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Summary

The central theme of this dissertation is the origin and the development of Surinamese nationalism, both ideologically and institutionally, the associated social reactions and the contribution to constitutional independence and the process of nation building.
Elaboration of the theme is structured into the following questions:

- How did Surinamese nationalism originate and how did it develop ideologically and institutionally?
- What were the social reactions to nationalism?
- How did nationalism contribute to the constitutional independence and the proces of nation-building?

These questions concern the activities of the nationalists and the developments of Surinamese nationalism in Suriname and the Netherlands, the associated social reactions, as well as the emergencing independence of Suriname as a state.
This study concerns the phenomenon of nationalism. On the basis of a literature study I have first tried to come to an appropriate description of nationalism, to be able to study Surinamese nationalism as a specific form of the general phenomenon. However, it appeared to be difficult to give an unambiguous description of nationalism; it always appears to be dependent on the context in which it is placed. In the Third World countries the development of nationalism is related to self-determination, decolonisation and emancipation. After World War II nationalism played an important part in the de-colonisation process in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. In the Third World countries nationalism particularly opposed colonial supremacy in political, economic and social respects.
As in other parts of the Third World, for example the Caribbean, the Surinamese nationalism has shown two aspects: cultural and political, that have a certain overlap and are interwined in certain ways.
In Suriname there always was opposition against colonialism, exploitation and oppression, but this opposition lacked a clear ideological basis and was not focused on targets related to the sovereignty of the state. In the thirties the precursor and founder of radical political nationalism was Anton de Kom. He stated in his political program that his first point of action was national liberation, full self-determination and constitutional independence. De Kom did not stay in Suriname long enough to create a broad social movement. Moreover, the repression of the colonial government was so strong that he hardly had the freedom to develop activities. The extreme repression during World War II was one of the reasons that the radical political nationalism of Anton de Kom could hardly take root. It was not until after World War II that the first signs of moderate political nationalism became manifest in Suriname. Its essence was common destiny and resistance against colonial repression. World War II gave the Creole elite reason to believe that Suriname was able to manage its own internal affairs and that the country could be less dependent on the Netherlands. This resulted in moderate political nationalism that was aimed at constitutional reforms within the frame-

work of the Kingdom. This experienced a warmer welcome in the Surinamese society than the radical nationalism advocated by Anton de Kom. To be able to conceptualise this ideal of autonomy in internal affairs the association Unie Suriname (Union Suriname) was established on 11 March 1943. This association aimed at more autonomy within the framework of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. This movement was moderately nationalistic and certainly not radical or revolutionary. By means of negotiation the leaders of the Unie Suriname wanted to gradually increase their say in internal affairs. As a pendant of this union the Hindustani-Javanese Central Board was established to protect the political and social interests of the Hindustanis and Javanese. The descendants of the contract workers were of the opinion that their interests were not sufficiently protected by the assimilated Creoles in the Unie Suriname. One of the aims of this board, presided by Mr Clemens Ramkisoen Biswamitre, was the introduction of a general right to vote for adults, proportional representation and self-determination in internal affairs. Cultural nationalism developed as a reaction to the assimilation policy that was initiated by the colonial government after the abolishment of slavery. The prevailing opinion of the colonials was that the descendants of the slaves did not have a (fully developed) culture and that Dutch culture was to fill the gap.

Julius Koenders and Henny de Ziel (Trefossa) can be considered to be the founders of cultural nationalism. Its core was the re-establishment of self-respect and self-esteem of the Creole people, which had perished during the assimilation policy.

The policy of governor Kielstra in the years 1933-1944 meant a break with the assimilation policy. His policy led to sharp reactions from the already assimilated light-skinned Creole middle-class, who liked to see the assimilation policy implemented consequently and integrally. The Creole people were particularly influenced culturally by this assimilation policy the Hindustanis and Javanese were less affected.

Anton de Kom, Julius Koenders and Henny de Ziel represented the radical political and cultural nationalism, whereas the Unie Suriname and the Hindustani-Javanese Central Board laid down the foundations for moderate nationalism of the political parties in Suriname. After World War II the intentions of Julius Koenders were continued by Surinamese students and workers in the Wie Eegie Sanie association (Our Heritage), with Eddy Bruma as their driving force and leader. Two parties, the VHP and the NPS, participated in round table conferences in the Netherlands and in doing so played an important part in the endeavours to obtain more autonomy. In 1954 this resulted in the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Cultural nationalism continued to develop in the Wie Eegie Sanie association in the Netherlands. In the fifties Wie Eegie Sanie became politically active, when it was announced that a round table conference, between the Netherlands, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles, was going to be organised to discuss a draft Charter for the Kingdom.

Surinamese nationalists in the Netherlands opposed this draft Charter, which they considered to be a neo-colonial decree. They demanded at least dominion status for Suriname similar to the British model. However, in this stage of the plea the moderate nationalism won. The Charter did cover an advanced form of self-government for Suriname, although some offices, such as defence and foreign affairs became Kingdom responsibilities. In the following stage of the constitutional-political development of Suriname, which was the realisation of constitutional sovereignty, the radical nationalists finally reached their goal.
In the meantime cultural nationalism developed in the Netherlands and after the return of Eddy Bruma and others the activities were continued in the association of the same name. The activities of Wie Eegie Sanie were mainly focused on the "division" of culture and the (re-)valuation of their own culture and heritage. Wie Eegie Sanie was reproached for being exclusively Creole. It cannot be denied that the supporters of the cultural ideal of Wie Eegie Sanie mainly originated from the Creole group. However, they tried in various ways to involve other ethnic groups with the ideal of an own Surinamese culture and identity. In Hindustani circles the attempts of these nationalists were interpreted as an assimilation policy of the (more or less westernised) Creoles. The Hindustanis wanted to retain and refine their own culture. The nationalists in turn interpreted the rejection of the Hindustanis as a desire for isolation in their "imported" culture and as unsusceptibility to the Surinamese ideal. The nationalists appeared to have an insufficient understanding of the complexity of the multi-ethnic society and they took it too easily for granted that they were the supporters of "the" Surinamese culture. Despite these problems this can still be called Surinamese nationalism, because its intention was territorial and intended to cover the complete Surinamese nation in all its cultural variety.
Political nationalism in Suriname did not develop in a radical or revolutionary direction. The two main parties, the NPS (Creoles) and the VHP (Hindustanis), had entered a political pact in 1958, which was called verbroederingspolitiek (fraternisation policy) and was intended to further the emancipation of the respective Creole and Hindustani ethnic groups. According to the VHP this could best be carried out under the safe cover of the Dutch flag.
Although not all the nationalists welcomed the step from a cultural to a political arena, on 1 September 1961 the Party of the Nationalist Republic (PNR) was founded, to achieve the political ideal of the nationalists: constitutional sovereignty. Many nationalists thought the time was not right for this, others thought that the nationalist ideals could also be achieved in the NPS.
The PNR intended to be a reforming party with a clear constitution on a nationalistic basis. The party's nationalistic basis was described by Eddy Bruma in Opmars van het Nationalisme (The Progression of Nationalism).
Only two years after its foundation, the PNR took part in the elections. The electorate, however, did not appreciate the newcomers, regularly characterised as communists by their opponents. The PNR did not gain any seats in the parliament. After that the PNR decided to change its strategy and looked for affiliation with mass organisations such as trade unions. PNR officers established

trade unions or took over the management of existing unions. This strategy proved to be successful. When in 1969 the PNR took part in the elections for the third time, the chairman and party leader of the PNR was elected Member of Parliament. This success was also due to the considerable part the affiliated PNR unions played in teacher strikes in 1966 and 1969.
For the fourth elections in 1973 the PNR had entered an electoral alliance with the NPS, the PSV and the KTPI, called the Nationale Partij Kombinatie (National Party Combination). These elections were won by the NPK and a government was established in which nationalists held three ministerial positions. During the electoral campaign the issue of independence had not been put forward as a theme, probably for tactical reasons. Nevertheless there were enough indications that PNR would make every effort to achieve independence in the newly started governmental term. Also in the NPS, voices requesting independence were gradually becoming louder. In his government policy statement Prime Minister Arron said that Suriname would be independent no later than at the end of 1975. The VHP, which was now put in the opposition, did not (yet) want independence, because they feared Creole dominance, which could possible result in racial tensions. The desire of the government of Mr Arron to realise Suriname's independence developed parallel to the opinion of the Dutch government of drs. Den Uyl to complete the de-colonisation process in the West. The ambitions of the government of Mr Arron to achieve Suriname's independence did not encounter the slightest obstacle. On the contrary, the Netherlands were very forthcoming and offered their co-operation in various areas. The technical aspects of the legal preparations of independence were pre-eminently led by experts connected with the NPS. The PNR had little influence on the course of affairs.
The opposition party VHP, attempted to stop the transfer of sovereignty by parliamentary as well as non-parliamentary means. They published a memorandum with ten critical items or matters that they thought had to be arranged before the transfer of sovereignty. Despite the initially explicit contradictions between the government and the opposition, a number of very important requests from the opposition were complied with, after which the transfer of sovereignty took place in full harmony on 25 November 1975. When the transfer of sovereignty was achieved the implicit tension between the PNR and the conservative wing of the NPS came to the surface. The latter group was convinced that the PNR was far too pretentious and was in the process of winning over the NPS electorate. Moreover, according to this group the influence of the PNR in the coalition was disproportionately high compared with its electoral input. The controversy between the two coalition partners aggravated during the division of seats for the elections to be held in 1977. The negotiations between the parties came to a complete standstill, their mutual distrust was growing and the board of the NPS decided to enter the election without the PNR. The PNR did not obtain any seats in the parliament. This electoral defeat affected Eddy Bruma so badly that he decided to give up the leadership of the PNR. Within the PNR a power struggle developed regarding party leadership and the policy to pursue. One group pro-

posed to start a coalition with left-wing parties, whereas another group wanted to link up with the VHP. The PNR had become adrift and it soon fell apart. Later a number of PNR supporters, particularly the officers related with the trade unions, established the Surinaamse Partij van de Arbeid (SPA) (Surinamese Labour Party) under the leadership of the "uncrowned" crown prince of the PNR, Fred Derby. When the PNR fell apart, the nationalists lost their institutional frameworks and they became disoriented. One last time the nationalists had an influential task during the formation of the first civil cabinet after the military coup of 25 February 1980. The jurist F. Leeflang and E Bruma, who had given legal advice to the striking military personnel, were asked to take charge in forming the new government after the coup. They formed a government with a clearly nationalistic character, presided by Mr H Chin A Sen, by profession a medical specialist for internal diseases.

The results of the military coup are not covered in this study, which leaves the possible nationalistic aspects of the military regime outside the scope of this study.

In literature on this topic it is often stated that nationalism aims at nation building in a certain territory, based on the belief in the nation's own ability and the common will to carry on as one people. We have to recognise that the PNR paid little or no attention to the aspect of nation building. The nationalists were strongly focused on the realisation of constitutional independence, which they considered to be conditional for realisation of nation building. They did not have any plans, ideas or concepts for the period after the achievement of independence concerning the nation building aspect. Because of this they were empty-handed after the realisation of independence, they had no political themes or goals. They also had the simple belief that nation building was an autonomous process that would develop by itself after independence. The challenge of nation building was in fact insufficiently noticed, or even hardly noticed al all, by the Surinamese nationalists. Nation building is now the challenge for the future of Suriname.