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## **The Role of NGOs in the Preservation of the Heritage of Religio-cultural minorities**

*Case study on the Jimmy Nelson Foundation and the preservation of Dutch religio-cultural minorities.*

“The world’s cultural colours are fading fast, and elementary natural wisdom is on the brink of being lost.” – Jimmy Nelson Foundation (NGO)

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University of Groningen

Student: Nadja Simone Miedema, S3733254

Supervisor: Dr. Joram Tarusarira

Second supervisor: Dr Brenda Bartelink

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## **Abstract**

In these times of globalisation, our world is rapidly changing. The interdependence of the world's economy, politics and culture is growing, which results in positive but also negative outcomes. For example, the loss of cultural diversity. Research has been done on the influences of globalisation on cultural diversity, but research on how to preserve cultural diversity and especially religio-cultural heritage is still overlooked. This thesis will look at how non-governmental organizations can contribute to the preservation of the heritage of religio-cultural minorities. To gather the needed data I used the Jimmy Nelson Foundation and their approaches toward preserving Dutch religio-cultural heritage as a case study. Participant observation and a questionnaire amongst three Dutch community members have shown that an NGO can act as a channel for religio-cultural minorities to preserve their heritage in the future.

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## Introduction

Now that the world has encountered a rapid state of globalisation, the growing interdependence of the world's population, economy and culture, our world is changing.<sup>1</sup> Globalisation has made the world more interconnected and interdependent through the rise of trade and technology. This has brought social and economic changes, which resulted in positive but also negative outcomes. For example, one can see the economic growth and the access to resources as benefits of globalisation. The disadvantages can be found in the increase in environmental issues and the growth in inequality between the undeveloped and developed countries. Samuel Huntington states that in this new world, the most important and dangerous conflicts will be between peoples from different cultural identities.<sup>2</sup> This intensifying relationship between different cultures would be a reaction to the growing global monoculture, a result of globalisation. Global monoculture can be seen as the dominance of one culture in the important aspects of the world.<sup>3</sup> In the past few years, I have been wondering what the future of cultural diversity will look like in these times of globalisation. Cultural diversity, the quality of different cultures, is the opposite of global monoculture.

When referring to preserving cultural diversity and its accompanying cultural minorities, it becomes evident that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are big actors in this field. Within this thesis, I want to focus on their role in the preservation of cultural diversity, and especially on the preservation of religio-cultural minorities. This thesis will be limited to one particular NGO as a case study, the Jimmy Nelson Foundation. Concerning the religio-cultural minorities, I studied three different Dutch communities: Marken, Staphorst and Urk.

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<sup>1</sup> Melina Kolb, "What Is Globalisation?", accessed December 15, 2021, <https://www.pie.com/microsites/globalisation/what-is-globalisation>.

<sup>2</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations And the remaking of World Orders* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth Keniston, "The Global Village", accessed May 3, 2022, <https://web.mit.edu/kken/Public/papers1/Cultural%20Diversity.htm>.



To better understand the actions of an NGO to preserve religio-cultural minorities and their eventual outcomes, I decided to do a four-month internship at the Jimmy Nelson Foundation. This institution is an NGO that is focused on the preservation of indigenous cultures and people. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, they shifted their focus to the cultural minorities in the Netherlands. This internship provided me with an opportunity to do participant observations through working there as an employee. Participant observation combined with three interviews with different community members provided me with the necessary empirical data for this thesis.

Since this thesis is focused on how The Jimmy Nelson foundation contributes to the preservation of religio-cultural minorities, the corresponding research question will be:

- How does the Jimmy Nelson Foundation (NGO) contribute to the preservation of Dutch religio-cultural minorities in times of globalisation?

This research question will be divided into the following sub-questions:

- What does the heritage of the Dutch religio-cultural minorities look like?

- What is the influence of globalisation on the Dutch religio-cultural minorities?
- What are the approaches of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation regarding preservation?
- What are the experiences of the Dutch religio-cultural minorities regarding the actions of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation?

This thesis and its findings will contribute to a better understanding of the preservation of religio-cultural minorities and the intersection of cultural diversity and globalisation. I aim to extend the knowledge about the preservation of cultural heritage since cultural heritage is under threat due to our globalizing world. The findings of this thesis will bring more insight into how to maintain cultural diversity, function as a guideline for later research and might even encourage other scholars to broaden this debate even more.

### **Literature review**

Globalisation and its consequences have been a topic of scholarly debate for some time. This means that there is a lot of academic work available. For example, the work of Melina Kolb discusses the idea of globalisation. Kolb describes that globalisation as a term became prominent in everyday life after the Cold War, due to the cooperative arrangements that were made.<sup>4</sup> In her research she advocates how globalisation brought major technological advances which have benefited society. This research has mostly the economic dimension as the main interest. Something that is often seen when dealing with globalisation. But over the years more attention has come to the relationship between cultural diversity and globalisation. For example, the book of Martin J. Gannon discusses the paradox that is present between culture and globalisation.<sup>5</sup> Insight into these specific paradoxes helps to understand the influence of globalisation on cultural diversity.

A lot of research has been done in the light of globalisation, especially on its influence. The negative influence of globalisation becomes present in the work of Anne E. Harrison, who focuses on the relationship between poverty and globalisation.<sup>6</sup> Her work gives a clear example of how globalisation can cause negative outcomes, and how it increases the inequality that is present in the world. Inequality is something that is also increasing when it comes to cultural diversity. A good example of the influence of globalisation on cultural diversity is the research

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<sup>4</sup> Melina Kolb, "What Is Globalisation?", accessed December 15, 2021, <https://www.piiie.com/microsites/globalisation/what-is-globalisation>.

<sup>5</sup> Martin J. Gannon, *Paradoxes of culture and globalisation* (Los Angeles: Sage Productions, 2008).

<sup>6</sup> Anne E. Harrison, *Globalisation and Poverty* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007).

of Sandra Herting, who researches the influence of globalisation on ethnic groups in Ethiopia.<sup>7</sup> This research gives a good idea of how globalisation can cause a negative influence on ethnic (minority) groups. This shows the importance of looking into the relationship between globalisation and cultural diversity. Religio-cultural heritage is part of cultural diversity and by this religio-cultural heritage is under threat due to the globalisation process. It is relevant to look into the relationship between globalisation and religio-cultural heritage because it gives more insights into how to deal with this issue. Multiple types of research have been done on this specific topic. An example is the research of Dharm P.S. Bhawuk, which is focused on the idea that globalisation can cause homogenous culture or that globalisation can cause the culture to even differentiate further.<sup>8</sup> Another interesting book is *Indigenous Peoples and Globalisation resistance and revitalization* by Thomas D. Hall and James V. Fenelon,<sup>9</sup> which gives a broad overview of different indigenous groups in the globalisation process. The book also provides prospects for the future of indigenous people. The possible prospects for indigenous people leans more to the scope of this thesis, the preservation of cultural diversity and in particular the preservation of religio-cultural heritage. But overall the academic works, like the one mentioned before, are mainly focused on the relationship between globalisation and cultural diversity. The gap, in my opinion, that is present here is research about the preservation of cultural diversity in times of globalisation. Big players in the field of preservation of cultural diversity are the non-governmental organizations. The journal *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal* of Jeffery Unerman and Brendan O'Dwyer can be used as a theoretical framework when researching NGOs and their roles.<sup>10</sup> This journal tries to explain and reflect on the role of NGOs in civil society. But the role of NGOs in the debate around the preservation of cultural diversity is still a bit overlooked. Research that is present on this topic is mainly focused on the relationship between NGOs and globalisation. For example, there is an article by Janet Salm *Coping With Globalisation: A Profile of the Northern NGO Sector Coping With Globalisation: A Profile of the Northern NGO Sector* that is focused on the idea of globalisation from the NGO sector perspective.<sup>11</sup> But this thesis will focus on the preservation of religio-

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<sup>7</sup> Sandra Herting, *Globalisation: A Threat to Cultural Diversity in Southern Ethiopia: a Threat to Cultural Diversity in Southern Ethiopia?* (Hamburg: Diplomica Verlag, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Dharm P.S. Bhawuk, Globalisation and indigenous cultures: Homogenization or differentiation? In *ScienceDirect* 32, no. 4 (July 2008) 305-3017. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2008.06.002>.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas D. Hall and James V. Fenelon, *Indigenous peoples and Globalisation resistance and revitalization* (London: Routledge, 2009).

<sup>10</sup> Jeffery Unerman and Brendan O'Dwyer, *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal* (Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2006).

<sup>11</sup> Janet Salm, *Coping With Globalisation: A Profile of the Northern NGO Sector*. In *Arnova* (1999). <https://doi.org/10.1177/089976499773746447>.

cultural heritage. And when it comes to heritage and its preservation, different studies have been conducted. For example, the book *Uses of Heritage* by Laurajane Smith, gives a global overview of the uses of heritage.<sup>12</sup>

To conclude, there are several types of research present around the topics: globalisation, NGOs, cultural diversity and heritage. What has been missing is how these topics come together. Especially when it comes to the role of NGOs in the preservation of religio-cultural heritage in times of globalisation. The academic relevance is that this thesis will contribute to the knowledge around the preservation of religio-cultural heritage. This is of importance because in times of globalisation cultural diversity is under threat.

**Chapter 1: Conceptual framework**

To better understand the rest of this thesis, the conceptual framework will give a brief overview of the important concepts that are present in this thesis: globalisation, religio-cultural minority, heritage and non-governmental organization. These concepts will be discussed and reflected on in light of this thesis. Also, the relationship between these concepts and how they are connected will be shown through a deductive conceptual framework, figure 1. Here it is visible that globalisation is influencing the religio-cultural minority and with this also their heritage. The NGO guides the religio-cultural minority towards the future by preserving their heritage.

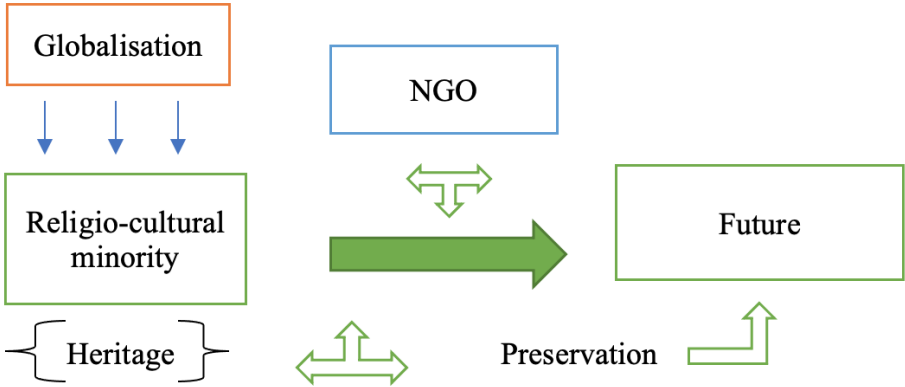


Figure 1: a deductive conceptual framework for research on the role of NGOs in the preservation of religio-cultural heritage in times of globalisation.

<sup>12</sup> Laurajane Smith, *The Uses of Heritage* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 11–43.



## 1.1 Globalisation

Globalisation is a phenomenon that refers to a world where polities, societies, economies and cultures have come closer together.<sup>13</sup> This means that faraway locations can be influenced by events that happen miles and miles away. For example, an Italian car dealer could be dependent on the Volkswagen factory in Germany as much as on the decisions of the local Italian government. This is called the intensification of worldwide social relations.<sup>14</sup> But not only does the intensification of these social relations cover the concept of globalisation. David Harvey describes it as the compression of social time and space.<sup>15</sup> Margit Warburg sees globalisation as a conventional term that describes the rapid integration of the world economy. She explains that this rapid integration during the last two decades is facilitated by the growth and innovations in international electronic communications.<sup>16</sup> Warburg points out that globalisation also brings with the awareness of the interconnectedness of the political and cultural domain and that humanity is interdependent. Other views on globalisation entail the idea that it is an international system driven by free trade and capitalism or the inevitable integration of nations, markets and technologies.<sup>17</sup> These theories all describe the importance of the economic factor in globalisation. But since this thesis is focused on the religio-cultural domain in times of globalisation, it is interesting to look at the ideas of globalisation by Luke Herrington. Herrington describes the role of religion as the driving force in the process of globalisation. He describes that the economic-centric approach comes from Western-orientated theories. According to him, it fails to completely explain and understand the concept of globalisation. Religion has been a far more important and enduring force in the process of globalisation. This is not to say that the economic factor, like the movement of capital goods, does not play a role in the process but it is important to take in mind that globalisation also involves the movement of culture, religion, people and worldviews. Within this thesis, it is more important to focus on the influences of globalisation when it comes to religion and worldviews. Is it possible that globalisation can cause changes in one's worldview? And can these changes in worldview influence how one practices their religion? But when we look at the problem that Herrington calls the agent-opponent paradox.<sup>18</sup> Religion is the domain that exposes the paradoxes present

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<sup>13</sup> Ray Kiely and Phil Marfleet, *Globalisation and the Third World*, (London: Routledge, 1998), 2.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> David Harvey, Globalisation and the "Spatial Fix", in *geographische revue* 2, 2001, 23-30.

<sup>16</sup> Margriet Warburg, "Introduction", in *Baha'i and Globalisation*, (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2005), 7-14.

<sup>17</sup> Luke Herrington, Globalisation and Religion in Historical Perspective: A Paradoxical Relationship, in *Religions*, 2013, 4, 145-165.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

in the globalisation process. For example, religion is a force in globalisation but also plays a big part in the so-called globalisation backlash. Scholars presumed that due to globalisation and modernization, religious activities would decline and secularization would take the stage.<sup>19</sup> But the interesting thing in this theory of Herrington is that it shows that religion and globalisation are not bound to be in conflict. For this thesis, it is important to take in mind that globalisation does not always have a negative outcome on religion or cultural practices. Globalisation can also push almost forgotten cultures to flourish and thrive again. When looking critically at the concept of globalisation we can say that the outcomes are unpredictable. This means that the influences of globalisation can cause the vanishing of cultural diversity but on the other hand also renewed interest and the thriving of culture.

The rest of the concept showed how interconnectedness brought religion into danger and with this, it became a danger for religious minorities. Even more so, interconnectedness forced religion to shape itself in a new form. Religion became a player in other domains than only the traditional one. For example, religion took its place in the political domain. Globalisation causes religion and culture to rediscover their way in society, reshape its form and sometimes even its presence. Globalisation can be a threat to religion and culture, but it can also bring a new appreciation and eagerness to preserve it. Globalisation influenced the practices of religion and culture and which in return influenced the followers of these beliefs. This brings us to the second concept, the followers of these minor cultures, the religio-cultural minorities.

## 1.2 Religio-cultural minority

When we talk about minorities it is hard to find a clear definition. This is because minorities come in a lot of different variations. Minorities are often described as a group of people that share certain traits or common identities. This can, for example, entail ethnic characteristics but also speaking the same language. When it comes to religio-cultural minorities there is also a shared religion and culture. For this thesis, we are looking at the Dutch religio-cultural minorities. The interests of these minorities are important for answering the research question. But if we want to research the interests of these minorities it is necessary to dive deeper into the concept of religio-cultural minorities. What do we mean by religio-cultural minorities? First, I will discuss the idea of minorities and later dive deeper into the concepts of religion and culture. Philip Vuciri Ramaga handles the concept of a minority. He discusses different

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

definitions of the concept, such as the numerical factor that is of importance when dealing with minorities. Ramaga discusses that in the case of numbers when defining minorities, a minority is a group that is inferior in numbers to the rest of the population of a country, nation or state. Another aspect is that the minority group has a non-dominant position and is showing solidarity towards their community and its religious, ethnic, cultural and linguistic characteristics.<sup>20</sup>

But this does not mean that every minority is vulnerable to the oppressiveness of the majority, there are exceptions. These exceptions exist when we lose the non-dominant characteristic, an example is seen during the Rwandan war and its genocide. The Hutu community which was by far the biggest community in Rwanda, at that time, got suppressed and slaughtered by the minority group the Tutsis. In this case, the superiority of the majority, the Hutus, disappeared due to the political realm and the elite positions of the Tutsi community in this. Louis Wirth shows another important trait when it comes to minority groups, cultural and physical characteristics. He describes the concept as the following: any group of people that are singled out from others in society because of their cultural or/and physical characteristics.<sup>21</sup>

For this thesis, the religious character is of importance, because the chosen communities for this thesis all identify themselves with religious beliefs. Religion is a broad and such a rich phenomenon that it is hard to identify it in one sentence. The danger of defining religion lies in the idea that with a clear definition it can exclude certain religions or it can be too focused on a certain 'type' of religion. So to get a broad idea of the concept of religion and try to avoid a biased definition, multiple theories and definitions will be discussed below.

Émile Durkheim defined religion as a 'unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things' (Durkheim, 1915). This definition came to be by centring around the idea of the distinction between the sacred and the profane. Religion is often described as an ideology or a system of beliefs. Or as Clifford Geertz quotes 'a symbolic system', or 'an awareness of the transcendent as Stanley Tambiah describes it.<sup>22</sup> Brian Morris on the other hand emphasizes the variability of religion. According to him, religion is essentially a social phenomenon. Morris advocated for the definition of Melford Spiro, Spiro sees religion as an institution consisting of culturally patterned interactions with cultural postulated superhuman beings (Morris, 2011). John Milton Yinger tries to provide us with a more functional definition of religion. He

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<sup>20</sup> Philip Vuciri Ramaga, 'Relativity of the Minority Concept', in *Human Rights Quarterly* 1992, vol.14, no.1, 104-119.

<sup>21</sup> Barton Meyers, 'Minority Group: an ideological formulation', in *Social Problems* 1984, vol.32, no.1, 1-15.

<sup>22</sup> Brian Morris, *Religion and Anthropology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 1.

describes religion as a system of beliefs and practices that serve the purpose to help a group of people with the ultimate problems of human life.<sup>23</sup> For example give meaning to the idea of death and the afterlife. It infuses human life with purpose, meaning, coherence, morals and ideas around social life. Another important aspect when discussing religion is approaching religion as a social institution. Morris describes a variety of dimensions that come up when approaching religion as a social institution. These dimensions entail rituals, ethical codes, doctrines, a moral community, beliefs, oral traditions and patterns of social relations that are retrieved from a ritual congregation.<sup>24</sup>

The last aspect that is of importance when discussing religio-cultural minorities is the domain of culture. The chosen Dutch minority groups all have a certain type of culture that they hold on to and which is very present in their community. Culture, the same as the concept of community and religion, is a broad concept because it is presented in numerous different ways. Huntington and Harrison for example, describe the term culture as a concept that has multiple meanings in different contexts and disciplines.<sup>25</sup> One can for example refer to a Spanish song or a Chinese dish with the same term, culture. Culture can be used to describe the knowledge and characteristics of a specific group of people. For example, the shared language, cuisine, beliefs, arts, music and social norms and values. The Center for Advanced Research on Language and Acquisition dives even deeper into the concept by explaining it as shared patterns of behaviour and interactions. And entails the cognitive constructs and understandings that are learned through socialization.<sup>26</sup>

Explaining the concept of culture by focusing on the intangible aspects is most common in the scholarly world.<sup>27</sup> In this definition we see how culture is present in ideas and symbols and other intangible aspects of human life. This is not to say that the material aspect plays no role. But the essence lies in how a group of people perceive, use or interpret these material aspects. This shows that distinguishing groups of people can be done by focusing on a certain group's values, symbols, and perspectives. And that people under the same culture most of the time interpret aspects in a similar way Aspects like symbols, tools, artefacts and behaviour.<sup>28</sup> Other definitions describe culture as the programming of the mind or culture as the man-made

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Lary A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter & Edwin R. McDaniel, *Communication Between Culture*, (Boston: Wadsworth, 2009) 23.

<sup>26</sup> Center for Advanced Research on Language and Acquisition, "What is Culture?", accessed May 8, 2022, <https://carla.umn.edu/culture/definitions.html>

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Lary A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter & Edwin R. McDaniel, *Communication Between Culture*, (Boston: Wadsworth, 2009) 23.

aspect of the environment.<sup>29</sup> As these different definitions show, culture is composed of a lot of elements. Overall five elements are used when distinguishing one culture from another: history, religion, values, social organizations and language. The importance of these elements encompasses all the different definitions discussed before.

This thesis is focused on religio-cultural minorities. So, all of these aspects discussed above (minority, religion and culture) are pertinent to this thesis. To make a clear picture we need to bring all these aspects together. When we look at the idea of a minority, we can say the following: they are in numbers inferior to the rest of the population, most of the time they have a non-dominant position and they are solitaire towards their culture, religion, ethnicity and language. When we look at the aspect of religion, we can say that it is based on a system of beliefs and practices with an awareness of the transcendent. It serves as a way in which individuals or groups of people can deal with the ultimate problems of human life. When looking at the aspect of culture we can say that it is a certain way of life that entails mainly five elements: history, religion, values, social organizations and language. Where a group of people interpret these elements similarly.

If we combine the concepts, we are looking at a minority group of people that not only share the same religion but also share the same culture. This can mean that this group of people is intensely bound to each other because they live in the same way with the same belief system. They also look at the ultimate problems of human life in the same way, like having the same interpretations about the afterlife, which makes them even more connected to each other. Discussing and reflecting on the concept of religio-cultural minority brought important aspects to the table, aspects that are important to discuss when dealing with religio-cultural minorities. Later in this thesis, a full chapter will be dedicated to discussing and presenting the three different Dutch religio-cultural minorities.

### 1.3 Non-governmental organization

This thesis focuses on the role of non-governmental organizations in the preservation of the heritage of religio-cultural minorities. To get a better understanding of the role of an NGO I use the NGO called the Jimmy Nelson Foundation as a case study. But to get correct insights it is important to discuss and reflect on an NGO as a concept. As the name already states, an NGO is an organization with a social purpose that operates independently from the government on a

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<sup>29</sup> Lary A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter & Edwin R. McDaniel, *Communication Between Culture*, (Boston: Wadsworth, 2009) 23.

voluntary or paid basis. This social purpose can be on a national or international level, for example, developmental aid or peacebuilding. NGOs are mostly focused on one specific theme, for example, the environment, animal welfare or poverty. This is all with a non-profit attitude.

Working at an NGO can be on a voluntary or paid basis. Does the involvement of money play a role in the success of an NGO? Will the employees work harder if they got paid? This can differ from NGO to NGO and how involved and passionate the employee is about the specific mission of the NGO. It is important to keep in mind that an NGO is a business as well and not only an organ to facilitate a particular goal. There are logistics, money and employees necessary to make an NGO function.

Since this thesis uses one particular NGO as a case study it is important to pay attention to these aspects as well. I have to take in mind that not only the actions of the NGO should be analyzed and discussed but also the foundation of the NGO. How can this NGO operate, and how is it funded? Is there a common interest between this NGO and another firm that causes the NGO to be successful? In chapter 3 the Jimmy Nelson Foundation will be discussed in detail, which will feature the actions of the NGO, the way they operate and how the foundation is built.

#### 1.4 Heritage

For this thesis, I am analyzing the preservation of the heritage of Dutch religio-cultural minority groups. To research this correctly it is important to discuss what heritage means and what it includes. One important scholar in the field of the study of heritage is Laurajane Smith. She boldly states that there is no such thing as heritage. By this, she means that heritage should not only be seen as ‘old’ monumental and aesthetic sites, places and artefacts. Smith argues that heritage is rather a hegemonic discourse, which constitutes the way we talk, think and write about a certain heritage.<sup>30</sup> She explains that heritage is not only a set of meanings and values, it is rather a cultural practice. Heritage is involved in the construction, understanding and involvement of values.<sup>31</sup> The UMass Amherst Center for Heritage & Society counts inherited traditions, objects, culture and monuments as heritage.<sup>32</sup> But they also point out that the meanings, behaviours and contemporary activities that people retrieve from them are even more important. Heritage is both tangible and intangible, memories and ideas of certain songs, dishes,

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<sup>30</sup> Laurajane Smith, *The Uses of Heritage*, (Abington: Routledge, 2006) 11.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> UMass Amherst Center for Heritage & Society, “What is Heritage?”, accessed May 9, 2022, <https://www.umass.edu/chs/about/whatisheritage.html>.

dances or traditions are as important as the material, for example, historical buildings or sacred sites. Then there is also the domain of nature that could be part of an individual or a group's heritage. Examples of this are trees, wildlife, mountains, rivers, landscapes, etc. Heritage, the tangible, the intangible and the natural, altogether provides a group of people with a common language and helps them to interact and communicate on a deep level.<sup>33</sup> This all shows that heritage is more than meets the eye. It is not only the material, the tangible, it is also findable in the intangible. It is important to keep this in mind when researching a community's heritage and its preservation. One should not only focus on the tangible, like ancient buildings. Maybe even more important is that one should pay attention to the elements like memories, values and ideas that are retrieved from it and become key in a community. But when we talk about heritage who decides what counts as heritage? When religio-cultural heritage needs to be preserved which aspects do you choose to preserve? Who decides which parts are important to preserve? In my opinion, the community itself is best to decide what counts as their heritage and what not. Does an NGO keep the opinion of the community in question in mind when helping to preserve their heritage? And if an NGO chooses what to preserve and what not, is the preserved heritage than the authentic heritage that should be preserved? Or rather an outsider's perspective on another communities heritage? These questions are important to keep in mind when researching the approaches and actions of an NGO regarding the preservation of religio-cultural heritage.

## **Methodology**

In this section, I will explain how I collected the data and which research methods I used. So, one can understand the process and knows how to interpret the findings. In this thesis, I wanted to explore the role of an NGO in the preservation of religio-cultural heritage in times of globalisation. To answer the research question, I needed to get a better understanding of the activities of an NGO regarding the preservation of religio-cultural minorities. To retrieve this information, I did a participant observation for a duration of four months at the Jimmy Nelson Foundation, an NGO that preserves religio-cultural minorities. I have chosen this particular NGO because it fits perfectly within my thesis. Namely, Jimmy Nelson, a photographer and the one who founded this NGO, was in the middle of producing a new photography book, which is a homage to traditional Dutch religio-cultural minorities and consists of photographs of members of these minorities. Due to COVID-19 and the period of this thesis, I decided to focus

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<sup>33</sup> The Heritage Council, "What is Heritage?", accessed May 9, 2022, <https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/what-is-heritage>.

on Dutch religio-minorities, which made the Jimmy Nelson Foundation very suitable for my case study. The participant observation was the main and most important method in this thesis. The results of this observation provided me with an accurate representation of the actions of an NGO. To fill eventual gaps, I sent questionnaires to three community members as a small addition to this research. I have chosen to do so to provide myself with some extra information about the experiences of members of religio-cultural minorities with an NGO. To make this thesis more manageable I decided to focus on three different communities: Marken, Urk and Staphorst. Secondary data, originally retrieved by the Jimmy Nelson Foundation, was used to retrieve information about the heritage of the chosen communities. To create an even better understanding of the culture and traditional clothing of these Dutch communities I attended *Eibertjesdag*, a special event to honour traditional Dutch culture. As mentioned earlier, I combined this thesis with an internship at an NGO, the Jimmy Nelson Foundation, which made the participant observation possible. It was a complete participation, which meant that I was completely involved in the work and social setting of the NGO. I have chosen this method because I wanted to build a close bond with the firm and create a good understanding of its activities. This method allowed me to study the day-to-day practices in their environment. It provided me with the opportunity to witness the formal activities but also the informal activities, such as conversations between employees. This also meant that I chose to move and started to live in Haarlem, which is a city close to Amsterdam, where the NGO is located. I decided to move to be present at the location and the NGO's activities as often as possible. This made active participation possible where I could participate in all the activities I wanted to observe. I have chosen to do an open observation while being clear about the purpose of my internship. This meant that the employees were all aware of my research. This might have led to employees changing their behaviour knowing that I am studying them. To minimise this possibility, I decided only to give a brief idea of my thesis and not share the details. I also want to acknowledge that I am aware of the risk of losing my objectivity when using this method. I decided to mostly work on my thesis at home instead of at the firm to keep my objectivity and to minimize the influences of my employees.

The observation at the Jimmy Nelson Foundation started on the first of March and ended on the first of July. During this period, I worked there as an intern. I was physically present at the location from Tuesday till Thursday, on Fridays I worked from home. A usual workday started at 9.00 and ended at 17.30. During this observation, I paid attention to the employees, the location, the structure of the NGO and their activities. These aspects are discussed in greater detail in chapter 3 and a logbook is included in the appendix.



Because of the duration of the observation and my position at the NGO, I felt free to ask questions and experience all the different parts of the NGO. It also allowed me to actively interact with the employees.

The freedom also meant that I could work on my thesis there as well whilst remaining working there as an employee. The NGO provided me with all the resources they have, for example, access to programs like Cult-ED, their educational program for kids. Another resource I used was their network of contacts. Due to their previous work with Dutch communities, they got a rich range of contacts. This is how I retrieved the contacts of the community heads of Marken, Staphorst and Urk. The internship also provided me with a database of useful information about the Dutch communities and earlier held interviews with community members. The data was originally collected by the NGO for research purposes. This secondary data was used by me in this thesis to create a chapter on the background of the chosen communities. Information retrieved from literature was added to complete the chapter. The interviewees are referred to as interviewees 1, 2 and 3. Interviewee 1 is a community member of Marken and interviewees 2 and 3 are part of the Urker community.

For this thesis, I have chosen to interview three important community members, one of each community (Marken, Staphorst and Urk). These three members all worked for Jimmy Nelson and the Jimmy Nelson Foundation. All the members and their communities are part of the new photography book by Jimmy Nelson. I have chosen to only interview people that were involved in the work of Jimmy Nelson and his foundation because I want to analyze the role of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation. In this way, I can find out how the members experienced the actions of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation. Due to distance and their schedules, the participants preferred contact by email. This resulted in a brief questionnaire that I shared with them by email. I have chosen a questionnaire by email to provide them with enough time and freedom to answer the questions in their own time. The email consisted of a small introduction text about the purpose of the thesis, around 70 words, and a questionnaire that consisted of eight open questions. I have chosen open questions because they would result in qualitative data. The questions are simple and short of nature to minimize the possibility that the participant would wrongly interpret the question. The participants of the questionnaire are referred to as participants 1, 2 and 3. Participant 1 is a member of the Staphorst community, participant 2 is a member of the Marken community and participant 3 is a member of the Urker community. The results of the questionnaire provided insights into the experiences of the Dutch religio-cultural minorities regarding the preservation of their heritage and insights into their experiences with the Jimmy Nelson Foundation.

To provide me with a physical experience of the cultures and heritage of the chosen communities I attended *Eibertjesdag*, a festivity in Nunspeet that celebrated Dutch religio-cultural heritage. On this day traditional costumes were shown and cultural practices, values and norms were explained. This gave me a look and feel of the religio-cultural heritage of Marken, Staphorst and Urk.

Literature was used to build the theoretical framework, where the concepts: of globalisation, religio-cultural minority, non-governmental organization and heritage are discussed. The information retrieved from the participant observation, questionnaire and the literature all together resulted in the discussion and conclusion.

## **Chapter 2: Background Dutch religio-cultural minorities**

The Dutch religio-cultural minorities Marken, Staphorst and Urk will be discussed in this chapter. Every community will be divided into three main themes: history, traditional costume and culture. This is to create a brief overview of their heritage.

The information in this chapter is strengthened by details retrieved from earlier interviews and from the answers to the questionnaire I handed out to participants of the chosen communities. More details and information about the nature of these interviews and the questionnaire are discussed in the methodology section.

At the end of this chapter, the collected data will be analyzed and the linkages that follow from this will be addressed.

### **2.1 Marken**

#### History

Since the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the island Marken was separated from the rest of Holland, a former province of the Netherlands, due to a heavy storm. It was not until 1957 that Marken was reunited with the mainland of North Holland again, thanks to the construction of a dike. Marken and its culture are mainly famous for their traditional costume and the small houses of the inhabitants that were full of porcelain. Early sources tell that in the 13<sup>th</sup> century Marken island was inhabited by Norbertine monks that originated from Hallum, Friesland.<sup>34</sup> These

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<sup>34</sup> Frank Mouthaan, “Westhuse en Oesthuse – Welvaart onder leiding van Monniken”, accessed May 13, 2022, <https://marken.frankmouthaan.nl/tot1345.html>.

monks lived off agriculture and built their farms on elevated hills, which are called *werven*. When these monks disappeared from the island in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the island of Marken regularly became the victim of flooding by seawater. This flooding brought an end to the agriculture that was present on the island. The original inhabitants of Marken, called Markers, sought their survival and income in fishing. The Zuiderzee (a former bay of the North Sea) did not provide enough fish for all the Markers to live from so in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries Marker fishermen went to the Baltic Sea. They even went as far as the Arctic for whaling. Later herring fishing with special herring pipes in the North Sea provided enough provision. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>-century fishery was mainly done on so-called loggers (boats) and they sailed from Dutch ports to German ports.<sup>35</sup> In 1837, Marken got their port and their fleet grew to almost 200 ships.<sup>36</sup> But in 1932 the *Afsluitdijk*, a magnificent dike that cut off the Zuiderzee from the North Sea, was built. This meant the end of the fishery of the Markers. The closure of the Zuiderzee created a lake, which turned the saltwater into fresh water and fish species died out. Many Markers needed to quit their profession as a fisherman, which, in turn, caused other firms linked to the fishery such as sailmakers and shipyards to lose a lot of their work. But many Markers still wear surnames that originated from their times at sea, named after their profession: *Visser* (Fisherman), *Zeeman* (Sailor), *Commandeur* (Commander) or named after the ship they once sailed on: *Appel* (Apple), *Boneveld* (Boneveld), *Pereboom* (Peartree) or *Dolfijn* (Dolphin).<sup>37</sup>

### Traditional costume

Remarkably, the Marker's traditional costume contains a narrative. Every piece of clothing is linked to a certain emotion, a special date or it shows a person's life phase. For example, a certain way Markers dress could refer to grief or the birth of a child. The clothing mostly refers to the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>38</sup> This is seen in the difference in clothing that depends on age. The children wear other costumes than the grown-ups. The younger boys wear skirts until the age of six when they change into a new set of clothes. The younger girls wear skirts, that differ from the ones of the boys, until the age of eight. The children first change into a kind of in-between set of clothing, where they are in the liminal phase, between child and adult. And later on, when

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<sup>35</sup> Marker Museum, "Geschiedenis", accessed May 13, 2022, [http://www.markermuseum.nl/?page\\_id=142](http://www.markermuseum.nl/?page_id=142).

<sup>36</sup> Marker Museum, "Geschiedenis", accessed May 13, 2022, [http://www.markermuseum.nl/?page\\_id=142](http://www.markermuseum.nl/?page_id=142).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

they reach adulthood they change into their final set of clothes. Every piece of clothing is handmade and the loose parts of the costume are fastened with pins. All the items of clothing are finished separately with bands and edges which in itself have their meaning. With the traditional costume, they do not wear much jewelry, this is because the costume in itself is very rich in embroidery and darning work. The gold and silver wear, and family heirlooms are carefully preserved at home and passed on from generation to generation. The luxurious fabric like silk was mainly used for special occasions. The designs on this fabric date back to colonial times, where Marker women got fabrics from India that were brought by the *VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, 'Dutch East India Company')*.<sup>39</sup> These fabrics were made into costumes and embroidery was made by the Marker women themselves. Due to the location of Marken, the Markers had to do many chores themselves. For example, the men made their fishing nets. For the women, it meant that they made their clothing themselves. Already at a young age, girls were taught how to handle needles and thread. Marken went through drastic events, such as floodings, war and the extinction of the fishing industry. Subsequently, the traditional costumes faded away. It started with the costumes of the men when they started a new profession onshore. When the children started to go to the mainland for better schooling, their traditional clothing disappeared as well. Nowadays, some elderly women still wear their traditional costumes in their everyday lives. The traditional costumes are worn by the rest of the Markers on King's Day, a national Dutch holiday where they celebrate the Dutch king's birthday. For this particular day, the Markers change the traditional colours of the costume to orange, something that is typical traditional for King's Day.

Costumes plays a big role in the religio-cultural heritage of Marken, this also comes forward in the interviews that were held. Interviewee 1 originated from Marken and describes that the traditional costume was so conventional in everyday life that it was unthinkable to leave the door without it. Interviewee 1 gives the following example: During haymaking in the summer women needed to wear special red-and-white-checked hats made of stuffed cloth. These special hats were created to protect the lace hats they wore daily. If they did not wear these protection hats the sun could damage the lace. One could ask why the Markers would not just leave their hat at home when they go out in the sun. Interviewee 1 explains that the hat is part of the costume and it was just not done to wear it without the hat:

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

“Je gaat nu ook niet op je blote voeten in de sneeuw lopen. Niemand zal zeggen dat het niet mag, maar je doet het niet. Het is onderdeel van je dracht, dus wil je complete gekleed lopen, dan heb je je kap op.”

[You are not going to walk barefoot in the snow either. No one will say you can't, but you won't do it. It is part of your dress, so if you want to walk fully clothed, you have to wear your hat.]

The costume was formed around the everyday life of the Markers. For example, the women did not have a coat, as they only wore a *dassie* ('tie'). This was the case because Marker women did not go out of the house much. For example, the butcher and the baker went from door to door, so a coat for the women was not necessary. The Marker men wore woolen pants that were not warm enough for winter temperature. But the fishing season for the men started around Pentecost and ended before the winter season. This meant that warm pants were not necessary. The Marker costume also has its place in the Marker dialect. When a woman was nicely dressed in traditional costume people would say 'you look *bas*', which means something like you look nice, neat or beautiful. Towards the men, one would say 'you look *gnap*', which has the same meaning in a masculine form. These terms are still used when one walks through Marken in their traditional costume. 95% of the people would say 'you look *bas*' or 'you look *gnap*'. When someone looks beautiful, they could still get comments from their fellow villagers that entail the words *bas* or *gnap*.<sup>40</sup>

### Culture

When we look at the culture of Marken, a lot of it is tied to their relationship with the sea. The Markers lived for centuries-long on the so-called silver of the sea (herring, anchovy and freshwater eel). Until the arrival of the *Afsluitdijk* in 1932, Marken flooded several times a year. Therefore, agriculture was not possible and Markers lived off fishing. The relationship between the sea and the Markers got damaged by the flood disaster of January 1916 where multiple lives were taken by the sea. The Markers still commemorate the horrible event and in 2016 a monument was built to honour and commemorate the victims.<sup>41</sup> An old Marker saying goes “Een vijand bedwongen, een vriend uit het oog verloren” ('An enemy subdued, a friend lost out

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<sup>40</sup> Information from an interview with interviewee 1 (11/02/21).

<sup>41</sup> Marker Museum, “Hoog water”, accessed May 15, 2022, <http://www.markermuseum.nl/?gallery=hoog-water>.

of sight').<sup>42</sup> Which means that the power of the sea can be controlled but not at all times. The power of the sea can also cause harm, for example when boatmen perish at sea and the Marker community loses a 'friend'. Here the difficult relationship of the Markers with the sea is visible. The sea is a source of income for the Markers, and their survival, but on the other hand, it has also caused a lot of pain due to the loss of fellow villagers by floods or accidents at sea. The influence of the sea is also visible in their living conditions, mostly all Markers live on *werven*, which is a human-created hill that is used for habitation. These hills protect the homes of the Markers against possible floods. Most of the Marker houses were black, because of the tar that was used. The Markers painted their houses with tar because this was water-resistant and cheap. If one came across a green painted house in Marken one could be sure that the inhabitants of this house were wealthy. It showed that one had enough money to buy green paint instead of tar. The even more wealthy families also painted white stripes on their houses, this showed that one was so rich that he could afford two different colours of paint. Status and wealth could therefore be read from the colours of the house. Tar was indeed a very cheap water-resistant material but on the other hand, it was extremely flammable. This meant that it was common in Marken that your house would burn down. Not only water but also fire posed a major threat to the Marker population. It was the struggle of a small community against the great impact of the natural elements.

During severe winters, when the port of Marken was completely frozen, one could encounter an *ijsbruiloft* ('wedding on ice'). This festive event was a reenacted wedding, where multiple bridal couples pretended to be bound by matrimony bonds. This event was a festive get-together for the whole community. Everyone was dressed up nicely and the Marker anthem was sung. All the guests got a special kind of cake and danced together. Interviewee 1 explains that also at the *ijsbruiloft* one was expected to come in a traditional costume. This meant without a jacket because the costume should not be covered. This also meant that the duration of the event was no longer than two hours, because of the cold weather. These weddings were possible because the whole community was at home due to the severe winter. Fishermen could not go out and the soil was too hard for the farmers to grow anything. People with other professions helped with the preparation. The baker made the special cake and the doctor took care of the drinks.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Markers started to build houses on poles as another way to keep their houses safe. After the construction of the *Afsluitdijk*, the danger of the sea was subdued and the

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

area under these poles could be filled with new houses. But the build of the *Afsluitdijk* not only meant an end to the danger of the sea, but it also meant the end of the fishery. The Zuiderzee became the IJsselmeer, saltwater turned into fresh water and the only fish species that was left was the eel. The fishery of the eel provided fewer fishermen with a livelihood than the herring and anchovy fishing of the past. As a result, the fishing fleet shrank. In 1932 there were still 82 ships registered in Marken. A few years later in 1936, there were only 58 left. In 1951 the number was 10 and in 1962 the last ship sailed to its final destination, the Zuiderzee Museum in Enkhuizen.<sup>43</sup> The philosophy of the Markers where the sea was seen as a friend thus became but a distant memory.

## 2.2 Urk

### History

For centuries, Urk was an island surrounded by the Zuiderzee. Now, it is wedged between dikes with the human-made polder behind it. In thousand-years-old writings the village Urk is described as a place that is characteristic due to its inhabitants and buildings.<sup>44</sup> Urkers, as the inhabitants are called, lived off the sea. Fishery provided them with a livelihood. The island was originally about eighty hectares in size and consisted of a high boulder clay hump and meadow. On this hump, which was only twelve hectares, houses, churches and the lighthouse were built. This hump was the only place that stayed dry when the flood came. This resulted in the chaotic infrastructure of Urk, every piece of land was used. The houses were made out of green painted wood and white painted brick walls. Nowadays these houses look well maintained but in the early days, this was not the case. Interviewee 2, who originated from Urk, tells that poverty runs like a red thread through the history of Urk. The Urkers had no money for luxury and decoration, so the houses were very small, practical and basic. Large families, sometimes with twelve children, were housed in these small Urker houses.

Before mainly relying on fishery, agriculture was the main income of the Urkers, but the fields were regularly swept away by the sea. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the fishery began to grow

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<sup>43</sup> Marker Museum, “Hoog water”, accessed on May 15, 2022, <http://www.markermuseum.nl/?gallery=hoog-water>.

<sup>44</sup> Museum het oude raadhuis, “Urk, het voormalige Eiland”, accessed May 16, 2022, <https://www.museumopurk.nl>.

and boats started to sail from the Zuiderzee to the North Sea.<sup>45</sup> In 1792, all the Urker men made their living from fishing.<sup>46</sup>

Until 1890, Urk was only connected with the mainland by a ship that travelled back and forth.<sup>47</sup> During severe winters when the Zuiderzee was frozen, it was not possible for ships to sail back and forth to Urk and the mainland. Urkers invented the *ijsvlet* to make the overpass to the mainland possible. An *ijsvlet* is a wooden boat with a mast, sail and oars. But unlike a regular boat, there are iron glides attached to the bottom of the boat. These iron glides were used as ice skates which allowed the boat to slide over the ice,<sup>48</sup> sometimes with the help of sailing on the wind, but more often it was pushed and pulled by a crew of ten people. With the build of the *Afsluitdijk*, the saltwater fishing in the Zuiderzee was over. This did not cause the end of the Urker fishery, which Urkers call *Het wonder van Urk* ('The miracle of Urk'). The fishermen moved to the North Sea where they could still fish. In 1939, the build of a dike from Lemmer to Urk was finished and in 1942 land was drained which created the Noordoostpolder.<sup>49</sup> These events meant that Urk was now connected to the mainland, which meant that Urk was no longer an island. But the island history of Urk is still very present, Urkers still say "I live on Urk" instead of in Urk. Which shows that they still refer to Urk as an island. This is so important for the Urkers that even in the rest of the Netherlands one says *on* Urk instead of *in* Urk.

### Traditional costume

The traditional costume is not worn daily anymore in Urk, but the Urkers are very proud of it still. At many choirs of Urk, the singers wear their traditional costumes during their performances. Also, at the *Urkerdag* ('the day of Urk'), the traditional costumes are worn. On this festive day, a tribute is paid to the Urker heritage. Hundreds of people gather around the harbour in their traditional costumes to celebrate. The Urkers value their heritage and want to preserve it through this special day. Some men wear their traditional costumes on Sunday when they go to church. That Urkers wear their traditional costumes on these special occasions shows how much the Urkers value their traditional costumes. Interviewee 2 points out that, unlike many other Dutch places with traditional costumes where mostly elderly people still or

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<sup>45</sup> IsGeschiedenis, "Geschiedenis van vissersdorp Urk", accessed May 16, 2022, <https://isgeschiedenis.nl/nieuws/geschiedenis-van-vissersdorp-urk>.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ineke Strouken, "Tradities op Urk", *Traditie*, 2011.

<sup>48</sup> Mijn Zuiderzee, "De IJsvlet van Urk", accessed May 16, 2022, <https://www.mijnzuidzee.nl/page/7689/->.

<sup>49</sup> Ineke Strouken, "Tradities op Urk", *Traditie*, 2011.



occasionally wear their costumes, the Urker youth is as enthusiastic as the adults. Everyone still buys new pieces for their traditional costumes. The thing that interviewee 2 is concerned about is the knowledge behind the traditional costumes. Interviewee 2 explains that the older generation witnessed the traditional costumes daily, as their mothers have always walked in Urker costumes. The older generation is familiar with the costumes and knows exactly how to wear them. The younger generation on the other hand had no example, as their parents did not wear their costumes daily. Interviewees 2 and 3 both discuss that the younger generation just put something together when wearing the traditional costumes. Both interviewees say that one should wear the costume in a certain type of way and that this is extremely important. The interviewees had witnessed a wedding the other day and are ashamed of the costumes of the newlyweds. The bride was dressed shabbily, and the groom wore the everyday costume instead of the traditional wedding costume. The interviewees are concerned about the dressing traditions that come with the traditional costumes. If the younger generation is not aware of the traditions and rules, then it would not be a tribute to the traditional costumes but rather a fun dress-up party. Especially when it comes to how the costumes should be worn. Interviewee 2 says the following:

“Dat aankleden, dat zal nog wat wezen. Het is niet zo dat het de jongeren generaties niet interesseert hoe ze zich correct moeten aankleden, want ze denken dat ze er prachtig uitzien.”

[The dressing itself, that will be a thing. It is not that the younger generation is not interested in how they need to dress, because they think they look beautiful.]

To which interviewee 3 responded with:

“Ze denken dat ze het weten, maar ze weten de helft niet.”

[They think they know, but actually, they only know half of it.]

To preserve the knowledge, community members of Urk are currently busy recording the traditional costumes and the accompanying rules. The traditional costume is described as modest and simplistic. Other Dutch traditional costumes can be seen as ostentatious, but the Urker costumes are rather the opposite. It distinguishes itself by its simple authenticity. What is interesting about the Urker costumes is that it is sensible about the big changes in the communities. An example can be seen during the disaster of 1883 when 28 fishermen died. The whole community was mourning and the floral costumes changed into black ones. The disaster

left its mark on the Urker costumes and the costumes have been sober ever since. The younger generation shows interest in the floral costumes from before the disaster, they rather wear these costumes during festivities. According to interviewee 2, the younger generation has no idea that these sober clothing originated from the disaster of 1883 and that the costumes they show interest in are from before the disaster. Due to the interest of the younger generation, the overall image of the Urker costumes becomes more cheerful.

### Culture

The fact that Urk has been isolated for centuries has left its mark. Urkers almost only married within their community. This causes many Urkers to share hereditary characteristics, which increases the risk of hereditary disorders. Something else that marks Urk is that they are a very close community that is proud of their heritage and origin. They have their own anthem and everyone talks in the Urker dialect. Urk is one of the villages with the most churchgoers in the Netherlands, about 94 per cent. Nearly 46 per cent of them are Reformed Christians. Other beliefs than Christianity are not present in the village.<sup>50</sup> Religious beliefs are key in Urker society. The importance of Christianity becomes, for example, visible in the representation of the Christian faith in the City Council. The SGP ( *Staatskundig Gereformeerde Partij*, ‘Dutch Reformed Political Party’) was by far the biggest party during the local elections of 2022, with almost one-third of the votes.<sup>51</sup>

Urk has numerous traditions, actually one could say that Urk is built on traditions. These traditions are built upon their relationship with the sea which shaped the culture of Urk. To create an image of this I will discuss some Urker traditions. Urker men often wear one golden earring in the shape of an anchor most of the time. This stems from the age-old fishing culture. When the fishermen sailed on the Zuiderzee it was common that a ship and its crew would not return from its voyage, due to an accident at sea. The fishermen were aware of these dangers at sea which can be seen in the old Urker saying “De zee geeft en de zee neemt” (‘The sea giveth and the sea taketh’). Due to their Christian belief, the fishermen valued a Christian funeral. When a fisherman went overboard and was nowhere to be found, it was impossible to bring him home to give him a Christian funeral. When the body washed ashore somewhere, people

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<sup>50</sup> Omroep Flevoland, “Gemeente Urk heeft de meeste kerkgangsters van Nederland”, accessed May 16, 2022, <https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/116989/urk-gemeente-urk-heeft-meeste-kerkgangsters-van-nederland>.

<sup>51</sup> Alle Cijfers, “Verkiezingsuitslagen voor de gemeente Urk”, accessed June 29, 2022, <https://allecijfers.nl/verkiezingsuitslagen/gemeente-urk/>

that found the body could use the golden earring to pay for a decent funeral.<sup>52</sup> The golden earring acted as funeral insurance. Sometimes the earring even showed from which village the fisherman originated, so that the body could be brought back to Urk. The golden earring is not the only age-old tradition that is still present in Urker culture. Interviewees 2 and 3, both inhabitants of Urk, explain the presence of white cloth hanging over the windows. When people on Urk were mourning, they hung white cloth over their windows. It showed that they were mourning and that they temporarily wanted to shut themselves down from society and community life. These white cloth periods sometimes lasted longer than a year. Interviewee 2 explains that the person in question stayed at home as long as the cloth was hanging down the windows. This mourning tradition is still present in Urker society. Some use white curtains now instead of cloth. Another remarkable tradition originated from the times when wearing clogs was common. Interviewee 3 explains that when a person was seriously ill on Urk, sand would lie outside and in front of the door. The sand muffled the sound of the clogs of the people that passed down the house so that the patient would not be disturbed. All Urkers would know if one was seriously ill due to the sand that was scattered around the house.

Another tradition that grew out of the fishing culture is visible in the way Urkers say goodnight. When the fishermen left the choir, they went down to the house of their parents to wish them goodnight, *genacht* in the Urker dialect. It means more than merely goodnight; it is loaded with the insecurities that come with the dangers of the sea. When you wish someone *genacht* you wish them good wind, sea, catch and a safe return home to the family. Should the fishermen not return then it also means goodbye and rest in peace. Interviewee 3 explains that the insecurity is extremely feelable in the community when the fishermen are away. It is still common that fishermen will not return home and wives and children are left behind. The insecurity that comes with it bounds the community together. The women of the fishermen form a close community that looks after each other. Also, the church forms a haven where one can find comfort during troublesome times. But the most important tradition of all is singing, which can be traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Interviewee 4 explains that the singing originally comes from fishermen who were scattered somewhere in an unknown harbour. Before the storm broke out, the fishermen would gather together and start to sing. Later on, the singing became more structured and fishermen gathered every Sunday afternoon to sing Christian songs and psalms. Nowadays there are many choirs on Urk, not only for the fishermen but also for women and children.

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<sup>52</sup> VPRO Tegenlicht, “Het verhaal achter de Urker oorring”, accessed May 16, 2022, <https://www.vpro.nl/programmas/tegenlicht/lees/artikelen/2021/het-verhaal-achter-de-urker-oorring.html>.

## 2.3 Staphorst

### History

Staphorst became well known due to the Dutch *Polygoonjournaal*, which is a collective name for two Dutch newsreels that were produced till 1987.<sup>53</sup> Around 1930, the Dutch news program decided to capture the churchgoers of Staphorst on Sunday. This iconic image became well known in the Netherlands. One can see a long line of people walking towards the church. The men dressed as farmers were walking around on clogs and some of them even had a cow on a leash. The women were dressed in typical Staphorst costumes and walked a little bit bent over and with a straight stride. The children in the video clip were also dressed in traditional costumes.<sup>54</sup>

This iconic image became an inspiration for many artists. For example, Jan Sluijters, one of the first modern painters together with Piet Mondriaan and Leo Gestel, became a well-known artist due to his work on the women of Staphorst.<sup>55</sup> Sluijters made a collection based on the women from Staphorst. Central in this collection are the traditional costumes and the typical posture of the women. The women of Staphorst are well known for their particular posture. The upper body is bent slightly forward and the head is pointed down. In total silence, they walk over the dike across the sea to the church.

Staphorst used to be a community full of farmers. This is still visible in the number of farms that are present. In the farming community, you had small farmers with small pieces of land and there were more wealthy farmers who had their disposal large tracts of land. These richer farmers were called *dikke boeren* (fat farmers). The distinction between these types of farmers was also seen in the clothing they wear. The children of the richer farmers wore more expensive clothes for example. In Staphorst there were especially many dairy farmers. These milkmen would sell their milk on markets or customers could buy milk at the farm itself. During the industrial revolution, more and more people moved to the bigger cities to work in factories. To not lose their customers the milkmen sold their milk door to door with special bikes and vans. But with the arrival of supermarkets, the competition was too hard for the milkmen which caused the extinction of the profession of milkman.

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<sup>53</sup> IsGeschiedenis, “Het Polygoonjournaal”, accessed May 21, 2022, <https://isgeschiedenis.nl/nieuws/het-polygoonjournaal>.

<sup>54</sup> Staphorst in Beeld, “Jaarmarkt Staphorst”, accessed May 21, 2022, <http://www.staphorstinbeeld.nl/index.php/9-film/17-jaarmarkt-staphorst>.

<sup>55</sup> Staphorst in Beeld, “Collectie Jan Sluijters”, accessed May 21, 2022, <http://www.staphorstinbeeld.nl/11kunst/97-collectie-jan-sluijters>.

### Traditional costume

In the Netherlands, the community members of Staphorst are well known for their traditional costumes. Especially on Sundays, these costumes are visible, when the churchgoers of Staphorst walk together towards the church. The men and women walk in a long straight line divided into small separate groups, while the women walk slightly bent forwards. We can trace this particular posture back to the traditional costumes of the Staphorst women. The traditional costumes are shaped so that the women have to bend forward. The women also used cushions to make their hips appear higher. Nowadays there are not many women that wear traditional costumes in Staphorst, and especially not daily. If women appear in their traditional costumes it is mostly for special occasions or during lectures they give to outsiders.<sup>56</sup>

When we look closer at the traditions concerning the traditional costumes of Staphorst we see the following pattern: indoors, the women wear a small cotton cap of black cloth on their heads, which is fitted tightly around the head. These caps are decorated with polka-dotted work. The hair of the women is rolled into a coil above their temples and the end is tucked under the cap. The women also wear ear iron, a big piece of iron hanging on the sides of the head, attached to this hang golden spirals. This all is worn during special occasions and on Sundays. The ear iron is placed over a black satin cap which is called the *toetmuts*.<sup>57</sup> This satin cap is shaped by a piece of cardboard folded into a point that is placed under the hat. Over the *toetmuts*, the women wear a lace hat called the *tufmusse* which is made out of tulle. In mourning, the lace cap is replaced by a light blue one.<sup>58</sup> On their upper torso, the women wear a *borstrok* (breast skirt) which has a floral motif. On top of this, they wear a piece of checkered cloth. A lot of regional costumes consist of an apron, which is also the case in Staphorst. Preferably, these aprons needed to have sharp nice creases. These creases could be created by tightly folding the apron. A sharp crease was seen as a status symbol. You could tell from the sharpness of the crease if a woman was rich. If the woman still had sharp creases in her apron it meant that she did not have to work. Because due to labour the creases would fade. The men wear linen shirts with gold, silver or copper throat buttons, usually with a hand-woven skirt over them.<sup>59</sup> Here the

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<sup>56</sup> Borne Boeit, “Klederdracht uit Staphorst uitgelegd”, accessed May 23, 2022, <https://www.borneboeit.nl/48522/nieuws/klederdracht-uit-staphorst-uitgelegd>.

<sup>57</sup> Goed op Streek, “Staphorst”, accessed May 24, 2022, <https://www.goedopstreek.nl/Site/Staphorst.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

buttons were seen as a status symbol, the richer the farmer the more valuable buttons he would wear. In mourning, men would wear handmade black or blue buttons made out of wool.<sup>60</sup>

### Culture

Participant 1 describes the community as a close-knit group, and that this closeness is retrieved from the early days when the community depended on each other. The people from Staphorst are not only seen as a tight community but also as a religious community. In Urk, we saw that the attendance of churchgoers was the highest in the Netherlands. But Staphorst is also well known for its religious community. Staphorst has the biggest Restored Reformed congregation in the Netherlands. The Restored Reformed Church is a Calvinist denomination in the Netherlands. The Restored Reformed Church of Staphorst became especially known during Covid19 when people criticized their church services. Most of the people from Staphorst are part of this church, which caused a great group of people to attend the services. The gathering of such a large group of people was seen by many as a violation of the corona rules. The continued gathering of large groups during church services in times of Covid19 shows how important religion is for the Staphorst community.

The churchgoers of Staphorst are referred to as *Zwartekousen* (Black stockings) due to the black stockings that the women wear on Sundays. A rich range of religious beliefs, from heavily Orthodox to Evangelical, are present in Staphorst. The presence of multiple religious beliefs is partly due to the influx of new residents. In the earlier days, people married only within their religious community. This meant that an Orthodox woman would not marry an Evangelical man. Participant 1 explains that this is still the case in Staphorst. The young single men used to find their potential wives by keeping their eyes wide open when walking through the streets. The parents of a marriageable daughter would hang a copper heart on their front door as an invitation for single men to introduce themselves. Another interesting tradition retrieved from the times of conscription was where young men from Staphorst could be sent to the army. In February the 18-year-old boys needed to sign up for *de lotingdag* ('the day of the draw').<sup>61</sup> The draw, which decided who needed to serve the army, was held in a local cafe. This day was also known as *de officiële dag van de dronkenschap* ('official day of drunkenness') because all the young men would drink alcohol to control their nerves. And after the draw, one would drink even more to celebrate or bemoan the results. When the men returned home, they

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Uit de oude Koektrommel, "Loting Nationale Militie", accessed June 1, 2022, <https://www.uitdeoudekoektrommel.com/loting-nationale-militie/>.

received special caps decorated with ribbons and flowers. This attracted the attention of the young women which released the tension of this drastic day a bit.

### **Chapter 3: Results**

In this chapter, the results of this thesis will be presented. The results are divided into the sub-questions of this thesis. Per sub-question the most important results will be discussed. In this chapter, the results will be analyzed, but conclusions will not yet be drawn. The data discussed below comes from participant observations for four months and a questionnaire conducted with three members of three different religio-cultural communities. This thesis looks at an NGO's role in preserving religio-cultural minorities. The observation is used to get a better understanding of the actions of an NGO. It also provided an insight into the structure of the NGO and its employees.

Finally, this chapter discusses the experiences of the community members with the actions of the NGO. This information was retrieved from the questionnaire held with three community members from three different communities. The overall argument is that the heritage of the chosen Dutch religio-cultural minorities is endangered by the influences of globalisation. And that the Dutch religio-cultural minorities want to preserve their heritage in the future.

#### **3.1 Approaches of the Jimmy Nelson foundation**

Since this thesis is focused on the role of an NGO in the preservation of the heritage of religio-cultural minorities, it is important to discuss the approaches of the chosen NGO. But also their vision when it comes to the preservation of religio-cultural heritage. If we want to get a better insight into the role of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation in the preservation of religio-cultural heritage we need a clear understanding of their approaches and vision. So, in this part, these two aspects will be discussed and later reflected on.

The Jimmy Nelson Foundation (JNF) is a foundation that was retrieved from the photographer Jimmy Nelson and his work. This photographer captures indigenous tribes from all over the world, with the goal to raise awareness for the preservation of these tribes and their knowledge. The JNF shares this goal and facilitates multiple projects to raise awareness and preserve indigenous knowledge. The JNF has three big pillars: fast-track awareness, sharing knowledge and local support.

Under the pillar of fast-track awareness, the JNF tries to create awareness for disappearing cultures. They do this by sharing videos about this problem on multiple social media platforms. These videos show how due to global warming our world is changing and that more attention should be paid to the indigenous cultures and their lifestyle. Because the JNF believes that the knowledge of indigenous people can help to turn the tables on climate change since they are the ones that live in harmony with nature.

Under the pillar of sharing knowledge, they created an educational program for children named Cult-ED. Cult-ED is a program developed for kids from the age of 11 to 15 but is also interesting for every culture fanatic.<sup>62</sup> It is a free program that focuses respectfully on culture and sustainability. Due to this program, it becomes possible to digitally travel all over the world, which makes children familiar with new cultures. Cult-ED tries to challenge children to think differently when it comes to themes such as climate change, homogeneity and globalisation. The JNF based some questions in the program on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. The JNF believes that the younger generation can bring the planet and its inhabitants into a more sustainable future. With Cult-ED they hope to encourage this younger generation and inspire them to think of an innovative solution for the future of our world and its cultural diversity. The program is built up into different chapters. Every chapter is based on one community and divided into four different lessons location, people, lifestyle and tradition. Every lesson has six different questions:

- Question 1: is created to discover the community in question.
- Question 2: is focused on the pictures made by Jimmy Nelson. The children can scan these images with a special app which unlocks videos about the community.
- Question 3: here the children try to find out multiple facts about the community.
- Question 4: this question is made to encourage the children to form their own opinion and think critically about different subjects.
- Question 5: here the children have to do something, like write an essay or make a drawing.
- Question 6: this question is focused on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This question encourages the children to think about their behaviour and what they could change regarding the environment.

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<sup>62</sup> The Jimmy Nelson Foundation, “Cult-ED culture education for curious world citizen”, accessed May 3, 2022, <https://www.jimmynelsonfoundation.com/cult-ed/>.



The last pillar, local support, is represented in their reciprocity project. The reciprocity project is focused on the preservation of heritage. The JNF does this by assisting local communities with the passing of their knowledge and heritage to the future generation. The important aspect of this project is that the initiative should come from the community itself. Afterwards the foundation together with the community work towards cooperation that is comfortable for both parties.<sup>63</sup> During the project, there is regular contact and the progress is monitored. The communities that currently are part of this reciprocity project are the Kazakh, the Maasai and the Q'eros.

The Kazakhs live in Mongolia and are one of the last communities that practice falconry. Falconry is a natural hunting technique where trained birds are used to hunt small animals. The use of falconry is an age-old tradition of the Kazakh, but at the moment it is fading away. This is due to the endangerment of the birds by the imbalance of the ecosystem. The Jimmy Nelson Foundation together with their partner NGO in Mongolia, Nomadic Expeditions, help support the preservation of the falconry in a sustainable way.<sup>64</sup> They do this by providing the community with education on how to sustainably protect the golden eagle.

The semi-nomadic community, the Maasai, live in Kenya and Tanzania. Due to globalisation their ancient traditions, rituals and practices are in danger.<sup>65</sup> The JNF together with their local partner Back to Nature Foundation supports the construction of the Maasai Cultural Education Centre.<sup>66</sup> At this centre they pass through the Maasai wisdom about living in harmony with nature, to the next generation.

The Q'eros people live in Peru in a spiritual, authentic and earth-centric way.<sup>67</sup> Globalisation has ended the remote and isolated way of life of the Q'eros. A road connects their remote villages with the big city. This brings advantages, such as easy access to hospitals. But it also brings multiple disadvantages, including the emergence of mining companies and the loss of community members to the city.<sup>68</sup> When community members move to the city they

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<sup>63</sup> The Jimmy Nelson Foundation, "Reciprocity projects", accessed April 25, 2022, <https://www.jimmynelsonfoundation.com/our-projects/>.

<sup>64</sup> The Jimmy Nelson Foundation, "Kazakh – Sustainable Eagle Population", accessed April 25, 2022, <https://www.jimmynelsonfoundation.com/culture/reciprocity-kazakh/>.

<sup>65</sup> Koissabe Ole, "Impact of Globalization in the Maasai Family", accessed April 20, 2022, [https://www.academia.edu/4036027/Impact\\_of\\_Globalization\\_in\\_the\\_Maasai\\_Family](https://www.academia.edu/4036027/Impact_of_Globalization_in_the_Maasai_Family)

<sup>66</sup> The Jimmy Nelson Foundation, "Maasai – Culture Education Centre", accessed April 25, 2022, <https://www.jimmynelsonfoundation.com/culture/maasai/>.

<sup>67</sup> The Jimmy Nelson Foundation, "Q'eros – Centre for Ancestral Culture", accessed April 25, 2022, <https://www.jimmynelsonfoundation.com/culture/reciprocity-qeros/>.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

leave behind their indigenous heritage and over the years the ancient knowledge is fading away. To preserve the Q'eros heritage, the community is building a centre and museum for Q'eros culture and wisdom. By helping to facilitate this centre and museum the JNF helps to preserve the knowledge of the Q'eros.

### **3.2 The goal of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation**

The goal of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation is to create a culturally diverse and healthy planet with respect for each other.<sup>69</sup> They pay attention to the environmental aspect because they believe that the rest of the world can learn a lot about the relationship between indigenous people and nature. According to the Jimmy Nelson Foundation, indigenous people live in harmony with nature. The vision of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation is to create better intercultural dialogue and understanding when it comes to the future of our planet and its species.<sup>70</sup> Their additional mission is to safeguard the cultural and natural heritage of the world for future generations. Through their work, they want to inspire humanity to seek a deeper connection with each other and their cultural identity.<sup>71</sup>

### **3.3 Participant observation**

In this part, I will present the findings of the participant observation. The findings from the participant observation will give an insight into the actions of the NGO. It is necessary to have a clear understanding of the actions of the NGO if we want to understand the role of the NGO in the preservation of religio-cultural heritage. Other aspects that are relevant to create a better understanding are the structure of the firm, the people that are involved and the location of the firm. These aspects are also discussed below and later reflected on in the analysis.

#### Location

The Jimmy Nelson Foundation is located in the South of Amsterdam, in the Netherlands. The firm is located in a business park, which is mostly filled with creative businesses. The location is one open space with two large tables where the employees can work on. There are two with glass closed-off rooms where private conversations or specific meetings can be facilitated. The space is filled with framed pictures of the work of the photographer and objects, such as African

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<sup>69</sup> The Jimmy Nelson Foundation, "Our Dream", accessed December 16, 2021, <https://www.jimmynelsonfoundation.com>.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

masks and shells from French Polynesia, that were retrieved from earlier travels. There is a couch, a kitchen, multiple plants and a big dining table, which gives the space a homely feel. Pictures of the space are included in the appendix at the end of this thesis.

### Structure

Two firms are working at the location, the Jimmy Nelson Foundation (JNF) and the Jimmy Nelson BV (*Besloten Vennootschap*, Private Company) (JN BV). The JNF is a foundation that is built around the work and the goal of the photographer Jimmy Nelson. The JN BV is a company that sells the pictures made by Jimmy Nelson as art pieces and sells the photography books by Jimmy Nelson, such as the book *Homage to Humanity*. The JNF is facilitated by the JN BV and external gifts. The employees all work for both companies. Both firms work closely together which makes them interconnected and interdependent. The JNF cannot exist without the help of the JN BV and the JN BV uses the JNF to give something back to the photographed communities.

### People

Six employees are working at the JN BV, which allows them to also work for the JNF. The staff constitutes a CEO, the photographer Jimmy Nelson and four employees. Jimmy Nelson and the CEO together form the guiding force over the rest of the team (figure 2). The employees all have a specific task but they also need to be able to do each other's tasks when necessary. Employee 1 works mostly on the activities of the JNF and is the educator and designer for the educational program of the JNF. Employee 1 also archives and manages all the visual documents. Employee 1 works three days a week at the office. Employee 2 is the project manager for multiple projects, among which is the Foundation. Employee 2 also manages the sales and personal relations. Employee 2 works four days a week, three days at the location and one day from home. Employee 3 is the producer, and filmographer and handles all the logistic tasks. Employee 3 works five days a week all from home since employee 3 is no Dutch inhabitant. Employee 4 is the designer and curator. Employee 4 works five days a week all from home since employee 4 is no Dutch inhabitant. As one can read, only employees 1 and 2 actively work on the tasks of the JNF. Employees 3 and 4 also do certain tasks for the JNF but it is not as visible in their task packages compared to employees 1 and 2. The whole team works closely together and seems to be a tight-knit group. I can tell that the employees have worked with each other for a long time and know each other very well. This becomes visible in their

informal conversations, where they talk a lot about their private lives. Everyone at the firm seems to be familiar with each other’s private lives. The atmosphere at the location but also amongst the employees was informal and relaxed. This was seen in the absence of any type of dress code and the joint lunch break where the employees alternately provide lunch for the rest of the team.

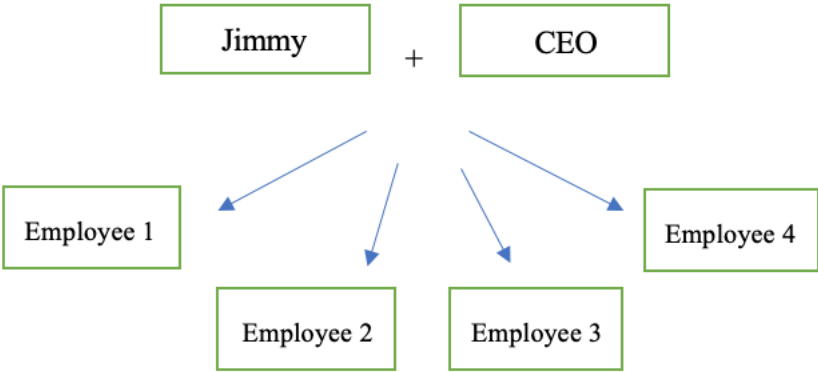


Figure 2: Visual representation of the work hierarchy

Activities

In this part, I will discuss the different activities I encountered during my observation. These activities create an image of how the NGO operates. It is important to create this image because it will create a better understanding of the role of an NGO in the preservation of heritage. Since the Jimmy Nelson Foundation has the goal to preserve cultural heritage the actions will show in what way they try to facilitate this goal.

One of the first projects I had to work on was their cultural education program, named Cult-ED. During the first week of my internship, I focused on the Cult-ED chapter about the Nenets, a semi-nomadic folk from Siberia. They asked me to look critically at the lessons and create advice to improve the lessons. I noticed that they were curious about what I, as a student of Religion Conflict and Globalisation, thought of the chapter. The employees reacted enthusiastically and were open to my advice. Every piece of advice I suggested was directly altered in the chapter. They gave me access to the total program and taught me how to change the program independently. Employee 1 provided me with the task to promote the Cult-ED program on social media. The idea was to promote the chapter on the Nenets since I altered that chapter, which made it ready to go public. The promotion mainly went through the social media

platform Instagram. Here I made an interactive question set that could be shared on the stories function of Instagram (figure 3). The questions were based on the topics of the different lessons: lifestyle, tradition, location and people. We decided to share three different questions each Friday, Saturday and Sunday, for a period of 5 weeks. I made these questions interactive by giving the Instagram followers the possibility to actively participate in the questionnaire. This was possible due to a special function of Instagram where followers could choose their answers (figure 4).



Figure 3: Example of Nenets questions template for Instagram stories.

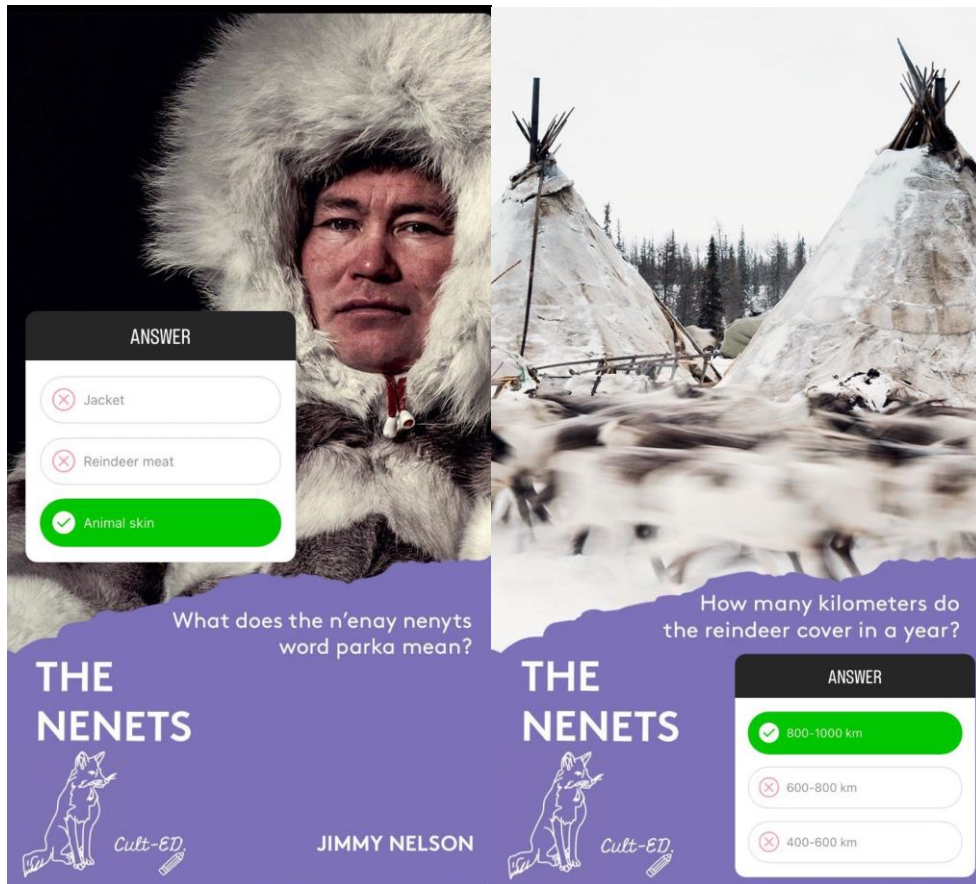


Figure 4: Examples of Nenets interactive questions shared on Instagram stories

The last question was always one with a link to the website where the Nenets Cult-ED lessons could be downloaded. Due to my work on the Cult-ED lessons, I got familiar with the outline of the program.

My next assignment was to help create a set of lessons on the Dutch. The communities that were chosen for this Dutch chapter are all communities that are also present in the new photography book by Jimmy Nelson. With employee 1 I brainstormed multiple times for this new chapter. We tried to get answers to the questions ‘what is typically Dutch?’ and ‘what counts as Dutch heritage?’. After collecting information we decided what should be included and what not. Then this information needed to be divided into four topics: location, people, tradition and lifestyle.

Due to the upcoming new book by Jimmy Nelson, the attention shifted from the Cult-ED program to the preparations for the book. Since I was new in the firm, they wanted me to do a check-round. I checked if the names of the models were correct and if every person pictured in the book signed a model release.

After one month I noticed I was familiar with the work structure and felt part of the team. I noticed that no one managed the social media accounts of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation and Jimmy Nelson himself. I decided to dive deeper into the world of social media, especially the platform Instagram. I got familiar with the program 'Planthat', a program that helps you plan your posts for the future. Since I was already quite familiar with the firm and its image, it was easy to create posts that fit this type of image. The employees were all happy with the work I did and asked me to continue this way. This showed me that I completely understood the image and goals of the firm, this reassurance did me good.

I noticed that the employees also appreciated my other work which allowed me to get even bigger tasks. They valued my knowledge as a student and asked me to check the rest of the book. The book is based on different traditional Dutch communities which all have their chapter. Each chapter consists of pictures that show the traditional costume, the lifestyle and community members. Each chapter also consists of texts that provide the reader with information on the specific community. In these texts, one can read about the history, the traditions, the stories about the traditional costume and multiple folktales. I encountered mistakes and unclarities in these texts and suggested some alterations.

Also, here the employees reacted enthusiastically and were grateful for my advice. I noticed that the expertise in religion and culture was not yet present in the existing team. I would say that all the employees are culture fanatics and feel strongly about the preservation of cultural diversity. But someone who checks the facts and the clarity of the texts was missing. With my academic background, I could fill this gap.

My next task was focused on creating small texts with information about all the Dutch communities. These texts were necessary because some of the images made by Jimmy Nelson are sold as art pieces. Every work is sold with a certificate that ensures its value, a small text of information about the person or community captured and a sticker with the details of the work that can be stuck to the back of the art piece.

After two months, halfway through my internship, I felt fully integrated into the firm. I had a meeting with the CEO in which the CEO told me that it felt as if I had always worked there and that they could no longer imagine that at some point this would no longer be the case. This meeting confirmed the feeling I had and showed me that I got an accurate image of the activities of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation. From this meeting forward they involved me in everything the firm did. This meant that every meeting with extern companies that were of importance to the employees was also important to me. They started to approach me as an employee instead of an intern. This new attitude meant that I gained access to all the parts and



documents of the firm, for example, finances and contracts with external parties. The idea that they trusted me with this sensitive information gave me a greater feeling of responsibility but also of appreciation.

I had to remind myself of the research and my position to stay objective. I decided to work some extra days from home to regain the feeling of being a researcher instead of only being an employee of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation. Employee 2 was on a holiday (period of three weeks) which meant that the other employees and I needed to take over employee 2's tasks. I had to cover the support email, the webshop and its logistic programs. Managing social media had, by now, become entirely my job. I noticed that gradually everyone entrusted me with this without giving me any guidelines or instructions.

The participant observation ended after a final interview with the CEO, who was also my internship supervisor. Here it became clear that I succeeded in my internship and that everyone was pleased with me and the work I did. During the conversation, which felt informal but still had a formal character, we discussed my difficulties and the things I liked doing there. It felt like an equal discussion where we both could share our experiences. The meeting between us ended with the CEO expressing that they would like me to work there as an employee and handing me a contract.

### **Analysis of the observation**

During my participant observation, I did various activities. When looking at the activities present at the Jimmy Nelson Foundation, we can state that they are intertwined with activities that belong to the Jimmy Nelson BV. Activities, for example, the ones that involve the new book or creating certificates are all activities that one would ascribe to the JN BV rather than the JNF. When we look at the structure of the firm, we can see that the JN BV and the JNF work closely together. This is because of the funding of the JN BV to the JNF, the JNF cannot exist without the revenue of the JN BV. Another aspect is that the employees work for both companies and the positions of the employees fluidly change throughout the day. In the morning, employee 1 could be busy with creating new educational lessons for Cult-ED and in the afternoon shifts to making certificates. Since the firm (JN BV & JNF) has such a small team, all the employees fulfil multiple positions and functions within the firm. It could be that when its team consisted of more employees the interconnectedness would decline and some employees would only fulfil a position at the JNF.

During conversations with Jimmy Nelson, he explained how he has been criticized a lot, especially at the beginning of his work. When he published his first book, *Before they pass*



*away*, which consisted of multiple endangered indigenous tribes, the media accused him of earning money at the expense of poor people. When it comes to development aid the aspect of earning money has always been a sensitive point, which is also present in the experiences of Jimmy Nelson. It seems that there is this idea that when it comes to development aid and other aid no money should go to the company but all the money earned should be invested in the development goal. During my observation, it became clear that this is impossible. Investing money in the company is necessary to keep the company running and growing.

Another thing is that endangerment of cultural diversity creates an opportunity to earn money. The idea that the indigenous tribes captured in the book, *Before they pass away*, are endangered gives the book more value. One could say that because of the endangered status of the tribes the book is a bestseller. This shows the reciprocity within the firms, the JNF cannot exist without the JN BV and its revenue but the JN BV cannot exist without the goal, of preserving cultural diversity, of the JNF. This reciprocity within the firms makes it clear how sensitive the work around social issues is.

During my observation, it was hard for me to distinguish if I worked more on the activities of the JNF or the ones from the JN BV. The hard part here is that the foundation is dependent on the revenue and the work the JN BV does. All the work done by the JN BV is in light of a specific goal, to preserve cultural diversity and a healthy planet. This goal corresponds with the goal of the JNF. So, one could say that the work the JN BV carries out is done in the light of the same goal as the one of the JNF. This makes the work of the JN BV indirectly work for the JNF. This again shows the reciprocity within the firms and that a hard distinction between these two firms and their actions is unclear.

### **3.4 The influence of globalisation on the Dutch religio-cultural minorities**

The focus of this thesis is on an NGO's role in preserving the heritage of religio-cultural minorities in times of globalisation. In this section, the influences of globalisation on the religio-cultural minorities and their heritage will be discussed. The changes seen in the daily lives of the community members over the last century are the results of the influences of globalisation. In this part, I will discuss the findings of the participants when it comes to the influence of globalisation on their culture.

In Staphorst the changes in practising traditions became already visible after the Second World War. Farmers stopped wearing their traditional costumes because they were interested in other career paths. Some wanted to study and others chose to work in the factories in the city. Nowadays no man wears their traditional costume in Staphorst. Only women above the age of

50 are likely to show up in their costumes. There are around 500 women that regularly wear their traditional costumes and during the winter it raises to 700. The traditional dot work on the clothing, which Staphorst is famous for, is also declining. In the old days, there were various shops and tailors that were skilled in this special technique. Nowadays, there are only then women that still practice this technique. When it comes to the traditional costumes it is not possible to buy them at regular shops, everything is handmade. This means that it is not easy to get access to traditional clothing. Another change is seen in the attitude of the younger generation towards traditional clothing. There are many rules linked to traditional clothing which are taken seriously by the older generation. The younger generation attaches less value to this. Not only their clothing has changed, but the traditions also faded away over time. The daily practices around baptism, marriage and funerals have mostly disappeared. Missionary work used to be a prominent activity but has completely disappeared.

Participant 2, a community member from Marken, also describes that traditions are disappearing and that their culture is changing. Participant 2 explains that many old Marker traditions are based on customs that were logical or practical at the time and suited the lifestyle of the people. Nowadays, Marken and its community members are “modernized” and are participating in the high pace of work and modern life that prevails in the big cities. Participant 2 explains it in this way:

“Dat heeft wel het een en ander aan tradities kapotgemaakt denk ik. Simpelweg omdat er weinig tijd is, mensen minder thuis zijn en er meer behoefte is aan privacy. Bij elkaar de deur plat lopen en uitgebreide verjaardagen met kaasjes en worstjes vieren is bijvoorbeeld wel aan het verdwijnen.”

[That did destroy some traditions I think. Simply because there is little time, people do not stay at home often and there is more need for privacy. For example, walking down each other's doors and celebrating birthdays with cheese and sausages are disappearing.]

Sometimes a specific culture and identity are still present but unconsciously. Participant 2 explains that this is the case when looking at the way the community members greet or approach each other. For community members, this social behaviour can just feel “normal” and are not aware that it is part of Marker culture. Something that actively is disappearing is the Marker dialect. The parents and grandparents of participant 2 were all raised in the Marker dialect, but participant 2 was raised in standard Dutch (*Algemeen Beschaafd Nederlands*). Nowadays, it is common and practical to leave Marker island for study or work.

“De Urker gemeenschap is juist nog erg veel bezig met de cultuur. Dit zit echt in ons hart en nieren. Zo hebben we veel standaard rituelen zoals vis eten met familie, koffie drinken bij oma, kerk op zondag en natuurlijk ons Urkerdag en Urk in Wintersferen waar 80 procent van de bevolking in klederdracht loopt.”

[The Urk community is still very much engaged in culture. This is really in our hearts and soul. We have many standard rituals, such as eating fish with family, drinking coffee at grandma's, church on Sundays, and of course our Urkerday and Urk in Winter Spheres where 80 per cent of the population dresses in traditional costume.]

Participant 3, a community member of Urk, describes the influence of globalisation differently here. For example in Marken modernization, which comes with globalisation, caused changes in the Marker culture, it even caused the disappearance of certain traditions. On Urk, globalisation did not cause the disappearance of traditions or a decline in interest in the Urker culture as stated in the quote above.

On Urk, the culture is mainly present in everyday activities. Participant 3 explains that the community especially value the traditions around family and the ones connected to the church and Christianity. Another aspect where the culture is prominently present is during festivities. This shows that the influences of globalisation did not cause the Urker culture to disappear, at least not in the same way as in Staphorst. Participant 3 ascribes the preserved traditions to the mindset of the Urker community:

“Een hechte en gastvrije gemeenschap. Een tikkeltje eigenwijs en nog echte eilanders. Bij een grote groep staan de normen en waarden van het christendom nog hoog in het vaandel.”

[A close and hospitable community. A tad headstrong and still real islanders. A large group of people still adhere to the norms and values of Christianity.]

### **3.4 The future of the Dutch religio-cultural minorities**

To get a better understanding of the role of an NGO in preserving the heritage of religio-cultural minorities it is necessary to get a better understanding of how this heritage should be preserved. In this section, I am going to discuss the hopes and prospects for the future of the community members. By discussing their hopes and prospects we will create an understanding of their point of view when it comes to the preservation of their religio-cultural heritage. It is important to

get a better understanding of their point of view and how they would like to see their heritage preserved because it is their heritage. And who else can decide better how the religio-cultural heritage of the community should be preserved than the community members themselves. By asking the participants about their prospects and hopes for the future the following became visible:

Participant 1, a community member of Staphorst, reacts nostalgically when it comes to the future of Staphorst. Participant 1 explains how the ‘fast world’ causes the rites and traditions to disappear. The community members do not want to practice these traditions anymore, as they find other things more important. Participant 1 also sees this back in the people’s perception of faith. In the last fifty years, people are not practising the faith as tightly and strictly as they used to. When participant 1 was younger the community was tighter and people paid more attention to each other, nowadays people have less time for each other because they are too busy doing activities outside of the community. Participant 1 says the following:

“Er is al heel veel veranderd. Als ik zelf na denk over de jaren dat ik jong was op de boerderij, wat een mooie tijd dat was. Het lijkt of de mensen meer tijd voor elkaar hadden, veiliger, je kende de burens en de omgeving. Nu vliegen we alle kanten op.”

[A lot has changed already. When I think about my younger years, living on the farm, which was a beautiful time. It seems like people had more time for each other, it felt safer and everyone knew their neighbours and the environment. Now we fly in all directions.]

In this quote, it becomes clear that participant 1 positively looks back to his youth when the culture in Staphorst was prominent.

Later Participant 1 also explains how due to the disappearance of the Staphorst culture, the culture and the traditional costumes get more appreciation. Participant 1 hopes that this appreciation will continue in the future and that everyone can enjoy the folklore activities and the traditional costumes.

Participant 2 from Marken mainly hopes that the community members will maintain their feeling of belonging and keep seeing Marken as their home:

“Ook hoop ik dat de Marker jongeren het stokje over nemen van hun ouders en grootouders, zich interesseren voor de verhalen en het bijzondere erfgoed zullen koesteren op een manier die bij de huidige tijd past.”

[I also hope that the Marker youth will take over the baton from their parents and grandparents, take interest in the stories and will cherish the special heritage in a way that suits the present time.]

We can see that participants 1 and 2 both value a positive and proud attitude towards their heritage. That the younger generation and others should understand its worth and that their religio-cultural heritage should be preserved. Participant 2 talks about the idea of modernity and how culture is always changing throughout time. Culture could be preserved if it forms itself in a new fit that is suitable for modern times. Participant 2 thinks this could be a way in which the Marker heritage can be preserved. Participant 3 from Urk reacts similarly, there should be space for one to grow and dream without forgetting their history and heritage. Participant 3 also hopes that the “Urker attitude”, down-to-earth, open and welcoming towards others, will be preserved.

### **3.5 Experiences of the community members regarding the actions of JNF**

In this part, I will discuss the experiences of the community members with Jimmy Nelson and the Jimmy Nelson Foundation. If I want to gain a better insight into the role of the JNF in preserving Dutch religio-cultural heritage, it is interesting to look at the experiences of the community members regarding the actions of the JNF. With the answers to the questionnaire, it became visible how the community members have experienced the actions of the JNF, which I will present in this part.

Jimmy Nelson and his team dedicated the last two years to capturing Dutch religio-cultural minorities. These pictures are bundled into a book which he sees as a homage to the Netherlands. A part of the revenue from this book will be used to facilitate school children to go to a digital show. This digital show is based on the religio-cultural minorities that are captured in the book. The goal of this digital show is to make people aware of the preciousness of the religio-cultural heritage of the Netherlands. And show the importance of preserving this heritage.

The arrival of the photographer caused a lot of excitement amongst the community members. Participant 1 tells that the whole community gathered in their most special costumes and helped each other dress up. Participant 2 tells how Jimmy Nelson's arrival was a big happening for the Marker community. People felt honoured that he had an interest in their small community. They found it special that he saw the beauty of the Marker heritage and wanted to share this with the rest of the world. Participant 2 discussed in the questionnaire the difficulties when trying to explain Marker life and culture to outsiders. Participant 2 finds it difficult to talk

about the positive aspects of the community when there are many preconceptions present. That Jimmy Nelson and his team can show these positive aspects to the rest of the world through this book means a lot to participant 2:

“Als de unieke aspecten van een gemeenschap (in dit geval in de vorm van materieel erfgoed) een podium krijgen voelt een gemeenschap zich ook sneller gezien en begrepen. Het helpt de mensen aan de buitenwereld uit te leggen wie zij eigenlijk zijn, maar ook dat ze helemaal niet veel verschillen de rest van Nederland.”

[When the unique aspects of a community (in this case in the form of material heritage) are given a platform, a community feels more seen and understood. It helps people to explain to the outside world who they actually are, but also that they are not very different from the rest of the Netherlands.]

Participant 2 also explains how the interest of Jimmy Nelson caused renewed interest by the community members in their heritage. The attention that their heritage got made them realize how special their heritage is.

“Maar ik denk vooral dat de waardering van een fotograaf als Jimmy de lokale bevolking meer in laat zien hoe bijzonder hun thuis eigenlijk is. Dat klederdracht, of cultureel erfgoed over het algemeen, iets is om te koesteren.”

[But more than anything, I think that the appreciation of a photographer like Jimmy makes the locals see how special their home really is. That costumes, or cultural heritage in general, is something to be cherished.]

Participant 3 reacts similarly and explains how everyone was impressed that such a famous photographer had an interest in the Urker community and wanted them to be a part of his new book.

### **Analysis of the questionnaire with the community members**

When we look at the findings of the questionnaire, we can state the following: Globalisation has mainly had its influence on the everyday life of the community members. People began to work outside the community or chose to study in the city. The worldview of the members changed and became bigger, as they started to think of possibilities outside their community. This change in worldview also caused the traditional costumes to disappear from

everyday life. The traditional costume was for example not suited for factory work and the Marker dialect was not spoken in cities like Amsterdam. As explained by participant 2, most traditions were based on customs that were practical in earlier times. What we see here is that the change in worldview of the community members caused changes in the traditions and even for traditions to disappear. Is it then that globalisation had the most influence on the worldview of the community members? And that globalisation in itself did not cause changes in the traditions of the community members. For me, it showed that globalisation not only causes the interdependence of economies or politics but also of worldviews. It seems like the interdependence shifted from only within the community to outside the community. And that when it comes to the religio-cultural heritage the change in worldview of the religio-cultural minorities causes the vanishing of their heritage. But one could say that the worldview of these community members changes because the world around them is changing and that cause for this change is the influence of globalisation. This leads us back to the idea that globalisation causes the endangerment of cultural diversity.

But globalisation does not always cause a change in worldview. It seems that the community members of Urk still consist of the same worldview. This can be caused by the location and history of Urk. Urk used to be an island and lived isolated from the rest of the Netherlands for a long time. You could say that because of this isolation the influences of globalisation were not as present as in Marken or Staphorst. Participant 3 also describes the Urker community as headstrong, this attitude could explain why they are not so amenable to a change in worldview.

When the participants talk about the future of their communities, we see that all the participants hope that their heritage will be preserved. They discuss that they hope that the culture will be appreciated in the future. What also comes forward is how they hope that certain feelings will stay. Participant 2 hopes that the Marker community will hold on to their feeling of belonging and that Marken will remain a home for the community members. Participant 3 hopes for a certain social behaviour to remain amongst the community members. And that the community members can grow and dream without losing their heritage. We can cover these prospects under the idea of passing on knowledge, the knowledge of their religio-cultural heritage. The appreciation and the feeling of belonging can be linked to their heritage, to the times when their community was their only home. And people did not think further than their community. A type of social behaviour also falls under heritage. As participant 3 explained, the Urker community highly value an open and welcoming attitude. Participant 3 sees this social

behaviour as part of Urk's heritage. When we look at the experiences of the community members regarding the actions of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation, we see that they have positive outcomes. Jimmy Nelson and the foundation provide the community members with a platform. A platform for their heritage so that the rest of the world can see it. It provides a way in which they can share their heritage with the outside world. Something that is according to participant 2 not easy with the prejudices of others. That the Jimmy Nelson Foundation are willing to do this for them gives the community a feeling of appreciation. We see that overall the community feels honoured that a famous photographer has chosen their community for his new book. This causes a renewed interest in their heritage amongst the community members. As participant 2 shows when discussing how the community members realized how special their traditional costumes are.

## **Conclusion**

This thesis aimed to get a better insight into the contribution of an NGO in preserving the heritage of religio-cultural minorities in times of globalisation. With the research question:

How does the Jimmy Nelson Foundation (NGO) contribute to the preservation of Dutch religio-cultural minorities in times of globalisation?

With the accompanying sub-questions:

- What does the heritage of the Dutch religio-cultural minorities look like?
- What is the influence of globalisation on the Dutch religio-cultural minorities?
- What are the approaches of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation regarding preservation?
- What are the experiences of the Dutch religio-cultural minorities regarding the actions of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation?

Globalisation causes the world to change and the interdependence of the world's economies and politics is growing, as also the interdependence of worldviews. What we saw in the communities of Marken and Staphorst is a change in worldview and a shift in interdependence. The interdependence shifts from only inside the community to outside the community, this causes them to broaden and change their worldview. The change in worldview leads to the disappearance of old traditions and customs because community members start to focus on aspects outside the community.

Now, that the interdependence of the world has grown the religio-cultural minorities are more than ever connected to the outside world. The religio-cultural minorities are in numbers



inferior to the rest of the population and Community members express difficulties when it comes to the preservation of their heritage. Especially when it comes to the transferring of knowledge to the new generation, but also when it comes to the representation of their heritage to the outside world.

The difficulties can be explained when looking at the concept of heritage. By heritage, we do not only mean the tangible but also the intangible. A community member of Urk ascribes for example a down-to-earth and welcoming attitude as typically Urk.

The Jimmy Nelson Foundation can contribute to the preservation of religio-cultural heritage by helping to solve these difficulties. The approaches of the JNF go hand in hand with the difficulties the community members encounter. One approach is the sharing of knowledge through for example their educational program Cult-ED, which can facilitate the transferring of knowledge to the new generation of the religio-cultural minorities. The capturing of the religio-cultural minorities in the new book by photographer Jimmy Nelson facilitates a way in which the community members can share their heritage with the outside world.

Based on participant observation and questionnaires, it can be concluded that an NGO can act as a channel for religio-cultural minorities to fulfil their needs, in which they can share and pass on their religio-cultural knowledge and in which they can create renewed interest and appreciation for their religio-cultural heritage. The results showed that the actions of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation facilitated a way in which the members of the Dutch religio-cultural minorities can share their heritage with the new generation and the outside world.

I hope that this thesis caused more appreciation of cultural diversity and eagerness to preserve it. Hopefully, it will inspire other scholars to deepen the understanding of how to preserve cultural diversity even more.

#### Limitations and suggestions for further research

Like any other study, my thesis is subject to limitations. This thesis is based on qualitative methods, the outcomes are interpreted by me which can be subjective. On top of this comes the active participation that allowed me to work for the Jimmy Nelson Foundation, this could cause a biased attitude. Because I was so involved in their work in comparison to someone that is a complete outsider. Maybe a complete outsider would interpret the findings in another way. To limit the subjectivity, one could choose quantitative methods instead of participant observation and interviews.

A discussion point is the approach of the Jimmy Nelson Foundation. Is the idea of putting religio-cultural minorities on a pedestal combined with the documentation of their

knowledge a guaranteed formula to success? Or does this formula only work because of the involvement of a well-known person?

A suggestion for further research could be to test this formula without the involvement of a well-known person. This could show if the sharing of knowledge and the documentation of heritage is a way to preserve religio-cultural heritage. Or that this approach only works because of the involvement of a well-known person, photographer Jimmy Nelson.

Another suggestion for further research could be to use multiple similar NGOs instead of focusing on one as a case study. This could limit the possibility to gain a biased attitude towards the NGO and one could retrain an objective view towards the approaches of the NGOs.

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## Appendix

### Questionnaire text

Goedemiddag [NAME PARTICIPANT],

Ik mail je met de volgende reden. Voor mijn studie 'Religie, conflict en globalisatie' doe ik onderzoek naar het behoud van culturele minderheden. En waar kan dit nou beter dan bij the Jimmy Nelson Foundation! Ik heb voor dit onderzoek gekozen omdat ik veel waarde hecht aan religie en cultuur en het behoud hiervan.

Je zou mij onwijs helpen met het invullen van deze vragen (onderaan de mail).

Alvast heel erg bedankt,

Met vriendelijke groet

Nadja Miedema  
Stagiair Jimmy Nelson Foundation

Kun je mij iets meer over jezelf vertellen?

Hoe zou je de Staphorst gemeenschap omschrijven?

Zou je zeggen dat de cultuur van Staphorst aan het verdwijnen is? Waarom wel of niet.

Hoe reageerde men op de komst van Jimmy Nelson?

Wat vond je er zelf van?

Heeft zijn komst gevolgen met zich mee gebracht?

Wat hoop je voor de toekomst van de Staphorst gemeenschap/cultuur?

Wil je nog iets specifiek kwijt?

## **Answers participant 1**

Kun je mij iets meer over jezelf vertellen?

[Left blank due to privacy reasons]

### Hoe zou je de Staphorst gemeenschap omschrijven?

Dit is een hele mooie gemeenschap. Het is een hechte groep, vroeger was je ook op elkaar aangewezen als familie en buren. Religie speelt een belangrijke rol en er zijn vele richtingen in religie, van zwaar orthodox tot evangelisch. Dit komt nu ook mede door instroom van andere bewoners uit verschillende richtingen van ons land, buitenlanders maar ook omdat men zelf ook wil kiezen. De jeugd is niet meer zo gecharmeerd van het dragen van de klederdracht en de zware kerkleer, uitzonderingen daar gelaten. Er is ook een verschil in de dorpen van Staphorst. Staphorst is over het algemeen Hersteld Hervormd (Statenvertaling, zingen op hele noten (oude stijl), Rouveen is meer gereformeerd (hierin ook diverse stromingen van licht naar zwaar), IJhorst in Hervormd (Dit kwam mede door de adellijke families die er woonden, waren praktisch altijd luchtig hervormd). Staphorst is van oudsher een boeren gemeente, van kleine boeren tot wat wij zeggen “dikke boeren”. Vroeger kwam dit ook tot uiting in de dracht, dikke boeren kinderen hadden mooiere kleding, er waren regels over. En je trouwde met je soort en kerkelijke gezindte (dit is nu eigenlijk ook nog wel zo). Het zijn harde werkers, schoon op hun huizen en erf, goed georganiseerd, komen de hele wereld rond, zijn handelaars, maken zelf ook veel. Het is een hele kleurrijke gemeente met zijn bijna 17.500 inwoners. De dorpen zijn bij elkaar zo een 18 km lang. Voor de jeugd is er heel veel te doen, zoals sport, samen dingen opzetten qua feesten, de vrienden kringen zijn heel belangrijk in een boerenomgeving. Ook het verenigings leven vanuit het kerkwerk wordt veel door de mensen bezocht.

### Zou je zeggen dat de cultuur van Staphorst aan het verdwijnen is? Waarom wel of niet.

Ja qua gebruiken en klederdracht wel. Na de tweede wereld oorlog begon het al, jonge mannen wilden niet meer in het boerengoed lopen, kwamen te werken in fabrieken en gingen doorleren. In Rouveen waren het de gereformeerde meisjes die de dracht aflegden. In Staphorst is met behoudener en wordt de dracht daar het meest gedragen, van dames van rond de 50 tot 100 jaar. Mannen geen 1 meer. Ook de dagelijkse gebruiken zoals bij dopen, trouwen en begraven zijn veelal verdwenen, Corona heeft daar weer een schepje boven op gedaan. Nu zijn er nog ca. 500 vrouwen in dracht In de winter trekken bepaalde Staphorster dames ook de dracht weer aan en dan zijn het er ca. 700 samen. Staphorster drukwerk (bedrukken van kledingstukken met

stipwerk) gebeurt nog steeds door ca 10 dames, mutsenmaker zijn er nog 3. Dan zijn er nog een aantal naaisters die de drachtkleding maken, je kunt het niet zo maar even in de winkel kopen alles is zelf gemaakt. Ook het repeteren van de kleding zoals in de rouw en uit de rouw is gebonden aan regels. Hierin was met vroeger strenger nu wordt er wat losser mee omgegaan, terwijl de oudere generatie daar wel naar kijkt en zijn mening heeft. Er verdwijnen wel zaken zoals het zendelingswerk, de dames worden steeds ouder, Corona heeft hierin veel verpest, sommige clubs zijn opgeheven. Ook begrafenis rituelen zoals de naberplicht( burenplicht bij klokluiden, koffieschenken op begrafenis etc., worden minder)

#### Hoe reageerde men op de komst van Jimmy Nelson?

De mensen vonden het heel leuk om op de foto te gaan. Het organiseren had nog wel wat voeten in de aarde. Grootmoeders moeten kleine kinderen aankleden, kleding past soms niet meer etc. de diversiteit aan drachten vond Jimmy heel mooi. Hij was verrast door de prachtige kleuren. De Staphorster dracht is heel kleurrijk en gevarieerd. We zijn een hele dag bezig geweest op diverse locaties. De mensen vonden het heel bijzonder.

#### Wat vond je er zelf van?

Ik vond het heel leuk, was de organisator. Wel wat problemen met het museum maar dat is recht getrokken. Ik wilde niet steeds weer de zelfde mensen op de foto (die bij het museum werken komen vaak genoeg op de foto, ik wilde mensen die ook wel eens mogen vastgelegd.)

#### Heeft zijn komst gevolgen met zich mee gebracht?

Zie vorige blokje. Daar heeft Jimmy niet veel van gemerkt, Stephanie weet er meer van. Heb daar met haar contact over gehad. Jimmy wilde museumstukken gebruiken voor een shoot maar dat mocht niet omdat het te kostbare stukken waren.

#### Wat hoop je voor de toekomst van de Staphorst gemeenschap/cultuur?

Ik hoop dat ik er nog lang van genieten wat het is de laatste generatie die het nog weet, in handen heeft, het draagt. De mensen leven wel door maar over een hele generatie is het oude verdwenen. De boerderijen blijven wel maar de oude gebruiken, regels en rites zullen verdwijnen. Maar is dit niet overal in deze snelle wereld. Staphorst is daar eigenlijk niet uniek in. Heel veel mensen willen het ook niet meer, vinden ander dingen belangrijker. Dit geldt ook voor beleving van geloof. Mensen zitten niet meer zo strak in een regime, zoals in de afgelopen 50 jaar. Er is al heel veel veranderd. Als ik zelf na denk over de jaren dat ik jong was op de



boerderij, wat een mooie tijd dat was. Het lijkt of de mensen meer tijd voor elkaar hadden, veiliger, je kende de burens en de omgeving. Nu vliegen we alle kanten op. Daarom is het verblijven en genieten van zo een oude cultuur en folklore als Staphorst maar ook de andere klederdrachten, de activiteiten daarom heeft een genot en geschenk.

### Wil je nog iets specifiek kwijt?

Ik geniet van het samen zijn met de klederdrachtmensen, het leven en wonen in een mooie provincie, het platteland waar het tempo, de natuur, schone lucht en beleving heel mooi zijn. Ik vond het werken met Jimmy en zijn medewerkers een geschenk (heb hem ook bij de sessie in Nunspeet zien werken)

### **Answers participant 2**

#### Kun je mij iets meer over jezelf vertellen?

[Left blank for privacy reasons]

#### Hoe zou je de Marker gemeenschap omschrijven?

Ik vind het persoonlijk best ingewikkeld om een gemeenschap in woorden te omschrijven, omdat ik het voornamelijk als een beleving en gevoel beschouw dat zich moeilijk in woorden laat vangen. Maar ik zal een poging wagen. Marken is een voormalig eiland en is daardoor eeuwenlang best geïsoleerd geweest. Zoals dat bij geografische isolatie vaak werkt, hebben de bewoners eigen gebruiken en tradities ontwikkeld die hen hielpen een goede en aangename manier van leven te ontwikkelen. Een geschiedenis van hard werken voor de kost, zowel angst en afkeur als liefde en afhankelijkheid voor en van de zee, roeien met de riemen die hebt en aangewezen zijn op je dorpsgenoten hebben Marken tot een hechte en sterke gemeenschap gemaakt. Het is een gemeenschap waar de meeste mensen elkaar kennen en voor elkaar klaar staan. Waar gezelligheid hoog in het vaandel staat en het heel normaal is om vrijwillig je tijd te besteden aan het helpen van een ander. Markers zijn ook altijd wel avontuurlijk geweest en reizen al decennia lang naar Amsterdam om te werken. Vroeger als huismeid of visventer, tegenwoordig voor studie en werk. Dit maakt dat Markers best wel “open-minded” zijn in verhouding tot andere dorpen of gemeenschappen. Ze zijn betrokken bij wat er zich aan de andere kant van de dijk afspeelt en beschouwen Marken na een lange werkdag als thuis. Ik vind het eigenlijk überhaupt best lastig om over Marken te praten als “gemeenschap”, want wat maakt nu eigenlijk een gemeenschap? Wanneer kun je een groep mensen een gemeenschap

noemen en waar liggen de grenzen daarvan? Sorry, ik denk dat hier de antropoloog in mij iets te veel naar boven komt 😊.

Zou je zeggen dat de Marker cultuur aan het verdwijnen is? Waarom wel of niet.

Cultuur is vloeiend en dynamisch, dus altijd in beweging. Ik denk dat een cultuur op zich niet zo zeer verdwijnt, maar voornamelijk verandert. Cultuur verandert net als al het andere in de wereld. Tradities kunnen overigens wel verdwijnen en dat gebeurt op Marken ook wel. Veel oude Marker tradities zijn gebaseerd op gebruiken die in die tijd logisch of praktisch waren en bij de levensstijl van de mensen pasten. Tegenwoordig zijn we natuurlijk volledig “gemoderniseerd” en doen de Markers mee aan het drukte en het hoge tempo van werken en leven die in de randstad heerst. Dat heeft wel het een en ander aan tradities kapotgemaakt denk ik. Simpelweg omdat er weinig tijd is, mensen minder thuis zijn en er meer behoefte is aan privacy. Bij elkaar de deur plat lopen en uitgebreide verjaardagen met kaasjes en worstjes vieren is bijvoorbeeld wel aan het verdwijnen. Maar ik denk dat er nog wel veel van de Marker cultuur en identiteit over is, misschien zelfs onbewust. Er zijn bijvoorbeeld bepaalde sociale gebruiken, manieren van elkaar groeten, benaderen en aanspreken die typisch zijn op Marken.

Ik zou wel zeggen dat het dialect langzaamaan aan het vervagen is. Oudere mensen, de generatie van mijn ouders en wat generaties daaronder zijn echt nog opgegroeid met het dialect, maar toen ik zelf naar school ging praatten we eigenlijk alleen maar ABN. Voornamelijk uit praktische overwegingen, omdat het dorp maar klein is en we dus allemaal voor de middelbare school, studie en werk van het eiland af moeten. Uiteraard spreek ik wel wat dialect, maar niet zo veel. Ik denk dat dat er wel vrij snel uit gaat raken.

Ook is Marken tegenwoordig best wel “ontdekt” door rijke mensen uit de stad, die onze idyllische huisjes voor de hele hoge prijzen kopen als vakantiehuisjes. Sommige mensen doen oprecht hun best om iets bij te dragen aan de gemeenschap door zich bijvoorbeeld aan te melden bij organisaties of ergens in een bestuur te gaan, maar sommigen komen enkel in het weekend en eisen rust en stilte op het dorp. Ik denk persoonlijk dat dat wel veel kapot maakt. Marken heeft, in tegenstelling tot veel andere dorpen, een relatief jongen gemeenschap. Omdat het zo dicht bij Amsterdam ligt blijven veel jongeren lang thuis wonen en besluiten ze uiteindelijk ook op het eiland te blijven. Vergrijzing is dus niet echt een probleem. De woningmarkt wel, maar dat is een andere discussie. De nieuwe bewoners die stilte eisen krijgen bij de gemeente vaak veel voor elkaar, waardoor het organiseren van dorpsevenementen bijvoorbeeld steeds lastiger wordt. Markers zijn hecht en sociaal, en dit soort evenementen zijn juist heel belangrijk voor het behoud van cultuur en culturele identiteit.

### Hoe reageerde men op de komst van Jimmy Nelson?

Jimmy's naam is natuurlijk alom bekend, en daarom was zijn komst ook een behoorlijke happening. Ik denk dat de meeste mensen zich vereerd voelden dat een persoon als Jimmy belangstelling toont in onze kleine gemeenschap en klederdracht. Dat hij de schoonheid ervan inziet en het aan een groter publiek wil presenteren. Het is soms best lastig om uit te leggen hoe het is om in een gemeenschap te leven of uit een gemeenschap te komen en wat de positieve en mooie kanten daarvan zijn. Voornamelijk omdat er zoveel vooroordelen over bestaan. Als de unieke aspecten van een gemeenschap (in dit geval in de vorm van materieel erfgoed) een podium krijgen voelt een gemeenschap zich ook sneller gezien en begrepen. Het helpt de mensen aan de buitenwereld uit te leggen wie zij eigenlijk zijn, maar ook dat ze helemaal niet veel verschillen de rest van Nederland. Maar ik denk vooral dat de waardering van een fotograaf als Jimmy de lokale bevolking meer in laat zien hoe bijzonder hun thuis eigenlijk is. Dat klederdracht, of cultureel erfgoed over het algemeen, iets is om te koesteren. Om die reden werd ook werkelijk alles uit de kast getrokken om de modellen er op hun best aan te kleden. Er is veel kleding onderling uitgewisseld en geleend zodat alleen het mooiste van het mooiste op de foto zou komen. Dat is altijd een heel verbindend en gezellig proces. Er is oprecht veel werk gestoken in het verzamelen van de dracht en het aankleden van de modellen.

Jimmy is een heel open en toegankelijke man waar mensen zich snel bij op hun gemak voelen. Ik vind het zelf interessant dat de meeste mensen die hem hebben ontmoet hem ook vrij snel "Jimmy" noemen, in plaats van "meneer Nelson" of "Jimmy Nelson". Dat geeft wel aan dat Jimmy bepaalde social beleefdheidsgrenzen redelijk snel van de baan weet te vegen en direct een connectie weet te maken met de mensen uit de gemeenschap. Je merkt ook wel dat veel mensen een beetje startstuck zijn en niet meer uitgepraat raakten over het bezoek van Jimmy. Maar dat is natuurlijk ook erg leuk.

### Wat vond je er zelf van?

Ik was zelf erg enthousiast toen ik hoorde over de komst van Jimmy Nelson, en vooral toen een kennis vroeg of ik het leuk zou vinden om samen met wat andere dorpsgenoten gefotografeerd te worden. Toen ik op de middelbare school zat zag ik voor het eerste Before They Pass Away, bij de vader van een vriendin van mij op tafel. Iedere keer als ik bij haar

thuis kwam bladerde ik door het boek heen en ontdekte ik prachtige nieuwe foto's. Jimmy introduceerde mij op deze manier aan de prachtige en fascinerende bewoners van de wereld in hun traditionele glorie. Het boek gaf mij toegang tot al deze mensen, de mogelijkheid om hen in de ogen te kijken en daarin net zo veel herkenning als verschillen in te zien. Ik weet dat Jimmy dat met zijn werk kan bereiken, en daarom zie ik het als een geweldige eer dat hij zijn aandacht nu op de Nederlandse gemeenschappen en het mooie kleine Marken stort. Ik hoop dat de mensen van Nederland en daarbuiten op dezelfde manier herkenningen vinden in de Jimmy's foto's van de Nederlandse klederdracht, maar ook geraakt worden door de unieke schoonheid van traditionele glorie.

#### Heeft zijn komst gevolgen met zich mee gebracht?

Ik denk dat zijn komst er in ieder geval voor heeft gezorgd dat er heel veel klederdracht uit de kast is getrokken en voor een mooi doel gebuikt is. Op Marken wordt de klederdracht eigenlijk een stuk minder vaak gedragen dan in sommige andere gemeenschappen, wat best jammer is. Maar voor deze gelegenheid, en vooral omdat Jimmy afgelopen najaar terug kwam voor een grote shoot met meerdere mensen, is er heel veel klederdracht verzameld en bij elkaar gezocht. Het "aankleden" is een heel sociaal proces, omdat er veel geleend en uitgewisseld wordt. Dat is door Jimmy's komst dubbel en dwars in gang gezet, en ook voor de boeklancering op 17 september zijn er nu al heel veel mensen druk bezig om alle dracht bij elkaar te zoeken en op maat te maken. Er gaat veel aan zoiets vooraf. Daarnaast ontstaat er altijd een gevoel van trots en waardering wanneer mensen hun klederdracht aantrekken. Iedereen wordt zich er weer even van bewust hoe mooi en bijzonder onze klederdracht eigenlijk is. Omdat Jimmy graag jonge mensen wilde fotograferen waren het dus ook voornamelijk jongen mensen die aangekleed moesten worden. Ik denk dat het een mooi stukje realisatie heeft losgemaakt ☺.

#### Wat hoop je voor de toekomst van de Marker gemeenschap/cultuur?

Ik hoop voornamelijk dat de Markers van nu en van de toekomst zich nog heel lang thuis kunnen voelen op het eiland waar ook hun voorouders zich thuis voelden. Ondanks dat tradities, behoeften en gebruiken veranderen hoop ik dat de historie en het unieke erfgoed bewaard en nooit vergeten zullen worden. Grappig genoeg zijn het vaak juist de "nieuwe Markers" die hier veel belangstelling voor hebben. Ik heb het idee dat zij meer inzien hoe bijzonder Marken eigenlijk is. Ook hoop ik dat de Marker jongeren het stokje over nemen van hun ouders en grootouders, zich interesseren voor de verhalen en het bijzondere erfgoed zullen koesteren op een manier die bij de huidige tijd past. Voor mij is Marken altijd een veilig thuis geweest waar

ik heb leren vallen en opstaan. En ondank dat er natuurlijk ook wel vaak afgunst en jaloezie heerst heb ik me wel altijd gesteund en toegejuicht gevoeld door de gemeenschap. Het is een veilige plek om als kind en tiener, maar ook als jongvolwassenen van alles uit te proberen. Als je van je fiets valt brengt de eerste de beste voorbijganger je thuis, als je kat kwijt is gaat de hele buurt op speurtocht en als je eens wilt weten hoe het voelt om directeur te zijn wordt je voorzitter van een organisatie. Ik denk dat het heel waardevol is om je zo veilig en thuis te kunnen voelen in een gemeenschap, en ik hoop dat die cultuur op Marken altijd zal blijven heersen.

### **Answers participant 3**

Kun je mij iets meer over jezelf vertellen?

[Left blank for privacy reasons]

Hoe zou je de Urker gemeenschap omschrijven?

Een hechte en gastvrije gemeenschap. Een tikkeltje eigenwijs en nog echte eilanders. Bij een grote groep staan de normen en waarden van het christendom nog hoog in het vaandel.

Zou je zeggen dat de Urker cultuur aan het verdwijnen is? Waarom wel of niet.

De Urker gemeenschap is juist nog erg veel bezig met de cultuur. Dit zit echt in ons hart en nieren. Zo hebben we veel standaard rituelen zoals vis eten met familie, koffie drinken bij oma, kerk op zondag en natuurlijk ons Urkerdag en Urk in Wintersferen waar 80 procent van de bevolking in klederdracht loopt.

Hoe reageerde men op de komst van Jimmy Nelson?

Goed, eerst wisten ze niet wie hij was. Dat is voor hem misschien ook wel een keer leuk. En toen ze zagen hoeveel volgers hij had op Instagram waren velen onder de indruk.

Wat vond je er zelf van?

Super gaaf om het team te ontmoeten. Volg het werk al een tijd en vind het bijzonder wat ze doen en hoeveel talent er is.

Heeft zijn komst gevolgen met zich mee gebracht?

Niet echt, iedereen gaat gewoon weer door tot de orde van de dag. Dat is ook wel echt Urk. Wel zijn de mensen die hebben mee gewerkt erg benieuwd naar de resultaten. En we zijn super trots dat ons prachtige dorp is uitgekozen.

Wat hoop je voor de toekomst van de Urker gemeenschap/cultuur?

Dat je mag zijn wie je bent zonder dat je het verleden vergeet. Dat er ruimte is voor ontwikkeling, groei en dromen. En dat net zoals nu iedereen welkom is.

Wil je nog iets specifiek kwijt?

Heel veel succes met je studie en als er dingen missen mag je altijd contact opnemen.

## **Logbook**

1-3-22

Start of the internship. Got to know the structure of the NGO and how they communicate with each other, which systems they use etc. Explored the Cult-ED lessons about the Nenets.

2-3-22

Explored and made the Cult-ED lessons of the Nenets

3-3-22

Had a critical look at the Cult-ED lessons of the Nenets. Wrote down the improvements and the strong points of the program

4-3-22

Worked on my thesis from home.

8-3-22

Had a critical look at the Cult-ED lessons of the Nenets. Wrote down the improvements and the strong points of the program

9-3-22

Explored the outline of the new book 'Between the Sea and the Sky'. Did administrative work on the documentation of the pictures in the database.

10-3-22

Worked on my internship assignment

11-3-22

Worked on my thesis from home

15-3-22

Worked on an article/research about the male gaze, photography, history and racism

16-3-22

Worked on an article/research about the male gaze, photography, history and racism

17-3-22

Worked on an article/research about the male gaze, photography, history and racism

18-3-22

Worked on my thesis from home

22-3-22

Worked on the index of the new book and accompanying administrative work

23-3-22

Worked on the index of the new book and accompanying administrative work

24-3-22

Worked on the index of the new book and accompanying administrative work

25-3-22

Worked on an article/research about the male gaze, photography, history and racism from home

29-3-22

Watched, gathered and chose videos for different indigenous communities

30-3-22

Watched, gathered and chose videos for different indigenous communities. And checked if the information was correct.

31-3-22

Check the new book file on mistakes.

1-4-22

Discuss my findings on the Cult-ED program and altered the program

5-4-22

Learned about media strategy and how we get people familiar with the indigenous communities

6-4-22

Think about questions to ask about the Nenet community for social media

7-4-22

Administrative work on the model releases and identify all the people that are present in the new book. Used my academic knowledge to check articles.

8-4-22

Worked on my thesis from home

12-4-22

Administrative work on the model releases and identify all the people that are present in the new book. Did research for the Dutch Cult-ED lessons.

13-4-22

Looked for suitable videos of the Nenets in the database. Made question post on photoshop.

14-4-22

Administrative work on the model releases and identify all the people that are present in the new book. And discuss the media strategy for the Nenets.

15-4-22

Work on my thesis from home

19-4-22

Worked on my internship assignment, did research for the Dutch Cult-ED lessons and did administrative work on the number of books. Learned to make certificates.



20-4-22

Worked on my internship assignment. Had an interim conversation with my internship supervisor. Brainstormed on the Dutch Cult-ED lessons.

21-4-22

Worked on the negatives (photos) and ordered them. Drove to the place where the negatives are made into a digital image. Here I got a tour and explanation of the process of converting an image into a digital one. Worked on the social media post with the idea to create awareness for the indigenous cultures that are in danger. Went to the opening of Fabrique des Lumieres, to check out the location and the exhibition. This is the same place where the exhibition about the Dutch heritage and authentic communities by Jimmy Nelson will be.

22-4-22

Worked on my thesis at home

26-4-22

Worked on my thesis at home

28-4-22

Worked on the social media posts  
And worked on my thesis

29-4-22

Worked on my thesis

2-5-22

Worked on my thesis and the Dutch Cult-ED lessons.

3-5-22

Worked on a marketing strategy for the book launch. Discussed and presented the social media strategy and posts I managed.

4-5-22

Worked on a marketing strategy for the book launch. Worked on the Dutch Cult-ED lessons

6-5-22

Worked on my thesis at home

10-5-22

Worked on accompanying stories for the certificates. Stories about Dutch religio-cultural minority groups.

11-5-22

Contacting interviewees and sending out questions. Worked on the methodology of my thesis.

12-5-22

Fact checked the new book.

13-5-22

Worked on my thesis at home

16-5-22

Worked on my thesis at home

17-5-22

Worked on the Dutch Cult-ED lessons

18-5-22

Worked on the social media strategy. And checked the cultural/religious facts in the new book.

19-5-22

Workshop at Gardners. Discussed a whole media strategy and launch of the new book.

20-5-22

Worked on my thesis at home

23-5-22

Worked on my thesis at home

24-5-22

Worked on my thesis at home and checked the cultural/religious facts in the new book.

25-5-22

Product photography shoot

27-5-22

Attended Eibertjesdag in Nunspeet.

30-4-22

Worked on my thesis at home and had a meeting with Dr. Joram Tarusarira.

31-5-22

Worked on my thesis and had a meeting with my internship supervisor.

1-6-22

Worked on my thesis at home.

2-6-22

Worked on the shopping system of the webshop. Learned how this system works and how to ship products. Also worked on my thesis and took pictures for my participant observation.

3-6-22

Worked on my thesis at home and worked on my placement report.

7-6-22

Worked on my thesis at home

8-6-22

Worked on my thesis at home

9-6-22

Worked on my thesis at home

10-6-22

Worked on my thesis at home

14-6-22

Worked on the Dutch Cult-ED lessons and worked on my placement report.

15-6-22

Day of the launch of the new book. Wrote texts for social media channels about the new book.

16-6-22

Worked on my thesis at home

17-6-22

Worked on my thesis and handed it in for feedback

21-6-22

Handled clients with questions about the new book and worked on my placement report.

22-6-22

Worked on the Dutch Cult-ED lessons, handled questions from clients and worked on my placement report.

23-6-22

I collected the correct documents for the certificates and checked and answered the questions of clients.

24-6-22

Worked on my placement report and chose pictures for social media.

27-6-22

Checked and answered the questions of clients by email.

28-6-22

Social media and worked on my thesis.

29-6-22

Worked on my internship report and thesis. Printed out 21 certificates.

30-6-22

Meeting with my internship supervisor and Dr. Joram Tarusarira. Worked on my thesis.

1-6-22

End of the internship.

**Pictures location internship**









