perspective on things. As she emphasised, *'You are out here on a frontier, you are doing the dirty work, and nobody thanks you for it!'* This 'frontier mentality' becomes visible in sourcing Western foodstuffs, a task requiring specific knowledge and great efforts. Jean, an American, explained her shopping strategies:

'The rule in Jakarta is, when you see something that is rare, you go and buy it immediately - and lots of it. A few weeks ago, I saw that Kemchicks [a Western-style supermarket] had chocolate chips, which they almost never have. So I went and bought a dozen packets - and now I can make cookies whenever I like! Also, when somebody comes back from the States, you ask them to bring stuff, such as muffin tins or potato mashers, that you can't get here.'

Food and the re-creation of Western dishes play a major part in maintaining Western identity, and they also cast expatriate women as inventive pioneers. Irene, a Swiss, had created a way of making tiramisu, an Italian dessert, with the limited ingredients available. She proudly showed me her recipe, which was entitled *'Tiramisu a la Jakarta'*.

Casting 'Indonesia' as a wild and dangerous territory helps to leave behind the victim-culture. Indonesia offers multiple possibilities to re-invent oneself as courageous 'adventurer' and 'explorer', thus accumulating social capital. A foray into one's *kampung*⁶ [local neighbourhood] can have this effect. A German woman recounted with a mixture of horror and admiration their friend Brigitte's activities, '*she takes her bike and goes for a ride through the next kampung [neighbourhood], and sometimes she gets off and goes into people's houses. I could NEVER do that!*'. Brigitte herself, whose husband had a representative role at the German embassy, quite enjoyed the reactions of the other women, and possibly the contrast to the rather formal position her husband occupied. When I asked her at a dinner party about her cycling trips, she chirpily remarked, '*Oh, there is nothing to it, I do it all the time. And anyway, the people are so friendly!*'

Another German woman, Christina, made regular trips to the Dani⁷ in Irian Jaya, visiting their villages and trekking through the highlands. She had started to organise and guide tours for her more daring friends. This provided the others with opportunities to meet the exotic 'Dani tribe', who still '*lived in the stone age*' and sometimes wore intimidating penis gourds. On several occasions, she gave slide presentations about her travels. They were received with a mixture of horror and excitement. Her image as an expatriate wife who dared to explore enhanced her self-confidence and prestige in a way that might be harder to achieve in Germany. In Germany, being faced with competition from other, more audacious 'explorers', her slide-shows on the Dani would receive much less attention than in the expatriate community in Jakarta. Crucially, as long as

⁶ The term *kampung* refers to a 'village' or 'settlement', but can also denote crowded, poor settlements within bigger cities, such as in Jakarta. It is also used metonymically; i.e. a '*kampung girl*' denotes a girl raised in a rural or 'traditional' setting, suggesting a 'simple' social background, possibly of poverty and little education.

⁷ The Dani are an ethnic group living in the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya on the island of New Guinea.

both Brigitte and Christina did not associate themselves too seriously with the 'locals'. but kept their expatriate lifestyle, they still remained acceptable, and admirable members of the expatriate women's community.

This illustrates how a carefully controlled transgressing of boundaries - for example between German expatriates and the Dani communities - can provide women with social capital and a sense of agency. It sets up a situation where expatriate women's agency is predicated, literally, on ethnic differences. It also shows that social gains originate specifically from these differences, and these women's actions straddling the gaps between them.

Increased Agency

Another possible way to transcend the boundaries of the 'golden cage' or the 'bubble', was to take part in charitable endeavours. Since all women's associations had a charities section, a considerable number of expatriate women spent their time and energy supporting charity projects, such as Indonesian orphanages, medical or educational programmes, and agricultural projects. While their management of these programmes and their actual benefits for Indonesians is often questionable, they provide expatriate women with opportunities for agency. For example, Regina, a trained therapist, became involved with a street children's project, which aided their transition from life on the streets to a regular house. While Regina was active in the planning and conducting of many activities, which she found very satisfying, this mostly took place within the framework of expatriate expertise. She told me rather triumphantly, that to pacify the unruly streetkids, she had played classical music - Mozart, *'and it*

immediately calmed them down. You see - it has to be done like that.' Again, Western civilisation had won over Indonesian social chaos.

Charity work could also consist in caring for orphans. Beth, an American, took part in this together with other women from her husband's company, ExxonMobile. As she explained, *'we go to an orphanage every Tuesday to hold the babies, because the people there never get down to actually holding them.'* I was visiting her one day in her house in a compound owned by ExxonMobile, which was separated from the outside by high concrete walls. Beth had found the company of the other ExxonMobile wives very helpful, as they offered a formal support network especially for newcomers. While we were sitting in a vast, chilled living room, a friend of hers called with the news that one of the children at the orphanage had died a few days ago, which had rather upset her. As Beth had hung up, she shook her head and said *'My friend is really sad about this... well it's a pity, isn't it? But I guess it just happens...'* When I asked her whether the ExxonMobile wives were also providing financial support for the orphans, she was abhorred, *'Oh no, there is no money involved. We just go there to hold them.'* While this might be a self-gratifying exercise, there is a thin line between caring for orphans as a real vocation, and as a passing interest in the absence of other things to do. It remains undetermined to what extent charity work is undertaken with genuine conviction, or whether it mainly serves to keep women occupied, who would drop it as soon as their circumstances changed. Many expatriate women were probably uncomfortably aware of these issues.

Celebrating It

The spirit of ‘making the most of it’ was another response to expatriate life, where women would celebrate it. Avoiding the victim culture, while facing possible accusations of an ‘idle life in luxury’, some women unabashedly proclaimed their gratitude for being given so much time and space for themselves, for personal growth or pure enjoyment. They still emphasised, such as Marie, that, ‘*life wasn’t all Gin and Tonics.*’ Marie pointed this out to me at a fashion show on a Monday morning, where she and her friends were elaborately dressed up, and chatted to designers while balancing platefuls of canapés. Marie had started modelling at these fashion shows, while her older friend Caroline was occupied with an interior design export business and her Czech friend Rose, an artist, was using her time as an expatriate wife to pursue her painting, organise exhibitions and give painting courses. When discussing whether life as an expatriate woman left one with too much time on one’s hands, the three of them simultaneously opened their social diaries. In A4 format, every week was covered in highlighter, with major events pencilled in colour, rarely leaving as much as a free afternoon. ‘*You see?*’ they eagerly pointed out, ‘*we’re so - busy - we do not know how to fit in any more stuff, it’s all booked already!*’ However, it was precisely the intensity of their claims ‘they were not bored’ that seemed to raise the question to what extent these hectic social schedules were more than time-fillers in an essentially limiting situation that they had not themselves chosen. This ambivalence did not disappear even with women who were ostentatiously embracing their ‘expatriate wife’ status.

Protected Spaces and Small Ponds?

This ambivalence makes it difficult to assess the subversive or liberating potential of these spaces and practices. On the one hand, expatriate wives' communities provide a sheltered space for women and therefore possibilities for development unavailable to them in their home countries. For example, the German Women's Association 'Brücke' produced, like other women's groups, a monthly newsletter. Susanne had only joined their team recently, and was, like other newcomers, embarrassed and insecure about her involvement and writing abilities. I was surprised by this, since the 'Brücke' newsletter was a non-pressurised, comparatively low-profile enterprise. For many women, though, involvement in the production of the newsletter was quite challenging. Some had hardly ever written a complete text by themselves, or used a computer. The 'Brücke' thus functioned as a protected space to try out their abilities in a non-commercial, unthreatening environment.

In recognition of this, the German Women's Association decided not to allow men membership of the association. As one board member told me, there had been an intense debate over admitting men to the 'Brücke's' activities. She herself had argued against it, she explained, because she saw the Brücke as a unique opportunity for German women to explore and develop their talents in non-hostile surroundings, without male supervision or even presence. Opinions had been divided, but it was eventually agreed that men remained excluded. The question is whether the gains from such sheltered spaces can be translated into the 'real world', into environments and interactions including men.

While there can certainly be gains for the women, I witnessed an incident that also cast doubt on the real benefit of these gains. On several occasions, I attended meetings of the 'charity committee' of the German Women's Association. The atmosphere was

usually rather relaxed and convivial, the women being close friends or at least having known each other for a while. At one meeting, they were joking about absent members, and suggested they were using excuses, such as, *'I can't come, I'm having my period.'* These remarks were greeted with boisterous laughter. This atmosphere changed one morning, when one of the members brought a male visitor along, a family friend of hers. His family had been supporting one of the charity projects, and he was interested in getting an idea of their work. The presence of this male professional in his mid-thirties changed the interaction within the group immediately. The all-female jokes stopped, the women put on an earnest demeanour, and stressed their seriousness about their work. At one point this visitor, although new to the tropics, made remarks about the effectiveness of anti-malaria drugs and the biochemical difficulties posed by drug resistances. This put the assembled women into a state of awed silence. He was listened to with respect, and his knowledge praised, while the women cast themselves once again as silly housewives dabbling in charity work. This highlights the limits of these protected spaces. They might encourage women while within these spaces, but questions the sustainability of their newfound self-confidence, if it vaporised in the presence of a single male.

Another aspect is the 'big fish in a small pond' syndrome. This refers to people's qualities and skills being more valuable in a closed environment without any real competition. Marie acknowledged this. She described how she started modelling clothes at expatriate women's fashion shows, and also starred in advertisements made for Indonesian television. These campaigns featured dairy products, and specifically had to include a *bule* [white Westerner]. Marie, who considered herself above-average pretty, admitted this could not have happened in the U.K. As she put it, *'I wouldn't have a chance in hell, modelling in the U.K! It's only possible because I'm here, and*

they do not have many bule-girls running around in Jakarta.’ While enjoying these opportunities, she realised they were due mainly to her special status in Indonesia. When determining the affirmative and subversive potential of expatriate women’s practices, their own conceptualisation of their situation is crucial. This concerns especially whether they recognised, accepted or challenged existing boundaries. Much of their agony and discomfort, I suggest, stems from their unwillingness or inability to face these boundaries. Whatever the efforts of expatriate wives to accommodate themselves, they never seriously question the framework in which they are situated, in other words following their husbands to Indonesia, accepting the status of ‘expatriate wife’, and not making serious attempts to obtain a job by themselves. The justification of the role of ‘supportive expatriate wife’ is never seriously examined - at least not in conversations or public discourses. While many women seemed to be aware of it, they prevented themselves from thinking about this too much, probably because it might have aggravated their already uneasy state. Admitting to these issues could have undermined the rationale for their stay in Indonesia, their role in it, and the sacrifices already made. A general question is whether any activity, however it furthers women, exceeds the framework of ‘expatriate wife’, or whether it is inevitably compromised by the submission it is predicated on. It is not clear to what extent these skills and experiences can be transferred from the protected space of the expatriate women’s environment to a job in their home countries or even in Indonesia. Finally, it might be the case that a sense of personal achievement is always undermined, because it arises from a situation which is not of their own choice.

Avant-garde Women: Going Further in Indonesia

So far, I considered mainly aspects of expatriate women's lives that are bounded, restrictive, and perpetuate established systems of patriarchy. Referring back to the initial question of transnational lives being 'subversive' or 'affirmative', this demonstrates that many of expatriates' practices are not subversive, but rather affirmative. 'Indonesia', from this perspective, is a limiting space. Yet, at the same time, their transnational existences also contain a liberating potential. Crucially, this potential is often predicated on their advantages as Westerners. In the following, I analyse the possibilities for agency, subversive practices and challenges to boundaries. As indicated above, it is often their political, economic and social advantages as *Western* women that allow expatriate women to gain greater agency.

'Self-made' Women, Corporate Professionals and Breakaway Wives

An important aspect of women's agency is whether they come to Indonesia independently, or as an accompanying spouse. However, being initially an accompanying spouse does not prevent them from becoming 'self-made' women in the course of their stay in Indonesia. Magdalena for example is a German aristocrat and trained zoologist who settled in Jakarta together with her husband in the 1950's. Soon after their arrival, she began taking care of orang-utans in the zoo and ran an orang-utan camp in Kalimantan, and was in many ways involved in protecting this endangered species in Indonesia. She now lives in her own house in the zoo compound, and keeps away from the '*coffee morning wives*', as she sneeringly calls them. While many German women are aware of her, many prefer to keep their distance, not least since her lifestyle suggests an alternative to what is postulated as the '*only way to live in Jakarta*'.

Johanna came to Indonesia with her husband some decades ago. They were both members of a mystic Javanese brotherhood in which they had been members in her husband's native England. From the start, Johanna held several jobs, until she started a dairy production business in her own backyard, which later grew into a factory of the *Yummi* range of dairy products. After managing the production for more than 15 years, she sold the enterprise to an Indonesian firm and retained managerial control. I return to the popularity and symbolic value of Johanna's products in chapter 5 in relation to food.

Both Magdalena and Johanna were able to utilise their Western skills and qualifications to achieve agency, such as running their own factory, or effectively influencing the country's species conservation efforts. This would have been harder to achieve in their home countries, at least in the form it had taken in Jakarta. While these are possibly more 'traditional' histories of successfully carving out a life for oneself in Jakarta, it does happen in present times as well. Government regulations mean that while it is not always easy for self-motivated, enterprising women to create such existences, but it is possible and frequently occurs. One example is the French woman Monique, who does not see herself as an 'expatriate'. As mentioned, at one coffee morning she was handing out leaflets advertising the art and interior design gallery she was running together with her French husband. Monique socialised in the expatriate circuit, but this was partly for business reasons and she, as well as the other women, was aware that her situation was in some ways different from theirs.

Western single female professionals working for international companies in Jakarta, often posted from their home countries, provide rather more straightforward cases of being an independent professional. They mostly have 'expatriate lifestyles' like their male counterparts. While they did not always specifically choose Indonesia, they

benefit from their posting in the same way as male expatriates; they receive generous pay packages, and are usually given greater responsibilities at work, together with enhanced future career prospects. Many of these female expatriate professionals are part of the 'younger generation', whom I briefly mentioned in chapter 1.

Many of the Avant-garde women described above maintain a lifestyle similar to that of 'family expatriates'. Being under a 'corporate umbrella' might make it rather easier for Westerners, even women, to find themselves a personal or professional niche. Living 'successfully' in Indonesia becomes more testing without those privileges. This was the case with Amelie and Sonja, two artists, who had reluctantly followed their husbands to Jakarta. In Amelie's case, it turned out that her husband was having affairs with Indonesian women. As she realised this, she decided to leave him. Amelie stayed on in Jakarta, though, and built an existence for herself through selling her artworks, as well as running photography and other art courses. While things have not always gone smoothly for her, she has managed to survive for several years.

Sonja's situation was slightly different, as she was uncomfortable with the expatriate life from the beginning. She felt that living in Jakarta limited her as an artist doing landscape paintings, and also brought out underlying tensions in her marriage, which eventually led to a break up. During a stay in Bali, she met a Balinese painter, whom she fell in love with. After separating from her husband, she moved to Bali and started working as an art teacher, living together with her Balinese boyfriend. Talking to her shortly after her break-up, she explained that apart from the emotional turmoil dominating her life, one of the most difficult challenges was leaving the financially secure and sheltered expatriate life. As she put it, *'I guess I have always been pretty dependent on Sven [her husband]. I earned money myself, not that much, but it was*

enough. Here in Jakarta, I didn't earn anything, but we had this luxurious lifestyle. And now' - she was looking around her to the pool, the veranda we were sitting on, and the spacious house behind us – 'it is very strange having to give all that up for a poor life in Bali. I suddenly have to start counting dollars.' She was rather happy about her new life, though, and did not seem to regret her decision. Living in Bali had brought her to herself, she said:

'I feel much more myself now, as a person and as an artist. That is due to Bali, but also to Sasongko [her boyfriend]. Because I have always led a very sheltered life with Sven - I never had to organise things or deal with money, I just cared about my art. But Sasongko is even worse than me in terms of organisation and money - so I have to deal with these things now, and I am growing up.'

Sonja's account of her increased agency hints at a recurring feature in relationships between Western women and Indonesian men. It seems that within these relationships, Western women tend to take up the material and psychological role of the provider, which is often presumed to be the male domain in relationships in the West. Western women thus often cast themselves as honorary males in this context - which ironically resonates with the role allocated to them by Western men in Indonesia, too. This is often paralleled by a feminisation of Indonesian men - such as Sonja's portrayal of Sasongko as helpless, inept in money matters, and generally dependent on her. This does not imply that he is in fact dependent; this 'helplessness' could also be a strategy to gain support from his comparatively wealthy, competent, and active Western girlfriend. In terms of women's agency, though, it becomes apparent that Sonja's decisions had precipitated personal changes that might not have happened if she had lived in Europe, and stayed in her secure relationship.

The question of agency becomes more complex in the case of Western women married to Indonesians. In many ways, they are less restricted than expatriate wives. They seemed able to obtain work permits more easily, had greater personal freedom, and less social restrictions than within the expatriate community. However, in struggling to bring up their children and provide them with an education, and dealing with their Indonesian relatives, they certainly faced much greater difficulties than corporate expatriate women. They were subjected to government regulations and social restrictions originating from Indonesian society. At the same time, they also seemed more inventive, motivated and engaged, and while they also sometimes complained about their situation, they hardly seemed to have the sense of helpless, outward-inflicted depression and sense of victimhood as of some of the expatriate wives.

Some ambiguities of expatriate existences have become visible. As demonstrated, they can be rather 'archaic' and limiting as well as progressive and liberating. Being an expatriate wife is often experienced as confining, although women develop various coping strategies. An expatriate situation can work in favour of women, depending on their motivation and marital status. It can provide them with increased agency, and a greater potential for personal and professional development than in their home countries. This increased agency is enabled by being set in Indonesia. The liberation of the 'avant-garde' women is thus often gained through economic and social advantages as Westerners. These advantages facilitate for example setting up businesses, developing their own projects, and entering into relationships with Indonesian men.

3.2 'It makes life possible': Women and the Internet

In chapter 2, I presented theories of transnationalism, which cast transnational existences in terms of 'flows' and 'fluidity'. In the above sections I demonstrated that

despite pockets of subversion, the perpetuation of traditional social systems and restrictions placed on women are still effective. One could assume that Email and the Internet enhance a 'fluidity' and are instrumental for the transgression of boundaries. In the following, I explore the role of the Internet and Email for expatriate women.

Evaluating specifically its 'conservative' or 'progressive' potentials, it turns out that their Internet and Email use is profoundly ambivalent, harbouring multiple possibilities. It seems initially that through performing kinship relations online, e.g. maintaining regular Email contact with relatives, women merely fulfil 'traditional' roles as carers. Their Internet activities, however, are not exhausted by this, but contribute to them becoming independent social actors, as I illustrate below.

The use of Internet and Email has a considerable impact on expatriate lives - especially for expatriate women. Their lives abroad have been significantly changed, and in some ways even made possible, by the use of these technologies. The focus of analysis here is especially on its personal and social relevance, as opposed to work-related purposes. This seems advisable since it seems to alter expatriate wives' lives abroad much more decisively than for their husbands. This is reflected by many wives' almost celebratory appraisal of Email.

I look specifically at four aspects of Internet use. First, there is the issue of access to these technologies. As it turns out, their situation as expatriate women often prompts them to start using these technologies in the first place, which could be regarded as a rather positive effect. Secondly, I assess the overall importance of these technologies. Most expatriate wives point out that Email has changed their lives immensely. Being able to 'keep in touch' with people improves their quality of life as expatriates, while making their status as 'trailing spouses' more palatable. This contributes to the

disconnection with their Indonesian environment, as well as lending credence to metaphors of isolation, and maintaining their 'expatriate bubble'. Thirdly, Email is used for the maintenance of kinship ties. It emerges that these technologies on the one hand invigorate rather traditional forms of social relationships, but at the same time are not confined to, but rather exceed them. Finally, I examine websites geared towards expatriate wives, which endorse their role as supportive women. These websites, while using 'progressive' technologies, propagate rather conservative ideologies.

Getting Online Abroad: Expatriate Wives' Use of Email and the Internet

Judging from many women's reactions, use of the Internet is not only important, but has also become a casual matter of fact. Comments such as, '*Email is wonderful! It has totally changed my life here in Indonesia*' abound. Women's use of it, however, is often comparatively recent. Most importantly - this is especially true of the older generation - many have only started using Email since they came to Indonesia. While they had not been forced to familiarise themselves with these technologies in their home countries, moving to Indonesia often prompted the decision to learn to use them. In triggering these learning processes, becoming an expatriate wife certainly has a 'progressive' aspect. Two tendencies are relevant here. First, among older expatriates, women seem to start using the Internet later than their male counterparts. In contrast to this, women's starting point seems less related to general trends in society but more connected to their personal needs: the correlation between moving to Indonesia and starting to use the Internet is much higher with women than with men, for whom this is possibly more related to work practices. Secondly, while women often start using the Internet later in absolute terms, they are more likely than men to take it up as they grow older. Interviews suggest that among elderly relatives back in their home countries such

as their parents, who are introduced to Email by their expatriate children, women seem more willing to be introduced to these technologies.

Yet this does not reveal the difficulties and psychological obstacles often involved in this. Lilo, a wife of a senior manager of a German company in her late fifties, recounts how arduous she found the processes of getting 'online':

'I haven't really learnt how to deal with it yet... my husband always wanted to get me to use it, but I said, there also have to be things left that I am not capable of... but then my friends said, Lilo, there is no more letter writing - you have to write Emails! So my husband said, I'll switch on the laptop for you, and then you just type in your letter. So I sat down at his desk at home, and typed in my letter. You should have seen how our pembantu [helper] looked at me, sitting at the laptop! And now I have learnt to send mails to family and friends.'

For slightly younger expatriate women, this does not only extend to writing Emails to friends, but is increasingly used for practical purposes, such as making travel arrangements and organising one's finances. Regina, a German woman in her forties, said, *'I've been using the Internet for one-and-a-half years now. I bought a laptop when I was still in Germany and brought it here. And now I am casually Emailing with our tax advisor and my bank manager - and I've also started online banking.'* In contrast to younger professionals, for whom this often is not worth mentioning, Regina and her friends still express a sense of awe - as well as an almost tangible pride and sense of achievement at being able to participate in this new world. A question might then be to what extent the Internet becomes an arena for women in which they can develop and demonstrate expertise, which, unlike managing household staff, might be more recognised as an achievement. While quite a few expatriate women gain competence in

using the Internet, and this certainly contributes to their sense of agency, it does not necessarily lead to greater outside recognition for example by their husbands. Many expatriate women mainly seemed to use Email and the Internet to pursue their own interests, such as 'reading the newspapers from home', and 'keeping in touch with friends and family', which I will discuss in detail below. It seemed that at the moment, there might still be a tendency of 'traditional' gender divisions of labour being reiterated with Internet tasks. Michelle, a British woman, indicates this as she characterises her and her husbands Internet activities, '*I pull up the gossip columns and chat with my sister, and Jim follows the news and does the stock exchange.*' Although this traditionally gendered use might hold at the moment, it does not imply it has to stay this way. On the contrary, I suggest that women's use of the Internet is not automatically channelled into and confined to 'traditional' activities, but harbours possibilities for exceeding these limits. This becomes apparent for example in Regina's statement that it is her who deals with the family's tax matters via the Internet. I take up this issue of labour division again in connection with 'doing kinship online'.

First of all, though, I briefly outline what kind of importance the Internet has assumed, as well as at the effects this might have. Expatriate women's response to the Internet is often enthusiastic. Beth, an American in her forties, stresses that, '*Email is my lifeline ... it has made living in Jakarta possible. It keeps my sanity - and it is cheaper than a shrink.*' The image of a 'lifeline' is recurrent - employed by older as well as younger expatriate women. As Beth summarises, '*Without Email, I would be totally homesick and lost.*' There seems to be a strong feeling that using Email '*breaks the isolation*' that they find themselves in when coming to Indonesia. Michelle, who had been posted to Jakarta on a separate occasion more than ten years ago, explains, '*the isolation has gone. There was a great sense of isolation in 1989 ... if someone at home was ill, it*

could have taken them a week to contact me. All that has changed. I can read the Sunday Times now - I can pull up the gossip columns and see what Fergie is up to.'

The recurrent image of life in Indonesia as 'isolation' resonates with the metaphor of 'living in the bubble' and the boundaries this implies. One question is how the Internet relates to these boundaries, and whether it challenges or rather perpetuates this.

'Email Makes Living Here Possible'

Many women emphasise that Email has not only made their lives in Jakarta easier, but regard it as making their existences there possible in the first place. Beth, whose grown-up children are at college in the US, acknowledges, *'if I didn't have Email, I would totally miss my job, which I expected to. But it really made a difference ... and I realised ... well ... this isn't too bad ... but I really thought I was going to miss my kids so much that it wasn't gonna work.'* This even holds for professional women. Ellen, a teacher at an international school, reckons that, *'without Email/Internet access I would have left Jakarta three years ago.'* Women with longer experiences of living abroad illustrate the extent to which expatriate life has been changed by these new technologies. Donna had been working as a volunteer in Yogyakarta in the late seventies, and came back to live in Indonesia about ten years ago. She recounts:

'It's so different from when I came to Jakarta ... we had a phone, but you had to pick it up and wait for half an hour till a tone came! When I was in Yogyakarta in '79, I would go once a month to a wartel, at a certain time, and talk maybe for ten minutes. If you wrote a letter, you spent hours writing this long letter ... took two weeks to get there, two weeks to get back ... so it has drastically changed, the distance to one's family. My mom says this to her friends, when Donna went to Indonesia it was like she went to the moon ... like, we lost her. When she got

a telephone, it's like she moved overseas ...when she got Email, it's like she moved to Seattle ... that's two hours away from where we live.'

Jean, an American in her fifties, summarises in what ways Email is important for her:

'It definitely improves the quality of my life abroad. I can correspond more with my children and friends than I would if I had to phone all of the time; I also correspond with people I probably would not keep in touch with otherwise. It provides access to information that I would not have without the Internet.'

It seems that the Internet and Email 'make life possible' in three different ways. First, it 'breaks the isolation' by enabling expatriates to maintain contacts with people in their home countries. Linda, who has been living in Indonesia for more than five years, describes it thus:

'Email has drawn me closer to all my friends and family both emotionally and even physically. By feeling like I can 'drop in and say hello' to people on a frequent basis and they can do that with me, even though we are half a world apart, I think I'm right next door. Of course it does not take the place of seeing people face to face, but it sure helps!'

Secondly, apart from keeping social relationships with people 'at home', Email allows women to maintain a wider social network of friends in different places all over the world. Although this is a regular feature with younger professionals, family expatriates are only slowly becoming aware of this. Helga, who is connected to the German embassy, realises, *'the people at the embassy keep being moved around ... and you start making friends with people a bit ... and then, you send Emails when they are posted somewhere else ... for example, to New York, or Paris, or Thomas [her husband] still knows some people from his time in Africa, they are now in Brazil.'*

Thirdly, the Internet also has practical advantages. Donna, who runs the 'Living in Indonesia' website for expatriates, points out the advantages of being able to access this site before moving to Jakarta, *'what we are trying to do with our website is to list all the community organisations, so if somebody comes here new, they can find them. Like, when I want to find a German Catholic golf club, I can do that ... there is the German Women's Association ... so I can find out, I can send Emails and have friends before I even get here!'* This is illustrated by the fact that their 'Living in Indonesia-Forum' regularly receives requests from people who are considering a job in Indonesia. This includes questions such as, *'Living in Jakarta - what is it really like? Or asking for practical information to prepare their stay in Indonesia, such as, 'can children ride their BMX-bikes in Jakarta? Do Mac-laptops work there, and can you get service for them? What do we have to bring that is absolutely not available there? Like, cling film?'* which are usually answered by expatriates who have been living in Jakarta for a while.

Information is another valued good obtained from the Internet. In this case, news is mainly relevant for social purposes. As Michelle says, *'you can keep in touch with what is happening at home.'* This is not only relevant for home visits, but fuels conversations with expatriates in Jakarta. Michelle explains, *'Last night, we were out with a couple of British people, and they were like, "does anyone know what happened to the Jill Dando murder?" and nobody was sure. So I thought, well tomorrow I can pull up the Times and see what is there.'* Therefore, the Internet obviously tremendously improves expatriate women's lives in many ways. This leaves the question as to whether these are merely amenities that sweeten the bitter but inevitable destiny of expatriate women - or whether these technologies harbour unforeseen and implicit potentials for challenging these ideologies. Before discussing this further

below, I want to explore a rather interesting combination of ‘traditional’ ideologies being reproduced through modern technologies; the case of ‘doing kinship online’.

Kinship Online: ‘Traditional’ Ties on the Internet

A particular aspect of ‘keeping in touch’ with people outside of Indonesia is reproducing kinship ‘online’. This refers to the fact that many expatriate wives stay in touch with their family ‘at home’, which includes elderly parents as well as grown-up children. This highlights relations between kinship, gender and technology. This also suggests that living a ‘transnational’, free-floating, globalised lifestyle does not mean abandoning kinship ties. The fact that expatriates are geographically far removed from family and friends in their home countries does not necessarily lessen the importance of ties to them. Neither does the distance seem to diminish expatriates’ awareness of ‘family duties’, that is, caring for increasing elderly and frail parents. While younger expatriates often maintain relations with their parents while living overseas as well, this issue becomes especially crucial for the generation of ‘family expatriates’. Since most ‘family expatriates’ are between 35 and 60 years old, their parents are usually older than 65 - an age where frailty, illness and bereavement become increasingly relevant. In addition to that, many ‘family expatriates’ have grown-up children, who do not accompany their parents on overseas postings any more. This can be a matter of concern for ‘expatriate mothers’, who are often anxious to keep in close contact with their children while overseas. Consequently, many expatriate women reproduce these social relations and fulfil what could be seen as ‘kinship duties’ via Email and instant messaging. Far from kinship ties becoming unbound through their residence overseas, Email intensifies these bonds.

While the importance of kinship ties might have remained the same, increased communication possibilities enhance their reproduction over long distances. This becomes obvious in conversations with expatriates, especially concerning elderly parents. Donna, who has been living in Indonesia for more than ten years, describes her regular communication pattern with her mother, who lives in Washington State, USA:

'almost every morning, I get on the Internet and talk to my mom! My father just passed away in February and my mom is so lonely ... and now I can say, what are you doing tonight, mom, and how was that dinner you were invited to last night? She is 73 years old ... so Email is good because she is so lonely now. It's five o'clock in the afternoon there when it is eight o'clock in the morning here, so it is right at the start of the evening - and for a recently widowed lady, it is a bad time because you are all alone in your house and you dread the evening. So we can talk a bit, and it is better.'

Similarly, Helga, whose elderly mother recently had to undergo heart surgery, was rather concerned about the situation, and appreciated being informed immediately, *'You certainly are more in touch with everything. When my mother got ill and had to have heart surgery I was in constant touch with my brother ... you keep being informed, and also you know that you can be reached anytime - and that is very important in such a situation.'* This is not only important in terms of elderly parents, but also for contact with grown-up children. Beth explains how important it is for her to keep in touch with her adult children in Texas:

'my kids and I instant message daily. It's the next best thing to talking on the phone. It makes us feel a lot closer than half way across the world! Mostly we message about 6 am in the morning my time in Jakarta, which is afternoon for them. So all four of us are connected by instant message ... and we send

pictures back and forth. I also do that with my own family, but they are all in Ohio ... I actually do not miss my parents so much, but most of all my kids'.

The prerequisite for these exchanges is not only that the elderly family members back in their home countries have access to computers, but are able to use them. Subsequently, a 'chain introduction' to using Internet and Email takes place. This education is passed on from expatriates to their relatives or friends in their 'home country'. Many expatriates had introduced friends or family to the Internet specifically so they would be able to communicate with each other during the expatriates' stay abroad. The overwhelming majority also admitted that they kept in touch less frequently or not at all with friends or family who did not use Email.

As indicated above, there are gender differences with respect to the use of Email. Quite often, it is the female relatives instead of males who are being successfully tutored by their children into using these technologies. While men might take up new technologies faster and earlier when they are younger, men's capacities or willingness to learn seems to decrease as they become older. In contrast to this, with increasing age women seem to remain more open to these technologies than men. Guy, a young Italian professional, describes his family communication, highlighting the difference between telephone and Email:

'for my parents it is still impossible to make international phone calls and be relaxed. I have to teach my dad that it is ok for three minutes. My mum is ok - my mum became a computer whiz. She writes Emails, she scans every letter that I get and sends it back to me. She is 65 and I'm very proud of her. My dad? She has to open an Email for him and then he writes - he will not do more than that.'

Similarly, Florian, a young German professional, one day proudly told me, *'I just got an Email from my grandmother - can you believe it? She's over eighty. God knows how she got near a computer! But then, she doesn't have problems with international phone calls either - she calls me up here in Jakarta and we chat for half an hour.'*

Although it might appear as if the maintenance of kinship ties via Email merely reproduces women's traditional roles as carers, the situation is more ambiguous. First of all, the use of Internet, even for these 'traditional' purposes, allows women to develop expertise in a realm that is often regarded as 'technological' and therefore a male domain. This gaining of 'technological' expertise might have an empowering effect for women as such. This is supported by the fact that many women, with increasing age, better cope with these technologies than men. More importantly, though, I argue that women's use of the Internet does not merely represent a technological version of 'traditional' women's work, such as the reproduction of kinship relations. While women perform 'typically female' tasks such as social exchange through Email, their Internet use is not entirely subsumed by this. On the contrary, engaging in social activities on the Internet can open up rather 'autonomous' arenas, where women invest in and benefit from social relations that are not subsumed by their role as caring mother, daughter or relative. An instance of this is the production of written accounts and stories about the life in Indonesia, which women distribute via Email to friends and acquaintances. Although they might take the form of a more traditional 'family newsletter', they establish the author as an original voice, placing their experience of life as an expatriate at the centre. The Internet can thus provide women with an autonomous discursive presence, recognised by the participants in these exchanges, that they might not attain in their everyday lives in Jakarta. Another example of being acknowledged as independent actors are social networks with other

expatriate women whom they met on a common posting, and have kept in contact with since. Michelle for example proudly recounted that, *'I'm still in touch with women whom I know from Saudi-Arabia, Iran and Malaysia, and every year for my birthday they send me Email-greetings, they have not forgotten about you.'* These are merely indications that the use of the Internet, even if taken up to perform 'family duties', is not exhausted by them. It can in various unforeseeable ways go beyond them, even if this is less visible, and less likely to be recognised by their husbands or immediate family.

Expatriate Wives' Websites

This intersection of progressive as well as affirmative aspects can also be found in the last example discussed here, 'expatriate wives' websites'. These websites are designed for expatriate wives, dispensing 'tips and advice' about life abroad as an accompanying spouse. An example is the website of Robin Pascoe, author of a book about expatriate wives, which has gone through several editions (1997). On her site, <<http://www.expertexpert.com>> [updated November 2001], she offers support to expatriate wives. Pascoe's 1997 book '*Successfully Living Abroad: A wife's guide*' is introduced as a, '*practical guide to the perils of being a mobile wife, with comforting and light-hearted advice from those who have been through it before.*' An anonymous reader reviews her book as follows:

'I am currently on my first posting as an expatriate wife. I only wish I had had this book before I arrived. It reassures you that all the emotions you are going through are perfectly normal - and reminds you that you are not alone in this. It is a funny, warm, well-written account of the highs and lows of life as an "accompanying spouse" and should definitely be read by every woman who has recently moved abroad with their husband for the first time, especially if you have potentially given up a successful career.' (Anonymous review, available from <<http://www.expertexpert.com>> [accessed July 2001]).

The deliberately adopted casual, 'progressive' tone, and euphemisms such as 'mobile wife' for 'dependent woman' barely conceal the reactionary ideology underpinning Pascoe's writings.

With similar pretences, a related website, <<http://www.womanabroad.com>> [accessed November 2001], presents the existence as expatriate wife as full of opportunities. It

discusses, *'careers to go: why writing can be the perfect portable career and the secrets of other successful writing women abroad.'* This is complemented by more domestic issues such as, *'International Adoption: True Third Culture Kids'* and thoughtfully addresses, *'Healthy Living- the menopause for women abroad'*. An incarnation of wife-and-motherhood ideology - in an expatriate setting - is the website <<http://www.expatsmom.com>> [accessed November 2001]. It demonstrates the emphasis on motherhood often found in expatriate-wives communities. The website's main feature in June 2001 is *'An Expat-Mom Birth Story! By Holly Bandel, Expat-Mom'*, while forthcoming topics include, *'Expat-Mom - experience of having to leave a job for spouse's expat assignment,'* mastering the, *'experience with Au Pairs and Nannies,'* and finally, *'Babies Abroad - pregnancy and childbirth experience in your host country.'* In the guise of being 'global' and, through utilising the Internet, 'modern and progressive', these websites reaffirm reactionary models of labour division and gender roles. Even these situations are characterised by a certain ambiguity. Although the websites can be rather reactionary in content, their female authors are often not. There is a certain irony in the fact that while these authors might praise being a non-working spouse and expat-mom, they have carved out professional niches for themselves, using the Internet, which enables them to avoid a lifestyle the virtues of which they keep extolling in their works.

As these examples illustrate, the Internet features in complex and sometimes contradictory ways. In the first instance, their impact can be seen as empowering, in that it enables expatriate women's access to the Internet, and gradual recognition of its possibilities. A question is in what way women utilise this potential. This is crucial because the most important effect of the Internet seems to be making life as an expatriate wife more bearable. Use of Email, through maintaining contacts with friends and family abroad, partly overcomes the 'isolation' that expatriate life can entail. By

thus improving their existences, these technologies facilitate the carrying out of women's duty to reproduce expatriate families abroad. This seems rather affirmative, and contributes to keeping expatriate wives in their prescribed position. The reproduction of kinship ties through the Internet also seems to be a case of employing 'modern' technologies for 'traditional' ends. It seems to enable women to perform their role as carers while living abroad. I would argue, though, that the impact of using this technology cannot necessarily be contained, and does not preclude its possible future use for more adventurous ends, although I admittedly found little evidence of this so far. Expatriate women's websites, while reinscribing traditional gender notions, harbour a similar ambiguity. Although they explicitly endorse an 'expatriate wife ideology', their existence, coupled with the entrepreneurial spirit of their authors, might undermine this ideology.

In this chapter, I looked at women's existences as expatriate wives, and their usage of Internet technologies within this expatriate setting. One of the main theoretical themes set out at the beginning was in what ways their transnational existences as expatriates are characterised by 'flows' or boundaries. The ethnographic material concerning expatriate wives, while retaining a basic ambiguity, strongly points towards the efficacy of boundaries. These are mainly instantiated by male-dominated social practices, the maintenance of which women are partly complicit in - or at least which they do not strive to transgress very much. These boundaries, though, are not all encompassing. I highlighted possible ways of overcoming restrictions. It emerged that Indonesia can constitute a rather liberating space for Western women. I pointed out that their increased agency as women is often predicated on their advantages as Westerners. This links back to McClintock's (1998) and Stoler's (1995, 1997a, 1997b) contentions that domains such as race and gender do not exist independently, but impact in combination,

and contradiction, with each other. Boundaries in expatriate women's lives also become visible in terms of their Internet use. Amenities such as Email improve their existences as dependent wives, and as such rather perpetuate their status quo instead of extending beyond it. This is further sustained by the fact that many women's Internet activities fulfil rather 'traditional' roles, such as reproducing kinship relations through Email. I argue, however, that their Internet use is not exhausted by this particular aspect, but exceeds it. This takes place for example through establishing women as competent and autonomous actors within their own, non-kinship based social networks that can comprise globally distributed relationships, even if this is not immediately recognised by their everyday social environment.

Chapter 4: Space, Embodiment and the Gaze

In this chapter, I investigate the roles of the body and space for expatriates. I suggest that embodied and spatial experiences are extremely significant, in terms of both being reflexive and productive of relations between expatriates and 'Indonesia'. The body and space are arenas in, and through, which many aspects of expatriates' lives crystallise and become visible. In section 4.1, I summarise some recent developments in theorising the body, in terms of embodiment as well as bodily spatial experiences. Notions of the body and bodily boundaries also form the basis for the following discussion of beauty treatments, clothes, and food in chapter 5. In section 4.2, I pursue in what ways Jakarta's cityscape is relevant for expatriates. This includes their experiences when moving through this city as well as their spatial practices. I argue that Jakarta cityspaces crucially influence expatriates' existences, while their forms of negotiating these spaces are indicative of larger issues concerned with the drawing and maintenance of boundaries. In section 4.3 I explore how notions of embodied and spatial experiences converge in the gaze of the Other. This refers to visual exchanges between expatriates and Indonesians when moving through public spaces, and the significance of the visibility of the white body.

4.1 Embodied and Spatial Experiences

Recent attempts to theorise the body have undergone similar changes to those outlined with respect to theories of transnationalism. It is not only the world and people in it that are seen as constantly in flux, but also the body itself. This is in contrast to earlier notions, which, as Csordas (1994) explains, assumed the body to be a, 'fixed, material entity ... existing prior to the mutability and flux of cultural change' (1994:1). This

attitude has now changed, recognising that, 'the body should be understood not as a constant amidst flux but as an epitome of that flux' (Csordas 1994:2). This does not only extend to the body as such, but also concerns the boundaries of the body itself. The body is thus no longer considered a bounded entity. As Csordas (1994) sees it, 'the contemporary cultural transformation of the body can be conceived ... also in discerning an ambiguity in the boundaries of corporeality itself' (1994:3). For Csordas (1994), these, 'circumstances of corporeal flux and bodily transformation' (1994:4) mark a situation that could be used to offset a theoretical paradigm shift. Taking seriously the body as the, 'existential ground of culture and self' (1994:4), his aim is to, 'reformulate theories of culture, self and experience, with the body at the centre of analysis' (1994:4). Before outlining the implications of Csordas' project, I will briefly discuss the consequences of the understanding of the 'body in flux'.

The parallels between theorising 'people in flux' in transnational situations and 'bodies in flux' are not incidental. A question is whether the caveats about 'fluid existences' also concern 'fluid bodies'. With regard to the ethnographic material, I argue that while it may be conceptually justified to point to the fluidity of the body, this does not imply that people appreciate this. On the contrary, I suggest that while many expatriates might be aware of inevitable flows across boundaries, they struggle to contain and control them. As with the celebrated fluidity of transnational practices, I do not intend to question the fluidity as such, but instead closely examine these flows, and non-flows, and recognise the importance of boundaries. One agenda for the following chapter is to take people's bodily practices seriously, and to relate them to the contestations of race and gender, especially between 'the West' and 'Indonesia'. The focus will be on the salience of bodily boundaries within these contestations, as well as the transgressions and transactions across them.

Returning to Csordas' (1994) project, the shift he envisions establishes at its core the paradigm of 'embodiment', enabling a 'theory of culture and self grounded in embodiment' (1994:13). This is predicated on a departure from a notion of the body, that separates the body as a material entity from its symbolic meanings. This notion has also consistently privileged symbolic meanings over material realities. The way to address this duality, in Csordas' (1994) view, is to adopt a concept of the body of 'being-in-the-world'. This notion collapses 'dualities between subjective and objective, meaningful and material' (1994:13). He suggests that this overcomes the notion of the body as a passive object and establishes it as an 'active subject of embodied being-in-the-world' (1994:14).

Csordas' dissatisfaction with current theories resonates with a crisis of representation. He complains that the privileging of the symbolic over the material has rendered the body: 'as a kind of readable text upon which social reality is "inscribed"' (Csordas 1994:12). He passionately argues against reducing the body to a *tabula rasa* in this way, a passive site on which external forces act and express themselves. Instead, through taking embodiment seriously: 'the body is transformed from object to agent' (Csordas 1994:3). For the present ethnographic context, this is instructive. In the discussion on food in section 5.1, Csordas' notion of embodiment or body as experienced 'being-in-the-world' is instrumental. Csordas' contentions imply an emphasis on the body as embodiment, as a visceral and material experience, as opposed to merely a site of symbolic inscription. This does not exclude paying attention to how the body is used as a resource for symbolic action and as a marker of boundaries. As outlined in chapter 2, it is crucial not to reiterate existing dichotomies between the material and the symbolic, but make explicit their interconnectedness, or, in McClintock's (1998) words, how these dimensions come into existence in and through

relation to each other. In chapter 2, I also discussed the creation, maintenance and transgression of boundaries, as well as the fact that boundaries are not solid, but permeable and negotiable. These issues become relevant in terms of embodied experiences and spatial boundaries, especially with respect to the divide between Inside and Outside.

Relating back to the dichotomy between the physical and the symbolic, this is similarly prevalent in theorising space. Spaces become important in terms of their symbolic qualities, yet they also have a material reality. Csordas' (1994) concept of 'embodiment' can be instrumental for an analysis of the role of spaces as well. This implies conceptualising space *as the body moves through it*, an embodied experience of being in and moving through space. It also extends to the sustained relevance of the physical; spaces in Jakarta are bestowed with symbolic qualities, and are similarly used to express and mark boundaries. In the following, I outline some anthropological notions of space, and discuss in what ways their material and symbolic dimensions become relevant, especially in relation to boundaries.

Spatial Experiences

'Space' has long been relevant for anthropology. While I cannot attempt to fully detail these discussions, I want to draw on Merleau-Ponty's (1962) distinction between 'geometric space' and 'anthropological space'. Anthropological space is conceptualised as 'existential space', which essentially is a relation to the world. Merleau-Ponty (1962) emphasises beings as situated in relationship to a milieu. In that sense, there are as many spaces as there are distinct spatial experiences (Merleau-Ponty 1962).

This points to two fundamental issues. First, I assume space to be constructed as well as embodied. 'Constructed' refers to Merleau-Ponty's (1962) point that space does not only exist as a material given, but is constructed as experienced space. Thus, there is not one given space, but a multitude of spaces as experienced by active subjects.

Secondly, this links to Csordas' (1994) concept of the body as embodiment, which characterises both bodily and spatial experiences. This becomes clear considering that, in a fundamental sense, spatial experiences are always of a bodily nature, while bodily experiences are inherently spatial, as the body exists in space.

Central to Csordas' (1994) concept was the desire to 'collapse the dualities between the material and the symbolic' (1994:13). As with the body, these two dimensions are relevant to spatial experiences as well. It resonates with Augé's (1995) suggestion that one should 'reserve the term 'anthropological place' for this concrete and symbolic construction of space' (1995:51). In the following, I explore the materialities of the Jakarta cityscape and their symbolic dimensions. I conceptualise these dimensions not as distinct realms, but elucidate their significance in relation to, and in interplay with, each other.

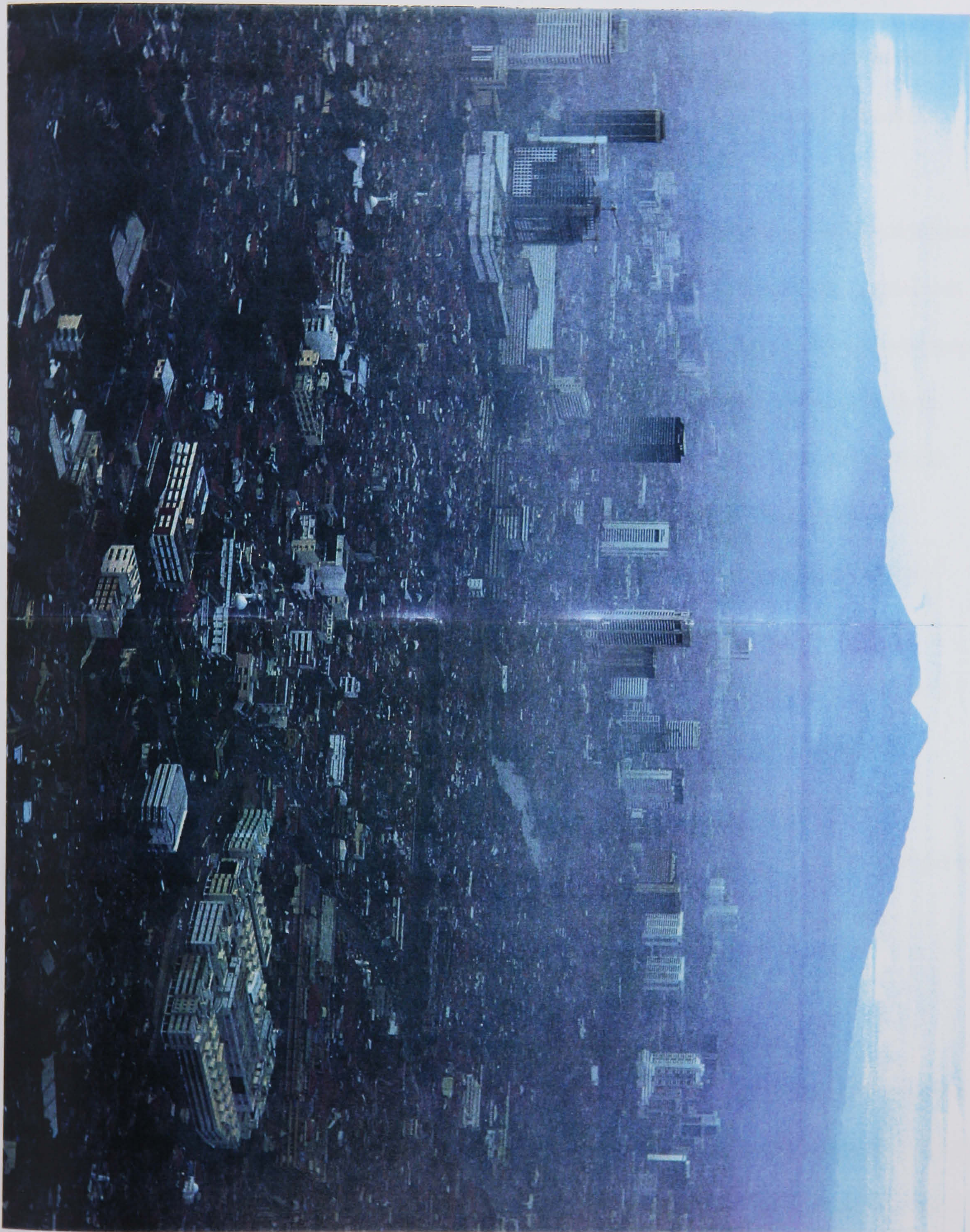
The interplay between these dimensions does not only concern spatial experiences, but also practices. De Certeau (1984), in his theory on everyday practices, specifically emphasises spatial practices. In his view, 'spatial practices in fact secretly structure the determining conditions of social life ... these multiform, resistance, tricky and stubborn procedures that elude discipline without being outside the field in which it is exercised ... which should lead us to a theory of everyday practices, of lived space' (De Certeau 1984:96). In the context of expatriates, spatial practices become important in

negotiating their existences within their ‘expatriate worlds’, and crucially in relation to their Indonesian environment.

One form of spatial practices is the marking of boundaries. It becomes apparent in connection with de Certeau’s (1984) view, linking back to theories of transnationalism. I explained in chapter 2 that these theories often emphasise the ‘subversive’ potential of transnationalist practices, as for example Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc’s (1992, 1994, and 1995) notions of subverting the nation state. In a similar, if unintended parallel move, De Certeau (1984) attributes a certain stubbornness and resistance specifically to spatial practices, which ‘elude discipline’. This faith in the subversive potential of practices seems to echo the transnationalist theories discussed in chapter 2. Consequently, the subversiveness of spatial practices in the case of expatriates has to be examined critically. In fact, I suggest that expatriates’ spatial practices harbour a conspicuous affirmative potential. This becomes obvious, for example, in erecting spatial boundaries. Apart from this, spatial practices are ambivalent; they also constitute acts of contesting or negotiating boundaries, as I illustrate below.

I aim to briefly elucidate the relation between spatial practices and boundaries. De Certeau (1984) states that, ‘it is the partition of space that structures it ... there is no spatiality that is not organised by the determination of frontiers’ (1984:123). This general insight becomes more acute when coupled with mechanisms of power and exclusion. Sibley (1992) studied social exclusion through spatial practices in the case of Gypsies in the city of Kingston-upon-Hull, U.K. He states that, ‘spatial structures can strengthen or weaken social boundaries, thus accentuating social division or, conversely, rendering the excluded group less visible’ (Sibley 1992:113). Although this

refers to a group of social 'outsiders', it has a resonance with the case of expatriates. While they are not marginalised in an economical sense, they could be described as an elite minority. Sibley's (1992) statement holds for expatriates when read in reverse; they are not victims of spatial exclusion, but seek spatial seclusion. Expatriates aim to exclude the majority - Indonesians - from their lives through boundary-making spatial practices, one of which includes reducing their own visibility. This relates to section 4.3 concerning the gaze of the Other. I have already argued that many expatriates suffer from their visibility as 'white Western bodies', which invites this 'gaze' and subjects them to being Othered. The gaze of the Other represents a form of power. This is also inherent in spatial practices. As Sibley (1992) asserts, 'space represents power in that control of space confers the power to exclude, but some spatial configurations are easier to control than others' (1992:113). Many expatriates in Jakarta are engaged in a continuous contestation of space in relation to their environment, excluding some elements of 'Indonesia' while incorporating others. As with bodily experiences, some are harder to control, or are not controllable at all - resulting in spatial leakages. In the following section, I explore in what ways Jakarta cityscapes influence expatriates' ways of living in them, and how their negotiation of these spaces expresses their relations with 'Indonesia'.



4.2 Jakarta Cityscapes

'If your package doesn't include a house with closed windows, air filters, adequate AC and air conditioned car with driver then do not bother to come'
(posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by seeu2@dnet.net.id, 24/01/01).

This statement sums up the attitude of many expatriates living in Jakarta; the cityspace is divided into an Inside - a clean, safe, controlled space - and an alien and unpleasant Outside. In the following, I first show how the physical conditions of these cityspaces, the built environment, climate and traffic, shape expatriates' experiences as well as generate spatial practices to deal with it. Secondly, I show how the relevance of the environment transcends the merely physical; spaces do not just feature physical qualities, but symbolic values. For many expatriates the Inside embodies 'Western' values, while the Outside represents everything that is feared, disapproved of or unknown. This influences their spatial practices, in the sense that living in Jakarta becomes a constant, careful negotiation of space and their movement through it. Thirdly, I show that although the Inside and Outside are often conceptualised as opposites, it turns out that these membranes are permeable. I argue that however people try to exclude 'Indonesian' realities, these keep entering into their spaces. The boundaries are revealed as porous.

I first discuss this with respect to housing, and expatriates' efforts to demarcate spatial boundaries, which are consistently undermined by the Indonesian environment entering into their spaces. I focus on expatriates' spatial practices as attempts to navigate their physical existences through these cityscapes. This becomes especially relevant when in transit and moving through public spaces. I discuss the fact that much of their lives'

takes place inside, which they see as problematic. While they try to address this imbalance, possibilities for this are limited, reinforced by incidents such as earthquakes, which unexpectedly instantiate their attachments to their location. Finally, I demonstrate how boundaries become especially pronounced in the case of institutions, such as the German International School, which asserts both its physical and symbolic territory.

Housing

One of the prime motivations in expatriates' use of space is to exclude 'Indonesia' as much as possible. This becomes especially apparent in terms of housing. Most of expatriates' living spaces are designed for exactly this; the more these homes disconnect the dweller from the ordinary Jakarta surroundings, the greater their attractiveness. Examples are the apartments in central Jakarta, in Menteng, Senayan and Kuningan. Approaching one of these apartments on foot, the street is noisy with sounds of traffic, the air filled with traffic fumes, and the temperature about 35 degrees Celsius. One can only walk slowly, breathing made difficult by heat, dust and fumes. One makes one's way through ramshackle vendors' carts lined up at the side of the street, to arrive at a security post guarding the entrance to the apartments. The multi-storey structures of steel and glass tower high over the street below. However, when you enter the lobby, a different world unfolds. Well-presented, uniformed staff greets the visitor and operate the elevators. The entrance hall is marble-floored, decorated with mirrors and indirect lighting, air-conditioned, and the street sounds are replaced by unobtrusive background music.

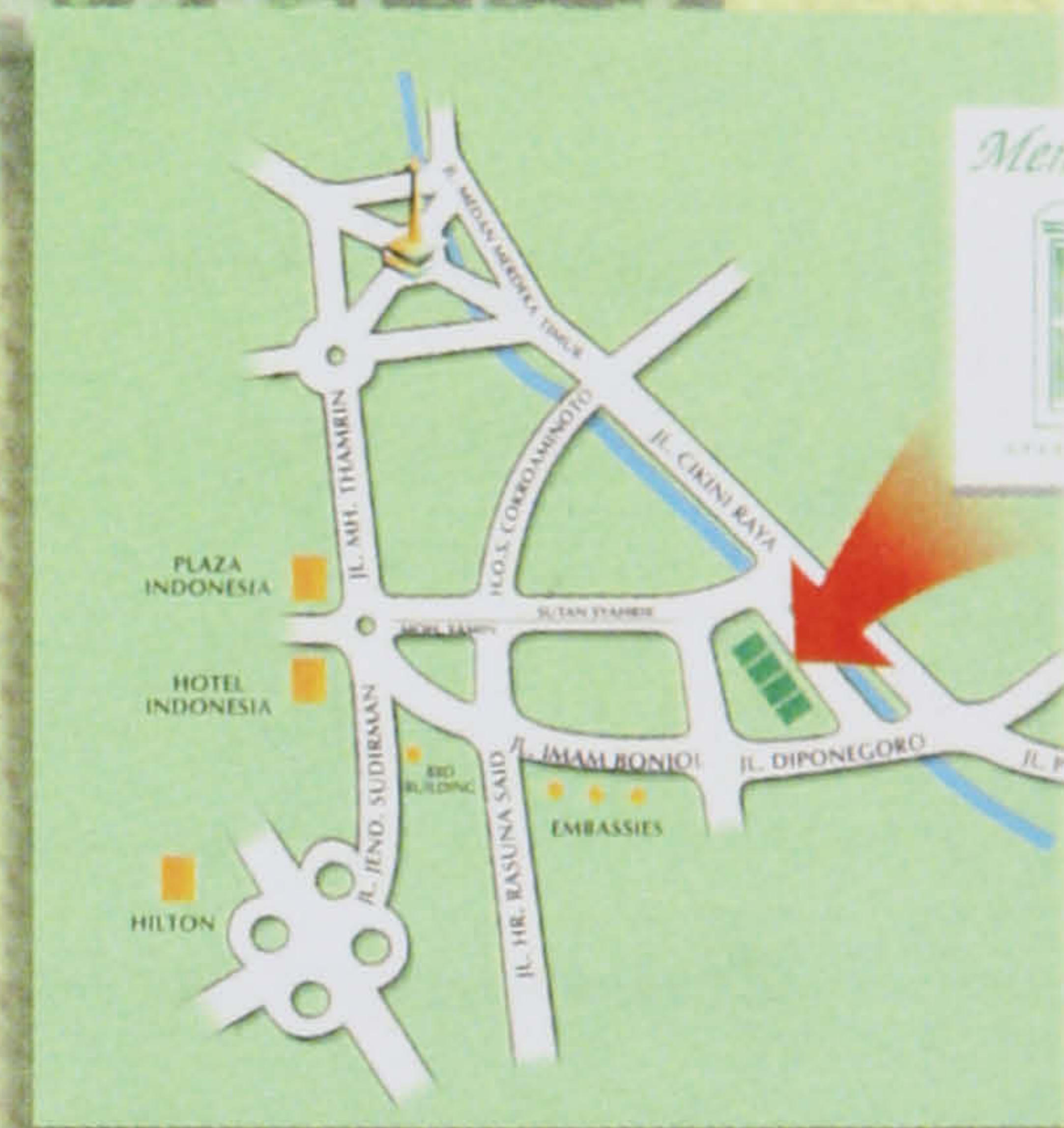
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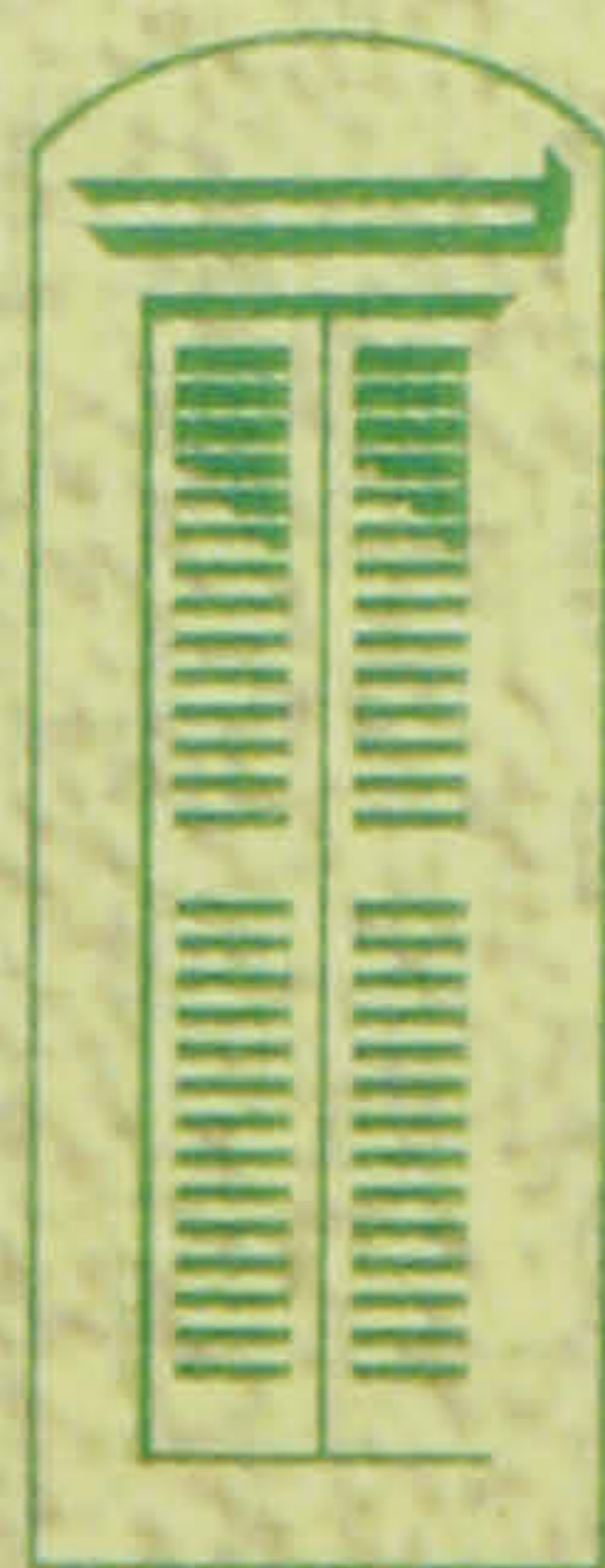
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Once inside a flat, the large windows frame panoramic views of the city, a cluster of high-rises, with *kampung*-settlements in between, stretching as far as one can see, obscured by a haze of dust and smog. Inside, it is cool, quiet, clean, and spacious. The apartment is decorated with Western-style furniture, a fully equipped kitchen, and vast living-room areas, looking out on the city. On the streets below, distant crowds and cars, water canals with green, oozing water and a few people sitting on the rims, fishing, are visible. The height, together with the cool and absence of noise, creates an experience completely removed from the physical conditions below. While one might experience an 'entry-shock' when entering the building, the 'exit-shock' is even more intense. After spending time in an apartment, going out to the street again one is hit by a wave of heat, noise, smells and crowds, instantly siphoning one back into life on the streets.

While apartment living might be one extreme, other kinds of expatriate housing embody similar attempts of seclusion from Indonesian realities. While apartment living caters mostly to younger, unmarried people, families with children often live in large, villa-style houses in one of the 'expatriate' areas such as Kemang, Pondok Indah and Cilandak. While these areas are not exclusively expatriate areas, they have a high density of expensive houses, which are in stark contrast to the poorer Indonesian housing areas around them. If one approaches one of these houses in Kemang, the streets leading to the property might be narrow and crumbling. The house itself would be set in a small compound, which comprises the house, garden, garage and front area, and is fenced off by high walls. After ringing a bell, an Indonesian security guard opens the compound doors and leads one to the 'main' door. While these houses are usually only one or two storeys high, they are extremely spacious. Inside, there is no heat, dust or noise, but space, quiet and comfort. Guests are seated in a large living room area.

decorated with Indonesian or Western art pieces. The living room windows open on to the garden, to a small terrace with Indonesian garden furniture, and a small pool. Behind the pool, high walls keep out neighbours or onlookers.

Alternatively, some expatriates live in larger 'capsules' - in compound housing. Some employers, such as ExxonMobile or the Australian Embassy, maintain their own housing complexes. They often comprise about a dozen houses, arranged in a circle, surrounded by walls, sometimes including a common pool, or a tennis court.

Indonesian reality is left at the gate as well. The expatriate world created inside may be larger, but is similarly removed from the outside. The difference to other housing forms is only the size of the 'capsule'. A sense of it being unreal, or a 'Disneyland', is predominant here as well.

At this point, it is important to stress that I do not mean to disregard the physical rationale for technologies like air-conditioning or the merits of clean air and hygiene. In the following, I do not intend to present expatriates' demand for 'clean spaces' as unreasonable or unfounded. It is important to keep in mind, though, that they often seem to disproportionately stress their own need for a cool and quiet environment, while supposing that Indonesians, who often can not afford it, would be *'more able to deal with heat and noise'*. However, expatriates disregard the fact that the Jakarta Indonesian elite also live similarly air-conditioned lifestyles (van Leeuwen 1997), a fact which indicates, that given the opportunity, Indonesians would prefer not to have to deal with the heat and noise. In the discussion below I aim to explore the symbolic dimensions of these inside spaces. I maintain that while concerns about the Insides may in the first instance be about physical amenities, they also cast 'clean and quiet' spaces as signifiers of 'Western civilisation'.

Expatriate housing practices thus reflect their desire for seclusion from the Indonesian environment; from the physical as in heat, dirt and crowdedness, but also insofar it represents the Other. Excluding this means to be safe from this, and to be sheltered from the gaze of the Other. Expatriate spatial practices can be conceptualised as boundary processes, as, 'the ways in which distinctions are made between the pure and the defiled, the normal and the deviant, the same and the other' (Sibley 1992:120). In contrast to expatriates' houses, street life in Jakarta is often experienced as physically uncomfortable, and perceived as the epitome of 'chaos', poverty, and the opposite of 'civilisation'. Yet, this captures the circumstances under which many Indonesians in Jakarta live, as described by Jellinek (1991). This is seen in the squalid shops lining the streets; the sounds of the cart vendors; the sight of battered scooters, hand-pulled carts and motor rikshaws; in wares lined up for the sale on the dusty ground; and in Indonesians milling about, trading, or just sitting at roadside stalls.

A house becomes more than a physically pleasing space, but represents 'Western' values, such as hygiene, order, wealth, modernity, and 'civilisation'. These practices of seclusion and drawing of boundaries simultaneously structure expatriates' experience of Jakarta cityscapes. Their ways of dwelling thus contribute to the construction of differences between Inside and Outside. If one lives in an air-conditioned, spacious, clean, quiet house, going out to the street with its heat, crowds, dirt, and noise can be overwhelming and uncomfortable. As many expatriates' homes mirror 'Western' ones, and little betray their Indonesian location, stepping outside can prove a shocking experience. As Sibley (1992) puts it, 'the way space is organised affects the perception of the 'other', either as foreign and threatening or as simply different' (1992:116). This also links to a sense of agency and control. Expatriates' own spaces are sheltered and comforting. Street life, on the other hand, constitutes its opposite; it confronts them

with often incomprehensible behaviour, subjects them to gazes, and hurls them into a world beyond their control.

Consequently, many expatriates attempt to ensure that their houses are as insulated from the Outside as possible, and constitute secluded enclaves. These attempts, however, are often doomed to fail in the sense that 'Indonesia' keeps intruding into these spaces. An example of this are the practical matters related to houses. Especially in the tropical climate, houses need constant repairs, which are not always done to expatriates' satisfaction. Many roofs leak during the rainy season. Telephone lines can be faulty. Expatriates' sophisticated electronic equipment is subject to power failures. Similarly, cockroaches, ants, mosquitoes, mice, snakes, geckos, and larger lizards are constantly encroaching on the inside of the house and have to be fought off. All of this is only partly controllable, and indicates the extent to which these inside spaces cannot be sealed off from a perceived 'Indonesian' environment.

This is exacerbated by the fact that many expatriates still do not regard these spaces as truly their own. Some wives confessed that they did not really feel at home in their houses, partly because of their Indonesian staff. As a German woman, Silvia, told me:

'it is terrible - from the minute I wake up, I feel I am not alone in my house. As soon as we leave the bedroom, the servants are there. My husband and the kids leave by 7am, and then the house is empty - leaving me and the servants. But I just can't relax with them running around all the time. That's why I go out early and play tennis. I never feel at home in my house, except for the weekends, when they are gone.'

These inside spaces thus do not constitute a 'safe haven'. On the contrary, the presence of Indonesian staff might be seen as intruding into the 'inner sanctum' of expatriates'

existences, their home, again indicating that the Outside keeps entering into these Insides in various ways.

This inescapable ambiguity of spaces is also relevant to younger professionals. I will chart the experiences of three of them, all in their early thirties, who had been living in Jakarta for 2-3 years. One of them, Sam, had started his career in Jakarta working for an international organisation. Due to his junior position, Sam was initially given only a small housing allowance, and lived in a converted garage-flat in Central Jakarta, in an Indonesian neighbourhood, and shared a car with a colleague. When I visited him two years later, he had been promoted and was staying in a rather luxurious high-rise apartment complex. Asked about his choice of housing, he explained his situation in the Indonesian neighbourhood, *'Every time I went to work or came home, kids in the street shouting at me, "Mister, Mister!" They never seemed to get used to me, and it really got on my nerves. So when I had more money for renting a place, I moved to this apartment, because it saves me from all that.'*

Similarly, Harold had started working in Jakarta for international firms as a trainee, and his lifestyle had changed as his career advanced. He was now living in an apartment complex similar to Sam's, but recalled his early days in Jakarta, *'I was living with a Javanese family in South Jakarta, and they were really nice, and I learned the language ... but I had to go to work by bus, can you imagine! I had no money then, so I was standing on the bus, squeezed in for an hour every morning!'* He now is driven to work in a car provided by his company. When asked about the past, he reminisced that, *'life is great in the kampung ... you can sit down on a bench and chat with the guys, have a cigarette, and just hang out.'* He rarely visited those *kampungs* now, but spent his leisure time in hotel bars with friends also employed in the banking sector. His

Indonesian girlfriend lived in his apartment, and showed little desire to return to the *kampung* herself. While *kampung*-life was not repulsive for Harold as for many expatriates, it was a nostalgic resource, and a symbolic claim to a former street credibility, which he did not intend to go back to.

Things seemed a little different with Brad. Also while a trainee, he had lived in a shared house with other Westerners in an Indonesian neighbourhood. He spoke with great warmth of Dharmita, their *pembantu* [helper], *'She was a wonderful woman. She taught me all my Indonesian. She was always worried when I worked and partied too much, she thought I should get more sleep. And also I knew what was happening in the kampung ... she really put me in touch with things.'* Later, he moved for some months to an expatriate apartment residence, and recalled, *'It was just not the same in Eksekutif Menteng ... yes, it was all air-conditioned and very comfortable, but I really missed the contact with the people. I was very out of touch, and I never learnt as much as I had from Dharmita.'* Although Brad saw his move partly as a loss, he reckoned that, *'one can't turn things back.'* Once he moved up the career ladder, he did not regard it as possible to maintain his previous lifestyle and the relations with Indonesians as he had before.

Movement

The anticipated contact with Indonesians is often crucial in determining expatriates' negotiation of spaces. In previous sections, I discussed this mainly in relation to housing, and the desire to create a space free of 'Indonesian' interference. I have shown these attempts as flawed, and their boundaries as permeable. Negotiating relations - physical, visual or social - with their Indonesian environment becomes crucial when

leaving their homes. Expatriates' movements through streets and public spaces are thus indicative as well as formative of attitudes. Unlike Brad, many expatriates seemed to perceive uncontrolled visual contact with Indonesians as unpleasant or threatening. I suggest that the wish to avoid this exposure, and to escape the 'gaze of the Other', crucially influences their spatial practices. While I focus in this section on expatriates' attempts to evade or minimise exposure to the gaze, in section 4.3 I further discuss the gaze both as it is directed towards, but also exerted by expatriates.

Attempts to avoid the gaze were especially pronounced with Simone, another young professional who lived in a high-rise apartment just a few hundred metres away from her office. Yet every morning she got into a taxi at the front lobby of her complex, which brought her to the entrance to her office building. When asked about this, she recounted that, *'I tried to walk at the beginning, because it's not very far. But it's hot and dirty ... and there are these becak [tricycle] drivers waiting in front of the mall, and all these vendors and people hanging out there on the way ... they always make remarks, or shout at me, and stare at me. And I really do not like that!'* Initially, she tried to protect herself from this environment by wearing sunglasses and a personal stereo. But she could not manage to shut them out: *'It all didn't help in the end ... they kept on looking, they could never ignore me, and I couldn't take it. I hate always being noticed and standing out.'* A friend of hers, Petra, had similar problems. Although she lived in a moderate house in an Indonesian neighbourhood, she felt observed whenever she left the house: *'I tried the sunglasses, but it doesn't work, because nobody wears sunglasses there - it just makes me stand out more and look arrogant.'* Petra has to walk a short distance to flag down a taxi to get her to the office. But even that seemed unbearable after a while: *'I couldn't take the stares any more ... while I had to wait for the taxi, everybody kept staring at me. So in the end, I ordered the taxi by phone and*

waited for it inside my house.’ These bodily practices, such as wearing shades or a personal stereo, are very concrete attempts to escape the gaze of the Other, and erecting boundaries to protect the self from the hostile Outside.

These statements convey a sense of how expatriates feel about ‘the street’. Many seem unable to relate to people they encounter on the street. It could be both helplessness and contempt, an inability to deal with these situations as well as a reluctance to engage with them, that makes ‘the street’ almost a no-go zone. Many people’s movement practices can be traced back to this. Although this does not extend to all, many expatriates’ lives take place mainly in closed spaces, like homes, offices, or leisure venues. The only problematic task becomes the transit between these spaces. As they attempt to minimise contact with the Outside, modes of transport become important. This highlights a pivotal aspect of Jakarta cityspaces; from a European perspective, they are not designed for walking. This concerns not so much the absence of pedestrian zones, but the general street layout, which makes it not only very difficult, but also unpleasant and dangerous to move on foot between places in the inner city. The Central Business District (CBD) is bounded by three major thoroughfares, Jl. Sudirman, Jl. Gatot Subroto, and Jl. Rasuna Said. These have mostly six lanes, and can theoretically only be crossed at pedestrian bridges, which are often far from each other. Many streets do not have sidewalks at all, but only a dusty soft shoulder, intersected by open sewers and canals. Within the CBD, almost all buildings are high-rises, forming a stark contrast to the street level. All this constitutes a harsh and inhospitable environment, which seems to forbid walking. This hostility of the built environment is exacerbated by the intense heat, noise and fumes that fill most of Jakarta’s outside spaces. Walking is thus seen as uninviting and unrewarding, and most expatriates avoid walking in these areas, but also in general. Instead, the car becomes the preferred mode of transport. thus

further eclipsing the streetlife. This situation is also reflected in a posting on the 'Living in Indonesia' forum: *'If you walk out on the sidewalks on the foot bridges that cross the road, when you first get here, you might feel like there is no oxygen and you can't breathe. But do not worry. You'll get used to it. Of course the expats in the bubble do not have to worry about this so much.'* (posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by Linkh@bigfoot.com, 23/01/0).

The problem of walking also affects expatriates working in offices at the 'Hotel Indonesia roundabout' in central Jakarta. Patricia highlighted the problem of getting to a cafe for her lunch break:

'It is difficult because there is a food court in the shopping centre opposite our office building, but it would take me 15 minutes to get there. I would have to manoeuvre my way across this roundabout with all that traffic, three lanes and no pedestrian crossings at all. By the time I'd get to the food court, I'd be full of dust and sweat and totally exhausted. So what we often do is, we cross one road to the Mandarin Oriental Hotel opposite, and eat in one of their cafeterias. This is a bit expensive and upmarket for a lunch break, but what can we do?'

The difficulties involved in this are reflected by the scarcity of expatriates making their way around this intersection at lunchtime - and the increased spectacle they present to Indonesians if some of them are sighted. All this seems in ironic contrast to de Certeau's (1984) musings on the positive experiences of walking, which were obviously written with Western cityscapes in mind.

The distinction between the safe indoors and ambiguous streets makes transport a precarious situation. The boundary between Inside and Outside is never as fragile as

when travelling in a car. This becomes obvious for example when stopping at the traffic lights at one of the main inroads to Jakarta, as the heat and sun are barely kept out by the air conditioning and tinted screens. Crippled beggars move towards the cars, as do street children, pressing their faces against the windows. Vendors move around, selling newspapers, tissues, cigarettes or antique pieces, in choking fumes and dust. Partly in order to keep these people out, expatriates usually lock their car doors before setting out. When travelling in expatriates' cars, I rarely witnessed them handing money to beggars or street children through the car window, as some Indonesians do. As Inside and Outside come dangerously close here, it partly explains why road checks and traffic accidents are seen as the most unpleasant or dangerous situations to be involved in. Road checks by the police - partly performed to extort bribe money from drivers, especially expatriates - are manageable, and even provide an opportunity to showcase one's ability to deal with the Indonesian 'system'. Stories of how one successfully dealt with traffic police, engaging in role-play, without parting with too much money, are part of many male expatriates' bar conversations. In contrast to that, accidents are more dangerous. This does not only include the actual damage sustained, but the risk of being mobbed by Indonesians who might use this as an opportunity to receive compensation, which can become rather threatening. Although I heard of very few accidents that expatriates were involved in, this was a worst-case scenario and prevailing fear, implying possibly life-threatening contact with the Outside totally beyond one's control.

Many expatriates move around in Jakarta exclusively by car, either driven by themselves or a chauffeur, or by taxi. This is partly due to the scarcity of a viable public transport system in Jakarta, for example a mass rapid transit system such as in Singapore or Kuala Lumpur. Public transport in Jakarta consists largely of run-down

buses, and a suburban train system, which runs on only half a dozen routes. Buses and trains are overcrowded and dirty, and are found 'impossible' to use by most expatriates. A typical day for a Jakarta expatriate might be leaving their house around 7am, taking an hour to be driven to work by car to the office in central Jakarta. The lunch is spent in a restaurant either in the same high-rise office building or in a nearby one. After work, the driver might pick the expatriate up to go to a gym, cinema, restaurant, bar or any indoor venue where social activities are held. After that, people might go home and not leave their compound until the next morning. A whole day's activities thus take place almost entirely indoors, without having too much contact with the Indonesian outside environment.

Insides and Outsides

The reduced exposure to the outside also extends to leisure spaces. Most venues where expatriates spend their free time, besides in their home, are indoors or in enclosed outside areas. Many sport activities take place in indoor gyms, which are often part of the apartment complexes, thus making it unnecessary to even leave the building. While many make use of this, not all appreciate it. Sam, for example, expressed his longing to *'go for a run in a real park.'* The only outdoor activities are playing tennis, which many expatriate wives engage in, and golf. Golf seemed popular for a variety of reasons, including work-related and social ones. Apart from this, a British woman reasoned that, *'when you play golf, you are outside, the air is fine, there is enough space, and you aren't bothered by anyone.'* This sums up the main complaints about living in Jakarta: the lack of fresh air; space; and 'privacy'. Although golf clubs are not exclusively for expatriates, the presence of Indonesians on the course seemed less offensive for being framed by the golf environment. Another popular activity is scuba

diving. It offers similar advantages; it provides contact with the natural environment, while 'Indonesian' realities are largely excluded from it. But when people were praising the 'fantastic Indonesian underwater-world', this evoked images of the less fantastic Indonesian over-water-world, which they seemed much less keen to explore. The secluded nature also extends to entertainment spaces. Most of the entertainment takes place indoors, in air-conditioned spaces, often with no natural light. Magda, a German woman, regarded being in *'just natural daylight'* a real treat on her holidays in Germany, because, *'in Jakarta, I spend all my time under neon lights.'* Most expatriates go for drinks in bars or restaurants that are entirely cut off from the 'natural' environment, at day or nighttime. The 'pub around the corner' does not exist, and bars are often located inside high-rise buildings. People made joking remarks that Jakarta was enjoyable only *'from inside, in the dark, or from above'*. In fact, the high-rise perspective was one of the ways in which the Jakarta cityscape could be consumed safely. When driving towards Jakarta's impressive skyline at night, people expressed their awe, declaring that, *'this is how I really like this city.'* Similarly, a popular spot was a revolving restaurant on the top floor of a high-rise tower, where one could dine while viewing Jakarta from above.

This removedness from the physical and social worlds around them was also captured by an emblematic incident, narrated by a British expatriate wife, Michelle. She had been living with her husband in the Hilton Residence for several months. During the May riots of 1998, which led to the overthrowing of the Suharto government, expatriates were advised not to leave their houses. The high-rise Hilton Residence is located next to the *Semanggi* intersection, where violent clashes between the pro-democracy demonstrators and the military took place. As Michelle recalled, *'since we couldn't go outside, and the men couldn't go to work, we all gathered at the Hilton and*

had cocktail parties. Honestly, we had our Gin and Tonics here, looking out of the window, and could see the clashes between the protesters and the police going on right underneath.'

These distanced, carefully managed relations with the environment are partly intentional; nevertheless, this situation is also regarded as a deprivation. The removal from the 'natural' outside is viewed to some extent as 'unnatural', especially when compared to their lifestyles in their home countries. This links to many peoples' sense of their lives being 'unreal'. In the following, I trace how they try to address this imbalance, and explore their bodily relationships with their surroundings.

Germans especially frequently expressed that they were missing '*nature*' and their desire to '*be able to just go for a walk*' or '*spend time in the forest*'. These were also activities that they enthusiastically recounted doing when returning from a home leave: how nice it was to, '*just go out and feel the spring sun, and breathe fresh air.*' These were seen as impossible in Jakarta. Some people made attempts to redress this, which sometimes turned awkward. Silvia, a German woman, remembered how she wanted to '*go for a walk*' to meet her son at a nearby sports stadium. But on the short way there through a *kampung*: '*it was hot and dusty, it was a pain to walk. And there was this stench - I do not know what, either the sewage canals or something burning, but I couldn't stand it - one couldn't breathe, it was too much.*' The attempt was aborted and she did not try again.

Another woman, Magda, rented a house in a rather green area of Jakarta, with a spacious garden and a veranda overlooking it - which was how she had imagined living

in the tropics would be. But even there, her space was constantly being intruded upon by 'Indonesia'. As Magda described it:

'our garden is very nice - if we're lucky enough to be able to sit in it. Because there are all these mosques around, and you couldn't imagine the noise they make. And it's not just prayers, they also have long speeches. Our friend tells us they are very anti-Christian, very nasty. You won't believe what we endure here during Ramadan. We can't use the garden at all, it is a shame.'

This not only constituted an aural, physical invasion of space, but was also exacerbated by its symbolic dimensions. The intruding noise was not neutral, but represented religious differences; they were prayer calls signifying the Muslim Other. This was regarded as an almost unacceptable invasion of one's aural space, in a different way that for example church bells might have been. Similarly, what disturbed people sitting at their pools were smells from neighbouring *kampungs*, especially that of burned waste. Again, this was more than just an olfactory nuisance; 'burning waste' was also a sign of backwardness, of non-civilisation, that was registered not only with annoyance, but contempt.

There were other involuntary connections with the physical world. In May and June 2000, several earthquakes shook parts of West Java, the reverberations of which were also felt in Jakarta. Many expatriates were frightened, especially those living in high-rise buildings. Judging from the excited conversations days after these events, though, the earthquakes seemed to have bonded them with their surroundings. They did not only provide exciting stories to tell, but produced unforeseen connections. These were embodied experiences of an environment that they felt in other ways cut off from.

International Schools: Symbolic Territory

The interplay between physical and symbolic dimensions also becomes visible in relation to institutions, the values they promote, and their location in Jakarta. An example is the German International School, which was struggling to defend its physical as well as symbolic territories on the outskirts of Jakarta, as I describe in more detail. Almost all international schools in Jakarta seem characterised by the sharp Outside-Inside distinction in terms of their geographic layout. As one enters the compounds' gates, one is leaving an Indonesian Outside to enter a non-Indonesian inside. In the case of the *Jakarta International School*⁸, this is especially pronounced as it is located amidst of a non-expatriate area in Pondok Indah, surrounded by narrow streets and dense traffic. The German International School, on the contrary, had been in a central Jakarta district for years, until it was decided that its site there had become too confining. In 1998, it was moved into an expensive, purpose-built structure on the outskirts of Jakarta in Bumi Serpong Damai. The estate is designed for commercial development, which at the moment appears to be stalled. It is thus surrounded by uninhabited industrial wasteland.

One could interpret the move from the central location, which was regarded as unwise by some members of the German community, as an attempt to gain greater control over the building and its surroundings - that is, by creating a greater distance between the Indonesian environment and the school, both as a building and an institution. Similar to what has been discussed in terms of expatriate houses, a 'school' does not only delineate a spatial, but also a symbolic territory. This was indirectly pointed out by the

⁸ The Jakarta International School (JIS) is also called the 'American School', as it follows the US-curriculum. It is open to all nationalities, and is becoming increasingly popular among non-US expatriates, providing their children with an English-speaking education, despite its rather high fees of about US\$1000 per student per month.

headmaster of the German International School when showing me around the school grounds. While the grassland surrounding the school was fenced off against the outside, he pointed to several goats which were grazing just outside this fence, and remarked, *'We have to keep them out all the time. If you turn away for a minute, they are all over the place. It's the same with the kaki lima [cart vendors] who are hanging out around there. If you do not pay attention, you have them all inside.'* Maintaining the German school's position meant constantly fending off intruders - goats or people. The school was battling with an encroaching Indonesian Outside, trying to keep it at bay. Apart from the damage done by the goats, they symbolise the 'under-developed', poor Indonesian Outside, against which the orderly, wealthy and 'developed' German Inside - signified by an ultra-modern building - has to be protected. This resonates with Sibley's (1992) claim that, 'strongly classified spaces have clear boundaries, their internal homogeneity and order are valued and there is ... a concern with boundary maintenance in order to keep out objects or people who do not fit the classification' (1992:115).

As with expatriate houses, this battle does not stop at the school gates, but is continued inside. Similar to Indonesian domestic workers, the German school employs Indonesians as manual or clerical workers. As the headmaster explained with a sigh, *'I constantly have to work at keeping up standards, and train our personnel to do things properly ... It's very different from Singapore - people there were focused and motivated, they worked 24 hours a day. Here, they work two hours a day - and then they have a bowl of rice, and that's good enough.'* Unlike in expatriate houses, the school situation is more difficult as it is not only Indonesian workers who could detract from implementing 'German values'. The German school also employs so-called *Ortskraefte*, German nationals who permanently live in Indonesia and who do not

receive an 'expatriate package', but work on a local contract with lower wages. These can be German women married to Indonesians, who are trained as kindergarten or high school teachers. But the headmaster emphasised that, *'these people are actually my greatest concern, those who have been here for 20 years. I have to send them to Germany once in a while to make sure they keep up standards. If they've been out here for too long, you lose them.'* In this sense, Germans who are possibly 'going native' also pose a threat to the system of values. A similar situation is presented by children of mixed marriages - for example with a German father and Indonesian mother - that are pupils at the school. They are a source of concern for the headmaster not only in terms of their German language abilities, but also of general attitudes. He reasons that, *'we have too many foreign influences here and must work to keep the German language pure.'* He thus regards it as his mission, *'to keep up the work ethics - I have to deliver German quality.'*

These contestations of physical and symbolic territories link back to the concepts of boundaries discussed above in section 4.1. While many expatriates seem engaged in erecting these boundaries to exclude 'Indonesia' from their spaces, this also extends to institutions. International schools, as shown with the German school, are a pronounced example.

This section has focused on how expatriates experience and negotiate Jakarta cityscapes, both in terms of material and symbolic dimensions. A crucial distinction exists between Inside and Outside spaces. Expatriates' practices demarcate boundaries between these spaces, trying to exclude 'Indonesian' influences, as apparent in their housing practices. It emerges, though, that these boundaries are porous, as the Indonesian Outside keeps entering into the Inside. The Inside is seen as representing

Western values, whereas the Outside embodies the Other, signifying chaos and non-civilisation. Consequently, expatriates' movements through public space are often designed to minimise physical and social contacts with 'Indonesia'. This concerns especially the gaze of the Other, being looked at by Indonesians in the street. In section 4.3, I further explore the significances and effects that this 'gaze' can have.

4.3 The Gaze of the Other

'It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity' (W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 1903/1961:16-17).

In the previous section, I highlighted how the desire to escape the gaze of the Other, while at the same time ensuring a secure, removed view of Jakarta cityscapes, shape and determine expatriates' spatial practices. In this section, I further explore the gaze of the Other, drawing out the 'visibility of the white body' in connection with both expatriates' and Indonesians' visual desire to take the Other into view, and tracing how being the object of Indonesians' gaze impacts on expatriates.

Csordas' (1994) notion of the body as embodied experience becomes especially relevant to what could be called the gaze of the Other, or expatriates' experience of being looked at by Indonesians in public spaces. The bodily experience of being subjected to this gaze - being stared at - is an impressive example of the importance of the visceral. This bodily dimension is compounded by the issues of power and domination contained in it. While being the object of a gaze might produce sheer physical discomfort, it also

exceeds the dimension of the physical through being perceived as exerting symbolic power.

Before pursuing this in more detail, I want to point out a link between the gaze of the Other and what Urry (1990) has called the 'tourist gaze'. Taking this as a basic metaphor for his study on tourism, Urry (1990) suggests that, 'we gaze at what we encounter. And this gaze is as socially organised and systematised as is the gaze of the medic' (1990:1), drawing a parallel to Foucault's gaze of the medic (Foucault 1990). The gaze of the Other that I am concerned with here in some ways constitutes its opposite; it is not foreigners staring at local subjects, but local people staring at foreigners. I do not present this as a unidirectional process, which Urry (1990) seems to do, as he rather disregards the perspective of the locals.

Instead, it is important to recognise the 'gaze' as a bi-directional interaction. This implies that first of all, obviously expatriates are as much spectators and perpetrators of the gaze as they feel objects and even victims of the gaze of the Other. The desire to fix the Indonesian Other in their gaze is thus similarly present. The difference might lie in the kind of gazes, rather than in the act of framing the Other in itself. I suggest that while Indonesians' staring at expatriates is an immediate, explicit way of taking the Other into view, expatriates often exercise the gaze indirectly and from a distance, such as through tinted car windows, from the safety of high-rise apartment buildings, or even in slide-shows presenting 'Indonesian culture'. This viewing from a distance might partly be necessitated by wanting to reduce one's own visibility, while retaining a view on the Other. At the same time, it also embodies more generally many expatriates' attitude towards Indonesia, in the sense of their being detached and removed from it, while nevertheless keeping it within their view and thus also under control. The

existence and presence of this visual desire both of Indonesians and expatriates also reveals expatriates' claims of '*staring at people being uncivilised*' as mere discomfort with being the object of that stare. As it turns out, expatriates similarly perform the act of gazing at the Other, if in a different, less 'visible' form. Their attitude is captured by the image of 'living in the bubble', as one can safely stare out at the Other from inside the 'bubble', while simultaneously trying to protect oneself from and evade the gaze of the Other. In addition to this, it emerges that expatriates' complaints about being stared at stem not so much from an attitude which regards 'staring' as unacceptable in general. Rather, they seem morally indignant about the fact that 'Westerners' are subjected to such humiliation, as this would be at odds with their own perceived 'superiority' in terms of political, economic and social powers.

Expatriates feeling Othered through the gaze is also crucially connected to what could be called the 'visibility of the white body'. As has become obvious in section 4.2, it is specifically the sight of a *bule*, a white foreigner, which tends to incite interest of Indonesians in the street, subsuming expatriates under the domain of 'white'. As 'white' is usually an unmarked category in many expatriates' home countries, being thus racialised is often a new and obviously unpleasant experience for expatriates. It is important to note, though, that their discomfort about being stereotyped and Othered similarly does not signal a criticism of that practice as such, but only of being subjected to it themselves. This is indicated by the fact that expatriates often continue to 'Other' Indonesians, through discursive as well as visual practices, while objecting to being treated like this by Indonesians.

The term *bule* also points towards the heightened and altered significance of the body within the expatriate context, which I discuss in greater detail in the chapter 5. *Bule*

means literally 'albino' in Javanese, thus emphasising a bodily feature, their whiteness, as the main characteristic of foreigners. It is the term most widely used by Indonesians to refer to white-skinned foreigners, similar to the Javanese term *londoh* [white person]. *Bule* is a highly contested term among foreigners, as becomes apparent in heated debates on the 'Living in Indonesia' forum. These debates often centre on the issue of whether *bule* is a derogatory or neutral term. While reconciliatory expatriates attempt to de-politicise this, regarding the term as a convenient shorthand which foreigners have to take in their stride, others regard it as indicating a host of stereotypes and pejorative notions about foreigners. As with the term 'expatriates', how expatriates ascribe the term *bule* signifies their relations with Indonesians. Especially among younger expatriates, it has become common to refer to themselves or friends as being *bule*, indicating a semi-ironic distance to their position in Indonesia, as shown in examples in chapter 7. Apart from its relevance as an element of discourse, the notion of being *bule* anticipates the inescapability of the white body. This issue becomes especially relevant for expatriate women in processes of identification, especially vis-à-vis Indonesian women, but also pertaining to their images of themselves in terms of a 'mind-body-split' with respect to relations with Western men. These issues constitute one of the core themes discussed in chapter 5.

Returning to the gaze of the Other, it is important to keep in mind the inherent two-sidedness of this situation, as outlined above. While in this section I mainly focus on expatriates being the object of the gaze of the Other, the overall situation comprises both expatriates and Indonesians as people who gaze as well as are being gazed at. It is crucial, then, to investigate the power issues involved in these contestations of the gaze. Whose gaze becomes important is dependent on the power issues involved. In some ways, the gaze of the Other is akin to what Mulvey (1989) has identified as the 'male

gaze' in cinematic images. Mulvey (1989) regards, 'the actual image of woman as (passive) raw material for the (active) gaze of man' (1989:25). The 'male gaze' is thus the way a cinematic camera constructs film scenarios to perform and invite the gaze of a presupposed male spectator. Although the gaze of the Other does not include all of these dimensions, it parallels the 'male gaze' in it exerts power, transfixing a stereotyped object of the gaze. One could regard Indonesians' use of the body - and their power to cause physical discomfort in expatriates - as a means of contesting Western domination. The gaze of the Indonesian Other can then also become a means of resistance.

In concrete terms, this refers to the fact that wherever expatriates go, they are likely to be the subject of stares. As soon as a white person enters public space in Jakarta - that is, leaves their house - they are inevitably noticed. This is almost independent of the area where they live, their attire or demeanour. Many expatriates say that they cannot 'escape' these stares - even in their own homes, they sometimes feel subjected to the scrutinising gaze of their household staff. Attempting to avoid or minimise these stares therefore becomes a major factor in expatriates' movements through the city. It also makes expatriate-oriented spaces - such as expensive supermarkets and exclusive hotel lounges - more palatable and attractive. The extreme form of being stared at, however, is walking on the street. Here, expatriates are open and vulnerable to gazes from every passer-by, onlooker, groups of young men hanging out in front of shops, giggling schoolgirls, vendors, beggars and streetsweepers. Since 'the street' is an immensely populated and social space in Jakarta, it harbours many possibilities for being gazed at. Moving through Jakarta by car, on the contrary, largely avoids this - which is part of the reason why many expatriates use the car as the main way of movement through the city, as illustrated in section 4.2.

Being looked at by Indonesians can thus be a disturbing experience. The fact that the majority of expatriates are uncomfortable with being the object of looks wherever they go attests to its power. It makes visible what is rarely acknowledged in expatriate discourses; that they are to some extent subjected to their Indonesian environment.

Although this might not be a deliberate move by the Indonesian onlookers, it effectively unsettles expatriates through objectifying and Othering them. In a symbolic dimension, it crucially reminds them of 'who they are' in terms of their privileged position, and thus forces them to acknowledge and resume their prescribed place. It is partly this moral dimension, coupled with the physical discomfort, which furnishes the gaze of Indonesians with such power.

As Donna observes, the reaction of many expatriates is to avoid this gaze, *'Some people travel like with a bubble around them. They protect themselves - talk about walking through a tunnel. They are walking, but they are not looking at anybody.'*

Conversations between expatriates suggest that this strategy is rather unsuccessful, often exacerbating people's helplessness; both the viewer and the object know that a gaze takes places, and trying to ignore it - by adopting a 'tunnel vision' - is already an acknowledgement of its effect, which both viewer and viewed are aware of.

In addition to that, ignoring the gaze in the Indonesian framework only compounds the situation. As Donna explains, *'the local perspective is, when you are not looking, you are arrogant, sombong.'* Attempts to escape those glances thus only deepen the rifts, and can contribute to Indonesians' ideas about expatriates being arrogant. As Donna points out, the power inherent in the gaze is not necessarily intended. Looking at people might have different meanings in Indonesian contexts than in European ones:

'in our culture, it is different - you do not stare at people and you tell kids not to stare - it's not polite. Like staring at someone who looks different... but staring

is NOT impolite in Indonesia. Here, 90 percent of the people are poor, they would do that. It's like, people watching. They are not all educated - for them, I am like someone they see on TV.'

The importance of these issues becomes obvious in expatriates' daily practices: trying to avoid the gaze of the Other often determines expatriates' use of public spaces. In the following chapter, I trace how expatriates move through and experience Jakarta spaces, as well as the physical boundaries they employ to minimise the impact of the gaze. In this chapter, I focused on how expatriates' spatial experiences of the Jakarta cityscapes and ways of negotiating them reflect and influence their relations with the city, and with 'Indonesia' more in general. Relating this to the main theme outlined in chapter 2, I suggest that the body-in-space is an arena where the construction, maintenance and transgression of boundaries become visible. Here, this refers especially to boundaries between Inside and Outside spaces. A crucial aspect is the interconnection between their material and symbolic dimensions, as Csordas (1994) has pointed out. Spatial experiences do not only become relevant as purely physical, but as embodied experiences, encompassing a symbolic dimension. Inside spaces often signify 'civilisation' and 'order', whereas the Outside denotes chaos and non-civilisation. This becomes apparent in expatriates' housing practices. These aim to exclude the Outside, for example through living in fenced-in compounds or high-rise apartment buildings, which offer a safe, and removed, view of the city. The Inside spaces often mirror Western interiors, and give few hints at the Indonesian environment in which they are situated. Although many expatriates attempt to exclude the Outside from their inside spaces, it keeps entering in various ways, transgressing the boundaries, and revealing them as permeable and porous. This is embodied for example by the

presence of Indonesian staff, whom expatriates see as ‘intruders’ into their Inside spaces.

In contrast to this Inside, the Outside can constitute an alien, threatening space.

Movement through public spaces thus has to be carefully negotiated. I suggest that expatriates see movement as a particularly vulnerable state, as becomes obvious in transport. Travelling in their own car mostly allows them to keep a safe distance from the Outside, while many hardly ever use public transport such as buses. Because of the material inhospitability of Jakarta cityscapes, walking is reduced to a minimum.

Another reason for avoiding walking is the gaze of the Other, being stared at in public spaces. In section 4.3, I further explored this ‘gaze’. It emerges that expatriates and Indonesians are similarly engaged in ‘gazing’ at the other. While expatriates’ gazes might be detached and from a secure distance, reflecting their position in a ‘bubble’, Indonesians’ gazes seem rather immediate, which expatriates denounce as ‘uncivilised’. Expatriates discomfort with being Othered is partly fuelled by deeming this behaviour as unacceptable towards ‘Westerners’. Being racialised as a ‘white body’ flags up the heightened importance of the body within the contestations of race and gender. In the following chapter, I therefore investigate the interconnections between bodies, gender, and race in the expatriate arena.

Chapter 5: Bodies, Race, and Gender

In this chapter, I focus on the significance of the body and its multiple and changing meanings in the context of being an expatriate, especially in relation to aspects of race and gender. Although this is relevant for both expatriate men and women, I place special emphasis on women's bodies. This seems warranted since many women, as discussed in chapter 3, experience a loss of agency and identity brought about by being unable to work, and being separated from social networks in their 'home countries'. In these circumstances, I argue that women's bodies, unlike men's bodies, attain a heightened significance, as they remain one of the few resources available to women for expressing agency and identity. This is exacerbated by their 'Western female bodies' being devalued in the context of relations between Western men and Indonesian women.

In section 5.1, I conceptualise the body as a site of contesting relations with Indonesia. This is performed through body treatments, clothing, and food. The body becomes an arena where, similar to 'space' in the previous chapter, relations between expatriates and 'Indonesia' are played out. In the previous chapter I highlighted boundaries between Insides and Outsides, as the body moves through them. Here, I place the body itself at the centre. It becomes a site of contestation, for even though bodily boundaries are insulated from outside influences, at the same time they are transgressed, for example through 'incorporating' food as elements of 'Indonesia'.

In section 5.2, I aim to disentangle the complex web of evaluations and contestations that white Western women's bodies are caught up in. I suggest that they are forced to re-evaluate their bodies vis-à-vis Indonesian women's bodies. More importantly, their

identifications as women undergo a major shift in terms of a mind-body split. As Indonesian women seem to occupy the position of being attractive by virtue of their bodily features, Western women claim the territory of the 'mind', stressing their intellectual, social and economic power. These contestations, revolving around the body, constitute a background for the changing gender relations between expatriate women and men. Finally, I ask whether boundaries of race and gender in the physical realm are similarly present in cyberspace. In particular, I examine the 'Living in Indonesia' forum, which might provide the participants possibilities for superseding these bodily boundaries.

5.1 Purity and Pollution: Beauty Treatments, Clothes and Food

In this section, I specifically discuss notions of the body and its boundaries, and the body-as-boundary. As outlined in chapter 2, these boundaries comprise visceral as well as symbolic dimensions. In the following, I attempt to elucidate the interplay between these dimensions. Three arenas suggest themselves: first, I consider Javanese beauty treatments, some of which are adopted by expatriates, while others are rejected.

Secondly, I look at the use of Indonesian clothes - and expatriates' reluctance to wear them - as well as suggesting reasons why this might be the case. Thirdly, I examine practices of food production and consumption.

In chapter 2, I argued that the notion of boundaries, rather than just flows, might be useful for elucidating expatriates' practices. More precisely, I do not mean to regard boundaries only as barriers. Boundaries are the site of closure and obstruction as much as of controlled passages across them, as well as uncontrolled transgressions and leakages. This multifaceted, ambivalent notion of boundaries provides a centrepiece for

this analysis. This notion corresponds to the ambivalent attitude of expatriates towards Indonesia. Many expatriates aim for seclusion from, and exclusion of 'Indonesia'. At the same time, expatriates also want to reach out and embrace certain aspects of 'Indonesia', and incorporate them into their lives. This desire might stem from an underlying, diffuse discomfort with their closed-off lifestyle, and could be an attempt to overcome this. It could also be regarded as accumulating social capital, as successful exposure to 'Indonesia' is to a certain extent regarded as admirable. These desires both for seclusion from, and appropriation of, 'Indonesia' generate a concept of 'limited exposure', which many seem to regard as an ideal. Expatriates expose themselves - and their bodies - to 'Indonesia', but only in ways that they can control. I suggest that many of their practices can be regarded most insightfully from this perspective.

Another aspect is the intertwined notion of the body's boundaries with the body-as-boundary. The idea is that through controlling the boundaries of the body, people mark boundaries between more symbolic realms. It becomes clear that the boundaries of the body are as much symbolic as visceral. A basic distinction is Fischler's (1988) notion of 'incorporation', as in the passage of food from an Outside to the Inside. Through this incorporation, people assume not only physical, but also symbolic qualities of what they ingest, which in turn is linked to Douglas' (1966) notion of pollution. Douglas suggests that a crucial aspect of food consumption is the avoidance of pollution, which results in food taboos. Furthermore, she reasons that the concept of 'pollution' is linked to disorder - polluted matter being 'matter out of place'. Douglas' concept also includes a distinction between pure and polluted substances. This distinction crucially rests on the identification of 'anomalies', such as the pig in the Hebrew, or the pangolin in the Lele case. These creatures are seen as 'anomalous', since their bodily features place them between certain categories of animal classification. The fact of them being 'anomalous'

makes them polluting and unacceptable. Douglas (1966), and to a lesser extent Lévi-Strauss (1970), have been criticised for their conceptualisation of the anomalous or ambiguous. In Douglas' view, the ambiguous is conceptually negligible compared with the main categories. One could argue, though, that it is in fact the ambiguous which constitutes the categories. The ambiguous can be seen not as a mere aberration, but as forming the basis for the construction of categories in the first place.

These concepts are highly relevant for the case of expatriates. I suggest that ideas of 'pure' and 'polluted' substances are a key to understanding expatriates' food practices, especially in terms of their differentiations between 'Western' and 'Indonesian' food. If one takes seriously that the ambiguous and polluting is highly significant, and productive of categories, this could have implications for the expatriates' case. It means that expatriates' ideas of 'Western' food are changed, and even constituted, by notions of Indonesian food being 'odd', 'undefined', unknown and dirty. The category of the 'pure', Western food, then becomes everything that is familiar, well defined, clean, and can be trusted. This shift in conceptual significance forms a backdrop to the following section on expatriates' attitudes to and beliefs about food.

It also emphasises a remaining fundamental ambiguity with respect to Indonesian food. Although many expatriates recoil in horror when confronted with Indonesian food, referring to it as 'poison on a stick', this reaction possibly masks more ambivalent feelings. One could suspect that coupled with the disgust is also an element of curiosity or even excitement. This ambivalent attitude towards Indonesian food becomes apparent in the various attempts of expatriates' to sample or incorporate Indonesian food into their diets. This can be done out of necessity, since many Western foodstuffs are not available in Jakarta, or to gain cultural capital and demonstrate one's

adaptability, such as at expatriate social events. A crucial aspect, which underlines the ambivalence, is that expatriates are often anxious to control the preparation of Indonesian foodstuffs and their transformation into 'Western' dishes in their own kitchens, possibly in attempts to limit their ambiguity.

I argue that concepts of purity and pollution can be an integral part of many expatriates' beliefs, not only with respect to food, but also in terms of dress and beauty treatments. This is connected to contestations of race or ethnicity, which mainly concern negotiations between expatriates' lives and 'Western values' more generally on the one side, and 'Indonesia' and 'Indonesian characteristics' on the other. Expatriates' bodily practices are a form of preserving, and sometimes transcending, the boundaries between the 'West' and 'Indonesia'. The 'West', as described above, signifies notions of 'civilisation', purity, and order, while 'Indonesia' stands for chaotic 'non-civilisation', pollution, and disorder, in physical as well as symbolical terms. This resonates with what Lupton (1996) calls the concept of the 'civilised body' (1996:19).

As it turns out, these realms are not distinct, but they intersect continuously, with 'Indonesia' frequently intruding into 'Western' spaces - and bodies. I suggest that, since this intrusion cannot always be avoided, expatriates have adopted certain practices to make this more acceptable. Lévi-Strauss' (1970) concept of the raw and the cooked is instructive here. He maintains a dichotomy between nature and culture, which is instantiated by food practices, especially in relation to the 'raw' and the 'cooked'. Lévi-Strauss (1970) suggests that, 'the raw/cooked axis is characteristic of culture; since cooking brings about the cultural transformation of the raw' (1970:142). Cooking transforms nature into culture, he thus reasons that, 'cooking is conceived of in native thought as a form of mediation' (Lévi-Strauss 1970:64). In the expatriate context, the

raw, 'uncivilised' nature corresponds to the Indonesian outside, while 'culture' is located inside, in Western expatriate lifestyles. To make the uncivilised, polluted 'Indonesia' acceptable it has to be transformed – literally through cooking, or through processes equivalent to it. This applies for example to many expatriates' ways of dealing with Indonesian raw materials and incorporating them into their diet, as I show below. The transformation of food is also linked to the reproduction of European bodies. Historical parallels to this reproduction can be found in colonial times. Stoler (1995) for example emphasised that the reproduction of European bodies is a political issue. She reckons that, 'we are just beginning to explore some of the quotidian ways in which European bourgeois bodies were produced in practices' (Stoler 1995:110). She therefore advocates paying specific attention to the, 'quotidian technologies of self-affirmation' (Stoler 1995:113). Although this refers to the situation in the Dutch Indies in colonial times, it also adequately describes expatriates' bodily practices today.

Beauty Treatments

An interesting dimension of bodily practices is 'Javanese' beauty treatments. These are offered in salons in Jakarta, which many Indonesians use, but some of which are also popular with expatriates. In the following, I describe some of these practices and their consumption. Expatriates' use of Javanese body treatments illustrates the sometimes conflicting tendencies characteristic of their relations with 'Indonesia'. Some practices are strictly avoided, such as consuming herbal medicines, as these are seen as too 'polluting'. Others such as beauty treatments are quickly adopted, especially if they are packaged for Western consumption, such as beauty treatments. I suggest that this is a form of appropriation, as it allows elements of 'Indonesia' to be adopted, but only, within a canon of acceptable Western practices. In particular, I discuss the herbal

medicine, *jamu*⁹ and expatriates' dislike of it, as well as beauty treatments such the 'creambath', which they are rather enthusiastic about.

Java has a long tradition of 'natural' body treatments, of herbal medicines and massages, which cure ailments and promote general wellbeing. These treatments encompass a whole range of beliefs and practices, which are alive and popular in metropolitan Jakarta. A few practices in particular are relevant here. Many Javanese regularly use herbal medicine drinks, called *jamu*, which are prepared daily and sold by 'jamu-ladies'. *Jamu* is sold from re-used plastic water bottles and is of a yellowish-orange colour, and undefined consistency. As far as I could gather, hardly any of the expatriates living in Jakarta had ever used any of this *jamu* or intended to do so. *Jamu* seemed to be the embodiment of the polluting Other; ingesting substances like this would have been unthinkable for expatriates for several reasons. One could argue that concerns about hygiene were part of this, or that buying from street vendors was something that only their servants did. Crucially, *jamu*, apart from its material qualities, held symbolic significance. *Jamu* - based on beliefs of the healing quality of herbs, in particular the 'unclean' way they were presented, came to signify Indonesian irrationality, dirt, 'non-civilisation', and backwardness for expatriates. Rejection of substances like *jamu* erected and asserted boundaries between the expatriate self and the Indonesian Other. At the same time, some expatriate women seemed to wish to appropriate some of these Javanese practices; but this could only be done with those practices that were 'suitable'.

⁹ The term *jamu* denotes a tonic made of medicinal herbs (Echols 1989). These tonics are home-made 'health drinks' that the *jamu*-lady prepares and sells. Characteristically, one of the more fashionable, expatriate-oriented beauty salons in Jakarta was called 'Jamu'. This probably did not detract in the slightest from the marketability of this fashionable, 'sophisticated' beauty parlour to expatriates.

The range of Javanese health practices also encompasses 'beauty treatments', which prove ideal for purposes of appropriation. Consequently, receiving 'Javanese body treatments' at a beauty salon often became part of expatriate women's lives and a regular event in their personal schedules. It must be stressed that these treatments do not necessarily come in the same form as those received by Indonesians. Although the clientele at some salons consisted of both Indonesian and expatriate women, some beauty salons offer services especially tailored to expatriates, such as the (in) appropriately named '*Jamu*' salon. Their promotional brochure promises to provide '*a few hours of blissful indulgence*', and offers '*a multitude of ... treatments designed to delight, replenish and relax your mind and body*' (promotional leaflet) such as facials, 'creambaths', manicures and pedicures.

As I went to one of these salons one day, a few Western women sat in a large room, being tended to by Indonesian staff. Some of the women were chatting to each other while receiving treatment. A rather large American woman was sitting in her chair, almost bulging out of it, her head stuck under a hair-dryer. While an Indonesian beauty technician was manicuring her right hand, her feet were bathed by another one squatting over the basin at her feet. In a rather blasé tone, she talked to her neighbour, '*I said to Jean, why are you getting upset? You know Debbie can be like that.*' Her friend was nodding in agreement, while her head was being massaged with lathery foam. Other expatriate wives, alongside Indonesian women, were getting similar treatments, as this had become part of their weekly schedule.

Other salons were even more conspicuously designed for Western consumption. One example is the '*Jamu*' salon, which resembles a modern beauty spa. While the kinds of salons described above were popular with expatriate wives, '*Jamu*' was especially

popular among young professionals. The equivalent of ‘cosmopolitan cuisine’, this salon presented beauty treatments which fitted into a Western canon of acceptable and fashionable ‘ethnic’ practices. The services offered at ‘*Jamu*’ comprised both more ‘ethnic’ treatments such as a ‘headmassage’ or a *mandi lulur*¹⁰, [a traditional herbal body rub] alongside routine Western beauty treatments such as leg waxing and manicures. This combination became obvious when entering ‘*Jamu*’. A mixture of essential aromatic oils and subtle traditional Javanese *gamelan* music filled the air, while several Indonesian women were busy caring for Western customers in tastefully decorated rooms, with muted colours and dimmed lights. All this obviously bore little resemblance to the traditional *jamu*-ladies with their wares strapped to their backs, trailing around *kampungs* [neighbourhoods] and selling their home-made health drinks. An American, Christine, who worked for a consulting firm, declared that she loved going there, ‘*because it’s great to be pampered, especially when you had a hard day, and living here in Jakarta - plus, I really like their creambaths.*’ A ‘creambath’, not as the name suggests, is in fact a hair treatment combined with a head massage. The hair is washed and an herbal conditioner applied, which is then slowly massaged into the hair. Together with the neck, shoulders, and upper arms are massaged as well as the head. This is a distinctly Javanese practice, which many expatriates seem to take up with relish. At the same time, Christine also wanted to get her legs waxed, while her friend Tanya was going to have both pedicures and manicures. As Tanya explained, ‘*it’s such a nice atmosphere here, and they really make you feel great*’, as two assistants were working on her hands and feet, ‘*and at home in New York I couldn’t afford this kind of thing anyway.*’

¹⁰ Ironically, the term *mandi lulur* refers to a herbal bath to lighten one's complexion, something that might be popular with Indonesians, but which expatriate women would not be aiming for.

One could see how these treatments are not only acceptable to Western tastes in terms of physical experiences, but also provide expatriates with the feeling of 'having connected to Indonesia'. They showcase several elements of expatriates' positions in Indonesia. The experience of a beauty salon is not only a safe exposure to 'Indonesian life', but furthermore can confirm expatriates' perceived superior position. Being tended to hand and foot by smiling, deferential Indonesian staff feeds into some expatriates' perception of being socially superior and consequently, deserving of such treatment. The fact that expatriates can afford these treatments, in contrast to life in their home countries, reveals a rather neo-colonial aspect of the whole scenario. These treatments also indicate another aspect; they could be seen as a 'sensual indulgence', with attention lavished on their bodies in a way they might neither have time nor money for at home. While on an expatriate posting, this not only becomes possible, but also suggests itself as an experience of 'oriental sensuality' which might be part of their expectations of Indonesia. Visits to beauty parlours, though, do not only carry positive connotations such as 'luxury' and 'pampering oneself'. Women's bodies are also a site of activity in a life that only allows for limited agency. In that sense, beauty treatments remain ambiguous practices.

While *jamu* is categorised as unacceptable and beauty treatments as appropriate, another Javanese practice - body massage - remains a grey zone. Several expatriate women appreciated professional massage services, while for others this seemed a suspect, or at the least undesirable treatment. This might have been partly to do with the presumed connection to sex workers or that was perceived as too 'invasive' - one's almost naked body being massaged by an Indonesian woman. It posed definitely less of a problem for expatriate men than for women, indicating the relevance of gender issues.

Clothes

Another aspect of the body marking boundaries between expatriates and Indonesia was through the use of clothes. As Stoler (1995) observes, ‘adoptions of Javanese dress by European-born Dutch colonials were only permissible at leisure, as other more hardfast cultural distinctions between European and native were drawn’ (1995:113). Again, this captures many current expatriate attitudes. Indonesian clothes, by and large, were hardly ever worn by expatriates, who for the most part stuck to a slightly modified version of the Western dress they would wear at home.

This is especially interesting since Indonesia has a long tradition of textile production, such as the Javanese *batik*¹¹. Nevertheless, Indonesian cloth was not often deemed suitable by expatriates. I seldom came across expatriate women wearing dresses made from Indonesian cloth. Referring back to the body as boundary, as well as to Douglas’ (1966) ideas of pollution, one could speculate that wearing Indonesian clothes on one’s skin would have signified a too close relation between oneself and ‘Indonesia’. Having these ‘raw’ textiles on one’s skin might have carried the danger of symbolic pollution. Here, Lévi-Strauss’ (1970) concept of a necessary transformation to ‘culture’ might be relevant. As it turns out, ‘transformation’ was involved whenever expatriate women did use Indonesian cloth. This meant having it tailored into clothes modelled on their own patterns, or copying their Western-style dresses they brought from home, such as skirts or scarves. As unmodified Indonesian could have been ‘polluting’, having it tailor-made, and thus transformed, made it acceptable.

¹¹ *Batik*-cloth, among *ikat* and *songket*, is probably the best-known textile product from Indonesia. Clothes made from *batik* are still worn by a large part of the population, for example in rural Java, especially by the older generations.

While cloth in a 'pure' form was rejected, it was celebrated in other ways; a favourite item of interior decoration were pieces of textile - such as woven *songket* from Sumatra, as well as colourful *ikat* from Timor, which were expensively framed and hung on expatriates' living room walls. Secured and distanced in this way, Indonesian culture becomes acceptable. It served as a token for one's connection with this country: a claim made through objects that was often neither implemented nor paralleled in terms of these expatriates' social practices.

The case of Caroline and Tim is an example. Both were independent young professionals living in high-rise apartments, who in their daily lives had little contact with Indonesians. As I described earlier, Caroline made every effort to avoid contact with Indonesians on the street, which she found discomfoting and threatening. Yet, since Caroline had lived in Indonesia for more than a year, she was searching for a tangible manifestation of this, since it was not visible in her life otherwise. Towards the end of Caroline's stay, she and a friend of hers, Tim, discovered the possibility of having 'traditional Indonesian wedding dresses' tailor-made for themselves. Caroline ordered a Sumatran wedding dress, while Tim had a Javanese wedding outfit, including a *kris* [traditional Javanese dagger], made. As I took photographs of Caroline in her new costume, as she had asked me to, she remarked with satisfaction, '*Now I have lived here for a while, and I am going away soon, I really want something to show that I was in Indonesia, something to prove this!*' Similarly, Tim, who had moved out of his Indonesian neighbourhood because he was unwilling to deal with Indonesians in such proximity, felt rather happy about his newly acquired dagger, as he did about the stone carvings set up in his apartment which he had brought back from trips to Sumatra. These objects were token claims to a connection with Indonesia that was conspicuously absent from their personal lives. There is also an irony in the situation, although neither

Caroline nor Tim perceived it as such. These wedding costumes, together with the fact that Caroline wanted to be photographed in them, as well as Tim's enthusiasm for his *kris* suggest acting out 'oriental fantasies', in the same way that receiving head massages with essential oils in a 'Javanese' beauty salon did.

Food

As with beauty treatments and clothes, concepts of purity and pollution played a role with respect to food. The attitude expressed by Sarah, a young British woman, can be seen as typical, '*Indonesian food? That's poison on a stick!*' The concept of 'limited exposure' that many expatriates perform becomes visible in terms of food. Wanting to maintain a 'Western lifestyle', coupled with the desire to appropriate elements of 'Indonesia', is a key concept in understanding expatriates attitudes towards food production and consumption. I outline some theoretical considerations concerning food, and then turn to expatriates' practices.

One of the central aspects of the body, and bodily boundaries, concerns the role of food. The history of theorising food production and consumption often replicates the dichotomies between the material and the symbolic pointed out in chapter 4. As mentioned above, structuralists such as Lévi-Strauss and Douglas have treated food mainly in terms of its symbolic qualities. In Douglas' (1975) view, food encodes messages about social relations like, 'hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, boundaries and transactions across boundaries' (Douglas 1975:61). Lévi- Strauss (1970) was similarly interested in food as a signifier, 'not only does cooking mark the transition from nature to culture, but through it and by means of it, the human state can be defined with all its attributes' (1970:164).

It seems that anthropology's preoccupation with the symbolic is only beginning to be replaced by the realisation that, 'the physiological dimension of food is inextricably intertwined with the symbolic' (Lupton 1996:8), in the sense of taking seriously its visceral qualities. In that way, Csordas' (1994) appeal to conceptualise 'embodied experiences' - of which the production and consumption of food are prime examples - is more than timely. As discussed above, this need not imply a neglect of its symbolic qualities. In the following, it emerges that processes of boundary making and transgressing are performed in both visceral and symbolic ways.

Fischler (1988) has cogently demonstrated why food consumption displays visceral aspects of boundary making and transgressing. Fischler's (1988) main concept, 'incorporation', implies that by eating, we literally incorporate outside substances into our body and thereby into our 'self'. Incorporation is 'the action in which we send a food across the frontier between the world and the self, between "outside" and "inside" our body' (Fischler 1988:279). This simultaneity of material and symbolic processes is echoed by Bakhtin (1984), who declares that: 'by the act of eating and absorption of food, we become what we eat. By taking food into the body, we take in the world' (Bakhtin 1984:281). This relates to the main issue here, the boundaries of the body as well as the body-as-boundary. Bakhtin (1984), acknowledging these boundaries, stresses their porous and open nature:

'The distinctive character of this body is its open unfinished nature, its interaction with the world. These traits are most fully and concretely revealed in the act of eating; the body transgresses here its own limits ... here man tastes the world, introduces it to his body, makes it part of himself' (Bakhtin 1984:281).

This also implies that the body can be used as a resource for the drawing of boundaries. Both become relevant in the contestations of race, gender, and nationalism, as I present them in later chapters.

If taking food into your body signifies incorporating its symbolic qualities, then this should be a rather salient and potentially dangerous activity. As Lupton (1996) asserts, 'this sense of danger around food and eating in relation to bodily boundaries is ... central to any act of eating' (1996:16). One might add that in the expatriate context with its highly contested values, eating is regarded even more as a precarious activity. With this in mind, I turn to examine expatriate practices of food production and consumption. Although so far I mainly stressed the making of boundaries, their transgressions are equally important. This includes voluntary transactions across these boundaries - like the ingestion of Indonesian food items - as well as involuntary transgressions, which expatriates often anxiously attempt to control. This also relates to Csordas' (1994) reminder of corporeal fluidity - people realise these flows take place, but anxiously guard against them rather than welcome them.

Transgressions of the body's boundaries are important precisely because they relate to the body-as-boundary. This refers less to the body as a passive site of inscription of symbolic values, but, following Csordas (1994), regards the body as an active agent. In beauty treatments, clothing, and food consumption, the body becomes an agent. The boundaries contested here are mainly those of ethnicity and nationality. I will discuss one of the most significant differentiations, between 'Westerners' and 'Indonesia', and those between different Western nationalities, as well as cultural or 'lifestyle' differences. The body-as-boundary links back to a structuralist understanding of food as a marker of differences. Caplan (1997) notes that there is, 'a preoccupation with

food as a marker of difference, including such classic sociological variables as gender, age, class and ethnicity which frequently ‘make a difference’ to eating patterns’ (1997:9). Similarly, Lupton (1996) points out that, ‘food is instrumental in marking differences between cultures, serving to strengthen group identity, [and that] food and culinary practices thus hold an extraordinary power in defining the boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’’ (1996:25-26). ‘Us’ and ‘Them’, in this case, would alternatively refer to ‘Us’ as Western expatriates, as German nationals, or young cosmopolitan professionals, while ‘Them’ in contrast could denote Indonesians, expatriates of other nationalities, or the older family expatriates. This becomes obvious later in chapters 6 and 7, where the role of food for social identification is addressed.

Finally, it is important to clarify an issue concerning hygiene. I have frequently invoked expatriates’ fixation with hygiene in terms of food, as well as with respect to housing and other areas. I do not intend to present these concerns as entirely unfounded and as mere exaggerated sensitivities of paranoid and parochial Euro-Americans. Obviously, concerns with hygiene in tropical climates are legitimate and sensible. While I acknowledge this, my aim here is to explore their symbolic dimensions. Discussions about ‘germs’ are about technical issues of hygiene, but I argue that these discourses, at the same time, function as a way of speaking about ‘Western values’. Discourses on hygiene can thus include subtexts of more symbolic notions, which are only expressed and exchanged indirectly. In the following sections, I aim to make these symbolic subtexts more explicit.

Just because you've left
Britain, it doesn't mean your
taste has to.



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Expatriates' Food Practices

Expatriates' tendencies to perpetuate Western lifestyles in terms of food became visible, for example, at an afternoon coffee gathering at a German woman's home. The occasion in itself being a very German institution, the setting contained all the required elements; coming from a glistening, sun-filled 32-degree-outside, one entered the dimmed, air-conditioned inside. A table was decorated with burning candles, where homebaked cakes and waffles were prepared. These were served with jam and freshly whipped cream, which threatened to wither any minute and had to be taken back to the kitchen immediately after serving them. On another occasion, a family had breakfast with the table mirroring a German breakfast table: it featured a breadbasket with rolls, butter, and organic honey, a glassware teapot and paper-napkins with ladybird-prints. On the whole, my impression - from talking to people, sharing meals with them and glancing into their fridges - was that the majority still consumed as much 'Western', or their respective country's food as possible.

This continuity in food practices was made possible through imported foodstuffs; about half a dozen Western-style supermarkets in Jakarta provided for an almost complete recreation of Western eating habits. While this was probably a reflection of people's preferences, it could also be seen as a way of distancing oneself from Indonesian eating practices. Western foodstuffs often seemed to be regarded as the only 'pure' substances available - in a material and symbolic sense. The fact that many American expatriates saw it as necessary to soak their supermarket-bought vegetables in chlorine bleach before cooking them illustrates the seriousness attached to the matter.

If Western food was 'pure', Indonesian food - as discussed above - was seen as 'polluted'. Many expatriates found it unthinkable to consume Indonesian food bought from vendors or street kitchens. From their appalled reactions one could conclude that eating those foods implied if not life-threatening illnesses, at least instant discomfort and danger. While eating on the streets was entirely avoided, however, expatriates had to face the fact that their cooks were Indonesian, and, if left to themselves, would source many of their ingredients from local markets and vendors. Many expatriates, especially long-term ones, acknowledged these practicalities, which meant that some of the food served at their homes was going to be 'Indonesian' - in the form of basic ingredients or even whole dishes. Here, Lévi-Strauss' (1970) concept of the transformation from the raw to the cooked becomes relevant again: while eating Indonesian food directly from the street or in its 'raw', polluted state was unthinkable, transformation and appropriation - for example, supervising one's staff, in one's own kitchen, while food was prepared - made it acceptable and 'safe' to consume Indonesian food, in hygienic as well as in symbolic terms. For example, at some social lunches at expatriate houses, the main dish might be a German staple - such as *Hackbraten*, a minced meat pie. The side dishes, though, could be almost Indonesian, as for example *wrap*, an Indonesian vegetable dish based on spinach and coconut, or corn fritters in place of potatoes.

Overall, there always seemed to be a desire for maintaining Western food habits; and if they could be performed with Indonesian raw materials, this was fortuitous. Fish was such an example; in German households, having fish for lunch would be perfectly acceptable, so if it came prepared Indonesian-style, for example with a spicy sauce, this seemed to maintain the balance between Indonesian ingredients and Western food habits. I also had the impression that the longer the expatriates had stayed in Indonesia

- usually for more than five years - the more likely it was that their menus would contain Indonesian dishes, more or less disguised as 'Western'.

The emphasis on transforming Indonesian food materials into Western dishes becomes especially visible in bilingual cookbooks. Many of the women's groups in Jakarta - such as the American, British and German Women's Association - published their own bilingual cookbooks (e.g. Brücke 2000, American Women's Association 1997). They consist of respectively American, British and German recipes, which are written on the left-hand side. On the right hand side appears the translation of the recipe into Indonesian - in order to enable the Indonesian cooking staff to learn how to prepare these Western dishes properly. While some concessions to availability of ingredients are made, many seemed to be taken straight from 'national' cookbooks. Only occasionally are substitute ingredients suggested, e.g. using non-sweetened apple juice instead of white wine, coriander for parsley, and the German dairy product *Quark* for the Italian *mascarpone* in the recipe for *Tiramisu*. Overall, though, one could interpret these cookbooks as a staunch effort to carry out Western food practices in Indonesian kitchens, performed by Indonesian cooks with local ingredients. The West, it seems, has to leave its mark, even in the family kitchen.

Apart from these efforts to modify and control local influences, there were also deliberate attempts to appropriate Indonesian food. This is connected, as indicated above, to the apparent desire to incorporate some elements of 'Indonesia' into one's life. In general, many expatriates were both uninterested in and often ignorant of Indonesian food. For example, a German woman expressed genuine surprise after tasting a banana fritter [*pisang goreng*] at a gathering at an expatriate's house. It turned out that during two years of living in Indonesia, she had never encountered this staple snack, which is

sold at virtually every street corner in Jakarta, as well as being a central part of any official Indonesian buffet. Similarly, in a conversation with an American woman, she admitted that she had never encountered *tempeh* [fermented soybeans] which occupy an equally central position in most Indonesians' daily diet.

In some instances, however, people made efforts to familiarise themselves with Indonesian staple foods, and even to incorporate some of them into their menus. One item lending itself to this was the spring roll. Most foods offered at functions at expatriates' homes, for example, were decidedly Western-style snacks and dishes. The spring roll, though, served with Indonesian chilli sauce, *sambal*, was as an acceptable piece of 'Indonesia'. This could be an expression of a token appropriation as well as genuine appreciation. It could satisfy one's wish to connect to 'Indonesia' and to identify with something Indonesian that one enjoyed. This showed that one did not live in an 'expatriate bubble' but was able to relate to 'Indonesia' as well. *'I could just die for these springrolls'*, a young German woman sighed after some helpings at a committee meeting. *'They're nice, aren't they'*, the hostess said, *'have some more.'* On another occasion, the guests were praising the homemade springrolls, and the hostess agreed, *'Yes, I find them quite acceptable, too.'*

In general, though, there were rather few Indonesian products that expatriates seemed able to endorse wholeheartedly. The need for such endorsements becomes obvious with what I call 'fusion products'. These are products manufactured in Indonesia, under foreign supervision, with 'Western' standards of quality and hygiene. The enthusiasm with which expatriate women latched onto these products indicated the need for them. One example is 'Yummi' products. This range of dairy products is manufactured just outside Jakarta in a small factory, which was set up by, and is managed by a German

woman, Johanna, who was mentioned in chapter 3. These products, while cheaper than imported ones, successfully reproduce German-style dairy products such as yoghurt, *Quark*, and various kinds of cheeses. The German Women's Association regularly conducted tours of this factory, including tastings, and the visiting women usually seemed extremely pleased with the conditions of manufacturing and the resulting products. I suggest that the popularity of the 'Yummi' products, apart from their quality, was due to the fact that they offered a 'piece of Indonesia' that expatriate women could safely adopt. I refer to these products as 'fusion products'. Consuming *Yummi* products allowed for a continuation of Western food habits, while endorsing 'locally produced' food demonstrated one's ability to leave the expatriate realm. This was enjoyable and socially useful, as well as 'safe' in material and symbolic terms, being both hygienic and ensuring one's eating habits did not become 'too local'.

Hygiene

This emphasis on hygiene, relating back to the guarding of Inside spaces discussed in chapter 4, frequently surfaces in discussions among expatriates. While 'Western' and 'Indonesian' foods and hygiene practices are often constructed as opposites, the boundaries between them are revealed as permeable. However much expatriates try to bar 'Indonesian' practices from their homes, these practices keep entering it in multiple, uncontrollable ways.

Importantly, Indonesians live inside expatriates' houses, as servants. Although staff usually spends their time off-duty in the servants' quarters, they still populate houses, gardens, and cars during much of the day. In this situation, the staff's minds and bodies become realms on which expatriates attempt to impose their order, especially in terms

of hygiene. These attempts often seem to be met with intentional or accidental resistance¹². It transpired from conversations between expatriate wives that they regarded the enforcement of certain hygienic ‘standards’ as crucial, but difficult to achieve. This refers to physical dirtiness, and includes ‘doing things properly’, indicating symbolic regimes of value. The following debate taken from the ‘Living in Indonesia’ forum illustrates this.

Julie, a British expatriate, has been reprimanded on the forum for being too narrow-minded on issues of staff hygiene. She defends herself, claiming that:

‘all I wanted was some practical advice about maintaining western standards of cleanliness in my new home. Yes, western standards ARE different from the locals - open your eyes! OK, cleaning may not get rid of every microscopic germ that may be lurking in the toilet/kitchen, but a wipe over with bleach will kill the majority & washing your hands is a UNIVERSALLY accepted method of maintaining personal hygiene. Once ... my staff have got the “hygiene message”, I do not think I’ll need to inspect them daily, but in the meantime, I will do what is necessary to keep my family healthy & that doesn’t mean storming in like the Gestapo. You seem to think it all comes down to some sort of racist or superior attitude ie: you wouldn’t do it to western staff, but it really comes down to different standards. It’s just a matter of education.’ (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by arnup@cbn.net.id, 21/02/01).

Paul responds that:

‘my point remains that you would not dare to behave like this if your staff were “whiteys” or spoke good English - but it’s OK to do it to “these people”, as you

¹² McClintock describes practices of resistance of black servants in colonial South Africa, through a close reading of the biography of the writer Olive Schreiner (McClintock 1998).

call them. Secondly, if you think that cleaning surfaces and washing hands is going to protect you from the thousands of uncatalogued virus' lurking in the tropics, then you are sadly deluded. Thirdly, a concern about hygiene can easily become an obsession - particularly for those who do not get out much. Reminds me of the accountant who insisted that his pembantu clean his morning egg in chemically treated water before she boiled it for his breakfast, or the woman who bathed only in bottled water.' (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Paul, 21/02/01).

Julie still disagrees:

'Personal hygiene isn't "obvious" to these people, get real. Their kitchens leave a lot to be desired. Why do you think associations like ICAC¹³: feel the need to provide courses on food hygiene and preparation AND personal hygiene "for your employees?" If you want that outside your door because "it's relative" then feel free-but our discussion is how NOT to have it outside our back door.'

Paul makes clear that the ICAC:

'do a good job in their training work, but they do meet market need, not real need - that is, they give people what they want but this doesn't "prove" anything, except maybe that there is a lot of obsessed people "out there." Not that I do not like a bit of cleanliness myself - for your information, I have a fairly clean arse as well, having mastered both modes of the arse-wipe.' (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Paul, 21/02/01).

¹³ICAC stands for International Community Activities Center. This is a social organisation geared towards expatriates and especially expatriate wives. It offers introductory courses on dealing with 'culture shock', as well as a range of social, creative and sports activities. These include training courses for Indonesian household staff, such as cooking courses and, in fact, 'introduction to cooking hygiene' courses.

This exchange illustrates attempts to impose certain practices in one's own house as well as the servants' quarters. It resonates with ideas of purity and pollution as discussed in relation to food, again indicating that the fear of being engulfed by germs exceeds the rationale of physical hygiene and encompasses more symbolic dimensions. In this section, I focused on the body as a site of negotiating relations with Indonesia. Central to this is the notion of the 'body-as-boundary' between the Western self and an Indonesian Outside. The ways in which expatriates defend these boundaries, or allow transactions across them, indicate their attitudes and beliefs concerning 'Indonesia'. In particular, I invoked Douglas' (1966) concept of purity and pollution to elucidate expatriates' attitudes towards bodily practices such as Javanese beauty treatments, wearing Indonesian clothes, and consumption of Western and Indonesian food. I argued that while expatriates regard some of these, such as herbal medicine, with suspicion, they also adopt others, such as certain Javanese beauty treatments. This points to a fundamentally ambivalent attitude: while some Indonesian practices and substances are regarded as 'polluted', others can be safely adopted, feeding into ideas of 'Oriental sensuality' or enlarging one's 'intercultural capital'. The most pronounced example is food practices. Expatriates harbour similar ambivalences towards Indonesian food, which can cause them to repel it or adopt it. Adopting it necessitates a transformation from its 'raw' or 'impure' state, which is associated with 'Indonesia', into a 'cooked' substance connected with culture or 'Western' food. Finally, I stressed that discourses on food and hygiene do not only refer to purely physical qualities, but incorporate more symbolic subtexts that exceed them.

5.2 *Jersey Cows and Asian Tigers: Women's Bodies and Gender Relations*

In this section, I focus on expatriate women's bodies as they are repositioned and revalued within the domains of gender and race. This influences Western women's relations with Indonesian women and men, as well as with Western men. I argue that women's bodies attain a heightened significance in the expatriate context, as they become the main markers of identity and sites of agency. This coincides with expatriate women's body image being undermined and devalued vis-à-vis Indonesian women's 'Asian' bodies. Expatriate women's response to this is twofold: first, they attempt to re-evaluate their bodies in positive terms, embracing their 'Western bodies'; secondly, this might transform their identification as women in terms of a mind-body-divide. While they were used to being appreciated as women in terms of their bodily as well as mental features, the presence of 'female Asian bodies' forces them to redefine themselves mainly in terms of their intellectual qualities. Since Indonesian women seem to occupy the territory of the 'body', especially as young, exotic, and docile bodies, many expatriate women shift to the territory of the 'mind'. This implies stressing their personal capabilities as well as their social and economic independence. Underlying this shift is the same Cartesian mind-body divide that has sustained the dichotomy of the 'material' and the 'conceptual' that Csordas' (1994) urges to leave behind. This has two crucial implications. First, although Western women might conceive of their situation in terms of this mind-body divide, or boundary, it is imperative to elucidate the connections between them. This means taking seriously the symbolic dimensions of the body. It also demands an awareness of the bodily aspects of women's identification as 'minds', or, as seemingly bodiless 'honorary males'. Secondly, this brings back the main theme of boundaries. I claimed that expatriates' lives are characterised by boundaries. An instance of this is the boundaries arising from

the intersections of race and gender. As outlined in chapter 2, it is precisely these kinds of boundaries, which can crucially alter expatriate women's lives.

In the following section, I trace how these boundaries play out with respect to Western women's identification as women, and their self-redefinition as 'minds' rather than 'bodies'. I explore ways in which this influences their relations with Indonesian women, specifically in the context of power struggles as 'white Westerners', and how these boundaries impact on gender relations between Western women and Western men.

Identity and Women's Bodies

The most relevant issue in the first place is how in the expatriate situation women's bodies become crucial in terms of their identity as women. I will first elucidate this, and then discuss how this is paralleled by a simultaneous destabilisation and deprecation of their bodies. A quote from the 'Living in Indonesia' forum highlights an initial predicament that expatriate women can find themselves in:

'Shopping, girls! Went to Pondok Indah mall yesterday to look for some clothes for myself. Shock, horror - everything I saw that I liked was TINY. I am not huge (size 12 Aussie), but I'm sure Barbie would have trouble getting into some of the little numbers on the racks. Do they keep bigger sizes out the back, or am I doomed? HELP!' (posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by Rebecca, beck339@hotmail.com, 08/02/01).

Rebecca's plea indicates how, in the context of being an expatriate woman in Jakarta, the female body attains heightened significance. As discussed in chapter 2, many women feel being stripped of their social or personal identities when coming to

Indonesia. In this situation, they often find themselves thrown back onto their bodies - having to make increased use of them as resources for expression and sites of agency. As many women have explained, they feel that, '*nobody here knows who you are, you do not have a personal history*'. They can feel reduced to their bodies to convey a sense of their identity and social standing. This holds for relations inside the expatriate community as well as for reassurance of their 'Westernness', stressing the difference to a perceived 'uncivilised' Indonesian Other. Hence, immaculate dress and grooming prevails at expatriate women's gatherings, as well as the absence of Indonesian clothing, which I discussed above. In addition to this, the importance of the Western body is reinforced by its visibility in public spaces, as discussed in chapter 4 concerning the gaze of the Other. In this situation, expatriates can experience their personalities being reduced and confined to their bodily appearance as Westerners by Indonesians, which is signified by the use of the Indonesian term *bule* [white foreigner].

Connected to this changed importance of the body, perceptions of one's body can change. Having spent much time with Indonesians, Monika, a German development consultant, recounted, '*after a while, I thought I was dark, too. I blended myself in with the others. But when I looked into a mirror, I was startled- I had forgotten how white I was.*' The discrepancy between self-perception and perception by others emerges when watching other foreigners. As Monika put it, '*once I saw three Scandinavian guys entering a bar, and I suddenly saw them with Indonesian eyes, how big and massive they were.*' This can also extend to the perception of expatriate women's own bodies, which in comparison with Asian women's bodies can suddenly appear elephantine, gross and clumsy.

The body also becomes a signifier of women's identities through the increased emphasis of motherhood. Bereft of their career, being a homemaker, having children becomes a major source of identification. This ties in with the re-evaluation of Western women's bodies mentioned above. With women over 35, sexual attractiveness seems to become less important in comparison to their reproductive capacities, which makes it difficult for women without children. Women's roles as childbearers seem to become central to their definition as women, especially if the role of 'sexual seducer' shifts to Indonesian women.

While the body is used for the expression of identity, this focus on the body is not entirely by choice. As discussed, many women talk about their *'loss of independence'* or agency, for example in having their freedom of movement limited. The body remains one of the few available possibilities for agency. Together with the emphasis on 'proper Western attire', this becomes apparent in the activities of the women's associations. A regular event with the British Women's Association are 'Colour Me Beautiful'-mornings, where beauty specialists give advice on 'the perfect make-up'. The German Women's Association presented talks on 'Collagen and how to stay younger', while the British and American associations featured annual fashion shows, staged in prestigious hotels in Jakarta, which culminated in glamorous balls. Even the 'Forum for Executive Women', which focused on fostering business and social relationships between female professionals, occasionally chose to present 'light topics' - such as 'Health and Fitness' and 'The perfect business dress' as part of their programme. The attention lavished on the body also becomes apparent in beauty treatments such as discussed above. Many women seized opportunities to take up sports, even if they had not done so before. For some, especially those without children, this could become their main occupation. The most popular activities were tennis and

golf, and some women spent every other day on the tennis court or golf course. This might not be due to the lack of other occupations, but they respond to the desire for agency, which many felt they were denied otherwise.

It also revealed an issue seen as threatening: many women felt that, with paid work and housework being taken away from them, the lure or danger of an 'oriental life of idleness', and a loss of control over their weight, was an ever-present danger. Michelle told me that she '*had nothing in the fridge- because if I keep something there, I will eat it.*' Similarly, I witnessed expatriate husbands criticising their wives for being too fat, '*At least Diana is watching her weight, and not eating as much as you do,*' remarked one husband to his wife, while his friend's wife answered, '*I know Wolfgang thinks I would look even better with a few kilos less*' - with none of these women being remotely overweight.

Devaluation of Western Women's Bodies

This points towards a major issue overshadowing expatriate women's lives. I argue that many expatriate women felt their bodies undermined by the presence of Indonesian women. Many Western women seemed to feel devalued and inferior in terms of bodily attractiveness - being too heavy, too tall, not graceful and exotic enough to compete with the 'Asian' bodies of Indonesian women. The comparison with Indonesian women leaves them feeling '*fat, ugly, old bule wives*', compared with the exotic, young and docile 'Asian' bodies. This becomes visible as Western men disparage Western women through their bodies, describing them as '*Jersey cows*'. This contrasts with the appraisal of Asian women, who are said to be '*tigers in bed*'. Consequently, both Asian and Western women use their bodies, and discourses of the body, as resources in

racialised gender contestations. Indonesian women's bodies are used to renegotiate expatriate gender relations, as well as relations between Western and Indonesian women. As being an 'accompanying wife' can put a strain on expatriate marriages anyway, the presence of 'Indonesian women' is often further aggravating. The importance of these partly muted, partly explicit struggles can hardly be overestimated. These struggles are not only competitions between members of the same gender, but became crucially intertwined with contestations of race. They illustrate Bradford and Sartwell's (1997) contention that:

'the practices that race and gender bodies ... do not remain merely external; they *use* bodies, flow through them, articulate forms of experience, modes of movement, and so on. Thus, race and gender ... become relational in any given transaction; they are ways of both being a body and of interpreting persons' (Bradford and Sartwell 1997: 192).

Women's bodies, it seemed, could be turned into resources in the struggles between Western dominance and Indonesian resistance. This was summed up by an Indonesian woman, who told me, *'maybe you are rich, but we are pretty.'* The perceived Western dominance, which Western women represented, could thus be undermined by Indonesian women's use of their bodies, who were successfully competing with Western women for male attention. Western women, on the other hand, seemed sometimes threatened by the sheer presence of 'Asian female bodies'. The exasperation discernible among many Western women emerged from a background of domination; it seemed especially painful to be defeated by Indonesian women, representatives of a group that was in many ways supposed to be powerless and inferior - in terms of wealth, education and life choices. To be thus humiliated by Asian women, who expatriate women often pretended to have nothing but contempt for, was probably an especially

difficult situation. Indonesian women could also be caught up in this struggle of domination and resistance, using their bodies to defy Western domination by having relationships with expatriate men, whom they often successfully used to pursue their own interests. At the same time, they employed their physical features to intimidate Western women, simply by displaying them, for example, in entertainment venues such as bars and nightclubs. As I describe below, Western women responded to this by similarly displaying what they saw as their own physical assets.

The humiliation of Western women manifested itself for example in shopping for clothes. As Rebecca's quote shows, it is difficult for average-sized Western women to find clothes that fit even in branches of European department stores such as Marks & Spencers. As Rebecca put it, *'you can just forget about it ... most of the tops in M&S are just size XS, how on earth would I be able to wear them?'* Similarly, Michelle summarised her experiences with an undertone of resentment, *'Why should I go shopping? I can't buy any clothes because nothing would fit me.'* These feelings are often not expressed directly, but as asides, implying a nagging sense of injustice; women who regard themselves as rather attractive in Western terms suddenly have to face being 'too big' for the average clothes items on sale.

Positive Re-evaluation

Many women regard this as a humiliating situation, leaving them feeling vulnerable and fragile. Being confronted with 'Asian' women's bodies, which many Western men seem to find more attractive, casts them as unattractive, possibly questioning their identification as female. A reaction to this is to positively re-evaluate their 'Western bodies'. In response, many women not only accept their 'Western bodies', but

emphasise their bodily features as attractive and desirable. The body does not remain a site of humiliation, but becomes a means of resistance. Western women resort to the body to 'fight back', for example suggesting that while Indonesian women might be slimmer, *'they do not have any breasts.'* Even in the case of younger Western women, this surfaced mostly unintentionally. Rachel, a young British woman, described an evening at a club the night before, *'it was full of Indonesian girls, all dressed up to the nines, of course, in these skimpy dresses that show off their breasts - or whatever little they have of it.'*

Debates on the 'Living in Indonesia' forum resonate with these attitudes. Some of these postings, for example, debate whether Indonesian women 'have breasts at all'. Western women were proposing this, while Western men were arguing that, *'of course Indonesian women have breasts.'* Breasts as the site of an East-West struggle are also invoked in the following posting, *'can anyone tell me why my pembantu [helper] insists on shrinking all my bras to the size of an egg cup? Now I know Indonesian ladies are perhaps not as well endowed as their western counterparts, but is there anything I can do? Is she trying to hint I should have a reduction?'* To which somebody responds, *'Maggie, I thought most of you Brit women were like a couple of Jersey cows walking around, 44D's.'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Black Adder, 19/01/01).

Another woman made a reconciliatory attempt, *'I can't imagine that ALL MEN prefer Indonesian women. They are beautiful and fascinating, but so are we, no??'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Kizmet Jones, 14/05/00). This was immediately refuted, *'You say: They are beautiful: and fascinating, but so are we, no?? I say: NOOOOO!!!'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Nono, 15/05/00). Calling Western women 'Jersey cows' shows how many Western men utilise body images in a

gender war that is very much connected to gender relations in their home countries - which the situation in Jakarta seems an extension. This potential devaluation of the Western female body is part of the reason for a redefinition of Western women's identities.

Before turning to this redefinition, it is important to recall the complexity of the situation with respect to Indonesian women. As with the gaze of the Other, anybody stereotyped because of their bodily features suffers from this situation. It is thus important to keep in mind that casting all Indonesian women as attractive, docile and stupid does as much injustice to Indonesian women as does describing all Western women as 'Jersey cows'. For example, Adelle, an educated Indonesian woman, complained that in particular expatriates were unable to regard her as anything but a 'pretty doll', refusing to take her seriously as an independent, thinking woman. Young Indonesian professional women who were members of the 'Forum for Executive Women' had similar problems, and were often taken for 'bargirls' whenever they visited bars or nightclubs. In addition to this, contestations about body shapes also take place among Indonesian women. As not all of them have waif-like bodies, those who deviate from the 'Asian ideal' form are subjected to criticism and derision from their peers.

Re-identification: from 'Body' to 'Mind'

Another response, apart from the positive re-evaluation of Western women's bodies, is to shift their identities from 'body' to 'mind'. This implies that women cast themselves less in terms of bodily attractiveness, but instead rely on personal qualities such as being educated, strong and independent-minded, wealthy, and in charge of their lives. A

typical attitude towards Indonesian women could be characterised as, '*maybe you are young and beautiful, but we are smart, rich and independent.*' This shift in identification is connected with being an 'honorary male', as discussed in chapter 2. It repositions expatriate women with respect to Indonesian women, but also changes the relations with Western men, as I discuss in the following section.

This re-identification becomes apparent in the ways these women interact with Western men. While Western men possibly see Western women as less attractive, this does not stop them from wanting to socialise with them. While many expatriate men's sexual interests seem catered for by Indonesian women, Western women are appreciated for their 'serious conversations'. A scene in a bar might include a Westerner, with his Indonesian girlfriend, cowering by his side sipping a Coke, involved in an intense conversation with a Western female companion, and sharing a beer with her. He does not seem to mind completely disregarding his girlfriend. Sometimes Western women have to remind him to '*cheer up your girlfriend*', uncomfortable with the awkward situation themselves.

While their bodies might be devalued, Western women's minds can become an asset in relations with Western men. Many men seem comfortable to relate stories of their sexual conquests to Western women. A friend of mine once showed me the scratchmarks his Indonesian girlfriend had inflicted on him the night before, along with the proud remark that, '*Indonesian women are really tigers in bed.*' This indicates a change in status of Western women, from that of 'eligible female' to 'male companion' - shifting them to a position of 'honorary males'. This also resonates with what has been discussed with respect to the 'feminisation of the Orient' (Lewis 1996): while this

casts Asian males and females alike as 'feminine', it also attributes masculinity to both Western males and females.

Expatriate Gender Relations

Here, I focus on how gender relations unfold in front of the conceptual background laid out in the previous section. This links back to three theoretical issues discussed in chapter 2. First, it takes seriously McClintock's (1998) insistence that boundaries of race and gender come into existence, '*in and through* relation to each other - if in contradictory and conflictual ways' (1998:5, original emphasis). Relations between expatriate women and men, and Indonesian women and men, demonstrate this.

Secondly, I take up Stoler's (1995) question of the connections between 'Asia' and expatriates' 'home countries'. I shall examine in what ways gender relations in Jakarta can be traced back to the situation in Western countries. This implies an ambiguous relationship, which casts the expatriate situation both as a product of, and as reaction to, the situation in Western countries, as well as having its own dynamics. Thirdly, I have already pointed to the lack of research on Western women in an Asian setting. While many studies focus on the desire of the Western male, they hardly ever address the consequences of this male desire for Western women. This disregard is even less acceptable as women experience this as a major feature of their expatriate lives. Its importance becomes obvious in the heated discussions on the 'Living in Indonesia' forum, which I partly draw on. In the following, I outline expatriate contestations of gender. I first present Western men's attitudes, and Western women's responses, and then investigate relationships between Western women and Indonesian men.

Looking at the contributions to the 'Living in Indonesia' forum¹⁴, one could be led to assume that Jakarta is merely another battlefield on which to conduct a Western 'war of the sexes'. Joe's statement for example seems to reinforce the notion of Indonesia providing the remedy for an unsatisfactory situation for men in the West: *'I'm a single US male and it's very frustrating to live in the USA. Soon I'll go living again to S. asia - I just love to turn the sad situation here at home upside down'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Joe, M15@joEmail.com, 13/05/00). On the other hand, Heather sums up a popular perception of unhappy Western women: *'Hi, I am just doing some research on why the expat women in Indonesia are so stuck up, miserable and complain all the time. If you have any idea, I would like to hear it. Thanks'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Heather, 14/06/00). These quotes mark two different ends of the spectrum: they pitch 'stuck up' Western women against 'disappointed' Western men, and thus prefigure major positions in the gender debates.

Taking these quotes as a starting point, one could argue that expatriate gender relations are to some extent determined by Western societies. They are not, however, their isomorphic representations. Some of the expatriate attitudes and preferences can be traced back to changing gender relations in the West. They can be regarded as an extension of the 'battle of the sexes' in Western societies, in which Indonesia becomes instrumental. Indonesian 'bargirls' and 'beachboys' are drawn into these struggles, often to redress what Western men and women see as imbalances in gender relations in Western countries.

What is more, living in an 'expatriate bubble', a rather self-centred situation, partly accounts for the intensity of these contestations. This becomes obvious from the

¹⁴ I briefly introduced this forum in chapter 1. I especially employ it in this section, as people discuss the sensitive area of gender relations rather openly, offering seminal insights into these contested issues.

expatriate Internet forum, topics such as ‘why expat men love bargirls’ are among the most hotly debated. They are usually bound to spark, as one reader put it, ‘*debates with a lot of ignorance and bitterness on the side of both sexes.*’ While part of that bitterness stems from ‘disaffected males’, it is also generated by ‘frustrated women’, who find themselves in a situation where they feel they are largely neglected by Western men. In the following, I illustrate how these intersections of race and gender play out in these arenas, and present attitudes of expatriate men as well as expatriate women.

One of the main reasons why expatriate men seem to find Indonesian women, and relationships with them, so attractive, is that they recreate a gender situation that has been partly abandoned in many Western societies. As Steven, a Belgian artist confessed to me, ‘*I think gender relations have become so confusing in the West, it is not clear any more who has what kind of role. Here in Indonesia, the situation is much more clear-cut.*’ Steven is involved in a furniture-export business and spends several months a year in Indonesia. He usually has relationships with Indonesian girlfriends, who are often aged between 20 and 23, thus being between 12 and 15 years his juniors. Some men are more explicit than Steven about what they do not like in the changed world of Western gender relations: they complain about losing their position as the breadwinner and the powerful position it provides them with, as well as about Western women becoming ‘too independent’ and ‘too macho’. As Colin puts it, he dislikes women who ‘seek control’ - presumably preferring to keep this for himself:

‘I will never marry a woman from so called ‘Western Culture’ again. I am certainly very pissed off with the greater part of Western ‘civilisation’, which has created women who are no longer happy with equality (which I am 100%

for, regardless of the culture I am living in), but now seek full control' (posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by Colin, bhoycholin88@yahoo.com, 7/02/01).

Expatriate Men

There seems to be some consensus among Western males that they are about to become the 'weaker sex', being subjected to women's power and suffering discrimination. Bill sums up his feelings:

'There seem to be two opposing sides regarding expat behaviour in Indonesia. Expat males and Expat females. I have just returned from Europe, and have seen another form of hypocrisy [sic] there. Females seem to be more independent, but are more aggressive and dare I say it "macho." It seems with equality and independence, females behave more like males whilst males behave more infeminately [sic]. The balance of equality has been overtaken by inequality. Thus males especially white males, are inferior and have fewer rights than women.' (posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by Bill, info@juicymail.zzn.com, 9/02/01).

Indonesian women, on the contrary, seem to have an entirely different attitude, as Ian reckons:

'as long as the woman is taken care of she will not interfere in your business and will try to get on with your friends even if she doesn't like them, this isn't a lack of character[sic] it is a respect/gratitude for the breadwinner of the family which is lacking in Europe and the USA.' (posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by Ian, aidtech@attglobal.net , 7/02/01).

Many expatriate men thus seem to regard relationships with Indonesian women as a welcome opportunity to redress this perceived gender imbalance in the West and recreate gender relations in a way they regard as more 'in order', and more favourable for themselves. As one expatriate describes his peers:

'I believe it is a fact that the vast majority of expat men in Jakarta take advantage of the frank interest shown in them on a fairly regular commercial or social basis. Certainly I have met very few bule men who state categorically that they have never "strayed". Some men here with wives at home have whole harems of girls, playing the sexual hero role to the hilt' (posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by Paul, oneworld@centrin.net.id, 1/03/01).

This points towards the re-identification of expatriate women as 'minds' rather than 'bodies' in contrast to Indonesian women. This shift is not only performed by expatriate women, but by expatriate men as well, as they similarly tend to identify Indonesian women as attractive, with docile bodies, and silly, childish, and insignificant minds. This parallels expatriate women's characterisation of themselves as having strong 'minds' and personalities, and their definition of Indonesian women through their bodily features. In that sense, both expatriate men and women are complicit in constructing Indonesian women as 'docile bodies'. Although they do so from different vantage points and with different intents, both contribute to the stereotyping of Indonesian women as 'Asian female bodies', denying them intellectual agency. This portrayal of Indonesian women, though, is exacerbated by their 'aggressive', resolute behaviour when pursuing relationships with Western men, as I discuss below.

While this predatory behaviour mentioned above is popular among single expatriate males, it also affects expatriate marriages. It is common knowledge that married

expatriate males having extramarital affairs with Indonesian women is very common. Marsha told me about a doctor she knew working with expatriates, who collected data showing that the most common diseases on Asian postings for male expatriates were neither malaria or food-related illnesses, but sexually transmitted diseases. Linking up with what has been discussed about the pressure being put on Western women by Western men, it becomes clear that expatriate wives see themselves in a very difficult position, their marriage being continually threatened by the lure of ‘bargirls’:

‘My Ex-husband from Australia was fooling around with a young barmaid from Blok M for more than 9 months until I found out. It was hard for him to resist temptation coz all his buddies did the same thing. Jakarta is a very sinful city. Watch your man Honey!!’ (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Snoepje, snoepjel@hotmail.com, 05/03/01).

Especially problematic in this respect are the times of ‘home leave’, the summer school holidays when expatriate wives usually leave Jakarta, together with their children, to spend 2-3 months in their home countries. As Michelle admitted to me, *‘to be honest, I wouldn’t dare to leave my husband alone in the summer here too long, it’s just too dangerous. There are too many young girls around and they are aggressive ... they really want that man.’* Consequently, gossip about affairs abounds among expatriate women, which contributing to an atmosphere of rumours. These stories at the same time perpetuate the myths and horrors of husbands ‘playing’ with bargirls, while their wives are on home leave, or even when they are in Jakarta. Typically, while their husbands or men in general are merely ‘reprimanded’ for their behaviour in expatriate discourses, Western women often stress the ‘aggressiveness’ of Indonesian women, thus shifting the responsibility from the man to the Indonesian woman. This aggressiveness

certainly exists, although it does not detract from the willingness of expatriate women to blame Indonesian women rather than expatriate men.

This perceived climate of aggression shapes expatriate women's perceptions of a 'hostile environment'. Patricia, a young German professional, recounted the following incident. She had gone for a night out with a male Western friend, who had recently broken up with his Indonesian girlfriend. At a nightclub they subsequently ran into his ex-girlfriend, who, on seeing them together, hissed at Patricia, '*So you got what you wanted now!*', assuming Patricia had already replaced her as his girlfriend. Similarly, stories were circulating of disaffected Indonesian women who had had affairs with expatriates while their wives had been away, and were now making threatening telephone calls to the returned wife - not only informing her of the relationship, but also trying to push her out of her position.

While many expatriate males are certainly appreciative of attention by Indonesian women, some of the bargirl practices can be seen as somewhat aggressive. One evening, I was in the Jakarta Hard Rock Cafe, a well-known pick-up place for bargirls, together with a Western male friend. Standing behind my back at the bar, one Indonesian woman was gesticulating at my companion; pointing towards me, she was giving me the thumbs-down, then pointing to him and herself, giving them a thumbs-up. While this woman's interest in expatriate men might be understandable, it also becomes clear why expatriate women can feel cornered by these practices.

Expatriate Women

Turning to expatriate women, one can take as a starting point the popular stereotype of ‘the expatriate wife’, which casts them as dissatisfied and dislikeable, as one contributor to the forum claims:

‘You may have been adults at home but in your expat financed fantasy here you both remind me why I see so many expat hubbies chasing post 80 tail whilst you are opening your shopping bags or telling us how hooooooribble your servants and drivers are. Yaaaaaawnnnnn, please go home and tell the girls at the garden club aaaaallllll about how horrible it was here’ (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Paul, 06/02/01).

Many expatriate men are engaged in and perpetuate discourses that cast ‘expat wives’ as spoilt, nagging and unreasonable. A posting on the forum describes this stereotype as:

‘Typical blinking british man-hater expat woman, drinks too much while hubby works his poor butt off, comes home and abuses the servants and makes them give her massages in the afternoon, then sneaks out in the middle of the night and wakes up the security guards’ (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by sayamalaikat@hotmail.com, 10/02/01).

It is important to note that this stereotyping might also have a functional role. I suggest that these disparaging discourses are linked to many expatriate men’s unwillingness to engage with the problematic situation of expatriate wives. As discussed in chapter 3, many women experience frustration as their attempts to regain some agency or identity are frequently countered by men’s dismissive reactions. As Michelle reported, her husband refused to acknowledge her predicament, asking instead, ‘*What’s your*

problem? The safe is full of money, go shopping! Stereotyped discourses of expatriate wives render women's complaints as unjustified, thus absolving their husbands from any responsibility, while alleviating potential feelings of guilt.

In response to men's attitudes, women attempt to dispel these stereotypes. An Australian woman argues that:

'Maybe some expat wives behave as you describe, but to be realistic I do not think the wives have much chance against youth, beauty & someone who treats you as a demi-god. If a husband's going to stray, he'll stray at "home" IF he gets the opportunity - there just happens to be so many more opportunities here. I guess some expat husbands prefer talking pigeon English to someone half their age & feigning eternal love, to communicating with their wives & keeping the marriage alive - or could it be that they just enjoy having their egos stroked'
(posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Rebecca, beck339@hotmail.com, 06/02/01).

In a slightly different vein, Adelle tries to explain to male readers why expatriate wives might be irritated and pressurised, and sums up their situation as such:

'Well, first you can imagine some women have to give up their career, house, friends or whatever to follow their husbands to a new country they probably never heard of in their lives. Secondly, they will arrive in a place where they do not know anybody, and have a set new staff in their luxury house who treat them like complete aliens. Thirdly later on they will find out that most twenty something girls in the bar their husbands visit regularly are incredibly flirtatious. I can understand why some expat women behave like the way they

do' (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Adelle, seeu2@dnet.net.id, 05/06/00).

Confronted with this situation, some Western women start to defend their reactions, which often also expresses their view of gender relations in the West:

'In the WEST we are not paternalistic or islamic, that is why western women do not hang on their men and can be truly independent. i.e financially, sexually and philosophically. In eastern cultures women are not the breadwinners and are generally seen as the financial dependants of men, ergo there is clearly an enourmous difference in the way you will be seen by western women. ie you are not a god. I think that western women are lucky, we can be financially independent, choose the men we sleep with, choose who we marry and walk away if the man pisses us off. If you find that threatening then its probably better that you live / marry an easterner' (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Srh, srh@yahoo.com, 08/02/01).

One question arising is where this leaves Western women - in terms of possible relationships with Western men, and gender relations in general. One reaction, especially among younger Western professional women, is that their social and emotional life suffers. They note a definitive lack of attention and interest from Western males. Discussing what it is like to be single and female in Jakarta, Lynn reckons, *'Be prepared to see many ex-pat men with Indonesian women and basically be prepared to be celibate. Maybe if you hang out in bars its different, but for me and many of my single colleagues its a very frustrating situation'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Lynn, davidoff@cbn.net.id, 12/05/00).

Parties and receptions often give a good indication of the composition of expatriate social scenes. At a party hosted by two French male professionals, at least half of the guests were young male expatriates like themselves, the next biggest group being Indonesian women. The rest consisted of Western females, and a few Indonesian men. Sarah, a Canadian woman, complained, *'In the West, when I go to a bar, I am used to getting at least a minimum amount of attention when I walk in. But here in Jakarta, I am invisible to Western guys - they completely ignore me!'* In this situation, many Western women have to reassure themselves of their attractiveness, *'you do not find any Western men there to date?? I can see why the cross-cultural thing would be appealing to both sexes, including myself. But I can't imagine that ALL MEN prefer Indonesian women. They are beautiful and fascinating, but so are we, no??'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Kizmet Jones, 14/05/00).

While the stereotypes of the nagging expatriate wife and whinging young female professional are well embedded in expatriate discourses, there are dissenting voices. Some expatriate women did not regard their posting as difficult in terms of gender relations at all. As one pointed out, *'I can't complain - I'm having a great time here, and have loads of male Western friends.'* Similarly, Martin, a Canadian expatriate, begged to differ, *'First of all, it is just not true that Western women do not get enough attention - I think they really like to whinge! And then, I'm not particularly interested in Indonesian women - I like Western women, and lots of my friends here are female expats!'* Still, Heather sums up the experiences of many women, *'it seems that the 'Asian bug' only bites men. Living in Asia for a while, as a woman you become a man-hater.'* This 'man-hating' is arguably based on the impression that Indonesia is an archaic space for expatriate males. This links back to the question whether Indonesia is an 'archaic' or 'avant-garde' space. Many expatriate women seem convinced that being

in Indonesia leads expatriate males to regress, as they seem to revert to a gender situation considered outdated in their home countries. A question is then whether Western women can experience 'Indonesia' as liberating through having relationships with Indonesian men.

Expatriate Women and Indonesian Men

In contrast to the high profile of relationships between expatriate men and Indonesian women, those between expatriate women and Indonesian men are considerably less conspicuous, and comparatively rare. This is due to several reasons, some of which I discuss here. I argue that these relationships instantiate an 'avant-garde space' that Indonesia can be for expatriate women. These relationships can thus extend Western women's agency and provide them with possibilities that they are less likely to encounter in their home countries.

A reason often cited by Western women for the scarcity of these relationships is the 'lack of attractiveness' of Indonesian males. Heather, a textile manager from the U.S. expresses it like this, '*Indonesian men are even shorter than me - and I am short. And I do not like that.*' The same characteristics that seem to make Indonesian women attractive disadvantage Indonesian men; Western women often described them as, '*too short, too skinny, not looking enough like a man,*' while their moustaches - an attractive feature among Indonesians - fail to impress most Western women. This could be regarded as an instance of the 'feminisation of the Orient', which renders Indonesian women as objects of Western male sexual desire, but also casts Indonesian men as 'feminine'. In many cases, this seems to diminish, rather than heighten, their attractiveness in the eyes of Western women.

Relationships between Indonesian men and Western women did not occur very much in Jakarta. This situation changes outside the capital, in smaller towns such as Yogyakarta and Makassar, as well as in tourist destinations such as Bali. This relates to the expatriate 'bubble-life' prevalent in Jakarta, which seems to increase boundaries rather than foster connections between Western women and local men. Single female expatriates outside the capital often live in a less expatriate-dominated world, are more oriented towards 'Indonesia' and seemed more inclined to engage in such relationships. This could either take the form of medium-term relationships with local men for the duration of their stay, or affairs with 'beachboys', the male equivalent to 'bargirls', for a holiday on Bali. It has to be pointed out that these affairs or relationships mainly occurred among female travellers and tourists, especially on the island of Bali, and in towns such as Yogyakarta (Schlehe 2000). In contrast, these relationships were comparatively rare among female expatriates in Jakarta.

Relationships between expatriate women and Indonesian men, I argue, are often part of 'Indonesia' as a liberating space, where expatriate women can extend themselves, instead of being limited. In particular, these relationships seem to bestow women with a sense of agency unavailable to them in their relationships with Western men. This can take the form of becoming the material provider in the relationship, as many Indonesian men are comparatively poor in relation to expatriate women. The women thus often get to pay for their partner's living expenses and housing as well as supporting his family. Connected to the material provision, women might also find themselves in the role of the symbolically dominant partner; often, they seem to organise their partners' lives in terms of education, obtaining or creating jobs for him, furthering his career, especially through their connections with and knowledge of Western countries. While Schlehe (2000) argues that many travel romances are fuelled by the Western female's desire to

'romantically surrender' themselves, which is increasingly less acceptable in Western countries, most of the medium-term relationships I witnessed seem to contain - as part of their attractiveness and strength - a strong element of female agency and domination. These relationships link back to two themes discussed above. They reinforce the argument that expatriate gender practices are related to situations in their home countries. Expatriate men seem to seek a relationship model that is discredited in many Western countries, one which casts women as submissive and docile bodies. They might regard Indonesia as an 'archaic' space, where they can engage in relationships that are increasingly hard to find in the West. Expatriate women, on the contrary, are similarly disenchanted with gender relations in the West; not because they have deteriorated, but because they have not progressed far enough. These relationships are not offering as much power and agency in a relationship as expatriate women might want. Indonesia then becomes a progressive space for these women, as Indonesian men often allow them a much more 'powerful' role in relationships. In connection with this, the question arises as to how 'liberating' Indonesia can be. As with the 'avant-garde' women discussed in chapter 3, the changed position of the Western female is not so much based on their increased power as women, but rather as *Western* women. Here, again, advantages of being Western supersede disadvantages based on gender. One could ask, though, to what extent relationships under these circumstances are really 'liberating', and provide empowerment for expatriate women.

As has become obvious, boundaries of race and gender majorly influence expatriate women's lives, and their relations with Indonesian women and Western men. A question would be whether these bodily boundaries can be overcome in interactions on the Internet, where they should matter less. I therefore investigate exchanges on the

'Living in Indonesia' forum, and ask whether these bodily boundaries do in fact become irrelevant or disappear.

Gender and Ethnicity - Boundaries in Cyberspace?

As discussed, strategies of exclusion are visible in many expatriates' lives. A question is whether these mechanisms are disabled on the Internet, where boundaries based on gender or ethnicity are initially less relevant. Since the Internet is increasingly becoming accessible for many Indonesians as well, greater equality at least seems possible.

Still, the 'Living in Indonesia' forum seems rather exclusive. Judging from the style and content of the postings, most of the active participants on the forum are expatriates. This does not indicate the number of 'silent visitors' to the forum, many of whom could be Indonesian. In that sense, the Internet forum would be yet another example of an Inside space which expatriates create and visit to avoid or control 'exposure' to an Indonesian Outside. I pointed out the relevance of the body as both obstacle and resource in negotiating relations between Western self and the Other. When interacting on the Internet, the body is absent - which does not necessarily change interactions between Westerners and Indonesians. Instead, alternative mechanisms of exclusion are employed to keep this Inside space free from outside, 'Indonesian' influences. Expatriates often seem happy to discuss Indonesia - but on their terms, and in their language, thus establishing control of the discourse on the forum. These strategies of exclusion, which are effectively silencing Indonesians by condemning them to visitor-status and discouraging them from participation in discussions - seem firmly in place.

These strategies do not have to be explicit, but can be implicit and indirect. One of the main deterrents - and the most important mechanism of exclusion - is language.

Imperfect English language skills cannot only lead to snide remarks, but has been used to denigrate - possibly Indonesian - participants, such as in this posting: *'Your English is so poor, it is obvious you are not an expat and that you are posting such crap just to annoy people. Why do not you just go back to your hovel and stay there?'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by anon@yahoo.com, 21/08/01). But even without such remarks, language barriers can prevent Indonesians with less confidence from contributing.

Another discourse-controlling mechanism is content itself. As shown above, almost a precondition for participating in these discussions is one's experience of living in Indonesia - but from the perspective of an expatriate. Similarly, jokes referring to the specifics of for example British regional culture are not likely to encourage Indonesians to contribute. Instead of the body, cultural capital regulates the discourse. The absence of some boundaries on the Internet does not necessarily lead to a potentially equal, shared discourse, but can be substituted by other mechanisms of control, such as cultural capital. In that sense, the discussion forum re-enacts Western discourse and reinforces Western symbolic dominance. Power imbalances prevalent in the 'real' world are not suspended in the 'virtual' one. In spite of the perpetuation of these imbalances, the Internet offers unique possibilities to challenge ethnic boundaries and partly subvert discourses, as the following case illustrates.

Adelle, as mentioned above, is a Western-educated Indonesian, married to an Australian. As she told me, she decided to post on the forum under a nickname, avoiding any references to her being Indonesian. She deliberately created a screen

identity, which allowed her to remain ambiguous in terms of ethnicity, and consistently and successfully created the impression that she was a 'Western' woman. She explained that, *'I love it when the people do not know who I am. They do not know whether I am Western or Indonesian, and I like that.'* She took pleasure in undermining ethnic prejudices and stereotypes. She was subverting the sometimes openly anti-Indonesian attitudes of forum participants through coaxing them to treat her as a Westerner, thus rendering their possible contemptuous attitudes towards Indonesians absurd. I learned of her actions at an early stage of my fieldwork, and decided to follow her exchanges on the forum. Her cultural capital enabled her to carry through this role-play successfully, thus demonstrating that with adequate discursive power, mechanisms of exclusion can be temporarily disabled. Adelle's case is also relevant in another aspect, as, after the real-life meetings of the forum members, in which she participated, it might become increasingly difficult to maintain her on-screen role-play, thus losing the advantages which had afforded her this liberating potential. The following episode serves as a reminder that, although the body as such is absent in the exchanges on the forum, it resurfaces in the struggle for discursive dominance. In this case, it is tied up with the gender debates, described in chapter 3, concerning Western men, Indonesian women and Western women. In the following exchange, a few people were critically debating the attitude of Western men getting involved with Indonesian women - branding them as, *'losers who can't get any decent relationship in their home country.'* In defence, the accused men turned attention to these women's bodies - suggesting they were critical because of being too unattractive and therefore 'sour and bitchy'. Adelle then remarked that, *'those guys go back to the real world every time they try to have a decent conversation (which needs a little bit of brain work) with their young and firm wives.'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Adelle, 6/06/01). Beck seconds her - and attempts to stop similar body-related arguments in

their tracks, *'Well said, Adelle ... & for all you losers out there, Adelle is a young, gorgeous Indonesian woman - not an unattractive, complaining etc. (ad nauseum!) western woman'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Beck, 06/06/01).

In the course of the increasingly heated debate, Jellybean takes the argument up again, *'remember I am one of those fat, ugly, nagging bule wives and wouldn't you like to know!'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Jellybean, 06/06/01), and subsequently turns it back on the man, *'Limpdick. You're probably one of the old wrinklies that hang out just inside the door at Oskars.'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Jellybean, 07/06/01). This re-inscribes the body into a disembodied, virtual discourse. Discussions on this forum are thus not necessarily devoid of ethnic or gender boundaries, nor are they entirely controlled by Western symbolic dominance. Adelle exemplifies how to use this medium to challenge these boundaries. At the same time, the re-inscription of the body into these discourses attempts to re-establish boundaries that are intrinsically absent from it.

In this chapter, I traced the role of the body in expatriates' lives, as they negotiate their relations with 'Indonesia' through bodily boundaries. This includes the maintenance of boundaries as well as controlled passages across them. Central to section 5.1 are Douglas' (1966) ideas of purity and pollution. Expatriates tend to view Western practices and substances as 'pure', whereas Indonesians are seen as possibly polluting. I assume, though, that these beliefs encompass a certain ambiguity. Consequently, not all of 'Indonesia' is rejected, as selected elements are adopted. I illustrated this with respect to beauty treatments. While Javanese herbal medicine is seen as 'dirty', treatments in beauty salons are accepted, possibly feeding into colonial ideas of being 'spoilt'. The defence of bodily boundaries becomes especially pronounced with respect

to food. While many expatriates avoid Indonesian food, its use is sometimes unavoidable. Following Lévi-Strauss (1970), I suggest that expatriates aim to transform Indonesian food substances from a 'raw', impure, to a 'cooked', civilised state. Consuming Indonesian food items, though, can also contribute to one's 'intercultural capital' and prove one's adaptability, which can be desirable.

In section 5.2, I focused on the significance of expatriate women's bodies. Their bodies attain a heightened importance in the expatriate context, as they become a major site of identity and agency. At the same time, many feel their bodies are devalued by being confronted with 'Asian' women's bodies, which casts their 'Western' bodies as unattractive. Women respond to this in two ways: first, they positively re-evaluate their bodies, presenting them as desirable. Secondly, they shift their identification as women from their bodily characteristics to personal qualities such as education, wealth, and independence. All of this impacts on expatriate gender relations. I suggest that expatriate gender contestations are on the one hand a product of the situation in Western countries. At the same time, while in Indonesia, expatriates try to redress what they see as imbalances in Western gender relations. Consequently, expatriate men seem to seek 'docile females', which are increasingly harder to find in their home countries. In contrast, Western women regard the situation in Indonesia as a backlash, as it fosters a kind of relationship that they regard as outdated. Some Western women have relationships with Indonesian men in which they find themselves as providers, placing them in a power position not usually found in their home countries either. The most important aspect, linking back to the discussion in chapter 2, is that expatriate women's lives are to a major extent influenced by, and caught up in, boundaries of race and gender. These boundaries are not even suspended in cyberspace, but re-introduced into this medium, as discussions on the expatriate forum illustrate.

Chapter 6: Identities, Representations, and Social Boundaries

In the previous two chapters, I mapped out how expatriates experience and negotiate processes of boundary making through their bodily and spatial practices. In this chapter, I focus on boundaries being constructed through public representations and discourses. Central to this is the construction of social boundaries and identities through processes of representation. In chapter 2, I argued that identity implies the notion of the Other. The notion of identity thus depends on the creation of boundaries, as boundaries mark out what is regarded as Self and what is regarded as Other. I also discussed different aspects of boundaries. Most notably, these concerned their material dimensions on the one hand, and their social or conceptual ones on the other. One of the basic contentions was that, following Csordas, these dimensions are not separate, but intertwined. In chapters 4 and 5, I emphasised the visceral dimensions in the case of spatial and bodily boundaries. In this chapter, I explore the representational aspects of boundaries in more detail. Representations become relevant as they reflect and produce identities, and demarcate social boundaries. An integral element of these self-representations is representations of the Other, which I discuss in more detail in section 6.2. Representations are also crucial as they involve the power of representing not only the Self, but also the Other. Notions of identity, boundaries and the powers of representation, and their interaction with each other provide the framework for the following analysis.

In section 6.1, I first describe the notions of identity employed. In section 6.2, I then discuss expatriates' practices as affirming social boundaries, especially in terms of nationality. I take expatriate women's associations and the celebration of the German National Day as examples. In section 6.3, I investigate processes of appropriation and

negotiation of social boundaries. Appropriation involves consuming 'Indonesia' in form of objects, events or persons. While these appropriations are mostly controlled, expatriates also experience 'uncontrolled encounters', and are faced with challenges to, and redefinitions of, their identities, as becomes visible in their relations with their Indonesian staff.

6.1 Identity through the Other

Having indicated the connections between social boundaries, identity and representation, I outline the notions of identities adopted, before turning to the relations between identities and representations. As Hall (1992) notes, the concept of identity has undergone several changes. He distinguishes between the Enlightenment period, with its 'sociological' notion of identity, and, most recently, the post-modern subject (1992: 275). While the Enlightenment saw subjects as, 'fully centred, unified individual [s]', the sociological subject is not self-sufficient, but constructed in relation to others. Finally, the post-modern subject becomes, 'fragmented; composed; not of a single, but of several, sometimes contradictory or unresolved, identities' (1992:276-77). Identity is no longer seen as, 'fixed, essential or permanent'; instead, it becomes, 'transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented ... in the cultural systems which surround us' (Hall 1992:277). The subject therefore, 'assumes different identities at different times' (Hall 1992:277). These identities furthermore are, 'never completed ... they are always ... in process' (Hall 1991:47).

This formulates three central characteristics, which are instrumental for the following sections. Identities are conceptualised as plural, relational, and processual. As Hall (1991) states, 'all of us are composed of multiple social identities, not of one'

(1991:57). This assumption informs the structure of the following sections. Each section traces different aspects of expatriates' identities - in terms of national, ethnic, racial and social identities. As emphasised in chapter 2, they are not separate from each other, but have to be viewed as intersecting and conflicting, 'coming into existence in and through each other' (McClintock 1998:5). Certain aspects are foregrounded in some sections, while others resurface only intermittently.

Identities are seen as processual. As Hall (1991) puts it, 'identifications change and shift' (1991:57). Similarly, Handler (1994) stresses that, 'cultures and social groups ... are now conceptualised in terms of ongoing processes of 'construction' and 'negotiation'' (1994:27). This conceptualisation marks a departure from seeing identity as a fixed state or entity, towards a concept of identification as an ongoing process of construction and change, and it is important in two ways. First, it allows us to conceptualise expatriates' identifications as a trajectory, comprising not only their existences in Indonesia, but also their previous lives in their home countries, and to account for potential changes. Secondly, it implies the notion of identifications as practices, which underpins the following sections. This links to the mode of relations outlined above. As the terms suggest, seclusion, appropriation and contestation are regarded as practices that expatriates engage in. This concept of identity also resonates with Week's (1987) contention that, 'identity is not a destiny but a choice' (1987:47), regarding identification as an active process.

Identities are also relational. This refers to the fundamental insight that identities are always constructed in relation to an Other, what Hall (1991) calls the, 'necessity of the Other to the self' (1991:48). Identification, he points out, is, 'always constructed through ambivalence' (Hall 1991:47). Identities are multiple and dynamic, and their

changes - over time and simultaneously - are predicated on different social contexts. In Hall's (1991) words, we are, 'living identity through difference' (1991:57). In the context of expatriates, this becomes important in elucidating the varying identifications they are engaged in. This concept of identity differentiates between identifications in a national context, such as between different national women's organisations; class distinctions made within a national group; identifications as Western women as opposed to Western men; as well as asserting their 'Western' identities in relation to Indonesians. As pointed out above, several of these aspects can be present in the same situation. Identities being relational emphasises that many of the contestations charted here, especially in section 6.3, only arise from the context of being an expatriate in Indonesia, which can challenge expatriates' identities in new ways.

This points towards a key reason why identifications become significant for expatriates. As Mercer (1990) notes, 'identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty' (1990: 43). This circumscribes the situation of expatriates as they experience crises of identities. The displacement in terms of identity is connected to their physical dislocation, through moving from their 'home countries' to Indonesia. The crisis of identity is especially pronounced with expatriate women, as discussed in chapter 3. Threats to expatriates' identities, or experiences of loss, are not confined to a single aspect like the national one, but are manifest in several ways. As described above, women's identities might be damaged through loss of their jobs as well as loss of their role as 'homemakers', as housework is taken over by Indonesian staff. These damages can be exacerbated by challenges to their identities as bodily attractive females in comparison with Indonesian women. These situations of crisis or uncertainty prompt reassertion of what is taken to be, for example, a group's identification. As becomes

obvious in section 6.1, expatriates re-enact national identities and, with renewed emphasis, present them as fortified and unified. This can be deceptive. As Hall (1992) argues, 'if we feel we have a unified identity ... it is only because we construct a comforting story or 'narrative of the self' about ourselves' (1992: 277). Processes of constructing identities comprise fabrication and narration; the version of the self as unfragmented and unified can be fictitious. Creating an 'essentialised' national identity cannot only be linked to situations of crises, but also to the presence of an Other, against which boundaries are demarcated. As Hall (1991) emphasises, identity, 'as a process, as a narrative, as a discourse ... is always told from the position of the Other' (1991:49).

This is echoed by Cohen (1994), who maintains that, 'we have also invented cultures by seeing them as reflexes of a boundary encounter: culture as a more or less self-conscious differentiation from a contiguous group ... or, as in Barth's version, as modulating itself to the requirements of contingent social interaction and boundary transaction' (Cohen 1994: 128-129). In summary, I conceptualise identities, as Miller (1998) succinctly puts it, 'as multiple and contested, discursively constituted through narratives of the self, constructed in relation to socially significant others and articulated through relations with particular people, places and material goods' (1998:23-24).

I briefly outline what kind of identifications and representations become relevant here. In section 6.2, I investigate collective processes of asserting national identities, both in relation and opposition to expatriates of other nationalities and to Indonesians. I discuss the case of expatriates' national women's organisations, which, although almost identical, take great care to emphasise the differences between them. I examine the celebrations held on German National Day, October 3rd, including the practices which reproduce an imagined German national identity, and the characteristics of these

representations. Although it is the difference from the Indonesian Other that is stressed, I highlight the internal divisions within these supposedly homogeneous national groups.

In section 6.3, I then explore how expatriates' enhance their 'Western' identities through appropriating elements of Indonesian 'culture'. This refers to expatriates representing themselves not as parochial, but as open-minded and 'cosmopolitan', willing to incorporate elements of 'Indonesia' into their lives. These appropriations crucially have to be secure and controlled, as indicated by the term 'limited exposure'. This implies that encounters - with objects, situations or people - are acceptable only when they take place on the expatriates' terms. I trace these processes through the appropriation of art objects, the consumption of events organised by the Indonesian Heritage Society (IHS), as well as through mediating or 'fusion' people¹⁵. I then focus on the challenges to expatriates' identities, brought about through confrontations with Indonesians. These interactions are often uncontrolled encounters, which highlight two issues. The first is expatriates' forced identification as 'Westerners' by Indonesians, which conflicts with their desire to be recognised as individuals. The second concerns expatriates' positions vis-à-vis their staff. The multiple and contradictory relations between expatriates and their staff make visible some of the contestations and changes of identities brought about by living in Indonesia as expatriates.

6.2 Representing Self and Other: National Identities

I suggested that representations become important in processes of identification and the drawing of social boundaries. How people represent themselves and others is expressive and indicative of their identifications. Representations then become a tool in

¹⁵ I employ the term 'fusion people' to refer to expatriates who have lived in Indonesia for a long time, are familiar with Indonesian culture and society, and act as mediators between expatriates and 'Indonesia'.

the drawing of social boundaries. In this section, I investigate how expatriates construct and maintain a specific set of social boundaries, namely those of national identities. I discuss German national identities as an example, although I suggest that similar processes occur in other national expatriate communities as well, such as the British, French, and American community. If identity is defined through the Other, this includes self-representation as well as representation of the Other. It becomes especially poignant as expatriates are surrounded by an Indonesian environment. While they aim to reproduce an essentialised 'core Germanness', I argue that representations of German national identity are interwoven with representations of 'Indonesia'. It is therefore as much a representation of the self as of the Other that constitutes this particular form of national identity. I argue below that the form of national identity created here in fact reflects a form of 'being German in Indonesia' instead of a projected 'core Germanness'. So far, I have pointed out how expatriates attempt to exclude 'Indonesia' from their lives. In this situation, however, elements of Indonesia are framed and embedded within a discourse of German national identity. This points to the power of representation. I argue that one of the most significant aspects of expatriates' interactions with 'Indonesia' is to retain the power of representation, of themselves as well of Indonesians. This might partly explain expatriates' resentment as the control over their representation is wrenched away from them. An example is their being classified as *bules* by Indonesians, which can produce much discomfort and suppressed anger. At the same time, expatriates naturally assume the right to define 'Indonesia', maintaining control over how it is represented within expatriate communities. This becomes obvious within expatriate women's associations as well as at the celebrations of the Day of German Unity, as I point out below. The issue of representation also links back to the general discussion on boundaries and the role of power. The case of social boundaries reinforces the initial contention of expatriates'

transnational lives being characterised by boundaries, and their desire to retain the power of defining these boundaries.

Representations of National Identities

I assume that the dislocated and to some extent uncertain situation of expatriates gives rise to, and creates a need for, coherent narrations of self. Constructions of national identity, and the drawing of social boundaries, are one form of this. As Cohen (1989) suggests, a sense of self, 'is always tenuous when the physical and structural boundaries which previously divided the community from the rest of the world are increasingly blurred. It can therefore be easily depicted as under threat: it is a ready means of mobilising collectivity' (1989:109). This can be related to expatriates' situations. In terms of social life, one can identify various forms of 'mobilising collectivity', as with the women's organisations or celebrations of the national days of the respective national communities. As discussed above, national identifications are oriented against a double Other: first, against expatriates of other nationalities; and secondly, against a more diffuse Indonesian Other. At the same time, I point out divisions within these communities, based on class, ethnicity, or deliberate deviance. For example, women's organisations display great similarities, while retaining an anxious distance, resonating with Cohen's (1989) claim that, 'saliency attaches less to the *substance* of the supposed distinctiveness, and more to the need to display it ... it responds to the need to delimit the bounds of similarity' (1989:110, original emphasis). This is counteracted by a pragmatism that increasingly transgresses these boundaries, as I illustrate below. As an example of expatriates' concepts of national identities, I briefly discuss the case of German expatriates, assuming that expatriates of other nationalities maintain similar ideas. I suggest that three different concepts of German national are identities relevant

here. The first is an essentialised version of being ‘German-as-such’, while the second aims to be a ‘realistic’ representation of being ‘German in Germany’. The third version, ‘being German in Indonesia’, becomes especially relevant. Constructions of German identities often aim to perform ‘being-German-in-Germany’. This is bound to fail, as German life in Jakarta cannot be a recreation of life in Germany, which many expatriates tacitly acknowledge. Relinquishing a ‘realistic’ version, the essentialised ‘core Germanness’ comes into play, and representations of this are always inscribed by the Indonesian environment. Performances of Germanness thus include representations of ‘Indonesia’. I argue that incorporating these elements into the national display merely reflects and asserts the power of representation held by expatriates.

Expatriate Women’s Associations

I turn to expatriate women’s associations as arenas where ‘national identities’ are performed. These organisations emphasise their national distinctiveness, despite visible substantial similarities between them. The American, British and German Women’s Associations provide examples. Like most of these women’s associations, they cite ‘charitable activities’ as the main reason for their existence. The organisational structure of these associations- a chairperson presiding over sub-committees - is very similar. The committees cover the same areas, such as charitable work, sports, leisure activities and newcomers’ services. They all publish bilingual cookbooks and monthly newsletters. The differences lie in details: the British include a ‘*Letter from Middle England: Ashby-de-la-Zouch*’ in their newsletter; while the Americans organise ‘*Shop till you drop*’ events. All recently introduced ‘couples’ evenings’, which draw husbands into their social activities, and regularly hold ‘crafty afternoons’, where they produce tea-cosies, candleholders and woolly Easter-bunnies for the upcoming bazaars. While

the social highlight of the year is their respective Christmas Bazaars, a mainstay of their social calendars are monthly 'Monday Coffee Mornings'.

Coffee mornings seem to reproduce imagined 'core national identities'. They also highlight how these essentialised versions incorporate elements of 'Indonesia'. Yet at the same time, it becomes obvious that expatriates' representational control is limited, as these orchestrated events are in some ways invaded by an uncontrollable Indonesian outside. The scene for these coffee mornings is set by the location; the American, British and German coffee mornings are held in prestigious venues such as the Shangri-La, Regent and Kempinski Hotels, and are usually held in the ballroom of each hotel. These coffee mornings start at 10 am, and between 9 and 10 am, a succession of chauffeur-driven cars arrive at the hotels, out of which expatriate wives emerge. Most women are carefully turned-out, with matronly hairdos, and wearing their pearl necklaces, starched blouses, and stylish skirts. The area in front of the ballroom is filled with stalls by Indonesian vendors selling 'Indonesian goods' - cloth, jewellery, 'antiques' and art objects. After browsing the stalls, the women enter the ballroom, which is furnished with large tables, covered with white tablecloths and silver water pitchers. A buffet is set up in the back area, where there are also display tables about the association, a second-hand book exchange table, charity information stalls, and a raffle box.

All coffee mornings follow a similar schedule; after an initial meeting-and-greeting, members take refreshments, deal with organisational matters, and then settle down to listen to the monthly lecture. After the talk, the women circulate and chat, until most start leaving around noon, while the veteran members stay for lunch. The refreshments served at these events testify to the efforts to construct, for example, a 'core

Britishness'. At the British mornings, tea is prepared by uniformed waiters at the buffet. The women can choose from a selection of loose leaf teas, which are prepared by the cup by the Indonesian waiters. Instead of ordinary biscuits, members are presented with freshly baked muffins and elaborately filled miniature croissants. As one would not necessarily find such carefully prepared refreshments in comparable meetings in the U.K., it becomes clear that these coffee mornings are not a re-enactment of 'being British in Britain'. Instead, they represent an essentialised, hyper-real version of 'Britishness'. This has less to do with coffee morning traditions in the U.K., but rather performs a ritual of 'civilisation', which is maintained in the middle of, and possibly directed against, the Indonesian 'non-civilisation' around them.

Food is also relevant at the American and German coffee mornings, although in different ways. At the American gathering, for example, food was not especially elaborate, but designed to provide comfort, a reassuring sense of a 'home away from home'; thus, coffee and Coca-Cola were served without much fuss; blueberry muffins featured next to chocolate chip cookies, while fresh popcorn was prepared in a microwave. These refreshments contributed to the reproduction of an imagined 'core national identity'. In the case of the German coffee mornings, this became obvious at the buffet. Different from their British and American counterparts, German food provision was hearty and plentiful. Although meeting at 9:30 in the morning, the buffet featured meat and cheese rolls, various cakes and cream cakes, as well as 'original German' items such as cold potato salad. This buffet seemed much appreciated and was always finished by the end of the morning. At first sight, one might be tempted to identify 'typical German characteristics' here, both in terms of the quality and quantity of food, reflecting the members' preferences. However, at the same time, it becomes clear that the buffet is a reflection, as much as an assertion, of 'German' ideas about food; a seriousness about eating; the need for hearty food in substantial quantities; and

eating not so much as an accompaniment to socialising, or guilt-ridden forms of comforting oneself, but perceived as a duty, which, although enjoyed, was taken seriously.

In addition to this, expatriate women's forms of socialising, leadership styles, and topics chosen for talks were probably partly conscious, partly unintentional performances of 'national identities'. An example is the farewell speech of the president of the American Women's Association (AWA)¹⁶, in which she addressed the members of the AWA as her time as president came to an end. She adopted rather warm, exuberant tones when thanking her '*talented and dedicated*' fellow board members, pointing out that being president of the AWA, '*is a memory that I will cherish all my life*' (*The Kayon*¹⁷, May 2000). Similarly, symbolic orchids are given to members who contributed to the AWA's work in special ways. In contrast to that, the tone within the British Women's Association (BWA) was often sharp, witty and self-mocking. The newly elected president introduced herself by remarking on her shortness, which barely enabled to see over the speaker's lectern - only thanks to, as she pointed out, her high heel shoes. In turn, manners at the German Women's Association (GWA) could be rather severe at times. By coincidence, their new chairperson was a former teacher, which might have played a role in her imposing order on a chatty crowd at a coffee morning: '*Ladies!*' she shouted, '*just got up from breakfast and already at the buffet! Everyone sit down at their places and listen now!*' This could be taken as performing in a typically 'German-commando' style; but as it later emerged, many members felt quite indignant about her way of talking and regarded it as inappropriate.

¹⁶ The American Women's Association (AWA) is specifically aimed at American expatriate women, and in many aspects resembles the German and British Women's Associations. However, membership of the AWA is only available to U.S. citizens, whereas the GWA and BWA are open to all nationalities, and is therefore regarded as rather more exclusive.

¹⁷ *The Kayon* is the name of the monthly newsletter of the American Women's Association (AWA).

While all these activities focus on the Inside life within the national expatriate bubble, the presentations at these mornings point to an attempted engagement with the outside. One BWA's coffee morning presented Indonesian charities they supported. Representatives of various charities gave speeches or performances as a way of thanking the BWA for their support. One of these was a blind children's choir, who in their sober dresses and thin voices presented an utterly strange contrast to the well-groomed, wealthy women watching them while sipping from their high-stemmed water glasses. Thankfully, afterwards the children were removed without much further interaction. An orphaned schoolboy, chosen for his brightness, took their place and read out his heartfelt thanks in an English speech he had written himself. This boy was thus addressing an audience of about 60 British women interested in charity, who were living luxurious lifestyles made possible by their husbands' generous salaries - which were more or less directly related to the exploitation of cheap Indonesian labour that their companies were involved in. The irony of the situation, it seemed to me, was as acute as it seemed lost on most of the audience.

A regular feature was the presentation of the day, often given by a fusion person, who had been living in Indonesia on a long-term basis and acted as cultural translator. For example, the German Women's Association had invited an older German woman to talk about her passion for *wayang kulit* [Javanese shadow puppet play]. Her talk was highly lauded for its in-depth knowledge, although I had the impression that for a portion of the listeners, it was more a cultural exercise to be endured than enjoyed. In any case, this was seen as a highly acceptable form in which 'Indonesia' could be consumed: Indonesia was presented by a German woman, while inanimate objects – puppets - became tokens of 'Indonesian culture', and all this was delivered in a safe and acceptable framework. A more exhilarating talk was given by another member of the

German Women's Association, about her visits to the Dani, an ethnic group living in Irian Jaya. While her slides of trekking through highlands and sitting at campfires were followed with interest, stories of the Dani men wearing penis gourds were a source of sheer titillation. The women suppressed giggles and could hardly contain their excitement, yet this was as far as things could be taken. What was perceived as exotic sexuality was still presented in the 'civilised' space of the Kempinski Hotel ballroom, and thus contained.

All these events point back to the initial suggestion that representations of self are at least partly constituted by representations of the Other. Looking at how national identity is reproduced, it emerges that the elaborate setting, the food and furnishings, dress and demeanour of the women, depend on 'Indonesia' in the sense of being positioned against it. Representations of 'Indonesia', though seemingly adaptations, further affirm boundaries of identities. It can take the form of respected mediators, such as the German *wayang kulit* expert, a British volunteer working with street children, or in the form of 'well-behaved' Indonesians such as the orphan giving a speech. It becomes visible, though, that maintaining representational control remains a continual effort. The German coffee morning for example was held in a ground-floor room, with large windows and doors opening to the outside. This outside - glimpses of the heat, the vendors, the dust and traffic, was excluded, at the price of the heavy curtains drawn shut in the middle of a sunny morning. As in private houses, Indonesia was also present in the form of personnel. Well-trained Indonesian staff were working at the buffet, while the periphery of the ballroom was dotted with Indonesian nannies in white uniforms, looking after expatriate toddlers while their mothers socialised - again illustrating expatriates' struggle to control how 'Indonesia' features in their lives.

Pragmatism: Transgressing Social Boundaries

While many of the expatriate women's associations' activities can be interpreted as affirming national identities, some aspects of these associations run counter to this. There is an increasing pragmatism among members, which leads some women to transcend these group boundaries for practical reasons, especially as many women's organisations have virtually identical programmes, such as coffee mornings, charity work, book swaps, sports groups, fashion shows and Christmas bazaars. Donna, a member of the British Women's Association, pointed towards these cross-overs in terms of sports. As she put it, *'if the schedule of the German tennis group is inconvenient for you, we have some women for whom our tennis playing times and location are more convenient, so they come and play with us, although they are not necessarily British.'* This growing pragmatism in favour of transgressing national boundaries also becomes apparent in the case of schooling. Traditionally, most expatriates send their children to schools specifically designed for certain nationalities. Thus, there are French, British and German 'international' schools in Jakarta, which closely follow the respective national curriculum, and teach in that language as well. More recently, a tendency has developed among expatriates to choose an English-speaking school instead, specifically the Jakarta International School (JIS), which follows the US curriculum. Increasingly, expatriates seem to recognise an English language-based education as beneficial. Many expatriates have become convinced that attending an international school, and the contact with English-speaking students, gives their children advantages in terms of their future university education and career. This belief can cause friction within the national expatriate communities, since the 'national' schools depend on these children for their continued existence. Since expatriate

numbers have been much reduced in Jakarta after the political crisis of 1998, many schools have to actively recruit students to ensure their economical viability.

Although there are growing indicators of this transnationally-oriented pragmatism, in many ways, national boundaries are still anxiously guarded. This became obvious when I was doing research with the German Women's Association. Occasionally, people asked me with a mixture of curiosity and anxiety whether I attended other national women's groups' events, which I confirmed. Their reaction seemed tinged with some suspicion as to what extent I was '*one of them*'. An element of curiosity remained, although few actually enquired further about these other group's activities. It seemed an ambiguous and therefore sensitive topic. Just how sensitive this was became clear to me at a particular coffee morning hosted by the British Women's Association. I had attended these a few times, but that morning I met a German woman, Brigitte. I had first met her at the German Women's Association, of which she was a member. To my surprise, she was reluctant to acknowledge me at all and kept her distance throughout the meeting. I knew that she had an interest in the UK, her two sons attended English boarding schools and were expecting to go to English universities. It seemed, though, that she felt like a traitor whom I had caught unawares, as she was probably downplaying her involvement in the British Women's Association with her German friends.

Internal Divisions

Another form of boundary maintenance concerns class boundaries. As Stoler (1995) states for the Dutch Indies, 'class distinctions within these European colonial communities were not increasingly attenuated but sharpened over time' (1995:103).

This also holds for expatriate communities, especially women's organisations. These are often characterised by two contrasting tendencies. On the one hand, their shared identities as expatriates seemed to create bonds and differentiate them from Indonesians. On the other hand, this did not annihilate internal divisions and differences in social status; on the contrary, as Stoler (1995) observes, these are often intensified. In the absence of other markers of social identity, such as social networks, families or houses, the main marker of these women's identities becomes their husband's job. Women within the German Association admitted that several years ago there had been a pervasive system of social ranking, but claimed that, '*this has got much better, it's not as snobbish as before.*' Apparently, the seating order at Coffee Mornings had been determined by the women's husbands' positions in their companies. Although this practice might have changed, it had apparently not ceased completely. Similarly, a young German woman, Sabine, felt that members were looking down on her because her husband was a 'blue-collar worker', employed by Mercedes in Jakarta as a highly qualified mechanic. This compared unfavourably with other husbands, who were 'white-collar workers', and held positions such as head of marketing or finance within the same corporation.

Apart from these instances, 'class' had a complex significance in the expatriate context, which I can only roughly indicate here. It was characterised by a twofold shift: on the one hand, a rather heterogeneous group of, for example, British nationals, suddenly shared the status of 'corporate expatriates', which had a unifying effect on their community. The status of corporate expatriate distinguished them not only from Indonesians, but also from other U.K. nationals who were not corporate expatriates, such as women married to Indonesians or independent English teachers on local

salaries.¹⁸ In that sense, class differences that existed in their home countries were diminished within the expatriate communities. As Tanja, a German expatriate wife, explained to me, her social contacts had become slightly more *'upmarket'* in Jakarta compared to their life in Germany. She realised that, *'suddenly we are invited by embassy people and spend most of our time with company executives - people I wouldn't necessarily mingle with at home.'* Since her husband was a senior manager himself, it seemed that class distinctions, which mattered at home, became less relevant in the context of 'unified' corporate expatriate communities. On the other hand, people remained acutely aware of the existing differences. This might be especially pronounced among expatriate wives because, as explained above, they lacked opportunities of expressing and marking their social identities. In this situation, their husband's job position became a central marker of their own social status, and thus emphasised a class awareness, that had become blurred in other ways.

Representing Germanness: The 'Day of German Unity'

Representations of national identities were especially pronounced at the celebrations of the different national days, such as the German, French and American ones. First, these celebrations reveal the interplay between the three versions of 'national identity' outlined above. Secondly, internal divisions and contestations of national boundaries become visible. Thirdly, the celebrations display how 'Indonesia' features at these events. The Day of German Unity is an example of this. The headmaster of the German International School sums up what he sees as his mission in terms of supporting national identification: *'our task is to give people a 'Heimatgefuehl', a sense*

¹⁸ The fact that Indonesians were well aware of these differences in status becomes obvious in the Indonesian term *bule miskin* [poor white person], which was applied to down-at-heel English teachers hanging out in areas such as Jl. Jaksa, which was known for illegal activities, drugs and prostitution.

of what their home is. You will see that here in Jakarta, German traditions are upheld very much, because otherwise they would disappear.'

The German National Day is on October 3rd, called the 'Day of German Unity', marking the re-unification of Germany in 1990. The celebration of this took place in the form of an evening-long reception at the German embassy. Admission is by invitation only, which in the last few years had apparently included all German nationals living in Jakarta. The reception was held in the open-air courtyard of the German embassy. The Ambassador and his wife greeted each visitor with a handshake. The atmosphere was exulted; people had dressed up, and many seemed rather excited, filled with self-importance at entering the embassy and shaking hands with the Ambassador. The ritual greeting, and the atmosphere among guests hinted at an important aspect of expatriate life in Jakarta; the Ambassador's circle. Among the community of Germans in Jakarta, 'the embassy' and people working there were regarded as a coveted social group, a connection with which was rather desirable. The German Ambassador once remarked, with grave benevolence, that, *'I am like the mayor of our little community here'*, which summed up his and probably many Germans' attitudes.

Sauerkraut and Bintang Beer: Representing Germany in Indonesia

In the following, I highlight how the celebrations of the Day of German Unity performed both representations of a 'core Germanness' as well featuring elements of 'Indonesia', as discussed above. After shaking hands with embassy officials, most guests proceeded straight to the courtyard, where a large buffet had been laid out. The centrepiece was a row, modelled on German market stalls. They each offered a 'traditional' German meat dish, such as *Schweinebraten* (pork roast), *Gulasch* (diced

beef), and various kinds of sausages, together with typical side dishes such as *Sauerkraut* (marinated white cabbage), *Rotkraut* (red cabbage) and *Kartoffelsalat* (potato salad), as well as regional specialities like Bavarian mustard. The whole set-up created the impression of a giant meat-feast. Veteran guests told me that they were quite used to this spectacle, and it was in fact part of the reason why they looked forward to attending the reception. The food provided represented an imagined, essentialised Germanness. Although the organisers assumed Germans would appreciate this kind of food, presenting it in the rather bombastic way they did was rather deliberate. Similar practices were also employed for example at the French national day, Bastille day, on the 14th of July. Here, the central feature of the menu was an impressive cheese buffet, which, given the scarcity of cheese in Indonesia, attained special significance. As with the Germans, some French nationals confided that one reason for attending these events was in fact the prospect of these buffets.

In the midst of the display of Germanness, framed aspects of 'Indonesia' appeared as well. To assist the invited Muslim Indonesians in their choice of food, signs had been put up on the stalls, depicting a jolly little pig with a rolled-up tail, indicating dishes that contained pork - and signs with a crossed-out pig which did not. This exemplifies the representational challenge expatriates were faced with; while they had to deal with the fact that this celebration of Germanness took place in Indonesia, they strived to maintain as much representational control as possible, framing 'Indonesia' in their terms. It also links back to boundaries as sites of leakage; as with the foodstuffs discussed in chapter 5, though, 'Indonesia' was forcing itself into these spaces in ways that were not completely controllable.

A further instance of 'Indonesia' featuring at these events was in the drinks provided. A supply of free German beer would have been rather expensive. Given the German penchant for beer, an Indonesian beer company sponsored the occasion by providing *Bintang*¹⁹ beer. This seemed an acceptable way of consuming 'Indonesia'. Other intersections became visible, though none of them challenged the prevailing regimes of values. An Indonesian waiter pointed out to me that he had prepared a special potato salad, being proud at having mastered the German recipe. Indonesian-German crossovers of that kind fed into the idea once expressed by the German Ambassador that, '*Indonesia can learn a lot from us.*' Similarly, towards the end of the evening, one of the Indonesian waiters, who had obviously drunk some of the *Bintang* beer he had been serving all evening, started offering the remaining guests half-empty drinks he had collected from the tables. Far from causing offence, this was smiled upon - and possibly appreciated as an attempt to emulate Western lifestyles.

Apart from the lavish food stalls, the event also included so-called *Volksmusik*, German 'traditional' music. It seemed that these reconstructions of 'core Germanness' were mainly modelled on South German forms of hospitality. The buffet featured mainly Bavarian dishes, and the entertainment was provided by a Bavarian brass band, complete with leather trousers and hats. The theme even extended to the decoration, which consisted of banners in blue-and-white, the colours of Bavaria. These elements did not represent an image of Germany-as-Bavaria, but rather an essentialised version of Germany 'as such' - a Germany which, in this form, existed neither in South Germany nor anywhere else. The food stalls, staging an intense meat-feast, would not be found at any function in Germany in that form. As indicated in the introduction, this scene did

¹⁹ *Bintang* beer is one of the few locally brewed beers in Indonesia and is mostly seen as 'acceptable' to drink by expatriates.

not represent any 'real' German life, but produced a world all of its own. Instead of signifying 'life in Germany', it signified only itself, 'German life in Indonesia'.

The social composition of the event was similarly not representative of German society, but rather representative of the German expatriate population in Jakarta. Among the guests were for example some unmarried young men, who were working for German companies. Most of the guests, though, were middle-aged couples with adolescent children, the husbands mostly being on the level of senior managers. Single women were rare; some women present worked for cultural institutions such as the Goethe-Institut or German development organisations, while women under thirty were hardly present at all. On the social periphery of the core group of family expatriates were older men living more or less permanently in Indonesia. Only these older men, and a few men married to Indonesian women, were dressed in traditional Indonesian *batik*-shirts, as most of the guests wore Western suits and cocktail dresses. Several young men, however, presented an exception, as they had not dressed up for this event. Instead, they appeared in casual attire, jeans and hiking sandals, with worn-out backpacks flung over their shoulders. While they were ostentatiously enjoying the food and beer on offer, their presence signalled a deliberate disapproval of the proceedings, and a visible dissociation probably both from the idea and the particular form of celebrating a national identity, as well as from the people involved.

The above described concept of Germanness, while reaffirmed by such celebrations, was at the same time questioned. The event aimed to project a definition of what Germanness was, and who belonged to it. These social boundaries were challenged, however, not only by the deviant sandal-wearers described above, but others questioning these ideas of belonging. On the fringe of the perambulating corporate

expatriates were Germans who were not on a posting, but were living in Indonesia permanently. Often these Germans were not on expatriate salaries, but had slid down the scale to 'local foreigner' wages. Some were married to Indonesians, and some were priests or missionaries, some of whom had been living in Jakarta for decades. Those were the ones, as was sometimes muttered with derision, '*who had gone local.*' Indonesian guests were eyed with even greater suspicion, their right to be at the reception continuously being scrutinised. '*She's my business partner's wife*', an older expatriate said apologetically to another German, explaining his earlier conversation with an older Indonesian lady. '*So you were born in Germany then, yeah?*' two German teenagers questioned another teenager their age, who just happened to be half-Indonesian. While young expatriate men with Indonesian partners still seemed to be accepted, their wives were often met with contempt or plain ignored. Clutching flashy handbags, these young Indonesian women seemed rather uncomfortable, clinging to their partner while manoeuvring their way through the crowd. These internal divisions are captured by Stoler (1995), who remarked of the colonial Dutch Indies:

'Europeanness was not only class-specific but gender-coded. A European man could live with or marry an Asian woman without necessarily losing rank, but this was never true for a European woman who might make a similar choice to live with or marry a non-European' (1995:115).

In some ways, Stoler's (1995) tenets still seemed to hold for the current expatriate situations as well. These discourses of belonging were enacted verbally and symbolically and framed the event. Through their presence, those on the fringe prompted reaffirmations of Germanness, while undermining them at the same time. These issues resurfaced some time after the event as well. Gossip suggests that the celebration had become too large and expensive, and guest numbers would have to be

reduced. It was passed on that only 'real expatriates' were going to be invited in the future, which would exclude Germans in mixed marriages, while the number of Indonesian guests would be reduced. A similar line was drawn, as the German Military Attaché told me, regarding evacuation plans, drawn up in case of overwhelming political turmoil. He explained that, *'all-German couples would be evacuated first. We can't take everybody, and if people are married to an Indonesian, or are children from a mixed marriage, they're likely to be left behind.'* He admitted that, *'this is very hard to justify. But we have to make a choice, which is terrible.'* Projections of a unified community with a shared national identity are thus contested by inside deviants, and involuntarily challenged by what some see as Outsiders.

At the outset of this section, I suggested that processes of representing, and asserting, national identity also involve representations of the Other. Taking expatriate women's associations and the Day of German Unity as examples, I traced how affirmations of national identities are interwoven with representations of 'Indonesia'. This ties in with the contention that the identities reproduced there are not, for example, 'being German-in-Germany', nor a 'core Germanness' which might be aspired to, but rather a form of 'being-German-in-Indonesia'. The efforts to distinguish oneself from an Indonesian environment are paralleled by contestations of social boundaries within expatriates communities, demarcating 'interior frontiers', as becomes visible in terms of class distinctions and ethnicity.

6.3 Transgressing Social Boundaries: Appropriation and Negotiation

In the previous section, I focused on the affirmation of national identities through representations of Self and Other. I suggest that while these social boundaries are

maintained, they can also be transgressed. This can either take the form of ‘controlled passages’ across these boundaries, as in appropriating elements of ‘Indonesia’, or of confrontations between expatriates and Indonesians. These conflicts can compel expatriates to renegotiate self-identifications and social boundaries. An important aspect is the continuities between affirmation and appropriation. Processes of appropriation can be an extension of affirmation as expatriates’ always seem to aim to control the power of representation. When surrounded by ‘Indonesia’, a strategy for retaining control can be to deliberately appropriate segments of ‘Indonesia’. These segments can be incorporated into discourses and practices as determined by expatriates. An important issue might be the wish to transform their expatriate identities from national-oriented to more ‘cosmopolitan’ ones, through the consumption of Indonesian objects or events. It seems that this does not seriously challenge expatriates’ identities. Instead, these acts of consumption are employed within their own frameworks, which I discuss in more detail below. It is important to acknowledge possible changes in identifications. It is apparent that expatriates can be intrigued by, or fascinated with, ‘Indonesia’, and are sometimes interested in escaping from their expatriate ‘bubble’, through engaging with ‘Indonesia’. It is not necessarily possible to assess this desire in terms of its ‘subversive’ potential. Although one might suspect that these appropriations merely feed into affirmative projects, one has to allow for the possibility of excess. These acts of appropriation might not be muted or exhausted when embedded into expatriate discourses, but exceed it. I therefore leave the meaning of these acts undetermined. In the following, I first explore processes of appropriation, especially through the consumption of Indonesian objects, events, and people, which often take the form of ‘controlled encounters’. I then turn to potentially confrontational encounters with Indonesians, which can challenge expatriates’ identities in

unanticipated ways. This becomes especially visible in expatriates' interactions with their Indonesian household staff.

Expatriates' Identities and Consumption of 'Indonesia'

In section 6.2, I discussed that the expatriate situation contains aspects of dislocation and uncertainty, which can produce intensified emphases on national identifications. National identities, however, are but one aspect of expatriates' existences. Living in Indonesia can not only trigger nationalistic responses among expatriates, but can also prompt them to wish to refashion themselves as 'cosmopolitans', willing to adopt elements of their new place of residence. As discussed, these encounters do not necessarily challenge their identifications, but are supposed to enhance them, as they confirm expatriates' sophistication and open-mindedness. I suggest, though, that these encounters constitute a 'limited exposure'. I employ this term to capture expatriates' concern for these encounters to be carefully controlled. I suggest that many are anxious to 'expose' themselves to Indonesia, but only in ways that are not unsettling or threatening. This might also contain a fear of becoming 'overexposed', being culturally transformed through too close identification with the Other (Johnson 1997), as became apparent with the reaction to the German Christine, who organised trips to visit the Dani in Irian Jaya. Although she was applauded for her bravery, her contact with the Dani retained a certain ambiguity in the eyes of her fellow expatriate women. The risk inherent in 'exposure' is further reduced by selecting specific ways of relating to Indonesia, such as appropriating objects, consuming places and using 'fusion people', who function as mediators between expatriates and the 'Indonesian world'. Practices of appropriation are connected to some expatriates' discomfort with their secluded lifestyles, and can include a desire to redress this discomfort, and diminish the 'unreal'

feeling of their lives. Acts of appropriation are used to signify, and substitute, a relation with 'Indonesia' that is not present in expatriates' daily lives. Also, the elements of Indonesia consumed do not necessarily present a 'real' Indonesia, but are designed for expatriates, becoming 'Indonesia-as-packaged-for-and-consumed-by-expatriates'. I first look at the use of objects, such as art pieces, then investigate the consumption of a packaged 'Indonesia' in the form of the 'Explorers' tours organised by the Indonesian Heritage Society (IHS), and finally look at expatriates' relations with 'fusion people'.

Appropriation of Objects

Thomas (1991) has extensively described the, 'European appropriation of indigenous things' (Thomas 1991:125). Investigating the practices on Captain Cook's voyages in the Pacific, he states that, 'indigenous artefacts virtually became trophies which reflected the broader experience and mastery of a passage around the world on the part of a traveler' (Thomas 1991:143). While this might apply especially to travellers or tourists, with expatriates the opposite seems the case. I suggest that their appropriation of objects does not reflect a broader experience, but in contrast becomes a token substitute, signifying an interaction with Indonesia that has not taken place, and supplanting the need for any further interactions. This has already been indicated in relation to Indonesian-style clothes, as illustrated in chapter 5, but also holds with respect to artefacts.

While clothes retain a certain ambivalence, especially as they present a close connection with the body, artefacts are more suitable objects for safe consumption. A poignant example is the displaying of Indonesian textiles as 'art' in expatriate homes. Behind a glass frame, the disquieting potential these objects might engender is disabled. Many

expatriates acquire a range of 'Indonesian' objects to decorate their homes. These comprise textile wall hangings, cushions, gongs, copperware, woodcarvings and Balinese masks. One couple had collected dozens of rather expensive *wayang kulit* puppets and arranged them in a prominent display in their entrance hall - a practice I had never encountered in an Indonesian house.

The objects people choose for appropriation often reflect their own preferences, as these objects become detached from their 'original' contexts. Thomas (1991) suggests that, 'what was Igbo or Javanese, in becoming American or Australian, now conveys something of our projects in foreign places and our aesthetics - something which effaces the intentions of the thing's producers' (1991:125). An example was the home of Nicola, a Canadian, which was decorated with an array of 'ethnic artefacts'. The spacious living room was dominated by three large wallhangings, which with their interwoven silver and golden threads looked rather precious. Similarly, a Javanese-style massive wooden bench was draped in heavy cloth from the island of Timor. Her shelves were filled with a few glossy art books, together with some carefully placed woodcarvings. The whole scenario conveyed a sense of a tasteful arrangement, which couched in the overall airy, spotless surroundings did not fail to impress the other expatriates gathered that morning to welcome newcomers to the community. Similarly, Ben, a young American, had hung a miniature historic map drawing of the Dutch Indies in his living room, together with a few selected stone carvings from islands off the Sumatra coast. A British art teacher had become interested in Indonesian paintings and put some up in her home, but those with more timid natures stuck to the drawings of Ken Pattern, a Canadian artist, who portrayed Indonesia in a more acceptable form, as I discuss below.

An interesting aspect is that the more removed some expatriates were from 'Indonesia', the more pressing becomes the necessity to prove they actually had spent time in Indonesia. This inverse relation became visible in many expatriates' choice of interior decoration. The less people were interacting with Indonesia, and the less time they had been there, the more Indonesian items - such as carvings, masks and puppets - they were likely to decorate their homes with. Conversely, the more people were connected with Indonesia, or moved further from their home countries mentally, the fewer 'Indonesian' objects were on display. Instead, their houses featured items reminding them of 'home', such as paintings, calendars and family memorabilia. In Andrea's house, an American married to an Indonesian, who had spent more than 15 years in Indonesia, there were hardly any 'Indonesian art objects' on display. Most of her decorations commemorated life in the US, such as cross-stitchings of 'God bless America' or a tin plate from a small town in Oregon, where her parents lived.

As with Indonesian body treatments and food, products were the more suitable for adaptation the more 'fusion characteristics' they exhibited. I regard such objects as 'fusion objects' which are linked to 'Indonesia', for example by being produced locally, but which are suitable for expatriate consumption, while simultaneously providing expatriates with the feeling that they have 'connected' with Indonesia. An example of this are the *Yummi*-dairy products described in chapter 5. Monika, a former art teacher from Germany, had taken to buying Indonesian art at auctions and decorated her home with them, along with batik cushions, statues and the like. She remarked, pointing towards her batik wall hangings, '*you know, your taste really changes here - I wouldn't dream of putting these things up in our house in Frankfurt.*' While making efforts to appreciate Indonesian art, she still felt the need to apologise for what were possibly not 'acceptable art objects'. This ambivalence is avoided by consuming 'fusion products'.

These products are suited for expatriates' needs while minimising fears of pollution or losing of their Western identifications.

For example, the works of Ken Pattern, a Canadian artist, are revered by all Western nationalities in the expatriate community. Pattern apparently spends much time in Indonesia, but regularly travels abroad and returns to Canada. His trademark pictures are pen and ink drawings of Jakarta, which depict the contrasts of Jakarta life, especially in terms of the built environment. Pattern's works are regularly featured in exhibitions, his postcards are available in art shops, and 'Ken Pattern Calendars' can be found in many expatriate homes - they are a favourite gift to other expatriates, especially around Christmas. Typically, Pattern's drawings juxtapose modern high-rise buildings in Jakarta's central business district with the run-down, grimy, poverty-stricken *kampung* areas just beneath them. These scenes are extremely captivating, since they reflect realities that most expatriates are aware of, even if they choose to disregard them most of the time. Pattern possibly addresses a feeling of guilt, since expatriates belong to the high-rise, not the slum-dwelling part of the pictures. Through presenting these contrasts - mirroring the contrasts of expatriates' own lives - in this crafted way, their guilt is framed, and the distance created makes these drawings fit to be consumed by expatriates.

Furniture is another favoured item for expatriate appropriation. Indonesian furniture seems to be one of the few items that can unreservedly be admitted into the expatriate home. Some streets in the Kemang area of Jakarta are lined with 'Indonesian furniture' showrooms, some of which cater exclusively to an expatriate clientele. In almost all expatriate houses in Jakarta, some pieces of Indonesian furniture can be found, and these are one of the few items deemed suitable to ship back to Europe or the US after



"Prime Time"

Ken Pattern



"Kali Ciliwung - Sunda Kelapa"

Ken Pattern

their assignment in Indonesia finishes. Furniture in expatriate homes, though, is rarely the same as that in those of Indonesians; it is modelled into ‘fusion products’. It is manufactured in Indonesia, according to Western designs, and caters to Western tastes. Instead of ‘traditional Javanese’ wooden benches, for example, the designs favoured by expatriates are modelled on the ‘traditional colonial’ deckchair.

Consuming ‘Indonesian Culture’

Another way of experiencing a safe encounter is through the activities of the Indonesian Heritage Society (IHS). The IHS is a non-profit organisation set up and run by expatriates, mainly for expatriates, although membership is open to all. Founded in 1970, the aim of the IHS is to, ‘*promote understanding and appreciation of the rich cultural heritage of Indonesia*’ (IHS introductory leaflet). Especially for expatriate wives, who want to ‘explore’ Indonesian culture, the IHS seems ideal. The IHS pursues its objectives through a range of programmes, such as study groups, organising volunteer work in the National Museum, offering tours and training Museum tour guides, as well as organising an annual public lecture series. The IHS also runs the popular ‘Explorers’ section. The ‘Explorers’ programme intends to give expatriates an insight into different aspects of ‘Indonesian culture’ through weekly tours and trips in and around Jakarta. The objective of these tours is to explore, ‘*traditional ideas, customs, skills and arts of the Indonesian people*’ (Explorers Handbook, IHS). The tours include museums, or batik, silk, glass or *tempeh* [fermented soy bean product] factories, walks through historic areas of Jakarta, visits to botanical gardens, handicraft studios, and can even include attending ceremonies and performances. The tours are highly organised, last one morning, and end with a communal lunch. This set-up should then appeal to expatriates wishing to leave their ‘bubble’ and get to know ‘Indonesia’.

As one woman told me at an introductory meeting, *'We just moved to Jakarta, and I do not have a clue, but there is no way I would venture out by myself. So I think this is a good opportunity to get to know the culture a bit.'* This seemed to be the motivation of quite a few participants. In the following, I describe one of the first tours of that season, which indicates how these 'encounters' take place.

The first tour visited 'Kampoeng Wisata' [literally: tourist village], a 'model-village' outside the town of Bogor on the outskirts of Jakarta. 'Kampoeng Wisata' was a small village, which had styled itself as an alternative 'tourist village'. It was intended to be alternative as it aimed to maintain the social and work relations within the village, while opening it up for tourists, and demonstrating traditional farming methods, plants, and handicrafts to visitors. The project was mainly conceived of by two foreigners, who had developed it in cooperation with the villagers themselves. The foreigners had, in their words, *'approached the communities in the areas around the village to help them learn to show creativity in art and other work.'* As the programme states, *'as you wander through the village you will see many home industries ... you also pass many fields of sweet corn, cassava, peanuts and plants used for traditional medicine.'* After arriving at the venue in chauffeur-driven cars, the 'Explorers' members - all dressed for hiking in shorts, walking shoes and hats - were given a guided tour of the fields, where they could touch the leaves of cassava- and groundnut plants and were told about traditional rice-harvesting methods, while watching some village women husking rice by pounding the stalks on a wooden frame. *'I think this is so interesting'* a middle-aged lady with a straw hat exclaimed. *'I've never seen a peanut plant that close'*. The group, consisting of almost 30 people, was led through the village to visit some home industries. In a small, airless house a few Indonesian women were sewing polyester tracksuits for the Indonesian army. The expatriate women in pastel-coloured shorts

took off their sunglasses and lined up to take turns glancing into the almost dark interior. As the group progressed through the village, Indonesian children and their mothers curiously, and with slight embarrassment, watched the visitors from windows, or perched on stairs. A few children followed the group along. The next few stops included another home industry which produced fake leather handbags, a frog farm, and finally offered the sight of village men and boys searching through an empty fishpond, looking for leftover fish hidden in the mud. *'Look what they are doing!'*, shouted Explorer members, grateful for this real-life spectacle unfolding before their eyes. The morning tour finished with a 'Sundanese Lunch'²⁰ on the veranda of the main guesthouse, after which the women got into their cars, so they could be back in Jakarta in time for the drivers to pick up their husbands from work.

After taking part in a complete Explorer-programme over eight weeks, I had the impression that most participants were quite satisfied with their experiences. The success of the 'Explorer' tours was confirmed, as they were usually oversubscribed, and had to be signed up for well in advance. The popularity of 'Explorers' indicated that the IHS delivered a package perfectly suited to expatriates' demand. These tours supposedly provided an insight into 'Indonesian culture' - yet the word 'tourism' is not mentioned. Possibly with genuine intention, the Indonesian Heritage Society proclaims a serious interest in 'Indonesian culture'. Furthermore, what makes it so attractive to expatriate women is that this takes place in a very safe, guarded framework, that is not threatening to any newly arrived expatriate wife. Constantly sheltered by the group, bound by a tight, tried and tested schedule, eating at selected, acceptable venues, even more daunting tours such as a visit to the *tempeh* factory can be experienced safely.

²⁰ *Sunda* is the name of a region in West Java.

I argue that this guided framework prevents any opportunities for more ‘genuine’ encounters between expatriates and ‘Indonesian culture’, although the explicit aim of the IHS is to ‘*take Indonesian culture seriously*’ [IHS introductory leaflet]. With its ‘Explorers’ programme, the IHS caters precisely to the need of expatriates for an ‘encounter’ with Indonesia - albeit only in the form of a limited exposure, an exposure that never exposes them too much, or questions the conditions of their residence there. Through embedding these orchestrated encounters in such a framework, the IHS, far from facilitating a more honest interaction, perpetuates and obscures the privileges of expatriates’ existences. Although the programme claims to, ‘*promote understanding of Indonesia*’ [IHS introductory leaflet] this does not render it more excusable, but more sinister. In addition to that, an organisation run by expatriates that claims to enable ‘*appreciation of the rich cultural heritage of Indonesia*’ [IHS introductory leaflet] cannot eschew accusations of being patronising. Linking back to the initial discussion, the activities of the IHS can be seen as part of expatriates’ aim to control representations of Indonesia as much as possible. ‘Indonesian culture’ is taken over by and embedded into a kind of post-colonial discourse, which, in a rather colonial manner, assumes that Indonesian culture is best taken care of in the hands of expatriates.

A similar attitude, wielding discursive control about representations of Indonesian history and culture, became apparent in an exhibition titled ‘*Traces of a Friendship: German-Indonesian Relations from 16th to 19th Century*’, which was held in the National Archives in Jakarta in January 2000. A project of the German ambassador at the time, this exhibition presented ‘German-Indonesian-friendship’ - on German terms. In a nutshell, it emphasised the beneficial impacts German ‘collaboration’ had had on Indonesia, in terms of science and education as well as politics and economics. It was especially insightful in terms of cultural representation. A large part of the exhibition

was devoted to German scholars' ideas about, and impressions of, 'Indonesia'. This included excerpts from the works of Goethe to Humboldt²¹, which often portrayed Indonesia, in rather orientalist fashion, as an exotic and almost mythical place, which would at the same time undoubtedly benefit from German intervention. The fact that this exhibition was well-received by German expatriates seems hardly surprising, as its attitudes and control of representations could be seen as mirroring those of expatriates in Jakarta today.

'Fusion People'

A similar role is sometimes taken over by what I have referred to as 'fusion people'. They are expatriates who have lived in Indonesia for a long time and are familiar with many aspects of 'Indonesian culture'. Quite often, these are not foreigners married to Indonesians, but expatriates who have developed a special interest in 'Indonesia', and are then employed to share their interest with other expatriates. Interactions with these 'fusion people', through attending their presentations, or participating in their trips provide 'controlled encounters'. The personalities of these 'fusion people' offer an acceptable form of 'Indonesia', which leaves expatriates' fears in terms of identification unchallenged. The presentation of a German woman, Margarete, at a coffee morning about her 'passion' for *wayang kulit* [Javanese shadow puppet play] was such an example. A dignified, elderly woman, she presented some of the *wayang kulit* puppets from her own collection, and explained their role in the *Ramayana*-epic where they appear. People usually referred to her with great reverence, praising her '*immense knowledge of the culture*', while not being too interested in that culture themselves. Likewise, another German, Christine, regularly organised tours to visit a group of the

²¹ Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), a German scholar, developed a theory of linguistics. He wrote extensively on the *Kawi* language, spoken in parts of Java, although he never travelled to Java himself.

Dani in Irian Jaya, whom she described as her 'friends'. In a similar vein, an economist working at the German chamber of commerce was invited as an 'expert' to talk about '*the key to successful business*' in Indonesia, with an emphasis on '*cultural pitfalls*', while Franz Magnis-Suseno, a Jesuit who had been living in Indonesia for decades, would be brought in to familiarise expatriates with the 'recent political problems in Indonesia', referring to developments in the post-Suharto era. These people provided a 'safe encounter' with 'Indonesia' - carefully circumventing potentially threatening questions about expatriates lives, and thus, like the tours of the IHS, contributing to a fictional, if fragile, construct of a 'friendly interest' relationship between expatriates and 'Indonesia'.

Negotiation and Confrontation

So far, I mainly discussed rather controlled appropriations of Indonesia. Expatriates' lives, however, are also characterised by uncontrolled encounters and confrontations, which can call into question their identifications. I discuss two aspects here. The first refers to expatriates' identities as individuals. This might seem ironic, since so far I have presented expatriates mostly as affirming their collective identities as Western nationals. One of the most humiliating experiences cited by expatriates is being denied their individuality, as manifest in the gaze of the Other. This links to issues of representation, as expatriates feel the power of self-identification and definition is taken away from them. The second aspect is connected to their identifications with 'Western' values such as rationality, and 'moral standards', which become especially pronounced in relations with their staff. These relations can also pose a challenge to expatriates' identities, as they find themselves not only in the position of employers, but also

sometimes as ‘masters’. I explore the changes to expatriates’ identities arising from these situations, and expatriates’ responses to them.

Power of Definitions

I have already discussed the gaze of the Other in chapter 4, referring to expatriates being exposed to the gaze of Indonesians when moving through public spaces. Here, this gaze attains another dimension; it challenges expatriates’ identifications in refusing them individuality, and stereotyping them as ‘Western foreigners’. This does not allow for personal variation, but implies characteristics assigned to all foreigners. Expatriates seem to resent this for several reasons; one is the basic discomfort with being exoticised and categorised. Another aspect could be that there is an element of truth in this stereotyping, as they are cast as ‘rich foreigners’. Although this is often true, expatriates feel that the multiple aspects of their identities are reduced to a few stereotyped ones, which they find humiliating. The gaze might embody what Hall (1991) calls, ‘this inscription of identity in the look of the other’ (1991:48). It is important to note that both expatriates and Indonesians engage in these practices with respect to the other. Many Indonesians are treated as ‘incompetent locals’ by expatriates, which they experience as similarly humiliating.

Some examples illustrate this. Jean, who is married to an Indonesian, recounted a typical incident: *‘One day, I am coming out of my house, and somebody shouts like, ohhh, bule! And I am like, this is MY house, I have lived here for more than 8 years, can you like not yell bule at me in my own front yard??’* Her frustration is palpable. It indicates the situation of many long-term expatriates, whose perception of their place in Indonesian society is not reflected in Indonesians’ reactions, who regard them first and foremost as foreigners. As Jean describes it:

'I have lived here longer than anywhere else, I have lots of friends, lots of activities. If I want to buy something, I know where to go. I know how to go from A to B, and if not, I know how to find out. I am perfectly at home and this is my home. All my stuff is here, I do not have a house somewhere else. But every time someone looks at you, you are a foreigner!'

She finds this constant Othering, irrespective of what she sees as her integration, wearing: *'Some say you will never fit in here. No matter how much you try, you will always remain a foreigner.'* Jean sums up many Indonesians' conceptions of 'foreigners'; instead of being recognised as an individual:

'You are seen as someone who doesn't know. I walk up to someone and speak Indonesian, and they just look. You want to get served somewhere, and they do not do it because they think you do not speak Indonesian! It's like, excuse me, is there someone to help me? And they go, oh you speak Indonesian! The constant assumption is, I do not know anything, I am the one you can't talk to, the one who is rich. That is very tiring.'

While Othering is not a unique phenomenon, the differences in bodily appearances between 'Indonesians' and 'Westerners' reinforces an emphasis on the body. Jean's experiences described above arise from being white, which initially eclipse other characteristics - such as speaking the language - which supports her claim to being an individual. This does not only hold for expatriates 'integrated' into Indonesian society, but also for those who are less part of it, but would prefer to merge into the crowd. Being Othered is painful for Jean because it disregards efforts at integration. For people such as Vicky and Eric, being Othered confirms their status as outsiders, which they are already only too aware of. Eric, who came from a posting in Chile, mourned the loss of

anonymity: *'In Chile, you could just walk on the streets and you wouldn't look that different, you could just blend in more. But here in Jakarta, it is impossible - people always stare at you, you are immediately recognised as a foreigner.'* Similarly, in an interview with German women at a newcomers' coffee morning, they unequivocally complained about *'always being seen as exotic.'* As one woman put it:

'everybody is staring at you and starting to talk to you. I know they do not mean it, and they do not know any better, but it gets on your nerves. It was the same in Malaysia. That was so nice about going to Australia for holidays: even the kids said, "mummy, nobody is talking to us here". You can move around as you like.'

These foreigners are unhappy about being stereotyped, although different reasons might be involved. Jean dislikes it because it denies her claims of belonging - of not being a 'typical' expatriate, but an integrated individual. Vicky, Eric and the German women, on the other hand, seem mostly uncomfortable because they feel reduced to their identities as privileged foreigners, of which they would rather not be constantly reminded.

Indonesians can find themselves in similar situations of being stereotyped. Adelle, an Indonesian married to an Australian, frequently encounters this. She constantly has to assert her position as a *'thinking, married woman'*, as she puts it, as opposed to being regarded as a bargirl accompanying a foreigner for the night. As she told me:

'I once sat in a bar with my husband, when another expatriate came up to him. He asked my husband how much he had paid for me, and whether he could maybe pass me on to him later? It was terrible. I was just furious. And my

husband said: "No. I am sorry. This is my WIFE." It happens to me all the time.'

Her situation is especially relevant as Adelle is a regular contributor to the 'Living in Indonesia' forum, which I mentioned in chapter 3. As I discussed in chapter 5, the Internet allows Adelle some ways in which to transgress boundaries and escape categorisations, instead enabling her to play with different, unrecognised identities.

Jean's Indonesian husband occasionally brought materials she needed to the American Women's Association's office, as Jean occasionally worked for one of their programme sections. Jean recalls how he was repeatedly treated '*like a driver*' when entering the office:

'when my husband picked something up for me at the AWA, and they are like, "you wait outside at the drivers section", and he was like, "excuse me? I am not a driver. I am Jean's husband." And suddenly they were like, "Oh, I am so sorry!"'

Similarly, Suprpto, an Indonesian university graduate working for the German chamber of commerce, told me how he routinely gets treated by German delegations visiting the office: '*When I greet them at the door, they just assume I am some office helper and will serve them tea - they are very condescending. I have to point out, "I am sorry, I am head of a section of the chamber here - you can talk to me like a real person."*' Problems like Adelle's are also encountered by an increasing number of Indonesian female graduates, who work for international companies in Jakarta. They struggle to be recognised as 'independent professionals' by Western men, who often seem unable to regard Indonesian females as anything other than prostitutes.

These examples make visible the contestations of identities and representations, and reaffirm the crucial role of the power of definition. Expatriates seem most challenged when the power of identification is wielded by Indonesians, who classify them as *bule*. [white Westerners]. These challenges, however, only indicate that expatriates expect to maintain the power of representation at all times. As they regard themselves as being in charge of creating and determining boundaries, counter-representations by Indonesians, for example through the gaze of the Other, become marked incidents. However, although Indonesians produce representations of expatriates, they do not hold the power to fundamentally unsettle expatriates' lives. While Indonesians' representations persistently appear on the margins of the expatriate universe, most expatriates are able to dismiss these as peripheral occurrences, which do not seriously interfere with their lives. Expatriates might dislike the gaze of the Other, but they are ultimately able to escape it through bodily and spatial practices, as well as to discursively dismiss it as the 'gaze of the uneducated'. While conflicting representations of self and Other are produced by expatriates and Indonesians alike, expatriates' power determines whose representations ultimately matter.

Confrontations and Negotiations: Expatriates and Indonesian Staff

Apart from being Othered and reduced to a stereotype, expatriates' identities are challenged through interactions with their Indonesian staff. As suggested above, their relations can take the form of uncontrolled encounters. These confrontations can make visible which 'Western' values expatriates try to impose on their staff, and what they regard as deviations from them. The domestic as the realm of symbolic contestations is highlighted by Stoler (1995), as she remarks about servants that, 'it was precisely those who served the needs of the *middenstand* who were viewed as subversive contagions in

those carefully managed colonial homes' (1995: 110). I trace some of these contestations, which can necessitate renegotiations of expatriates' identities. The most salient issues are staff 'education', as well as enforcing 'Western morality'.

Staff 'Education'

A German woman summed up many expatriates' view on Indonesian staff, '*Children ... they are like children. And you have to treat them as such.*' Indonesian staff rarely seemed to be granted full adult status as persons. Most notably, expatriates seem struck by what they regard as a lack of rationality, intelligence and initiative, and most importantly, an inability or unwillingness to learn. A German woman recalled what she saw as a typical incident:

'This office boy had been working for my husband's office for ten years. We sent out invitations for our son's confirmation to relatives in Germany, and my husband gave him all the money for the postage. He took the money and ran off with it - after ten years of working there! Just for the postage money. They are so short-sighted, I can't believe it.'

Similarly, Marsha, who maintained rather good relations with her staff, was exasperated with the behaviour of one of her maids. As she recounted:

'one of my maids said she was getting married and was pregnant, and she wanted to quit her job. But her husband didn't even have a job! I said to her, do not quit - I think you need the money even more now! She thought that by being married she would be provided for, so she left. Some months later, she had had a kid, and no money, and she came and asked me to take her back - just what I could have told her from the start.'

Also, staff did not seem to grasp the concept of performance-related pay in the sense that pay rises were coupled with improved work performance. As a German woman complained, *'we are paying them more and more every year, but the work is not getting any better! I always have to make sure things get done - but they can only take, take, take. They never give.'*

The most salient issue, especially with Germans, were learning abilities. Sabine repeatedly expressed her inability to grasp *'what is going on in their minds'*. She went on:

'Our driver doesn't know any street in Jakarta. I always have to tell him, even though I'm going to the same places most of the time. We're living in Jalan Sekolah Kencana, and I bet you he doesn't know that. If you told him, go to Sekolah Kencana, he wouldn't even know. And he doesn't LEARN, this is what I can't understand.'

Consequently, the relationship between staff and expatriates is conceived of as one between pupil and teacher. An American woman proudly recollected the initial period with her maid:

'she was trying to wash our dishes in a tiny plastic container in the sink, with about one drop of detergent. I said to her, no, no, Yati, you can't do it like this. I showed her: you have to fill up the whole sink, use hot water, and pour in loads of detergent. Now that's what I call doing the dishes properly. After I showed her, it worked very well!'

This training is coupled with enforcement of 'thoroughness' and diligence. An Australian woman described how, *'my maid wiped the top of the toilet box, but I*

discovered she never even lifted the spare toilet roll on top of it. She always wiped around it! You could see the dust - so I said, you actually have to lift this up! I made her watch as I did it. These attitudes are reflected in the programme of the 'International Community Activity Center' (ICAC), an expatriate-oriented organisation providing courses for expatriates - and their staff. As mentioned in chapter 5 with respect to domestic hygiene, expatriates can send staff on courses on *'food preparation and personal hygiene'*. Classes on 'telephone manners' are designed to prevent, *'missing important messages as your staff can not deliver them well'* (ICAC programme).

'Local Savages' and 'Western Morality'

Another aspect of contesting and guarding Western values is the threat to morality posed by Indonesian staff. As Stoler (1995) describes it, colonials in the Indies were anxious to remove, '[European] children from the immoral clutches of native nursemaids' (1995:122). This attitude also became apparent with expatriates. Tales were told among expatriate wives confirming the hidden *'savageness'* of one's staff - at least this seemed to be the spin given to these stories. At one coffee morning, a German woman told with horror about what happened in a friend's house, *'Everybody had gone out, but her husband had forgotten something, so he came back from the office unexpectedly. And what did he see? The nanny was sitting in their own bathtub, together with their baby - naked!!'* It did not become clear what was most disturbing - the fact that she had used their bathtub, the nanny's bathing together with their child, or that this was all conducted naked. In any case, this seemed a prime example of how *'uncivilised these people'* were. One obviously could not trust them, since savagery reared its head the minute one turned one's back.

Inge, a German woman who had been living in Indonesia for several years, was facing a different moral dilemma, as a difficult situation was unfolding in her household. Her female cook, who was married with children, was apparently having an affair with next-door's nightguard. Inge's other household staff had informed her that whenever she was away, the night guard would slip into the house and they would '*have it away*' in the servants quarters. Inge found this situation unacceptable, as did her other staff, who expected her to put an end to this. She was unsure what to do; she felt a responsibility to intervene, which seemed justified since this happened in her own staff's quarters. At the same time, she did not want to lose her cook, and admitted that the cook was '*a grown woman*' who could not be reprimanded like a child. The situation was compounded by the expectations of the other staff, who expected her to assume her moral obligations as an employer. It seems that within a 'Javanese' system of feudalistic-patriarchal employee relations, employers are expected to enforce 'order' among staff, even if that employer is a foreigner. This possibly feeds into reinforcing Western ideas of Indonesians as 'uninhibited savages' on whom one has to impose certain standards of morality.

Expatriates as 'Masters'

A final aspect of expatriates' identification are the master-servant relations²² with their staff. This can be somewhat surprising for expatriates, since many had never employed household staff before. Assuming the position of the 'master' or 'mistress' can therefore challenge expatriates' ideas of themselves. This challenges not only to self-

²² I invoke the term 'master' here to highlight continuities with colonial times, when colonials regarded themselves as 'masters' and their staff as 'servants'. Although I do not imply that all expatriates see themselves as masters, the term points to issues of power and ideas of superiority which are relevant in relations between expatriates and their staff.

identified 'liberals', who might be reluctant to give orders to staff, but also to experiencing the power and interdependencies of this position. In the following, I trace a few aspects of these relations.

An important aspect is the change inherent in these situations. Being put into a 'master's position' just because one employs servants can trigger processes which transform expatriates into 'masters'. It reveals the power of material conditions: in many cases, Europeans who regarded themselves as 'liberal' or even 'Marxist', found themselves sliding into 'authoritarian' or 'feudal' attitudes towards their staff. While often not happy about this, it seemed hard to resist this expected role - expected by other expatriates, and their own staff. It also attests to the fact that power relations are established by both sides; it is not only the 'master' keeping the 'servants' in their position, but the presence of a 'servant' might produce even initially reluctant 'masters'. These dynamics are indirectly acknowledged in expatriates' discourses. At one newcomers' morning at the American Women's' Association, Maggie was talking about a newly arrived member, *'Sarah actually thinks she can do without servants. She plans to do her own cooking! But that's not gonna last very long. I tell you, she'll realise pretty quickly she can't do without them, and get herself some staff as well.'* At a German women's gathering, Hilde described how this situation had changed her:

'The longer you live in this country, and we've been in Asia for 6 years now, the less tolerant you get. At first, when my husband got back to Germany from his Asian postings, I was surprised about the tone he was suddenly using with people. I said, what kind of a tone is it that you have adopted, how are you dealing with people? But the truth is, you have to change your tone, otherwise you do not achieve anything here.'

While relations with staff are often presented in terms of distance and control, staff can also add or detract from their employers' identities and social prestige. This becomes obvious when expatriates entertain in their own home. Apart from at coffee mornings, where the servants are often disparaged, at dinner parties the servants can play a vital role. 'Bad' staff behaviour reflects on the employers, suggesting ineffective training or unwise choice of staff. Staff achievements, though, can also enhance their employers' standing. For example, the ICAC offers staff training in 'Thai cooking' and 'Bartending' - advanced skills that can add to an expatriate's prestige. The bilingual cookbooks mentioned earlier also give an example. If a cook produces a German courgette-yoghurt soup, the cook contributes to the expatriate's social advantage. These dependencies, though, are embedded in a framework of dominance. It seemed that the only way expatriates could positively relate to their staff was by praising their docility. While personal characteristics were sometimes recognised, '*She is very reliable, I must say*', this was judged from a position of benevolent superiority. Expatriates can show their abilities to relate to Indonesia by extolling the virtues of the 'pearl' of a cook that they have. Evaluations like these merely affirm expatriates' powerful positions, as recognising one's staff's qualities in this manner also keeps them in their place.

In this chapter, I elucidated how the interconnections between identities, representations and social boundaries play out in expatriates' lives and their relations with Indonesians. I argued that identity is constituted through an Other, and that social boundaries determine what lies on either side of them. I suggested that representations of Self and Other assume a crucial role in the contestations of identity. More specifically, this entails representations of Self, comprising representations of Other. The power of representation thus remains central to people's control of their identities. I discussed this first with respect to expatriate women's organisations, and through expatriates'

affirmation of national distinctiveness. I argue that these projected 'national identities' constitute a specific form of, for example, 'being German in Indonesia', as opposed to an imagined 'core Germanness'. Apart from these affirmations of identities, social boundaries are deliberately transgressed, or even challenged. Expatriates sometimes aim to 'enrich' their self-representations through appropriations of Indonesian 'culture'. These appropriations mostly take place within controlled frameworks and do not seriously threaten expatriates' identities. However, some encounters with Indonesians constitute challenges, as expatriates feel Othered through being simply categorised as 'Westerners'. This again illustrates how constestations of identity are bound up with the power of definition. Finally, expatriate relations with their staff constitute a complex set of powers and dependencies, which brings about changes and contestations of 'Western values' and include attempts to 'educate' their staff, while ultimately remaining in control of representations of themselves and Indonesian staff alike.

Chapter 7: Young Expatriates, Alternative Lifestyles?

In the previous chapters, I mainly focused on the older generation of ‘family expatriates’, and their attitudes to and interactions with their Indonesian environment. As has become obvious in chapter 6, national affiliations characterise many older expatriates’ identities, their relations with ‘Indonesia’ are often laboriously negotiated, and social encounters with Indonesians are often seen as threatening. One could ask whether the younger generation of ‘global professionals’ develop different ways of relating to their Indonesian environment, which might be less fraught, and less marked by anxiously guarding their national identity. This assumption is supported by the fact that while many family expatriates are posted to Indonesia without being particularly interested in working abroad, the ‘young global professionals’ are defined by their explicit aim to work in an international environment. The question emerges whether this attitude opens up with possibilities for more genuine engagement with ‘Indonesia’, and transcends the ‘expatriate bubble’ that many family expatriates live in. In short, I argue that the ‘young global professionals’ do not manage to leave this ‘bubble’, but also perpetuate lifestyles that are removed from their Indonesian environment. While their lives differ markedly from those of family expatriates, they do not engender more open relationships with ‘Indonesia’, but merely perform altered forms of exclusivity. One could suggest that this marks the emergence of a new class, whose powers are based on the twin bases of economic and cultural capital, as I discuss in more detail below. Instead of living in a ‘family expatriate bubble’, young professionals live in a ‘cosmopolitan bubble’. This is performed through their itinerant lifestyles, how they relate to localities, their use of the Internet, social lives, discourses, and practices of food consumption. While this ‘cosmopolitan bubble’ is less characterised by forms of

national identity, the supposed ‘internationalism’ represents in fact a Western canon of localities, discourses and consumption practices.

I suggest that young professionals’ ‘cosmopolitan’ lifestyles become especially visible in their ways of relating to, and representation of localities. In section 7.1, I focus on these ‘translocal’ lifestyles as a specific area of their lives where their being ‘cosmopolitan’ manifests itself, and which engenders forms of exclusivity both in terms of spatial practices and discourses. In section 7.2, I explore how this exclusiveness is visible in other areas of their lives, such as their social relations and food consumption. I argue that while young professionals might distance themselves from ‘national identifications’, their ‘cosmopolitan’ identities often similarly exclude the local, or ‘Indonesian’ aspects. I finally ask in section 7.3 whether a more inclusive approach is achieved by younger foreigners living in Yogyakarta, who distinguish themselves from corporate expatriates, and whose professed aim often is to ‘blend in with the locals’. I suggest that although foreigners in Yogyakarta might manage to avoid living in a ‘bubble’, their existences are predicated on advantages of being Westerners, in professional, social and economic terms. While both these lifestyles avoid the ‘family expatriate bubble’, and are different ways of relating to ‘Indonesia’, I conclude that seemingly neither of these groups entirely escape the global inequalities which their lives in Indonesia are inevitably based on.

7.1 ‘Global’ Lives, Localities, and the Internet

In chapter 1, I described the younger generation of expatriates as ‘young global professionals’. While this is a convenient shorthand term, the term ‘global’ needs closer scrutiny. Here, I take it to refer to their mobile lives, frequent changes of jobs and

residence, 'globally' distributed social networks, and general outlook. In this particular case, I claim that the term 'global lifestyle', which many professionals regard as their characteristics, masks a very specific, 'Western' form of using and representing localities. I similarly argue that their 'international' outlook constitutes a specific selection of Western practices, which often disregard the 'local'. While I discuss these practices in section 7.2, here I explore in what way localities are incorporated into 'global' discourses and practices.

I suggest that these incorporations are captured by the notion of 'translocality'. This refers to young professionals' practices of experiencing and conceptualising 'localities', places that they live in for a limited time, or pass through regularly. Their lives can be described as 'translocal' more accurately than 'global', since they take place in a series of sampled, temporarily lived-in, and passed-through localities, with which they have an acquaintance of sorts, but which are ultimately subsumed under and submerged in the greater narratives of their mobile, itinerant lives. In these narratives, localities are not so much presented as unique, inexhaustible places in themselves, but become mere links in the chain of their globally distributed local experiences, or globally trodden pathways.

While this 'translocality', both in terms of their discourses and spatial practices, characterises much of young professionals' lives, I point out that localities, even if embedded in practices of translocality, are not completely subsumed by these. As becomes obvious below, a shared representation and experience of specific places can attain heightened relevance in young professionals' lives, and serve as a basis for creating social bonds - although one could argue that these places are always represented within an overarching discursive translocality. This ambivalence also

characterises the role of the Internet with respect to localities. While one could suspect that use of the Internet allows young professionals to further disengage with 'Indonesia', it turns out that use of the Internet also reflects the relevance that living in Indonesia has for their lives - even if Indonesia is discursively constructed in a very specific, 'Western' way. A final link between the Internet and localities is suggested by Castells' (1996) claim that localities are rendered irrelevant by the Internet. I contend that this notion is mistaken, as the 'Living in Indonesia' forum demonstrates. It emerges that this forum, based on a 'global' medium, relies on a sense of shared locality. Far from being made irrelevant, localities thus engender specific discourses and social interactions within this forum. At the same time, 'Jakarta' as a locality is constructed through expatriates' discourses that take place on this forum, as I illustrate below. In the following, I first highlight how localities are relevant as part of a network of global trodden pathways, which are frequented by young professionals. Secondly, I show how discourses on globally distributed, shared localities can become important for people leading secluded existences in Jakarta. Thirdly, I examine young professionals' use of the Internet, and how this can disconnect them from the Jakarta locality, but at the same time reflects the increased importance of Indonesia in their lives.

Global Trodden Pathways

Although young professionals have seemingly 'global' lifestyles in terms of job mobility and personal outlook, localities - in terms of concrete, local spaces - become relevant for them in different ways. First, their 'global lifestyles' include frequent visits to certain local nodes in their global networks, such as certain airports, restaurants or bookshops. These places become important as localities in the form of 'global trodden pathways'. This refers to a range of places, which have become well-known nodes in

the itineraries of young expatriates. They can be places of transit, such as airports, or popular holiday spots, hotels, department stores or social venues in metropolitan cities. As part of their mobile lifestyles, many pass through these places, so that a common repertoire of spatial experiences emerges.

Conversations about quaint Georgetown bookstores, Tokyo department stores, organic food stores in Los Angeles, and music clubs in San Francisco may sound preposterous and exclusive. On reflection, though, it becomes clear that the condition for sharing these experiences is their non-exclusiveness. Although there are differences in likelihood of other people having been to the same places, there is a growing repertoire of global spaces easily shared with others. This can establish a common sense of locality between virtual strangers in Jakarta. This does not only extend to 'Western' locations, but also to other Asian regions. Since many young professionals regard Jakarta as a rather unattractive location, some of their discourses revolve around other places in Indonesia or beyond. This includes exchanges about places in Bali, night-clubs in Kuta, scuba diving spots on the north coast of Bali, and even restaurants in Ubud such as *Casa Luna*, and the merits of its grilled-tuna salads and sundried-tomato ciabattas. Even Internet cafes become common points of reference- such as the one on the top floor of Singapore's Changi airport, in the Khao San area of Bangkok, or even certain Internet cafe chains in parts of central London.

Similarly, people casually exchange views on the hotel facilities in Singapore, or check-in counters in Heathrow airport. Tom, a young Canadian working for a pharmaceutical firm, was just about to go to a weekend trip to Singapore. He dwelled on how he was looking forward to '*a Starbucks Iced Moccacino at the Airport Cafe*', and being able to visit a branch of Borders bookshop on Singapore's Orchard Road. Like many of his

friends, he regarded such weekend trips overseas as essential, because, as he explained, *'you have to get out of Jakarta, or you go mad'*.

This was not seen as bragging, but simply sharing experiences that everyone could relate to. I asked an Italian friend who had stayed in Bangkok for a stopover whether he had visited a certain Italian food stall in the tourist area of that city. *'Yes, I did just that'*, he wrote, *'how did you know?'* As this incident illustrates, the global paths of these young professionals resemble the routes of young backpackers in Asia. These routes are not secret, but become increasingly common knowledge. While travellers often compete for exclusive knowledge, young professionals regard these places from a recreational or business perspective, and as part of their 'global' lifestyles.

Shared Localities

Apart from these 'global trodden pathways', localities can also become important for young professionals as common reference points when forming social bonds. Many young professionals regard their existences in Jakarta as isolated or removed from their 'normal' social lives in their home countries. In this situation, discourses of shared experiences in other places assume an increased relevance in forming social relations. An example from Susanne's life shows this relevance. A Swiss national, she completed a degree at a US university and subsequently worked for several years at the World Bank in Washington, D.C. After realising that it would significantly enhance her career prospects to spend time working abroad in the development sector, she came to Jakarta with another development organisation. She had especially liked the *'international flair'* of Washington, D.C. As she recounted, *'one of my bosses was from Togo, and the other from Sweden, and their working styles were entirely different. I had friends from*

all over: they were from India, Hungary, some Americans, and my boyfriend was from Chile.’ In Jakarta, Susanne was eager to establish a social circle that included Australians as well as Americans and Europeans, but hardly any Indonesians. At the same time, she maintained world-wide social networks: they included friends in the development sector working in Africa and Eastern Europe as well as from her US university, her Swiss university and high-school. Considering these globally distributed, deterritorialised social networks, one could ask what importance ‘locality’ held for her.

Importantly, Susanne did not particularly enjoy Jakarta as a place. She disliked the lack of green space, the restricted movement, continually being stared at in public spaces and generally being treated like a ‘foreigner’. At the same time, ‘locality’ became important for her in terms of spaces outside of Indonesia, and past experiences of these that could be shared with other young professionals. As we attended a meeting one evening, it turned out that the person sitting next to her had been to the same university as she, and had also lived for some time in New York. They immediately began reminiscing about university, small bookstores, and their favourite hangouts in certain areas of New York. Although they had not been there at the same time, and had few common acquaintances, the shared familiarity with certain spaces was extremely significant. While living in Jakarta never sparked the same excitement, having visited the same cafes in New York forges significant bonds between them.

This not only testifies to the comparative irrelevance of their present location- Jakarta-, but also indicates the strain and alienation of a ‘dislocated’, seemingly deterritorialised lifestyle, in which shared local, if distant, experiences subsequently assume heightened importance. This suggests that ‘locality’ as such does not become irrelevant, but instead

re-emerges, vested with meaning, in a different form and context. This also contains an element of nostalgia. Quite possibly Susanne, returning to Washington. D.C. after her stay in Indonesia, might happily share memories of Jakarta spaces with other returnees. Shared knowledge of certain spaces - which, crucially, are geographically disconnected from one's present location in Jakarta- can thus be a source of comfort and recognition, especially if one feels slightly alienated and cut off from one's present environment. It emerges that these 'globalised' lifestyles do not imply a decreased relevance of localities. Instead, localities become important as nodes in globally distributed networks. Young expatriates do not only enjoy visiting these places as such, but also relish sharing discourses about them as part of their 'cosmopolitan' identities.

Role of the Internet

As I demonstrate below, young professionals' lives are marked by an extensive use of the Internet. I explore the effects this has on their relations with Jakarta, and to what extent these 'local' influences become visible and inform their Internet use. I outline the importance that the Internet has in their lives, and emphasise the continuities engendered by it. These continuities further maintain the experience of a 'cosmopolitan bubble'. At the same time, it emerges that Indonesian localities, represented within Western discourses, remain relevant.

Two quotes give a sense of the importance of Email. Patricia admitted, *'I'm hooked. I am a complete Email junkie.'* Her friend Sarah explained that, *'Email - that's the most important thing for Patricia after eating and sleeping.'* In the following, I outline the relevance of Email in greater detail. Patricia was a highly strung young consultant working for a development agency, who found it rather hard to cope with the

'remoteness' of Jakarta, and who longed to return to the headquarters in the U.S., where she had been based before. Email was essential for her to maintain her professional and social networks while living, as she put it, *'in the middle of nowhere'*. She describes her relation with Internet technologies, *'For me, Email is extremely important. We just had this high-school reunion questionnaire, and they asked "what is your favourite drug?" For me this is email. I suffer from withdrawal when I'm unable to check my mail for two days. It really is my social support system.'* Stephen, a Canadian employed by an Indonesian NGO, puts it succinctly, *'Email makes me feel connected and happy. When staying abroad, it certainly helped a lot.'* Stefan, a German working for an American company, puts it more drastically, *'Without email, my current life would not be possible.'*

Email ensures the continuity of social exchange when entering a new living situation. Christine, who had been working in Australia before coming to Indonesia with her partner, emphasises, *'Email is essential; it is the main source of communication with friends and family at home. Plus, it alleviates any feeling of isolation, being overseas and sometimes not working.'* Email not only makes live abroad easier, many consider their lives abroad impossible without it. Patricia describes this, *'It influenced my life in Indonesia in that I spent 3-4 hours nearly every day online, writing e-mails or chatting online. It helped me to maintain my balance. Without access to Internet I would feel cut off. The Internet diminishes the feeling of isolation.'*

While 'family expatriates' often did not use Email before moving abroad, Patricia stresses:

'E-mail was important to me before I moved to Jakarta since it was the main channel to keep in touch with my friends all over the world. Its importance to

me increased dramatically when I moved to Indonesia though. It became my lifeline and my support system. Later, at the end of my stay this key role diminished somewhat, but e-mail is a key priority as it helps me to share my experiences with friends and family, to get support or let them know what is going on in my life.'

Email functions as a social support system, especially when starting an 'isolated' life in Indonesia. This was also true for Natasha, a British NGO-consultant who was based in Jakarta, while working on projects throughout Southeast Asia. As she described it, *'Our life is not normal in Jakarta in the sense that we are all orphans. There are no commitments to go see your parents at the weekends, you're cut off from friends and family. It is not a totally normal life.'* In this situation, Email becomes crucial: *'I get at least two personal emails a day and I am quite upset when I do not. It gives me a really good feeling to be in touch with someone I really care about. But on a day where I get no personal Email it is terrible - I think people have forgotten about me.'* Natasha had been working as a development consultant for several years, starting out in the early 1990s, which included work stints in Central America, the Caribbean, and the Philippines. As she realises, *'my life evolved along with email, and it has changed it a lot. At the beginning, when I was just travelling, I didn't have email, and it didn't bother me. But now, it really matters. I remember once I was in Guatemala for work, I couldn't get to Email for two weeks, and I was going mad.'*

Life in Indonesia is often seen as 'isolated', which Email helps to overcome: *'Email is a link to the 'outside world' and 'it helps to break the isolation.'* This isolation is less diminished by interaction with the immediate environment, but through social relations with people in other parts of the world. Email thus intensifies the feeling of a 'living in

global bubble'. Online shopping can contribute to this feeling through providing goods required for a Western lifestyle. Karen for example, an American management consultant, quite enjoyed living in Jakarta, taking weekend trips to Bali, and having a busy social life. She pointed out, however, that her contentment was helped by the fact that, *'I can still live out here and have certain luxuries, like my favourite creams or make of clothes, or good books at a reasonable cost, when I order them over the Internet.'* Many young professionals want 'international lifestyles', but only with limited disruptions. The Internet then helps to maintain such a state of equilibrium. It anchors people with transient lifestyles in a 'global bubble' through creating a sense of continuity. It provides an invariant backdrop; as Sergio puts it, *'my Email-address will always be the same, no matter where I am'*; or in Yasmineen's words, *'wherever you are you can open your mail and find letters from all over.'*

This continuity comprises several aspects. First, it allows expatriates to *'live in two worlds.'* As Natasha, a German working in East Java, puts it, *'through Email, I can live in 'two worlds', although of course it is no substitute for 'real experiences.'* Another aspect concerns work. As Patricia points out, *'without access to Internet I would feel cut off from what is going on in my professional field. Since I am not totally excluded from the news, I feel more comfortable living far away from New York where I had easy access to information.'* Sergio, an Italian journalist working in Jakarta, stresses his involvement with what is happening in Italy, *'I read two Italian newspapers every day on the Internet - but also two Southeast Asian newspapers, like the Jakarta Post and the Straits Times.'* Information from one's home country is not only relevant in terms of its news value, but also because it enables continuous exchanges with friends from home. Natasha explains:

'Email facilitates communication when I am on home leave - because I am always up to date with what has been happening there. When I am in Germany, I can take part in discussions, without people having to explain everything to me. Also, discussing issues in emails helps me to not only think about it the 'Indonesian way', but also offers German perspectives on things.'

Sergio also stresses the social importance of 'being up to date': *'when I went home for Easter, I knew about everything. When talking with my friends, I knew, this minister resigned because of sexual affairs, and that singer had died - all of that.'*

Many young professionals emphasise how continuity in personal relationships alleviates the disruption created by spatial distances and long absences. As Monika, a German professional, points out, *'It became clear to me last time, when I had been gone for a whole year - when I came back, I realised immediately, my friends are there just as before- but the important thing was, we didn't pick up things where we left them a year ago, but we picked them up from where we were at the moment.'* Lack of this personal continuity is felt sharply, and a sense of shared past can be paramount. Natasha describes this, *'some day I feel, I am in a place where nobody cares about me. They may want to go out and party with you, but who is there to really worry about you? In these situations writing emails makes me feel good, because we share lots of references to the past and people that we know.'*

As these narratives show, the Internet effects a sense of being 'globally connected'.

This can be paralleled by being disconnected in terms of locality, as Email can detract from efforts to engage with Jakarta. When asked whether Email helped her live in Jakarta, Natasha pondered, *'maybe it is quite the opposite. If I knew I couldn't communicate with people abroad, I would have to focus more on being here. Maybe*

you go through a transition- you have an initial period where you need Email because it is like a lifeline, but it also makes you miss everything more - it is a two-way thing.'

Edouard, a French media professional, also recognises Email as an escape route, but defines his priorities, *'I am connected to my friends via email. But I would not say that it is so important in general; as the important thing is really to build a pleasant life in Indonesia.'*

While Email can foster a cocooning within this 'cosmopolitan bubble', there is evidence that living in Indonesia does have an impact, for example in making communication with other expatriates in Indonesia more important. As Sonja describes it, *'the focus of my Email partners has changed over the last few years. Increasingly, Email addresses in Indonesia become important, because sometimes it is very difficult to describe experiences that happened here, to people in Germany, so that I'd rather talk to people in the same situation'*. Natasha has recognised similar changes in her Email use, *'I have different folders for emails from the UK, from Indonesia and elsewhere- and Indonesia is now the biggest. My mailbox from Indonesia far outweighs anything else, it is about 3-4 times as much. The next biggest is from friends outside the UK, and then comes the folder with friends in the UK.'* This demonstrates how local environments do still become relevant even within these 'global' lives.

In conclusion, the Internet has an ambivalent role for young professionals. On the one hand, Email and the Internet foster a sense of being globally connected, thus sustaining life in a 'cosmopolitan bubble'. This can further discourage young professionals from making contact with their local environment. Despite these 'global' connections, though, 'locality' has an impact, as apparent in the preference for increased Email

communication with other expatriates living in Indonesia, even if it is represented and constructed in 'Western' discourses.

Localities and the Internet

It has been claimed that 'globalised' lifestyles are increasingly eclipsing the relevance of the 'local'. Castells (1996) conceptualises:

'a city in which space flows supersede the meaning of the space of places.

Space flows, however, are organised on the principles of information-processing activities, rather than on the everyday spaces of living and working. The resulting meaninglessness of everyday places and political institutions is resented and resisted through a variety of individual and collective strategies.'

(Castells 1996: 394)

This statement supports the assumption that where existences are fluid and Internet-oriented such as with young professionals, everyday places and practices might become 'meaningless'. This assumption is reinforced by Castells' (1991) claim that, 'Between ahistorical flows and irreducible identities of local communities, cities and regions disappear as socially meaningful places' (1991:350). I argue on the contrary that 'everyday places' do not become meaningless. Instead, I suggest that information-processing flows do not eclipse local places and practices, but sometimes are sustained and framed by a sense of a locally based community. In particular, I examine the 'Living in Indonesia' forum already mentioned in previous chapters. Although it uses a 'global' medium, it only works because of a sense of Jakarta as a shared locality. This sense of shared locality becomes evident in the content of topics discussed on the forum, which often revolve around Jakarta localities, but also exceeds these topics. I

suggest that even sharing knowledge of other localities, such as European regional ones, fosters a sense of community among expatriates living in Jakarta. This resonates with young professionals' discourses described above, in which shared experiences of places outside of Indonesia forge social relationships between people living in Jakarta.

The relevance of locality on the forum becomes apparent in several ways, with the most popular discussion topics being linked to living in Jakarta, including exchanges about physical space. Thus, somebody complains about the traffic problems in the notoriously overcrowded area of Kemang:

'Try to drive through Jl. Kemang Raya (the road is only about 4 meters wide) between 12:00 until 15:00. It will be totally jammed mainly because of that school beside KemChick. The school has no parking space available but it seems that every selfish driver in Jakarta goes there to drop off / pick up their young master everyday. Not to mention the hassles due to renovation of underground water pipes or telephone lines, roads, etc. Some people must hate the Kemang people that much! Sorry, I just have to unload this from my chest' (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by sierih@hotmail.com, 31/05/00).

Advice about local shops and restaurants also abounds. For example, somebody asks where to find Japanese food, and gets a detailed response:

'The Hilton used to be good. Sakura near Pondok Club Villas is reasonably priced and they speak English there too. The one opposite Kemchick is OK but the Japanese do not think so, it is full of rich Indonesians. Loads of restaurants in Blok M but I do not rate the one at the Hotel Gran Mahakam. Yuk' (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by greeneyed_weirdo@musician.org, 23/05/01).

This kind of information is meaningful only for people with an interest in these places, namely Jakarta residents. In a slightly different vein, there is an exchange of information about places that expatriates might not want to visit themselves, such as Jalan Jaksa, the backpacker area of Jakarta. Somebody gives his account:

'Dirty, mosquito-ridden hostels full of local junkies popping any pill available. A very large gay population, including expatriates and cross-dressers. A lot of out of luck expatriates. Sipping warm cheap beers, as they count their decreasing rupiah from teaching English. Oh, and the odd Hooker, who has been through the more up-market areas of Jakarta. Thats Jl.Jaksa' (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by markustaylor_98@yahoo.com, 18/02/01).

This recalls expatriates' concepts of Jakarta cityscapes being divided in Insides and Outsides. In this context, the forum can satisfy expatriates' curiosity about these spaces, which they might find unpleasant, and would be reluctant to visit themselves.

A major feature is the recounting of experiences of 'Indonesia as a foreigner'. For example, somebody discusses their view of the Indonesian beer, Bintang: *'Can anyone tell me why I feel terrible the day after a piss-up on beer bintang. I usually get a really bad headache - much worse than a normal hangover headache. My friend says it is because they add special chemicals so that the beer can "keep" in the hot tropical climate. Is this true?'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by M15@joEmail.com, 22/05/01) In return they are advised to, *'try to reduce your intake, that often helps to avoid headaches. With Bintang there is nothing wrong according to my own experiences of 10 years being thirsty'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by londoh@londoh.com, 23/05/01).

Another favourite is ‘true stories’ that might or might not have happened to the person who posts them, such as the one about somebody trying to buy a croissant from a street vendor:

‘Lovely morning, stopped raining for about six minutes, so a nice easy stroll to the office was in order, and what better way is there to start the day than with fresh croissants. So, flags down a van with a “cock a doodle dangdut” sound effect and surveys their wares. “How much are the croissants?” “How many do you want?” “Depends on how much they are” - “How many do etc etc.” “Ok, a thousand” “Only have five” “And how much are they?” “Ten thousand rupiah” “Ok, let me have them, here’s ten thou” “No, ten thousand each, thats Rp55, 000.” “No f#@# ing way Mr Turpin, and five times ten is fifty anyway, not that I am paying that!” “Ok, Rp30,000, good diskon” - OK then, nasi piggin’ goreng again for breakfast.’ (posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by tungincik@hotmail.com 26/05/01).

Stories like these require a considerable amount of ‘local knowledge’ and are virtually meaningless to people unfamiliar with these situations. People would have to know what a ‘cock a doodle dangdut’ is (a cart vendors jingle), the seemingly erratic sales practices of vendors, and why someone would be disenchanted to eat *nasi goreng* (a common staple dish) for breakfast again.

A poignant example of the relevance of locality are the lists labelled, ‘*you know you have been in Indonesia for too long when...*’ such as this:

‘[you know you have been here too long if] you prefer to eat spicy instant noodles for breakfast instead of cereal. you get on a public bus that has a marked sign “near or far, Rp 700” and you try to haggle the fare down to Rp

500 on the grounds that you aren't going very far. When dressing up to go to a wedding, you reach for your silk batik shirt instead of your suit and tie. you need to ask your babysitter what your child is saying, because you aren't sure if it's meaningless baby talk, or javanese. you can identify the food sold by each passing food vendor by the different tapping noises they make as they wander through your neighborhood. you swear each morning that no death is too good for the roti man [bread seller]' (posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by shekelle@biology.wustl.edu, 8/05/01).

This list resonates with people sharing 'Indonesian' experiences. Discussions on the forum are not confined to these 'Indonesian' topics. The 'global' resurfaces in the form of experiences outside of Indonesia, which are still especially meaningful for people who usually live in Indonesia. An example is this Australian woman's account on what she rediscovered on her recent trip to Australia:

'Since being back in Oz, I'm rediscovering all those things I used to enjoy & never really thought about before . 1. Driving. God it feels good to get behind the wheel again! I never thought I'd miss this, but to be able to drive is sheer bliss. 2. Privacy. Ok, they do the ironing etc. but it still freaks me when they pop out of your bedroom unexpectedly. 3. Clean air. It's so light & fresh, like.. air! 4. The Doona. Nothing nicer than snuggling under a thick, fluffy doona on a cold morning. 5. Physical labour. Yes, I actually miss cleaning the house & getting into the garden. I'm sure this will phase will pass soon enough!'

(posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by beck, beck339@hotmail.com. 06/06/01).

At the same time, expatriates from similar backgrounds communicate experiences, which are tied up to other times and localities, as this exchange illustrates: *'Does anyone know where you can buy English dry cider, or local equivalent? Since being here, I really miss it!'* which triggers somebody else's memory:

'Heentway, 70s, no festival was complete without gallons of Olde English Cider, nothing quite Lindisfarne in the rain with a hangover that should have been on display in medical museum, Rod Stewart falling off the stage drunk, the long trek home with lots of good Olde English on the way.' (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by bhoycholin88@yahoo.com, 03/05/01)

To which another responds, *'Methinks we come from similar backgrounds- I can remember my younger days going to watch the mighty Glasgow Celtic, where a bottle of Olde English and a half bottle of Seagers Cream sherry was the order of the day'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by srh@yahoo.com, 03/05/01). These exchanges are also inaccessible to people not sharing these time-space-experiences, such as Indonesians. The specificity of this 'cultural knowledge' also becomes obvious in-jokes. Many presume familiarity with life in England:

'Imagine if all the major retailers started producing own brand condoms: Tesco Condoms: Every little helps. Sainsbury Condoms: Making life taste better. Safeway Condoms: Lightening the load. Pringles Condoms: Once you pop, you can't stop. Royal Mail Condoms: I saw this and thought of you' (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by arnup@cbn.net.id, 06/06/01).

Some even refer to specific regions, such as Newcastle:

'Height of the Gulf War and a British Destroyer is just over the horizon from Saddam's ragtag fleet. Captain calls up Geordie on the watch and says "Geordie, get your binoculars and a radio, shin up the f'orrard crow's nest and

*have a look and see what the ragheads are up to". Geordie complies and in less than a few minutes reports back to the Captain that he can see "a load of ships" "Are they war ships Geordie"? says the Captain. "Nah, they're theirs."²³ (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by Colin, bhoycholin88@yahoo.com 08/06/01).*

I have suggested that even these 'non-Indonesian' discourses are embedded in the framework of a shared existence in Jakarta. The regional British jokes do not seem to support this. But their communicative value is mainly social; exchanging these jokes creates a sense of community - a community based on living in Jakarta. As a regular contributor explains the role of the forum: *'New Expat Forum Gang welcomes information-and helpful comments from anybody who has any! TC's clinic is open all hours, Colins laffs can be a definite pick-you-up on a bad day, or Becks nights out for those who are man enough. This page definitely helps me to live in Indonesia!'* (posted on the *Living in Indonesia* forum by arnup@cbn.net.id, 18/05/01).

As has probably become obvious, these people might not be talking to each other if they did not live in Indonesia. This sense of community is also expressed by the fact that participants of this forum, after months of 'virtual' exchanges, decided to meet for a drinks evening at a Jakarta bar. Since then, people who know each other through the forum meet up in 'real life', and then comment on these meetings again on the website. Referring back to the initial claim that Internet makes 'everyday places and practices meaningless', exchanges on the 'Living in Indonesia' forum demonstrate that this is not necessarily the case. Far from becoming meaningless, the location of Jakarta provides

²³ The joke makes use of the fact that in Newcastle ('Geordie') dialect the word 'our' is pronounced like 'war', which renders the joke unintelligible for anyone unfamiliar with this particular dialect.

the framework for these exchanges, sustaining the forum through a sense of shared locality.

In this section, I have examined the interplay between young professionals' 'global lifestyles' and how this encompasses their use and representation of localities. I argue that localities are relevant for them in several ways. First they form part of a network of 'global trodden pathways', which young professionals both frequent and construct in discourses. The sense of shared local experiences also becomes important in forging social bonds, especially in their 'isolated' position in Jakarta. The ambivalent role of the Internet becomes visible as the Internet on the one hand effects further disengagement with Jakarta, but also reflects the growing importance of social exchanges about Indonesia. The relations between localities and the Internet are revealed as complex, as this 'global' medium is used to refer back to shared localities in expatriates 'home' countries. I argue, though, that the 'Living in Indonesia' forum is mainly sustained by the shared experience of living in Jakarta, thus affirming the relevance of a 'locality', even as it is embedded in expatriates 'Western' discourses.

7.2 Living in a 'Cosmopolitan Bubble'

In the previous section, I outlined how young professionals' use and representation of places is embedded in, contributes to, and reflects their 'cosmopolitan' lifestyles. This links back to the initial assumption that young professionals, while avoiding the 'family expatriate bubble', live instead in a 'cosmopolitan' bubble, which is defined by a canon of Western practices and tastes. As indicated in the introduction, these 'cosmopolitan lifestyles' hint at more profound changes underlying these phenomena. I suggest that young professionals not only represent a new lifestyle, but also constitute an emerging

class. The foundations of this class would be economic capital, but would crucially also include cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984). Conceptualising young professionals as a new class takes into account, and reveals, issues of power involved. As has become apparent in the previous section, not anybody can lead a ‘cosmopolitan’ life. Becoming a member of this group is crucially predicated on owning the prerequisite economic and cultural capital. It also becomes obvious how these kinds of capital are linked, since leading a mobile life, and having ‘cosmopolitan’ tastes is made possible in the first place by financial resources. It is partly the economic advantages of being ‘Westerners’ that enable young professionals to acquire the cultural capital that finds its expression in ‘cosmopolitan’ lifestyles.

One could regard this as rather insidious, as the supposed ‘cosmopolitanism’ masks a form of exclusivity based on economic and cultural power imbalances. However, it also reconfigures boundaries of race or ethnicity. While membership of this class would not be explicitly based on ethnic criteria, it would often factually exclude Indonesians, who do not wield similar economic power. Members even of the wealthy Indonesian elite can only become ‘young global professionals’ to the extent that they acquire ‘Western’ cultural capital. As I indicate in the conclusion, this is increasingly happening, thus possibly merging young Western and young Indonesian professionals into a new class. It also becomes clear why young professionals’ social lifestyles and interactions become crucial to this analysis. They represent and produce the cultural capital that marks them as members of the class of young ‘cosmopolitans’. Therefore, in this section, I investigate young professionals’ social interactions, discourses, and food consumption as manifestations not only of life inside a ‘cosmopolitan bubble’, but also as the social practices of a ‘cosmopolitan class’.

When discussing these ‘cosmopolitan’ lifestyles it is important to point out that I do not mean to adopt Hannerz’ (1996) notion of ‘cosmopolitans’. His notion suggests the existence of a group of free-floating, open-minded individuals who in their ‘global’ lives deliberately engage with samples of ‘local cultures’. As I discussed above and in chapter 2, Hannerz’ (1996) notion disregards the political inequalities on which ‘cosmopolitanism’ is based, which marks it as the privilege of a Western elite. As I argue, young professionals do not represent an ‘ideal cosmopolitanism’, precisely because their lives abroad are determined by a Western code of practice, which frame and represent the ‘local’ in a very specific way.

The term ‘cosmopolitan’ employed here refers to young professional’s self-identification as ‘cosmopolitan’ in terms of their mobile lifestyles and globally distributed social networks. I suggest that they regard themselves as having an ‘international’ outlook within their social lives which, in contrast to those of family expatriates, are not established along national lines. Young professionals’ identification as ‘cosmopolitan’ or ‘international’, as indicated above, needs to be critically examined. While they seem less parochial than their older counterparts, this does not necessarily translate into their having a greater engagement with ‘Indonesia’. On the contrary, young professional mobile lives and international social networks can provide them with a certain distance from their place of residence. Presenting themselves as ‘lifestyle cosmopolitans’ can shelter them from challenges to their identities that the Indonesian environment might hold. While identification along national lines is ostentatiously discarded, they are removed, or aim to be, from ‘Indonesia’. Disregarding national identities does not imply a more generally inclusive attitude, but is supplanted by a ‘Western internationalist’ identification, which is embedded in, and perpetuates, global inequalities in terms of economic and social power. Young professionals are able to

maintain these identifications through living in a 'cosmopolitan bubble'. This manifests itself in the use of both real and virtual spaces, as discussed above, as well as in terms of their social lives. I first give an impression of this social scene as set in the 'Jakarta Ultimate Frisbee Club'²⁴, and then discuss the role of 'ethnic food' within a 'cosmopolitan' lifestyle. I finally illustrate the form of social interactions at gatherings such as the so-called 'Spaghetti Nights'.

Social Lives

The specific form of 'Western internationalism' becomes evident for example in the weekly practice sessions of the Jakarta Ultimate Frisbee Club. Players meet on Sunday afternoons on a field outside the Jakarta Convention Centre to practise Ultimate Frisbee. Although open to anyone, most players are young Western professionals - usually male, and many from either the US or Canada. While there are some Western women members, there are very few Indonesians - apart from some players' girlfriends, or young Indonesians who were educated in the US. The way of interacting and communicating, including use of slang words almost perfectly mirrors a similar situation in the US. The fact that this scenario unfolds on a Jakarta playing field seems rather incidental. Most regulars are rather serious about Frisbee practice and one team frequently participates in Ultimate Frisbee competitions all over South East Asia, in places such as Bali, Hong Kong, or Singapore. Many members work in Jakarta as political or financial journalists, freelance or for major news agencies. Conversation during breaks revolves around work, travel to other parts of the region, airport and visa problems, or work experiences in cities such as Bangkok or Taipeh.

²⁴ The Jakarta Ultimate Frisbee Club is a community organisation, which meets regularly for practise at a sports centre in Jakarta, and participates in frisbee competitions in other parts of South East Asia. Similar clubs also exist for example in Singapore and Hong Kong.

Jenny, an American working for a financial news agency, had been living in Jakarta for three years, which she considered 'ages'. She accepted a job at a news agency in Hong Kong, where her boyfriend, an American journalist, lived. Soon, she was going to relocate to Hong Kong, which prompted conversations about its housing market and the experiences of people who used to work there. After practice, players walked a few hundred meters through the sports complex, dotted with Indonesian tennis and football players, to a nearby bar. It happened to be a *TGI Fridays*, part of an American chain restaurant. The menu was Mexican-American: people ordered barbecued ribs and fries, nacho chips with guacamole sauce and chicken fajitas. Most drank Mexican beer, or freshly prepared 'strawberry smoothies'.

Talk mainly revolved around work; while Fabio, the main organiser of the club, reminisced about the early days of the Frisbee club and the whereabouts of its departed members. It turns out that a friend of mine, who used to work in Jakarta had been a member two years ago. Fabio recalled, '*Yeah, I remember him. Canadian guy, worked for some telecommunications company, right?*' Somebody else mentioned, '*I think Dennis is back in town for a few weeks ... remember him?*' Somebody does, '*sure, we used to go to the Jaya pub all the time. What's he up to now?*' Jenny and Stephen, both Americans who met in Jakarta, realise they frequent the same club when in New York, '*that place is just so cool! I love it.*' '*I know. Whenever I'm back, I have to go there.*' Susanne exchanged memories of her university department in Washington, D.C. with a fellow graduate. '*No way! They changed the whole library floor? I can't believe it!*' This kind of conversation is so widespread that a contributor to the 'Living in Indonesia' Forum mocked it:

'Last time I was in JKT I really enjoyed the food in Margoux at Sangrilla. The Sunday brunch at BaliCliff was terrific the baby lobster was better than the king

crab I had lately at the Bellagio's Buffet in Vegas. We can talk about how Andre Agassi lost on the first round (ok 2nd round 1st was a buy) in Hamburg- Thomas Johansen the Swede is prob gonna win it' (posted on the Living in Indonesia forum by no@hotmail.com, 18/05/01).

As well as journalists, other members work for software companies, international banks, NGO's or multinational corporations. Susanne inquired about a job for her German colleague's boyfriend, who was to move from Germany soon and was looking for a job in software development. Herald, who has been working for Chase Manhattan Bank in Jakarta for a few years, was scheduled to take a job with another bank, at the Stock Exchange in Johannesburg, and was looking forward to the change. David worked as a consultant for an oil company. *'I wouldn't say we are expatriates'* he explains to me, indicating the sweaty crowds gathered round the bar, eating Mexican food as the last rays of the hot afternoon sunshine hitting the oak-wood interior: *'I would say, we are something like international managers.'*

'Cosmopolitan' Tastes: Food Consumption

In chapter 5, I discussed food mainly as a way of marking boundaries between 'Westerners' and 'Indonesia'. Food consumption can also demarcate differences in terms of lifestyles, and constitute a form of cultural capital (e.g. Bourdieu 1984:186). In the following, I illustrate how the food practices of young professionals reflect their 'cosmopolitan' tastes, and thus serve to distinguish them from family expatriates as well as from Indonesians. At first sight, they seem to pursue lifestyles similar to young professionals in their 'home' countries - like having dinner parties for friends in London, going to restaurants in New York or cooking for themselves in their home in

Vancouver. Young professionals practices of food consumption in Jakarta reflect their 'Western' lifestyles as lived 'at home'. I argue, though, that in the context of Jakarta these practices assume a changed significance. They not only serve as an expression and affirmation of their 'cosmopolitan' lives, but also demarcate boundaries between themselves and 'Indonesia', as well as from the older generation of 'family expatriates'. Restaurant choices and 'ethnic' food consumption illustrate this.

Thomas, a young professional who was quite familiar with Indonesia, and had been working in Jakarta for a year, explained how he and his friends were using *bule* places:

'sometimes I go to warungs [street food stalls], but I also go to very bule places with bule menus. Especially in such a polluted and overpopulated city you sometimes need to go to a five star hotel and meet a friend for coffee and pretend you are in buleland. You drink a cappuccino, read the Herald Tribune, create a bule environment. Then after two hours you are back in a Prestasi [a local taxi firm] taxi. All my bule friends, NGO people, do that. Even if they want to be here and feel safe and accepted, they need the refuge, the escape. Like five star Sunday buffets at the Shangri La for brunch, or hanging out at a swimming pool in someone's apartment - with bule food, too.'

Just as family expatriates often make an effort to source the necessary ingredients for preparing dishes 'just like at home' (such as German, French or American food), many young professionals also continue their food practices like 'at home'. These practices include events such as preparing pasta dishes or having barbecues, but it also includes eating out - especially at 'ethnic' restaurants. Like they might do in London, people go for meals to Italian, Chinese or generally 'European' places, which offer food such as salads, pasta or steak. The choice of restaurants in Jakarta in general seems to mirror

Western tastes in terms of 'ethnic cuisines'. Apart from staples such as Italian restaurants, Jakarta also has several Mexican, Indian and Thai restaurants, as well as Lebanese, Japanese and Korean ones.

Indonesian food, with its comparatively simple dishes, seems rather unattractive to young professionals in comparison, and is also not usually on the menu in upmarket restaurants. If one insists on eating Indonesian, the rationale seems to be, one might go either to a cheap local eatery or let one's *pembantu*²⁵ cook - but visiting a restaurant for that purpose does not seem a sensible option. Instead, when choosing a restaurant, many young professionals prefer specific 'ethnic' food. Examples are the *La Na Thai* and the *Hazara* restaurants, located in central Jakarta and managed by a Canadian expatriate. While *La Na Thai* offers 'authentic Thai cuisine', *Hazara* specialises in Indian food. Both places are popular with young expatriate professionals, as well as with wealthy young Indonesians. Both restaurants have rather dark wooden interiors, dimmed lights, spacious bars, decorated in 'ethnic' style but exuding 'Western' comfort, and an overall atmosphere of sophisticated 'cosmopolitanism'. Little about these places gives away the fact that they are located in Jakarta, instead of in Washington, D.C. or London. Yet, these spaces attain a rather different significance, as Guy describes, '*I am always shocked at the juxtaposition of the outside of the Hazara and inside - it makes people feel special when they go there. With La Na Thai, it is fun playing with the thought of Jalan Sudirman and Jalan Thamrin [two major thoroughfares] being just outside- but when you go inside, you enter another world.*'

The predilection of especially younger expatriates to visit restaurants like these is indicative of their lives in Jakarta. Consuming Thai food assumes an entirely different meaning in the context of Jakarta than in London. Places like *Hazara* and *La Na Thai*

²⁵ A *pembantu* literally means 'helper' and generally refers to household staff.

in some ways function like expatriate wives' coffee mornings or German national day celebrations: they are Inside spaces, constituted in opposition to the Indonesian Outside.

If 'Western civilisation' has embraced Thai cuisine, then Thai cuisine itself becomes a pawn in the symbolic struggle between the 'West' and 'Indonesia'. These sheltered and 'civilised' restaurants counterbalance a potentially threatening and alien Outside. It does not make a difference that these are 'Asian' cuisines; it merely highlights the incorporation into a Western canon as well as different concepts of 'ethnicity'. Some Asian cuisines have come to signify rather refined 'cosmopolitan' tastes, and play a role in the acquisition of cultural capital. While Chinese and Indian food have almost become a staple in some Western countries, Thai food still has a more exotic flair to it, as does Japanese food, which is ranked high by 'Western' tastes. Consequently, exclusive Japanese, Thai and upmarket Indian food becomes a 'bastion of civilisation', and is used by the young professionals as a way of distinguishing them as 'cosmopolitans'.

This contrasts with the 'unrefined', unattractive and potentially 'polluted' staples of Indonesian cooking. Patronising places such as the 'cosmopolitan' *Hazara* provides an example of how young professionals live in a 'cosmopolitan bubble', a concept further discussed in the following sections. This not only excludes, but also opposes the Indonesian locality. It also reminds us that what is appreciated as 'authentic' in 'ethnic cuisine' depends on what is approved of by the Western food canon. 'Ethnicity' in a broad sense is not necessarily positive. Indonesian food is surely an 'Asian ethnic cuisine' - but unless it finds approval within the Western canon, it remains unfashionable local cooking. One can detect some irony in the fact that certain Asian cuisines,

incorporated into this Western canon, are used as a resource in the symbolic struggle between 'Western civilisation' and 'Indonesian Other'.

'Cosmopolitan' Lifestyles

These young professionals, their lifestyle practices, and ways of communicating also became apparent at so-called 'Spaghetti Nights'. Louise, an American in her mid-thirties working for an NGO, had continued the custom of 'Spaghetti Nights' from the time she worked as a peace corps volunteer in Mali to her Jakarta life. In Mali, the volunteers used to have regular get-togethers in the form of a 'Western Night' where they prepared spaghetti. As Louise explained, *'that's quite a special dish when you're in the middle of Africa.'*

In Jakarta, Louise's spaghetti nights took place in her flat on the 7th floor of an apartment block in central Jakarta. Louise had worked in countries such as Mali and Bhutan as a volunteer, and later as a development consultant. In Bhutan, she had acquired two cats, which she took with her to Jakarta: *'I had to do that, because my neighbours in Bhutan told me it would have been bad karma to leave them behind.'* As a consequence, her Bhutanese cats now lived on the 7th floor of a Jakarta apartment tower. Louise felt inclined towards Buddhism. She erected several shrines in her bedroom, to ward off bad energy, and displayed Buddha images and statues that she had picked up abroad. She regularly went to temples in Bali (such as the *Besakih* 'mother temple') for their 'good vibrations', and when she felt she needed to gather new energy. A carafe with holy Balinese temple water was kept in a corner. She had also become interested in black magic while in Africa, and had found a Dutch-Indonesian 'spiritual

mentor' in Jakarta who helped her deal with the psychic energies she encountered during her life in Jakarta.

At Louise's spaghetti nights, American colleagues from her office were gathered as well as friends such as the German Karen, or Dee, an American diving instructor, who ran diving courses off the coast of West Java. Diving, apart from squash, tennis and golf, was among the most popular sports activities, which Louise had taken up as well.

While people were enjoying the spaghetti, Yasmeen, a British woman, whose parents were originally from Bangladesh, was mixing margaritas. *'My favourites,'* she declared, *'really good. You absolutely have to get the mixture right, though.'* Louise agreed. *'Yes, of course I'm Muslim,'* added Yasmeen, *'but I'm not very practising. I'm a London girl.'* The conversation focused on the upcoming Buddhist holiday, *Waisak.*²⁶ *'I am so looking forward to having a day off,'* admitted Yasmeen, *'and I've already booked myself a couple of hours at my salon.'* *'Creambath?'* asked Louise.

'Creambath, waxing, manicures- the whole do.' She sighed, *'I am really looking forward to it - I've had such a hard time at work lately.'* Standing on the balcony of the flat, we were overlooking the nearby railway station and the adjacent branch of McDonalds. *'Isn't that funny,'* said Yasmeen, *'we are here in Jakarta, in the middle of Asia, and what do you see when you look out of your bedroom? McDonalds.'* She had been working abroad as a development consultant for several years, while renting out her flat in London. *'It's strange to say this,'* she admitted as we were overlooking the night skyline enjoying the breeze: *'but I am actually a bit of a poverty specialist.'*

Susan, an American friend of Louise's came out on the balcony. She worked for the World Bank in Washington, D.C., and was on a visit to audit development projects in Louise's office. They had met while working in Africa. Susan enjoyed being in

²⁶ *Waisak* is a Buddhist holiday, which marks Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and death.

Jakarta, but was keen to return to Washington, D.C. to be with her little son and husband, originally from Cameroon, whom she had met in Mali. *'Lucky you'*, said Louise, *'he's a really nice guy.'* Louise reckoned that, *'most expat men you meet in Asia are bastards - it seems they just become like that here.'* Louise's last boyfriend in Bhutan had left her just as they were due to get engaged. *'Working abroad has lots of advantages, but finding a man isn't one of them,'* Yasmeen agreed. *'If you're looking to find someone here, you're in the wrong place,'* Yasmeen summed up sentiments of many female professionals. *'But look at us,'* she mused, looking at the assembled group inside the flat and then the Jakarta skyline, turning her margarita glass between her fingers: *'where we are, how we live - we have become a new crowd, like a global tribe.'* Events like these give an impression of the atmosphere among many young professionals - leading seemingly 'globalised' lifestyles with Jakarta as a temporary backdrop. These lifestyles include quickly shifting locations if necessary, acquiring, leaving and losing friends as their lives required, keeping in touch with people world-wide, checking on their London flats once in a while, adopting local 'spirituality' or beauty treatments as it suited them, and having spaghetti and margaritas in apartment blocks with night-time views of a chaotic, crowded, third-world city.

As these scenarios illustrate, many young professionals' lives are not so much 'cosmopolitan', as a re-enactment of 'Western-internationalist' attitudes and practices. This becomes apparent in their social lives and discourses, in their consumption of 'ethnic' foods and in their forms of entertainment. It links back to the initial question as to whether young professionals' lives constitute an alternative to the family expatriates' exclusive existences in Jakarta. As emerges from the above sections, many young professionals seem to perform a lifestyle which, while less nationally oriented, embodies a different form of seclusion from 'Indonesia'. Young professionals, while

eschewing life in a 'family expatriate' bubble, thus remain anchored in a similar 'cosmopolitan' bubble, which engenders its own form of exclusiveness while maintaining the rhetoric of being 'international' or 'cosmopolitan'. A final question is, if expatriates in Jakarta invariably seem to perform exclusive lifestyles, whether non-corporate expatriates outside of the capital are able to avoid this. In the following section, I therefore discuss Western foreigners living in Yogyakarta, and pursue the question whether they embody alternative lifestyles.

7.3 Trying to Blend In: Foreigners in Yogyakarta

So far, I have mainly focused on corporate expatriates - both in terms of the younger and older generations - and traced how they negotiate their existences, mainly in Jakarta. I argued that both family expatriates' and young professionals' lives are based on, and profit from, global social and economic inequalities, which influence their relations with 'Indonesia', and which often remove them from 'Indonesian' environments. A crucial question is whether their 'lives in a bubble', and the attitudes associated with it, are inevitable for foreigners in Indonesia. One could suspect that expatriates' lifestyles, as described in the preceding chapters, are mainly due to their corporate status, while Jakarta's urban environment intensifies their tendencies to encapsulate themselves within expatriate communities. In order to investigate whether this situation is specific to corporate expatriates in Jakarta, or whether it indicates a general condition, I focus on a different group of foreigners based outside of Jakarta. These are non-corporate expatriates who live in a medium-sized university town, Yogyakarta, in Central Java.

These are mostly people who were not necessarily posted to Indonesia by a company or institution, but came on their own initiative. Many of them, but not all, are between 20 and 35; some are students, some are engaging in business ventures, while others, like the artists and social workers, pursue a range of personal projects. I discuss their lifestyles in more detail below. Coupled with their decision to come and live in Indonesia is often an entirely different attitude towards Indonesia; many of these 'independent expatriates' are genuinely interested in the country and its people. They are often quite competent in terms of local knowledge, social practices and Indonesian language, and many seem determined to establish 'genuine' relationships with Indonesians - even with the aim, especially in the case of foreign students, of trying to 'blend into' a local community. Armed with this kind of motivation, a question is whether these attempts to integrate can be successful - and whether they can successfully avoid living in a 'bubble'. It turns out that the foreigners' lives in Yogyakarta are indeed markedly different from many expatriates' in Jakarta, fuelled not only by their different attitudes, but also in terms of their activities, interactions with Indonesians, and habits and material living conditions.

However, even though one could argue that these foreigners are indeed not living in a secluded 'bubble' - in either social or spatial terms - I suggest that they are unable to eschew or obliterate the consequences of the power imbalances underpinning their existences there. As discussed in the previous chapters, the lives of many Western foreigners in Indonesia are characterised, and partly enabled, by inequalities in terms of political, economic, social and symbolic power. I argue that most foreigners profit from these power gradients in various ways and are usually aware of this. This partly acknowledged, partly denied awareness complicates interactions with Indonesians. Encounters between expatriates and Indonesians are therefore almost inescapably

problematic in a similar way to those of Jakarta expatriates and Indonesians. I suggest that despite intentions to establish 'genuine' relationships with Indonesians, foreigners living in Yogyakarta are unable to avoid the consequences of these power imbalances. Although Yogyakarta foreigners do not live in a 'bubble', their encounters are invariably fraught. The question then becomes rather to what extent they acknowledge this, and how they subsequently negotiate this situation. Given the fact that most foreigners are caught in these power imbalances, and that their existences are based on taking advantage of them, the image of 'living in the gap' suggests itself. This captures the fact that the privileges of their existences arise from the power differentials between the 'West' and 'Indonesia'. As becomes evident, these foreigners are often not wholly integrated into 'Indonesian' communities, while being removed from, and keeping rather loose connections with their 'home countries' as well. They might more adequately be described as 'living in between' - both in terms of social relations and of material advantages. The 'gap' then signifies a state of symbolic belonging, as well as a condition, enabling these foreigners to carve out existences in Indonesia, which can provide them with personal opportunities and increased agency. The image of the 'gap' acknowledges their efforts to engage with Indonesia, while taking into account that notions of 'power-free' encounters and possibilities of 'blending in' might be unrealistic. These encounters would be bound to fail since they fail to acknowledge the underlying preconditions of their existences.

Yogyakarta Existences

Most foreigners living in Yogyakarta are engaged in self-run small-to-medium scale business enterprises, or are employed in the teaching or cultural sector, work for non-governmental organisations, pursue their own projects in the arts or social work, study

at one of the universities, or simply come to live there without any income-generating activities. As private entrepreneurs, foreigners concentrate on the production and export of furniture and handicrafts, or run tourism-related venues such as guesthouses, bars or restaurants. In the 'cultural' sector, English teaching is most prominent, next to French and German, and the local branches of cultural institutes also employ several foreign nationals. As Yogyakarta is not an industrial centre, there are few NGO projects directly concerned with Yogyakarta, but some maintain offices there and have volunteers working for them. Most typical for Yogyakarta foreigners are those who are not directly engaged in 'business' activities, but in what can be called 'personal projects'. These are often related to art or social work, or simply consist of a lifestyle that allows them to pursue various personal interests.

Compared to Jakarta expatriates, young Yogyakarta foreigners live in comparatively modest accommodation, which while more expensive than that of the average Yogyakarta citizen, is still cheaper than accommodation in their home country. What marks these young foreigners specifically as part of a 'transnational' phenomenon are their movement patterns. In contrast to older foreigners, who often stayed in Indonesia for years at a stretch, these younger 'independent expatriates' frequently move back and forth not only between Indonesia and their home countries, but also between other countries as well. The situation in Yogyakarta is thus characterised by some 'coming and going' - people make frequent trips to Jakarta, Singapore or return to their 'home' countries for work, social or visa reasons. This transience also bears its own sense of stability: usually people do not leave for good, but maintain ties to Yogyakarta while they are away and return frequently. Another feature, which is crucial for the notions of 'home', is that they maintain close ties to their home countries, and friends and family there. Moving to Yogyakarta in that sense is not seen as a decisive, final move, but

rather a temporary choice, which can be reconsidered and revoked if the need arises. As far as the motivations for moving to Indonesia are concerned, some peoples' decisions seemed to be determined by accident. Most of them had come to Indonesia for the first time as tourists, or to visit friends. Often these foreigners had not even been especially interested in Indonesia as a country, but more or less chanced upon it as a travel destination. However, while visiting, and engaging with the country, they realised what lifestyle possibilities could open up for them there.

I have already suggested that their lives can best be captured in the metaphor of 'living in the gap'. They are living 'in' the gap geographically and socially: moving back and forth between countries, but being neither completely part of one or the other society, or maybe a bit of both. Alternatively, one could describe the gap as a 'third space', one that is neither wholly the home country nor Indonesia, but instead is constructed through the foreigners' particular situation in Indonesia. This 'gap' is inhabited and continuously re-created by them. The 'gap' is a space opened up by differences between Indonesia and their home countries, and provides a habitat because of the gains arising from these differences. One of the things that makes foreigners stay in Yogyakarta is the realisation that they can build existences there partly based on these economic and social differences. Their greater economic power allows them to lead comparatively comfortable lives in Yogyakarta, while the social and cultural differences provide a variety of professional possibilities and social and personal advantages which would not present themselves in their home countries.

‘Living in the Gap’: the Benefits

All these advantages share a basis in economic and social gradients between the foreigners’ ‘home countries’ and Indonesia. Although these differences become relevant in multiple and ambiguous ways, they can provide advantages for the foreigners. One could also discuss the ways these differences disadvantage or limit them, but for the present case I focus on the favourable aspects. The easiest to recognise are probably the economic ones: the greater economic power of foreigners compared to most Yogyakarta citizens provides the foreigners with a lifestyle often unavailable at home. Other advantages arise from what is perceived as ‘difference’ or Otherness, or what is called the ‘bonus of the exotic’. These ‘social differences’ are a complex set of features that get played out in various ways. An important aspect that constitutes these social differences is the idea that ‘white’ Westerners, almost irrespective of nationality, are in certain ways considered superior to Javanese or Indonesians - an idea sometimes entertained by both Westerners and Indonesians. The idea of superiority seems to be based on several aspects: greater political and economic power; belonging to highly industrialised countries with ‘high technology’; a high standard of education; high standard of living; countries marked by effectiveness; ‘hard work’ and success. This often seems the basis for the admiration of foreigners; it endows foreigners with a certain prestige and ensures a great deal of attention, which invariably influences their everyday lives. At the same time, it is important to point out that foreigners are also considered inferior in many ways. For example, they lack Javanese social and cultural competence, spiritual awareness and morality; and they lack restraint and politeness, according to Javanese’s opinions. They are sometimes regarded as ‘children’ by Indonesians who behave inappropriately but can not be expected to know any better. While there are obviously a multitude of attitudes towards

foreigners among Javanese, regarding both foreigners' potential 'superiority' as well as 'inferiority', here I am focusing on the perceived superiority of foreigners.

Consequently, one could ask how foreigners themselves relate to these issues. Again, they have a whole range of attitudes towards these issues. It seems that in many cases, the idea of the superiority of white foreigners as such is - as least outwardly - rejected. What might sometimes be retained - or maybe reinforced - is the idea of foreigners bearing valued qualities, such as inventiveness, organisational skills, long-term planning and the like. Often it is claimed by foreigners that, while these differences supposedly exist, they do not imply any further judgement. Several foreigners stated that, '*We are different, but not any better,*' which characterises in a nutshell their self-ascribed mental attitude. To what extent this describes more a 'politically correct' attitude than an actual belief is not always evident. Social differences are not confined to increased social status, but can comprise a 'better' education and professional training as well as personal skills and 'intercultural knowledge', the ability to interact with Indonesians and other foreigners in a way that can be used to their advantage. There are also 'professional gains', in that foreigners are offered more professional possibilities than in their Western home country, often with a higher income or increased living standard. It means that foreigners can obtain jobs they could not at 'home'. This holds especially for those setting up business projects like furniture or handicraft production and export.

Usually, the capital and business knowledge required to set up a business in Indonesia is much smaller than in Europe or the US. Many of these small-scale entrepreneurs have not run businesses at 'home', and did not necessarily have any specific business qualifications - still, they often succeed. As Martin, a young Belgian entrepreneur,

explained, *'this is because in Indonesia, you can afford to make mistakes without losing your business immediately'*. Since many operations are initially on a small financial scale, mistakes are less costly. Martin had realised this, as he had started a furniture production and export business without any prior business qualifications. After a few years, he had gained sufficient experience to be doing well, despite some setbacks, and, as he admitted, *'having made a couple of wrong decisions'*.

A lot of foreigners' success is due to structural advantages. As Martin expressed it bluntly, *'To be successful in Europe, you need to be very smart. Here, you only need to be half-smart.'* He had the impression that it had been relatively easy for him to outperform Indonesian business rivals. He partly credited to this the generally low Indonesian competition in specific sectors, but also to foreigners' better starting positions in terms of general education, as well as their motivation, and organisational skills. These advantages also extend to foreigners taking a job in their original profession. Birgit for example, a German graduate, had just received her Masters of Business Administration, and was doing an internship in Yogyakarta for a few months. She explained her reasons for coming to Indonesia: *'in Europe, there is lots of competition and all my friends have to work hard to be successful. Here in Indonesia, I have advantages from the start because of my better education, and it is much easier for me to maintain a good position.'* Birgit was later promoted to a more responsible post in another city, and, because of her experience gained in Indonesia, eventually obtained the kind of job in Latin America which she had been aiming for.

Apart from professional, there are social and personal gains. As I have mentioned above, foreigners can experience an increase in social status that functions as an 'ego-boost'. This has several consequences; one is an apparent increase in their romantic and

sexual attractiveness. As a foreigner, female or male, it is usually quite easy to establish a relationship with an Indonesian, if one wishes to do so. That this has also often to do with economic factors is obvious. Although foreign men and women use these relationships in different ways, there are also some similarities. As outlined in chapter 5, a relationship with an Indonesian often provides foreigners with increased agency. For example, it seems that both foreign men and women often make efforts to 'educate' their partner - often in the form of paying for their partner's language or university courses, thus not only '*raising them to their level*', but also sometimes moulding their partner according to their own ideals. Foreign women in particular make efforts to increase the life possibilities for their partner - a situation that seldom occurs in Western countries. Hence, these relationships can provide agency for the foreign partners, through allowing them to become 'charge-taking benefactors' or breadwinners. As discussed above, this is related to the changed gender situation in Western societies, where some Western men feel their status as sole provider has been eroded, and some Western women find there are too few possibilities to assume a more central, providing role in their relationships.

Apart from the professional and social advantages, there are also more 'personal' or individual gains. For example, especially among younger people, living in Indonesia is perceived as a chance for personal growth. Alice for example was a British woman who had initially come to Yogyakarta for holidays, but had then decided to stay on. As she explained, '*since my money goes so much further here, I can pursue my personal interests - like doing creative things, learning the language, etc - without having to do a shit job like I would have to in London. The pressure isn't there, which gives me the time and space to think about things.*' While living in Yogyakarta, Alice took language courses, learned to play some musical instruments, and practiced Javanese dancing. She

partly financed herself by teaching English, which still left her with enough time for her other activities. These personal gains originate from real or perceived differences and inequalities between foreigners and Indonesians. Foreigners realise that their 'capital' - financial, social or cultural - yields much more profit in Indonesia. Thus, it seems that not only your money goes further, but also your knowledge, effort, and personality.

Fraught Encounters: the Limits of 'Gap Life'

Returning to the original question, whether Yogyakarta foreigners are able to avoid the pitfalls of 'living in a bubble', it emerges that their lifestyles are more adequately described as 'living in a gap'. Due to their motivations, interests and general cultural competence, foreigners certainly do not live as secluded and exclusive a lifestyle as expatriates in Jakarta do. Although their lives on the surface look much more integrated, I argue that they are similarly unable to escape the basic political and economic inequalities that can make living in Indonesia - and especially relations with Indonesians - a fraught experience. Regarding these inequalities, it becomes clear that not only are Yogyakarta-based foreigners unable to avoid them, but, as discussed above, many are, more or less deliberately, taking advantage of them. While foreigners' lifestyles do not embody these underlying inequalities as poignantly as Jakarta expatriates, they do not eradicate them either, since these inequalities partly enable their existences. One could suspect that this even contributes to a certain hypocrisy. Differences in attitude and lifestyle can assist in glossing over or even disregarding these basic inequalities, possibly tempting people to assume a moral highground when compared to their Jakarta counterparts.

This points to an interesting aspect of the relations between Yogyakarta foreigners and corporate expatriates in Jakarta. Foreigners in Yogyakarta often emphatically distance themselves from corporate expatriates, pointing out their own greater competence in matters of 'Indonesian culture'. One could argue, though, that Yogyakarta foreigners represent the dominated fraction of the dominant class (Bourdieu 1984: 260-317), in the sense that their comparative lack of economic capital - compared to corporate expatriates - leads to a greater emphasis on their cultural capital. The cultural capital would consist of their knowledge of, and participation in, 'Indonesian culture'. This situation would resonate with Bourdieu's (1984) claim that, 'the structure of the distribution of economic capital is symmetrical and opposite to that of cultural capital' (1984:120). While Yogyakarta foreigners are proud of being different from corporate expatriates, their view of corporate lifestyles is characterised by a certain ambiguity. This becomes apparent as Yogyakarta foreigners, during trips to Jakarta, frequently seem fascinated, repelled, and seduced by the luxurious lifestyles available there. The option of Yogyakarta foreigners for a morally superior position compared to Jakarta expatriates is also compounded by the fact that, sometimes contrary to people's assertions, 'Javanese culture' did not necessarily play a role in foreigner's decision to establish an existence in Indonesia, as explained in the next section. Finally, what also likens the 'gap life' to the 'bubble' is a certain exclusiveness. Although not as pronounced as with Jakarta expatriates, 'living in the gap' is not available to anyone either. The boundaries and mechanisms of choice and exclusion are discussed below.

'Culture' is not an Issue

I initially wondered whether foreigners might be drawn to Java because of its cultural heritage, as in traditional music, dance or *batik*, or even by practices of Javanese

mysticism. It can be argued, though, that 'Javanese culture' neither played a major role in attracting foreigners in the first place, nor in their decision to stay there. Lucy, an American artist living in Yogyakarta, reckoned that, *'Most of my friends here are not madly in love with Indonesian culture ... but you realise that your money goes so much further here, and it gives you the space to do things that you cannot do at home.'* Lucy had been living on and off in Indonesia for more than ten years. Although she had been quite enchanted by Javanese culture initially, she emphasised that *'the main draw was the lifestyle ... at home, I've always had to do something, waitressing if things were bad, or selling Tshirts on Venice Beach. Here, I can live on what I earn as an artist'*.

Although 'culture' was not necessarily the reason to come here, quite a few foreigners develop an acquaintance with 'Javanese culture' or society as they go along. A lot of the Yogyakarta foreigners become quite fluent in Indonesian. They are often directly involved with Indonesians - at least in their work or projects - on a daily basis. Thus, foreigners often acquire some 'intercultural competence', that is, knowledge about 'correct' and effective interaction with Indonesians. This does not necessarily imply a greater appreciation or understanding as such, but it is recognised as supporting the foreigners' interests. Many foreigners aim to maintain good social relations with their Indonesian friends, colleagues, and neighbours, and consider themselves to be fairly successful in this. One could ask how this situation, intercultural knowledge coupled with a detached attitude, arises from or impacts on foreigners' sense of identification. Foreigners do not necessarily immerse themselves in 'Javanese' society, but neither do they avoid it out of a heightened sense of their own (national) identity. Their identities seem to be neither challenged nor reinforced by their residence abroad.

Gap Life: Exclusive and Privileged

The literature on movement and globalisation often carries a sense of celebration and an attitude of 'everything being possible'. One therefore has to point out some of its limitations, which are often overlooked or downplayed. The 'gap' does not open up anywhere in the world; it depends upon economic and political power gradients, which Western people can use to create a gap existence. The 'gap' is limited to certain regions and within these, focused on specific places. The possibilities for the 'gap lifestyle' are thus not global, but quite circumscribed. Most importantly, the 'gap lifestyle' is not open to anyone. Since it depends on the economic and social inequalities mentioned, it can only be experienced by a certain group of people like those from Western countries. Due to its exclusive nature, the 'gap lifestyle' is not a liberating development, but reproduces the inequalities it is based on. Most importantly, the gap situation reinforces the need to pay attention to the way social and material conditions constitute identity and gap life. This life can probably only be enjoyed by individuals with an assured sense of personal identification. As suggested earlier, it is often their economic advantages, which endow foreigners with such a secure sense of identity. It is a useful reminder of the theoretical necessity of not separating the social and cultural aspects of movement from its economic ones. This seems important since in the discussions on migration, and its effects on identification, the discursive and symbolic aspects of identity have often been put in the foreground, while economic factors are less focused on.

Finally, 'gap life' also points to the continuing relevance of social preconditions for identification. While the individuals and situations described do not provoke anxiety, there are also materially well endowed individuals who are living 'in the gap', but lack

this secure sense of identity without which gap live can not be appreciated. For them, the gap is not a desired 'home' but an uncomfortable limbo. This can be the case with 'ethnic Indonesians' who have lived abroad for a longer period of time and then, through the 'globalisation of markets', return to their 'home country' Indonesia to work or live there as 'expatriates'.

These persons sometimes experience this situation as quite difficult. While they might feel a much stronger sense of affiliation with the expatriate community of the country where they lived previously, this is not always reciprocated by the Western expatriates. In some cases, this rejection is not necessarily expressed by expatriates, but exists as an underlying fear of the 'Indonesians' themselves, which only exacerbates the situation. At the same time, while they might feel drawn to, but are rejected by the expatriate community, these 'ethnic Indonesians' are often not considered 'real Indonesians' any more by their Indonesian relatives or friends. They are sometimes regarded as too 'Westernised' and not belonging to the 'real Indonesian' community any more either. These people might seek close relations, but are frequently denied them. In that sense, the 'gap lifestyle' is reserved for people who are in a position to choose - their places of residence as well as their social and cultural affiliations.

In this chapter, I have focused on the younger generation of expatriates, on young 'global professionals' living in Jakarta, and young non-corporate expatriates in Yogyakarta. I examined young professionals' self-identification as being 'cosmopolitan', and have argued that this 'cosmopolitanism' in fact masks a form of 'Western internationalism'. This becomes obvious in their use and representation of localities, their social lives and discourses, and practices of food consumption. I suggested in section 7.1 that places become important in the form of 'global trodden

pathways' as well as in discourses of shared localities. These complex relations also become visible in connection with young professionals' use of the Internet. While the Internet can on the one hand further disconnect them from 'Indonesia', a sense of shared locality permeates and informs their exchanges through email or on Internet discussion forums. In section 7.2, I traced how young professional's social lives are an expression of their imagined 'cosmopolitanism'. This includes discourses on these shared, globally distributed localities, as well as forms of entertainment, such as in the case of the Jakarta Ultimate Frisbee Club and the 'Spaghetti Nights'. While young professionals continue their 'Western' practices of 'ethnic' food consumption in Jakarta, they attain a different meaning as they not only distinguish young professionals from family expatriates, but also demarcate boundaries between young professionals and their Indonesian environment.

Returning to the initial question of whether there are alternatives to the exclusive lifestyles of expatriates in Jakarta, I have shown that foreigners in Yogyakarta are not able to avoid the social and political inequalities that their existences are inevitably based on. I argued that their lives are predicated on their advantages of being Westerners. While this allows Yogyakarta foreigners to pursue the lifestyles they do, it also invariably compounds their relations with Indonesians, and maintains existing boundaries. Although many Yogyakarta foreigners do not live in a 'national' or 'cosmopolitan' bubble, their lives and social encounters are still marked by inequalities, even if they may make great efforts to minimise them, and to transgress social, cultural or ethnic boundaries. It seems that although expatriates lifestyles can vary greatly, they all are ultimately unable to escape the consequences arising from these power imbalances, indicating the continued existence of boundaries.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

‘Living in a Bubble’: A Metaphor Expatriates Live by

In this thesis, I employ the metaphor of ‘living in a bubble’ as characterising expatriates’ lives. This metaphor was one of the most recurrent and pervasive, and was frequently used by expatriates themselves to express their experience of life in Jakarta. The significance of this metaphor is both theoretical and experiential. It is theoretically relevant, as it captures what I regard as a crucial feature of expatriates’ lives; the existence of boundaries. The image of a ‘bubble’ embodies precisely that. A ‘bubble’ creates a bounded Inside that is sheltered from an Outside. The image also suggests, though, that the membrane which separates Inside and Outside is both artificial and fragile. All these features indicate theoretical issues, which I discussed in this thesis. These are based on the fact that the metaphor of the ‘bubble’ resonates with expatriates’ own experiences and representations of their situation. My use of this metaphor to elucidate theoretical issues is thus informed by the fact that the ‘bubble’ is a metaphor that expatriates live by.

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As indicated in chapter 2, metaphors can constitute discursive or symbolic boundaries. They are relevant in the context of expatriates’ lives as metaphors are indicative of, as well as productive for, the making and negotiating of boundaries. Their epistemological value lies in the fact that metaphors invoked by expatriates can reflect expatriates’ views of their own situation. At the same time, metaphors also play a role in producing expatriates’ experiences, as discourses within the expatriate community, such as the ‘myths of impossibility’, which often influence expatriates’ actions and decisions. In

the following, I show how the metaphor of 'living in the bubble' captures both experientially and theoretically relevant aspects of expatriates' lives.

'Living in a Golden Cage': Boundaries of Gender

Although 'living in an expatriate bubble' relates to both expatriate men and women's experiences, it resonates especially with the situation of expatriate women. I argued that the boundaries structuring expatriates' lives are especially effective with respect to expatriate wives, who come to Jakarta as 'accompanying spouses'. One of the most recurrent metaphors with which expatriate wives describe their situation is 'living in a golden cage'. This image specifically represents women's experience of the 'bubble', and marks it as crucially different from expatriate men's experience. 'Living in a golden cage' stresses the limits of expatriates' women's existences; having ample time and financial resources, yet being confined to the house, they feel severely limited in their personal lives. Being unable to work, and having limited possibilities for activities outside the house, they often regard their lives in Jakarta as that of a luxurious confinement.

The loss of identity and agency inherent in this situation is compounded by what I have referred to as 'myths of impossibility'. These are 'mental boundaries', discourses within the expatriate community concerned with things that are 'impossible to do', such as driving oneself, going out alone or after dark, eating on the street or taking public transport. These rather powerful ideas are circulated among expatriate wives, related to newcomers, and might prevent many women from engaging in activities like these at all. This has little to do with the actual risk involved in these activities, but mainly act as mental barriers. The boundaries of the golden cage are not only external, but are to

some extent self-imposed. At the same time, though, it becomes apparent how some women utilise these myths to gain social capital - by intrepidly transgressing these boundaries, for example through cycling through *kampungs* or highland trekking with the Dani in Irian Jaya.

The 'cage' as a metaphor relates mainly to expatriate women. However, although it might be similar for many expatriate women, it becomes obvious that it is not an 'equal' space, but is internally divided. The experience of the 'cage' is not singular, but is structured by differences such as of nationality, class, and age. This becomes obvious with respect to the women's associations, which often emphasise their distinctive 'national' characteristics, for example at their Coffee Mornings. Within these nationally aligned organisations, the community of expatriate wives is also divided by class boundaries; being stripped of markers of their own identity, women's status is often determined by that of their husbands, creating a hierarchy among wives based on their husbands' career level. Similarly, younger expatriate women, who are often not married and hold independent jobs in Jakarta, shun expatriate wives' associations, membership of which they regard as embarrassing and pitiful. Younger women often regard themselves as part of a generation of 'young cosmopolitans', which I discuss further below.

These internal boundaries - both in terms of 'mental' boundaries as well as internal divisions with the community - are paralleled by external boundaries. In the image of the 'bubble', these boundaries separate the expatriate Inside of the bubble from an Indonesian Outside. Crucially, these external boundaries are marked by ambiguities: they are seen a problem as much as a blessing. The experience of expatriate women shows that the Inside is not only a sheltered, but also a confined space. Finally,

boundaries are not only sites of obstruction, but also sites of transactions and transgressions. The image of a 'membrane' of a bubble points towards the permeability of boundaries.

These ambivalences are played out with respect to boundaries between the Inside and the Outside. While the boundaries of the 'golden cage' are seen as confining by many women, some positively redefine their position as being on the 'frontier', regarding themselves as 'pioneer women'. This frontier is seen as dividing a Western 'civilised' area, such as their own homes, but also their lives in general, from an uncivilised 'Indonesian' territory. In this situation, women's task becomes to reproduce and defend 'Western civilisation'. This includes finding and managing scarce resources, such as Western goods, maintaining standards of hygiene, educating their staff, and generally attempting to reproduce 'Western' lifestyles in Jakarta. Boundaries might then be seen less as confining, but rather as a challenge on which women can thrive. Linking back to their overall lack of agency, though, one could argue that this redefinition is functional; through representing the limits of their existences as frontiers to be maintained, expatriate women are cast less as victims, instead even suggesting a liberating potential.

The 'Expatriate Bubble': Boundaries of Race

How expatriate men and expatriate women experience life in the 'bubble' thus differs greatly, asserting the efficacy of internal boundaries such as gender. These internal boundaries are paralleled, and compounded by, external boundaries such as race or ethnicity. While these boundaries partly play out differently for men and women, both regard expatriate communities as the Inside of the 'bubble', which secludes them from an ethnic Other, and an Indonesian Outside. This seclusion is acknowledged by

expatriates as being 'artificial', both in the experiential sense of 'feeling strange' as well as being 'constructed' or 'manufactured' in a theoretical sense. Arguably most expatriates are aware of their peculiar position, being physically located in Jakarta while having minimal contact with either the physical or the social Indonesian outside world. This seclusion is seen as an advantage, even necessity, as well as a problem; it is both desired and regretted. On the one hand, expatriates actively create and maintain the boundaries that make their 'bubble'. On the other hand, they often attempt to transcend them, through incorporating elements of 'Indonesia' into their lives. These contrasting, ambivalent emotions characterise expatriates' spatial and bodily practices.

Much of expatriates' use of space, especially the Jakarta cityscape, is aimed at ensuring their seclusion, as becomes obvious in their choices of housing. Family expatriates usually live in secured compounds, in large, air-conditioned houses surrounded by high walls, in green areas in South Jakarta. Younger professionals often choose high-rise apartments in the city centre, which offer panoramic views of the city, but are otherwise removed from the heat, noise and dirt of the streets below. Both forms of housing recreate as much as possible 'Western interiors'; the interiors are spacious, clean, and quiet, which intensifies the contrast to the Indonesian Outside. These contrasts do not only concern physical differences, but also carry symbolic significance. The Insides emanate wealth, order, and 'Western values', while the Indonesian Outsides signify chaos, poverty, and 'non-civilisation'. These stark contrasts, and the negative, even threatening, import of the Outside make expatriates' movements through public spaces a precarious activity. Consequently, expatriates try to avoid this kind of public exposure, through using private transport and seldom walking outside. Some wear sunglasses or personal stereos in the attempt to create a 'miniature bubble' around them, which carries them safely from one Inside space to another.

These spatial practices are partly designed to escape the gaze of the Other - being stared at by Indonesians. This gaze of the Other, and expatriates' discomfort with it, emphasises the changed importance of the 'white body' as well as the power issues involved. Being singled out as bodily 'deviant' in a crowd is often a new, and unpleasant, experience for expatriates. This experience is intensified by feeling stereotyped by a supposedly less powerful Indonesian Other. It also highlights the fragility of the 'bubble'; however much expatriates attempt to fend off outside intrusion, a simple walk on the street demonstrates how easily this 'bubble' is punctured - and bursts.

This heightened significance of the body is experienced differently by expatriate men and women. Expatriate women often feel doubly Othered in terms of the body; not only as white Westerners, but also as Western women in contrast to Indonesian women. Being confronted with, and feeling threatened by, supposedly more attractive 'Asian female bodies' can lead to expatriate women's re-evaluation of their own bodies, as well as to a change in their relations with Western men. Expatriate women can thus become 'honorary males', whose personal strengths are more important than their bodily features. This again demonstrates the 'double bind' in which expatriate women find themselves, being both, 'colonizers and colonised, privileged and restricted, acted upon and acting' (McClintock 1998:6). It illustrates how boundaries of race and gender come into effect in interaction with each other. The ambiguous position of expatriate women also indicates how an axis of oppression can be an axis of liberation; their potential status as honorary males can provide single expatriate women with a powerful position in relationships with Indonesian men. These relationships often afford the women more agency than relationships with Western men. Their powerful position as women, though, is crucially based on their economic and social advantages as Westerners.

This highlights how boundaries are not only sites of containment, but also of transactions across them. As discussed, some expatriates attempt to literally incorporate aspects of 'Indonesia', through having Javanese body treatments such as 'creambaths', or consuming Indonesian food such as springrolls. While concepts of 'pure' Western foods, contrasting with potentially 'polluted' Indonesian substances, seem to underlie much of their food practices, a certain ambiguity - and sometimes the wish to cross these boundaries - remains. Crucially, though, expatriates appreciate transgressions of these boundaries only insofar as they initiate them, or can control them. Exposure to Indonesia, ideally, is always a 'limited exposure'. This points to a central issue in expatriates' relations with 'Indonesia', the power of creating and maintaining boundaries. Power becomes relevant as the power of representation, of self-representation as well as representation of the Other.

The power of representation is crucial in defining and creating identities, as the Self is always defined through the concept of an Other; the boundary is important as it defines what lies on either side of it. Representational boundaries are central for expatriates, in order to internally distinguish themselves from expatriates of other nationalities, as well as externally to distinguish themselves from Indonesians, as becomes obvious for example through women's associations' Coffee Mornings or celebrations of national days. In both cases, expatriates aim to control not only their self-representation, but simultaneously seize the power of representation of the Other. Through representing 'Indonesia' at Coffee Mornings, for example in form of an orphan's choir, expatriates incorporate and appropriate 'Indonesia' at the same time. At the German national day, Indonesian *Bintang* beer is served by Indonesian waiters, who are dressed in Western uniforms, well-trained, and are also able to professionally prepare German dishes such

as *Roulade* (meat rolled around a gherkin). Framing 'Indonesia' in this form not only makes it acceptable, but also takes over Indonesian's power of representation.

Expatriates' discomfort with being represented by the Other, on the other hand, immediately surfaces in their discussions about the term *bule*, used by Indonesians to describe white Westerners. As the power of representation is threatened with being taken away from expatriates, the precariousness of their situation, and the fragility of their 'bubble', becomes again apparent.

Living in the 'Cosmopolitan Bubble': the Younger Generation

For the most part of the thesis, I described the older generation of family expatriates, who live in an internally divided 'expatriate bubble'. A question arising as to whether the younger generation, the 'young global professionals' in Jakarta, and the non-corporate expatriates living in Yogyakarta, manage to avoid living in a 'bubble'. One of the main differences from the family expatriates is that the 'young professionals' see themselves as 'cosmopolitans'. They explicitly pursue an 'international lifestyle', in terms of working in different countries, changing places of residence, and maintaining globally distributed social networks. While they eschew the form of compound living favoured by family expatriates, young professionals prefer apartments in high-rise buildings in the city centre. One evening, I was standing with Sam, a young professional, on the roof-terrace of his apartment building at night, looking down at a kidney-shaped turquoise swimming pool with adjacent bar, staffed by uniformed Indonesian waiters, watching the sprawling city stretched out behind the bar - at least as far as the smog allowed one to see. Sam looked at the scenery and remarked, '*I think I'll be happy when I can leave this Disneyland.*' His immediate Jakarta surroundings,

like his apartment tower, had the look and feel of a well-maintained theme park for expatriates. Sam clearly had a sense of hyperreality; or, in the words of the family expatriates, artificiality. Although Sam's bubble differed in size, shape and colour from those of family expatriates, he was still living in a bubble, albeit a cosmopolitan one. Young professionals thus might not escape living in a 'bubble': in many ways, their lives are as similarly removed from their Indonesian surroundings as the lives of family expatriates. Young professionals set themselves apart on a double front; having little contact with Indonesians, they also distance themselves from family expatriates, through forms of dwelling, discourses on globally distributed places, and practices of food consumption. Their 'international' lifestyles include 'globally trodden pathways', a string of locations supposedly shared by everyone regarding themselves as a 'young cosmopolitan', such as certain bookshops in Washington, D.C., restaurants in Bali, and hotels in Singapore. Similarly, their food consumption consists of a Western canon of accepted foods. This canon does not necessarily strictly reproduce Western food habits, such as family expatriates do; it includes a range of accepted 'ethnic' foods, such as Japanese and Thai, but it also largely excludes 'local' - Indonesian - food.

This indicates precisely the kind of 'cosmopolitanism' that young professionals inhabit: it turns out to be a form of 'Western internationalism', to the exclusion of much of 'Indonesia'. Young professionals, then, do not rework the inequalities on which expatriate existences are based. Instead, their 'cosmopolitanism' can be regarded as even more insidious, as it engenders new forms of exclusivity, yet with the discourse of being 'open-minded' and 'international'. This exclusivity, and the distinction from family expatriates as well as from Indonesians, is based on the twin foundations of economic and cultural capital. In that sense, one could argue that young professionals indeed form a new global class. The sense of being members of an emerging group or

class is expressed by young professionals themselves. Yasmeen feels that she and her friends are '*global orphans*', leading mobile lifestyles, who are physically removed from friends and family in their home countries. Tom, a young professional working for an oil company, regards them as '*international managers*'. David reckons that, '*we're part of a global tribe - at home anywhere and nowhere; the only thing that remains the same in our lives is our Email address.*'

Membership of this 'global' class, however, is not available to everyone. It points at issues of power involved in this class formation. A remaining question is whether non-corporate expatriates in Yogyakarta escape 'living in the bubble', and develop new ways of dealing with these power issues. Foreigners in Yogyakarta often show greater knowledge of, and engagement with, their Indonesian environment, and thus might avoid living in a 'bubble'. The ostentatious appreciation of 'Indonesia', though, can be part of a strategy of distinction. Foreigners in Yogyakarta often aim to distance themselves from corporate expatriates, emphasising their own greater involvement with 'local culture'. This involvement can become a form of cultural capital, which sets Yogyakarta foreigners apart from expatriates living in Jakarta. This correlates, though, with the fact that the economic position of Yogyakarta foreigners is often much less privileged than that of corporate expatriates.

While Yogyakarta foreigners distance themselves from corporate expatriates, their relations with Indonesians are almost as inevitably fraught. This is based on the fact that foreigners' lives in Yogyakarta are often made possible through their economic, professional, and social advantages as Westerners. While they do not live in a 'bubble', they are 'living in a gap', utilising the economic and social power gradients between the West and Indonesia to carve out existences for themselves in Yogyakarta. In this sense,

even Yogyakarta foreigners embody a form of exclusion; while engaging with 'Indonesia' to a much greater extent than corporate expatriates, their lives are still based on power inequalities which exclude most Indonesians, for example, from joining them in 'living in the gap'.

A last question concerns the future development of 'expatriates', both as a social group and as an area of research. I suggest that 'expatriates' in their traditional form might be in decline. This could be due to their lack of cost efficiency, and to the emergence of the new generation of 'young global professionals'. This generation might gradually replace the 'family expatriates', who often assume their foreign posting with little interest in working abroad. This shift could be paralleled by changing employment practices. The concept of the 'expatriate package' might become less common, and be replaced, as multinational companies pay US dollar salaries, irrespective of the nationality of the employees. This includes employing local graduates in the same positions as 'foreigners', with similar salaries. Provision of expatriate housing, removal costs, school fees, cars, and flights home might be phased out, thus shifting from a concept of 'expatriates' to one of 'international managers'.

This possible development of expatriates as a social group simultaneously outlines directions of future research, which would concentrate on the 'young global professionals'. This includes multi-sited fieldwork, conducting research at different 'nodes' in global networks. It would be desirable to follow young professionals over a longer period of their itinerant lives. Central questions would include their representations of, and interactions with, specific localities. Issues of concern would be their work situations, social lives, ties to their 'home' countries, concepts of identity and

home, and their perspectives on the future. A crucial question would be about the development of a group identity, as well as their relations with their local surroundings. The emergence of the class of 'young global professionals' could finally bring about changes in the situation of Indonesians themselves, as young Indonesian professionals, who have often had a 'Western' education, would maintain positions in multinational companies similar to their 'expatriate' counterparts. These changes in education and employment structure might contribute to a merging of the 'classes' of young Western and young Indonesian professionals. In that sense, boundaries of race would be reconfigured, and partly overcome, by boundaries of class. These changes of power distribution, and young Indonesians' acquisition of economic and cultural capital could create a situation where young Western expatriates no longer live in a 'cosmopolitan bubble', but interact with their Indonesian counterparts on a more comprehensive, equal basis.

In summary, in this thesis I argued that expatriates' transnational lives are characterised by the construction, maintenance and transgression of boundaries. These are boundaries of race and gender, which become manifest in the realms of the body, the use of space and the performance of national identities and social lives. The emphasis on boundaries contrasts with current theories of transnationalism, which stress the fluidity and subversiveness of transnational practices. As Smith and Guarnizo (1998) have noted, transnationalism is often seen as a, "boundless" and therefore liberatory process' (1998:11). The case of expatriates suggests, however, that their transnational practices are less marked by boundlessness, and more by boundaries. Moreover, I conceptualise boundaries and flows as interdependent, as the notion of boundaries relies on the existence of flows.

I do not dispute the relevance of flows, but I highlight the hitherto neglected process of boundaries formation, thus complementing current transnationalist theories. This entails critically examining the view of transnational practices as liberating and subversive. It also shows theories of cross-cultural interaction, which revolve around concepts of 'culture shock' and expatriate adjustment to the host culture, to be mistaken. I suggest that the emphasis on fluidity stems from the fact that research has often focused on non-privileged, unskilled labour migration. As expatriates represent privileged, skilled labour migrants, the more limiting aspects of transnational practices become visible. The focus on expatriates, which constitutes a form of 'studying up', thus provides not only new ethnographic material, but also a different theoretical perspective on the nature of transnational processes.

In order to elucidate the relevance of boundaries, I develop a notion of boundaries as constructed, as well as contested and permeable. These boundaries revolve around gender, race, nationality, as well as generational and class differences. Boundaries are conceptualised as intertwined and interacting with each other. Expatriates' lives can be seen as unfolding within the complex web of multiple interconnections of boundaries. A salient domain is that of gender, which concerns in particular expatriate women. They often experience a severe loss of agency and identity. These boundaries of gender are compounded by those of race and ethnicity, as they reconfigure many women's self-identifications. The complex relations between 'Westerners' and 'Indonesia' become visible in expatriates' spatial and bodily practices. Expatriates' spatial practices are determined by the division between an Inside, which symbolises 'Western values', and an Outside, which denotes non-civilisation. Contact with the Outside is seen as problematic, especially since it exposes expatriates to the gaze of the Other.

This points towards the heightened significance of the 'Western body'. This significance is manifest in expatriates' experience of being Othered because of their visibility, as well as in refusing, or allowing, elements of 'Indonesia' to transgress their bodily boundaries. Ideas of purity and pollution become influential in expatriates' food consumption. This entails an avoidance of Indonesian food for possible fear of 'pollution' as well as its appropriation out of necessity, or as a means of expressing cultural adaptability.

The balance between emphasising expatriates' 'Western' identities and interacting with their Indonesian environment is also apparent in their social lives. The generation of 'family expatriates' often re-enact national identities. This re-enactment may be complemented by careful adaptation of 'Indonesian culture' through the consumption of artefacts. The question emerges as to whether this exclusive form of transnationalism is inevitable, or if the younger generation can develop alternative lifestyles. Many young professionals' regard themselves as 'cosmopolitan', based on their mobile lifestyles and social networks. This could be an expression of a 'Western internationalism', which engenders its own forms of exclusivity. Finally, I show how foreigners in Yogyakarta cannot escape the global inequalities their existences are based on either, which points to the persistence of boundaries in these form of transnationalism as well. As I show throughout this thesis, in the study of transnationalism and migration, the concept of boundaries, including their intentional and accidental transgression, is crucial.

Glossary

<i>Batik</i>	Traditional Indonesian printed cloth, where colour is applied to cloth which is partly covered with wax.
<i>Becak</i>	Tricycle rikshaw, used in many areas of Indonesia, but banned in some areas of Jakarta.
<i>Bule</i>	Literally 'albino', derogatory term for white person or Caucasian.
<i>Bule miskin</i>	Literally 'poor white person', often used to refer to Western teachers of English.
<i>Ikat</i>	Tie-dyed material which is woven into cloth.
<i>Ikut swami</i>	Literally 'following the husband', official Indonesian term for status of an accompanying wife.
<i>Jamu</i>	Tonic made of medicinal herbs.
<i>Kaki lima</i>	Literally 'five feet', the term for street vendors using a three-wheeled cart.
<i>Kampung</i>	Village, quarter, a residential area for lower classes in town or city.
<i>Kris</i>	Traditional Javanese dagger, said to have magical qualities.
<i>Londoh</i>	Javanese term for white person.
<i>Mandi lulur</i>	Literally, a herbal bath designed to lighten one's complexion. Here herbal body scrub.
<i>Pembantu</i>	Literally 'helper', term for household staff.
<i>Pisang goreng</i>	Pieces of fried banana, sold by many street vendors.
<i>Roti</i>	Means 'bread'; the ' <i>roti</i> man' refers to a bread vendor who goes through neighbourhoods with his cart, and announces his presence by gongs or jingles.
<i>Songket</i>	Cloth embroidered with gold or silver thread.
<i>Sambal</i>	Hot chilli sauce, an Indonesian staple eaten with many dishes.
<i>Sunda</i>	A region in West Java, with the city of Bandung as a regional centre; also refers to <i>Sunda</i> as an ethnic group and a language.
<i>Tempeh</i>	Slices of fermented soy beans, which are usually eaten fried.
<i>Warung</i>	Street food stall, small restaurant.
<i>Wayang kulit</i>	Traditional Javanese shadow-puppet play.

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