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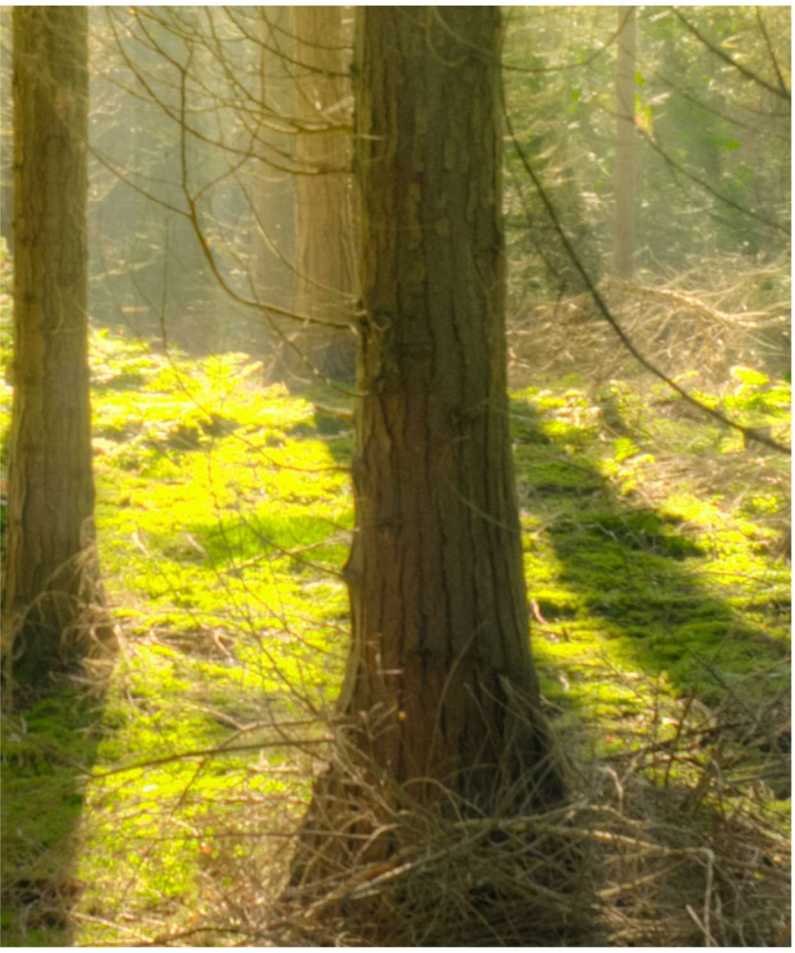
BACHELOR THESIS

THE “FOREST OF HEALING” – AN INDIGENOUS STRUGGLE FOR REPARATIONS IN THE COLONIAL CORE



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Comissioned by Stichting Aralez, Represented by Chihiro Geuzebroek

ARALEZ

Abbreviations

FoH – Forest of Healing (Bos der Heling in Dutch)

IKC-Int – Indigenous Knowledge Centre International (Inheems Kenniscentrum Internationaal in Dutch)

NCIV – Netherlands Centre for Indigenous People (Nederlandse Centrum voor Inheemse Volken in Dutch)

FPIC – Free, Prior, and Informed Consent

BIPOC – Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

OV – Openbaar Vervoer (Public Transport in Dutch)

CARICOM – Caribbean Community

KIEN - Knowledge Centre for Immaterial Heritage (Kenniscentrum Inmaterieel Erfgoed Nederland in Dutch)

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Introduction

This research report constitutes a Bachelor Thesis in International Development Management, with a specialization in Regional Development and Innovation. It comprehensively explores “The Forest of Healing: An Indigenous Struggle for Reparations in the Colonial Core”.

The thesis begins by providing essential Background information on the Forest of Healing project, including its context within the Netherlands and broader global Indigenous struggles, along with details on the involved organizations, Aralez and Indigenous Knowledge Centre International (IKC-Int). This leads into the Problem Definition, which clarifies the specific research gap this study addresses. Subsequently, the Research Objective(s) are outlined, defining what this investigation aims to achieve, followed by the Main Research Question and its Sub-Research Questions that guide the inquiry.

The Literature Review then presents an overview of existing scholarship relevant to reparatory justice for Indigenous peoples, addressing the current academic landscape. A detailed Conceptual Framework establishes the theoretical lens through which the research findings are analyzed, focusing on colonial damage, decolonial healing, and reparatory justice. The Methodology chapter elaborates on the qualitative research design, data collection methods (desk study, interviews, survey, focus group), and data processing techniques, underscoring the decolonial approach adopted throughout the study.

The Results section presents the empirical findings gathered from Indigenous stakeholders, organized by the sub-research questions, followed by a Reflection of Results that critically examines the data collection process and its implications. The Discussion chapter then thoroughly analyzes these findings in relation to the conceptual framework. Finally, the Conclusion and Recommendations bring the focus back on the main research question and offer actionable recommendations for the Forest of Healing project's future development and its contribution to reparatory justice.

Background

This research will focus on the Forest of Healing project, which is currently in the planning stage, by conducting an explorative study of the perspectives of Indigenous people. This is valuable for the commissioner as well as the project initiator in this stage of the project. The commissioner is the foundation Aralez, while the project initiator is the “Indigenous Knowledge Centre International” (“Inheems Kenniscentrum Internationaal” in Dutch, short IKC-Int). These will be presented, as well as their relationship and involvement in the project. This will be complemented by insights on global Indigenous struggles to contextualize the project of study. However, firstly, the project itself is introduced after the explanation of the Dutch context in which it is situated.

Indigenous struggles in the Netherlands

With their colonial history, the Netherlands bears significant responsibility for the genocide of Indigenous people and the continuous violations of their human rights (ARALEZ, 2024b). The Dutch government's recent apologies for the slavery past, while a step forward, have yet to fully acknowledge the atrocities committed against Indigenous peoples (IKC-Int, 2024). This lack of recognition perpetuates the erasure of Indigenous experiences and the ongoing struggles they face in the Netherlands (Uitermark, 2021).

Globally, the historical injustices inflicted upon Indigenous people have had lasting consequences that continue to impact their communities today. The loss of land, language, and culture due to colonial policies and practices has resulted in the suppression of Indigenous identity and self-determination

(TallBear, 2021; Uitermark, 2021). The ongoing trauma of genocide, displacement, and oppression manifests in various forms, including social, economic, and health disparities (Smith et al., 2021). The Land Back movement, gaining momentum globally, highlights the fundamental connection between land and Indigenous identity and the need for its return to Indigenous stewardship (Droz et al., 2023). In the Netherlands, the struggle for reparations is exemplified by the case of the Lenape people seeking a formal apology, reparations, and the return of stolen bodies held in Dutch museums (Boztas, 2024).

Like other people from the colonies, Indigenous people have come to the Netherlands for centuries, both by force, as the case of an enslaved Lenape man in the 17th century shows (Boztas, 2024), and by choice, like Surinamese Indigenous Peoples in the face of the independence of Suriname in the 20th century in search of better education and employment opportunities (Uitermark, 2021). The thesis commissioner Aralez is part of the Dutch Indigenous movement and held, for example, several events on Indigenous Liberation in 2023, including the organization of an Indigenous Liberation Day, commemorated with seven Indigenous-Dutch organizations, like the NCIV, Wasjikwa, the Tribes Movement, the Mabikas Foundation, Aweroekana, and Free West Papua (ARALEZ, 2024a). These organizations worked as the "Indigenous Liberation Movement coalition" between 2020 and 2024, which focused on grassroots movement building but is no longer operating due to internal discrepancies. However, many of the individuals active in the coalition still work together and build new projects, organizations, and alliances. The Indigenous movement in the Netherlands is also relatively small, leading to overlaps between organizations. Over the last years, voices for a physical space for Indigenous people in the Netherlands arose in the movement. These have recently become more concrete with the project idea of the Forest of Healing.

Forest of Healing

The Forest of Healing project is envisioned by the IKC-Int as a physical space in the Netherlands for remembering, learning, healing, and organizing shaped by and for Indigenous people that acknowledges and addresses the historical injustices faced by Indigenous peoples and their more than 500-year-old struggle for self-determination (IKC-Int, 2024). This initiative is seen as a crucial step towards reparations, aiming to foster dialogue and collaboration between Indigenous communities and various cultural and educational institutions. According to the IKC-Int, the forest will serve as a tangible reminder of shared colonial history, providing a space for reflection, education, and recognition of past wrongs. They also defend that it is an act of symbolically giving Land Back to Indigenous people who once had their land stolen by the Dutch empire.

The forest will feature replicas of cultural houses created by Indigenous groups, providing spaces for cultural restoration and activities (IKC-Int, 2025). The Forest of Healing will furthermore hold space to a knowledge center, essentially the physical manifestation of the IKC-Int: It will host the Indigenous Archive, which will be passed on by the NCIV, that has built it up since 1969, as well as workshops, conferences and small performances. In the outside area, a space to safely make a bonfire is envisioned. The IKC-Int wants to work together with Natuurmonumenten to create a diverse forest over an area of 80 to 100 ha. With this, they also want to contribute to the Dutch forest strategy that aims for 5000 new hectares of planted forest in 2030. Visitors will also have the opportunity to plant trees, symbolizing growth and healing.

The project emphasizes the importance of Indigenous ecological, agricultural, and medicinal knowledge, aiming to preserve and promote these cultures as part of the reparative process. Ultimately, the Forest of Healing aspires to be a place of reconciliation, healing, and mutual understanding, benefiting both Indigenous communities and the broader society (IKC-Int, 2024).

The Forest of Healing project is in the planning stages, with the IKC-Int actively working to develop the concept and hosting a congress about it in November. Efforts are focused on fostering collaboration with Indigenous communities and cultural institutions, as well as securing support for the initiative. It has gone through several talks with representatives of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and aims on receive a part of the 200 million euros the government promised to make available in the coming years for national awareness over the Dutch colonial past, as well as funds for nature rehabilitation (IKC-Int, 2025).

This thesis is conducted in close collaboration with two organizations, one being the commissioner Aralez and the other the project initiator IKC-Int. Both are active in the Indigenous Movement in the Netherlands and collaborate regularly, as for this project, but differ in their focuses.

The project initiator

The IKC-Int is a rather new organization working on Indigenous rights in the Netherlands. The mission of the IKC-Int is to contribute to "greater visibility, preservation, and recognition of Indigenous languages, cultures, and spiritual values" (IKC-Int, 2025). Their current focus is the set-up of the Forest of Healing, which is supposed to host a physical knowledge center. The people on the board of the organization have all been part of the Indigenous Movement in the Netherlands for a long time and work together with numerous other stakeholders in the field. One such stakeholder is Aralez, which will organize town hall sessions to discuss the plans of the Forest of Healing. Sherlien Sanches, board members of the IKC-Int, who is also the contact person of the organization for the researcher, is also part of the board of Aralez. She is Indigenous, from the Karinya people in Suriname.

The commissioner

This research is commissioned by Stichting Aralez, a pan-decolonial network and grassroots organization based in Amsterdam. This thesis project is situated in the reparatory justice endeavor of Aralez, with a specific focus on Indigenous people in the Netherlands and on the frontlines, which is one of the thematic focusses of the organization. On one hand, Aralez is involved in the project Forest of Healing, as mentioned before; on the other hand, they generally work for decolonization and international solidarity and want to get insights on how the project can contribute to that. The specific research problem encountered by the commissioner and the project initiator is explained in continuation, but first some more information on the commissioning organization:

Aralez aims for structural changes in the societal system, recognizing Western civilization as built on colonialism and exploitation that institutionalizes genocide and ecocide (ARALEZ, 2022). It is a network between different initiatives and movements working on decolonization and social justice. One thematic focus of theirs is the struggle for reparations. In close collaboration with other organizations and actors, they developed the “Pan-Decolonial Reparations Manifesto”, subtitled “Towards reparatory justice for the Global South and the dismantling of Dutch (neo-) colonialism” (ARALEZ, 2024). They consider reparations to be crucial to dismantle ongoing colonial structures of economic, social, and cultural domination and argue that not implementing them would lead to increased climate destruction, ever wider global inequalities, and the loss of ever more cultural identities and languages (ARALEZ, 2024). Aralez strongly positions themselves for liberation, which is understood as the removing of the systems of exploitation and oppression that are currently in place, while promoting autonomy and the right of self-determination and human dignity (ARALEZ, 2024). Aralez is represented by Chihiro Geuzebroek, a Bolivian-Dutch multidisciplinary artist and organizer with Quechua roots.

Indigenous struggles worldwide

All over the world, Indigenous Peoples are struggling for their sovereignty, the respect for their own frameworks for society, justice, and land stewardship, as well as the defense of their human rights, the revitalization of their culture and customs, and their ancestral lands. Ever since Europeans first invaded the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Oceania, Indigenous Peoples were pushed off their lands and killed through infection with European diseases as well as through blunt murder. The following gives a short overview of the crimes on the American continent. There alone, 56 million Indigenous people died between 1492 and 1600, of which 90% of deaths were a result of European epidemics (Koch et al., 2019). This marks the beginning of a time of Indigenous genocides in the Americas that continues through the following centuries. The term genocide is used here, referring to its definition under the Genocide Convention of 1948:

> "Any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." (OHCR, 1948)

While some authors argue that the 500 years following the arrival of the Europeans in the Americas are too big of a time frame to classify with one term (genocide), there is general academic agreement that the colonization of the Americas is based on several genocidal events, such as the epidemics in the late 15th and 16th centuries, the wars of conquest, enslavement, forced dispossession and removal, as well as the destruction of material resources in the 18th century, or the Indian Removal Act of 1830 in the US (Ostler, 2014).

In the diverse stories of colonization and resistance, Indigenous struggles around land are the common theme: the reclaiming of ancestral land, its demarcation and thus official recognition, and the protection of the land from capital interests have marked the struggles of Indigenous Peoples. Besides securing Indigenous livelihoods, access to and power over ancestral land also presents a profound healing process for them (Droz, 2023).

While the realities they live in are diverse and cannot be generalized, they share a strong and ancestral link to their land. Indigenous people are safeguards of the forests, as exemplified by the 35% of the world's intact forests that are located in Indigenous people's lands (Amnesty International, 2024). In the face of climate catastrophe and biodiversity loss, state authorities and multinational companies, however, continue to prioritize capital accumulation by expanding extractive industries, oftentimes at the expense of Indigenous Peoples, invading and destroying their lands. Stories from the frontlines show that colonial structures of economic, social, and cultural domination persist today. However, so do Indigenous organizing, fighting for land, cultural survival, climate action, decolonization, reparatory justice, and healing.

Problem Definition

The research problem is the issue from which the research derives. The problem elucidates the motivation behind the research. In all cases, knowledge is needed to solve this problem. The Forest of Healing is unique because it seeks reparations for Indigenous people within a colonial country by acquiring land. According to the researcher and the commissioning organization, this is the first project of its kind. Indigenous struggles for lands that are known by the commissioner were either by Indigenous people in a settler colony in the global north, like the USA and Canada on Turtle Island, or in the global south. There are no known references within Europe. With the Forest of Healing likely being the first to shine a light on the need for healing and repair within the colonial core, it is necessary to gather information about perceptions and ideas for this place as it is being envisioned. The commissioner currently is interested in mapping different ideas and understandings of how this struggle for an Indigenous land in the colonizer country can advance reparatory justice and what would be needed to achieve this. The decision for the name “Forest of Healing” was taken recently, after the alternative “Forest of Forgiveness” was rejected in internal discussions. IKC-Int and Aralez don't know what healing means to the Indigenous people that could participate in the project, what they think needs to be healed, or what could be healed through the project.

Research Objective(s)

The research objective explains why the research is conducted and what it aims to achieve in a specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound way. This research aims at mapping out perspectives of Indigenous stakeholders of the Forest of Healing project, mostly from within the Netherlands, but complemented with stakeholders on the frontlines in the Global South, on ways in which the Forest of Healing project is contributing to reparatory justice. This will be done by focusing on the perspectives of the Indigenous people on the damage that has been done, understandings of healing, and the perspectives on the Forest of Healing concerning the extent to which it can contribute to the former.

It is essential for Aralez to include perspectives from the frontlines through interviews to foster a conversation between the global North and the global South and ensure that diasporic Indigenous actors in the Netherlands are aware of perspectives and concerns for how the Forest of Healing and its Indigenous knowledge center can benefit Indigenous people beyond the Dutch nation-state borders. By listening to perspectives from the frontlines and acting accordingly, the aim is to foster solidarity.

Ultimately, this research aims to map out the perspectives of Indigenous stakeholders on the Forest of Healing so that it can be used both by the commissioner in their efforts to strengthen international solidarity and decolonization and by the project initiator to include their considerations in their planning. The research will also contribute to the work of the IKC-Int by being stored in their archive, accessible to future generations, and potentially used in communication with the government and other public institutions.

Research Questions

Main Research Question

The main research question is thus defined as

> What, according to Indigenous stakeholders in the Netherlands and in the frontlines, is needed for the Forest of Healing project to contribute to reparatory justice?

Sub-Research Questions

The three sub-research questions are defined as

1. What, according to the Indigenous stakeholders, is the colonial damage experienced in their specific Dutch context?
2. How do the Indigenous stakeholders understand “Healing”?
3. How do the Indigenous stakeholders envision the Forest of Healing project?

Literature Review

This literature review provides an overview of the available literature regarding study. Inquiries in academic search engines like Google Scholar or BASE (Bielefeld Academic Research Engine) provide hardly any results on the specific topic of reparatory justice for Indigenous People in the Netherlands. This aligns with perspectives from Indigenous organizers, who argue for the need for more research on Indigenous histories as part of the Dutch colonial past. To situate this research in the existing body of knowledge, the focus is broadened, and publications on reparations for the Dutch slavery past are included, an article on the Caribbean discourse on reparations in relation to the Netherlands, as well as publications shining light on Indigenous realities in the Netherlands. The different articles reviewed are presented one by one, after which they are connected to the present research.

The article “What is Meant by ‘Repair’ when Claiming Reparations for Colonial Wrongs? Transformative Justice for the Dutch Slavery Past” by Nicole L. Immler (2021) considers different types of justice, as conceptualized by Laplante (2013), namely reparative, restorative, civic, and socio-economic justice, and applies them to the Dutch case, arguing that different affected and interested parties make different justice claims and that essentially all four are important when addressing the Dutch colonial past. The author's empirical findings indicate that reparation claims from Afro-Caribbean and Surinamese communities focus more on relationship-building processes to address structural injustices than on specific outcomes such as apologies or reparations.

Through a historical perspective of reparations, Immler highlights the recent change in the narrative around reparations in the Netherlands as a shift from ‘trauma’ to ‘revolution’; from ‘victims asking for recognition’ to ‘citizens demanding their rights’. By bringing to the discussion Rastafari reparation claims linked to community building, the author introduces the role of self-repair, both for the colonizers and the colonized, closely linked to education. Immler highlights the importance of a conversation at eye level that must be based on the recognition of colonial history (and present) so that reparatory claims are not understood as “asking for a favor” but instead as a fair entitlement. Therefore, money to invest in structural improvements for the victims is considered a prerequisite for a just dialogue on reparations, not their final goal.

The article concludes that the focus on social repair can simultaneously tackle reparatory justice claims from affected communities and make reparations more acceptable to larger parts of Dutch society. However, the article fails to explore the need to increase acceptance of reparations in Dutch society, which the author asserts is important. By providing critical conceptualization of reparatory justice, this article lays an important base for the present research project. This research utilizes various forms of justice for its conceptual framework.

In her article “Indigenous Land Rights and Caribbean Reparations Discourse” (2017), Amy Stecker deals with the ten-point plan of the Caribbean Reparations Commission (CARICOM) to achieve reparatory justice for the victims of slavery, genocide, and racial apartheid in the Caribbean from 2014. The commission aims to reach a settlement with the Dutch, British, and French governments. While this

plan is the first to introduce a focus on Indigenous people, the author problematizes the reparatory claims of the Caribbean states while perpetrating human rights violations against their population of Indigenous descent. It also discusses the role of European governments to acknowledge their colonial crimes and to strengthen "cultural reparations", which is argued to have the potential to unify communities and tackle their experience of cultural loss by supporting the set-up of cultural institutions, like museums in the Caribbean states, through financial means, as well as the provision of historical documents, maps, artworks, and archaeological and ethnographic objects, both physically and through digitalization. These contributions will be valuable for the present research as they situate the Forest of Healing project in an international reparations discourse, in which other players are also setting demands on the Dutch state. It is of interest to see how those can be linked or not.

The master thesis "Diasporic Indigeneity: Indigenous Identities in the Netherlands" by Cecila Uitermark (2021) aims to provide insights into Surinamese Indigenous diasporic lives in the Netherlands, which, according to the author, are not a new phenomenon but remain underrepresented in the academic as well as broader societal discourse. Uitermark achieves this by focusing on contemporary lived experiences, identity articulations, and personal migration and dwelling stories. She explores ways in which Surinamese Indigenous peoples in the Netherlands maintain a connection to their ancestral land while creating new roots where they live.

The author gives an overview of the Indigenous Peoples of Suriname and the shared history of Suriname and the Netherlands, which are highly valuable for this research. Uitermark also provides a conceptual shift from Indigeneity as "belonging in a place" to "belonging to a place", acknowledging the affective connections Indigenous people in the diaspora might have to their "homeland" and the various ways in which Indigenous people practice place-making and self-organizing. The main body of the thesis is divided into three parts, focusing on history, identity, and self-organizing. In the first findings chapter, several Suriname Indigenous Diaspora organizations in the Netherlands are introduced, together with their cultural and political work. This perspective recounts the history of Indigenous Suriname in the Netherlands, drawing from interviews and archive studies.

Uitermark finds a high level of self-organizing and a strong social network that supported the political work of the communities and shows how tribal differences were overcome through the common goal of social change. In continuation, the thesis mentions the online event series on Indigenous Liberation organized by the commissioner of this thesis, Aralez, and uses this as a starting point for outlining the findings on contemporary Surinamese Indigenous identity articulations in the Netherlands. In the final chapter it discusses authenticity and essentialism in the Dutch context.

The master thesis provides meaningful insights into the history and contemporaneity of Surinamese Indigenous people in the Netherlands that will help contextualize the findings of this thesis. It gives valuable input for methodological concerns when doing research on and with Indigenous people, which are incorporated in the methodology of this report.

The 2009 article "Resettling Peoples, Redressing Histories: Challenging Answers to the Land Question in Namibia and the Netherlands" by Liora Barba addresses questions of segregation and the politics of place in globalization in the Namibian and Dutch contexts. Barba deals with topics of spatial marginalization, political youth struggles, and more recent promises of reparations targeting the Dutch-Moluccan community in the Netherlands. With a focus on the Moluccan community in the Netherlands, the article gives important background information on this specific Indigenous population from the Maluku Islands in Eastern Indonesia that first entered the Netherlands in the 1950s.

This literature review explores the existing body of knowledge relevant to the research topic, addressing the lack of academic literature on reparatory justice for Indigenous Peoples in the

Netherlands. This gap aligns with calls from Indigenous organizers for more research on Indigenous histories within the Dutch colonial past. To situate the study, the review includes works on reparations for Dutch slavery, Caribbean reparations discourse, and Indigenous realities in the Netherlands. Key contributions include Immler's conceptualization of reparatory justice, Stecker's discussion on Indigenous claims in the Caribbean, Uitermark's study on Surinamese Indigenous identity, and Barba's research on Dutch-Moluccan experiences.

Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework systematically guides the exploration of the main research question by establishing the interlinked concepts of colonial damage, decolonial healing, and reparatory justice. The analysis begins with a foundational understanding of what Indigenous stakeholders identify as colonial damage, as this directly informs the necessity and nature of reparatory justice. Consequently, the assessment of colonial damage provides the basis for comprehending how Indigenous stakeholders conceptualize healing, as the need for healing directly arises from these historical and ongoing harms. Finally, the framework examines how the Forest of Healing project, the central object of this study, aims to contribute to healing and, by extension, to reparatory justice.

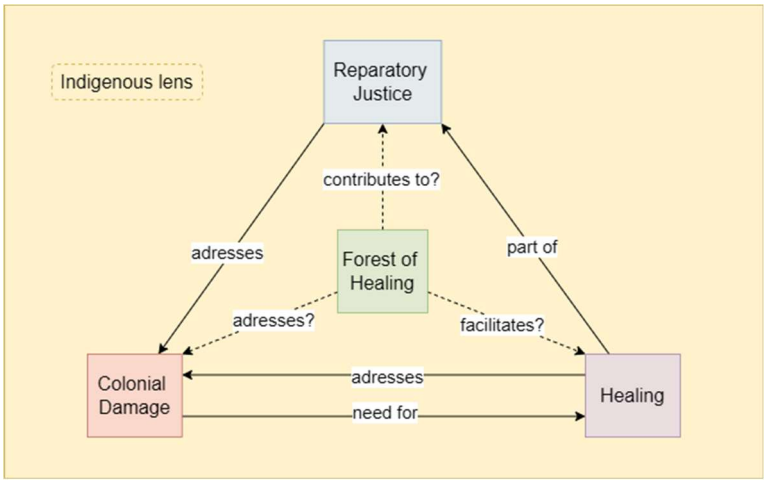

Figure 1: Visualization by the researcher.

Figure 1 visually maps the analytical progression, illustrating how understanding 'Colonial Damage' directly informs the conceptualization of 'Healing', which in turn is essential for evaluating the 'Forest of Healing' project's contribution to 'Reparatory Justice'. This framework emphasizes a continuous, building-upon relationship between these concepts, where insights from each stage iteratively deepen the understanding of the others.

The research findings on healing will be analyzed through the lens of decolonial healing literature, consistently referring back to the colonial damage articulated by both research respondents and existing scholarship. Thus, healing is not examined in isolation but as a direct response to, and a process building upon, the identified damage. The potential impact of the Forest of Healing project on reparatory justice will be regularly examined alongside both the main findings and additional information about healing and colonial damage.

This entire research endeavor is deeply rooted in Indigenous perspectives, prioritizing Indigenous voices not only in primary data collection but also in the selection and use of secondary data. While the framework primarily draws on Indigenous writers, it is complemented by insights from non-Indigenous critical, feminist, and decolonial scholars to provide a comprehensive analytical foundation. The specific understanding and application of the term "Indigenous" within this research will be clarified at the end of this conceptual framework, emphasizing its political and relational nature.

Colonial Damage

To understand the scope and nature of "colonial damage" as experienced by Indigenous stakeholders, this research draws upon international legal definitions and decolonial/postcolonial discourse. The United Nations resolution on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Violations of International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law describes five types of damage: physical or mental harm; lost chances (like jobs, education, and social benefits); material losses and lost income; moral harm; and expenses for legal, medical, and psychological help (UN, 2006).

Beyond these technical definitions, the framework incorporates concepts that illuminate the profound and enduring harms of colonialism. "Othering," as theorized by Spivak, highlights the discursive practices through which colonized peoples are deemed inferior to European colonizers (1985). Fanon further elaborates on the deep psychological and identity wounds inflicted by colonization, leading to internalized inferiority and intergenerational trauma (1956, 1961). Lugones introduces "epistemic violence," emphasizing how the denial of marginalized peoples' knowledge, voices, and realities constitutes a significant form of trauma (2003). This is closely linked to ethnocide—the cultural destruction of non-colonial societies—a term used by Indigenous activists since the 1960s and defined internationally as a violation of international law as closely linked to genocide (UNESCO, 1982, as cited in Heiskanen, 2021).

To analyze contemporary manifestations of suffering and damage, the concepts of neocolonialism and coloniality are employed. Neocolonialism refers to the persistent exploitation by global powers, including multinational corporations and institutions, that perpetuates colonial forms of control (Henriksen, Hydle and Kramvig, 2019). Quijano's concept of coloniality describes the enduring power structures, rooted in racial classification and the devaluation of certain bodies and ways of knowing, that continue to shape contemporary societies (1992). This framework posits that the possibility of gaining power through adopting the dominant culture incentivizes assimilation. Together, these concepts will guide the analysis of research findings relating to colonial damage.

This is complemented by Arthuro Escobar's work on ontology and ontological conflict (2018): Ontology is how we understand existence, reality, and the relationships between what is real and what is not. Escobar describes how colonialism triggered a massive ontological conflict between Western ontologies of separation, domination, and exploitation and Indigenous ontologies that were often more relational (Escobar, 2018).

Healing

Healing, within Indigenous contexts, is deeply rooted in traditions that emphasize the interconnectedness of land, community, and spirituality (Struther & Eschiti, 2004; Yeh et al., 2004, as cited in Smith et al., 2021). Indigenous Peoples have long practiced holistic healing aimed at restoring balance within systems, but colonialism systematically suppressed these practices as part of assimilationist policies. In settler-colonial states, healing entered public discourse as a framework for addressing both collective and individual trauma resulting from ongoing colonial harms (Archibald, 2006; DeGagne, 2007, as cited in Smith et al., 2021). Phillips describes healing as fundamentally about "therapeutic change and cultural renewal" (Feeney, 2009, as cited in Smith et al., 2021), where personal transformation must be accompanied by collective efforts toward social, cultural, and spiritual revitalization.

This aligns with the understanding of healing as inherently tied to reconciliation and restorative justice (Henriksen et al., 2021). It involves addressing historical injustices and structural colonial violence, linking personal healing with broader social justice. The framework emphasizes acknowledging grief,

loss, and anger through storytelling and mourning, followed by rehabilitation, welfare measures, and reparative compensation as key steps toward healing (Henriksen et al., 2021). Healing, therefore, transcends the individual to include cultural and collective dimensions, fostering social transformation and democracy. Central to this process is care, which sustains social bonds and nurtures communal relationships. Ultimately, healing for Indigenous Peoples requires reclaiming cultural sovereignty, restoring relationships, and pursuing structural change, making it both a personal and societal journey toward resilience and justice.

According to Miranda Field, Indigenous perspectives of Healing contrast the Western focus on pathology with a focus on relationships: “relationships with self, relationships with community, relationships with the more-than-human, and relationships with the land” (2022). Indigenous healing is described as a holistic endeavor, combining the healing of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects, often through ceremony and traditional medicine (Field, 2022). The land is considered a crucial starting point and guide in the healing process, while it is acknowledged that many Indigenous peoples do not distinguish sharply between themselves and their environment, and the historical and ongoing harm lies both in human experiences and in the suffering of the land (Field, 2022). Healing is pursued through a strength-based approach, highlighting “connections to self, community, more-than-human, and land” (Field, 2022).

Cara Page and Erica Woodland further frame "healing justice" as a political strategy and a community-led response to interrupt, transform, and intervene on individual and collective trauma. They present it as an emergent process designed to address historical and current trauma, grief, crisis, and violence, while also being a spiritual framework that remembers lineages and models of integrative and holistic care rooted in ancestral traditions of resiliency and survival (2023).

Reparatory Justice

The concept of reparatory justice is central to this research, serving as the overarching purpose against which the Forest of Healing project will be evaluated. This framework examines reparatory justice through international legal perspectives and the critical distinction between transitional and transformative justice.

Under international human rights law, reparations are recognized as a victim's right, encompassing five key aspects: restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition (United Nations, 2006). This global legal framework is primarily associated with transitional justice. Scholars compare the critical difference between transitional justice and transformative justice. Transitional justice refers to top-down reparation efforts that, according to Immler, often lack sufficient understanding or monitoring of their effects (2021). In the Dutch context, this includes the establishment of historical commissions, official apologies for colonial wrongs, commemorative practices, and educational programs aimed at acknowledging past injustices. Critics contend that such reparations often reinforce colonial structures and offer superficial measures that fail to achieve genuine repair, which is considered impossible within existing capitalist and colonial systems (Huard & Moser, 2022). According to some scholars, it is impossible to repair the crimes of colonialism, as their loss is incalculable (Harney and Schinkel, 2021). This critical discussion highlights a broader shift toward transformative justice, which moves beyond symbolic gestures to address deep-seated structural inequalities rooted in colonial history. This approach views reparations as a "catalytic device" for transformation, contingent on victims organizing effectively and state actions addressing structural reforms.

Stanford-Xosei proposes a holistic approach to reparations that includes social, political, psychological, and cultural dimensions (2019). She distinguishes between external reparations, focusing on state-led

actions, and internal reparations, centering on self-repair within communities. Self-repair is deemed crucial for individuals and communities to regain dignity, agency, and well-being, thereby enabling them to demand external reparations. Stanford-Xosei argues that reparations extend beyond material compensation to include what she calls “cognitive justice”, challenging the hegemony of European knowledge and rebuilding relationships (2019).

To reach research conclusions, the Forest of Healing will be analyzed as to how it contributes to the different types of reparatory justice.

Indigenous lens

The term "Indigenous" in this research is explicitly political, referring to peoples with a historical continuity to pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies who retain distinct social, economic, cultural, and political institutions and are currently a non-dominant part of society. It is not a generic term for originating from a place but defines a positionality in opposition to the colonizer. This aligns with definitions from the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations.

Dr. Kim TallBear (2021) further emphasizes the political nature of "Indigenous," noting its challenge to the "assimilative state" and highlighting deep connections to ancestors and land through co-constitution. This connection is not solely based on DNA, as genomics has historically been used as a colonial tool to reduce Indigenous peoples to a "biological or population-based category" and reinforce the "expectation of inevitable disappearance". Terminology is contextual and depends on who is speaking, so informants' preferred framings will be respected. When specific Indigenous groups are known (e.g., Mapuche, Guaraní, Yanomami), their names will be used to avoid generalization. While there is one participant in this research that disagrees with the term “Indigenous”, arguing that it is a colonial term ascribed to native people, undermining their right of self-determination and self-identification, Smith outlines that the term “Indigenous peoples” actually emerged out of struggles of the American Indian Movement and the Canadian Indian Brotherhood (1999). Activists strongly advocate the use of the "s" in "peoples" to acknowledge distinct differences among groups (Smith, 1999). This term has strategically empowered colonized communities globally to unite, share experiences, and collectively struggle for self-determination against colonizing societies that continue to impact their lives, representing the ongoing work of decolonization (Smith, 1999).

Capitalizing "Indigenous" is essential for acknowledging Indigenous peoples as distinct, collective identities, which has historically been denied (Geuzebroek, 2021; Weber, 2020). The lowercase "Indigenous" often reduces these groups to biological categories, erasing their humanity and connection to land. Capitalizing the term emphasizes that Indigenous peoples are active, politically engaged survivors and helps fight colonial erasure. Additionally, the term "Indigenous" serves as a unifying identity for various groups facing systemic harm while also respecting specific tribal identities.

Methodology

This methodology section is based on Baarda’s “Research. This is it!” (2014), commonly referred to in Van Hall Larenstein.

Research Design

The research design outlines the strategy and approach of the research while maintaining a close connection to the research questions.

To achieve the research objective and answer the research questions, this study employs a qualitative design with an exploratory focus. This design was chosen because there is currently little known about the topic of research, and an initial study that explores the ideas and perspectives of the Indigenous stakeholders on the project is needed. For that, mixed qualitative methods are chosen, such as desk study, interviews, a short qualitative survey, and a focus group. The Indigenous Stakeholders serve as the units of analysis, which may include both organizations and individuals. The research is essentially done about them, and they are the ones to whom the results will apply. All units of analysis together build the population. The population is thus the sum of all Indigenous stakeholders in the Forest of Healing project.

The population includes Indigenous stakeholders from the Netherlands as well as from the frontlines in Abya Yala. The samples to include in each different part of the field research, namely the interviews, the survey, and the focus group session, have been selected together with the IKC-Int and Aralez, based on their professional experience and their knowledge about whose perspectives would be most meaningful to solving the research problem. While a concrete list of interviewees and focus group participants is set up with the project initiator and the research commissioner, potential real-world limitations in achieving the ideal sample size and diversity are acknowledged. Challenges that might occur during the process, as well as their implications for the research, will be discussed between the researcher and the research commissioner. While the interviews focus more specifically on gathering perspectives key to the IKC-Int and Aralez, the survey has a more open character and aims at gathering insights from as many Indigenous people in the Netherlands as possible. Occasional observation moments complement these research methods, collecting them as field notes. The combination of these diverse research methods allows for extensive triangulation of research findings.

Data Collection

The present thesis project uses different methods for data collection, consisting of a desk study, semi-structured interviews, a survey, and a focus group. They will each be explained comprehensively so that the methods could be repeated by someone else.

Desk study

The desk study has collected literature from various sources and methods. The search engines used include Google Scholar, BASE (Bielefeld Academic Search Engine) from Germany, and SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library Online) from Brazil. The engines were searched for entries on the following searches: “reparations Indigenous Dutch”, “reparation Indigenous”, “reparational healing Indigenous”, “land back Indigenous”, “Indigenous diaspora Netherlands” in English and “luchas indigenas por la tierra” “reparación histórica” and “reparación decolonial” in Spanish and “luta indígena pela terra”, “reparação histórica”, “reparação decolonial”, “demarcação de terra” in Portuguese.

Interesting articles and books were sorted out by reading their abstracts. Special interest is given to pieces written by Indigenous scholars from Abya Yala. Further articles were chosen through references in the articles that were read. Next to that, several literary and media resources were acquired by the thesis supervisor, Chihiro Geuzebroek, through pieces she sent privately, as well as a list of resources she collected as part of the "Indigenous Dreams" portrait project to give readers more background knowledge on the topics discussed. The references used for this research proposal mostly derive from the English searches in the search engines, and while including Indigenous perspectives, mainly those from Turtle Island (USA), a broader set of perspectives deriving from scholars from the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking part of Abya Yala (the Americas) will be incorporated in the research to contextualize and analyze the findings. The terms Abya Yala and Turtle Island are used as the names of

the territories given by Indigenous people instead of the terms established through colonialism. This is in line with the decolonial research approach employed by the researcher, as explained below.

Articles and books for this part of the study will be limited to those freely accessible online next to those of the private library of the researcher, as they do not have access to subscription-based academic materials through their educational institute, Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences. This limitation excludes certain readings, particularly those behind paywalls, a byproduct of the capitalist nature of academic publishing.

Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the Indigenous stakeholders of the Forest of Healing project to obtain in-depth insights. The aim is to conduct a total of ten interviews, of which two will focus on providing background information on the FoH by engaging with organizations that are involved, namely the "Knowledge Centre For Immaterial Heritage" (in Dutch "Kenniscentrum Inmaterieel Erfgoed Nederland", short KIEN) and the Museum Naturalis. These are the only two interviews to be done with non-Indigenous stakeholders. They contribute to the background research about the Forest of Healing and not specifically to answering the research questions from Indigenous perspectives. This is done to level out the lack of written public information about the project, which does not exist yet because organizations (like the ones to be interviewed) are currently working on publications about the FoH. The researcher cannot afford to wait for those publications; instead, primary data from interviews with these organizations will be acquired.

The remaining eight interviews aim to include four online interviews with Indigenous stakeholders from the frontlines in Abya Yala and four interviews with Indigenous stakeholders in the Netherlands. The latter are chosen based on their involvement with the IKC-Int, their previous experience with Indigenous knowledge centers, and their involvement in Indigenous history and education. Not all chosen interviewees have experience in all fields mentioned, but together they build a balanced sample. The Indigenous stakeholders from Abya Yala, on the other hand, are selected based on their existing connection to the IKC-Int and Aralez, their involvement in Land Back and reparatory justice struggles, as well as their interest in international collaboration and advocacy. Most come from countries that have a shared colonial history with the Netherlands, which highlights their stake in the project.

These interviews will follow a pre-designed set of open-ended questions but allow flexibility for follow-up questions based on the respondents' answers. This setup aims for an informal conversation, allowing the respondents to share their perspectives openly. The interviews will be conducted in person whenever possible for interviewees based in the Netherlands and via video conferencing tools, like Microsoft Teams, for the interviewees based abroad. The researcher will have a short phone call with the interviewee beforehand, when possible, to introduce themselves and their project, explain the process, foster a more balanced relationship, and encourage the interviewees to ask questions. A form concerning the usage of the data will be sent to the respondents beforehand to ensure FPIC (free, prior, and informed consent), and it should be signed by respondents physically or digitally before the interview takes place. This form is developed by the IKC-Int and reviewed and possibly edited by the researcher and the commissioner. Interviews will be audio-recorded and will last approximately 45–60 minutes and not longer than 90 minutes. Interviews will be held in English whenever the interviewee is confident with that language. The researcher, fluent in Dutch, Spanish, or Portuguese, will conduct the interview in the respondent's preferred language. The transcripts will subsequently be translated to English for the data analysis.

Survey

The researcher will prepare an online survey through a safe online survey platform, which will be spread in networks of Indigenous people in the Netherlands and abroad and shared with all contacts of Indigenous people in the Netherlands and abroad available to the project initiator, the commissioner, and the researcher. The survey will gather more insights on the topics of interest from broader perspectives, including people that are not organized and don't have any connection to the commissioner or the project initiator. Dissenting voices will also be included in this format, referring to those from the Indigenous community in the Netherlands with whom the commissioner and project initiator had disagreements about the movement and the FoH project. This is thought of as a step towards reapproaching each other and possibly also contributes to healing inside the community.

The survey will be offered in English, Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese to enable respondents to respond in the language they are most comfortable in. The researcher will subsequently translate non-English results to facilitate data analysis. The aim of the survey is to be accessible and low-effort, with the goal of gathering as many responses as possible, specifically aiming for a total of 40. The survey will consist of one closed question, one short answer question, and three to four long answer questions. The close question will ensure strictly Indigenous participation, while the short answer question will gather information about the different Indigenous peoples the respondents are part of. The three to four open questions will deal with the sub-research questions and give room for extra remarks.

The information gained will also help the researcher prepare for the focus group session and introduce people to the topics that will be further discussed in the group. After the survey, the focus group is presented as the next step, and respondents can sign up to join. This will be done through a separate link so that no contact details can be linked to responses. It will be explained that participation in the focus group cannot be guaranteed, as a balanced sample with participants from all different areas is pursued.

Focus Group

The researcher will also conduct one focus group session. The focus group is aimed to consist of 8-10 participants and will be used to gather collective insights on key issues. The focus group selects participants based on diversity, targeting individuals from Abya Yala, Asia, Oceania, and Africa. They are chosen in consultation with the commissioner and the project initiator. Some proposals from specific people come directly from them; others come from the researcher, and others are expected to be found through the survey. The answers on the form to sign up for the focus group will then be reviewed by the researcher and the commissioner, to bring together a diverse sample. It is appreciated if participants that come from a collective send one representative for their group. However, according to the commissioner, people in the Indigenous community in the Netherlands have had negative experiences with being spoken for and, in consequence, prefer to speak only for themselves. Therefore, most participants will be individuals, representing only their own personal view.

The specific topics for the focus group will be chosen based on early results from the interviews and the survey and may include questions that had mixed answers in earlier research, as well as issues that need more detailed investigation. In the focus group setting, the researcher takes on the role of a moderator to facilitate discussions, using a guide with open-ended questions to encourage participants to share their perspectives. The session will last approximately 90 minutes and will be audio-recorded for transcription. Field notes will capture group dynamics, non-verbal cues, and other contextual information. If consented, photographs or short video clips will be taken to document the group setting.

Observation

The researcher will engage in observation and take field notes in several different situations. This is an addition to other research methods and will assist the researcher in monitoring their learning process. Notes will be taken during the focus group, as mentioned. Furthermore, other insights from conversations with people in the field that happen outside the interviews will be noted down by the researcher when possible. During the time of the study, the researcher will also attend various events taking place in the Netherlands that are related to the topic of research, like a guest lecture from a West Papuan activist at the University of Utrecht in February or a learning session on Decolonial Education in February, as well as the Reparations conference of Aralez in April. Events like these will help the researcher get additional insights into the field of research through a more experience-based learning compared to the desk study. Attending events by Indigenous people in the Netherlands will also contribute to the networking of the researcher and offer opportunities to get in contact with more Indigenous people in the Netherlands that could participate in the survey, as well as the focus group. These experiences and the corresponding notes will contribute to triangulating the findings of the research, as well as to building relationships with the community. Attending events by members of the Indigenous community in the Netherlands is also a way for the researcher to practice their commitment to Indigenous methodologies and decolonization by showing up to the struggle, as explained by Smith:

> "Showing your face, turning up at important cultural events, cements your membership within a community in an ongoing way and is part of how one's credibility is continually developed and maintained" (1999).

Data Processing

This section details the data processing techniques designed to ensure the rigor and reliability of the qualitative findings. All collected qualitative data will undergo an initial review to confirm accuracy and completeness. Any gaps or ambiguities will be resolved through follow-up communications, and preliminary notes will be made to facilitate subsequent analysis. Qualitative data, including interview transcripts and field notes, will be organized and stored systematically in QUIRKOS. This software will enable structured data management, allowing for efficient categorization and retrieval during analysis. It is chosen due to its appealing visual and intuitive organization, aiding the researcher in coding the results effectively. Data will be processed by coding responses into meaningful themes, guided by both deductive and inductive approaches. Codes will be developed based on the research questions and the conceptual framework, as well as emerging patterns within the data. This thematic coding approach ensures that the nuances of the qualitative data are captured. Thematic analysis will be conducted to identify recurring patterns, themes, and insights relevant to the research questions. Coding will evolve iteratively, allowing for refined categorization and deeper insights as patterns emerge across datasets.

Decolonial Approach

As this research works with Indigenous people and in the realm of decolonization, attention must be drawn to the peculiarities of this endeavor. Academia has played a central role in colonization and has been a driver as well as a tool to objectify and dehumanize Indigenous peoples (Uitermark, 2021). The researcher needs to be conscious of how the legacies of imperialism and colonialism play into previous and their own research practices. This research aims at challenging the 'Othering' of Indigenous peoples and holding space for Indigenous perspectives through focusing as much as possible on secondary data from Indigenous scholars and obtaining primary data from Indigenous respondents.

This research also aims at implementing the four R's of Indigenous research. Chilisa and Drugge (2020; 2016 as cited in Uitermark, 2021) introduce the four R's of Indigenous research—respect, reciprocity, relationality, and responsibility—as key principles for ethical and meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities. Respect involves listening to participants' stories and knowledge systems while highlighting their resilience instead of focusing solely on loss or cultural decline. Reciprocity means giving back, ensuring the community benefits from the research by sharing knowledge in ways that matter to them. Relationality emphasizes building real, lasting connections with participants, not just treating them as research subjects. Responsibility calls for following ethical guidelines, such as ensuring FPIC (free, prior, and informed consent), protecting privacy, and giving credit where due. For this purpose, a form will be set up, which respondents sign before giving an interview. Through this, they agree to share information with the researcher; however, their knowledge does not become the researcher's property. They rather give permission to the researcher to reproduce it, always maintaining the right to withdraw their consent. These principles help shift research away from a one-sided, extractive process to a collaborative and empowering approach that honors Indigenous perspectives and agency.

According to Chilisa (2020, as cited in Uitermark, 2021), researchers hold significant power in framing and describing Indigenous realities, often based on their own perspectives. Smith (2020, as cited in Uitermark 2021) highlights that history is tied to power, challenging its portrayal as neutral while noting that it has traditionally excluded the voices of marginalized groups. When Indigenous experiences have been included, they have frequently been misrepresented. Decolonization, therefore, involves both deconstructing dominant narratives and reconstructing more inclusive ones (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012, as cited in Uitermark, 2021). This thesis aims to contribute to this process by focusing on Indigenous realities and perspectives on the proposed research questions.

Aligned with Smith's focus on knowledge sharing instead of information sharing (1999), the researcher aims to not only share the final research report with the commissioner, project initiator, and broader community of Indigenous people in the Netherlands (and possibly at the frontlines), but also to share further knowledge they gained by engaging in this research: This includes an ordered list of academic sources found for this research (used and not used), as well as a folder with all the ones found online. It will also summarize the Indigenous contacts reached out to for the research, with feedback on how the different actors reacted.

As mentioned in this research proposal, the researcher tries to incorporate Indigenous terminology and theories. However, as the researcher's education has taken place in the colonial country of the Netherlands, their knowledge, frameworks, and theories are also mostly based on Western knowledge. This must be acknowledged as a material reality and stress the importance of the decolonial endeavor of this research, but also the challenge that it represents.

Results

The researcher was able to conduct a total of eight interviews, of which five were with members of the Indigenous diaspora in the Netherlands, two with Indigenous people from the frontlines, and one with a non-Indigenous person from an organization that is in some way connected to the Forest of Healing. Getting a balanced group of interviewees, as planned in the methodology, was difficult, so this sample size and mix was the best that could be done given the situation; this limitation is discussed in detail in the findings section.

The research is designed to incorporate the diverse perspectives of both Indigenous peoples from the frontlines and those in the diaspora to ensure a broad and inclusive understanding. It does not,

however, primarily focus on a comparative analysis between these two groups; rather, differences in their viewpoints are only pointed out specifically when particularly significant to the findings.

Furthermore, a focus group was conducted with three participants from the Indigenous diaspora in the Netherlands. The survey reached a total of 49 responses, of which 28 are incomplete. Of the remaining 21, 14 did not identify as Indigenous, leaving the researcher with seven usable answers. In total, this result section thus presents the statements of 14 Indigenous stakeholders.

Logically, the amount of information gathered differs for the methods of data collection: While the interviews provided the researcher with in-depth perspectives between one hour and 90 minutes per interviewee, the focus group took roughly two hours, in which three people shared their insights. Lastly, the survey responses range from a total of less than 100 words to a total of almost 1000 words. This variety in the number of contributions is reflected in the responses and quotes, leading to some research participants being cited more than others in the results chapter.

The results are presented by sub-research questions, followed by a reflection of the results.

Colonial Damage

Introduction

This chapter dives into the perceptions and experiences of colonial damage among Indigenous stakeholders, both in the Netherlands and abroad, to eventually reach conclusions about how the Forest of Healing may contribute to reparatory justice. The chapter gives the results to the sub-research question, “What, according to the Indigenous stakeholders, is the colonial damage they experience in their Dutch context, for which reparatory justice is needed?”. It is the colonial damage that the respondents experience that informs the need for Healing and reparatory justice and ultimately the Forest of Healing, which all in turn address the colonial damage.

While the research question focuses on damage within the Dutch context, interviewees, survey respondents, and focus group participants understood this in multiple, interconnected ways, speaking about damage in different geographies and times in history. Their perception of damage included:

- experiences within the Netherlands (present);
- legacies inherited from Dutch colonies (past), which continue to affect former Dutch colonies (present) and may also resonate with experiences in specific other colonies (past);
- and as part of a global colonial system (past) that has transitioned into a global neo-colonial system (present), in which the Netherlands continues to participate.

The presentation of the findings employs a broad temporal filter, differentiating mainly between present and past colonial damage. While finer distinctions could show continuity or shifts, they risk fragmenting the lived experience of cumulative and relational harm. Indeed, respondents’ accounts of damage often lack precise linear-historical anchors, being articulated more thematically or emotionally.

The forms of damage will be presented in four categories, referring to the geographical-historical reference when relevant. Those are ontological damage, structural & historical damage, cultural damage, and Psychological Damage. It is noted that ontological damage influences structural damage, while this influences cultural damage. Cultural damage has a direct impact on personal forms of damage. While covering all four categories of damage, respondents spoke mostly to cultural as well as structural damage. Consequently, the results will be presented in order of the frequency with which each category was cited, beginning with cultural, followed by Structural, then psychological, and lastly ontological. Subcategories are presented in the same manner, starting with those most cited and finishing with those least cited.

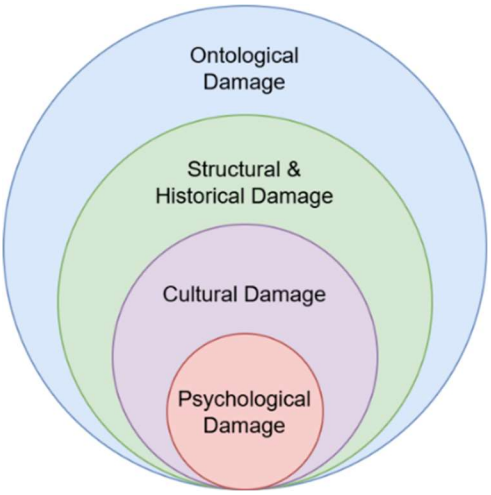

Figure 2: Forms of damage in order (original visualization)

Cultural Damage

Half of all collected quotes deal with cultural damage, and all interviewees and focus group participants refer to cultural damage, as well as almost half of the survey respondents. The most present forms of cultural damage observed by the participants of this research are invisibility, Othering & internalized inferiority, assimilation, and erasure of culture and language.

Invisibility

The cultural damage mentioned by most respondents, with most quotes attributed to it, is invisibility. Interviewees felt actively "made invisible" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025), which is echoed by a survey respondent who claims to be existing only in “the margins of awareness” (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025), as well as a focus group participant who experienced his existence as not counted relevant (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). When talking about invisibility, respondents are oftentimes referring to their present-day Dutch reality or otherwise broadening their scope to the present-day global neo-colonial system, as evident in the statement by one respondent claiming that indigeneity is essentially about being "placeless," unrepresented globally, and, for many, being forced to hide their identity (2025, Interview). This invisibility is seen as a form of racism, hindering land claims by denying current existence.

Sofia observes a lack of visibility in popular culture (Sofia, Interview, 2025)[1], which is complemented by the "systemic silencing of Indigenous histories, worldviews, and contributions" noted in the survey (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025). Another critical issue raised by roughly a third of participants in this research is the lack of information, particularly in education in the Netherlands, where Indigenous histories, including slavery and colonial relationships, are neglected (Sofia, Sherlien, and Chihiro, Interview, 2025; Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). This lack of visibility leads to feeling unseen, as

[1] Sofia is from the Arawak people and was born and raised on Turtle Island (USA). She was raised with her heritage and started being an activist for Indigenous rights at a young age. She had been involved in Indigenous student movements on Turtle Island (USA) before she came to the Netherlands to study (Sofia, Interview, 2025). A pseudonym has been chosen randomly for her, as she wishes to remain anonymous.

Sherlien confirms: "From the Indigenous side, I find that I don't exist. And that I am not seen and not being recognized. And that is difficult; that is very difficult." (Interview, 2025)[2].

Considering invisibility, one participant in the focus group and one interviewee also shed light on the extraction of Indigenous knowledge for personal profit and the lack of credit the Indigenous people often receive for the work. Dwayne questions the trend of popularization of Indigenous knowledge in discourses on regeneration in the West and points out its extractive nature, arguing that the goal is "to make sure that we can… do better on this side of the world" (Focus group, 2025)[3]. Sherlien adds a reference about her Indigenous nephew, who does not value his traditional knowledge, while a person from the Netherlands could go talk to him and then "get a PhD here" (Interview, 2025).

Dehumanization & Internalized Inferiority

The last example relates highly to another deeply damaging form of experience identified by roughly half of respondents: being labeled inferior, even denied human dignity, and internalized inferiority. As respondents oftentimes link them directly, they are presented together, drawing on insights from various geographical-historical contexts, linking experiences from past global colonialism and the present neo-colonial system, former Dutch colonies, and current experiences in the Netherlands.

Several interviewees described being historically ascribed derogatory terms such as "exotic", "primitive", "uncultured", "savage", and "underdeveloped" (Richard, Sherlien, and Jupta, Interview, 2025) and experiencing historical and ongoing discrimination. Respondents described the profound impact of this process. One diaspora interviewee explained the resulting internalized feeling and fear:

> "For an entire generation, they slowly started feeling inferior about the identity... So, there was a fear of being put in a certain space where, you know, we would be marginalized, we would be sidelined." (Richard, Interview, 2025)

This internalization is described as the "biggest impact... in terms of how individuals have come to see themselves as not being equal" (Richard, Interview, 2025). This also sidelines Indigenous epistemologies, setting them as 'primitive' (Richard, Interview, 2025), and contributes to profound cultural and spiritual loss, including the "demonization" of spiritualities and outlawing of ceremonies (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025).

Erasure of Culture and Language - Ethnocide

Highly connected to all the above is the erasure of culture and language, which is frequently described by participants in the research, mostly referring to the present-day global neo-colonial system as well as to former Dutch colonies in the past and present. When specifically talking about the loss of language, some interviewees also share experiences from colonies that were not part of the Dutch kingdom; however, they share the same patterns and are part of the same global system of colonialism.

The erasure of culture is also referred to by an interviewee as ethnocide (Sherlien, Interview, 2025). Sherlien talks about the loss of culture and cultural identity, confirming that when "cultures are

[2] Sherlien Sanches was born in Suriname and grew up in the Netherlands after coming here at 8 months. She is of Karinya descent and is a board member of the Indigenous Knowledge Center International, which she founded. Their goal is to set up the Forest of Healing, hosting the Indigenous Knowledge Center International. She has been working on Indigenous visibility and recognition for years (Sherlien, Interview, 2025).

[3] Dwayne Toemere was born in the Netherlands to a Lokono mother and a Kalinya father. He grew up with the Indigenous culture at home but only connected to the Indigenous community recently. While he learned to assimilate in society and practice his culture only at home, he is now working more on integrating Indigeneity in his work as a teacher and researcher at the Academy of Theatre and Dance in Amsterdam (Dwayne, Focus Group, 2025).

murdered, you also murder an identity. And that's how you murder an entire people" (Interview, 2025). She views this not as a finished process, but as "going on now" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025).

The frontline Indigenous person Jupta vividly tells the story of US American missionaries doing an "innocent colonization", as she calls it, in her grandparents' village in Suriname in the 70s (Interview, 2025)[4]. They came to the village with medicine during a time when many people were sick due to diseases that "Dutch adventurers," who were mapping the area, brought. The missionaries told the villagers that God saved them and that they had to "believe in Jesus ... give your life to Jesus" (Jupta, Interview, 2025) to survive. Jupta explains how the Indigenous people did what they were told, with the horrors of the disease in mind (Interview, 2025). With the introduction of a bible school, the missionaries persuaded the Indigenous people to adapt more and more to the missionaries' customs:

> "She said every time we would go there, the teacher would tell us, 'Maybe tomorrow or later, don't come with a painted head because you're dirtying the Bible pages.' And because they felt so sorry that they did that, the next day, they wouldn't paint themselves... When the students stopped painting themselves, the teacher would say, 'Maybe next time you should cover up a bit because we don't want to see your breast…' It looks innocent. A lot of things that we were doing, of who we are, of how we were, were taken away from us." (Jupta, Interview, 2025)

Jupta (Interview, 2025) assures that later in her life her grandmother regretted complying with the missionaries, but that back then she did not understand what they were doing, mentioning that they did not teach their children anymore how to make feather dresses because they did not want to offend the Bible teachers. Her grandmother expressed sadness and a feeling of loss about dressing in a Western way and having lost their unique appearance. Jupta confirms that the church is destroying "some of the cultural aspects that make us strong" (Interview, 2025).

The illegalization and criminalization of dances and medicinal plants is another means of erasing Indigenous culture, mentioned by Chihiro (Interview, 2025)[5]. Survey respondents add how "[their] spiritualities were demonized, [their] ceremonies outlawed, and [their] ways of healing replaced by Western frameworks" and how they lost "knowledges, …relations to the living territories, …dreaming, …community" (Respondent 3, Respondent 6, Survey, 2025).

The loss of language is part of ethnocide, as language is both a carrier of culture and an integral part of it. This proved to be a common theme for interviewees, focus group participants, and survey respondents alike. Interviewees talk about stories of their Indigenous languages being forbidden and suppressed during colonial times (Jupta, Interview, 2025; Respondent 3, Survey, 2025). Next to direct prohibition of languages, several interviewees also mention more indirect factors that contribute to the loss of language, such as discrimination resulting from speaking the language (Richard, Chihiro, Interview, 2025):

> "There's a reason … why my parents thought that it's OK not to know … about one's language even because … this had become by then very much a marker to discriminate people … to very much sideline people." (Richard, Interview, 2025)

[4] Jupta Lilian Itoewaki is from the Wayana Indigenous people in Suriname. She worked as a translator for her people since she was 16 years old. She commits her life to giving back to her community and studied in Paramaribo. She received training by the UN on human rights and indigenous rights as the first Wayana person ever. She started her own organization in Suriname, representing Wayana people and their interests (Jupta, Interview, 2025).

[5] Chihiro Geuzebroek is a founding member of the decolonial grassroots organization Aralez. She is a Dutch person with Dutch-Bolivian parents and Quechua ancestry. While she says that she is not representing any people, her heritage made her feel the urge to reconnect to her Indigeneity and fight for Indigenous liberation (Chihiro, Interview, 2025).

One interviewee adds that colonialism rendered Indigenous languages non-economic, meaning that it is oftentimes impossible to find work in those languages, which leads to people not learning them, even if formal prohibition ended (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). Several participants in the research express sadness and regret about not being able to speak their own Indigenous language and express their wish to learn it and pass it on to new generations (Chihiro, Sherlien, Interview, 2025; Dwayne, Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025).

Assimilation

While previous sections deal with direct or indirect pressures making Indigenous people adapt to the colonizers' way of life, a few interviewees and focus group participants also mention the direct efforts of Indigenous people to assimilate to the mainstream culture. The stories shared include experiences from their current lives in the Netherlands, the stories of their parents in former colonies or current settler-colonial states, as well as the global neo-colonial system. Two interviewees, one focus group participant, and one survey respondent share stories of how their parents or grandparents would try to assimilate and adapt to the mainstream culture as much as possible, often with the intent to protect their children from discrimination. (Chihiro, Richard, Interview 2025; Dwayne, Focus Group, 2025; Respondent 7, Survey, 2025). Another apparent driver for assimilation is the striving for "a better future" (Dwayne, Focus Group, 2025).

Structural & Historical Damage

All interviewees mention some form of structural and material damage, and it is frequently mentioned by survey respondents. Respondents and interviewees talked about historical colonial crimes linked to early periods of colonialism, as well as continued colonial power structures. The form of structural damage talked about by most research participants is continued colonial power structures. This is complemented by insights into the present colonial land dispossession mentioned by most respondents. However, the historical colonial crimes are mentioned less frequently than the other two categories. A few interviewees also refer to the rootedness of coloniality today.

Continued colonial power structures

Interviewees and survey respondents widely perceive a pervasive global neocolonial system, with specific links to the Netherlands, that extends historical colonial dynamics into the present. Richard elucidates this by highlighting how the "carbon footprint is very much outsourced to other countries in the global South," maintaining low wages to ensure "cheaply available commodity" production, largely for global North consumers (Interview, 2025)[6]. Chihiro further details how a massive workforce outside the Netherlands effectively "works for the Dutch economy," perpetuating a "very hierarchical" power dynamic (Interview, 2025). This global economic scaffolding, rooted in colonial extraction, is said to underpin a system where the rights of Indigenous peoples are often disregarded. An interviewee from the frontlines describes how international verdicts supporting Indigenous communities are "simply ignore[d]" by governments (Jupta, Interview, 2025), while an interviewee from the diaspora speaks of the "doctrine of discovery," the idea that the Americas were discovered, as an ongoing basis for denying fundamental human rights to Indigenous peoples, deeming current governments as "occupiers" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025).

A diaspora interviewee calls out enduring power imbalance in the control of knowledge and heritage in the context of the United States with the account of Indigenous human remains being unearthed for

[6] Richard Toppo is from the Oraon, Kurukh people in eastern India. He came to the Netherlands in 2016 to do his PhD and is now researching at the University of Antwerp, focusing on Indigenous rights movements in India. He grew up not knowing about his Indigenous roots, as his parents tried to protect him from discrimination. At the age of 14, he got in contact with Indigenous rights movements and has been involved in the struggle ever since (Richard, Interview, 2025).

anthropology students while the originating community was denied access (Sofia, Interview, 2025). Another diaspora interviewee furthermore notes how Indigenous people have been historically excluded from decision-making processes (Chihiro, Interview, 2025).

Present colonial land dispossession

Directly resulting from these continued colonial power structures, present-day land dispossession is noted as a critical issue for Indigenous communities globally. Sherlien recounts how "Indigenous rights are still being violated today" in Suriname, with communities "losing more and more land... to large sellers of pieces of forests" (Interview, 2025). Those who defend their ancestral lands are "undermined and arrested" and "considered criminals and put in prison" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025). One diaspora interviewee describes how "mining giants coming to Indigenous landscapes... just taking over the land, just going about with resource extraction as if... the Indigenous lives do not matter, as if their beliefs do not matter" is a direct manifestation of the idea "that certain people are just not equal" (Richard, Interview, 2025). Another interviewee further illustrates this with examples from "blood coal" in Colombia, connecting European consumption to direct land and life destruction (Interview, 2025). Beyond resource extraction, land is also dispossessed for "windmill park[s]," "palm oil plantation[s]," or even "nature conservation pushing Indigenous people off the land" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). The profound impact of this continued dispossession is captured by a diaspora research participant's lament that for many, "There is no land to go back to" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025), creating a reality where "becoming a placeless people is what indigeneity is kind of about" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). These ongoing acts, ranging from violent seizure to systematic legal exclusion, constitute a humanitarian disaster, directly violating the rights and very existence of Indigenous communities.

Historical colonial crimes

Interviewees and survey respondents consistently highlighted the profound impact of historical colonial crimes, emphasizing stories of suffering from their ancestors within former Dutch colonies and across the global colonial system. Participants used terms such as "occupation," "total imprisonment," "no freedom," "slavery," "captivity," and "theft" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025; Sherlien, Interview, 2025; Respondent 2, Survey, 2025). Sherlien underscored the immense scale of this devastation, arguing that the Indigenous peoples were victims of the "largest genocide of all... committed" (Interview, 2025). This systematic oppression led to Indigenous people being "deprived of any of the rights" (Richard, Interview, 2025) and resulted in "disruption and damage of [their] food systems" (Respondent 5, Survey, 2025).

The historical record reveals particularly brutal practices that defined the colonial era. A diaspora interviewee, who does public presentations about the colonization of Indigenous people in the Americas, details how Indigenous peoples in the Americas were the first to be enslaved, enduring mass deaths from "diseases and slavery" before the transatlantic slave trade began (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025). This "red slavery," involving the enslavement of Indigenous communities, was notably employed by the Dutch in Suriname (Sherlien, Interview, 2025) and brutally implemented in mines like Potosí, Bolivia, where Chihiro estimates "eight million people died" under such conditions (Interview, 2025).

The role of institutions, such as the Catholic Church, in "grabbing those raw materials" and deploying its "own army" was also noted by two interviewees (Cameahwait, Jupta, Interview, 2025), with Cameahwait sharing the personal trauma of his mother being "kidnapped... and sold to the church" from a reservation camp, which he asserts are "actually concentration camps" (Interview, 2025)[7]. This

[7] Cameahwait, a member of the Shoshone and Lakota tribes, lived in the Netherlands for most of his life. He grew up being told to stay silent about his Indigenous roots. He used to work at the police but left as he turned sick from post-traumatic

link is further emphasized by an interviewee from Turtle Island (USA), who explains how the treatment of Native Americans, including reservations, inspired Hitler's plans (Interview, 2025), highlighting a direct connection between historical colonial violence and later genocidal regimes.

Psychological Damage

More than half of the interviewees and focus group participants bring up damage on a personal or psychological level, complemented by one survey response. All insights on psychological damage shared are concerning the present while dealing with realities encountered in the Netherlands, in former Dutch colonies, as well as in the global neo-colonial system. As the inner circle of the framework through which damage is reviewed, personal damage can be considered a direct consequence of the cultural as well as the structural & historical damage.

Intergenerational Trauma

Several respondents speak to their own suffering, as well as that of other Indigenous people, by understanding that trauma will be passed on through generations. Cameahwait describes his depression during puberty as one originating from intergenerational trauma (Interview, 2025). According to him, Indigenous people deal with intergenerational trauma, just like descendants of victims of the Second World War or the transatlantic slave trade (Cameahwait, 2025). Richard (Interview, 2025) similarly notes how the "epistemic violence" experienced by Indigenous people carries scars, which stay forever. This aligns with Ymyenayare's view, who observes many Indigenous people being "out of balance" due to historical trauma playing out unconsciously (Focus Group, 2025)[8]. A respondent of the survey highlights his challenge to "reclaim a sense of wholeness" after colonization created an "intergenerational disconnect", specifically through the cultural damage discussed before.

Ongoing Discrimination

The ongoing impacts include present-day discrimination experienced by the Indigenous people who were interviewed, surveyed, and invited to participate in the focus group. Two participants mention experiencing direct racist and discriminatory insults (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025; Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025), with one of them specifically recalling such incidents from his childhood (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). An interviewee from Turtle Island (USA) elaborates on the US American tradition of celebrating Thanksgiving, traditionally honoring colonialism and celebrating the Pequot Massacre (Sofia, Interview, 2025). She describes how she gets confronted with her surroundings' celebration of this colonial holiday each year and gets pushed back whenever she speaks up about it, even in the Netherlands, where she observes people celebrating Thanksgiving more and more (Sofia, Interview, 2025). She expresses that each year "it does something to [her]", showing the ongoing impact and discrimination she experiences. She shares having been discriminated against and discredited in academia in the Netherlands for using decolonial frameworks and Indigenous methodologies, which demotivated her to continue to pursue an academic career (Sofia, Interview, 2025).

stress syndrome. After having a vision of Indigenous women approaching him, he started embracing his identity and now gives public presentations on the Indigenous Genocide in the Americas (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025).

[8] Ymyenayare is the son of a Karinya woman and a Dutch man. He grew up in the Netherlands and experienced bullying as a child for being Indigenous. At the age of seventeen, he went to visit his family in Suriname, which impacted him deeply and motivated him to learn the language (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). He chose to be named by his Indigenous name in the research instead of his Dutch name.

Alma[9], a focus group participant, repeatedly points out that he does not identify with the term "Indigenous", as he sees it as a discriminatory term stemming from the colonial term "Indian" (Focus Group, 2025). He sees it as a term attributed to his people by the colonizers and not chosen by them and thus as a sign of continued oppression (Alma, Focus Group, 2025). This position is contrasted with the overwhelming body of literature among Indigenous scholars identifying with the term and using it. Alma's perspectives are considered in the conceptualization of the term Indigenous in the Conceptual Framework of this thesis.

Internal Conflict

A few research participants also shine light on conflict within Indigenous communities. A diaspora research participant shares how those are often centered around identity, about being or not being "native enough", emphasizing the need to "unpack the colonialism behind" them (Sofia, Interview, 2025). Casual conversations with the supervisor of this thesis and the initiator of the Forest of Healing project also shine light on internal conflicts arising from different perspectives on methods and strategies for working on Indigenous Liberation in the Netherlands.

Ontological Damage

While the ontological damage comes up in all interviews inexplicitly, every time that a disruption of different categories of being is noted, some Indigenous stakeholders talk about ontological damage more directly, which is outlined below.

Colonial society

A critique of our contemporary societies as being highly colonial emerges as a critical dimension of colonial harm within participant narratives, particularly emphasized by one interviewee. Interviewees predominantly linked this to the current global system, with specific examples observed in the Netherlands.

A diaspora interviewee from India notes that all colonizing powers operate under "the same colonial structure…, propagat[ing] the same ideas of resource extraction" that are based on the idea that certain bodies are "less human, so that they can be exploited" (Richard, Interview, 2025). Similarly, Cameahwait and Chihiro (Interview, 2025) link colonialism to current capitalism, highlighting how it is based on the dispossession of the commons, grabbing and abuse. Cameahwait adds that "the whole earth is getting destroyed in this way (Interview, 2025), referring to climate change.

A diaspora interviewee argues that our entire society is founded on the idea of coloniality, which asserts that certain people are inherently unequal and that their ways of thinking and living should not be valued (Richard, Interview, 2025). He refers to gender relations, as well as the example of the current genocide in Palestine and the prevailing silence of much of society. According to him, the racial categorization of certain bodies not being recognized as equal "affects everyone's lives." He stresses "how deeply it gets embedded that there were certain distinctions that, over time and in a very gradual way, … informed us." He points out "how Indigenous epistemologies have also been... set to be primitive" and how "certain value systems that were prioritized" led to other "ways of living that were almost demolished" (Richard, Interview, 2025).

[9] Alma Inkary is a Quechua person from what is today called Peru and grew up in his community in the mountains. He advocates for focusing on Indigenous values instead of identity. He has a cultural center, where he hosts spiritual ceremonies for a broad audience, and has been invited to speak at the UN twice (Alma, Focus Group, 2025).

Healing

Introduction

This chapter delves into the multifaceted understandings of healing as articulated by Indigenous stakeholders participating in the research, addressing the second sub-research question: “How do the Indigenous stakeholders understand 'Healing'?”. The research participants’ understanding of healing evolves largely around different forms of reconnection, next to a struggle for recognition and justice.

The Indigenous stakeholders that participated in the research recurrently refer to different forms of reconnection, be it to their Indigenous identity and culture, to the community, or to the land. The focus on reconnection has also been observed in contrast to Western understandings of healing. The second dimension of healing voiced by the participants of the research focuses on struggle, being a struggle for recognition, for representation, and for justice. This is complemented with perspectives on the impossibility of healing, the respondents experience. In line with the previous chapter, results on healing will be presented according to the frequency of their mentioning, starting with the categories most referred to by research participants and finishing with those least mentioned.

Reconnection

The most present theme among Indigenous stakeholders concerning healing is reconnection, exemplified by Respondent 3 stating, “My need for healing lies in reconnecting what was broken: the severed ties between land, language, and lineage” (Survey, 2025). More than half of all quotes related to healing revolve around this. The different forms and focuses of reconnection are described as follows.

Reconnect to Indigenous Identity & Culture

Most interviewees, focus group participants, and survey respondents mention some form of reconnection to their Indigenous identity and culture as healing. Quotes under this category make up a third of all quotes related to healing, making this a central topic for respondents. The participants talk about “reclaiming [their] Indigenous roots” (Sofia, Interview, 2025), “being connected to your culture, recognizing the connection with your ancestors” (Cameahwait, 2025), as well as “reclamation, embodiment” of their Indigenous identity (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025).

Identity Reclamation and Pride:

Many respondents speak to the importance of reclaiming their identity. While the damage chapter explained assimilation as a colonial damage on the cultural sphere, it becomes apparent that the new generation, the people participating in the research, are those that are reclaiming their Indigenous identity again and questioning the assimilation with which they grew up.

For some, this reclamation is a conscious act of pride, as exemplified by Cameahwait, who wears feathers to provoke and demonstrate continued existence, stating, “To show that we are still here” (Interview, 2025). Cameahwait also confirms that contributing to his personal healing involves “being proud of who you are again” (Interview, 2025). This active embracing of identity contrasts with past experiences, where individuals “ticked… all the boxes” to fit in, leading to a disconnect from their culture, as described by Dwayne (Focus Group, 2025). He affirms that nowadays he embraces more who he is as an Indigenous person, distancing himself more from Western categories like introverts/extroverts, which he felt pressured by before (Dwayne, focus group, 2025). Ymyenayare shares how his granddaughter is proud of her Indigenous origins, which inspires her to learn more about them (Focus Group, 2025).

A characteristic of this pride highlighted by Indigenous stakeholders is a deliberate focus on strengths rather than suffering. This involves celebrating and leveraging the inherent resilience, knowledge, and innovative capacities within Indigenous cultures. Participants highlight how focusing on the positive aspects of their cultures, their strengths, and unique knowledge will help other Indigenous people to reconnect with their Indigenous identity and feel prouder while also contributing to making the world see their value and contributions to society (Cameahwait, Sherlien, Interview, 2025). Sherlien notes how traditional knowledge systems, like agricultural practices that strengthen biodiversity, are now being more recognized by the Western world, which she views as highly important (Interview, 2025).

The act of "knowing who you are," understanding one's strengths and talents, is framed as a foundational step in healing and self-empowerment by Sherlien (Interview, 2025). Respondent 3 also states, "I aspire to live my identity not just in resistance to colonial frameworks, but in full affirmation of the beauty, wisdom, and strength of the Lokono and Kalinha peoples" (Survey, 2025). This is complemented by a survey respondent declaring, "Healing for me is about acknowledging our past and finding ways to proudly and collectively carry it in the present" (Respondent 2, Survey, 2025).

Cultural Revitalization and Learning:

Cultural revitalization emerged as a central point in reconnecting to Indigenous identity and thus healing from colonial wounds for research participants. Participants highlight the importance of actively learning and remembering cultural practices that were suppressed or lost. Dwayne shares how he is "trying to remember it again" and how he is "just learning things," noting that his culture offers "ceremonial rituals, being together, singing, dancing, art", which are considered medicine. This learning often involves listening deeply and carefully, as conveyed by Ymyenayare referencing a Kalinya relative saying, "So that you first listen and first look and only then talk" (Focus Group, 2025). Participants also learn from the natural world, with Ymyenayare explaining, "You learn from the animals in the forest, and my grandmother said so too... you also have to know the language of the forest" (Focus Group, 2025). Furthermore, a participant discusses how Indigenous values, which are "about nature, about our existence, about our life," should be discussed by everyone, regardless of their background, because "We are children of mother earth" (Alma, Focus Group, 2025).

The desire to learn about their history, which has been "made illegal," such as dances and medicinal plants, is a significant part of the healing journey (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). The recognition of Indigenous knowledge by science is also considered a positive step, affirming that "we are not stupid, but we do have a lot of knowledge" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025). Sherlien further emphasizes the importance of being able to teach children about their Indigenous background (Interview, 2025). Respondent 2 expresses their hope and ambition "to create more awareness about the history and identity of the Moluccan community, particularly in the diaspora" and to "inspire others to explore their own roots and embrace their story" (Survey, 2025).

Music is also a significant vehicle for healing through cultural reconnection. Learning ancestral "songs again" is explicitly mentioned as a form of healing by one diaspora interviewee (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). Another diaspora interviewee notes that music is generally considered healing across many cultures and that "healing could be writing music" (Sofia, Interview, 2025). Cameahwait highlights the profound impact of traditional flutes, stating that their playing has been "scientifically proven to cure Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome" and leads to visions, emphasizing that the "whistle heals me" (Interview, 2025). Sofia also discusses how learning about the Indigenous origins of music in a non-native industry was "very healing," providing a sense of place and power, as "knowledge is power." And that power can also be healing" (Interview, 2025).

Language Revitalization:

The revitalization of Indigenous languages proved to be a common theme for interviewees, focus group participants, and survey respondents. Several express a strong desire to reconnect with and learn their ancestral languages, such as Respondent 7, who is "planning to learn the Indigenous language" (Survey, 2025). An interviewee articulates the profound significance of language, stating that reclaiming it can happen "not out of productivity but because of it making your soul more alive again and allowing you to see the world with other eyes because the language and its grammar also say a lot about how you interface with the world" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). The ability to simply "sing in the language" or introduce oneself with "a little bit proper pronunciation" would be "very healing" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). Chihiro also observes a generational drive, noting that, "in my generation there are a lot of people who want to reclaim a pride in their language" (Interview, 2025). A frontline interviewee stresses the need to "go back" and honor traditional processes to understand concepts like forgiveness and love in their own language, indicating that "We need to go back because language, culture, you can learn so much" (Jupta, Interview, 2025). Ymyenayare affirms that it is in the language where the identity lies and that language revitalization must be integral to healing efforts (Focus Group, 2025).

Ancestral Connection:

For a few Indigenous stakeholders, reconnecting with ancestors is another vital dimension of Indigenous identity healing. Cameahwait shares how "recognizing the connection of your ancestors" is crucial for healing (Interview, 2025). He also describes a personal experience where a vision of Indigenous women offering a "spoon with soil" helped him understand the need to "go back to your roots, go back to who you are" after a period of depression linked to intergenerational trauma (Interview, 2025). Alma explains the importance of inviting "the voice of ancestors" as energy that travels through time and space and vividly demonstrates it, as he invites the ancestors by playing the flute at the beginning of the Focus Group (2025). Adding to the previously explained point on the importance of learning about Indigenous values, regardless of background, Alma notes how people with European ancestry also have Indigenous ancestors, going six or eight generations back (Focus Group, 2025). Respondent 3 expresses a desire to "deepen my relationship with the ancestral knowledge that flows through me: through ritual, craft, movement, and community" (Survey, 2025).

Beyond explicit cultural learning, a deeper, intuitive spiritual awakening also contributes significantly to healing and identity reclamation. Dwayne describes how the death of his mother opened up a profound spirituality, leading to a realization that his Indigenous community possessed inherent ways of processing grief. This process felt less like learning and more like "remembering a lot," accompanied by a strong sense of intuition (Focus Group, 2025). Dwayne emphasizes that this intuitive spiritual experience, while not scientifically proven, is a fundamental "part of the human experience" and thus valid and healing (Focus Group, 2025).

Space for Pain

Some interviewees also stress the importance of reconnecting to their pain and intergenerational trauma by making space for mourning in the process of healing. Chihiro speaks of healing being about

> "Finding sacredness, tending to the wound both psychologically and spiritually as well as physically, of burnout culture and suppressed depressions or suppressed anxieties, a lot of not knowing. We will never know everything because a lot of it is lost, but finding that there are entrances when you feel the world is a world without entrances" (Interview, 2025).

In the informative lectures about the doctrine of discovery and the genocide of the Indigenous people in the Americas that Cameahwait gives, he used to try to regulate his emotions and not show anger and sadness but claims that "now I just dare to show that for them, they can just see our pain. They

can see my pain" (Interview, 2025). He asserts that when you acknowledge the trauma you carry "and do something with it, you can break through it" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025).

Richard raises the point that feeling the pain of the suffering happening around the world is needed "to make us human again" in the capitalist society that is alienating us from each other (Interview, 2025). He argues against the common argument that humans can only take a certain amount of suffering and advocates for us to open up to the pain instead of saying that we cannot "emotionally bear it," as there are "people… actually physically bearing it" (Richard, Interview, 2025).

Reconnect to Community

A significant aspect of healing for Indigenous stakeholders revolves around reconnecting to community, emphasizing the crucial role of community and healthy relationships in overcoming colonial damage. Most research respondents refer to this form of reconnection, and it includes not only building strong bonds within Indigenous communities but also fostering respectful relationships with allies and addressing internal conflicts.

Community as a Foundation for Healing:

Participants consistently highlight the fundamental importance of community for healing. A frontline interviewee states that for her, healing means "having this really strong, unbreakable relationship with my community", which she explains to be having with her community in Suriname (Jupta, Interview, 2025). Alma emphasizes that within a community, individuals can "catch yourself," implying a support system vital for navigating challenges (Interview, 2025). Sofia adds how "Healing could be just hanging out together" (Interview, 2025). Sherlien underscores a broader Indigenous perspective, noting that compared to Western morals focused on the 'I',

> "Indigenous people often think from the we, we, we, we, we. And there, in the we, there is also healing. If we treat each other better, take better care of each other, so also take care of the earth, and be aware of our environment, then that heals" (Interview, 2025).

A diaspora research respondent from Turtle Island (USA) also notes that community provides a space for Indigenous people who are at the beginning of their journey of reclaiming their identity to "learn about" and understand Indigenous identity rather than relying solely on individual research (Sofia, Interview, 2025). Respondent 3 expresses a longing for "Indigenous community here in the Netherlands" to build with others on the "path of remembering, resisting, and renewing" (Survey, 2025). Respondent 1 adds that "strengthening communities" remains a central ambition for healing (Survey, 2025). A shared observation among focus group participants is the richness that emerges when people from various Indigenous communities come together to share stories, creating a sense of collective wealth (Alma, Dwayne, Focus Group, 2025).

One interviewee emphasizes the need for genuine, non-transactional spaces where Indigenous people can simply "be" with each other. An Arawak research participant living in the Netherlands observes that many organized Indigenous activities in the Netherlands are "centered around productivity" rather than pure community building (Sofia, Interview, 2025). She advocates for spaces where people can "just hang out, catch up, just be together" without a specific goal. These informal gatherings, like having meals or going on hikes, are considered "very deep love" and "very decolonial." The absence of such physical spaces in the Netherlands makes it difficult to cultivate the deep connections found elsewhere, as reported by the interviewee (Sofia, Interview, 2025).

Building Healthy Relationships with Allies:

Healing also extends to fostering respectful relationships with non-Indigenous allies. A front line An interviewee from a former Dutch colony shares a profound insight from an elder who noted that her relationship with a Dutch partner can be “healing because you can have a relationship. You respect each other. And there is a reciprocity: he gives, you give. There is this balance” (Jupta, Interview, 2025). This perspective encourages seeing descendants of colonizers not as enemies, but as potential partners in healing if they approach with “good intentions with [a] pure heart” and a willingness to learn and help (Jupta, Interview, 2025). She further highlights the act of forgiving, discussing that “someone saying I'm sorry for what I did to you is also a healing process” (Jupta, Interview, 2025). In this research, this sentiment is unique to her, as no other research respondent shared perspectives on forgiving as part of healing.

A diaspora interviewee, however, connects to the aspect of intercultural relationships, adding that her white partner is “part of the culture in a way because he’s connected to me” (Interview, 2025), emphasizing that he has historical knowledge and understands the struggle. One diaspora interviewee also explicitly states that “healing is not an identity issue; the healing is for healing relations” (Chihiro, Interview, 2025).

The frontline Interviewee Marcelino[10] raises the point that spirituality can serve as a universal connector, fostering international links among Indigenous peoples and allies. He suggests that despite diverse backgrounds, a shared understanding of spirituality can facilitate dialogue and connection, potentially leading to “restitution and reconstitution” on a global scale (Interview, 2025).

Ceremonies as a Communal Healing Practice:

Some participants describe ceremonial practices as vital for maintaining balance within the community and with the earth. These often involve collective participation, such as mourning rituals where an entire village is involved in singing, dancing, and support to restore harmony after loss (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). Water rituals are also mentioned as a way of “making a place for our mourning” (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). Spiritual spaces, called “wak’a” in Quechua, are recognized for their ability to give or take away spiritual energy (Marcelino, 2025).

Chihiro mentions that some cultural performances, influenced by patriarchy or colonialism, might not reflect older, more egalitarian versions of their cultures, suggesting a need to break down “internalized colonialism” within cultural practices themselves (Interview, 2025).

Research participants also note a tension, emphasizing how ceremonies can feel “forced” or like a “show for... white people”, which can be “not always spiritual or healing” and might make people “look at us as... entertainment”, as recalled by Jupta (Interview, 2025). Sofia raises similar concerns when Indigenous people in the Netherlands do sacred ceremonies for white people, as those often wouldn’t understand nor care about the Indigenous history but rather “want to feel part of this exotic culture” (Interview, 2025).

Fostering International Solidarity

Several respondents share their ambitions to create strong bonds between Indigenous communities and struggles across the globe. This is seen as contributing to Healing on a broader scale. Jupta articulates a profound sense of shared responsibility, stating, "We're also healing from other things,

[10] Marcelino is an Indigenous native of the Yampara nation that territorially occupies the south of Bolivia. Both his parents are Quechua speakers. He considers himself a human rights and environmental activist. He has a project of an ecological space in which he focuses on restoration of traditional and endemic flora and fauna, a space for connection with nature and respect for biodiversity, and international collaboration (Marcelino, Interview, 2025).

and... we feel responsible... when you see someone else is not doing well." She views inter-communal help as a process of mutual learning, akin to a reciprocal exchange of knowledge (Interview, 2025). The importance of bundling and sharing knowledge and rebuilding trust on an international level is also noted by a diaspora interviewee (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025).

Reconnect to the Land

Reconnecting with the land or with nature emerged as a crucial aspect of healing for roughly half of the Indigenous stakeholders, often presented in contrast to Western perspectives. This reconnection is understood as intertwined with the concept of respect and reciprocity towards the Earth and its inhabitants.

Holistic healing as connected to the Land

Many participants say healing includes the body, spirit, land, and consciousness, all of which are part of the same metabolic cycle. One diaspora interviewee describes this as "healing all the toxics that are in our body, in the ground, healing the toxics that are in the air, and healing the inability to open our hearts to others. Those are all things that are one and the same in terms of dedication to healing" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025).

Specifically, the two Frontline interviewees emphasize the interconnection with the land as central to healing. Marcelino stresses that healing must be rooted in the territory, emphasizing that "without territory there is no meaning, that is, there is no meaning; one would be empty, or inert, without a soul" (Marcelino, Interview, 2025). Jupta adds that land is very important for Indigenous people, as "if it's Indigenous people without their lands, it's like you're not Indigenous" (Interview, 2025). That is why reconnecting with the land is also presented as integral to the search for Indigenous identity, as Jupta explains that "reconnecting with nature is one of the important things in searching for your identity" because "Indigenous people believe that not just us humans have a soul, but all living things have a soul." Rivers, the mountains, trees, and the animals" (Interview, 2025).

This profound connection to the land is not merely intellectual but deeply experiential. Marcelino describes the Quechua term 'RAS', which refers to the intense sensations of healing and satisfaction derived from connecting with the land. He explains that even when stressed, entering such a space can induce a feeling of profound calm and well-being, highlighting how territorial spaces physically and spiritually "recharge your batteries" (Marcelino, Interview, 2025).

Learning from and respecting the more-than-human world

For several research participants, a key aspect of reconnecting to the land involves actively learning from the more-than-human. Ymyenayare shares the story of an encounter with a puma and how the animal became the teacher in the situation, as he emphasizes, "You learn from the animals in the forest" (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). This is complemented by Chihiro, referring to "our multi-species ability to learn from other animals or learn from other living environments" as an essential part of the healing process related to overcoming the alienation from the land (Interview, 2025).

Sherlien notes that an important form of healing is for young people to become aware of their natural environment, to "see the richness, but also to see the value and certainly also to respect it" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025). She situated this in contrast to a Western perspective that often overlooks the names and significance of local flora and fauna. Marcelino stresses how Healing is not about a romanticized relationship to nature, as he jokingly exemplifies with "You have to kiss the plant and you heal" (Interview, 2025). Rather, he sees the need for deep respect: "Respect biodiversity, respect the Earth, respect the vegetation, respect the tree" (Marcelino, Interview, 2025). Healing, he believes, should contribute to that through an interaction of experiences and connections, which in turn will improve human well-being (Marcelino, Interview, 2025).

Reciprocity and Environmental Stewardship

This reciprocity is highlighted by various research participants (Sherlien, Marcelino, Interview, 2025). Marcelino emphasizes that the Earth "responds to you," meaning that caring for it leads to positive outcomes, such as better crop yields (Marcelino, Interview, 2025). This reciprocal relationship extends to acknowledging and appreciating the energy and vital connection that land and territory provide (Marcelino, Interview, 2025).

Alma stresses that Indigenous values, which are "about nature, about our existence, about our life," should be discussed by everyone, regardless of their background, because "We are children of mother earth" (Alma, Focus Group, 2025). The need to be in constant connection with nature is considered crucial for personal well-being and for navigating life's challenges (Jupta, Interview, 2025). Even simple acts like gardening are considered a form of healing (Sofia, Interview, 2025).

- In contrast to Western understandings

In discussions of healing, research participants frequently highlighted the distinctions between Indigenous and Western understandings. Many participants, who did not grow up immersed in their Indigenous cultures, have found that embracing Indigenous and other non-Western healing practices involves a multifaceted process of reclamation, learning, and unlearning.

One diaspora interviewee perceives healing in the West as fragmented across various domains, such as physical health, psychological well-being, and environmental protection. However, she considers all these areas to be interconnected within a single metabolism, thus expressing a desire to heal body-spirit-space-time as one unified concept of life that flows through both the personal body and the land body (Chihiro, Interview, 2025).

Ymyenayare reflects on Indigenous Healing being more about restoring balance, while Western approaches can lead to a "kind of mill" where individuals "go on and on and on" without a definitive end (Focus Group, 2025). For him, Indigenous Healing instead is "tied to certain end points," signifying a collective acknowledgment of completion (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025).

Jupta, as a frontline Indigenous person, explicitly points out that Western methods of "Catholic resolution and peacemaking," while applicable in broader contexts, may not be "culturally sensitive" or appropriate for Indigenous communities when addressing reparation or healing (Jupta, Interview, 2025). She stresses that Indigenous Healing is fundamentally different and that talking to psychologists is not the way Indigenous people heal their trauma (Interview, 2025). Instead of fully neglecting Western Healing methods, she emphasizes the importance of self-determination so that Indigenous people themselves can decide what Western methods, habits, and strategies they want to introduce and which ones not. Indigenous Healing going beyond psychological assistance is also what Dwayne sees, sharing how finding Indigenous forms of Healing has been deeply enriching for him when dealing with a family loss (Focus Group, 2025).

Struggle

While the reconnection part of healing focuses more on Healing practices that happen on the personal or collective level, they mostly stay inside the Indigenous communities, even while including a focus on creating alliances with non-Indigenous people. While research respondents talk extensively about reconnection as central to healing, most respondents also mention another dimension of healing, which is the struggle. This struggle concerns topics of recognition and representation, as well as the struggle for justice. These aspects are complemented with a collection of the participant's reflections on the impossibility of Healing, which was also mentioned by several participants and specifically emphasized by a few.

Struggle for Recognition & Representation

Both recognition and representation emerge as a central theme for about half of all research participants. They share how important it is for them to be recognized as Indigenous people (Sherlien, Jupta, Interview, 2025; Dwayne, Interview, 2025; Respondent 1, Survey, 2025). For Sherlien, Healing is fundamentally about "the right to exist" (Interview, 2025); for a survey respondent, it is about "a world where I don't have to explain or justify my Indigenous being—where my presence is seen as natural, sacred, and vital" (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025).

Jupta also connects recognition to the right to self-determination (Interview, 2025). Furthermore, she argues that recognition has to go beyond symbolic acts of Indigenous people being "on a national beer or on a coin," as is the case in Suriname (Jupta, Interview, 2025). Both Dwayne and Sofia share how they appreciate it when they find themselves represented in the cultural sphere, be it in comedy (Sofia, Interview, 2025) or in an exhibition (Dwayne, Focus Group, 2025). A survey respondent adds that "Indigenous peoples must be given a strong voice" (Respondent 1, Survey, 2025).

Struggle for Justice

For roughly half of the Indigenous stakeholders, healing is deeply intertwined with the pursuit of justice. A diaspora interviewee emphasizes that while there are individual elements to Healing, it contains "much more systemic elements" and "has to be structural" (Richard, Interview, 2025). He questions how healing can occur without addressing these systemic issues, stating that "it's not the responsibility of the Indigenous to convince the entire world" but for "the other side as well, who have to reflect on the damages that have been done to reflect on… justice" (Richard, Interview, 2025). He shows his frustration, as he states, "It's never a given thing...we always have to fight for justice" (Richard, Interview, 2025).

He argues that Healing must go "hand in hand with justice," which includes the conversation around "reparation" (Richard, Interview, 2025). Reparatory justice, as articulated by Respondent 3, entails "truth-telling, visibility, and restoring our rights to land, culture, and voice" (Survey, 2025). This struggle extends to Indigenous peoples in the diaspora, including those in the Netherlands (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025). The pursuit of justice also encompasses diverse forms of activism. Sofia highlights that "healing could be going to protest and being an activist" but also notes that activism takes many forms beyond conventional protests (Interview, 2025). For instance, planting Indigenous plants considered as a form of "ecological activism" and reclaiming space (Sofia, Interview, 2025). She says, "We must heal, do justice, and do it through activities" (Interview, 2025).

For some Indigenous peoples, who are currently under direct occupation, like the Indigenous people of West Papua, where "a slow genocide [is] being committed", liberation, driven by self-determination, is necessary to reach healing (Respondent 4, Survey, 2025). For Respondent 4, an Indigenous person from West Papua who lives in the diaspora, engaging in this struggle for freedom is what they associate with Healing (Survey, 2025).

- Dealing with the Impossibility

Several research participants also share their doubts about the possibility of healing as they reflect on the current neo-colonial system we live in. Chihiro notes that reparatory justice is unreachable in capitalism, which is based on colonialism (Interview, 2025). Several research participants note how neo-colonial power relations persist in the global economy (Chihro, Richard, Sherlien, Cameahwait, Interview, 2025; Alma, Focus Group, 20205) and how the current capitalist society is alienating and driven by profit, which makes genuine healing difficult (Cameahwait, Richard, Interview, 2025). Richard observes,

> "Do I want to then go into this very corporate set of worlds which demands us to be alienated, which breaks us into certain pieces, and, you know, sort of distances us from each other and fixates us into a system where we are always into profit making, profit making, profit making? There's nothing. There's no going beyond that" (Interview, 2025).

Marcelino further notes that this dehumanization and disconnection from nature are accelerating as we are more and more “robotizing”, leading us into a "bottomless pit" (Interview, 2035). For him, that translates to motivation to engage in resistance (Marcelino, Interview, 2025).

One diaspora interviewee reflects on the feasibility of restoration, asking, "How can you restore all that culture? How can you? How can you restore all those buildings that have been destroyed? How can you restore all that knowledge?" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025). He expresses the deep-seated nature of the damage, stating, "This, you can't fix this, you can’t. Because these are only very small measures, that will work with that," and “it's not doable; it's actually not” (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025). Another diaspora interviewee shares Cameahwait's judgment of the possibility of repair and healing, admitting, “Frankly speaking, I don't know how to engage with the healing process” (Richard, Interview, 2025).

Forest of Healing

Introduction

This subchapter deals with the sub-research question, “What do the Indigenous stakeholders believe can be healed with the project?” This subchapter presents opinions and ideas of research participants on the Forest of Healing, aimed at understanding their vision and perception of challenges.

This chapter shines light on research participants’ general opinions on the project idea, followed by a description of the different dimensions that the respondents identify as key for the Forest of Healing, being the reconnection to Indigenous identity and reconnection to community. The borders between each of them are blurry, as reconnection to culture in many cases also suggests a reconnection to community, and the community oftentimes includes non-human life, as respondents refer to the interconnectedness of life. The similarity in structuring to the results chapter concerning the second sub-research question on Healing is chosen purposely to emphasize how the ideas on the project directly link to Healing, as conceptualized by the research participants. This positive vision of the Forest of Healing is complemented by a description of the challenges that are identified.

General opinions

Research participants express an overwhelmingly positive sentiment regarding the initiative's importance and inherent beauty. Participants describe the project as "really something very beautiful" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025), with its name alone being "very beautiful" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025). This positive reception is echoed by others who found the project "amazing; it’s really important. It’s about time" (Richard, Interview, 2025) and a "good initiative" (Marcelino, Interview, 2025). There's also a strong sense of personal endorsement and confidence in the individuals involved, with one participant "rooting for... this because I know it's amazing people that are behind this" (Jupta, Interview, 2025). The enthusiasm is echoed by another diaspora respondent who adds that simply having a physical space “does so much” (Sofia, Interview, 2025).

Beyond these initial positive reactions, there is a clear recognition of the Forest of Healing's profound value and its significant potential for broader societal contributions. It is viewed as “good that it is done to get out of the boxes and that it is something genuine, that something is being recovered; that is already a contribution" (Marcelino, Interview, 2025). This value is perceived in its "massive, massive potential" to effect meaningful change, particularly given current global challenges (Richard, Interview,

2025). Chihiro highlights the potential of the Forest of Healing to help us “imagin[e] ourselves back into peace-making communities” (Interview, 2025). The three focus group participants also show doubts about the Forest of Healing project, referring to the risk of it becoming a place that imitates Western ideas of knowledge preservation (Dwayne, focus group, 2025). These are further described below under Challenges and Doubts.

The vision:

A space to Reconnect to Indigenous Identity & Culture

The Forest of Healing is envisioned as a crucial space for Indigenous peoples to reconnect with and reaffirm their Indigenous identity and culture through various interwoven dimensions, including the active revitalization of cultural knowledge and practices, the experience of sacred spiritual connection, and the acknowledgement of shared wounds.

Space for Being, Belonging, and Identity Formation

A fundamental aspect of reconnecting to Indigenous identity within the Forest of Healing is creating a physical and emotional space where Indigenous individuals can simply be and feel a sense of belonging without the need for justification, as mentioned recurringly by respondents. This is particularly vital for those navigating their identity. For instance, the ability "to be able to walk through a door and say you're welcome here and you don't have to explain... That is huge" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). Such a space can provide "a sense of belonging" and a place to "feel at home" (Richard, Interview, 2025). This idea of an unquestioned presence is crucial, according to the research participant, especially for those "not sure if they're Indigenous or Indigenous enough" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025), allowing them to "figure that out through community" rather than solitary searching (Sofia, Interview, 2025). The Forest of Healing can thus become "a place where we can be found... a kind of focal point" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025), both for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, fostering visibility.

Revitalizing Cultural Practices and Knowledge

One of the most important efforts of the Forest of Healing for Indigenous stakeholders is the revitalization of their cultures and knowledges. Reconnection to Indigenous identity is deeply intertwined with the active engagement in cultural revitalization. As summarized by a survey respondent, the Forest of Healing should be a space for "knowledge, stories, education, art and expression, and celebrations of special ceremonies" (Respondent 2, Survey, 2025). Research participants also envision the Forest of Healing to showcase diverse Indigenous cultures through art pieces, fairs, music, and traditional architecture, like totem poles and ancestral altars (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025; Respondent 3, Survey, 2025).

The Forest of Healing is imagined as a vibrant hub, serving as "a knowledge center, having a place to be for knowledge" (Sofia, Interview, 2025) and an "information point for people who want to know a little more about it" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025). This includes tangible activities such as establishing and maintaining a medicinal garden (Chihiro, Interview, 2025; Respondent 3, Survey, 2025), which serves as "a beautiful entry point to learn about health and your own cycles" and from "other types of teachers that are non-human" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). Other learning practices proposed include sharing and learning each other’s traditional dances (Chihiro, Interview, 2025), offering workshops and guided tours (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025), and hosting a library and the Indigenous archive so that younger people can go there to learn about their Indigenous culture (Sherlien, Interview, 2025). The value of “embodied practices like traditional dance, martial arts, or yoga” is stressed, as it is seen as a way to “feel our bodies as part of the land” (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025).

Another dimension of the project is the education of a broader audience about Indigenous history and contemporary realities, both struggles and "positive things" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025). It is argued

that “you can learn so much, even if you are not Indigenous”, referring to Indigenous strategies, management, and ways of life (Jupta, Interview, 2025). While non-Indigenous learning is mentioned by some research participants as an important dimension of the Forest of Healing, others focus more on the need for protected closed spaces for Indigenous people to work on healing. The struggle of finding this balance is discussed under Challenges and Doubts below.

By some, the forest of healing is also seen as a place to "listen to the elderly or the wise people" who "have so much knowledge," as they have resisted and lived through challenging times (Marcelino, Interview, 2025). A research participant also acknowledges the Forest of Healing as a place where intergenerational learning and encounter can be facilitated and where “next generations” can be brought to learn and “imagine new futures” (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025). The idea of remembering Indigenous pioneers and leaders arises, with the idea of dedicating statues to them to honor those “who have fought enormously for the same thing but are no longer here” (Sherlien, Interview, 2025).

A significant component of this cultural renewal is language, as described by several research participants. The desire for "a place where we can learn language" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025) is vital. Explaining "some basic words from the language" during ceremonies ensures people "know what you're talking about" (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). Sherlien also views the Forest of Healing as a place where knowledge production can take place, e.g., by working on statistics and where "science can listen and serve instead of science stealing the knowledge" (Interview, 2025).

Acknowledging Wounds and Collective Mourning

For several Indigenous stakeholders consulted, an essential part of reconnecting to Indigenous identity is the acknowledgement of past and ongoing wounds, and the Forest of Healing is seen as a place where this difficult but necessary process can occur. According to the Indigenous stakeholders, it needs to be "a place for our brokenness… to be seen," where one doesn't "have to explain a lot but can just be" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). The space should allow for "closed events that people can show their pain... and also that it heals, that those rituals can also be done" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025). This ability to "mourn... without having to ask for permission" (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025) is considered critical for processing intergenerational trauma.

Sacred Space for Spiritual Practices

The spiritual dimension of Indigenous identity is central to the vision for the Forest of Healing for many respondents, arguing that it should be "sacred ground... where Indigenous presence is not only acknowledged but centered, honored, and protected" (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025). This involves creating areas that are "really blessed and designed for healing" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025). This aims to ensure that ceremonies can be realized "much more powerfully" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025), fostering genuine spiritual cleansing and healing through "guidance in Indigenous rituals" (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025) and the opportunity for people to "meditate on Indigenous energy" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025), having "quiet zones for reflection, meditation, or personal ceremony” (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025).

Central to this spiritual reconnection is the practice of ceremony, allowing Indigenous peoples to "make fire in nature and hold ceremonies" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025) and to "sing, drum, burn, plant, dance, mourn, and celebrate without having to ask for permission" (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025). These ceremonies are where "ancestors are welcome, and where the earth herself can speak to us" (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025). However, inherent challenges of conducting Indigenous ceremonies in the Netherlands are recognized, with a participant raising the concern that if not carefully stewarded, rituals performed away from their original environment might become unauthentic (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). Ymyenayare emphasizes that Indigenous songs often deal with the specific

characteristics of their territory (like local animals), which will not fit in the Netherlands. He also sees a difficulty in combining ceremonies from different Indigenous groups, as they all have “different languages and different rituals” (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025).

As discussed in the Healing chapter, there are also concerns of ceremonies losing their authenticity and strength when performed for a white audience or through external facilitators. A diaspora interviewee sees in the Forest of Healing a chance to do it the right way, focusing on Indigenous-led and -targeted ceremonies (Sofia, Interview, 2025). The challenge of finding this balance is further explained under Challenges and Doubts.

A space to Reconnect to Community

The Forest of Healing is widely envisioned by research participants as a vital space for Indigenous peoples and their allies to forge stronger connections and rebuild community with one another. While reconnection to community is naturally fostered through shared cultural and identity-affirming activities—such as ceremonies, collaborative learning, and the joint effort of creating the space—participants also underscored distinct aspects of 'reconnecting to community' that require their own focus. These specific dimensions are highlighted by respondents as the establishment of accessible communal spaces for informal gathering, dialogue, and simply 'being' together despite diversity; the promotion of robust international networks for solidarity, reciprocal learning, and collaborative action; and a commitment to fostering genuine, justice-centered relationships and relational worldviews as alternatives to dominant societal norms.

An Informal Communal Space

Adding on previous points made on the Forest of Healing becoming a place where Indigenous people can just *be*, without having to justify their Indigeneity, many research participants emphasize it being a highly communal space, where people can "just be together" (Sofia, Interview, 2025), an informal "hangout space... not for an activity or not for work but somewhere just to be and do some creative stuff… and maybe meet new people" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). A diaspora research participant from Turtle Island (US) highlights that many existing Indigenous activities in the Netherlands are "surrounding a goal or something that has to be done or productivity," leaving "very little time to just be with each other" (Sofia, Interview, 2025). This lack of unstructured time is considered a barrier because, without a dedicated physical space, it's hard to cultivate deep connections (Sofia, Interview, 2025). She explains how, in her experiences in the Turtle Island (USA), she valued such spaces as highly decolonial, as they don’t subscribe to Western ideas of productivity. Sherlien also emphasizes the basic need for a "private place" where people can "come together" and which remains "open" for those who wish to "think along" (Interview, 2025).

Furthermore, she notes the importance of these spaces accommodating diverse expressions of Indigeneity, where "you don't have to be an activist to be Indigenous" (Sofia, Interview, 2025) and where Indigenous people can openly communicate about their differences as well. She highlights how conversations about differences can happen easier when there is a space where they can come to the table naturally (Sofia, Interview, 2025).

International Solidarity and Collaboration

The Forest of Healing is envisioned by many research participants as a vital hub for fostering international connections, mutual learning, and solidarity among Indigenous peoples worldwide. Marcelino, from his perspective on the frontlines, imagines "processes of exchange of experiences, I don't know, models of healing, models of coexistence, collaboration, etc.," built "within the framework of reciprocity" and not "falling into... that it becomes something romantic or something hippie" (Interview, 2025). He further suggests that such initiatives can "connect peoples... regardless of asking

for passports," contributing to healing and the exchange of knowledge globally (Marcelino, Interview, 2025). Marcelino envisions a direct collaboration between the Forest of Healing and his own territory, the “Jaku country house” in Bolivia, exchanging plants and participants as well as knowledge and sharing experiences through virtual interconnection and real-life visits (Interview, 2025). Another diaspora interviewee echoes this, seeing the Forest of Healing as a place for "exchange programs with other Indigenous people worldwide who can come there to work together" and a central point that should be "very receptive to different Indigenous people worldwide" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025).

This international dimension is also about mutual support and shared learning. Chihiro emphasizes that while the Forest of Healing is a pioneering project on a global level in many ways, "we're not alone," and there is much to learn from the steps taken by Indigenous people in other countries, which can aid local processes (Interview, 2025). She also highlights the importance of the center being "a steppingstone towards a more international solidarity and usefulness to people who are fighting on the front lines" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). She stresses the role of the Forest of Healing to, on one hand, make visible Indigenous collaborations and projects from all over the world and, on the other hand, “co-shape with the people on the ground”, as she emphasizes that visibility politics is not enough (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). Sofia sees the potential for the Forest of Healing to be "a center for a network" and a "point to have a call to action" for international solidarity (Interview, 2025), e.g., when neo-colonial projects invading Indigenous territory on the frontlines have connections to the Netherlands.

A space to Reconnect to the land

The reconnection to nature evolves as a critical dimension of the vision of the Forest of Healing that research participants share through several core dimensions: the recognition of land as sacred ground, integral to identity and holistic healing; the commitment to living in harmony with nature, learning from its wisdom, and actively engaging in ecological care; and the highlighting of Indigenous stewardship, sovereignty, and the symbolic power of 'land back'. These deeply held views underscore the understanding that healing for Indigenous peoples is inherently linked to the well-being of the land and the restoration of a respectful, reciprocal relationship with the land, echoing themes of holistic healing, learning from the more-than-human world, and environmental stewardship, as discussed in the Healing sub-chapter.

Learning from the More-than-human world and Living in Harmony

The Forest of Healing is also envisioned by many respondents as a place for active learning from and with the more-than-human world, fostering a relationship of harmony and respect. This includes spaces "where we can work on ecological knowledge... agricultural knowledge... [and] medicinal knowledge" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025). An interviewee sees the "garden of like medicinal herbs" as an "entry point to learn also about health" and describes how "the whole process of tending to earth makes you learn from other types of teachers that are non-human" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). Respondent 4 emphasizes "showcasing the beauty and necessity of living in harmony with nature" and "underlining the importance of how all lives are interconnected" (Survey, 2025). Jupta’s vision for the Forest of Healing pictures “the connection and the balance, the harmony, that peace with animals”, which she finds in the illustrations of heaven from the Jehovah Witnesses, despite her believing in her “own spiritualism” instead of “Jesus and God” (Interview, 2025). Some research participants even mention introducing animals like "cows, llamas, guinea pigs," or jokingly a "jaguar," to foster connection and healing (Cameahwait, Interview, 2025; Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). Ultimately, it's about getting "to know the territories where we are standing and beginning to relate with them" (Respondent 6, Survey, 2025).

This connection can also be cultivated on Dutch land by learning about it and relating to it "in a new way, in a softer way, in a caring way" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). Focus group participants discuss the idea of symbolic acts like planting corn as a symbol for a Quechua approach to life, which focuses on the care and dedication to the different steps in a process (like planting corn), which includes cleaning, sowing, preparing, and giving extra nutrition to the plant (Alma, Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025).

One diaspora interviewee shares his hope for the Forest of Healing to “expand to other areas” so that it “doesn’t become the only space where people are coming to heal”, but people instead can be having similar processes “in their own backyards” (Richard, Interview, 2025). He clarifies his view that the project should not be about creating an "abstract space where people can go and feel together with nature" but rather about fostering a deeper understanding of "nature as part of our everyday lives" and "living with nature together" (Richard, Interview, 2025).

The Forest of Healing as a Sacred Ground for Holistic Healing

The land and nature are perceived as fundamental to Indigenous well-being and identity, holding a significance comparable to sacred religious sites. One diaspora interviewee states, "Many people have a church, many people have a mosque. Yes, [Indigenous people] must have nature. So, it is just obvious that the Forest of Healing should be there" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025). This sentiment is echoed by the vision of the Forest of Healing as "sacred ground. A living, breathing space where Indigenous presence is not only acknowledged but centered, honored, and protected" (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025). The idea of installing waterwaysis voiced, like “springs, ponds, or flowing streams—as water is sacred in so many ways” (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025).

A space to Challenge the Neo-Colonial System

While not being a central topic for all research respondents, there are a few research participants that specifically focus on the need and potential of the Forest of Healing to Challenge the prevailing neo-colonial system. This is discussed both through the Forest of Healing being a space based on Indigenous values, instead of Western values, and through the struggle for justice and ‘Land Back’, with the Forest of Healing exemplifying this.

Relational Values Beyond Capitalist Norms

Several research participants see the Forest of Healing project to challenge prevailing capitalist systems and foster alternative ways of living and relating. One research respondent from the diaspora describes the project as follows:

> “It’s in the heart of the capitalist project. It’s in the heart of a system that says that oh we need to be alienated. It’s about telling that look we don't have to live that way. We can be doing things differently. We can be having a different way of life. We can actually have better relations between human beings, and we don't have to value one person over the other. We can have good equal gender relations,… but justice has to be at the heart of it” (Richard, Interview, 2025).

Marcelino echoes this sentiment, stating that it is commendable that efforts are being made to break free from conventional norms, demonstrating authenticity and recovery, which is already a significant contribution (Interview, 2025). Richard further suggests that the project can help individuals discover "the very basic elements that can go into creating this ontological perspective of relationality," encouraging a worldview where things are considered interconnected (Richard, Interview, 2025).

Struggle for Justice and 'Land Back'

Central to the struggle for justice is the profound symbolism of 'land back'. Chihiro highlights the importance of "sovereignty of land stewardship and being able to make choices as a collective"

(Interview, 2025). The concept of 'land back', even in a Dutch context, holds significant meaning, as a diaspora The interviewee describes the act of the "Netherlands giv[ing] the Indigenous people a piece of land back with the Forest of Healing; however small, it is symbolically so strong and has such a big impact," viewing it as "a piece of recognition" and "a beginning of 'You are allowed to be there too'" (Interview, 2025). Sofia adds that as the Indigenous people living in the diaspora in the Netherlands do not have the "Indigenous knowledge of how to take care of the land," it is different from land back on ancestral territories (Interview, 2025). However, she acknowledges that it is still important, being a symbolic land back, as "it is kind of an acknowledgement that land was stolen" (Sofie, Interview, 2025). Furthermore, Sherlien sees the Forest of Healing as a vital place for collectively working on "cultural recovery, cultural identity, reparations" and highlights its inspirational potential on an international level.

> "How beautiful would it be if Forest of Healing arises, that the Netherlands, as a small European country, gives the Indigenous people a piece of land back? How would that stand against England, Spain, Portugal, and France?" (Interview, 2025).

Challenges and Doubts

While participants overwhelmingly express positive sentiments, they also voice important doubts and challenges concerning the Forest of Healing's conceptualization, implementation, and potential pitfalls. These reflections underscore the complexities involved in creating a genuinely Indigenous-led and impactful space.

Authenticity and Access: For whom is the Forest of Healing?

Several research participants identify a critical challenge in defining who the Forest of Healing is truly for and how access should be managed to maintain its integrity and serve its primary purpose.

Focus on Indigenous Sanctuaries and Diaspora

According to Sofia, the space must be, first and foremost, for Indigenous people, their knowledge, and their allies, with the education of non-native individuals viewed as a secondary objective (Sofia, Interview, 2025). One research participant with a Quechua background emphasizes a specific focus on the needs of the Indigenous diaspora, recognizing their unique context and the importance she sees in the forest as a "particular land back space for diasporic Indigenous people" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025). While another interviewee from the Kalinya people envisions it broadly for those who suffered under the Dutch colonial flag and as an international Indigenous hub (Sherlien, Interview, 2025), a strong sentiment among respondents is the need to first create a sanctuary. Respondent 3 articulates the non-negotiable principle that the Forest of Healing "should not be curated about us but created with us—from the roots up" (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025).

Balancing Inclusivity with Boundaries

This leads to a nuanced discussion among participants regarding the balance between openness and the necessity for protected, Indigenous-centered spaces. Cameahwait, for instance, calls for "closed events" exclusively for Indigenous people to share pain and engage in healing rituals, alongside public accessibility (Interview, 2025). By contrast, another interviewee expresses that "Nothing is closed. It's for everyone" (Sherlien, Interview, 2025), suggesting collaboration with diverse groups, including non-Indigenous farmers and academics. Generally, there is consent about the need for both—spaces for broader learning for non-Indigenous people and more closed spaces where Indigenous people can do healing and relating work inside their communities.

To navigate this, Sofia suggests that clear boundaries, potentially through designated "community hours," and staff capable of upholding these guidelines are crucial to prevent Indigenous individuals

from feeling uncomfortable or their sacred practices from being treated as a spectacle for "tourists" (Interview, 2025). She expresses discomfort over Indigenous ceremonies sometimes being performed for non-native people or being shaped by external facilitators. She believes a dedicated space “for us to do it with ourselves” would fundamentally change this dynamic, allowing for cultural practices, including ceremonies, to be conducted with greater autonomy and authenticity (Sofia, Interview, 2025).

International Dimensions and Responsibilities

Research participants share an understanding that the Forest of Healing has deep potential to foster international solidarity and contribute to Indigenous struggles worldwide. However, Chihiro expresses concern that the project might fall short in emphasizing its role as a central point of international solidarity, serving those who face severe violence and displacement on the frontlines (Interview, 2025). She cautions against inadvertently "reproducing closeness to empire," as it is easiest to collaborate with English-speaking territories, urging mindfulness towards communities colonized by nations like Spain or Portugal, who face greater communication barriers (Chihiro, Interview, 2025).

Authenticity and Influence: How to ensure integrity and genuineness?

Resisting Western Influence and Co-option

A significant concern revolves around the potential for Western paradigms to influence the project. Dwayne, a focus group participant, questions whether establishing a physical knowledge center might inadvertently "imitate Western ideas" of knowledge preservation (Focus Group, 2025).

Ymyenayare agrees, jokingly referring to the project possibly becoming an “exhibition-like thing… a kind of Jurassic Park” (Focus Group, 2025). The focus group participants suggest that the project should stem from Indigenous values and intentions (Ymyenayare, Alma, Focus Group, 2025) rather than conforming to systematic, Western style "development plan, emergency exit, main building A" thinking (Dwayne, Focus Group, 2025). Jupta agrees by pointing out the need for a focus on "reciprocity, respect, and relationship," contrasting these with potentially overshadowing Western perspectives (Interview, 2025).

This worry is shared by Richard, who identifies a "risk of co-option" by corporate or capitalist systems, which might try to rebrand the project for their own purposes (Interview, 2025). He stresses the need to be "very, very, very careful" to prevent this (Richard, Interview, 2025). Marcelino cautions that for the project to be authentic and to avoid co-option, the identity and positionality must be collectively defined and rooted in "historical memory" (Interview, 2025). The Forest of Healing should be "really linked to identity… and positionality of Indigenous peoples who want to recover their processes" (Marcelino, Interview, 2025). He specifically warns against the risk of "usurping the genuineness of the Indigenous nations and peoples by trying to make it a little more commercial or, in this case, profitable," unless this is a clearly stated intention from the outset (Marcelino, Interview, 2025).

Participants also comment on the precise nature and scope of the Forest of Healing. Marcelino advises taking care to distinguish the initiative from what he calls the "hippie current" in activism and suggests it should not be "too abstract" but, where appropriate, linked to public policy (Interview, 2025).

Focus on Indigenous Values Instead of Fixed Outcome

Members of the focus group agree on the importance of preparatory spiritual work, such as cleaning the physical space before it opens (Ymyenayare, Dwayne, and Alma, Focus Group, 2025). Reflecting back on the image of the Forest of Healing as ‘Jurassic Park’, Dwayne notes

> “I don't think it even matters what it looks like in concrete terms as long as we know these kinds of things, how to do it, with what energy we have to do it. It doesn't matter whether it's here or in an open field or with a forest or no forest” (Focus Group, 2025).

It is noted that “healing is in cleaning” (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). This process of cleaning and preparation might even reveal that the Forest of Healing "may not be the right place" for healing, which, even though "impractical," is “how it works” (Dwayne, Focus Group, 2025). The focus group participants thus point towards the need for the Forest of Healing project, as it is in its planning stages to be focused on Indigenous values instead of the material outcome of the project and thus hold space for possible changes of direction.

Authenticity and Diversity: How to navigate differences?

Another significant challenge highlighted by participants involves navigating the inherent differences and similarities among the diverse Indigenous peoples the Forest of Healing aims to serve. This complexity presents both obstacles to unified approaches and opportunities for profound collective healing and understanding.

Diverse Needs, Histories, and Perspectives

A primary consideration is the vast diversity within and between Indigenous communities. Jupta emphasizes that "one size doesn't fit all," cautioning that approaches effective for one group may not suit others (Interview, 2025). This is echoed by Sofia, who points to differing cultural upbringings—for instance, experiences in the United States, defending against settler colonialism on ancestral lands versus struggling for recognition in the Netherlands—and varied personal histories, such as growing up with or separated from one's culture, which lead to distinct healing needs (Interview, 2025). One interviewee also stresses the importance of "holding that space for difference," as various communities will have unique requirements for engaging in healing work (Chihiro, Interview, 2025).

The diversity in traditions and languages presents practical challenges, particularly concerning communal practices. Ymyenayare notes the difficulty in combining specific rituals from different Indigenous groups, such as the Lokono and Kalinya, because "they are two different languages and different rituals" (Ymyenayare, Focus Group, 2025). Alma also recalls past difficulties in sustaining unified organizational efforts among various Indigenous groups due to their transient nature or lack of sustained financial support (Focus Group, 2025).

Building Unity through Shared Values

Despite these differences, participants also identify pathways to unity and shared understanding. A diaspora interviewee advocates for centering decolonial values, such as "giving space for each other," welcoming diverse perspectives, and focusing on the collective goal of "coming together" and preserving knowledge (Sofia, Interview, 2025). Richard observes that Indigenous individuals from varied global contexts often "end up saying or communicating very similar logic of what we imagine or how we see things" (Richard, Interview, 2025). From the focus group, there's a recognition of "universal values," like the significance of the equinox, which can be shared, and a belief that when different Indigenous people gather, "something naturally arises" and a diverse collection of stories and understandings emerges (Dwayne, Alma, Focus Group, 2025). This is highlighted by their repeated emphasis on the enriching nature of the focus group session, as Alma states, “Just look, with three people here, such richness is only our story. It will really take off if it's a large group” (Focus Group, 2025). Chihiro views the collaboration process among different Indigenous groups as inherently valuable, even though it is "challenging," describing it as a "process of relating and hence of also healing parts of ourselves and each other" (Chihiro, Interview, 2025).

Reflection of Results

This section reflects on the research results and the process of reaching those.

Different Ways of sharing information

As both the interviews and the focus group session were conducted in a semi-structured manner, they left a lot of room for the respondents and participants to highlight the topics most important to them. The conversations organically moved towards a certain focus, in line with the specific position and background of each interviewee or focus group participant. For instance, for an Indigenous person on the frontlines in a country with no apparent direct links to Dutch colonialism, there was no focus on the Dutch colonial history but rather on the present-day colonial system, and for this specific interviewee, also on international collaboration between different territories working on Indigenous land stewardship and revitalization, due to their personal involvement with this topic. This explains why some respondents are presented with more quotes under certain subcategories and fewer under others. In the focus group, for example, respondents shared their personal stories extensively, which made the researcher take the decision to focus on the topics of Healing and the Forest of Healing instead of exploring the topic of damage.

This is an example of the significant differences in how the research participants shared their insights. While some participants shared long stories to make a point, others gave precise answers to the questions posed. This posed difficulties in the analysis for the researcher, who, even though committed to Indigenous Methodology, is writing a bachelor's thesis informed by Western academic theory, aiming to reach direct and practical conclusions to the research questions. To deal with this challenge, the researcher tried to point out when respondents were sharing a story and views the act of storytelling as an outcome by itself, which will be discussed in the following chapters. Linda Tuhiwai Smith clarifies that stories are an important part of Indigenous methodologies, as they don't "simply tell a story" but "contribute to a collective story, in which every Indigenous person has a place" (1999).

Challenges in data collection

Interviews

The researcher also critically reflects on the inherent challenges posed by aiming for a balanced sample. The researcher could not achieve the proposed ten interviews, which included four from the frontlines, four in the Netherlands, and two with background informants. Instead, the researcher conducted five interviews with Indigenous people in the Netherlands and two abroad. The interviewees were selected in consultation with the commissioner and the project initiator. This led to a first selection of three Indigenous stakeholders in the diaspora, plus the project initiator and the commissioner themselves, as well as four Indigenous stakeholders on the frontlines. All those selected participants stem from the network of the commissioner and project initiator. The deviation from the initial four Indigenous stakeholders in the diaspora to later five was justified by the commissioner and project initiator's wish to balance out their own voices as presenting the Indigenous diaspora in the Netherlands by conducting three interviews in the Netherlands, next to their own.

Securing interviews and focus group participants was a major, weeks-long challenge for the researcher. Of the three selected Indigenous diaspora interviewees, the one from the Free West Papua campaign was unreachable and couldn't contribute. Despite extensive efforts to contact the West Papuan community in the Netherlands for interviews, focus groups, and surveys, only one person ultimately shared insights via the survey. This indicates an underrepresentation of this Indigenous community in the research. The researcher attended two Free West Papua Campaign events, observing their significant presence and organization compared to other communities. Future Forest of Healing work

should prioritize including them, though this experience might also suggest their limited capacity for such projects due to other struggles.

Of the four Indigenous interviewees from the frontlines selected by the project initiator and commissioner, only two could be interviewed. One person was completely unreachable after multiple attempts via online forms, email, and Instagram. With another, initial contact and interest were established, but after months of follow-up, no interview date materialized. Consequently, the researcher considered reaching out to their own contacts among Indigenous people from the frontlines in Brazil. Although appreciated by the commissioner, the researcher initially questioned their direct stakeholder qualification, as their only link to the Forest of Healing project was the researcher. However, in line with Indigenous Research principles of building long-term relationships and contributing through reciprocity, the researcher eventually contacted two individuals. While the two individuals were enthusiastic, their tight schedules, time differences, and the advanced stage of the research prevented them from scheduling an interview. This outcome stresses the need for further consultation with Indigenous stakeholders from the frontlines.

Focus Group

Initially, ten individuals or organizations representing Indigenous peoples from the Americas, Asia, and Oceania were selected for the focus group by the project initiator and commissioner. Similar to the interviews, a significant challenge was establishing contact with potential participants and finding a suitable date for everyone. In the end, the session was only attended by three participants due to the cancellation of two at the last minute. This resulted in a disproportionate representation of Surinamese Indigenous people within the group.

One invitee, an Indigenous person from India, was subsequently chosen for an additional interview. This decision was made because one of the initially selected interviewees in the diaspora category was unreachable, and this individual offered an opportunity to incorporate more perspectives from Asia, which had previously been underexplored. The two focus group participants who unexpectedly canceled also expressed interest in sharing their insights through an interview. However, to maintain sample distribution balance, this could not be guaranteed, and they were instead directed to the survey to contribute their perspectives.

Survey

The survey was set up in four different languages:vEnglish, Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese. It was shared with a list of Indigenous contacts by the commissioner and project initiator as well as on the personal Instagrams of the project initiator, the commissioner, and the researcher, as well as the corresponding organizations Aralez and the Indigenous Knowledge Center International. Next to that, it was also posted on LinkedIn by the researcher. The survey was shared with all previous research participants, asking them to share it with their peers. While a total of 49 people engaged with the survey, all the 21 complete answers were either in Dutch or English. The Spanish and Portuguese versions were thus not used at all. They were set up to allow for participation of Indigenous people from Abya Yala (the Americas), but no participation from people from these territories could be guaranteed.

Implications

These complications in the data collection have implications for the research results: it is not possible to speak of the results as representing the diverse perspectives and backgrounds of the Indigenous community in the Netherlands, nor that they sufficiently include international perspectives from the frontlines to ensure that the conclusions and recommendations for the project Forest of Healing address international solidarity and benefit Indigenous people beyond the Dutch nation-state borders.

Instead, the outcomes of this study must be seen as a snapshot of the insights that were accessible to the researcher at this moment in time and space, a first and significant step to mapping out perspectives of Indigenous stakeholders, rather than a complete overview.

To move forward in understanding the needs and aspirations of Indigenous stakeholders to the Forest of Healing, both on the frontlines and in the Netherlands, further research should focus on getting the insights of the diverse Indigenous stakeholders that previously have not been consulted.

Need for Further Dialogue

A general reflection, stemming from personal conversations with the research participants, as well as the focus group and the interactive consultation, is the need, felt by Indigenous individuals participating, for more conversation and dialogue inside the Indigenous community. Several questions were posed in the interactive consultation that need further consideration, possibly through a formal research project but most and foremost through dialogue between Indigenous people. These questions were posed in connection to specific research findings:

- Concerning internal conflict: Is there a relationship between the "divide & conquer" strategy of the colonizer and the persistence of conflicts within Indigenous communities?
- Concerning Invisibility: How do you make sure that knowledge is not only extracted but that there is a form of reciprocity?
- Concerning spirituality as connecting Indigenous people and allies globally: How do you bring spirituality into institutions?
- Concerning Ceremonies: Should healers be qualified? And by whom?
- Concerning Ceremonies: Indigenous healing ceremonies are connected to language—who will teach?

The interactive consultation furthermore brought up several content additions that have not been included in the result section nor its discussion but will be named here to possibly serve as a conversation starter in the future:

Table 1: Output Interactive Consult - Conversation starters

Damage:	Healing:	Forest of Healing:
Transgenerational Trauma as the unconscious spiritual trauma that gets passed on	Visibility may propel portraying stereotypes (e.g. an Indigenous person wearing feathers)	Indigenous culture and land are connected ancestral Netherlands: Need to connect to people native to this land that have knowledge about it
Denouncing, discarding indigenous identity, forcibly intentionally		
Concerning ongoing discrimination: AND ERASURE - Uitwissing -> firsting & lasting	Including indigenous teachings in education system, different cosmovision	Use Indigenization as a tool to tackle challenges
Problem of tokenism		
Internalized capitalism / colonialism dividing families		

The Background Interview

From the two background interviews initially planned, only one could be realized. The idea was that these would give background information about the Forest of Healing. The interview conducted with a representative of KIEN was very interesting and gave the researcher insights into the working of the

representative; however, it became clear that the person was, at least until now, not very involved in the project. While Marlous[11] also shared some thoughts on the project, these are purposely not included in the results, as she is not an Indigenous stakeholder. With her background in cultural anthropology and current work on decolonization in the cultural field, she did, however, pose questions that the researcher finds meaningful to share as possible further inspiration for dialogue:

- "What sort of indigenous people are we talking about? Who are they? Where do they come from? What is going on internally? Who is part of it, and who is no longer part of it? Where are the boundaries of that community, and how come the boundaries are there? Are they only there in relation to this project, or are the boundaries different?" (Marlous, Interview, 2025).
- "It's not just the question of will the Forest of healing be here at one point in the future. But it's also very much a question of how we can get there and how we can mold this process in such a way that we as indigenous people are dealt with in a way that's not again colonial in itself... How can we get the colonialism out of how this process…? What does this process need to really contribute to decolonization? What does it need, and how can we organize it?" (Marlous, Interview, 2025).

Discussion Chapter

Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive discussion of the research findings, analyzing them through the lens of the established conceptual framework on colonial damage, decolonial healing, the forest of healing, and reparatory justice. It directly addresses Sub-Research Questions 1, 2, and 3, exploring Indigenous stakeholders' perceptions of colonial damage, their understanding of healing within the Dutch context and broader global systems, as well as visions of the Forest of Healing project.

Colonial Damage

This section discusses the findings concerning the question "What, according to the Indigenous stakeholders, is the colonial damage they experience in their specific Dutch context, for which reparatory justice is needed?". Research participants articulated a multifaceted understanding of colonial damage, encompassing present experiences in the Netherlands, the enduring legacies of the Dutch colonial past on former colonies, and the pervasive global neo-colonial system. This layered perception strongly aligns with the concept of neocolonialism, defined as persistent exploitation by global powers, multinational corporations, and institutions that perpetuate colonial forms of control. This complex understanding, which takes into account different geographical and historical aspects, questions limited national views on reparations and shows that experiences of colonial harm often involve a mix of different places and times.

This approach aligns with a decolonial effort to question Western notions of time, drawing instead on Indigenous conceptualizations. For instance, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) highlights how Māori language can use a single term to refer to both time and space, challenging discrete categories, while Janca & Bullen (2009) detail how Aboriginal Australian circular time perceives events not just in sequence but as part of recurring patterns. These different ways of looking at time help us understand why people

[11] Marlous van Akker is a cultural anthropologist working at KIEN, the Dutch center for intangible cultural heritage. She did her PhD in Kenya on cultural heritage from a decolonial perspective. Inside the KIEN, she researches how the Dutch colonial past still reverberates in cultural practices seen today.

describe damage as something that lasts, without clear historical points, showing a more complete view of time instead of just being vague.

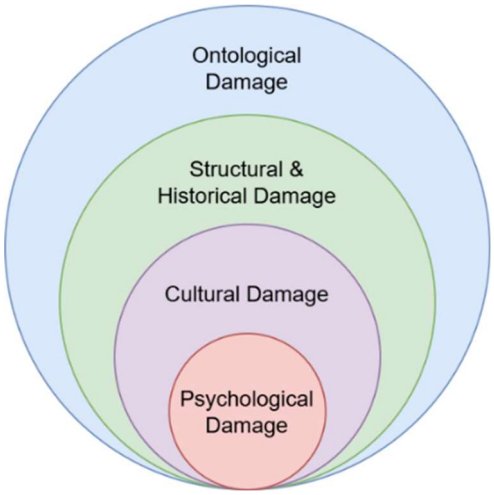

Figure 3: Forms of damage in order (original visualization)

To systematize the various forms of damage articulated by participants, identified categories have been structured into concentric levels: Ontological, Structural & historical, cultural, and Psychological Damage. This hierarchical ordering, depicted in Figure 1, allows for a comprehensive analysis of how deeper forms of harm manifest across different dimensions of Indigenous experience.

At the highest level, ontological damage pertains to the harm inflicted upon the very being and reality of individuals and communities. Building on this, structural and historical damage includes both past and ongoing systemic harms, such as economic exploitation and land loss, that have been created by colonial histories. These deeper forms of damage manifest as cultural damage, impacting visibility, identity, language, and traditional practices. Ultimately, all these forms contribute to psychological damage, affecting the mental and emotional well-being across generations.

Ontological Damage

The ontological damage is the harm inflicted by persistent colonial societies on the very being and reality of individuals and communities, not only those colonized but all people. These perspectives offer a profound lens for comprehending the interconnected forms of colonial damage, extending beyond individual experiences to the inherent fabric of reality.

The observation by one diaspora interviewee, highlighting a societal logic where certain bodies are deemed less valuable, directly links to Spivak's concept of 'Othering,' which establishes a social hierarchy based on constructing 'lesser human Others', as coined by Spivak (1985). This is echoed by scholars such as Gómez-Barris: He asserts that colonialism, beginning in the 15th century, "reorganized the world of the living into racialized classifications of death and disposability" (2019). As the respondent asserts that this got deeply imbedded into society, Gómez-Barris notes how the very "logic used to dehumanize the other is the same ideology that continually separates the human from the nonhuman" (Gómez-Barris, 2019). Gómez-Barris further explains how this process leads to "Man" seeing "himself as separate from the natural world, facilitating an extractive mode of seeing, doing, and being within a global system of race" (2019).

The sidelining of entire epistemologies, as raised by one diaspora interviewee, aligns with Arturo Escobar's work (2018), who frames this as an ontological conflict, where the dominant, colonial-infused ontology, which is dualistic and extractivist, clashes with and suppresses diverse, often relational ontologies.

Structural & Historical Damage

Flowing from ontological harm, structural and historical damage encompasses both past and enduring systemic harms.

Historical Colonial Crimes

Respondents highlighted "occupation," "slavery," "captivity," and "theft" of land as historical colonial crimes, describing Indigenous peoples as victims of the "largest genocide". This includes "red slavery" in Suriname and deaths in mines like Potosí. The Catholic Church's role in resource extraction and deploying its "own army," and the link between reservations and genocidal plans were also noted. This confirms the historical overview of Indigenous genocides in the Americas, including epidemics, wars of conquest, enslavement, forced dispossession, and the destruction of material resources.

The categorization as genocide is supported by Legters (1988), who asserts that American Indians are victims of genocide, defining it according to the UN Convention on Genocide from 1948 (cited in Brave Heart and DeBruyn, 1998). The Netherlands' significant responsibility for genocide and human rights violations that the respondents mention is in line with the accounts by Aralez, as noted in the background chapter of this thesis (2024). As respondents repeatedly state, there are few accounts in literature and academia about the Dutch colonial history concerning Indigenous people. Unsuccessful Google Scholar and wider web searches confirm this.

These accounts of historical colonial crimes collectively demonstrate the pervasive and devastating nature of colonialism that laid the foundation for enduring global neocolonial power dynamics.

Continued Colonial Power Structures

Participants saw a continuing global neo-colonial system, especially connected to the Netherlands, where there is ongoing economic exploitation (like outsourced carbon footprints and low wages for cheap production), a lack of respect for Indigenous rights, and control over knowledge.

This indicates that the participants in this research perceive colonialism as a current condition of contemporary societies rather than merely a relic of the past. This aligns with Quijano's work on coloniality as enduring power structures, as well as Henriksen, Hydle and Kramvig, who argue that neocolonialism persists today as a multifaceted force, underscoring that "neocolonization is still in progress in many countries," with "colonial forms of domination and subjugation... remain[ing] operative" across society (2019).

One interviewee also specifically signaled to the "Doctrine of Discovery", which is also discussed by authors such as Valandra et al.: The idea that Columbus "discovered America" is the "European-invented legal theory upon which all claim to, and acquisition of, Indian lands in North America is ultimately founded", which is rarely discussed, much less questioned, in "White society" (2020).

Present colonial land dispossession

The continued land dispossession experienced by Indigenous communities, as highlighted by participant accounts, directly reflects the enduring impact of colonial power structures. Reports of communities losing land to large companies for resource extraction or other uses match studies showing ongoing discrimination and land loss in Indigenous areas (Miranda, 2023; Dianderas, 2024). This ongoing acquisition, whether for agribusiness or other ventures, often constitutes what Escobar (2016) terms "ontological occupation," where distinct Indigenous ways of life are undermined by the imposition of a singular, dominant worldview (Escobar, 2016). Furthermore, the criminalization and imprisonment of land defenders are not isolated incidents but reflect a systemic repression widely documented in academic literature (Miranda, 2023).

These violations severely impact Indigenous communities, leading to dire consequences for their health and well-being, as scholars emphasize the intrinsic link between land and life (Faria & Martins, 2023). Such persistent acts of dispossession represent a profound humanitarian crisis, directly challenging the very existence of Indigenous peoples. It is also a tangible manifestation of an

ontological conflict, where the dominant Western ontology views land as an inert resource for exploitation, contrasting sharply with Indigenous ontologies that perceive land as a living, relational entity.

Cultural Damage

The different forms of cultural damage are all intrinsically linked and must be understood always in relation to each other and never separately.

Erasure of Culture and Language – Ethnocide

Participants described the ongoing erasure of culture and language, viewing it as ethnocide, where cultures are “murdered,” leading to the murder of identity and people. Examples include forced adaptation due to missionaries and the illegalization of dances and medicinal plants. Language loss is driven by historical prohibitions and contemporary non-economic value. These findings are widely supported by literature on the colonization of Indigenous people, as, for example, Walters et al. talk of "cultural practices, including languages, educational systems, spirituality, and the daily practices of everyday life [being] systematically attacked, oppressed, or outlawed" (2021). This directly supports the international definition of ethnocide from the Declaration of San José, which equates cultural genocide to a violation of international law (Heiskanen, 2021). The Othering and internalized shame, as presented in the results, contribute to the loss of culture and language. The ethnocide, which includes the loss of language, is a driver for the invisibilization of Indigenous people, as well as their pressure to assimilate. The suppression of Indigenous languages and ceremonies, as described by participants, constitutes a direct assault on Indigenous ontologies, as these cultural expressions are integral to their distinct ways of perceiving and relating to reality.

Invisibility

A central damage emerging from the results is the feeling of invisibility, especially in the Netherlands, often due to systemic silencing of Indigenous histories in education as well as popular culture. This finding is strongly consistent with Uitermark's (2021) research on Surinamese Indigenous people in the Netherlands, who also reported feeling invisible. Uitermark argues this invisibility is deeply rooted in historical processes of colonization and marginalization, a position that Indigenous migrants carried with them to the Netherlands (2021). She notes this is an experience common among Indigenous populations globally. This can be further linked to Lugones’ concepts of epistemic violence, where the denial of marginalized peoples’ knowledge, voices, and realities constitutes a profound form of trauma. This invisibility is largely a consequence of the erasure of culture, as explained above.

The lack of representation in popular culture (Sofia, Interview, 2025) and the "systematic silencing of Indigenous histories, worldviews, and contributions" (Respondent 3, Survey, 2025) supports Uitermark’s idea that invisibility continues because of reliance on narrow stereotypes of Indigeneity, which do not include different expressions. She also highlights how the structuring role of race in the Dutch context impedes the visibility and inclusion of voices from Indigenous people (Uitermark, 2021).

The invisibility can be seen as an outcome of the other forms of cultural damage as described by the respondents, including negative ascriptions & internalized inferiority, erasure of culture, and assimilation, but it also affects those in return. While the erasure of culture directly leads to more invisibility, increased invisibility also leads to further assimilation. Furthermore, invisibility, just as all other forms of cultural damage, is enabled only through the structural and historical forms of colonial damage, which in turn are enabled through the ontological damage.

Othering & Internalized Inferiority

A shared experience among research participants is the ascription of inferiority by society and the internal sense of inferiority. Respondents explicitly linked these two aspects, revealing the clear connection between the external acts of dehumanization suffered by Indigenous people and the resulting internalized inferiority and cultural shame.

The negative ascriptions and internalized inferiority, as described by research participants, strongly relate to Spivak's concept of Othering. Being labelled with derogatory terms and, in turn, internalizing those is central to the colonial project of Othering, in which a positive image of the colonizing society and culture is created, while the colonized people and their culture are categorized as inferior. Muller (2007) argues that the dehumanization of Indigenous people is inherent in the colonizing process and includes the denial of "Indigenous people's culture and moral view."

Constant exposure to this external gaze and messaging fosters internalized inferiority. As Fanon (1952, 1961) explored, being subjected to a dehumanizing external gaze can lead to internalizing feelings of worthlessness. Smith (1999) further notes how imperialist knowledge systems and messages of "worthlessness, laziness, and dependence" are fed back to colonized peoples.

This demonstrates how the external process of Othering translates into deeply damaging internalized feelings, impacting Indigenous self-worth, cultural connection, and identity across generations. This directly brings about psychological forms of damage, as further analyzed below, and also connects strongly to the ontological damage, as the complete devaluing of Indigenous epistemologies and ways of life.

Assimilation

The Indigenous stakeholders share how they or their parents would actively assimilate to mainstream culture, often to protect themselves or their children from discrimination, frequently stemming from the internalized inferiority, the discrimination that comes with the othering, and the already existing invisibility of Indigenous people in society. This relates to Quijano's explanation of how assimilation to the dominant culture is reached through discrimination, suppression, and discrediting of the colonized culture in the first place but also by the promise of prosperity through assimilation and incorporation of Western values like modernity. He states, "Then European culture was made seductive: it gave access to power. After all, beyond repression, the main instrument of all power is its seduction. Cultural Europeanization was transformed into an aspiration" (2007, original in Spanish 1992). The pressure to assimilate into mainstream culture, driven by both force and the promise of prosperity, reflects the imposition of a dominant Western ontology that seeks to homogenize diverse ways of life.

Psychological Damage

Ultimately, all these forms of damage contribute to psychological damage, affecting the mental and emotional well-being across generations.

Intergenerational Trauma

The accounts of the research participants on colonial trauma being passed on through generations resonate with literature on historical and intergenerational trauma. Scholars recognize trauma as historical, collective, and political, transmitted across generations and embedded in social structures. Traumas from colonization and genocide are not just remembered but inherited. Thinkers like Frantz Fanon (1956, 1961) showed how colonization profoundly wounds the psyche and identity, creating systemic trauma.

Lugones' accounts of epistemic violence and the trauma resulting from it directly connect to the observations of a diaspora interviewee of the "scars" that the epistemic violence produces. This

understanding aligns with Brave Heart and DeBruyn (1998), who discuss “chronic trauma and unresolved grief” as contributing to social problems among “American Indians.” Brave Heart and DeBruyn (1998) note how Indigenous people oftentimes pass on trauma from one generation to the next, similarly to Holocaust survivors, and articulate that this kind of trauma develops when grieving is not legitimized by the mainstream society, especially when that society is the perpetrator of the violence. This perspective underscores the deep historical and ongoing impacts described by participants living within the legacy of colonial systems.

Ongoing Discrimination & Internal Conflict

These ongoing impacts include present-day discrimination that Indigenous people experience, such as direct racist and discriminatory insults. The celebration of colonial holidays like Thanksgiving, which commemorates massacres, continues to inflict psychological harm on Indigenous individuals. Some research participants also highlighted conflicts within Indigenous communities, often centered around identity and questions of being "native enough". This points to the need to "unpack the colonialism behind" these conflicts.

Healing

This section addresses the second sub-research question: "How do the Indigenous stakeholders understand 'Healing'?". Healing, for the research participants, emerged as a deeply personal yet profoundly collective endeavor, often centered around the concept of reconnection and a continued struggle for justice and recognition. This focus on (re-) connection is echoed by Miranda Field, who argues for strength-based approaches that include “connections to self, community, more-than-human, and the land” (2022). Indigenous understandings of healing, as articulated by stakeholders, are intrinsically linked to re-establishing and affirming Indigenous ontologies, which fundamentally prioritize relationality and interconnectedness (Field, 2022).

Reconnection to Indigenous Identity and Culture

Reconnecting to Indigenous identity and culture evolves as a critical aspect of personal and collective healing processes. This active embracing of identity directly counters the colonial damage of internalized inferiority and Othering, as participants emphasize focusing on the strengths, resilience, and inherent wisdom of Indigenous communities and cultures. “Celebrating Survival” is a strategy advocated for by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, described as the activities that focus on the positive, celebrating resistance and affirming Indigenous Identities (1999). Furthermore, living and sharing their culture and identity actively counteracts assimilation, invisibility, and the erasure of culture. Cultural learning is central to healing, with participants identifying relearning cultural practices like dances, art, music, philosophies, and language as a path to healing from the suppression of Indigenous cultures.

Smith supports this, stating that "reclaiming, reconnecting, and reordering those ways of knowing which were submerged, hidden, or driven underground" is the way to move forward and heal (1999). This directly addresses the colonial damage of the erasure of culture and language, also called ethnocide, through self-empowerment. Language revitalization is described as a vessel for the revitalization of Indigenous knowledges, aligning with a focus group participant who emphasized that identity lies in language and healing must start there (Smith, 1999).

Several respondents also refer to the need to mourn for colonial losses and give space to the pain that derives from the damage and trauma experienced. Smith argues that collective remembering, specifically of the painful past, was often made impossible as communities and families were ripped apart, making the act of remembering today inherently linked to healing and transformation (1999). These diverse forms of reconnection directly address the wounds inflicted by colonialism, specifically

cultural damages like invisibility, Othering & internalized inferiority, erasure of culture and language (ethnocide), and assimilation, as well as psychological damage such as intergenerational trauma.

Reconnection to Community

The importance of community is highlighted by respondents, emphasizing Indigenous healing that moves away from Western individualism by focusing on the "we" instead of the "I" and by creating spaces to "be" with each other without a predefined end goal. Simply finding a community of belonging is considered immensely valuable. Relationships with community are critical to Indigenous healing journeys, as described by Field (2022), with people healing with the support of their communities rather than in isolation (Alt, 2017, as cited in Field 2022).

Respondents also stressed the need for healing relationships and presented personal examples of relationships with non-Indigenous people as examples. According to research participants, ceremonies play a crucial role in reconnecting to each other and fostering communal healing while also contributing to the reconnection to Indigenous identity and culture. Indigenous literature widely supports this. Concerns voiced by two interviewees about the non-authenticity of ceremonies when performed for White audiences are echoed by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), who refers to the spirituality industry culturally appropriating Indigenous spiritual beliefs and White individuals looking to realize spiritual fantasies through Indigenous ceremonies, which is considered a colonizing practice.

Reconnection to the Land

As a third realm, reconnection to the land emerged as crucial for healing. Indigenous stakeholders view healing as directed not only toward the physical body but also toward the spiritual and toward the land body. The importance of a connection to the land or territory is repeatedly emphasized. The two frontline interviewees consulted stressed the interconnectedness of land and human, explaining how "all living things have a soul" and that without territory there would be no meaning. Smith (1999) sees in this a clash of belief systems between the West and Indigenous people, in which the West sees nature as an inert thing, while many Indigenous cultures view nature as a "living entity, Mother Earth."

Colonial land dispossession has harmed these multi-species relationships Indigenous people had for centuries. The destruction of their environment often made it impossible to live in a close relationship with the land anymore, as rivers were poisoned and forests cut down. The disconnection from the land is seen as an outcome of colonialism, and the reconnection to the land as a decolonizing act, reaffirming Indigenous ontologies of relationality (Field, 2022). As research participants shared their perspectives on learning from the more-than-human world, Jordan (2015, as cited in Field, 2022) emphasized the importance of the relationship to nature in the healing processes and how nature can be a guide in healing from colonial damage.

Differences to Western Healing

Indigenous stakeholders highlighted the differences between Western and Indigenous understandings of healing. One interviewee noted the Western perspective of healing as scattered over different scenes, like physical, psychological, or environmental, while in Indigenous views it is all connected. Miranda Field notes the disconnection of Western notions of healing from the land: "As a society, disconnection with the land influenced how psychology teaches those who guide healing, the practices the field establishes as evidence-based, and what elements contribute to positive outcomes" (2022). This fundamental difference underscores a clash of ontologies: a Western ontology often fragmented and focused on pathology, versus an Indigenous ontology that views healing as holistic and relational, intrinsically linked to land, community, and spirit.

Struggle

Throughout the research, the understanding of Healing expands beyond the focus of reconnection and includes a struggle for recognition, reparation, and justice. This struggle deals with structural elements that cannot be healed inside communities but ask for changes in society.

Recognition of their Indigenous identity and their right to self-determination are principal issues for the research respondents. This relates closely to the present neo-colonial system, in which Indigenous people continue to be oppressed and dehumanized. Representation and recognition play a crucial role in tackling this, as supported by Smith: "representation as a political concept and representation as a form of voice and expression", who sees this as a needed response to the historical exclusion of Indigenous peoples from decision-making (1999), which is also noted by one interviewee.

For some Indigenous stakeholders, healing is deeply intertwined with the pursuit of justice. One interviewee emphasizes that while there are individual elements to healing, it contains "much more systemic elements" and "has to be structural." Several interviewees advocate the connection between healing and justice, arguing how healing must go beyond the individual and include striving for collective justice and reparation. This reflects Henriksen et al.'s conceptualization of healing as being tied to reconciliation and restorative justice (2021). Research respondents noted that healing cannot occur without systemic change. This relates to the discourse on transitional and transformative justice. Transformative justice in the Dutch context moves beyond symbolic apologies and commemorations to address structural inequalities rooted in colonial history (Immler, 2021). Unlike transitional justice, which focuses on acknowledgment, transformative justice aims to reshape power structures, ensuring meaningful reparations that foster systemic change and lasting equity in Dutch society (Immler, 2021). This struggle for justice specifically targets the structural aspects of colonial damage, particularly the ongoing colonial power structures and current land dispossession. The pursuit of justice and recognition is also an ontological struggle, as Indigenous peoples assert their right for their distinct ways of being and knowing to be acknowledged and respected within dominant societal structures.

Dealing with the Impossibility

Several research participants also shared their pessimistic view on the possibility of healing, referring to the current neo-colonial system as the impeding factor. One respondent pointed out the impossibility of restoring all that has been lost, even if political will were present, while also noting that implemented reparations are often small measures, never able to fix all the damage done. Healing that includes justice for all peoples is viewed as impossible in the capitalist, neo-colonialist system.

This is echoed by literature: the focus of transitional justice on returning the victim to their state before the crime has been widely critiqued by scholars who argue that the crimes of colonialism cannot be repaired, claiming that their loss is incalculable (Harney and Schinkel, 2021). Rather than gaining back everything stolen, scholars argue that reparations are about the ability to "dwell in the incalculable, the impossibility of accounting either for loss or for love." This critique is complemented by the view that reparations can never truly repair the damage done when they are conducted within a colonial and capitalist system (Huard and Moser, 2022). As the crimes committed in colonialism are viewed as ongoing and structural, they cannot be compensated nor forgiven while the same system remains in power. These scholars defend reimagining "reparation as a space to think, and enact, the impossible" (Huard and Moser, 2022), to imagine a new world based on the attempt to repair historical harm and trauma (Samudzi, 2020, as cited in Huard and Moser, 2022).

Forest of Healing

This section discusses the findings on the third sub-research question, "How do the Indigenous stakeholders envision the Forest of Healing project?" by drawing on literature as outlined in the conceptual framework and by connecting the findings to results from the previous chapters. The perspectives on the vision of the Forest of Healing will be linked to the understandings of Healing as explained before and subsequently to the colonial damage that it tackles. The challenges and doubts that research participants expressed will similarly be related to previous research findings when applicable by indicating what dimensions of Healing are at stake and what forms of damage could possibly be addressed if managed well. In her book on Indigenous Methodologies, Linda Tuhiwai Smith presents twenty-five Indigenous projects of research within the pursuit of social justice (1999). While the Forest of Healing is envisioned as a multi-layered project with research being just one branch, a total of twenty of the twenty-five projects is applicable to the Forest of Healing. Those will be clarified below.

Perspectives on the Idea – A Forest of Healing

Research participants predominantly share their enthusiasm about the project idea of the Forest of Healing. The project is acknowledged for its potential to contribute to societal transformations by providing an alternative space inside the capitalist system in which Indigenous people can work on "cultural recovery, cultural identity, and reparations." The possibility to work on topics such as cultural recovery and reparations is part of the struggle for recognition and justice, which are integral to the respondents' understanding of healing. These struggles in turn bear the potential to address colonial damage, including historical colonial crimes, the continued colonial power structures, as well as present colonial land dispossession and to contribute to societal transformations by providing an alternative ontological space inside the capitalist system, rooted in Indigenous ways of being and relating.

Reconnection as the predominant dimension of the Forest of Healing is echoed by Smith, who argues for the project of "Connecting", in which she refers to the different forms connecting can take, from connecting to land, to each other, to one's spirituality, and to each other (2012). Interconnection is furthermore central to many Indigenous cosmologies, as she emphasizes, "Many Indigenous creation stories link people through genealogy to the land, to stars and other places in the universe, to birds and fish, animals, insects, and plants. To be connected is to be whole" (Smith, 1999).

The forest of healing by itself, as well as with and through all the projects and dimensions it is envisioned to carry, makes a strong example of what a strong commitment to social justice for Indigenous people can look like. It exemplifies the Indigenous project of "envisioning," which concerns the act of asking people to imagine a positive future and "set a new vision" (Smith, 1999). These Indigenous visions are sometimes passed down through generations, binding people together, and hold strong as an act of resistance (Smith, 1999). Next to that, it is also a project of "creating," which speaks to the power of Indigenous communities to create and be creative under conditions of colonialism (Smith, 1999), by "channeling collective creativity in order to produce solutions to Indigenous problems." The aim of the Forest of Healing to be a space shaped by and for Indigenous people aligns with this.

A Space to Reconnect to Indigenous Identity & Culture

The reconnection to indigenous identity & culture emerged as a vital focus point for Forest of Healing, as it does in the conceptualizations of Healing as well. The Forest of Healing is envisioned as a welcoming space for Indigenous people so that casual and unquestioned presence can be facilitated. This deals with the need for healing in the sphere of identity reclamation and pride and tackles the

experiences of damage that circle around being made invisible, having to justify their indigeneity, and other forms of discrimination. The FoH is seen as a space in which Indigenous people can just *be*, when in many spaces they had to assimilate, and as a space in which they can regain cultural pride around their Indigenous identity through being together with fellow Indigenous people and, in an informal way, healing the colonial damage of internalized inferiority. These themes resonate strongly with the broader understanding of healing as reconnection, particularly to Indigenous identity and culture, as detailed in the previous subchapter on healing. The Forest of Healing aims to rebuild Indigenous ontology by fostering authentic presence and revitalizing cultural practices, which are expressions of distinct ways of being and knowing.

While the revitalization of culture and language are key dimensions of Healing for research participants, the Forest of Healing is viewed as the space to do so. A vast number of different practical and conceptual ideas are shared to foster culture, including language revitalization in the FoH. This includes the sharing of art, dances, music, stories, and other knowledges. The focus in the FoH on "Language Revitalization" as a path to a more alive soul and a different worldview is a powerful echo from the Healing subchapter. With such projects, the FoH is directly addressing the erasure of cultures and languages, also called ethnocide, as well as fostering visibility and recognition, seen as essential for Healing.

Participants also envision the FoH as a place of listening to Indigenous elders. This is highly related to the Indigenous project of storytelling, as outlined by Smith in her work on Decolonizing Methodologies (1999), in which she argues that oral histories by elders and women are an “integral part of all indigenous research” (Smith, 1999), as they are ways of passing down values, beliefs, and cosmologies. While pointing out the values of storytelling for Indigenous research, she highlights the importance of a focus on dialogue and conversations among Indigenous peoples, “to ourselves and for ourselves” (Smith, 1999). The research results emphasize this point, revealing that the participants shared a common need for increased and ongoing dialogue among various Indigenous groups.

The FoH is also advocated for as a space to acknowledge pain from colonial wounds without a need for justification and inside a community that shares the pain. This aligns with the "Space for Pain" highlighted in the Healing subchapter and addresses directly the damage of intergenerational trauma, as identified by respondents and supported by literature.

One way to mourn collectively is through ceremonies, which are considered an essential part of the Forest of Healing. Research participants illustrate how Indigenous ceremonies and rituals will enable the Indigenous visitors to connect to their spirituality and their ancestors. Ceremonies have been identified by research participants as vital for collective healing while also contributing to cultural revitalization and community building. Through that, it addresses the interconnected forms of cultural damage, being the erasure of culture and language—ethnocide—as well as intergenerational trauma and possibly also internal conflicts, assimilation, and internalized inferiority. These ceremonies are also seen as holding space for connecting to ancestors, highlighting a link to the "Ancestral Connection" discussed in the Healing subchapter. However, challenges are identified by respondents about doing ceremonies in the Netherlands, which have been discussed under Healing.

A Space to Reconnect to Community

The Forest of Healing is intended to be a space that fosters community. Research participants consider this element central to communal encounters, adding to the previous explanation of the FoH as a space for Indigenous people to simply “be.” Some envision informal hangout spaces and activities centered around the community instead of productivity, even if that productivity would be connected to the struggle for justice. These are perceived as highly decolonial by challenging capitalist, colonial ideals of

productivity. These informal hangout spaces can thus contribute to addressing the ontological damage in which Western epistemologies eliminate all alternative ways of life. Furthermore, it stresses the importance of community as a foundation for healing, as elaborated in the Healing chapter. By (re-)connecting to community, colonial damages such as the feeling of invisibility, internal conflict, and intergenerational trauma can also be addressed.

Besides fostering community inside the Forest of Healing, research participants also view the element of international collaboration and solidarity as central to the project. Some of the highlighted elements include exchange programs, joint projects beyond national borders, visibilizing frontline struggles, receiving international Indigenous guests, and being a network that can act when direct support is needed. These relate to several Indigenous projects as described by Smith, such as "Networking" and "Sharing", in which information, knowledge, and databases are shared by establishing trust among the Indigenous people participating (1999). In a society in which Indigenous people are historically excluded from decision-making, as noted in previous chapters, such networks can be a powerful way of learning, being informed, and informing. A practical example of international collaborations which the Forest of Healing could be part of concerns the project Smith outlines as "Returning", in which Indigenous artifacts, remains, and other stolen goods are returned to their respective Indigenous communities (1999). The Forest of Heling could take a leading role in these processes.

These efforts of the Forest of Healing to strengthen international solidarity and collaboration are represented in the understanding of Healing that the Indigenous stakeholders share, which includes struggle for justice and international solidarity, while also strengthening community on an international level. Through this international network of solidarity, the continued neo-colonial power structures are challenged.

A Space to Reconnect to the Land

Next to reconnecting to Indigenous identity and culture and to community, the research participants also imagine the Forest of Healing as a space of Indigenous land stewardship and reconnection to the land. By essentially being a forest with a central building, the Indigenous Knowledge Centre International, the Forest of Healing naturally provides a space in which reconnection to the land can take place. Research participants note how the FoH can become a place in which people can learn from and with the more-than-human world through relating to the land in a gentle and open way and working with ecological, agricultural, and medicinal knowledge. This relates back to learning from and respecting the more-than-human world, as a perspective of Healing voiced by respondents. The land is viewed as an actor in the healing process, both by stimulating healing and by healing herself. This traces back to the colonial damage of the erasure of culture and the colonial damage inflicted upon communities by destroying their lands and livelihoods. By practicing a more harmonious way of relating to nature, Indigenous epistemologies can be revitalized. This strong focus on interconnectedness in the FoH reflects an Indigenous ontology that understands humans as part of a living, sentient environment, rather than separate from it. The FoH is viewed as the sacred space, which naturally is located in nature, in which Indigenous people can connect to their spirituality.

A Space to Challenge the Neo-Colonial System

Several research participants also highlight the potential of the Forest of Healing to offer an alternative to the capitalist ways of living and relating by doing things differently, focusing on cultivating relationships of reciprocity with the human, natural, and more-than-human world. With this, the project addresses sentiments of research respondents, as explored in the Healing subchapter on "Dealing with the Impossibility", as well as the "Struggle for Justice." As capitalism is understood to be intertwined with colonialism and the current system as a neo-colonial configuration of power, the

forest of healing offers the research participants the perspective of an alternative space. By challenging prevailing capitalist systems and fostering alternative ways of living rooted in relational values, the FoH directly confronts the dominant Western ontology of separation and exploitation.

For the Indigenous stakeholders consulted in the research, the FoH arises as a powerful step in their struggle for recognition. The act of the Dutch state to give Indigenous people a piece of land is seen as a powerful symbolic and practical act, countering their experience of invisibility, as noted under colonial damage. The creation of the Forest of Healing also entails two specific Indigenous projects, as outlined by Smith: "Claiming" is the act of calling out the rights of the Indigenous communities and the duties of state actors (1999). The Forest of Healing is a direct example of this, as the claim to set up the Forest of Healing is tightly connected to official excuses for slavery by the Dutch king and ex-premier, who acknowledged the responsibility the Dutch state carries in dealing with its colonial past and the duties that arise from there.

Challenges and Doubts

The Indigenous stakeholders voice concerns and challenges concerning the Forest of Healing, which are discussed in the following section. The challenges all broadly connect to questions of authenticity.

Access

One critical issue voiced is the question of access; while some respondents prioritize the FoH as a sanctuary for Indigenous people, others believe it should be opened for everyone. While opening the space for non-Indigenous people could contribute to building healthy relationships with allies, which is acknowledged as central to Healing, the need for a space where Indigenous people can exist without having to justify their identity or pain is characterized by respondents as central. Research respondents agree that some form of openness to the general public is positive, while certain boundaries are necessary. Being open also to non-Indigenous people and providing them an opportunity to learn, the project has the potential to address ongoing discrimination and broaden possibilities for healing also to non-Indigenous people. Authors such as Henriksen, Hydle and Kramvig discuss the need for including "the wrongdoers and the community" in restorative practices for decolonization to promote true "repair, reconciliation, and the rebuilding of relationships" (2019).

Influence

Research participants also raise concerns about the risk of co-option by Western influences. It is argued that Western or capitalist forces could co-opt the project or that unconsciously it could be set out following Western paradigms of project management and knowledge conservation. This risks the identity and culture reclamation, set out clearly as a dimension of Healing and of the FoH project. Participants worry that instead Indigenous identity and culture could get appropriated. This is the case as the neo-colonial power structures, to which the respondents refer when talking about the colonial damage, still persist, and the project thus arises inside the system, with a constant risk of co-option. The concerns about Western influence highlight the ontological challenge of preventing Indigenous ways of being from being co-opted or diluted by dominant paradigms.

To prevent that, research participants advocate for a strong rootedness in Indigenous values, which is seen as even more important than the final outcome—the Forest of Healing. This strong focus on Indigenous values aligns with the Indigenous project of "Indigenizing", as "being grounded in the alternative conceptions of worldview and value systems" by emphasizing Indigenous knowledges and values.

Diversity

Lastly, the Indigenous stakeholders state how difficulties might arise through the diversity in Indigenous peoples that are supposed to shape the Forest of Healing together. While an acknowledgement of difference is advocated for, a shared understanding exists of the possibility to connect through difference and reconnect to community, which is seen as vital for Healing. Observations from the encounters and dialogues of Indigenous people that occurred throughout this research underscore this enriching value of dialogue among Indigenous people from diverse backgrounds.

Conclusion

Contributions Reparatory Justice

The past chapters provided a thorough analysis of the research topics by presenting the results for the sub-research questions and discussing them by applying the conceptual framework. In this last chapter, the focus returns to the main research question, which is, "What, according to Indigenous stakeholders in the Netherlands and on the frontlines, is needed for the Forest of Healing project to contribute to reparatory justice?" It will be discussed in what way the Forest of Healing has the potential to contribute to reparatory justice and to what types of reparatory justice that is.

The Forest of Healing project holds immense potential to contribute to reparatory justice by addressing various forms of colonial damage, by contributing to healing through reconnection, and by creating a space that can challenge the neo-colonial system. The focus, as explained by Indigenous stakeholders, lies on specific forms of reparatory justice.

A focus on Self-Repair – Healing vs. External Repair

The Forest of Healing has a strong focus on self-repair, rather than external reparations, as explained by Stanford-Xosei (2019). The vision of the Forest of Healing is centered around reconnection, and the community of Indigenous people is seen as the main actors to engage with the different forms of reconnection. While the possibility for non-Indigenous people to learn about Indigenous history and knowledge also emerges as an aspect of the project, a strong need for self-repair is apparent. This is also observable in the forms of colonial damage most directly and presently addressed by the Forest of Healing, as it is envisioned by Indigenous stakeholders: The reconnection to identity, culture, community, and the land addresses those forms of colonial damage that are located inside the harmed communities: the cultural damage of erasure of culture, the invisibility, the internalized inferiority and assimilation, as well as the psychological damage of intergenerational trauma and internal conflict. According to Stanford-Xosei, self-repair is crucial for both individuals and communities to regain their dignity, agency, and well-being, empowering them to make demands for external reparations (2019). Following this argumentation, the Forest of Healing can be a strong step in self-repair while laying the basis for further external repair. The understanding of Healing that the research participants share strongly relates to self-repair as explained by Stanford-Xosei. While for some, Healing also includes the dimension of struggle, which rather relates to external reparations, the strong focus of Indigenous stakeholders concerning Healing is on the personal and communal dimension, which is represented by Stanford-Xosei's concept of self-repair.

Healing, as explained through the conceptual framework, is a part of reparatory justice; logically, by contributing to Healing, the FoH automatically contributes to reparatory justice. The perspective of Standfort-Xosei, that Healing or self-repair is often a first necessity on the path towards reparatory justice, complements this understanding. Healing is thus not only a disconnected part of reparatory justice but a foundational element, paving the way for further demands of reparatory justice.

While not focused on as much as self-repair, efforts to fight for external repair that addresses structural and historical damage also become clear as ambitions of the Indigenous stakeholders and as potential for the project to include. Creating strong solidarity networks with Indigenous people worldwide, for example, is a way to challenge the continued colonial power structures which continue to disadvantage and dispossess Indigenous people by creating networks of mutual support. Research respondents also refer to the Forest of Healing as a place to work on reparations and struggle for social justice, which directly shows the connection to external reparations. The act of the Dutch state giving a piece of land to the Indigenous people for the Forest of Healing to be realized would in itself be a powerful form of external reparation, as argued by research respondents.

Transformative Justice

This study also collected several perspectives about the transformational potential of the Forest of Healing: The project emerging as a challenge to the capitalist, neo-colonial system holds powerful aspects of transformative justice (Immler, 2021). Transformative justice is that type of justice that moves beyond symbolic apologies and commemorations to address structural inequalities rooted in colonial history. The colonial damages encountered by the Indigenous stakeholders represent the structural inequalities, and the transformative justice is found in the participants's visions of the Forest of Healing tackling those damages.

Examples mentioned by Immler for transformative justice are community-driven initiatives advocating for social repair, for instance, those strengthening historical awareness, as well as broader education (2021). These are found in the Forest of Healing project, however with a strong focus on the Indigenous communities themselves and less on education of non-Indigenous people. It is argued that reparations can be a 'catalytic device' for transformation if there is engagement in reparations both from the side of victims, organizing into networks of change, and from the state side, addressing structural reforms. Educating non-Indigenous folks is also identified as a potential dimension of the Forest of Healing project. If non-Indigenous Dutch people would learn more about Indigenous histories and would be more aware of Dutch colonial history in relation to Indigenous people, the ongoing discrimination that the Indigenous stakeholders explain could decrease.

It is thus central that the Forest of Healing not only be facilitated by the Dutch state but also that there be clarity that this is only the beginning of the reparations needed. Structural changes in the wider society that are mentioned by research respondents, like, e.g., integrating Indigenous history and knowledge in school curricula, as well as the restoration of land rights for Indigenous people, must be taken on as goals beyond the realization of the physical space of the Forest of Healing. Beyond providing direct support initiatives with other Indigenous people globally, the project is also seen as an opportunity to address the ontological damage inflicted by colonialism. In the capitalist society, where values such as productivity and profit-making persist, the Forest of Healing could be a space of community building that focuses on Indigenous values of relationality and interconnectedness of all forms of life. Several respondents refer to this potential but also to the risk of the project being co-opted by Western capitalist ideals. To prevent this, the project should be firmly rooted in Indigenous values and epistemologies.

The doubts of research respondents about the possibility of Healing and reparations are echoed by some reparations scholars who argue that reparations can never fully serve to really repair the colonial damage done, at least while remaining in the colonial and capitalist system. They nevertheless iterate the importance of working on reparations, but from the perspective of imagining a new world based on true and full repair of the damage. The Forest of Healing holds huge potential to be such a space "to think, and enact, the impossible" (Huard and Moser, 2022).

The UN Reparations Framework and Transitional Justice

Generally, the international UN reparations framework is tightly associated with financial and material reparations and is considered a form of transitional justice, which is put in place in a top-down manner, without much knowledge about the effects on communities. This is clearly not applicable to the Forest of Healing, a project emerging from inside the affected communities themselves. However, there are some aspects of the Framework by the UN to which the Forest of Healing contributes.

The results and the discussion show that the Forest of Healing addresses several of the forms of reparatory justice as outlined by the UN. Rehabilitation is addressed as the FoH is envisioned as a place where Indigenous people can find psychological, social, and even medical support from and with other Indigenous people. So, it is a form of self-organized rehabilitation through community building, cultural revitalization, and spiritual practices. The project supports mental and emotional well-being by addressing intergenerational trauma and providing a sense of belonging. However, it is not rehabilitation, as an offering of those services by the perpetrator of violence, as it is originally described in the UN framework. Respecting and valuing the self-organized rehabilitation, the state must thus fully support and finance this to really comply with UN standards of reparations. The Forest of Healing also relates to the dimension of satisfaction, as outlined by the UN framework through truth disclosure by focusing on Indigenous histories and knowledge. It offers forms of public apology and commemoration through the act of symbolically giving "Land Back", acknowledging past wrongs.

It could be argued that restitution and compensation are also addressed partly, as through addressing various forms of colonial damage, especially in the cultural dimension, the victims are enabled to restore some of their “original situation”, in which they were before the harm occurred. However, as stated above, this original situation cannot be reached in colonial capitalism, as noted by respondents and scholars. The Forest of Healing can also be seen as a form of compensation for the colonial damage suffered; however, according to the UN framework, this relates to economically assessable damage like physical harm or lost opportunities, which is not a focus of the project.

As explained, the Forest of Healing largely focuses on self-repair and community efforts to heal, with ambitions to also struggle further for social justice. In the UN reparations language, this is the struggle for the guarantees of non-repetition, focusing on legal reforms, education, and mechanisms to prevent future violations. While this is not something that the project itself can realize, it can advocate for state actions in this direction.

Conclusion

The Indigenous stakeholders consulted in this research shared their perspectives on colonial damage, their understanding of healing, and their visions of the Forest of Healing. The project has large potential to contribute to reparatory justice by implementing the visions of the stakeholders, as those cover much of their needs for Healing and tackle almost all forms of colonial damage, some more and others less directly.

It is undeniable that the Forest of Healing has the potential to contribute to various kinds of reparatory justice by addressing almost all forms of colonial damage identified. While some are addressed more directly, such as the cultural and psychological forms through efforts of reconnection to Indigenous identity, culture, community, and the land, structural and historical forms of damage can be addressed less directly. Even though the project itself does not have the power to tackle all the historical colonial crimes, the continued colonial power structures, or the present colonial land dispossession, it has the potential to challenge the neo-colonial system by creating a space rooted in Indigenous values, which represents a stark contrast to society. By creating a project that does not subscribe to the ontology of separation, as propagated in capitalism, the FoH also has the potential to address the Ontological

damage done. Serving as a space for organizing for social justice and Indigenous liberation, the project brings many opportunities for strengthening the struggle for reparations, potentially even across borders, due to its focus on international solidarity. This essentially is also a struggle against the continued colonial power structures, thus addressing this form of structural damage.

The project primarily emphasizes self-repair, aiming to be a space for healing that is both personal and collective, largely contained within the Indigenous community itself. This concept of self-repair is crucial for individuals and communities to regain dignity, agency, and well-being, empowering them to eventually demand external reparations. The Forest of Healing, by focusing on reconnection to identity, culture, community, and land, directly addresses colonial damages from the cultural and psychological sphere, all of which are located within the harmed communities. This focus on self-repair is considered a foundational element of reparatory justice, paving the way for future demands for broader external reparations. The project also holds transformative justice potential by challenging the neo-colonial system and promoting community-driven initiatives for social repair and historical awareness. While not a top-down UN framework application, it aligns with aspects like rehabilitation and satisfaction through self-organized community building and acknowledging past wrongs.

This research was primarily directed to producing valuable and practical outcomes for the commissioning organization, and the organization realizing the Forest of Healing. However, it has also produced significant new information for the broader academic discourse that both complements and builds upon previous studies. The results highlight how multi-dimensional, complex and enduring colonial damage is and how Indigenous people view healing as a deep process of reconnecting to one's identity, culture, community, and the land. This is consistent with Immler's (2021) focus on self-repair as a fundamental component of reparatory justice, which is especially relevant for diasporic Indigenous people, as Uitermark (2021) examines. In addition, the idea of the Forest of Healing as a place to "think, and enact, the impossible" directly responds to the academic criticisms on surface-level reparations of Harney and Schinkel (2021) and Huard and Moser (2022), showing that real reparations require confronting and altering the long-standing neo-colonial systems to envision a better future.

Recommendations

1. The Forest of Healing project, as well as the process to reach it, should be firmly rooted in Indigenous values, ontologies and epistemologies to ensure that the project does not get co-opted by Western ideals like productivity or profit. This stresses the need to take the time for careful preparation and consideration of the next steps in the creation of the Forest of Healing.

2. The former includes having the needed discussions within the Indigenous communities about critical topics, such as those mentioned in the reflection chapter. The stimulation of dialogue between and among different Indigenous people and communities in the Netherlands should be made a priority. Both in the process of setting up the Forest of Healing, to make sure it really serves the communities it aims to stand for, and once it exists, to further strengthen relationships. Having the Forest of Healing as a physical space where the conversations between Indigenous people can arise naturally will further facilitate dialogue.

3. Establishing strong networks of solidarity with Indigenous people on the frontlines should be a central part not only of the Forest of Healing but of the process of moving towards it. The researcher experiences challenges in connecting to frontline Indigenous people to talk about the topic. It should be further explored what needs and wishes for the Forest of Healing from frontline communities are, as this could not fully be achieved with this research. The possibility that interest from Indigenous people from the frontlines can be low due to more direct struggles and engagements should also be considered.

4. The indigenous stakeholders consulted stress the importance of self-repair and healing happening in their own Indigenous community and the wider Indigenous diaspora in the Netherlands. It becomes apparent that self-repair is the strongest need among respondents, which should be prioritized as a powerful part of reparations while paving the way for demanding more structural reparations. When there is the energy and space to include external people in educational and healing activities in the forest, that should be realized, as it has the potential to create awareness and bring structural change.
5. Using the space for radical organizing to challenge the neo-colonial system is also highly valuable and should be integrated when possible; however, the need for informal spaces without a productive goal (which can be activistic) should be respected.
6. It is recommended that the people working on the Forest of Healing, while focusing on the project centered around Self-Repair and Indigenous Healing, continue to advocate for further reparations by the Dutch state. This includes the responsibilities of the Dutch state to hold accountable those corporations that actively contribute to the destruction of Indigenous lands worldwide, include truthful colonial history in curricula, and extensively fund Indigenous-led initiatives, like the Forest of Healing.

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Annexes

Annex 1 – Interview Guide

Semi-structured Interview Guide: Forest of Healing Project (Netherlands)
Introduction

- Thank the interviewee for their participation and for signing the consent form.
- Reiterate the purpose of the research: To gather Indigenous perspectives on the Forest of Healing (FoH) project and its potential to contribute to reparatory justice.
- Ensure anonymity and confidentiality.
- Explain the interview process and estimated duration (45 minutes to 1 hour, under 1.5 hours maximum).
- Confirm that the interviewee has signed the consent form and ask if they have any questions about it.
- Obtain verbal confirmation that they understand their right to withdraw consent at any time.
- **Obtain verbal consent for recording the interview.**

Opening Questions (5-10 minutes)
- Could you please share a bit about yourself and your connection to your Indigenous heritage?
- What does your Indigenous identity mean to you, particularly in the context of living in the Netherlands?
- (How would you describe the current relationship between the Dutch government and Indigenous communities, both within the Netherlands and on the frontlines?)

Understanding the Damage (15-20 minutes)
- What, according to your perspective, are the most significant harms caused by Dutch colonialism that continue to affect Indigenous communities today? (Probe for specific examples in the Dutch context)
- How do these historical injustices manifest in the daily lives of Indigenous people in the Netherlands?
- What forms of damage or loss do you observe within your community that you believe require reparatory justice?

Exploring the Concept of Healing (15-20 minutes)
- What does "healing" mean to you from your Indigenous perspective? /
  What does “healing” mean to you personally? How does that relate to your Indigenous heritage/culture?
- What processes and practices are associated with healing in your tradition?
- How does this understanding of healing differ from Western concepts of healing?

Understanding the potential of the Forest of Healing (15-20 minutes)
- What are your initial thoughts and feelings about the Forest of Healing project, being developed in the Netherlands?
- Having in mind your perspective of healing, how do you think the Forest of Helaing project could contribute to that? / What kind of healing do you think this project could enable?
- What do you hope for from the 'Forest of Healing' project?
  (What aspects of the project do you find most promising or exciting?)
  (Do you have any concerns or reservations about the project?)
- What would be a sign of success for you in terms of healing through the project?
  (So imagine the Forest of Healing has been set up five years ago. It managed to really contribute to healing. How would the situation look like then?)
- What specific outcomes or changes would you like to see result from the FoH project in terms of healing and justice?
- How can the FoH project best serve the needs and aspirations of Indigenous communities, both within the Netherlands and on the frontlines?

The Forest of Healing and Reparatory Justice (15-20 minutes)
- What aspects of the project do you find most promising or exciting?

- Do you have any concerns or reservations about the project?
- In your opinion, what needs to be considered or included in the FoH project to ensure it genuinely contributes to reparatory justice for Indigenous communities?

Concluding Questions (5 minutes)

- Is there anything else you would like to share about the Forest of Healing project, reparatory justice, or healing?
- Do you have any suggestions or recommendations for the project developers or researchers involved in this study?

Thank You and Follow-Up

- Express gratitude for the interviewee's time and insights.
- Offer to share a summary of the findings when the research is complete.
- Provide contact information for any follow-up questions or clarifications.
- Ask if I can share little questionnaire and if they can share it in networks.

Adapted Semi-structured Interview Guide: Forest of Healing Project (For Frontline Indigenous People)

Introduction

- Thank the interviewee for their participation.
- Language: Dutch, Spanish or English
- Reiterate the purpose of the research: To gather Indigenous perspectives on the Forest of Healing (FoH) project and its potential to contribute to reparatory justice, specifically from frontline communities.
- Explain the interview process and estimated duration (45 minutes to 1 hour, under 1.5 hours maximum).
- Confirm that the interviewee has signed the **consent form** and ask if they have any questions about it.
- Obtain verbal confirmation that they understand their right to withdraw consent at any time.
- Obtain verbal consent for recording the interview.

Opening Questions (5-10 minutes)

- Could you please share a bit about yourself, your community, and your connection to your Indigenous heritage?
- What are some of the key challenges and opportunities facing your community today?
- How would you describe the current relationship between your community and the Dutch government/entities?

Understanding the Damage (15-20 minutes)

- When you think about the harms caused by Dutch colonialism that continue to affect your people today, what comes to mind? (Probe for specific examples)
- How do these historical and contemporary injustices impact the daily lives and well-being of your community?
- What forms of damage or loss do you observe that require reparatory justice?

Exploring the Concept of Healing (15-20 minutes)

- What does "healing" mean for you personally and in the context of your community and Indigenous knowledge systems?
- Are there specific processes, practices, or ceremonies within your culture that are associated with healing from historical trauma and ongoing injustice?
- How can this understanding of healing inform initiatives like the Forest of Healing project?

Understanding the potential of the Forest of Healing (15-20 minutes)

- What are your initial thoughts and feelings about the Forest of Healing project, being developed in the Netherlands?

- Having in mind your perspective of healing, how do you think the Forest of Helaing project could contribute to that? / What kind of healing do you think this project could enable?
- What do you hope for from the 'Forest of Healing' project?
  (What opportunities or potential benefits do you see in the FoH project for your community and Indigenous peoples globally?)
  (Do you have any concerns or reservations about the project, particularly from a frontline perspective?)
- What would be a sign of success for you in terms of healing through the project?
  (So imagine the Forest of Healing has been set up five years ago. It managed to really contribute to healing. How would the situation look like then?)
  (What specific outcomes or changes would you like to see result from the FoH project in terms of healing and justice?)
- In your opinion, what needs to be considered or included in the FoH project to ensure it genuinely contributes to reparatory justice for Indigenous communities beyond the borders of the Netherlands?
  How can the FoH project foster solidarity and collaboration between Indigenous communities in the Netherlands and frontline communities like yours?

Concluding Questions (5 minutes)

- Is there anything else you would like to share about the Forest of Healing project, reparatory justice, or healing?
- Do you have any suggestions or recommendations for the project developers or researchers involved in this study?

Thank You and Follow-Up

- Express gratitude for the interviewee's time and insights.
- Offer to share a summary of the findings when the research is complete.
- Provide contact information for any follow-up questions or clarifications.

Semi-structured Interview Guide: Non-Indigenous Actors (Background Research on FoH Project)
Introduction

- Thank the interviewee for their participation.
- Explain purpose of research and of specific interview.
- Share my motivation.
- Reiterate the purpose of the interview: to gather background information on the Forest of Healing (FoH) project from non-Indigenous actors involved in its development.
- Explain the interview process, semi-structured and estimated duration (30 minutes to 45 minutes).
- Thanking for filling out form of consent, asking for permission to **record, transcribe**.
- Any questions before we start?

Opening Questions

- Could you please share a bit about yourself and your professional role in KIEN/Museum Naturalis?
- Follow up on the work of KIEN

Connection FoH and Organization

- How did you/your organization become involved in the FoH project?
- What is your organization's role in the development of the FoH project?
- What are your overall impressions and expectations of the FoH project?

Challenges and Opportunities

- What are the main challenges you foresee in the development and implementation of the FoH project?
- What are the biggest opportunities you see for the FoH project to make a positive impact?

Concluding Questions
- Is there any information about the FoH project that has not been publicly released yet?
- Is your organization currently working on any publications about the FoH project?
- Do you have any other thoughts or insights on the FoH project that you would like to share?

Thank You and Follow-Up
- Express gratitude for the interviewee's time and insights.
- Offer to share a summary of the findings when the research is complete.

Semi-gestructureerde interviewgids: Forest of Healing Project (Nederland)
Introductie

- Bedank de geïnterviewde voor zijn deelname en voor het ondertekenen van het toestemmingsformulier.
- Herhaal het doel van het onderzoek: het verzamelen van inheemse perspectieven op het Forest of Healing (FoH)-project en het potentieel ervan om bij te dragen aan herstelrecht.
- Zorg voor anonimiteit en vertrouwelijkheid.
- Leg het interviewproces en de geschatte duur uit (45 minuten tot 1 uur, maximaal minder dan 1,5 uur).
- Bevestig dat de geïnterviewde het toestemmingsformulier heeft ondertekend en vraag of hij/zij er vragen over heeft.
- Verkrijg een mondelinge bevestiging dat ze hun recht begrijpen om hun toestemming op elk moment in te trekken.
- Verkrijg mondelinge toestemming voor het opnemen van het interview.

Openingsvragen (5-10 minuten)
- Kunt u iets vertellen over uzelf en uw verbinding met uw inheemse erfgoed?
- Wat betekent je inheemse identiteit voor jou, vooral in de context van het leven in Nederland?
- (Hoe zou u de huidige relatie tussen de Nederlandse overheid en inheemse gemeenschappen omschrijven, zowel in Nederland als in de frontlinie?)

Inzicht in de schade (15-20 minuten)
- Wat zijn, volgens uw perspectief, de belangrijkste schade veroorzaakt door het Nederlandse kolonialisme die inheemse gemeenschappen vandaag de dag nog steeds treft? (Onderzoek naar specifieke voorbeelden in de Nederlandse context)
- Hoe manifesteren deze historische onrechtvaardigheden zich in het dagelijks leven van inheemse volkeren in Nederland?
- Welke vormen van schade of verlies ziet u binnen uw gemeenschap waarvan u denkt dat ze herstelrecht vereisen?

Verkenning van het concept van heling (15-20 minuten)

- Wat betekent heling voor jou vanuit je inheemse perspectief? /Wat betekent "heling" voor jou persoonlijk? Hoe verhoudt dat zich tot uw inheemse erfgoed/cultuur?
- Welke processen en praktijken worden in uw traditie geassocieerd met heling?
- Waarin verschilt dit begrip van heling van westerse concepten van heling?

Inzicht in het potentieel van het Forest of Healing (15-20 minuten)

- Wat zijn je eerste gedachten en gevoelens over het Forest of Healing-project dat in Nederland wordt ontwikkeld?
- Met uw perspectief op genezing in gedachten, hoe denkt u dat het Forest of Helaing-project daaraan zou kunnen bijdragen? / Wat voor soort genezing denk je dat dit project mogelijk zou kunnen maken?
- Wat hoop je van het 'Forest of Healing' project?
  (Welke aspecten van het project vind je het meest veelbelovend of opwindend?)
  (Heeft u zorgen of bedenkingen bij het project?)
- Wat zou voor u een teken van succes zijn in termen van genezing door het project?
  (Dus stel je voor dat het Forest of Healing vijf jaar geleden is opgericht. Het slaagde erin om echt bij te dragen aan genezing. Hoe zou de situatie er dan uitzien?)
- Welke specifieke resultaten of veranderingen zou u graag zien resulteren in het FoH-project op het gebied van genezing en gerechtigheid?
- Hoe kan het FoH-project het beste voldoen aan de behoeften en ambities van inheemse gemeenschappen, zowel in Nederland als in de frontlinie?

Het bos van genezing en herstelrecht (15-20 minuten)

- Welke aspecten van het project vind je het meest veelbelovend of opwindend?
- Heeft u zorgen of bedenkingen bij het project?
- Wat moet naar uw mening worden overwogen of opgenomen in het FoH-project om ervoor te zorgen dat het echt bijdraagt aan herstelrecht voor inheemse gemeenschappen?

Afsluitende vragen (5 minuten)

- Is er nog iets dat je zou willen delen over het Forest of Healing-project, herstelrecht of heling?
- Heeft u suggesties of aanbevelingen voor de projectontwikkelaars of onderzoekers die bij dit onderzoek betrokken zijn?

Bedankt en follow-up

- Spreek dankbaarheid uit voor de tijd en inzichten van de geïnterviewde.
- Bied aan om een samenvatting van de bevindingen te delen wanneer het onderzoek is voltooid.
- Geef contactgegevens op voor eventuele vervolgvragen of verduidelijkingen.
- Vraag of ik een kleine vragenlijst kan delen en of ze deze in netwerken kunnen delen

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Aangepaste semi-gestructureerde interviewgids: Forest of Healing-project (voor inheemse volkeren in de frontlinie)

Introductie

- Bedank de geïnterviewde voor zijn deelname en voor het ondertekenen van het toestemmingsformulier.

- Herhaal het doel van het onderzoek: het verzamelen van inheemse perspectieven op het Forest of Healing (FoH)-project en het potentieel ervan om bij te dragen aan herstelrecht, met name van gemeenschappen in de frontlinie.
- Leg het interviewproces en de geschatte duur uit (45 minuten tot 1 uur, maximaal minder dan 1,5 uur).
- Bevestig dat de geïnterviewde het toestemmingsformulier heeft ondertekend en vraag of hij er vragen over heeft.
- Verkrijg een mondelinge bevestiging dat ze hun recht begrijpen om hun toestemming op elk moment in te trekken.
- Verkrijg mondelinge toestemming voor het opnemen van het interview.

Openingsvragen (5-10 minuten)

- Kunt u iets vertellen over uzelf, uw gemeenschap en uw verbinding met uw inheemse erfgoed?
- Wat zijn enkele van de belangrijkste uitdagingen en kansen waarmee uw gemeenschap vandaag de dag wordt geconfronteerd?
- Hoe zou u de huidige relatie tussen uw gemeenschap en de Nederlandse overheid/entiteiten omschrijven?

Inzicht in de schade (15-20 minuten)

- Wat schiet je te binnen als je denkt aan de schade die het Nederlandse kolonialisme heeft aangericht en die jouw volk vandaag de dag nog steeds treft? (Onderzoek naar specifieke voorbeelden)
- Hoe beïnvloeden deze historische en hedendaagse onrechtvaardigheden het dagelijks leven en het welzijn van uw gemeenschap?
- Welke vormen van schade of verlies ziet u die herstelrecht vereisen?

Verkenning van het concept van genezing (15-20 minuten)

- Wat betekent "heling" voor u personelijk en in de context van en inheemse kennissystemen?
- Zijn er specifieke processen, praktijken of ceremonies binnen uw cultuur die verband houden met heling (van historisch trauma en aanhoudend onrecht)?
- Hoe kan dit begrip van heling initiatieven zoals het Forest of Healing-project informeren?

Inzicht in het potentieel van het Forest of Healing (15-20 minuten)

- Wat zijn je eerste gedachten en gevoelens over het Forest of Healing-project dat in Nederland wordt ontwikkeld?
- Met uw perspectief op genezing in gedachten, hoe denkt u dat het Forest of Helaing-project daaraan zou kunnen bijdragen? / Wat voor soort genezing denk je dat dit project mogelijk zou kunnen maken?
- Wat hoop je van het 'Forest of Healing' project?
  (Welke kansen of potentiële voordelen ziet u in het FoH-project voor uw gemeenschap en inheemse volkeren wereldwijd?)
  (Heeft u zorgen of bedenkingen bij het project, met name vanuit een frontlinieperspectief?)
- Wat zou voor u een teken van succes zijn in termen van genezing door het project?
  (Dus stel je voor dat het Forest of Healing vijf jaar geleden is opgericht. Het slaagde erin om echt bij te dragen aan genezing. Hoe zou de situatie er dan uitzien?)
  (Welke specifieke resultaten of veranderingen zou u graag zien resulteren in het FoH-project op het gebied van genezing en gerechtigheid?)

- Wat moet er volgens u worden overwogen of opgenomen in het FoH-project om ervoor te zorgen dat het daadwerkelijk bijdraagt aan herstelrecht voor inheemse gemeenschappen buiten de grenzen van Nederland?
  Hoe kan het FoH-project solidariteit en samenwerking bevorderen tussen inheemse gemeenschappen in Nederland en frontliniegemeenschappen zoals die van jou?

Afsluitende vragen (5 minuten)

- Is er nog iets dat je zou willen delen over het Forest of Healing-project, herstelrecht of genezing?
- Heeft u suggesties of aanbevelingen voor de projectontwikkelaars of onderzoekers die bij dit onderzoek betrokken zijn?

Bedankt en follow-up

- Spreek dankbaarheid uit voor de tijd en inzichten van de geïnterviewde.
- Bied aan om een samenvatting van de bevindingen te delen wanneer het onderzoek is voltooid.
- Geef contactgegevens op voor eventuele vervolgvragen of verduidelijkingen.

Semi-gestructureerde interviewgids: niet-inheemse actoren (achtergrondonderzoek naar het FoH-project)

Introductie

- Bedank de geïnterviewde voor zijn deelname.
- Herhaal het doel van het interview: het verzamelen van achtergrondinformatie over het Forest of Healing (FoH) project van niet-inheemse actoren die betrokken zijn bij de ontwikkeling ervan.
- Leg het interviewproces en de geschatte duur (45 minuten tot 1 uur) uit.

Openingsvragen

- Kunt u iets vertellen over uzelf en uw professionele rol in relatie tot het Forest of Healing-project?
- Hoe ben jij/jouw organisatie betrokken geraakt bij het FoH-project?
- Wat is de rol van uw organisatie in de ontwikkeling van het FoH-project?
- Wat zijn uw algemene indrukken en verwachtingen van het FoH-project?

Projectachtergrond en ontwikkeling

- Wat waren de belangrijkste drijfveren en doelen achter de start van het FoH-project?
- Hoe heeft het project zich ontwikkeld sinds de eerste conceptie?
- Welke belangrijke beslissingen hebben de huidige vorm gevormd?
- Wat zijn de belangrijkste onderdelen en geplande activiteiten van het FoH-project?
- Wat is de tijdlijn voor de uitvoering van het project en wat zijn de belangrijkste mijlpalen?

Samenwerking en partnerschappen

- Hoe heeft het project zich beziggehouden met inheemse gemeenschappen en organisaties bij de ontwikkeling ervan?
- Welke andere belangrijke partnerschappen en samenwerkingen zijn essentieel voor het succes van het FoH-project?

- Wat zijn de belangrijkste uitdagingen en kansen bij het bevorderen van samenwerking tussen diverse belanghebbenden?

Uitdagingen en kansen

- Wat zijn de belangrijkste uitdagingen die u voorziet bij de ontwikkeling en uitvoering van het FoH-project?
- Wat zijn de grootste kansen die je ziet voor het FoH-project om een positieve impact te maken?

Afsluitende vragen

- Is er informatie over het FoH-project die nog niet openbaar is gemaakt?
- Werkt uw organisatie momenteel aan publicaties over het FoH-project?
- Heb je nog andere gedachten of inzichten over het FoH-project die je zou willen delen?

Bedankt en follow-up

- Spreek dankbaarheid uit voor de tijd en inzichten van de geïnterviewde.
- Bied aan om een samenvatting van de bevindingen te delen wanneer het onderzoek is voltooid.

Guía de Entrevista Semiestructurada Adaptada: Proyecto Bosque de Sanación (Para Pueblos Indígenas de Primera Línea)

Introducción

- Muchas gracias en primer lugar por su participación. ¿Usted tuvo la oportunidad de leer el formulario de consentimiento? ¿Tiene alguna duda?
- Reiterar el propósito de la investigación: Juntar perspectivas indígenas sobre el proyecto Forest of Healing (Bosque de la sanación) y su potencial para contribuir a la justicia reparatoria, específicamente de las comunidades de primera línea.
- Explique el proceso de la entrevista y la duración estimada (de 45 minutos a 1 hora, menos de 1,5 horas como máximo).
- Confirme que el entrevistado ha firmado el formulario de consentimiento y pregúntele si tiene alguna pregunta al respecto.
- Obtener confirmación verbal de que comprende su derecho a retirar el consentimiento en cualquier momento.
- Obtener el consentimiento verbal para grabar la entrevista.

Preguntas iniciales (5-10 minutos)

- ¿Podrías compartir un poco sobre ti, tu trabajo, tu comunidad y tu conexión con tu herencia indígena?
- ¿Cuáles son algunos de los principales desafíos y oportunidades que enfrenta su comunidad hoy en día?
- ¿Cómo describiría la relación actual entre su comunidad y el gobierno y las entidades holandesas?

Entendiendo el Daño (15-20 minutos)

En Proyecto Bosque de sanacion, importante entender el daño hecho a los pueblos indígenas. En investigación hablo con personas sobre daños hecho específicamente por el colonialismo holandés, si tiene alguna conexión en su caso, porfavor cuenta, si no quería preguntar si podría hablar sobre

- Desde su perspectiva, ¿cuáles son los daños más significativos causados por el colonialismo holandés que continúan afectando a su comunidad y a los pueblos indígenas a nivel mundial? (Sondeo para ejemplos específicos)
- ¿Cómo impactan estas injusticias históricas y contemporáneas en la vida cotidiana y el bienestar de su comunidad?
- ¿Qué formas de daño o pérdida observa que requieren justicia reparatoria?

Explorando el concepto de sanación (15-20 minutos)

- ¿Qué significa "sanación" para usted personalmente? como es relacionado a su comunidad y a los sistemas de conocimiento indígena?
- ¿Existen procesos, prácticas o ceremonias específicas dentro de su cultura que se asocian con la sanación del trauma histórico y la injusticia continua?
- ¿Cómo puede esta comprensión de la sanación informar iniciativas como el proyecto Bosque de la sanación (Forest of Healing)?

Entendiendo el potencial del Bosque de la Sanación (15-20 minutos)

- ¿Cuáles son tus pensamientos y sentimientos iniciales sobre el proyecto Forest of Healing, que se está desarrollando en los Países Bajos?
- Teniendo en cuenta tu perspectiva de la sanación, ¿cómo crees que el proyecto del Bosque de la Sanación podría contribuir a ello? / ¿Qué tipo de sanación crees que podría permitir este proyecto?
- ¿Qué esperas del proyecto 'Forest of Healing'?
  (¿Qué oportunidades o beneficios potenciales ve en el proyecto de FoH para su comunidad y los pueblos indígenas a nivel mundial?)
  (¿Tiene alguna preocupación o reserva sobre el proyecto, particularmente desde una perspectiva de primera línea?)
- ¿Cuál sería una señal de éxito para ti en términos de sanación a través del proyecto?
  (Así que imagina que el Bosque de la Sanación se estableció hace cinco años. Logró contribuir realmente a la sanación. ¿Cómo sería la situación entonces?)
  (¿Qué resultados o cambios específicos le gustaría ver como resultado del proyecto FoH en términos de sanación y justicia?)
- En su opinión, ¿qué debe tenerse en cuenta o incluirse en el proyecto de Amigos de la Salud para garantizar que realmente contribuya a la justicia reparadora para las comunidades indígenas más allá de las fronteras de los Países Bajos?
  ¿Cómo puede el proyecto FoH fomentar la solidaridad y la colaboración entre las comunidades indígenas de los Países Bajos y las comunidades de primera línea como la suya?

Preguntas finales (5 minutos)

- ¿Hay algo más que te gustaría compartir sobre el proyecto Forest of Healing, la justicia reparatoria o la sanación?
- ¿Tiene alguna sugerencia o recomendación para los desarrolladores de proyectos o investigadores involucrados en este estudio?

Gracias y seguimiento

- Exprese gratitud por el tiempo y las percepciones del entrevistado.
- Ofrécete a compartir un resumen de los hallazgos cuando se complete la investigación.
- Proporcione información de contacto para cualquier pregunta o aclaración de seguimiento.

Annex 2 – Form of Consent

Consent Form for Participation in Research on the Forest of Healing Project

Research Title: The Forest of Healing: An Indigenous Struggle for Reparations in the Colonial Core
Researcher: Elena Ruiz
Affiliation: Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences, Aralez

Introduction:
You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Elena Ruiz as part of a Bachelor Thesis in International Development Management. The research aims to explore the perspectives of Indigenous stakeholders on the Forest of Healing project and its potential contribution to reparatory justice.

Purpose of the Research:
The research seeks to understand how the Forest of Healing project can contribute to reparatory justice from the perspectives of Indigenous stakeholders in the Netherlands and the frontlines. This will involve exploring the experiences of damage, understandings of healing, and perspectives on the project's potential impact.

Data Collection Methods:
The research will involve interviews, surveys and focus groups.

- Interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed.
- Surveys will be anonymous.
- Focus group discussions will be audio-recorded and transcribed.

Voluntary Participation:
Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You have the right to decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. You can withdraw your consent by contacting the researcher via email or by phone.

Use of Data:
The data collected from you will be used for the purposes of this research study, including the research report, presentations, and potential publications. The data may be used for future research projects related to Indigenous issues and reparatory justice. The data may also be used deliberately by Indigenous people for emancipatory work collaborations. The final report will be stored in the archive of the Indigenous Knowledge Centre.

Access to Data:
The data collected from you will be kept confidential and will only be accessible to the researcher.

Quote Attribution:
Please indicate below how you would like your contributions to be attributed in the research:

- I would like to be quoted using my real name. ☐
- I would like to be quoted using a pseudonym. ☐ Pseudonym: _____
- I would like the researcher to choose a random pseudonym for me. ☐

Contact Information:
If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact:
Elena Ruiz: e-mail: elena.ruiz@hvhl.nl telephone: +4917695738070

Consent:
I have read and understood the information provided in this consent form. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study under the conditions described above.

_____

Name of participant

_____ _____

Signature of participant Date

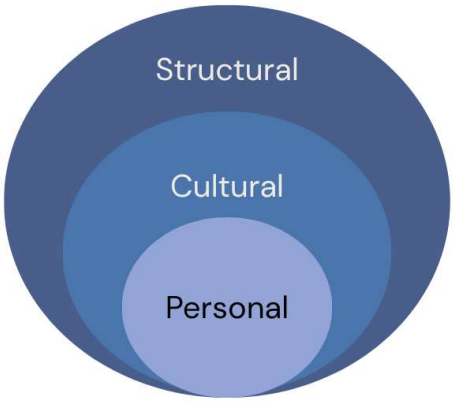
_____ _____

Signature of researcher Date

Please return this signed consent form to Elena Ruiz at elena.ruiz@hvhl.nl .

Annex 3 – Posters

Colonial Damage



Structural Damage

Historical Colonial Crimes:

Widespread suffering, *"largest genocide of all"*, grabbing of land and raw materials, human rights deprivations.

Mass deaths of Indigenous people from *"diseases and slavery"*.

Reservations as *"concentration camps"* → inspiration for Hitler.

Continued colonial power structures:

Pervasive global neo-colonial system linked to NL.

Economy based on colonial exploitation (outsourcing of carbon footprint, massive workforce outside NL working for Dutch economy).

Doctrine of discovery persisting.

Continued denied access to Indigenous remains and artifacts.

Present Colonial Land Dispossession:

Indigenous rights *"still being violated today"* globally.

Communities losing land to resource extraction, *"mining giants,"* and *"blood coal"*, or for *"windmill park[s],"* *"palm oil plantation[s],"* *"nature conservation"*.

Land defenders being criminalized.

"There is no land to go back to".

Colonial Society:

Contemporary societies as highly colonial.

Colonialism and capitalism linked, based on dispossession, grabbing, abuse.

Society based on *"coloniality"*, where *"certain people are just not equal"*.

Indigenous epistemologies are *"set to be primitive"*.

Cultural Damage

Invisibility:

Indigenous individuals feel *"made invisible"*, *"not seen and not being recognized"*, existing in *"the margins of awareness"*.

Indigeneity as being *"placeless,"* globally unrepresented, and often hidden.

Lack of visibility in popular culture and *"systemic silencing of Indigenous histories"*.

Education in the Netherlands neglects Indigenous histories, including slavery and colonial relationships.

Indigenous knowledge is extracted for profit, with a lack of credit for Indigenous people.

Dehumanization & Internalized Inferiority:

Indigenous people labeled inferior and denied human dignity.

Historically ascribed terms like *"exotic,"* *"primitive,"* *"uncultured,"* *"savage,"* and *"underdeveloped"*

Leading to an internalized feeling of inferiority.

Individuals *"see themselves as not being equal"*.

Indigenous epistemologies are sidelined, causing cultural and spiritual loss.

Erasure of Culture and Language - Ethnocide:

"When cultures are murdered, you also murder an identity. And that's how you murder an entire people".

"Innocent colonization" by missionaries: forced adaptation and loss of traditional customs.

Illegalization of dances and medicinal plants, demonization of spiritualities, and outlawing of ceremonies bring about to cultural loss.

Indigenous languages forbidden, suppressed, and erased.

Sadness and regret over not knowing their Indigenous languages.

Assimilation:

Indigenous people adapted to mainstream culture, often to protect children from discrimination.

A driver for assimilation was striving for *"a better future"*.

Members of new generation now reclaiming Indigenous identity and questioning past assimilation.

Personal Damage

Intergenerational Trauma:

Trauma passed on through generations.

"Epistemic violence" leaves *"scars, which stay forever"*.

Feeling of being *"out of balance"* due to unconscious historical trauma.

Colonization created an *"intergenerational disconnect,"* challenging sense of wholeness.

Ongoing Discrimination:

Present-day discrimination, including direct racist insults.

Colonial holidays like Thanksgiving, which honor massacres, cause ongoing psychological harm.

Discrimination in academia.

Some Indigenous individuals reject the term *"Indigenous"* as a discriminatory colonial label.

Internal Conflict:

Conflicts within Indigenous communities often center on identity, e.g., *"native enough"* debates. -> require *"unpack[ing] the colonialism behind"* them.

Internal conflicts also arise from differing methods and strategies for Indigenous Liberation in the Netherlands.

Healing

Reconnect to Indigenous Identity & Culture

Identity Reclamation & Pride:

Wear Indigenous clothing, to show *"we are still here"*.

Focus on strengths, resilience, and unique knowledge

"Acknowledging our past and finding ways to proudly and collectively carry it".

Cultural Revitalization and Learning

Actively learning suppressed cultural practices.

"Ceremonies, rituals, being together, singing, dancing, art".

Learning from the more-than-human world, like *"from the animals in the forest"*.

Language Revitalization

Desire to learn ancestral languages.

Reclaiming language makes *"your soul more alive again"*, offers new worldviews.

Language is where identity lies, integral to healing.

Ancestral Connection

"Recognizing the connection of your ancestors".

"Inviting the voice of ancestors" as energy traveling through time and space.

Process of remembering ancient healing strategies.

Space for Pain

"Tending to the wound both psychologically, spiritually as physically".

Showing pain and acknowledging trauma can help *"break though it"*.

Feeling the pain of global suffering needed *"to make us human again"*.

Reconnect to Community

Community as Foundation for Healing:

"Unbreakable relationship[s] with my communiy".

Indigenous perspective emphasizes *"we"* over *"I,"* leading to healing through collective care.

Community as space to learn and reclaim Indigenous identity, strengthening communities.

Non-transactional spaces for Indigenous people to *"just be together"* are vital.

Building Healthy Relationships with Allies

Examples of relationships with white partners as healing.

"Healing is not an identity issue, the healing is for healing relations".

Spirituality can connect Indigenous peoples and allies globally.

Fostering International Solidarity

Ambitions to build strong global Indigenous bonds contributing to broader healing.

Sharing of Knowledge foster international solidarity and trust.

Ceremonies as a Communal Healing Practice

Vital for balance within community and earth.

Creating space for grief through mourning and rituals.

Concerns about ceremonies feeling *"forced"* or like a *"show for... white people,"* lacking genuine healing.

Reconnect to Nature

Holistic Healing connected to Land:

Reconnecting with nature integral to Indigenous identity, as all living things have a soul.

Involves interconnection of physical body, spirit, land, and consciousness.

Healing must be *"rooted in the territory"*.

"Without territory there is no meaning, one would be empty... without a soul".

Learning from and Respecting Nature:

Learning from more-than-human world is essential for healing alienation from the land.

Healing requires deep respect for nature: *"respect biodiversity, ...the Earth, ...the vegetation, ...the tree"*.

Reciprocity and Environmental Stewardship:

Reciprocity with Earth; *"Earth responds to you"* when cared for.

Indigenous values about nature and life should be universally discussed as *"We are children of mother earth"*.

Connection with nature needed for well-being.

In contrast to Western understandings:

Indigenous vs. Western healing: holistic vs. fragmented.

Indigenous healing: restoring balance, collective completion.

Western methods: often not culturally sensitive.

Self-determination in choosing healing approaches.

Struggle

For Recognition & Representation

Need for recognition and representation for Indigenous people.

Healing involves *"the right to exist"* and not having to justify one's Indigenous identity.

Recognition should extend beyond symbolic acts.

Representation in cultural spheres is essential.

For Justice

"Healing must go 'hand in hand with justice,' which includes ... 'reparation'", "truth-telling, visibility, and restoring our rights to land, culture, and voice".

Not Indigenous responsibility to convince; *"the other side"* must reflect on damages and justice.

For occupied peoples, liberation and self-determination are necessary first step for healing.

Dealing with the Impossibility:

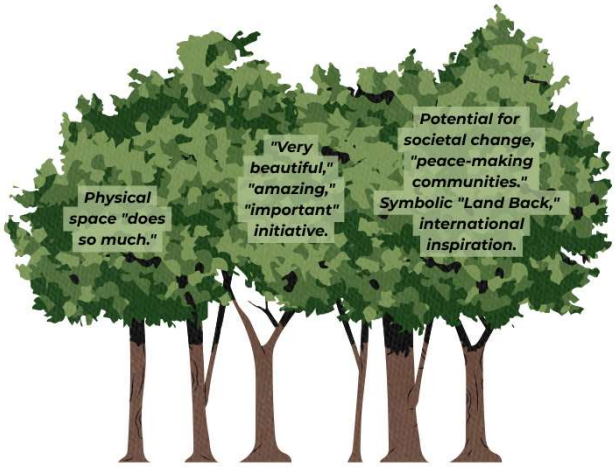
Doubts about healing possibillity in neo-colonial system / profit driven society.

Reparatory justice seen as *"unreachable in capitalism"*.

Dehumanization and disconnection accelerating in society.

Restoration of all that was stolen seen as unfeasible.

Some admit not knowing how to engage with the healing process.



Forest of Healing

The Vision: A space to...

...Reconnect to Indigenous Identity & Culture

Space for Being, Belonging, and Identity Formation:

Place to *"be found,"* a *"vocal point"* for Indigenous visibility.

Sense of belonging, *"feel at home."*

Welcoming space for Indigenous people on the journey of reconnecting to their identity.

Revitalizing Cultural Practices and Knowledge:

Space for *"knowledge, stories, education, art and expression, celebrations of special ceremonies."*

Showcase diverse Indigenous cultures (art, fairs, music), knowledge center, information point.

Medicinal gardens: learn from *"non-human"* teachers.

Intergenerational learning, Language learning, knowledge production.

Acknowledging Wounds and Collective Mourning:

"Place for our brokenness... to be seen."

Allow *"closed events"* to share pain, engage in rituals.

Sacred Space for Spiritual Practices:

"Sacred ground," Indigenous presence honored and protected.

Enable powerful ceremonies; *"quiet zones"* for reflection.

...Reconnect to Community

An informal Community Space:

"Informal hangout space," for people to *"just be together."*

Space to be together without productive goal as highly decolonial and fostering deep connections.

Relational Values Beyond Capitalist Norms:

Challenge capitalist systems, foster alternative ways of living and relating.

International Solidarity and Collaboration:

Foster international connections, mutual learning, solidarity, through direct exchange programs/ shared projects.

Support frontline struggles globally.

...Reconnect to Nature

Learning from Nature and Living in Harmony:

Space for ecological, agricultural, medicinal learning.

Relating to Dutch territory in *"more caring way"*.

Understanding of *"nature as part of every-day lives"* expanding beyond physical space of Forest of Healing.

The forest of Healing as a Sacred Ground for Holistic Healing:

While other spiritualities have churches, mosques, Indigenous people need nature.

"Sacred ground," living space for spiritual connection.

...Contest the Neo-Colonial System

Relational Values Beyond Capitalist Norms:

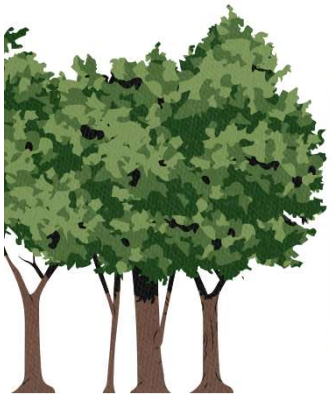
Offer alternative to capitalist ways of living, focus on reciprocity.

Countering alienation.

Struggle for Justice and 'Land Back':

"Sovereignty of land stewardship."

"Land back" is powerful symbolic and practical act of recognition of colonial crimes.



Challenges & Doubts

Authenticity and Access: For whom is the Forest of Healing?

Priority: Sanctuary for Indigenous people.

Balance inclusivity with protected Indigenous spaces.

Take on challenge of communication with Indigenous people from non-english speaking territories, to not *"reproduce closeness to empire"*.

Authenticity and Influence: How to ensure integrity and genuineness?

Risk of imitating Western paradigms of knowledge preservation / project management.

Risk of co-option by corporate/capitalist systems.

Focus on Indigenous values over material outcome (the physical space).

Authenticity and Diversity: How to navigate differences?

Diverse needs, histories; *"one size doesn't fit all."*

Build unity through shared decolonial values, giving space for each other.

The Forest of Healing is a project currently developed in the Netherlands, envisioned as a physical place of remembrance, learning, healing, and organizing, shaped by and for Indigenous peoples. The project aims to acknowledge and address the historical injustices faced by Indigenous peoples, and their centuries-long struggle for self-determination. The project is imagined as a vocal point for Indigenous people to come together and work on reparations and indigenization.

The Forest of Healing seeks to create a tangible space for reflection, education, and recognition of past wrongs, and to foster dialogue and collaboration between Indigenous communities and the broader Dutch society. The project envisions a several-hectare forest, that will include and work together with different Indigenous cultures who were damaged by Dutch colonialism, or are suffering neo-colonial exploitation by Dutch actors today. The forest will host the Indigenous Knowledge Center International, including the Indigenous Archive, as well as spaces for workshops and conferences. The Indigenous knowledge centre aims to work together with scientists and students, as well as cultural institutions on Indigenous knowledge. Furthermore, it seeks to create partnerships with grants and funders who wish to support Indigenous projects in the Netherlands and abroad, such as in Suriname or elsewhere.

The Forest of Healing aims to preserve and promote Indigenous ecological, agricultural, and medicinal knowledge, contributing to a more inclusive and sustainable future for all. The project is currently in the planning stages, with a congress planned for October to further develop the concept and secure support for the initiative.

Section A: Intro

A1.

Do you consider yourself Indigenous?

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] Other

Other

A2.

If yes, what Indigenous people(s) are you affiliated with?

Section B: Survey on the Forest of Healing Project

B1. **When thinking about reparatory justice in the Netherlands, it is important to first have some clarity on the damage that has been done and the harm that Indigenous people face today. What are the damages, harms and losses caused by colonialism that come to your mind when you think about your own experience as an Indigenous person, (specifically in the Dutch context, if you can speak to it)?**

B2. **What are your personal hopes or aspirations, as well as needs for healing, connected to your Indigenous identity?**

B3. **What elements or activities would make the Forest of Healing a meaningful place for Indigenous peoples (both in the Netherlands and worldwide)?**

B4. Is there anything else you would like to mention?

Thank you for your participation. If you have any questions, feedback or comments about this survey and the research, please contact the researcher:

Elena Ruiz: elena.ruiz@hvhl.nl

If you would like to be further involved in the research or receive the results of this research, please fill in your e-mail address in the form through the link on the bottom of this site. This will NOT be linked to your responses, they continue to be anonymous.

If you are based in the Netherlands, I also want to invite you to join the focus group session on Thursday the 10th of April at 19:00h in Amsterdam. In the session, we will dive deeper into the topics that this survey dealt with. In case you are interested in participating please indicate it in the form, so that I can contact you. If several people would like to participate but cannot be in Amsterdam on this day, I might be able to organise a second edition online as well.

CONTACT FORM

Het Bos der Heling is een project dat momenteel in Nederland wordt ontwikkeld, bedoeld als een fysieke plaats van herdenken, leren, helen en organiseren, gevormd door en voor Inheemse mensen. Het project heeft tot doel de historische onrechtvaardigheden waarmee Inheemse volkeren worden geconfronteerd, en hun eeuwenlange strijd voor zelfbeschikking, te erkennen en aan te pakken. Het project wordt voorgesteld als een vocaal punt voor Inheemse volkeren om samen te komen en te werken aan herstelbetalingen en Indigenisering.

The Bos der Heling wil een tastbare ruimte creëren voor reflectie, educatie en erkenning van misstanden uit het verleden, en dialoog en samenwerking tussen Inheemse gemeenschappen en de bredere Nederlandse samenleving bevorderen. Het project voorziet in een bos van enkele hectaren, dat verschillende Inheemse culturen zal omvatten en zal samenwerken die zijn beschadigd door het Nederlandse kolonialisme, of die vandaag de dag te maken hebben met neokoloniale uitbuiting door Nederlandse actoren. Het bos zal onderdak bieden aan het Inheems Kenniscentrum Internationaal, inclusief het Inheems Archief, evenals ruimtes voor workshops en conferenties. Het Inheemse Kenniscentrum Internationaal wil samenwerken met wetenschappers en studenten, maar ook met culturele instellingen op het gebied van Inheemse kennis. Verder wordt gestreefd naar het aangaan van samenwerkingsverbanden met subsidies en financiers die Inheemse projecten in binnen- en buitenland, zoals in Suriname of elders, willen ondersteunen.

Het Bos der Heling heeft tot doel Inheemse ecologische, agrarische en medicinale kennis te behouden en te promoten, en zo bij te dragen aan een meer inclusieve en duurzame toekomst voor iedereen. Het project bevindt zich momenteel in de planningsfase, met een congres gepland voor oktober om het concept verder te ontwikkelen en steun voor het initiatief te krijgen.

Sectie A: Intro

A1.

Beschouw je jezelf als Inheems?

- [ ] Nee
- [ ] Ja
- [ ] Overige

Overige

A2.

Indien ja, met welke inheemse bevolkingsgroep(en) identificeert u zich?

Sectie B: Enquête over het Bos der Heling Project

B1. **Bij het nadenken over herstelrecht in Nederland is het belangrijk om eerst duidelijkheid te hebben over de schade die is aangericht en de problemen waarmee Inheemse volkeren vandaag de dag worden geconfronteerd. Welke schade, problemen en verliezen veroorzaakt door het kolonialisme komen in u op als u denkt aan uw eigen ervaring als inheems persoon (specifiek in de Nederlandse context, indien u daarover kunt spreken)?**

B2. **Wat zijn uw persoonlijke hoop of ambities, evenals behoeften aan heling, verbonden met uw Inheemse identiteit?**

B3. **Welke elementen of activiteiten zouden het Bos der Heling tot een betekenisvolle plek maken voor Inheemse mensen (zowel in Nederland als wereldwijd)?**

B4. **Is er nog iets dat u zou willen noemen?**

Bedankt voor uw deelname. Als u vragen, feedback of opmerkingen heeft over deze enquête en het onderzoek, neem dan contact op met de onderzoeker:

Elena Ruiz: elena.ruiz@hvhl.nl

Als u verder betrokken wilt worden bij het onderzoek of de resultaten van dit onderzoek wilt ontvangen, vul dan uw e-mailadres in op het formulier via de link onderaan deze site. Dit wordt NIET gekoppeld aan uw antwoorden, ze blijven anoniem.

Als u in Nederland woont, wil ik u ook uitnodigen om deel te nemen aan de focusgroepsessie op donderdag 10 april om 19:00 uur in Amsterdam. In de sessie zullen we dieper ingaan op de onderwerpen die in dit enquête onderzoek zijn behandeld. Als u geïnteresseerd bent om deel te nemen, geef dit dan aan in het formulier, zodat ik contact met u kan opnemen. Als meerdere mensen mee willen doen maar niet op deze dag in Amsterdam kunnen zijn, kan ik misschien ook een tweede editie online organiseren.

CONTACTFORMULIER

El Bosque de la Sanación es un proyecto que se desarrolla actualmente en los Países Bajos, concebido como un lugar físico de recuerdo, aprendizaje, sanación y organización, moldeado por y para personas Indígenas. El proyecto tiene como objetivo reconocer y abordar las injusticias históricas que enfrentan los pueblos Indígenas y su lucha centenaria por la autodeterminación. El proyecto se concibe como un punto de voz para pueblos Indígenas para unirse y trabajar en reparaciones e indigenización.

El Bosque de la Sanación busca crear un espacio tangible para la reflexión, la educación y el reconocimiento de los errores del pasado, y fomentar el diálogo y la colaboración entre las comunidades Indígenas y la sociedad holandesa en general. El proyecto prevé un bosque de varias hectáreas, que incluirá y trabajará junto con diferentes culturas Indígenas que fueron dañadas por el colonialismo holandés, o que están sufriendo la explotación neocolonial por parte de actores holandeses en la actualidad. El bosque albergará el Centro Internacional de Conocimiento Indígena, incluido el Archivo Indígena, así como espacios para talleres y conferencias. El Centro Internacional de Conocimiento Indígena tiene como objetivo trabajar junto con científicos y estudiantes, así como con instituciones culturales sobre el conocimiento Indígena. Además, busca crear asociaciones con subvenciones y financiadores que deseen apoyar proyectos Indígenas en los Países Bajos y en el extranjero, como en Surinam o en otros lugares.

El Bosque de la Sanación tiene como objetivo preservar y promover el conocimiento ecológico, agrícola y medicinal Indígena, contribuyendo a un futuro más inclusivo y sostenible para todos. El proyecto se encuentra actualmente en las etapas de planificación, con un congreso previsto para octubre para desarrollar aún más el concepto y asegurar el apoyo a la iniciativa.

Sección A: Intro

A1.

¿Usted se considera Indígena?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Sí
- ☐ Otro

Otro

A2.

En caso afirmativo, ¿con qué pueblo(s) Indígena(s) se identifica?

Sección B: Encuesta sobre el Proyecto Bosque de la Sanación

B1. **Al pensar en la justicia reparatoria en los Países Bajos, es importante tener primero cierta claridad sobre el daño que se ha hecho y el daño que enfrentan los pueblos Indígenas en la actualidad. ¿Cuáles son los daños, perjuicios y pérdidas causados por el colonialismo que te vienen a la mente cuando piensas en tu propia experiencia como persona Indígena (específicamente en el contexto holandés, si puedes hablar de él)?**

B2. **¿Cuáles son sus esperanzas o aspiraciones personales, así como sus necesidades de sanación, relacionadas con su identidad Indígena?**

B3. **¿Qué elementos o actividades harían del Bosque de la Sanación un lugar significativo para las personas Indígenas (tanto en los Países Bajos como en todo el mundo)?**

B4. ¿Hay algo más que le gustaría mencionar?

Gracias por su participación. Si tiene alguna pregunta, comentario o sugerencia sobre esta encuesta y la investigación, comuníquese con la investigadora:

Elena Ruiz: elena.ruiz@hvhl.nl

Si desea participar más en la investigación o recibir los resultados de esta investigación, por favor, introduzca su dirección de correo electrónico en el formulario a través del enlace que se encuentra al final de esta página. Esto NO estará vinculado a sus respuestas, que seguirán siendo anónimas.

Si reside en los Países Bajos, también me gustaría invitarle a unirse a la sesión de grupo focal el 10 de abril a las 19:00 horas en Ámsterdam. En la sesión, profundizaremos en los temas tratados en esta encuesta. En caso de que esté interesado en participar, por favor indíquelo en el formulario, para que pueda ponerme en contacto con usted. Si varias personas desean participar pero no pueden estar en Ámsterdam ese día, quizá pueda organizar también una segunda edición en línea.

FORMULARIO DE CONTACTO

A Floresta da Sanação é um projeto atualmente em desenvolvimento na Holanda, concebido como um local físico de lembrança, aprendizado, sanação e organização, moldado por e para os povos Indígenas. O projeto tem como objetivo reconhecer e abordar as injustiças históricas enfrentadas pelos povos Indígenas e sua luta secular pela autodeterminação. O projeto é imaginado como um ponto de encontro para que os povos indígenas se reúnam e trabalhem em reparações e indigenização.

A Floresta da Sanação busca criar um espaço tangível para reflexão, educação e reconhecimento dos erros do passado, além de promover o diálogo e a colaboração entre as comunidades Indígenas e a sociedade holandesa em geral. O projeto prevê uma floresta de vários hectares, que incluirá e trabalhará em conjunto com diferentes culturas Indígenas que foram prejudicadas pelo colonialismo holandês ou que estão sofrendo exploração neocolonial pelos atores holandeses atualmente. A floresta abrigará o Centro de Conhecimento Indígena Internacional, incluindo o Arquivo Indígena, bem como espaços para workshops e conferências. O centro de conhecimento indígena tem como objetivo trabalhar em conjunto com cientistas e estudantes, bem como com instituições culturais sobre o conhecimento Indígena. Além disso, ele busca criar parcerias com subsídios e financiadores que desejam apoiar projetos Indígenas na Holanda e no exterior, como no Suriname ou em outros lugares.

A Floresta da Sanação tem como objetivo preservar e promover o conhecimento ecológico, agrícola e medicinal Indígena, contribuindo para um futuro mais inclusivo e sustentável para todos. O projeto está atualmente em fase de planejamento, com um congresso planejado para outubro para desenvolver ainda mais o conceito e garantir o apoio à iniciativa.

Seção A: Intro

A1.

Você se considera Indígena?

- [ ] Não
- [ ] Sim
- [ ] Outros

Outros

A2.

Se sim, com que povo Indígena (ou quais povos) você se identifica?

Seção B: Survey on the Forest of Healing Project

B1. **Ao pensar em justiça reparatória na Holanda, é importante primeiro ter alguma clareza sobre os danos que foram causados e os prejuízos que os povos indígenas enfrentam hoje.Quais são os danos, prejuízos e perdas causados pelo colonialismo que vêm à sua mente quando você pensa em sua própria experiência como Indígena (especificamente no contexto holandês, se você puder falar sobre isso)?**

B2. **Quais são suas esperanças ou aspirações pessoais, bem como suas necessidades de sanação, relacionadas à sua identidade Indígena?**

B3. **Quais elementos ou atividades tornariam a Floresta da Sanação um lugar significativo para os povos Indígenas (tanto na Holanda quanto no mundo todo)?**

B4. **Há mais alguma coisa que você gostaria de mencionar?**

Obrigado por sua participação. Se tiver alguma dúvida, comentário ou sugestão sobre este questionário e a pesquisa, entre em contato com a pesquisadora:

Elena Ruiz: elena.ruiz@hvhl.nl

Se quiser participar mais da pesquisa ou receber os resultados dela, insira seu endereço de e-mail no formulário por meio do link na parte inferior desta página. Isso NÃO será vinculado às suas respostas, que permanecerão anônimas.

Se você mora na Holanda, também gostaria de convidá-lo a participar da sessão do grupo de foco no dia 10 de abril, às 19:00, em Amsterdã. Na sessão, abordaremos as questões levantadas nesta pesquisa. Caso esteja interessado em participar, indique seu interesse no formulário, para que eu possa entrar em contato com você. Se várias pessoas quiserem participar, mas não puderem estar em Amsterdã nesse dia, talvez eu também possa organizar uma segunda edição online.

FORMULÁRIO DE CONTATO