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AMBIVALENT HEGEMONY: CULTURE
AND POWER IN COLONIAL JAVA, 1808-1927

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Ambivalent Hegemony:

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“Ambivalent Hegemony” explores the Dutch adoption and subsequent rejection of Javanese culture, in particular material culture like dress, architecture, and symbols of power, to legitimize colonial authority around the turn of the twentieth century. The Dutch established an enduring system of hegemony by encouraging cultural, social and racial mixing; in other words, by embedding themselves in Javanese culture and society. From the 1890s until the late 1920s this complex system of dominance was transformed by rapid technological innovation, evolutionary thinking, the emergence of Indonesian nationalism, and the intensification of the Dutch “civilizing” mission. This study traces the interactions between Dutch and Indonesian civil servants, officials, nationalists, journalists and novelists, to reveal how these transformations resulted in the transition from cultural hegemony based on feudal traditions and symbols to hegemony grounded in enhanced Westernization and heightened coercion. Consequently, it is argued that we need to understand the civilizing mission ideology and the process of modernization in the colonial context as part of larger cultural projects of control.

By emphasizing the interactions between the colonizers and the colonized, this study brings into focus a shared colonial space, thus bridging the fields of Indonesian and European colonial history. These interactions are explored in a number of sites that have proved of particular relevance. For example, the study of Javanese status symbols, such as the ceremonial parasol (*payung*), deference rituals, and a hybrid sartorial hierarchy reveals the ways in which the material grounds of colonial authority were contested. Likewise, an examination of hill stations, their architecture and function, illuminates the growing concerns surrounding the “physical body”, and fears of Westernization and Javanization among the Javanese and Dutch respectively. The various narratives are brought together in a discussion of annual fairs, their attractions, appearance and objectives in the colony’s capital at Batavia (Jakarta). These transformative themes in the history of Indonesia, which stress the place of material culture in legitimizing colonial regimes, are treated in depth for the first time as dimensions of a coherent process.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This dissertation is the culmination of my cross-Atlantic academic journey. On its eastern shores I was introduced to the historical discipline at Leiden University. There I quickly developed a fascination with the history of colonial Indonesia. Under the auspices of Leonard Blussé I wrote two research theses, based on explorations of the rich archival collections in the Netherlands, emphasizing political and economical perspectives on the colonial past. Partly based on these writings I was presented with the opportunity to attend graduate school at Rutgers University for one academic year. It was this experience on the western shores of the Atlantic that proved to be both life and career changing. Foremost, during this year at Rutgers University Michael Adas challenged me to apply a cultural perspective to my subject. This reorientation was reflected in a lengthy MA thesis that explored the relationship between culture and power in colonial Java. This experience abroad – the introduction to a more cultural perspective as well as the general academic atmosphere – encouraged me to pursue a Ph.D. at Rutgers University. With the support of Michael Adas, Bonnie Smith, Matt Matsuda and many others I was able to make this happen.

Of course, the whole project would have been impossible without the generous financial support of the Rutgers University History Department, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, a Fulbright Fellowship from the Netherlands America Commission for Educational Exchange, a VSB Fund grant, and a Leiden University Scholarship. This dissertation, its contribution to the academic field, and my development as an instructor are the returns on these investments for which I am forever obliged.

It was my education at Leiden University under the excellent guidance of Leonard Blussé and Harry Knipschild in particular that allowed me to embark on my Ph.D. studies. During my research in the Netherlands I also greatly benefited from discussions with Kees van Dijk, Gerard Termorshuizen, Remco Raben, and Pauline van Roosmalen. In addition, the support of the staff of the Royal Netherlands Institute for Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies was indispensable in finding my way through its important collections. I am especially thankful for the guidance of Rini Hogewoning, Josephine Schrama, Sven Aalten, Liesbeth Ouwehand, and Jaap Anten.

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I consider myself fortunate to have been able to pursue a Ph.D. at Rutgers University, where the history department in New Brunswick has provided me with an outstanding academic training in a highly social environment. The department showed its

true excellence at times when things looked bleak. The support of professors and graduate advisors, in particular Alastair Bellamy, Al Howard, Paul Hanebrink, Seth Koven, Belinda Davis, and Phyllis Mack, was crucial in completing my studies. Nor could I have done without the guidance and assistance of Dawn Ruskai in dealing with and making sense of academic bureaucracies.

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Graduate school, and the writing of a dissertation in particular, can be a lonely and arduous adventure. Lucky for me, I did not have to make this journey alone. The friendship and support of fellow graduate students was indispensable. I will forever savor professional and social get togethers at libraries, coffee shops, weddings and Thanksgiving dinners with Annie Kinkel-De Vries, Elizabeth Perry-Churchich, Adam Zalma, and especially Stephen Allen, Kathryn Mahaney, and Alejandro Gomez-del Moral. In addition, friends and family on both sides of the Atlantic were indispensable in

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It was my mothers' fascination with Dutch colonial literature that first directed me towards the history of colonial Indonesia in particular, although my parents have always encouraged my fascination with the past in general, for instance by taking me to historical sites during our many family vacations together. But their greatest accomplishment is the creation of a warm and supportive family that allowed my sisters and me to chase our dreams knowing that we could always count on one another. The fulfillment of this particular dream of mine is therefore also their achievement.

Together with my wife, Joke van Oers, I embarked on an adventure that has been academically and socially highly rewarding. Without the example of her ceaseless passion and dedication to the work that she loves and her continuous support I would not have made it this far. Our overseas adventure has enriched our lives tremendously by the people we have met, the travels we have made, the obstacles we have overcome, but most of all the family we have created. Our two beautiful daughters were the ultimate source of inspiration behind the completion of this dissertation. My work is therefore forever dedicated to my lovely family: Joke, Amelie and Sofie.

DEDICATION

For Joke,
Amelie & Sofie

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Introduction

After a yearlong furlough Godard Hazeu returned to Java in the spring of 1916, leaving behind a belligerent European continent, only to discover that the atmosphere in colonial society had grown even more toxic than at the time of his departure. On the eve of his leave, Hazeu, as the Advisor for Native Affairs, expected to contain the rising tensions between government representatives and the nascent nationalist movement by prohibiting civil servants from demanding humiliating forms of deference from the colonized. Instead, anxieties among the various ethnic and social groups on Java had deteriorated further. In part this was the result of the specter of World War I, which was reflected in the fear of war in Asia, the polemic over a native militia, the corresponding demands for democratic participation by the nationalist movement, and the declining standard of living due to the collapse of the world market. But in an insightful and critical analysis for the new Governor-General, Hazeu primarily ascribed the anxieties in colonial society to the awakening and desire for modernization of the indigenous peoples and the denial thereof by the European and Javanese civil services. The latter, according to Hazeu, were caught in an “Oriental-Medieval state of affairs”, a reference to Javanese feudal traditions, to such an extent, that “any other method of governing, any other grounds of authority, any other manner in socializing with and treatment of the population in general became hard to imagine.”¹ Colonial anxieties thus sprang from the confrontation between those pushing for the modernization of the colonial relationship and the guardians of the “Oriental-medieval state of affairs”.

¹ Commissioner for Native Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu to Governor-General J.P. Van Limburg-Stirum, 30 November 1916, Folder 70, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, Royal Netherlands Institute for Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV), The Netherlands.

The detailed analysis of the Commissioner for Native Affairs provides the historian with a unique perspective on the interrelationship between culture and power in Dutch colonialism. According to Hazeu, the increasing interference of Dutch colonial administrators in indigenous society throughout the nineteenth century was shaped and legitimized by the adoption of Javanese feudal traditions regarding social etiquette, prestige, governance, and authority. In imitation of the Javanese *priyayi* (aristocracy) Dutch administrators demanded “Oriental-medieval deference” from the *wong cilik* (common Javanese) and considered servile obedience as a *conditio sine qua non* for good governance. The colonized were considered “half- or a quarter-people” whose labor and time were at the disposal of the authorities in the name of public interest. But the process of cultural accommodation went beyond deference traditions. Colonial administrators adopted Javanese status symbols like the *payung*, a ceremonial state parasol, clad themselves in indigenously inspired dress, such as the *sarong* or *kain*, *kebaya*, and *batik*-trousers, resided in houses that were partly modeled after those of the *priyayi*, and turned the consumption of rice into an aristocratic spectacle. Hazeu believed that this nineteenth century “Oriental-Medieval state of affairs” was so ingrained in the mentalities of European administrators and Javanese aristocrats alike that it was impossible for them to conceive of any other legitimization of colonial authority.²

However inconceivable, new grounds of colonial authority were implemented as a consequence of the Ethical Policy in 1901, the Dutch equivalent of the civilizing mission, and the corresponding national awakening of indigenous society. For Hazeu, the colonial administrators’ disregard for both developments was the primary cause of the increased

² Commissioner for Native Affairs Hazeu to Governor-General Van Limburg-Stirum, 30 November 1916, Folder 70, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, The Netherlands.

tensions in society. In essence, he argued that while the modern Javanese wanted to throw off the yoke of humiliating feudal customs and traditions, the European and Javanese civil services still adhered to these practices as the necessary symbols of their prestige and authority. To prevent the relationship between the government and the Javanese from further deterioration, Hazeu contended that the seemingly ambivalent attitude of the colonial authorities – that is, their simultaneous propagation of a civilizing mission by the central government and the adherence to Javanese feudalism by its civil servants – needed to be resolved. As a protagonist of the Ethical Policy and confidant of the Javanese, Hazeu advised that “medieval institutions” and traditions be reformed in accord with a “modern spirit”, and that the participation of the educated Javanese in the colonial administration be promoted. In addition, Hazeu recommended that European administrators needed to be pressured to comply with the regulations prohibiting Javanese deference demands. Not to act, Hazeu forewarned, would result in increased colonial anxieties, and a loss of colonial legitimacy and authority.³

Hazeu’s assessment of the sorry state and remedies for colonial society raises fascinating questions regarding the relationship between culture and power in colonial societies. For instance, how precisely did the “Oriental-Medieval state of affairs” legitimize colonial authority? Was this cultural accommodation the result of intentional policies or of circumstance? Why was this system of dominance challenged and altered significantly around the turn of the twentieth century? And how could the ambivalence of the colonial authorities to its own legitimization be explained? And finally, what role did the colonized play in constructing, maintaining, and contesting this system of dominance?

³ Ibid.

These issues are at the heart of this dissertation, which argues that from the early decades after their arrival in the seventeenth century the Dutch appropriated Javanese culture, in particular material culture, including dress, architecture and symbols of power, to legitimize colonial authority. At the turn of the twentieth century, they then began to discard the complex system of dominance they had based on this appropriation. From the 1890s until the late 1920s, this system of control was challenged by rapid technological innovation, evolutionary thinking, the emergence of Indonesian nationalism, Islamic revivalism, and the intensification of the Dutch “civilizing” mission. The convergence of these profound changes resulted in the contestation of the Javanese-influenced system of colonial cultural hegemony; first and foremost by the colonial state itself, soon followed by an indigenous nationalist awakening. The ambivalence on the part of the colonial authorities, exemplified by their advocacy of the civilizing mission ideology while allowing its civil servants to continue to propagate feudal traditions, and the radicalization of the nationalist movement finally resulted in enhanced Westernization and heightened coercion as the basis for colonial rule.

In studying the relationship between culture and power in a colonial setting, the notion of cultural hegemony proves to be particularly illuminating. Introduced by Antonio Gramsci to explain the rise and contestation of fascism in Italy, cultural hegemony refers to the continuous process through which a dominant group tries to achieve and maintain the consent of the great majority of the population it rules. Gramsci differentiated between civil society, as the sphere of political organizations, interest groups, and media, where consent was achieved, and political society, the sphere that housed the coercive apparatus of the State. Even if the dominant group was in firm

control of political society, to maintain hegemony it constantly needed to defend its consent in civil society from contestation on the part of rival interests.⁴ Instead of approaching Gramsci's theoretical insights on hegemony as doctrine, and thus limiting its effective application to bourgeois industrialized societies, this study follows historians who have pointed towards the opportunities that a non-prescriptive interpretation offers for the study of culture and power in the past.⁵

Surprisingly few historians have applied Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony to the colonial context.⁶ In addition to adherence to a doctrinal interpretation, this lacuna might be explained by the assumption that colonialism was inherently violent. However, for Gramsci the exercise of hegemony was characterized by the combination of consent and coercion with the former very often more pervasive than the latter. In other words,

⁴ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, translated and edited by Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971) 5-23, 52-58, and 161-170. Steve Jones, *Antonio Gramsci* (New York: Routledge, 2006). Paul Ransome, *Antonio Gramsci: A New Introduction* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992) 132-155. Walter L. Adamson, *Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980). Raymond Williams, "Hegemony," *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford [England]: Oxford University Press, 1977) 108-114.

⁵ In addition, Gramsci's work on hegemony is permeated with inconsistencies, which in all likelihood were the result of the miserable conditions under which he wrote his work. These inconsistencies make it difficult to consider Gramsci from a doctrinal perspective. See: Perry Anderson, "The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci," *The New Left Review*, Vol. 100 (1976-77) 5-78. Some of the original suggestions for Gramsci's application by historians, see: Michael Adas, "Bringing Ideas and Agency Back In: Representation and the Comparative Approach to World History," in Philip Pomper, Richard Elphick, and Richard T. Vann (eds.), *World History: Ideologies, Structures and Identities* (Malden, MA: Basil Blackwell Publishers, 1998) 81-104. Jackson Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 90, No. 3, (June 1985) 567-593. Stuart Hall, "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity," *Journal of Commonwealth Inquiry*, Vol. 10, No. 5 (1986) 5-27. M.C.J. Stoddart, "Ideology, Hegemony, Discourse: A Critical Review of Theories of Knowledge and Power," *Social Thought & Research*, Vol. 28 (2007) 191-225.

⁶ The clear exceptions to this rule are the edited volume titled *Contesting Colonial Hegemony* and Ranajit Guha's *Dominance without Hegemony*. The edited volume is of particular interest, since it presents the various case studies in which arguments for and against the application of cultural hegemony in the colonial context can be found. Dagmar Engels and Shula Marks, "Introduction: Hegemony in a Colonial Context," in Dagmar Engels and Shula Marks (eds.), *Contesting Colonial Hegemony: State and Society in Africa and India* (New York: British Academic Press, 1994) 1-15. Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998). David Arnold, "Gramsci and Peasant Subalternity in India," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1984) 155-177.

cultural hegemony enables the historian to explore the interplay between the creation of consent and the application of coercion in colonial systems of dominance. This approach also illuminates why and how colonial power could appear natural and legitimate instead of alien and oppressive. Gramsci himself suggested that to become hegemonic, the aspiring group needed to forge alliances and incorporate the interests and tendencies of groups over which hegemony is to be exercised. These processes can clearly be discerned in the history of Dutch colonialism on Java. Moreover, the application of cultural hegemony to the colonial context expands our understanding of cultural hegemony and its possibilities for further research.⁷

Although the Dutch arrived on Java as outsiders who established themselves on the island through the use of force, it quickly became evident that they could not rely on violent coercion alone. The Dutch East India Company (VOC) prioritized commercial over political ends, but the defense of its economic interests necessitated its interference in Javanese politics. From the outset the Company, and later the colonial state, were short on physical force. Even in the 1930s the colonial army on Java consisted of a mere 20,000 troops, of whom only 4,000 were of European descent, controlling a population of nearly 41 million. Consequently, the Dutch could not rely on force alone in managing their empire. They therefore endeavored to forge alliances with other groups on Java, foremost among the Javanese *priyayi*, who could govern in their stead, but also Chinese merchants who could serve as economic middlemen in the colonial economy. These alliances were constructed around mutual benefits to deter attempts by any of the parties involved to return to the previous order. The importance of these alliances became clear during the Java War in 1825-1830, when many *priyayi* openly supported the Dutch war

⁷ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 52-58 and 161-170.

effort against the Javanese royal houses. The victory marked the last major military colonial intervention on Java until the twentieth century, and was an important step towards the creation of colonial cultural hegemony.⁸

By adopting and transforming both Javanese cultural values as well as elements of Javanese material culture, the Dutch went well beyond, in Gramsci's wording, taking account of "the interests and tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised".⁹ While Gramsci located the struggle for cultural hegemony mainly in the realm of ideas and ideology, the study of Dutch colonial experience provides opportunities to expand the spheres in which colonial cultural hegemony can be exercised to the realm of material culture and social performance. Throughout the nineteenth century the Dutch followed a policy of cultural accommodation to appease and control the indigenous elite and legitimize colonial authority. This was reflected in the adoption of Javanese social etiquette, deference regulations, ceremonial forms, powerful symbols, such as the *payung*, architectural forms, clothing, cuisine, and the strict language hierarchy, in which a superior is addressed in high Javanese and replies in low Javanese. By appropriating Javanese feudal traditions and draping themselves in the accompanying trappings of power, the Dutch legitimized their authority over both the indigenous elites and the illiterate peasantry. In conjunction with the alliances that were forged with the *priyayi*, Chinese, and mercenary soldiers from inside the archipelago, cultural

⁸ D.H. Burger, *Structural Changes in Javanese Society: The Supra-Village Sphere* (Ithaca, NY: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, 1956). Leslie H. Palmier, "The Javanese Nobility under the Dutch," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Jan. 1960) 197-227. Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy: Prince Dipanagara and the end of an old order in Java, 1785-1855* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007). H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht: Het Europese binnelands bestuur op Java en Madoera, 1808-1942* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1994). Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite: The Colonial Transformation of the Javanese Priyayi* (Singapore: Heinemann Educational Books, 1979).

⁹ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 161.

accommodation facilitated the creation of an enduring system of colonial cultural hegemony that was fully elaborated by the second half of the nineteenth century.¹⁰

Once colonial cultural hegemony was achieved it needed to be constantly enforced and adapted to the changing social, economic, and political circumstances within colonial society. In the nineteenth century the only groups that could seriously contest colonial cultural hegemony were the class of administrative *priyayi* collaborating with colonial authorities and the *priyayi* associated with Java's semi-independent royal and princely houses. While the former were incorporated in the management of the colonial state, the latter were disciplined through state coercive power during and following the Java War. However, the Javanization of colonial authority, the cultural accommodation through which the Dutch attempted to legitimize their rule, was not a static or straightforward process. Throughout the nineteenth century its character changed as the result of renegotiations with the *priyayi*. These renegotiations were often the result of changing circumstances and shifts in the balance of power. While during the era of the Cultivation System (1830-1870) the *priyayi* enjoyed great administrative and executive power, in the last decades of the century they lost most of their political influence to the Dutch, but were compensated with an increase of feudal pomp and etiquette. The construction of nineteenth century colonial cultural hegemony and the corresponding

¹⁰ Benedict Anderson is among the few who have interpreted cultural accommodation as more than simply the side effect of colonial interactions. See his essays: "The Language of Indonesian Politics" and "Sembah-Sumpah: The Politics of Language and Javanese Culture" in his *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990) 123-151 and 194-237. D.H. Burger, *Structural Changes in Javanese Society: The Supra-Village Sphere*. Leslie H. Palmier, "The Javanese Nobility under the Dutch," 197-227.

Javanization of colonial authority through a process of cultural accommodation are the subject of chapter one.¹¹

The contestation of the colonial cultural hegemony, and of the complex mixture of European and Javanese culture that supported it, slowly increased from the 1860s onwards, reaching its peak in the early twentieth century. Colonial culture and society were first disturbed by the lifting of immigration regulations that led to an increase in the number of Europeans who worked in the private sector and the number of European women in the colony. Moreover, the growing intensity of the Dutch commitment to “civilizing” the peoples of the Indies, which was enshrined in the “Ethical Policy” (1901), was driven by rapid technological innovation, bureaucratization, racist and evolutionary thinking, and the emergence of Indonesian nationalism. From the perspective of a larger global and regional context that included the rise of Japan as a major power, revolution in China, the spread of Pan-Islamism and Communism, and the outbreak of World War I made it evident that a period of great anxiety was at hand.¹²

¹¹ John M. Brownlee, “Colonial Knowledge and Indigenous Power in the Dutch East Indies,” *Explorations in Southeast Asian Studies. The Journal of the Southeast Asian Studies Student Association*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring 1998) 19-29. D.H. Burger, *Structural Changes in Javanese Society: The Supra-Village Sphere*. Leslie H. Palmier, “The Javanese Nobility under the Dutch,” 197-227.

¹² On the changing demographics of colonial society: Frances Gouda, “Nyonyas on the Colonial Divide: White Women in the Dutch East Indies, 1900-1942,” *Gender & History*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (1993) 318-342. Laura Ann Stoler, “Making Empire Respectable: the politics of race and sexual morality in 20th century colonial cultures,” *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 16, No. 4. (1989) 634-660. J.G. Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983). Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Women and the Colonial State: Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000). The rise of evolutionary racism and its impact: Frances Gouda, “The Native ‘Other’ as the Medieval, Childlike, and Animal ‘Self’ (or as Fundamentally Different): Evolutionary Ideas in Dutch Colonial Rhetoric in Indonesia,” in Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995) 118-156. Also see: P. de Rooy, Ann Laura Stoler, W.F. Wertheim, and Jan Breman (eds.), *Imperial Monkey Business: Racial Supremacy in Social Darwinist Theory and Colonial Practice* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1990). On technological developments: Wim Ravestijn and Jan Kop (eds.), *For Profit and Prosperity: The Contribution Made by Dutch Engineers to Public Works in Indonesia, 1800-2000* (Leiden/Zaltbommel: KITLV Press/Aprilis, 2008). For a good overview: Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, *Being Dutch in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2008).

Of all these transformations, the declaration of the Ethical Policy in 1901 was arguably the most significant. The Dutch equivalent of the British “white man’s burden” and French *Mission Civilisatrice* marked an essential departure in the legitimization of colonial authority. The new civilizing discourse encouraged the development of the island of Java and its inhabitants under Dutch tutelage towards limited self-government based on Western examples. The civilizing mission was motivated by metropolitan moral qualms over unilateral exploitation and the colonial economy’s dire need for cheap educated labor. The example of other imperial nations, especially the American annexation of the Philippines from Spain, which was interpreted as an ominous sign for non-modernizing powers, also encouraged Dutch action. The civilizing discourse, embedded in notions of modernity, progress, limited political and administrative participation, stood in stark contrast with nineteenth century colonial legitimization rooted in Javanese feudalism. As the representatives of civilization and modernity, the Dutch could no longer rule through cultural accommodation without losing their credibility. The new modern hegemonic ideology thus encouraged a Westernization of European elements in colonial society to enhance colonial prestige.¹³

While the Ethical Policy was designed and propagated by the high colonial authorities – i.e. Governor-General, Council of the Indies, Minister of Colonial Affairs,

¹³ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten wrote the standard work on the “Ethical Policy”. Her *Ethiek in Fragmenten: Vijf Studies over Koloniaal Denken en Doen van Nederlanders in de Indonesische Archipel, 1877-1942* (Utrecht: HES Publishers, 1981) is still an important collection of essays. Moreover, it was one of the works that stimulated a revival of empire studies in the Netherlands. Locher-Scholten’s contributions were honored by the dedication of a recent collection of essays on late colonial empire; Marieke Bloembergen and Remco Raben, *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief: Wegen Naar het Nieuwe Indie* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2009). A more political perspective on the Ethical Policy can be found in: Steven Wedema, *“Ethiek” und Macht: Die niederländisch-indische Kolonialverwaltung und indonesische Emanzipationsbestrebungen, 1901-1927* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1998). Also see: Suzanne Moon, *Technology and Ethical Idealism: A History of Development in the Netherlands East Indies* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2007).

and Dutch Parliament – its implementation depended on the cooperation of both the European and Javanese branches of the dual civil service on the ground. However, these two groups stood to lose the most from a modernization of the colonial relationship, ranging from feudal privileges, symbols of power, marks of deference, and general social standing. In addition, both administrative corps would have to transfer some of their tasks and responsibilities to both European and indigenous specialized agents of the colonial government, such as engineers, sanitary and health officials, lawyers, judges, and agricultural advisors. Unsurprisingly then, many of these civil servants opposed the Ethical Policy and adhered to, as Hazeu described it, the “Oriental-Medieval state of affairs.” The European civil servants were supported in their position by a large share of the European, and especially Eurasian, population on Java who felt threatened by the possible development of indigenous society. A conservative newspaper editor even claimed in 1916 that due to the Ethical Policy “the end of colonial rule was near.”¹⁴

Throughout the period of the Ethical Policy, roughly dated from 1901 to 1927, colonial representatives thus displayed an ambivalent hegemony towards colonial society. While the government propagated the civilizing mission ideology, both the European and Javanese civil servants adhered to the “Oriental-Medieval state of affairs.” For Hazeu, the fundamental challenge that the government faced was to resolve this seemingly contradictory position on the character and legitimization of colonial rule before it would permanently undermine the governments’ standing with the nascent nationalist movement. After the Sarekat Islam congress in June 1916, the first mass movement in

¹⁴ Karel Wybrands, “Het naderend Einde,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch Indie*, No. 233, 5 October 1916. For the emergence of the engineer in colonial society see: J.A.A. van Doorn, *De Laatste Eeuw van Indie: Ontwikkeling en Ondergang van een Koloniaal Project* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1994). Wim Ravestijn and Jan Kop (eds.), *For Profit and Prosperity*.

Indonesian history, Hazeu advised the Governor-General that the colonial authorities could no longer postpone conceding at least some form of participation or representation in the governance of the colony. Moreover, the young nationalist movement demanded to be treated as free and equal citizens instead of as feudal serfs. With a sense of foreboding, Hazeu therefore wrote to the Governor-General: “make haste, time is running out.”¹⁵

Ever since the promulgation of the Ethical Policy, the new colonial discourse had become a Trojan horse by providing the Western educated Javanese with the intellectual ammunition to lay bare colonial hypocrisy. The expansion of educational and professional opportunities was crucial for the development of an indigenous middle class that derived its social status primarily from education and merit instead of birth. Most Javanese nationalists originated in this group and rejected the Dutch feudal hegemonic ideology in general, and Javanese feudalism in particular. As the Commissioner for Native Affairs, Hazeu had correctly assessed that the ambivalent hegemony of the colonial authorities sowed confusion in society about the government’s true intentions and eventually invited contestation by the nascent nationalist movement. The end of the 1910s and early 1920s witnessed the proliferation of counter-hegemonic ideologies, mirroring the prevailing ethnic, religious, political-ideological, and secular currents in the nationalist movement. The differences among these ideologies were often reflected in attitudes towards material culture in particular and Westernization in general. Material culture played a crucial role, as it was often safer to challenge colonial authority through

¹⁵ Commissioner G.A.J. Hazeu to the Governor General Van Limburg Stirum, 29 September 1916, Folder 67, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, The Netherlands.

cultural means, for instance a change of clothes, than to engage in open political contestation, which might result in repression.¹⁶

However, there are indications that the modern hegemonic discourse of the civilizing mission was not without its effect on the growing indigenous middle class. The Western educated Javanese became preoccupied with modernity, technology, and progress (*kemajuan*), and fascinated with Western material culture in general. Recent scholarship has even suggested that the majority of the middle class was not so much interested in nationalism or the creation of an independent nation, but in acquiring a modern lifestyle. This modern existence consisted of seeing Hollywood movies, dancing, playing Western sports, and maybe most importantly, becoming a consumer of Western(ized) products, ranging from technological products to lotions and creams. It was this largely a-political group that indirectly helped maintain colonial authority till the end of colonial rule.¹⁷

The early decades of the twentieth century can be described as a period in which the Javanization of colonial authority was reconfigured by the colonial state, protected by the colonial civil services, and contested by the nationalist associations. Unsurprisingly this period has been described as a “turning point”, “an age in motion”, a period of “crisis

¹⁶ Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite* (The Hague; W. van Hoeve Ltd., 1960). M.C. Ricklefs, *Polarizing Javanese Society: Islamic and Other Visions c. 1830-1930* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007). A.P.E. Korver, *Sarekat Islam 1912-1916: Opkomst bloei, en structuur van Indonesië's eerste massabeweging* (Amsterdam; Historisch Seminarium van de Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1982). Akira Nagazumi, *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism: The Early Years of the Budi Utomo, 1908-1918* (Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies, 1972).

¹⁷ Henk Schulte Nordholt, “Onafhankelijkheid of Moderniteit? Een Geïllustreerde Hypothese,” in Marieke Bloembergen and Remco Raben (eds.), *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief: Wegen naar het Nieuwe Indië, 1890-1950* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2009) 105-120. Rudolf Mrázek, *Engineers of Happy Land: Technology and Nationalism in a Colony* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002). William O'Malley, “Second Thoughts on Indonesian Nationalism,” *Indonesia: Australian Perspectives* (1980) 601-613. Hans van Miert, *Een Koel Hoofd en een Warm Hart: Nationalisme, Javanisme en Jeugdbeweging in Nederlands-Indië, 1918-1930* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1995). Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990).

and change”, and also as an inherently “contradictory” epoch in the history of colonial Java.¹⁸ It is the argument of this dissertation that the application of the Gramscian notion of cultural hegemony can also integrate and shed light on these diverse interpretations of this complex historical period. According to Gramsci, the moment a predominant group loses a certain degree of consent in society, its hegemony is in danger of being openly contested. This ultimately could result in a “crisis of authority”, which he described as consisting “precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.”¹⁹ The ambivalent hegemony of the colonial state had, I argue, created a crisis of Dutch colonialism that could not easily be resolved.

The “morbid symptoms” that Gramsci predicted, as did Hazeu, coincided with the radicalization of the indigenous nationalist and European conservative movements by the end of the 1910s. The tone of both the colonial and vernacular press became more confrontational, while occurrences such as strikes and physical confrontations between Europeans and indigenous peoples increased. Ultimately, the rising tensions culminated in the failed communist uprisings of late 1926 and 1927 in West-Java and Sumatra respectively. Even though the attempted revolutions were ill prepared, ill executed, and hardly a secret for the colonial authorities, their occurrence drastically changed the

¹⁸ Kees van Dijk called the period a turning point in Indonesian history. The different emancipation movements of Indonesians, Indo-Europeans and the Chinese in the colony are the subjects of his fascinating studies. Takashi Shiraishi, focusing on the Indonesian radicalist movement, referred to this period as “an age in motion”; Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben called it a period of “crisis and change” for the Indo-European community; and Ann Stoler defined it as a “crisis of authority.” Finally, Rudolf Mrázek demonstrated how amidst all these changes “modernization” added another layer of anxiety, while Remco Raben and Marijke Bloembergen characterized the period as “contradictory.” Kees van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War, 1914-1918* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007). Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, *Being Dutch in the Indies*. Rudolf Mrázek, *Engineers of Happy Land*. Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926*. Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002). Marijke Bloembergen and Remco Raben, *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief*.

¹⁹ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 276.

dynamic of colonial society. It marked the definite end of the progressive era in Dutch colonial politics. A conservative reactionary movement that idealized the nineteenth century hegemonic ideology took its place. After two decades of undermining the power of the Javanese aristocracy in the colonial administration, the conservative movement strengthened its position to counter the influence of the nationalist movement among the general population. The uprisings also signaled an increased reliance of the colonial state on coercion. The establishment of internment camps for politically dangerous leaders within the nationalist movement, the increased control of police intelligence services, and the enforcement of censorship of the vernacular press all pointed towards the loss of a large degree of consent in colonial society.²⁰

Within the historiography of the Netherlands Indies, interest in the relationship between colonial culture, specifically material culture, and colonial power is relatively meager. This is all the more surprising when the so-called “myth of Dutch colonialism” is taken into account. Both contemporaries and historians have alluded to the special nature of Dutch colonialism, which holds that the Netherlands as a small nation with limited resources out of necessity had to rely on consent instead of military force and coercion.²¹ However, none of these studies explored the crucial role that material culture played in

²⁰ Ruth T. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965). Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*. H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*. P.J. Drooglever, *De Vaderlandsche Club, 1929-1942. Totoks en de Indische Politiek* (Franeker: T. Wever, 1982). For the censorship on the press: Mirjam Maters, *Van Zachte Wenk tot Harde Hand: Persvrijheid en Persbreidel in Nederlands-Indië, 1906-1942* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 1998).

²¹ Frances Gouda has written a chapter on the myth of Dutch colonialism: “A Cunning David Amidst the Goliaths of Empire: Dutch Colonial Practice in the Indonesian Archipelago,” in Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*. The title of Wim van den Doel’s standard work on the Dutch Administration of the Interior also refers to this myth, as it is translated as “The Silent Force”. H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*. Neither of these works truly examines the importance of material culture in legitimizing colonial authority. Gouda is mainly concerned with immaterial culture, whereas Van den Doel focuses on institutional and ideological development of the colonial civil service.

legitimizing colonial authority and gaining consent.²² However, historians have – knowingly or not – described many elements that were crucial to the achievement and maintenance of hegemony. Most attention has been given to the development of a racial stratification, the politics of sex, a dualistic civil service and the institution of indirect rule. However, the actual rituals, displays and social conventions that made colonial power visible, have only received scant attention.²³ Yet, it was through material culture – e.g. status symbols, dress, food, and architecture – that colonial authority was both communicated and legitimized. The outward appearance of material culture enabled it to serve as both a powerful instrument of colonial power and of contestation that conveyed underlying political, social, ethnic, and colonial hierarchies.²⁴

By emphasizing the interactions between the colonizers and the colonized on cultural terrain, my dissertation brings into focus a shared colonial space, thus bridging the fields of Indonesian and European colonial history. The underlying belief is that colonial histories cannot be understood without studying the interactions between the

²² The absence of studies on the relationship between culture and power for the Netherlands Indies also contrasts with the attention the subject has received in studies on British India, especially in the work of Bernard Cohn: “Representing Authority in Victorian India,” in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 165-178. And: Bernard Cohn’s *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).

²³ A wonderful exception to this rule is the edited volume dealing with dress as a social marker in colonial Indonesia, which has inspired this present study. See: Henk Schulte Nordholt, *Outward Appearances: Dressing State and Society in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1997). Cees Fasseur, “Cornerstone and Stumbling Block: Racial Classification and the Late Colonial State in Indonesia,” in Robert Cribb (ed.), *The Late Colonial State in Indonesia: Political and Economical Foundations of the Netherlands Indies, 1880-1942* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1994) 31-57. Wim van den Doel and Heather Sutherland have respectfully studied the two separate parts of the dualistic colonial civil service in describing the histories of the European administration of the interior and the indigenous counterpart, the *Pangreh Praja*. They both argue that this dualistic system of indirect rule was crucial for the stability of colonial government. See: Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*. And: H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*. For the politics of sex see Laura Ann Stoler’s collection of essays on the subject: *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* (2002).

²⁴ Nicholas Dirks, introducing the works of Bernard Cohn has argued that colonialism was a cultural project of control. With the exception of the work of Benedict Anderson, few historians of the Netherlands Indies have explored this relationship between culture and power. See: Nicholas Dirks, “Foreword,” in Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge*, ix. Benedict Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (1990).

colonizers and colonized. In this dissertation several sites of interaction are explored, where actors, ranging from Dutch civil servants, officials, *priyayi*, conservatives, progressives, young nationalists, journalists, and novelists, come together and interact in colonial space. For example, the study of Javanese status symbols, such as the ceremonial parasol (*payung*), deference rituals, and a hybrid sartorial hierarchy reveals the ways in which the material grounds of colonial authority were contested. Likewise, an examination of mountain resorts, their architecture and function, illuminates the growing concerns surrounding the “physical body”, and fears of Westernization and degeneration among the Javanese and Dutch respectively. These transformative themes in the history of Indonesia, which stress the place of material culture in legitimizing colonial regimes, are treated in depth for the first time as dimensions of a coherent process.

The interactions between European civil servants and their Javanese counterparts and subjects are a fascinating example that perfectly illustrates the intricacies of how culture sustained colonial authority. In the nineteenth century Dutch civil servants inserted themselves atop the Javanese feudal hierarchy by adopting status symbols, like the golden *payung*, demanding traditional forms of deference, and being addressed in conformity with the Javanese language hierarchy. However, the civilizing mission ideology, with its stress on Western cultural and racial superiority, did not allow the supposedly modern Dutch to behave as Javanese feudal lords. Between 1904 and 1913 no less than seven government circulars were promulgated that denied European civil servants the Javanese trappings and privileges of power. The necessity of repeated circulars serves as an indication of the forceful contestation of the new colonial policy by civil servants. Ultimately, was only when the Sarekat Islam began to challenge Javanese

feudal culture in general that the colonial government came down hard on its own civil servants in 1913. The build-up to this defining moment and the ensuing outrage among conservative Europeans as well as the enthusiasm within the vernacular press for these measures are discussed in chapter two.

Dress and outward appearance were essential in Dutch colonial Java to make distinctions that skin color could not make alone. As a consequence of several centuries of racial mixing, race was not a reliable indication of one's status and position in colonial society. It was also through these mixed race sexual relationships that indigenous women cohabitating with European men introduced Javanese cultural elements, such as dress, into these Eurasian households. As a consequence, by the nineteenth century European and Eurasian women adorned themselves in *sarong* and *kebaya*, while their male compatriots clad themselves in *batik*-trousers in the private sphere. Interestingly, these cultural adoptions were in fact a transgression of the sartorial hierarchy that was established around the same time, which stipulated that everyone had to dress according to his or her ethnicity. However, the Dutch versions of "native dress" set themselves apart through their colors, motifs of their designs, and materials. This sartorial hierarchy, which supported the Javanese feudal hierarchy, came undone by the turn of the twentieth century. First, Chinese nationals assaulted it, but the initiative was quickly taken over by Western educated young Javanese. For these groups, a change in attire was a political statement as well as a means to evade feudal traditions. Since clothing traditionally signified one's status, anybody wearing European dress was exempt from humiliating Javanese social etiquette. Chapter three explores these efforts of indigenous groups to

“dress-up” and the ensuing Dutch reaction that pushed back while simultaneously trying to “out-dress” the Javanese.

During the early decades of the twentieth century, the Dutch and Javanese both became increasingly concerned with identity politics and their physical constitutions as a consequence of the social transformations resulting from the Ethical Policy, technological innovations, and evolutionary racism. During these years the Dutch no longer believed that European acclimatization to the tropical environment could be facilitated by cultural accommodation. Instead, the latter was now considered a degenerative danger that needed to be avoided just like close contacts with the allegedly less-developed indigenous people, especially household servants. Similarly, the Javanese became apprehensive over the rapid Westernization of the world around them, fearing an irreparable loss of self. In chapter 4 it will be argued that these concerns were in fact two sides of the same coin in the colonial encounter. Both colonizers and colonized feared a loss of (national/racial/religious) identity due to degeneration or Westernization respectively. Their solutions were likewise sought in changes in morality and lifestyle. While the Dutch sought solace in mountain resorts to protect their bodies from the tropical heat, the Javanese became fiercely critical of the institution of mixed marriage.

Chapter 1

The “Javanization” of Colonial Authority:

The Construction of Cultural Hegemony in Nineteenth Century Colonial Java

Going through the travel accounts of two British travelers on their tour of Java in the 1890s one is struck by their bewilderment, but also their fascination, with the character of colonial society. Both men were appalled by the Dutch adoption of what appeared to be Javanese items of dress, the *sarong* and *kebaya* for women and *batik* trousers for men, which they described as scanty apparel and in good British fashion an insult to propriety. They were simply revolted by the absence of bread in the colonial diet, which consisted of the rice-table – the mixing of rice with a broad assortment of spicy side dishes offered by servants, and speculated that the Dutch had either no liver at all or one made of gutta-percha (rubber).¹ In stark contrast to British colonial policy they found that racial mixing was not only condoned, but almost encouraged by the Dutch colonizers. Also, in their relationship and exchanges with the Javanese the Dutch had, to the authors’ dismay, adopted Javanese customs and manners of etiquette, including outward tokens of respect. This led one of the travelers to assert that it was his conviction that the Dutch would “soon cease to be Europeans in anything but a traditional sense.” In sum, what these British authors found most disturbing in colonial Java was that instead of raising the

¹ The gutta-percha is a tropical tree native to Southeast Asia, which produces a sap that can be turned into a natural latex by the same name. In the nineteenth century gutta-percha latex was used for insulating underwater telegraph cables. The name “gutta-percha” actually stems from the Malay “*getah perca*”, meaning “sap of the percha tree”.

Javanese to their own level, the Dutch “tend[ed] to sink to the native level, the loss counterbalanc[ing] the gain, as a mountain to a grain of sand.”²

Of course, the observations by these authors were shaped by their personal knowledge of and experiences within the British Empire, which they clearly perceived as being not only more “enlightened”, but also as more “civilizing” than the Netherlands Indies. To make sense of this contrast in colonial styles, one of the authors suggested that The Netherlands, as a small nation compared to mighty Britain, was unable to maintain a large military presence on Java and was consequently forced to rely on the adoption of Javanese cultural components, hence their “sink[ing] to the native level”, for the legitimization of its authority rather than on coercion alone. The author had picked up this explanation during his travels through Java, but tempered its explanatory value by stating that it was given to him “sarcastic like.”³

Ironically, it is the argument of this chapter that this reasoning was less far-fetched than it appeared to the British author. Dutch colonial rule was in many respects a project of cultural control. By embedding themselves in Javanese society the Dutch found a way to legitimize their authority through local customs, manners and semiotics. Where the Dutch legitimized their colonial authority in the mother country with reference to the right of conquest, in nineteenth century Java they did so with reference to Javanese feudalism and its accompanying worldview. Thus, while the British travelers perceived the manifestation of Javanese cultural components in colonial society as an indication of

² George Murray Reith, *A Padre in Partibus: Notes and Impressions of a Brief Holiday Tour Through Java, the Eastern Archipelago and Siam* (Singapore: Singapore and Straits Print. Off., 1897) 188-190. Arthur Keyser, *From Jungle to Java: The Trivial Impressions of a Short Excursion to Netherlands India* (Westminster (London): The Roxburghe Press, Ltd, 1897).

³ Arthur Keyser, *From Jungle to Java*, 71-72.

the colonizers' degeneration, the Dutch considered these signs of outward appearance as crucial for maintaining their colonial authority.

It is therefore surprising that legitimization of colonialism through cultural accommodation has received scant attention in the historiography of colonial Java. The cultural hybridity that the British observers witnessed is often used anecdotally or reminiscently and explained as the side effect of racial mixing. What has been published on outward appearance is limited to cultural elements in isolation – e.g. dress – rather than viewing multiple cultural elements as crucial parts of a larger system of colonial rule. In this context the concept of colonial cultural hegemony is enlightening, as it refers to the formation of institutions, regulations, classificatory schemes, rituals, the appearance of power, and etiquette that on the one hand served to forge a union between different power holders (e.g. the Dutch and the Javanese aristocracy) and on the other to help legitimize their joint authority. Through this concept, colonial culture can be considered an integral part of the system of colonial governance instead of a mere byproduct. It brings a cultural layer to the scholarly studies that have been conducted on the institution of indirect rule and its reliance upon a dualistic civil service, the comprehensive system of racial stratification, and the politics of sex. All of these well-known “pillars of colonial governance”, as will be demonstrated below, were supported by a hybrid colonial culture – as reflected in status symbols, deference rituals, dress, food consumption, and architecture – that struck the British travelers as appalling.⁴

⁴ In the many scholarly works on Dutch colonial rule in nineteenth century Java culture often takes a back seat. The exception to this rule is the inspiring work of Jean Gelman Taylor: *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983). Another influential cultural study is the collection of essays on dress: H. Schulte Nordholt (ed.), *Outward appearances: dressing state and society in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1997). In most other works culture is used anecdotally. On the construction of indirect rule see: H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht: Het Europees Binnenlands Bestuur op Java en Madoera, 1808-1942* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1994).

By considering culture and the symbolic manifestation of power as essential elements in upholding colonial prestige and authority, a new perspective takes shape that complements and complicates those of older studies. For instance, studies on colonial policy often divided the nineteenth century in three phases that differ from one another in being characterized as either a period of modernization (1808-1830 and 1870-1901) or feudalization (1830-1870). In short, during the periods of modernization there was a push for more direct European rule, for diminishing the real influence of the Javanese aristocracy, and organizing the colonial economy along modern economic lines (liberalization policies). During the phase of feudalization the colonial government instead depended heavily on the Javanese aristocracy and empowered their feudal position for the sole purpose of even more effective exploitation. This characterization of nineteenth century colonial history can be found in most textbooks on colonial Indonesia. However, this periodization largely ignores a conscious process, which I will refer to as the Javanization of colonial authority, which allowed both the Dutch colonizers and the Javanese aristocracy to surround themselves with Javanese symbols of power to legitimize their dominion over the people of the island of Java. The concept of colonial cultural hegemony thus provides us with a more complicated perspective on the nineteenth century colonial rule.⁵

Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite: The Colonial Transformation of the Javanese Priyayi* (Singapore: Heinemann Educational Books, 1979). Or on the racial classification: Cees Fasseur, "Cornerstone and Stumbling Block: Racial Classification and the Late Colonial State in Indonesia," in Robert Cribb (ed.), *The Late Colonial State in Indonesia: Political and Economical Foundations of the Netherlands Indies, 1880-1942* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1994) 31-57. And on the social and conjugal policies: Laura Ann Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). In contrast, the work by Bernard Cohn on British India provides an example of how culture and power interacted in colonial societies. See: Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).

⁵ The term "Javanization" was first coined by Benedict Anderson: *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990) 133-134. Anderson used the

To make sense of the British travelers' observations, this chapter explores the construction of colonial cultural hegemony in nineteenth century colonial Java, with particular emphasis on the relevance of outward appearance. It will be demonstrated how the exterior manifestation of colonial authority was in fact crucial in supporting the politics of sex, a system of indirect rule, and racial stratification. The chapter begins with a short description of the roots of colonial cultural hegemony in the period of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) after which the successive phases of its construction during the nineteenth century are discussed. The chapter closes with a description of the processes that would undermine its effectiveness by the turn of the twentieth century.

Cultural Foundations in the VOC period

The preconditions of the comprehensive nineteenth century system of colonial cultural hegemony can be found in the era of the Dutch East India Company, whose colonizing policies were crucial in the development of a mestizo culture and society. By enforcing strict immigration and conjugal regulations the company encouraged mixing between European men and Asian women. Within two generations this resulted in an autonomous colonial culture and society, that is, by the middle of the seventeenth century it could no longer be characterized as Dutch or Asian. The logic behind these colonizing policies was that the Company tried to restrict private trading interests while at the same time creating

term to describe a cultural osmosis between the Dutch and Javanese that leaned toward the latter through the influences of the Europeans' Asian wives or concubines. In this chapter I employ the term to designate a more conscious policy of cultural accommodation to legitimize colonial authority. The periodization alluded to above is described in detail by D.H. Burger in his *Structural Changes in Javanese Society: The Supra-Village Sphere* (Ithaca, NY: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, 1956) and *Structural Changes in Javanese Society: The Village Sphere* (Ithaca, NY: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, 1957). Textbooks that have worked of this periodization are: H.W. van den Doel, *Het Rijk van Insulinde: Opkomst en Ondergang van een Nederlandsche Kolonie* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 1996) and J. van Goor, *De Nederlandse koloniën. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse expansie 1600-1795* (The Hague: SDU Uitgeverij Koninkinnegracht, 1994).

a small settler community that could supply Eurasian manpower for lower rank positions. Thus, lower officials could not bring a European wife to Java and were encouraged instead to cohabit with or marry an Asian woman. Consequently children of these arrangements grew up in a predominantly Asian household. As a result, Eurasian cultural domination of colonial society was visible in all aspects of life. A situation that would remain largely unchanged until the turn of the twentieth century.⁶

From the early seventeenth century onwards the Dutch gained experience and understanding of local culture and society, which would prove to be indispensable in the nineteenth century. The cultural exchange that occurred in the households of European company employees and Asian women was reflected in the food that was consumed, the clothes that were worn, the Malay language that was spoken, and the particular gender relations that developed. These interactions additionally resulted in the first experiments with Javanese deference rituals and symbols, based on Javanese aristocratic and court cultures, to differentiate between the various social classes and ethnic-religious groups in colonial society. The Dutch preoccupation with these Javanese manifestations of power even necessitated the promulgation of various sumptuary laws and deference regulations. Although these regulations were mainly intended for the European and Eurasian inhabitants of Batavia and its environs, they applied by extension to all who lived under

⁶ The *The Social World of Batavia* by Jean-Gelman Taylor is a major inspiration for this study. Her work, with its focus on culture and gender, represents a new stage in the historiography of Dutch colonialism. Other studies followed its lead in examining the “management of sex” and the “colonizing policies” in the Dutch colonial world, for instance: Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995). Laura Ann Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*.

Company rule. These forms, however, did not dictate the relationships with those indigenous peoples living outside of the Company's reach.⁷

One of the more intriguing adoptions by the Dutch was that of the Javanese *payung*, a ceremonial state parasol that bore the distinctions of the rank of its owner. The *payung* was not carried by the owner itself, but by a servant who followed the bearer of authority on foot, in his carriage, or sat close to him in on the ground, but always holding the *payung*. Both in pre-colonial and colonial Java, two elite hierarchies existed, that of the noble families who had the right to carry a *payung* from birth, and that of the Javanese bureaucracy (*priyayi*), who had the right to carry the *payung* by virtue of their office. Europeans and Eurasians living under the auspices of the VOC were quick to adopt the *payung* as a status symbol as well. Its growing popularity in the seventeenth century necessitated clear regulations on who had the right to a servant with a *payung*, and who had to carry his own parasol. These regulations were first introduced in 1647, and thereafter somewhat relaxed in 1729, 1733, and 1754, but still only junior merchants and those higher up in the Company's hierarchy were allowed the privilege to have a servant carry a *payung* for them. The *payungs* employed by the Dutch merchants were not part of a *payung* hierarchy as was the case in Javanese society. They were simply copies of Javanese status symbols detached from their traditional usage.⁸

The trading Company also stipulated specific regulations dealing with the manner of showing respect (*hormat*) to the Governor-General and other high officials. For instance, in 1719 it was decided that when encountering the Governor-General on the

⁷ Various examples of this process of cultural exchange can be found in: Jean-Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, xvii-xxii, 3-32.

⁸ J.A. van der Chijs, *Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakaatboek, 1602-1811*, Vol. 2 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1886) 111. J.A. van der Chijs, *Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakaatboek, 1602-1811*, Vol. 4 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1887) 239-244 and 333-536. J.G. Taylor, *Social World of Batavia*, 38-41 and 66-69.

road, Europeans had to dismount their horses or carriages and make a bow, whereas a Javanese was expected to squat on the spot as a gesture of deference. The latter form of deference, like the *payung*, was an adoption of customs previously reserved for the Javanese royalty and aristocracy. However, all of these experiments with Javanese semiotics and deference rituals were overturned in 1795, when the VOC went bankrupt and the many sumptuary and deference laws were retracted. As will be demonstrated below, retracted did not mean that these symbols and rituals were forgotten.⁹

In addition to racial and social mixing, cultural transfers were also the result of the Dutch preference for indirect colonial rule. Initially the Company did not consider itself a colonizing power, but in order to secure trade and profits it used its sovereign and military powers when necessary. From the outset the VOC intervened in local Javanese politics and rivalries between the royal houses of Mataram (and its successor states Surakarta and Yogyakarta) and Banten, and local administrators and chiefs. Slowly but surely the Company acquired more territory and influence on the island of Java. But it interfered little in local administration. In practice, this meant that those Javanese administrators and local chiefs – known as *Bupatis* (or *regenten* as the Dutch called them) – who had administered districts before the colonial period in name of Javanese royal houses, were allowed a large degree of independence as long as they remained loyal to the VOC, abstained from relations with foreign powers, guaranteed peace, and promptly collected and delivered the required tribute. Over time the VOC treated their *Bupatis* more and more like officials responsible for the cultivation of crops. Nonetheless, to a large extent the *Bupatis* maintained their status and influence under Company rule. Often their power even increased, since the support of the Dutch allowed them to transgress the

⁹ Jean-Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, 39-42, 56-57, and 66-67.

norms of the indigenous system. One of the consequences was that they could demand more deference and services from the people than before.¹⁰

Javanese society has been described as a feudal society par excellence at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Its strict hierarchy distinguished between princes, nobles and peasants. The nobility were Java's governing upper class, or *priyayi* class, which itself was divided into two broad categories of the high and low *priyayi*. It differed from medieval Europe, in that nobility was not hereditary, but depended upon the closeness of kinship to one the royal houses or the administrative position one held. A close relationship to a prince, or a high administrative office, made one a member of the high *priyayi*. A more distant relationship to power meant that one belonged to the lower *priyayi*. The term *priyayi*, which means 'younger brother of the king', itself clearly refers to the importance of kinship. Since the number of urban artisans and traders was small, the peasants or *wong cilik* (common or little people) made up the overwhelming majority of the Javanese population.¹¹

Social, economic, administrative and military life in Javanese society was organized according to feudal forms. The roots of this strict feudal culture lay in the seventeenth century, when the Mataram Empire dominated the island of Java. Its court culture was taken as the example to be emulated by all *priyayi*. Central to this feudal relationship was the display of power through large retinues of followers, demonstrations

¹⁰ Leslie H. Palmier, "The Javanese Nobility under the Dutch," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Jan. 1960) 197-227. Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*, 1-18. Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve Ltd., 1960) 1-29.

¹¹ D.H. Burger called Javanese society a "feudal land par excellence" and differentiated between *priyayi*, *santri* and *abangan*. In contrast, anthropologist Clifford Geertz differentiated between *priyayi*, *santri* and *abangan*. A more complicated division, because where the *priyayi* are a social group, *santri* and *abangan* are religious groups. D.H. Burger, *Structural Changes in Javanese Society: The Supra-Village Sphere*, 1. Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1960). M.C. Ricklefs, *Polarizing Javanese Society: Islamic, and Other Visions, c. 1830-1930* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007).

of homage and servitude, and hierarchies of colors and clothes, such as specific *batik* patterns, ceremonial attire, krisses – a dagger imbued with spiritual and magical powers – or the right to bear a *payung*. This was the situation that the Dutch colonial state would have to deal with in the nineteenth century.

Dawn of a New Era: Early Experiments with the Appearance of Colonial Authority

The bankruptcy of the VOC in 1798 coincided with the larger transformation in world history of Eurasian territorial empires and European empires of trade into colonial empires. The disintegration of Eurasian empires, such as Mughal India, the Ottoman Empire, and Safavid Persia was a necessary precondition for the extension of European influence, while the twin political and Industrial revolutions in eighteenth century Europe were another.¹² On Java the remnants of the declining empires of Mataram, and its successor states following the treaty of Giyanti, and Banten were similarly confronted with this new revolutionary European attitude, personified by Governor-General Marshal Herman Willem Daendels (1808-11) and Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Stamford Raffles (1811-1815). Their objective was to found a lucrative colonial state in the Indonesian Archipelago. This required a new form of colonial rule, or so it was thought, and thus a different kind of relationship between the Dutch and the local rulers and administrators on Java. Inspired by the Enlightenment, Daendels and Raffles attempted to create a modern, centralized and rational colonial state. Above all this meant that the power and influence of the indigenous aristocracy was broken by taking away their feudal privileges and turning them into salaried officials, while placing European civil servants atop of the

¹² Christopher Bayly has convincingly made this argument in his: *Imperial meridian: the British Empire and the World, 1780-1830* (London; New York: Longman, 1989). C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Wlobal Connections and Comparisons* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004).

administrative hierarchy. The integration of the Javanese aristocracy into the administration of the colonial state went a step further, however. The *Resident* (highest Dutch official within a residency) led a European civil service that in some cases bypassed the indigenous bureaucracy. The new colonial state sought to rule its territory more directly than the VOC had. This colonial policy was not to last. The colonial state could not turn a profit, and more importantly resistance and unrest among the aristocracy were among the causes of the Java War (1825-1830), during which the new Dutch colonial state almost collapsed.¹³

Daendels' main priority on his arrival in 1808 was to establish Dutch sovereignty over the whole island of Java. While the Dutch East India Company had gained sovereignty over Mataram in name in 1749, and by extension over its heirs Surakarta and Yogyakarta, the relationship between Batavia and the Javanese courts had continued as one between sovereigns.¹⁴ In the late eighteenth century the court of Yogyakarta even developed a political philosophy that stated that there was a dualistic hegemony on Java with the Dutch ruling the Western and the Javanese the central and eastern parts of the island.¹⁵ Daendels hardly lost time in making it clear that there was only one sovereign

¹³ Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*, 1-18. And: H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 35-57. For an overview of the relationship between the Javanese nobility and the Dutch: Leslie H. Palmier, "The Javanese Nobility under the Dutch," 197-227.

¹⁴ The reign of Susuhunan Pakubuwana II (r.1726-1749) was one of the more disastrous among the rulers of Mataram. After siding against the Dutch East India Company during the Chinese rebellion of 1740-41, domestic unrest against his position forced him to beg the Company to keep him in power. His schemes and machinations would eventually lead to the break-up of the empire, but before that occurred he transferred the sovereignty over to the Dutch East India Company (11 December 1749) on his deathbed. M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1200* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001) 86-130.

¹⁵ By the late eighteenth century the Yogyakarta court tried to legitimize the Dutch presence on Java by regarding them as descendants of the Sundanese Kingdom of Pajajaran (13th and 14th centuries). This Kingdom was the Western Javanese counterpart to Majapahit (c.1292-1527), of which the court of Mataram, and by extension that of Yogyakarta considered itself to be a descendant. According to this view the island remained divided between the representatives of two old royal traditions. For more details on this Javanese perspective see: M.C. Ricklefs, *Jogjakarta under Sultan Mangkubumi, 1749-1792: A History of*

power on Java by ordering drastic changes to the ceremonial functions and etiquette regarding the Dutch representatives, titled Residents, at the Javanese courts. The July 1808 Edict on Ceremonial and Etiquette accorded the Residents with new privileges reflecting their position as representatives of the Governor-General and the King of Holland.¹⁶ According to Peter Carey, Daendels' actions "struck at the heart of the Javanese understanding of the Dutch presence in Java."¹⁷

The Edict of Ceremonial and Etiquette signified the beginning of Dutch attempts at shaping the appearance of colonial authority as a means of its legitimization. Throughout the nineteenth century the Dutch regime experimented with de- and re-feudalizing of the colonial system of rule, but the whole time it banked on the adoption of Javanese externalities and symbols to justify its sovereignty. By altering the appearance of colonial rule, Daendels intended to display the new balance of power in unmistakable terms. The immediate rejection by the Sultan of Yogyakarta showed that Daendels had indeed struck a cord. The promulgation and reception of the edict demonstrated the power of appearance and semiotics in the colonial Javanese context and set the stage for a struggle over cultural hegemony.

The Edict on Ceremonial and Etiquette signaled that the Residents, who under Daendels reign were called 'Ministers', were no longer mere representatives of a trading

the Division of Java (London: Oxford University Press, 1974) 362-413. Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy: Prince Dipanagara and the End of an Old Order in Java, 1785-1855* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007) 167-168.

¹⁶ The Edict on Ceremonial and Etiquette of 28 July 1808 ("Reglement voor het ceremonieel, in acht te nemen door de residenten bij de hoven te Soerakarta en te Djokjokarta") can be found in: J.A. van der Chijs, *Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakkaatboek, 1602-1811*, Vol. 15, 1808-1809 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1896) 63-65. Also: H.W. Daendels, *Staat der Nederlandsche Oostindische Bezittingen onder het Bestuur van den Gouverneur-Generaal Herman Willem Daendels in de Jaren 1808-1811*, Appendices, second document (The Hague, 1814). For a contemporary discussion of the Edict: Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy*, 166-167.

¹⁷ Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy*, 166-7.

company, but of the newly appointed King of Holland, Louis Napoleon, the ‘rightful’ sovereign of Java.¹⁸ Daendels wanted to end the inappropriate and degrading ceremonial functions that the Company’s Residents had performed at the Javanese courts. For instance, the Residents previously had to participate in court ceremonies with their heads uncovered, without a state parasol, and were expected to bow three times when greeting the Javanese monarchs, while also having to serve these rulers in a menial fashion with wine, betelnut, and cleansing water.¹⁹ In addition to the new title of Minister, the Dutch representatives received a new official costume of state²⁰, a military escort, and most importantly, were assigned a large gold-and light-blue *payung*, a ceremonial parasol, emblazoned with the arms of the King of Holland.²¹ The Edict further instructed the Ministers to no longer remove their hats when approaching the Javanese monarchs, who were instead expected to rise to greet the Dutch representative and offer him a seat at their left hand side on the throne, permitting them to sit at the monarchs’ level. During the ceremonies the Minister would lead the monarch by the arm while keeping his hat on and walking under the shade of his gold-and-blue *payung*. It was to be clear that the

¹⁸ Daendels honored the French domination of the Netherlands by assigning the former Company’s Residents in the land under its dominion the title of Prefect and those stationed at the Javanese courts the title of Minister. The subsequent British (1811-16) and Dutch (1816-1942) administrations overturned these name changes in favor of the established title of Resident.

¹⁹ This list of complaints is taken from Daendels’ personal recollection of his time as a Governor-General of the Indies. Interestingly, article 6 of the Edict particularly deals with the prohibition of the new Residents (Ministers) to serve wine or betelnut to the Javanese monarchs. See: H.W. Daendels, *Staat der Nederlandsche Oostindische Bezittingen*, Vol. 1, 94-99. The document can also be found in J.A. van der Chijs, *Plakkaatboek*, Vol. 15, 63-65.

²⁰ The new uniform was described as follows (translation by Peter Carey): “blue coats with high collars braided in gold with olives, olive branches and flat gold buttons, white breeches with embroidered knee bands and white silk stockings, tricorn black hats with black straks and cockade”, in: Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy*, 166. For the original Dutch text see article 1 of the Edict: J.A. van der Chijs, *Plakkaatboek*, Vol. 15, 63-65.

²¹ Article 2 of the Edict on Ceremonial and Etiquette describes the *payung* as having a gilded top-half, a light-blue bottom-half and a completely gilded interior. On the *payung*’s exterior the royal arms of the King of Holland were emblazoned. A similar *payung* was used in the contacts with the Sultanate of Banten. J.A. van der Chijs, *Plakkaatboek*, Vol. 15, 375-377.

Minister would no longer serve the monarch with wine or betelnut, instead a servant should serve both men equally. The Edict also dealt with the forms of greeting outside the *kraton* (palace), for instance, the Minister in his carriage was no longer expected to give way to the Javanese monarchs when crossing paths on public roads.²²

While the Sunan of Surakarta immediately accepted Daendels' Edict on Ceremonial and Etiquette, the Sultan of Yogyakarta could not stomach the 'proposed' arrangements. In his eyes the adoption of a semi-gilded *payung* by the Dutch and the proposed seating arrangements were simply incompatible with Javanese political philosophy. In Javanese cosmology gilded *payungs* were the privilege of royal families and their descendants, not of ambassadorial civil servants of a far-flung King in Europe. The symbolic implication of the gold-and-blue *payung* of the Minister, which Daendels was acutely aware of, was that the Minister stood on equal footing with the Sultan and his family.²³ From the proposed seating arrangements a similar inference could be made. In a correspondence with Daendels, Sultan Hamengkubuwana II officially protested against the Edict, especially the seating arrangement, and stated that he would prevent a situation in which he needed to give way to the Minister's coach in public by sending his travel itineraries to the European official's office in advance.²⁴ In contrast, Sunan Pakubuwana IV not only agreed with the Edict, but even offered one of his aged female retainers (*nyai*) to carry the Minister's *payung* on his visits to the court.²⁵ The strikingly different

²² J.A. van der Chijs, *Plakkaatboek*, Vol. 15, 63-65.

²³ Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy*, 170. Peter Carey, *Babad Dipanagara: an account of the outbreak of the Java War, 1825-30: the Surakarta court version of the Babad Dipanagara with translations into English and Indonesian-Malay* (Kuala Lumpur: Printed for the Council of the M.B.R.A.S. by Art Printing Works, 1981) 234-235. The Governor-General had similarly employed the gold-and-blue *payung* as a symbolic weapon during his annexation of the Banten Sultanate in 1808. For the Banten example: J.A. van der Chijs, *Plakkaatboek*, Vol. 15, 375-377.

²⁴ Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy*, 171.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 171-172. And: H.W. Daendels, *Staat der Nederlandsche Oostindische Bezittingen*, 94-99.

reception of the Edict by the two main Javanese monarchs reflected the balance of power between the two rulers and their desire for Dutch support.

The conflict over the Edict between Daendels and the Sultan dominated the diplomatic relationship between the two sides for the duration of the Franco-Dutch regime and eventually spilled over into the British interregnum. The Sultan staunchly refused to sit on the same level as the Dutch representative, leaving the Minister no choice but to refrain from attending court ceremonies. During the Governor-General's first official visit to Yogyakarta in July 1809, Hamengkubuwana II even demanded that the Minister would not be allowed to stand while he was on his feet and that Daendels himself would sit at a lower level than the Sultan. This angered Daendels to the extent that he threatened with bypassing Yogyakarta completely and only visiting the court of Surakarta, which would be a major insult and blow to the Sultan's prestige. The Sultan acquiesced, and allowed the Governor-General to sit at his level, but persisted in withholding this honor from the Minister. Finally, in September 1810 Daendels budged on the Sultan's resolve and agreed that his representative would sit at a lower level than the Sultan. The Javanese monarch could not enjoy this victory for long, since a rebellion by one of his *Bupati* brought about a forceful change of heart in the Governor-General.²⁶

In November 1810 Raden Rongga, a *Bupati Wedana* of one of the Sultan's outer districts, rebelled against the, in his eyes, colonial defilement of Java. Coincidentally, Raden Rongga had been one of the first public victims of the Edict on Ceremonial and Etiquette. In October 1808 Raden Rongga did not halt for the oncoming carriage of the Dutch Minister, clearly recognizable by the gold-and-blue *payung* on the box. This was a severe breach of etiquette given that under the Edict the Sultan himself would have been

²⁶ Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy*, 194-199.

obliged to stop. The Minister demanded Raden Rongga's public apology in front of the whole court. Reluctantly the Sultan agreed and was witness to this humiliating experience for the high Javanese official. Raden Rongga had thus been in the center of attention of Dutch-Javanese relationships from the outset. On top of this, Daendels held Raden Rongga responsible for allowing bandits to raid neighboring governmental lands. The Sultan tried to protect his protégé from falling to the Marshall's hands by marrying him to one of his daughters. But Daendels' concession on the issue of seating arrangements necessitated a reciprocal gesture from the Sultan, who finally promised to extradite Raden Rongga to the Dutch authorities. Before this came to pass, the *Bupati Wedana* fled the court and started a short-lived rebellion that was crushed with his death on 17 December 1810. However, the outbreak of the rebellion convinced Daendels that the Yogyakarta sultanate was in dire need of a change of regime. The Governor-General marched on the central Javanese court with 3,000 soldiers and forced the Sultan to abdicate in favor of his son, the Crown Prince. The Edict of Ceremonial and Etiquette appeared to be firmly in place.²⁷

The British invasion and conquest of Java in August and September 1811 drastically changed the relationship between the European and Javanese authorities once again. The Napoleonic Wars had directed the attention of the imperial superpower to Java and exchanged the dictatorial Napoleonic regime of Marshal Daendels for the authoritarian administration of Thomas Stamford Raffles. The former Sultan took advantage of the uncertainty in the aftermath of the Franco-Dutch capitulation and reinstated himself as Yogya's monarch by forcing his son to step down. When Hamengkubuwana II received John Crawfurd, the British Resident, his throne was

²⁷ Ibid., 200-201 and 206-257.

elevated above the colonial official's seat by the insertion of a wooden bench. It was a clear indication that the Sultan wanted to restore the pre-1808 status quo. This desire almost sparked an outbreak of violence during Raffles' first visit to Yogyakarta in December 1811, when the Sultan insisted on inserting the same wooden bench under his chair. One of Raffles' staff members kicked the bench from under the Sultan's chair, which led to a standoff in the throne room of the Residency House. The soothing intervention of the Crown Prince prevented further escalation. However, the Sultan's position had become untenable and his behavior would result in the sacking of his *kraton* by British forces on 20 June 1812, an event that was likened to the British victory at Plassey in 1757. A European colonial government was now unmistakably sovereign on Java, finally settling the matter of ceremonial and etiquette at the Javanese courts.²⁸

In addition to establishing sovereignty over the whole of Java, Daendels and Raffles transformed the system of colonial governance and exploitation. As products of revolutionary Europe, both men legitimized their reign over the island by rejecting feudalism and its exploits, and replacing it by a benevolent government that offered peace and prosperity to all Javanese.²⁹ To realize these enlightenment ideals both Governors worked hard to establish a modern and centralized bureaucratic state. They placed salaried European administrators, titled Residents³⁰, at the head of the provincial administrations. This meant that the *Bupatis* were reduced from aristocratic chiefs to

²⁸ Ibid., 261-365.

²⁹ Additionally, Daendels was specifically tasked with ending the rampant corruption among European administrators during the Company's existence. Both Daendels and Raffles would fall short from achieving their lofty ideals because these were not politically expedient. Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy*, 199-200 and 284-285.

³⁰ During Daendels' reign these administrators were given the title of Prefect, after their Napoleonic European counterparts. Daendels established nine prefectures on Java. Raffles changed the title to that of Resident, after their counterparts in British India, and increased the number of residencies to 17. When the Java was returned to the Netherlands the new colonial government continued the use of Raffles titles.

being the highest-ranking Javanese within a colonial civil service. Daendels and Raffles thus increased the power and influence of European administrators at the expense of the *Bupatis*, whom they considered as outdated feudal potentates that needed to be broken. For instance, in August 1808 Daendels convened with the *Bupatis* of Java's North coast and informed them that henceforward they would receive a fixed salary, lose most of their rights to demand labor services and forced crop deliveries, as well as their appanage holdings, and that their office, as was practiced under the VOC, would no longer be hereditary. Ultimately, all power was centralized in the Governor-General's office, which oversaw all appointments and dismissals in both the European and Javanese branches of the civil service. Under Raffles' tenure the position of the *Bupatis* reached its nadir.³¹ His implementation of a new government tax (the landrent) as a replacement for feudal services and deliveries was designed to bypass the *Bupatis* completely, leaving them with little real power left.³²

Much as Daendels' Edict on Ceremonial and Etiquette signaled a change in the relationship with the Javanese monarchs, new regulations on retinue and state indicated the demotion of the *Bupatis* within the colonial administration. In the eighteenth century the *Bupatis* mustered retinues of hundreds of servants as evidence of their rank and status. These entourages consisted of servants who carried heirlooms and symbols of power, such *payungs*, lances, guns, krisses, and golden betel-boxes, as well as countless

³¹ Heather Sutherland described this period as the nadir of the Javanese *Bupati*. Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*, 1-12.

³² For Daendels' explanation of his policy see: "Governor-General Daendels to the Minister of Commerce and Colonial Affairs, 12 November 1808," in S. van Deventer, *Bijdragen tot de kennis van het landelijk stelsel op Java, op last van zijne excellentie den minister van kolonien, J.D. Fransen van de Putte, eerste deel: De wording van het stelsel* (Zaltbommel: Joh. Noman en Zoon, 1865) 18-24. All of the changes to the position, rank and status of the *Bupati* are described in the document detailing the reorganization of governance of Java's north coast dated 1 September 1808. It can be found in: J.A. van der Chijs, *Plakkaatboek*, Vol. 15, 1808-1809, 157-183.

household servants. In 1808 Daendels meticulously limited and prescribed the size of these retinues under his administration. For instance, high ranking *Bupatis* on Java's North coast were allowed to gather retinues consisting of "only" 168 servants, while lower ranking *Bupati* were allotted retinues of 134 or even a mere 70 servants.³³ By not abolishing the office and rank of the *Bupati* altogether, Daendels allowed for a contradiction to emerge between the *Bupati* as a civil servant and as a traditional aristocratic chief. In a letter to the Minister of Commerce and Colonial Affairs he defended his decision by pointing out that while he had "sufficiently preserved the outward authority of the indigenous *Bupatis* in the eyes of the common Javanese", they nonetheless had become "completely subservient to the objectives of the government."³⁴ In other words, Daendels transferred administrative and executive control to European civil servants, while leaving the Javanese aristocracy with the symbolic vestiges of authority, which they could employ to their advantage over the general populace.³⁵

During the British interregnum (1811-16) Raffles continued to strip the office of the *Bupati* of its administrative and executive powers until a small police task was all that remained. According to Raffles, this was a "political mode of employing many persons of influence [the *Bupatis*]" who would otherwise be disgruntled over their removal from office. In addition, the British Lieutenant-Governor deemed it politically expedient "not

³³ In a later instruction for the *Bupati*'s of Java's North coast these numbers were altered slightly to 170, 140, and 62 respectively. See: J.A. van der Chijs, *Plakkaatboek*, Vol. 15, 292-301. The original numbers can be found in: J.A. van der Chijs, *Plakkaatboek*, Vol. 15, 157-183.

³⁴ "Governor-General Daendels to Minister of Commerce and Colonial Affairs, 12 November 1808," in S. van Deventer, *Bijdragen tot de kennis van het landelijk stelsel op Java*, Vol. 1, 22.

³⁵ An informative overview of the position of the Javanese *Bupatis* in the colonial administration can be found in: B. Schrieke, *De Inlandsche Hoofden. Rede in tegenwoordigheid van Zijne Excellentie den Gouverneur-Generaal van Nederlandsch-Indië uitgesproken bij de IV-jarige herdenking van de stichting der Rechtshoogeschool te Batavia*, 27 October 1928 (Weltevreden [Batavia]: G. Kolff&Co., 1928).

to abolish the rank, title, or state of the present native chiefs.”³⁶ Like Daendels, Raffles sought to appease a weakened political group in Javanese society but was keenly aware of its privileged standing and control of Javanese symbols of power. By incorporating the Javanese aristocracy, and the *Bupatis* in particular, into the colonial civil service hierarchy, the Dutch and British appropriated the outward symbols of power that enabled them to legitimize their rule. For the two revolutionary Governors, this co-reliance on feudal vestiges of power was supposed to be a temporary phase until a complete transition to a system of direct rule could be implemented.

The end of the Napoleonic wars initiated, much to Raffles’ chagrin, a transfer of most of the VOC’s former Southeast Asian possessions to the newly founded United Kingdom of the Netherlands.³⁷ It was up to a three-man Committee-General, which included the next Governor-General Godert Alexander Gerard Philip baron van der Capellen, to deal with Daendels’ and Raffles’ legacies. The main issues that the Commissioners needed to address were the extent to which the colonial government should create a modern bureaucratic state, to what degree the Javanese civil service should be de-feudalized, and finally how the relationship between the Dutch and Javanese civil services should be structured. The central question therefore was should the colony be ruled directly by a

³⁶ “Minute recorded by the Honourable Lieutenant-Governor of Java, on the 14th June 1813,” in Thomas Stamford Raffles, *Substance of a minute recorded by the Honourable Thomas Stamford Raffles, Lieutenant-Governor of Java and its Dependencies, on the 11th February 1814; on the introduction of an improved system of internal management and the establishment of a land rental on the island of Java: to which are added several of the most interesting documents therein referred to.* (London: Printed for Black, Parry, and Co., 1814) 253-278.

³⁷ The main reason for this transfer of colonial possessions was that England wanted the new United Kingdom of the Netherlands (roughly comprising of the present-day Netherlands and Belgium) to become a strong counterbalance to France on the European continent. In those days it was believed strong states needed empires, hence the decision to return most of the VOC’s possessions to the new Kingdom. The Malaysian peninsula was excluded from this transfer, which resulted in great diplomatic tension between the two North Sea states. Most of the territorial and economic issues were resolved with the Treaty of London of 1824, leaving England and the Netherlands as the “exclusive Lords of the East”. Raffles’ disappointment set him on a path that led to the founding of Singapore, which in the end remained British.

modern bureaucratic European civil service, or indirectly through either a modernized or feudal Javanese civil service. The Commissioners-General, like their predecessors, chose for the first option and strengthened the position of the European civil service vis-à-vis the indigenous civil service, further reducing the relevance of the *Bupatis* in favor of the Residents. It appeared that the end of the Javanese aristocracy and the feudal culture it represented, as key players in the colonial state and Javanese society was near.

After the dismantling of the Committee-General, Governor-General Van der Capellen decided to change course following a grand commencement tour of Java in 1819. In a letter to the Minister Colonial Affairs he explained that he was shocked to discover that his Residents showed a “most detrimental” attitude towards the Javanese aristocracy as a result of the transfer of most of the administrative and judicial powers from the *Bupatis* to the Residents. Apparently, most European civil servants perceived the *Bupatis* as redundant cogs within the colonial administration’s machinery. According to the Governor-General, the notion that Java could be ruled directly without the support of the Javanese aristocracy now appeared to him to be a grave miscalculation. Perhaps if the *Bupatis* and the aristocracy in general had not existed, the general populace would have been susceptible to direct rule by outsiders. Instead, the European civil servants lacked precisely what the *Bupatis* had to offer, namely a:

“powerful and honored influence, which with the utterance of a single word, and without the use of force, moves or halts thousands, and steers their labor in the public’s interest [which is that of the colonial government], and can only be obtained and maintained by a perfect symmetry in language, religion, color, virtues and customs, and appears therefore never to become the exclusive domain of the

European civil servant, who governs a district, to which he has no ties other than his temporary appointment.”³⁸

Van der Cappellen therefore proposed to appease the *Bupatis* with the outward distinctions of power as well as a more clearly prescribed place within the colonial bureaucracy, without making them too powerful. He argued that the costs of not incorporating the Javanese aristocracy could be detrimental to Dutch colonial rule. Van der Capellen was the first Governor-General to suggest a systematic and clearly prescribed use of the feudal status and influence of the Javanese aristocracy to strengthen colonial governance.

In 1820 Van der Capellen promulgated a regulation that assigned and specifically set out the position of the *Bupatis* within the colonial government as well as their titles and ranks, the symbols of power they were allowed to carry, and the size of their retinues.³⁹ The regulations described the *Bupatis* as the “first persons” among the indigenous population and were only subordinate to the European Residents, whom they were expected to provide with counsel, while in return the Residents should consider the *Bupatis* as their “younger brothers”. The *Bupatis* were expected to encourage the cultivation of the land with cash crops, promote industry, construct and maintain infrastructure, further crop and animal husbandry, head the local police and maintain social peace and stability, prevent abuses, corruption and extortion, support education, oversee religious matters, keep records of births, deaths, and marriages, and recruit people for the feudal services that were still allowed. They were not, however,

³⁸ Governor-General G.A.G.P. baron van der Capellen to Minister of Public Education, National Industry and Colonial Affairs Anton Reinhard Falck, 9 May 1820, *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1865) 115.

³⁹ The new regulations were in part modeled after Daendels’ instructions from 1808. The 1820 regulations on the duties, ranks, and titles of the *Bupatis* on the island of Java were published as: “No. 20. *Reglement op de verpligtingen, rangen en titels der Regenten op het eiland Java*”, *Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië voor 1820* (The Hague; Batavia: Schinkel; Landsdrukkerij, 1839) 98-110.

empowered to be involved in tax collection and the management of the government's warehouses, nor were they allowed to engage in any kind of trade or industry.

Nonetheless, the regulation provided for a careful restoration of some of the powers the *Bupatis* had lost. The document can thus be regarded as the basic plan for the dual civil service that would characterize the rest of Dutch colonial rule.

That Van der Capellen's intervention occurred none too soon for the *Bupatis* becomes clear when one takes a look at the size of the retinues they were allotted. While Daendels had already reduced the size of a *Bupati*'s retinue considerably to, depending on their respective rank, 168, 134 and 70 servants, Van der Capellen assigned them 34, 27 and 11 servants respectively. In addition, the Governor-General clearly described the colors of the *payungs* that the respective *Bupatis* were allowed to carry. All were assigned a white *payung* with, depending on their rank, three, two or one golden cirkel(s) on its surface. The regulations also prescribed the retinues and *payungs* for the spouses and sons of the *Bupatis*. These constraints on the duties, titles and ranks of the Javanese *Bupati* signified the Dutch use of Javanese symbols of outward authority to legitimize colonial rule. Moreover, it reflected that the colonial authorities had begun to fossilize Javanese traditions in a rigid European bureaucratic system.⁴⁰

The 1820 regulations marked the Dutch colonial government's transformation into a traditional Javanese monarchy, creating and overseeing a feudal hierarchy of ranks, titles, and *payungs*. In 1824 Van der Capellen completed this makeover by issuing a regulation dealing with the titles, ranks, and ceremonies of the indigenous civil servants subordinate to the *Bupatis*. On the one hand, these regulations turned the Javanese aristocracy into a bureaucratized indigenous branch of the colonial civil service, while on

⁴⁰ *Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië voor 1820*, No. 22, 98-110.

the other hand it assigned these offices with the traditional insignia of power. Much like the Javanese monarchs, for instance following the break-up of Mataram, the Dutch designed their own intricate *payung* hierarchy. The *payungs* were invested upon its civil servants at the time of their appointment and only for the duration of their service. the Dutch *payung* hierarchy was inspired by that of the Principalities, but its color schemes were different. For instance, *Jaksas* received a *payung* with a green top-half and blue bottom-half with three golden circles and *Wedanas* a *payung* with a blue top-half and red bottom-half with three golden circles. The various colors were often associated with the profession of its bearer, thus blue with the civil service and green with a legal position. Figure 1.2 provides a complete overview of this hierarchy by the end of the nineteenth century (also see figures 1.1 and 1.7).

The *payung*, a ceremonial state parasol, is one of the oldest and most revered heirlooms (*pusaka*) among the Javanese aristocracy. It was considered the foremost important status symbol of Javanese royalty and probably has its origins on the Indian subcontinent. It is speculated that the *payung* as a status symbol was introduced during the Hindu and Buddhist periods. For instance, the bass-reliefs of Borobudur depict many *payungs*. The first state parasols could not be closed and were always opened like a disc (they were not cone-shaped, let alone parabolic like modern umbrellas). Later, possibly due to the familiarity with Chinese umbrellas, *payungs* could also be closed. A servant always carried the *payung* before or after the owner (it is therefore called an *ampilan*⁴¹). With *payungs*, it was not the size that mattered but the color of their surface. The color

⁴¹ Ampilan, from “ampil”, to carry, are a category of *pusaka*, and referred to objects that were carried before or after its owner by a servant. S. Kalff, “Javaansche Poesaka,” *Djâwâ: Tijdschrift van het Java-Instituut*, Vol. 3 (1923) 151-158.

hierarchy started with gold, the royal color, and then descended with yellow, white, blue, green, brown and red (see fig. 1.1, 1.2, and 1.7).⁴²

Although the Dutch *payung* hierarchy was officially headed by the *Bupati*, those of the European Resident and Assistant-Resident stood in even higher regard. After Daendels assigned *payungs* to his European Ministers dealing with the remaining Javanese monarchs and princes, the European Residents, and later Assistant-Residents as well, regarded the *payung* as part of their office insignia. Raffles already noticed this tendency among the European officials in his 1817 edition of his *A History of Java*, in which he stated that the representatives of the European Governor-General had assumed the right to carry a golden *payung*. The Assistant-Residents, a position introduced by Raffles himself, had to make do with a *payung* with a white top-half and golden bottom-half. In contrast to the strict regulations regarding the *payungs* of the indigenous civil service, a similar instruction for the European civil service is nowhere to be found. Nonetheless, European civil servants, including the Governor-General, now opted to be accompanied by a royal symbol of power, completing the transformation of the new colonial overlords into a Javanese monarchs (fig. 1.4, 1.6, and 1.8).⁴³

⁴² For more background on *payungs* in colonial Java: J. Groneman, "Javaansche Rangen en Pajoengs," *Tijdschrift van het Indisch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, No. 4 (1883) 1-13. J. Groneman, "Een en ander over den Javaanschen adel," *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (1886) 880-896. L. Th. Mayer, *Een Blick in het Javaansche Volksleven*, Vol. II (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1897) 509-510. J.J. Verwijk, "Nota over de staatsie en het gevolg der Inlandsche ambtenaren in de Gouvernementslanden op Java en Madoera," *Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur*, Vol. 17 (1899) 451-461. "Pajoengs of Songsongs, adat en titels," *Het Koloniaal Weekblad*, Vol. 3, No. 33 (1903). J. Groneman, "Een Pajoeng-Kwestie," *Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur*, Vol. 25 (1903) 38-47. J.E. Jasper, "Staatsie, Gevolg en Songsongs van Inlandsche Ambtenaren in de Gouvernementslanden op Java en Madoera," *Extra Bijlage van het Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch-Bestuur*, Vol. XXVII, No. 1 (1904) 1-73. S. Kalff, "Javaansche Poesaka," 151-158. S. Kalff, "Eerbewijzen in Indië," *Haagsch Maandblad*, Vol. 8, (July-December 1927) 643-651.

⁴³ Thomas Stamford Raffles, *A History of Java*, Vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1817) 308-312. J. Groneman, "Een Pajoeng-Kwestie," 38-47. P.J. Veth, *Java: Geographisch, Ethnologisch, Historisch*, Vol. 4 (Haarlem: De Erven F. Bohn, 1907) 367-368.

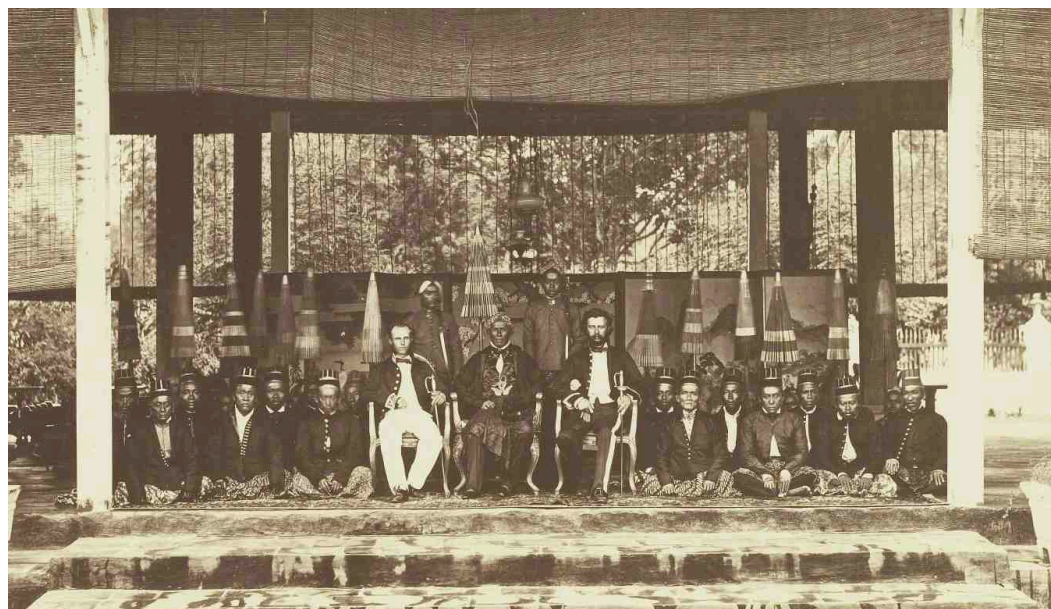


Fig. 1.1 A European Assistant-Resident and a Controller visit the *Bupati* of Pati (Central Java) to present him with the order of the Dutch Lion in 1867. The district heads and lower indigenous officials sit on the floor. The *payungs* reflect everyone's status and rank in the colonial administration. Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image Code: 3517).

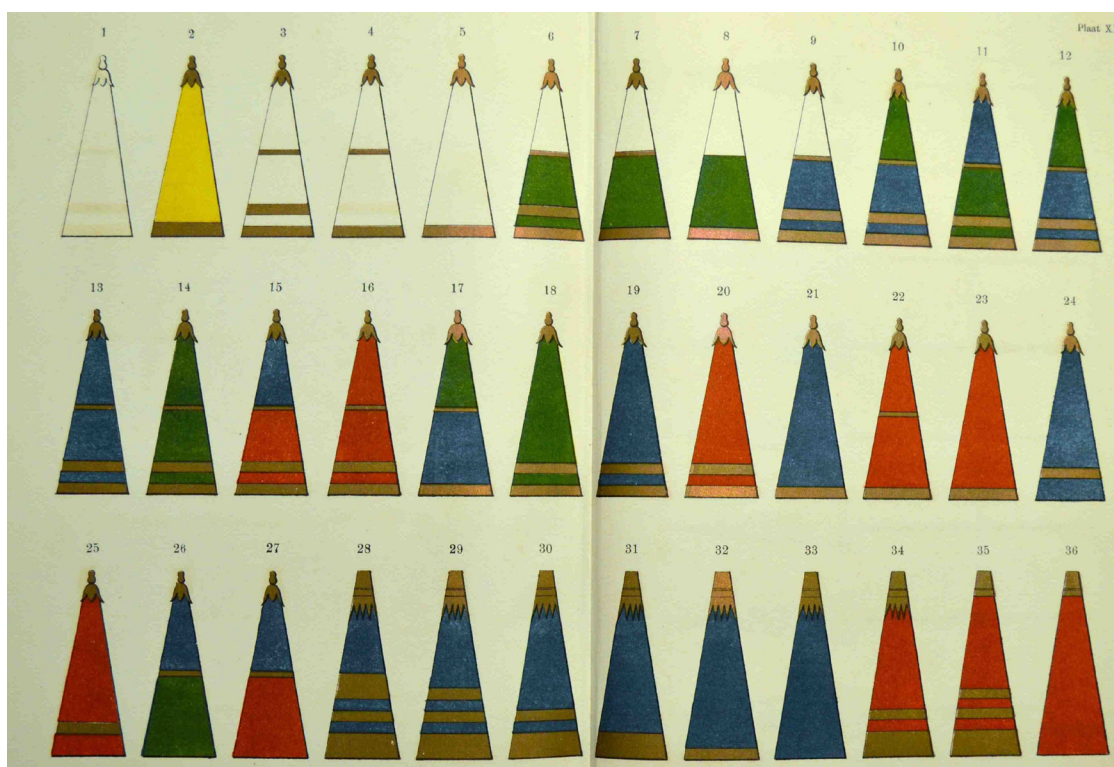


Fig. 1.2. The Colonial government's *payung* hierarchy for indigenous civil servants in 1897. The yellow *payung* is for *Bupati*'s who belong to the nobility (2), nos. 3-8 for *Bupati*'s and their relatives, nos. 9-19 belong to offices in existence in 1824 (e.g. *patih* (10), *penghulus* (11 and 14), *Jaksas* (12 and 17), *Wedanas* (15 and 19) among others), newer professions follow thereafter, such as teachers (28-33) and doctors (35). Source: L. Th. Mayer, *Een Blik in het Javaansche Volksleven*, Vol. 2 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1897) Appendix Plate 20.



Fig. 1.3. The *Bupati* of Pamekasan (Madura) clad in his official costume (note the oak-branches on his collar and sleeves) decorated with European insignia and accompanied by a servant holding his *payung*. Source: Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands (Image Code: 84999).



Fig. 1.4. Resident P. Sijthoff and his barefooted servant who carries his golden *payung* in 1904. In the same year the use of the *payung* by European officials was prohibited (See the following chapter). Source: Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands (Image Code: 2603).

Van der Capellen's rapprochement with the Javanese aristocracy was most opportune, as it transpired on the eve of the outbreak of the Java War (1825-1830). The rebellion that originated in the central-Javanese Principalities spread like wildfire over much of Java and came close to toppling colonial rule, were it not for the fact that a majority of the *Bupati* came down on the Dutch side of the conflict. The Governor-General's decision to incorporate the Javanese aristocracy in the colonial administration by draping them with Javanese symbols of power, combined with promises of more responsibilities and hereditary office at the conclusion of the conflict, convinced the *Bupati* that their own interest was better served by the Dutch than by the Javanese

monarchs. In addition, during the war the Residents were urged to treat the *Bupatis* and indigenous civil servants respectfully and with distinction, which was considered crucial to maintaining order as well as gaining the support of the indigenous chiefs and population. The conflict underscored the influential position of the *Bupati* in Javanese society and cemented the partnership between the Javanese aristocracy and the Dutch.⁴⁴

For the Yogyakarta Prince Dipanagara, the instigator of the rebellion, the Java War was as much about the preservation of Javanese cultural values as it was about economic and political grievances and millenarian hopes. In his masterful study of Dipanagara and his world, Peter Carey convincingly argues that the Prince's rebellion was mainly in defense of Javanese sartorial, linguistic and cultural codes against the increasing Europeanizing influences of court society. The disregard of Javanese etiquette and ceremonial that started with Daendels' policies in 1808 had become unbearable for the proud Dipanagara. He especially considered the introduction of Malay by the Dutch, because of their inability to converse in high Javanese, in Javanese court relationships an unacceptable concession. Conversely, he employed insulting low Javanese expressions to the Dutch representatives. The Prince's preoccupation with cultural values also manifested itself in his treatment of prisoners of war, whom he offered the option to converse in Javanese, adopt Javanese dress, and convert to Islam.⁴⁵

Similarly, Dipanagara was still exasperated by the adoption of the golden *payung* by the Dutch court representative. In Dipanagara's chronicles, specific mention is made of the rude assumption of this status symbol that in Javanese eyes was the sole privilege of the monarch and his family. As the oldest son of the Sultan, Dipanagara himself had

⁴⁴ "Gouvernements Besluit van den 21sten December 1827 No. 15," *Tijdschrift van Nederlandsch-Indië*, No. 1 (1865) 126.

⁴⁵ Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy*, 588-589 and 617-655.

always been accompanied by a *payung* and was aware of its cultural and spiritual prestige. For instance, by sending out his golden *payung* to villages to rally his forces, Dipanagara could be at two places at once during the Java War. Examples like these showed the Dutch the importance of controlling these symbols of power and the ways in which they could be employed.⁴⁶

Although Dipanagara failed to restore the pre-1808 old cultural and political order, the decades following the Java War witnessed a process of Javanization of colonial rule, structured around elements of Javanese feudal culture, including the sartorial and linguistic codes that the Prince vehemently advocated. The “last stand of the old order”, as Carey dubbed the Java War, was thus instrumental in implementing a system of cultural hegemony based on an alliance with the Javanese aristocracy led by the *Bupatis* and a reconfiguration of the outward appearance of colonial rule on a Javanese footing.

The Javanization of Colonial Authority

The experiences with employing Javanese cultural elements like the *payung* to break the power of the Javanese royal houses symbolically, to uphold the morale of the Javanese aristocracy while simultaneously undermining their authority, and their relevance during the Java War, had taught the Dutch to take Javanese feudal culture, and the aristocracy that it supported, far more seriously than it had till 1830. It had become evident that for the colonial government to turn a profit it had to depend on Javanese aristocratic allies. In the years following the Java War the position of the *Bupati* was therefore strengthened politically, economically, and symbolically. This new policy acknowledged that the

⁴⁶ Ibid., 586. Also see: P.J.F. Louw, *De Java-Oorlog van 1825-1830*, Vol. 2 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1897) 244.

Dutch, in the words of Van der Capellen, lacked the “perfect symmetry in language, religion, color, virtues and customs” with the local populace to rule them directly.⁴⁷

While a system of indirect rule was implemented, Dutch civil servants tried to bridge the cultural distance between themselves and their colonial subjects by adopting various elements of Javanese feudal culture. Taken together, these processes resulted in a highly hierarchical and feudalized colonial order.

These changes were associated with the institution of a new system of colonial exploitation by Governor-General Johannes van den Bosch. In part, this was a return to the VOC system of forced deliveries, but on a grander scale and with far greater reach. A year before the Java War came to a close, Van den Bosch in a spirited appeal to the Dutch King wrote that the only way for the Indies to turn a profit was through the use of forced labor. He argued that the Javanese were innately lazy and without the proper stimulation would barely perform the necessary work to cultivate enough rice for their own sustenance. In his opinion, this characteristic precluded the possibility of any system based on free labor, with or without the involvement of European capitalists, to result in profits for the motherland. Van den Bosch therefore proposed to revert to the system of forced deliveries of cash crops, for which he deemed the support of the Javanese aristocracy indispensable. In essence, what Van den Bosch proposed was for the colonial government, as the new sovereign of Java, to assume the role of a Javanese monarch and

⁴⁷ Governor-General Van der Capellen to Minister of Public Education, National Industry and Colonial Affairs Anton Reinhard Falck, 9 May 1820, in: *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1865) 115.

as such demand the right to feudal services and deliveries to tap the unused Javanese labor for the benefit of the colonial treasury.⁴⁸

The decision to govern and exploit the colony through the Javanese feudal system necessitated the cooperation of the Javanese aristocracy. Van den Bosch's proposal thus coincided with and confirmed the experiences of the Java War, in which the support of the Javanese *priyayi* had been crucial. Similar to Van der Capellen a decade earlier, Van den Bosch believed that the Javanese aristocracy was uniquely suited to employ its feudal prestige and moral authority to coerce the Javanese to work for the colonial government. As Governor-General he therefore increased the stature and powers of the Javanese *Bupati* by promising hereditary succession and reinstating private landholdings. A financial incentive, known as the *kultuurprocenten* (cultivation percentages), rewarded *Bupatis* progressively for the cash crops their regencies delivered. Through these measures Van den Bosch reasoned that: "the most prominent class among the Javanese [can] be tied closer to [the colonial government]. Consequently, they would have nothing to gain and everything to lose from a change in circumstances."⁴⁹ The administration of the Javanese according to their own customs and domestic and religious institutions meant that European civil servants retreated from direct interference with the common

⁴⁸ It should be noted that Van den Bosch's interpretation of the rights and duties of the colonial government in its role of a Javanese monarch differed from the Javanese perspective. This helps explain both why Dutch colonial rule was far more exploitive than that of its predecessors and how the relationship between the Dutch and the aristocracy on the one side and the general population on the other would change during the time of the Cultivation System. "Advies van den Luitenant-Generaal Van Den Bosch over het Stelsel van Kolonisatie," in D.C. Steijn Parve, *Het Koloniaal Monopoliestelsel Getoetst aan Geschiedenis en Staathuiskunde* (Zaltbommel: Joh. Noman en Zoon, 1851) 294-328. Informative studies on the Cultivation System: R.E. Elson, *Village Java under the Cultivation System, 1830-1870* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1994) and C. Fasseur, *The politics of colonial exploitation: Java, the Dutch and the cultivation system*, translated by R.E. Elson (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1992).

⁴⁹ Van den Bosch aan Baud, Buitenzorg 31 January 1831, in: *Briefwisseling tussen J. van den Bosch en J.C. Baud, 1829-1832 en 1834-1836. Eerste deel: Brieven van Van den Bosch* (Utrecht: Kemink en zoon N.V., 1956) 74.

Javanese. Their main task was to survey the Javanese aristocracy and protect the common man against possible mistreatment and abuse by its native chiefs.⁵⁰

The Cultivation System, as well as the system of indirect rule that accompanied it, was the result of syncretism between traditional Javanese feudal authority and modern notions of state administration and agro-industrial exploitation. It is therefore too simplistic to perceive the Cultivation System as merely the employment of traditional Javanese authority as a means to control Java's labor resources. This is to say that the Cultivation System was not a return to an idealized Javanese pre-colonial feudal order, or the enforced stagnation and rigidization of Javanese reality, but a construction rooted in East and West, employing Javanese feudal elements in support of modern state exploitation. Javanese society thus was significantly different than the pre-1808 status quo. For instance, the Cultivation System made more extractive and sustained demands on feudal services and deliveries than ever before. The position of the *Bupati* was also considerably different: not only did they wield incredible power, but they did so as civil servants of the colonial government. This was reflected in the supervision by the European over the indigenous civil service. Interestingly, it was as civil servants that the *Bupatis* achieved hereditary succession, something that had eluded them in the pre-colonial Javanese world.⁵¹

Where the rule of Daendels and Raffles has been described as the 'nadir of the *Bupati*', the era of the Cultivation System (1830-1870) can thus be described as quite the

⁵⁰ Van den Bosch aan Baud, Tjipanas 4 June 1831 and 7 August 1832, in *Briefwisseling tussen J. van den Bosch en J.C. Baud*, Vol. 1, 93 and 158. J. van den Bosch, *Mijne Verrigtingen in Indië. Verslag van Z. Excellentie den Commissaris Generaal J. Van Den Bosch, over de jaren 1830, 1831, 1832, en 1833*. (Amsterdam: Frederik Muller, 1864) 398-402. An insightful description on the place of the Javanese aristocracy in the Cultivation System can be found in: R.E. Elson, *Village Java*, 179-184.

⁵¹ Heather Sutherland dubbed the rule of Daendels and Raffles the "nadir" of the *Bupati* in her: *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*, 12-16. Also see: R.E. Elson, *Village Java*, 180-186. H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 59-65. H. Palmier, "The Javanese Nobility under the Dutch," 202, 214-218.

opposite. During these decades the *Bupatis* considerably increased their social status, prestige, and even wealth. Their position as intermediaries between the colonial government and the Javanese peasants was cemented in the government regulations of 1836 and 1854. The latter also included an article that contained the promise of hereditary succession, which remained subject however to the ability, diligence, honesty and loyalty of the *Bupati*'s heir.⁵² These regulations showcased an inherent contradiction in the position of the *Bupati* as at one and the same time a "native chief" as well as a colonial "civil servant". The crux of the regulations lay in the simultaneous acknowledgement that there were native chiefs, but that they derived their ultimate power from their appointment or recognition by the colonial authorities.⁵³ This drastically altered the relationship between the Javanese aristocrats and common Javanese. The *Bupati* no longer derived their power from the traditional feudal *kawula-gusti* (servant-lord) relationship, in which devotion for the lord was exchanged for protection of the servant, but from Dutch support. This meant that the *Bupati* could exploit their subjects as long as they held the support of the Dutch.⁵⁴ As a consequence however, a rigid hierarchy now replaced the supposed harmony of the feudal relationship, which ultimately would prove to be detrimental to the position of the Javanese aristocracy.

⁵² For the Dutch and Javanese sides of the dual civil service see H.W. van den Doel's *De Stille Macht* and Heather Sutherland's *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite* respectively. The regulation from 1836 can be found in: C. Fasseur, *Kultuurstelsel en Koloniale Baten: De Nederlandse Exploitatie van Java, 1840-1860* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1975) 33. The *Regeeringsreglement* of 1854 can be found in: C.W. Margadant, *Het Regeeringsreglement van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol 1-3 (Batavia: G. Kolff & Co., 1894-7). Or in: *Staatsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië* 1855, No. 2. Of particular interest are articles 67, dealing with the principle of indirect rule, and article 69, dealing with hereditary succession of the office of the *Bupati*.

⁵³ The status of the *Bupati* in the colonial administration was the subject of heated debate in Dutch parliament. *Bijblad van de Nederlandsche Staats-Courant*, 1853-1854, II, Tweede Kamer, 99ste zitting, 31 July 1854.

⁵⁴ According to Robert Van Niel, the Javanese aristocrats had "been extracted spiritually and concretely out of the feudalistic, Javanese cosmos and placed within a rudimentary form of a modern administrative state." Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*, 26.

The re-feudalization of colonial rule was not limited to the Javanese aristocracy, but extended to the Dutch representatives of colonial authority. During the period of the Cultivation System, an increased process of Javanization occurred that was the result of both the increased contacts and cooperation between European and Javanese civil servants as well as an attempt to legitimize colonial rule by striving for, in Van der Capellen's words, a "perfect symmetry in language, religion, color, virtues and customs" (see above). In essence, the period of the Cultivation System witnessed an attempt at cultural accommodation to support colonial rule. Where Van der Capellen had believed this to be impossible, his successors believed that much could be achieved as long as the Dutch would learn the indigenous languages.

The new division of labor between the Dutch and Javanese civil services was for instance reflected in the language of communication. Since the days of the VOC the Dutch had used Malay, the lingua franca of the archipelago, in its contacts with the Javanese. This frequently resulted in tensions between Dutch representatives and Javanese *priyayi*, most egregiously Prince Dipanagara in the years leading up to the Java War, since the Javanese language was an essential instrument in the maintenance of the Javanese feudal hierarchy. Those of superior social standing addressed their inferiors in low Javanese (*ngoko*), while they were answered in high Javanese (*krama*). To be addressed in Malay – a foreign and egalitarian language – was consequently considered a grave insult by the Javanese aristocracy. With the prospect of increased contacts with the Javanese *priyayi* and village headmen, the Dutch sought to further legitimize their authority by manipulating the Javanese language hierarchy, similar to the *payung* hierarchy, in their favor. Already in 1819 Governor-General Van der Capellen decreed

that European civil servants in the colony were expected to serve without a local translator within a year and be proficient in Malay and a local language within two years on penalty of a 25% salary cut. In addition, in 1827 proficiency of Malay and Javanese were required for promotion within the civil service hierarchy. However, the lack of a centralized education system for colonial civil servants and the outbreak of the Java War (1825-1830) prevented these measures from taking effect.⁵⁵

The proficiency in vernacular languages required by greater contacts with the indigenous population led the colonial government to sponsor the establishment of the Javanese Institute in Surakarta in 1832. The Institute was tasked with the education of civil servants in the Javanese language while simultaneously serving as an academic center. However, the limited quality of both instructors and students prevented the institute from producing suitable civil servants. Combined with the failed language decrees in Java during the previous decades, this convinced Dutch colonial administrators that they, like their British counterparts before them⁵⁶, should prepare prospective civil servants for a colonial career in the Netherlands itself. The Minister of Colonial Affairs, Jean Chrétien Baud, therefore cooperated with Taco Roorda, one of the few experts on

⁵⁵ The Commission-General was instructed in 1818 to encourage the knowledge and use of vernacular languages and Malay among its European citizens. This objective was repeated in the government regulation of 1827, which specifically addressed the need of civil servants to be proficient in vernacular languages. See: Kees Groeneboer, *Gateway to the West: the Dutch language in colonial Indonesia, 1600-1950: a history of language policy* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998). Van der Capellen's decree of 25 March 1819 can be found in *Staatsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, No. 34. The decree on vernacular proficiency as a requirement for promotion was published on 22 November 1827: *Staatsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië* 1827, No. 109.

⁵⁶ In 1800 the British founded the College of Fort William, India, for the training of colonial civil servants. This was quickly followed by the establishment of the East India College in Hertford Castle, England, in 1806 (in 1809 the EIC moved to Haileybury, England). Bernard Cohn, "The Recruitment and Training of British Civil Servants in India, 1600-1860," in B.S. Cohn, *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays* (Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press, 1987) 500-553. Cees Fasseur, *De Indologen: Ambtenaren voor de Oost 1825-1950* (Amsterdam: Aula, 3rd edition, 2003) 25-28.

the Javanese language in the Netherlands⁵⁷, to persuade the King to support the addition of colonial studies to the Royal Academy in Delft. In 1842 Baud wrote a detailed proposal that stressed the importance of language, especially Malay and Javanese, and cultural studies for the success of prospective colonial civil servants:

“It is a tangible truth that a dominated people cannot be held in subjection for long, without violence, if the ruler does not make every effort to govern that people with fairness and justice, and above all, with respect for the local institutions, customs and prejudices. The primary means for learning to know those institutions, customs and prejudices is to become thoroughly familiar with the language of the country [...].”⁵⁸

The study of vernacular languages was thus considered an essential part of a broader push to the Javanization of Dutch colonial rule. The deference to local institutions, customs, and bias, Baud argued, was key to ruling the colony without having to rely on the rule of arms. The King was swayed and in 1843 the Royal Academy in Delft accepted its first prospective colonial civil servants, supervised by Taco Roorda, the first professor in the study of Eastern linguistics and anthropology.⁵⁹

In the years leading up to the opening of the Royal Academy, Taco Roorda advocated the founding of specialized education for colonial civil servants by arguing the benefits of an increased knowledge and use of Javanese among European civil servants. During a lecture in front of the King in 1841, he rejected the use of Malay for communication between the Dutch and Javanese, as it was a foreign language that

⁵⁷ Taco Roorda was a member of the Dutch Biblical Society (*Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap*) for which he translated the Bible into Javanese. It is here that Baud, another member of the Biblical Society, and Roorda met one another and shared their passion for Java. Cees Fasseur, *De Indologen*, 86-87.

⁵⁸ The original Dutch text can be found in: J.C. Baud's report to King William I, 28 June 1842, in *Historische Nota over het Vraagstuk van de Opleiding en Benoembaarheid voor den Administratieven Dienst* (Batavia, Landsdrukkerij, 1900) 23. The English translation comes from: Kees Groeneboer, *Gateway to the West*, 74.

⁵⁹ Cees Fasseur, *De Indologen*, 55-76, 90-97.

continuously reminded the Javanese of their own subjection. Moreover, Malay was an egalitarian language that lacked the clear differentiation and expression of rank and status that was so prevalent in Javanese. Roorda argued that the Dutch colonial civil servant should employ the Javanese language hierarchy in their favor, by addressing their Javanese partners in low Javanese, which required a response in high Javanese. In this manner the diglossia of the Javanese language reinforced both the prestige of the individual Dutch civil servant as well as that of the colonial authorities in general.⁶⁰

Roorda illuminated his argument by referencing an anecdote of the Resident of the Priangan regencies. He told his audience the story of how the Dutch senior official had engaged in a conversation with a substitute *Bupati (onderregent)* using Malay. The exchange was jovial, as one between equals; the Resident even cordially placed his hand on the Javanese official's shoulder. The situation quickly turned awkward when a European inspector of the coffee cultivation, an inferior of the Resident, joined the conversation. The inspector addressed the substitute *Bupati* in low Javanese, after which the indigenous civil servant dropped to ground, assumed a cross-legged position (*sila*), and replied in high Javanese. According to Roorda, the Javanese would not consider this a degrading situation, since it conformed to their own customs. In contrast, he argued with a sense of foreboding, if the Javanese were exposed to European notions of liberty, the island of Java would be quickly lost to the Dutch. This conception was central to the

⁶⁰ Cees Fasseur, "De Taal is Gans de Indisch Ambtenaar. De Taalopleiding van de Bestuursambtenaren," in Kees Groeneboer (ed.), *Koloniale Taalpolitiek in Oost en West: Nederlands-Indie, Suriname, Nederlandse Antillen en Aruba* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1997) 187-206.

curriculum of prospective colonial civil servants in the Netherlands and profoundly shaped their perspective on the colonial relationship.⁶¹

Roorda's anecdote about the Dutch and Javanese civil servants demonstrates that the Javanese language hierarchy was only one part of an encompassing system of Javanese deference rituals. In Javanese feudal society it was customary for those with inferior status to sit crossed-legged on the floor, a posture that is called *sila*, in the presence of social superiors. When addressed, the socially inferior person would avoid eye contact and accompany each sentence with a gesture of respect, called the *sembah*, by bringing the palms of the hands together and have the thumbs touch the mouth while the index fingers touch the nose. If allowed to approach a person of higher rank, one was expected to crouch forward on ones heels, an uncomfortable walk known as *jongkok*. Taken together, these deference rituals are known as *hormat*, which literally means respectful in Malay. Under the aegis of men like Baud and Roorda, future colonial civil servants were instructed in the Netherlands how to employ both the language hierarchy and *hormat* rituals to legitimize colonial authority.⁶²

Considering these pedagogical beliefs of colonial policy makers, it is not surprising that Dutch civil servants developed a tendency to behave like feudal lords on Java. The Residents were accompanied by their golden *payungs*, which were carried by servants when touring on foot, mounted on their carriages when travelling by coach, or displayed on the veranda of their residences. In imitation of the *priyayi*, European officials surrounded themselves with numerous servants and demanded to be

⁶¹ Cees Fasseur, *De Indologen*, 90-91. Taco Roorda's lecture can be found in the National Archives, NA, Vb. 28-6-1842, No. 47, Kol. 1449 as well as in the *Handelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut*.

⁶² Benedict R.O'G Anderson, *Language and Power*, 123-151 and 194-237. For Raffles' description of these deference rituals: Thomas Stamford Raffles, *A History of Java*, Vol. I, 308-310.

accompanied by a great entourage of Javanese officials while touring their districts. They insisted to be addressed with honorary titles as “*kangdjeng tuan*” – your highness – of course with observance of the proper language hierarchy and *hormat* customs, which used to be the preserve of Javanese royalty and high nobility. On arrival in the colony, the lifestyle of the Javanese *priyayi*, whose position had never been stronger than during the Cultivation System, clearly had a great appeal to the European officials (fig. 1.4 and 1.6).⁶³

The Javanization of colonial society permeated less obvious cultural activities such as food dishes and the manner of their consumption, which were employed as additional markers of social, racial, and cultural identities. As Susie Protschky has pointed out, what mattered was not only what was eaten but also how the consumption of a meal was performed. In the formative stage of the Dutch acting as colonial aristocrats this came down to finding a way to differentiate oneself in a recognizable manner from both the Javanese aristocracy and commoners through the colonial table. From the 1830s onwards, the Dutch set themselves apart as the new ruling class of Java by new ways of eating that were rooted in Asian and European traditions. This new food culture was represented by the *rijsttafel* (rice-table), which can best be described as a rice centerpiece in combination with a broad assortment of side dishes. The term *rijsttafel*, which in Dutch can also be employed as a verb (“*rijsttafelen*”), refers to the tradition of having a round table with several openings in it. At the center a large bowl of cooked or fried rice would be placed, surrounded by smaller bowls with side dishes – vegetables, soups, sauces, meat, and fish among others, which were to be served over the warm rice. These side

⁶³ About the titles that European administrators demanded: “Geen Europeesche Kangdjengs meer,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 35 (18 June 1914) 120.

dishes originated in the indigenous societies of the Indonesian archipelago and were modified to Dutch taste preferences. As the staple food of the colonial subjects, rice was a controversial food for the colonizers. By turning its consumption with a copious amount of side dishes into a grand spectacle, not to mention a labor and capital-intensive activity, the Dutch performed their role as Java's new rulers. In stark contrast, the common Javanese made do with rice and a single side dish.⁶⁴

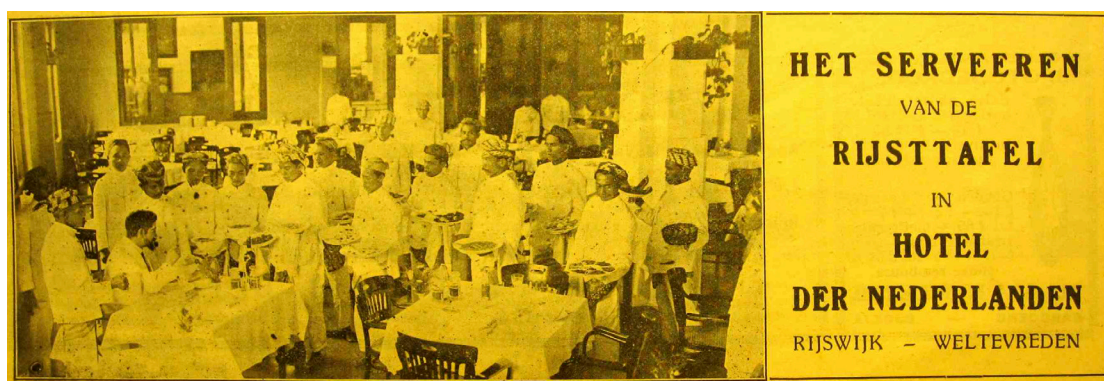


Fig. 1.5. A modern variant of the nineteenth century *rijsttafel* (rice-table) could be found in European hotels across Java in the twentieth century. The *Hotel der Nederlanden* in Batavia was renowned for the quality of its *rijsttafel* and its presentation. This advertisement shows the row of servers who one-by-one present the side-dishes to the European customer. This modern variant was based upon its feudal origins. Source: *D'Oriënt*, Vol. 2, No. 5 (2 February 1924).

During the next decades the consumption of the *rijsttafel* evolved into an elaborate aristocratic spectacle by replacing the actual “rice-table” with servants who in procession presented the European consumers with the various side dishes (fig. 1.5). In his influential colonial novel *The Hidden Force*, Louis Couperus described this upper-class display as follows:

⁶⁴ Susie Protschky, “The Colonial Table: Food, Culture and Dutch Identity in Colonial Indonesia,” *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (2008) 346-357. Onghokham, *The Thugs, the Curtain Thief, and the Sugar Lord: Power, Politics, and Culture in Colonial Java* (Jakarta: Metafor Publishing, 2003) 311-322. D.C.M. Bauduin, *Het Indische Leven* (The Hague: H.P. Leopold, 1941) 84-87. Victor Ido, *Indië in den goeden ouden tijd* (Bandung: Nix, 1949) 11. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, “Summer dresses and canned food: European women and Western lifestyles in the Indies, 1900-1942,” Henk Schulte Nordholt (ed.), *Outward appearances: dressing state and society in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1997) 151-180.

“Here the habit still prevailed of an endless array of dishes at the *rijsttafel*, with a long row of servants, one after the other, solemnly handing round one more vegetable, one more *lodeh* [coconut sauce], one more dish of chicken, while, squatting behind the ladies, the *babus* pounded *sambal* [chili sauce] in an earthenware mortar, according to several tastes and requirements of the sated palates.”⁶⁵

As a rule of thumb, the larger the procession of servants with side dishes, the greater the embellishment of the host’s prestige. Although the *rijsttafel* consisted of many indigenous dishes, it differentiated itself from the meals of the Javanese *priyayi* and common man in several ways. Foremost, the sheer variety of side dishes was only financially affordable to the Dutch. Also notable was the absence of *tempeh* – fried soybean patties – from the *rijsttafel*, which the Dutch considered too lowly a dish for the ruling class, as it was widely consumed by all Javanese. In contrast, the Dutch did add beer and fried bananas to the *rijsttafel*, which in return were scarcely consumed by the Javanese. Finally, most Javanese preferred cold to warm meals, whereas the Dutch favored dishes served hot. The history of the *rijsttafel* shows how pervasive the production and reproduction of colonial authority was throughout colonial society.⁶⁶

The Javanization of colonial authority was not limited to the adoption of the Javanese language hierarchy, *hormat* rituals, and a feudal lifestyle (including the *rijsttafel*). But extended to a profound change in the appearance of colonial rule, of which the aforementioned *payung* was one element, the syncretism between European and Javanese architectural styles was an important other. The quick succession of regimes (Napoleonic 1808-11; British 1811-1816; and Dutch restoration 1816-1819) and the occurrence of the Java War (1825-1830) prevented an elaborate infrastructural

⁶⁵ Louis Couperus, *The Hidden Force* (Amberst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1985) 101.

⁶⁶ Susie Protschky, “The Colonial Table,” 346-357. Ongkhokham, *The Thugs, the Curtain Thief, and the Sugar Lord*, 311-322.

development of the island by the colonial state.⁶⁷ This changed with the implementation of the Cultivation System, which demanded widespread infrastructural investment, ranging from the construction of sugar factories, storehouses, port facilities, irrigation and drainage systems, roads, bridges, as well as new offices, residences, and outstations for colonial administrators. These building programs were fundamental in exerting and preserving political and economic control over the island of Java. Crucially, this was not achieved by the functionality of these buildings alone, but equally as important was their appearance. The syncretic architectural design, combining Javanese and European methods of construction and design, made these buildings appear familiar yet distinctive in the colonial environment. Consequently, they became symbols of colonial authority that could be “read” by rulers and subjects alike.⁶⁸

Although adaptation to local conditions occurred from the seventeenth century onwards, the main attempt had been to transplant a European architectural typology to the tropics. For instance, the Dutch constructed their first houses with thick brick walls, large windows, small eaves, few openings for ventilation, and without veranda's. The Dutch soon realized that this way of building was at odds with the hot, humid, and wet tropical climate of Java, leading to hazardous living conditions. Over time accommodations to the local climate were made, most noticeably the transition to the parallel direction of roofs, creating overhanging eaves that better protected the facades of buildings against tropical sun and rain. Further improvements accompanied the construction of mansions outside the centers of the first trading posts during the eighteenth century. These mansions were

⁶⁷ The obvious example to this rule is Daendels infamous postroad. Peter J.M. Nas and Pratiwo, “Java and De Groote Postweg, La Grande Route, the Great Mail Road, Jalan Raya Pos,” *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde*, Vol. 158, No. 4 (2002) 707-725.

⁶⁸ For a succinct description of this surge in infrastructural development on Java, see: R.E. Elson, *Village Java*, 84-85.

spacious, had better ventilation, and provided more shade. Nonetheless, it was only in the nineteenth century that vernacular architectural traditions would become dominant in colonial architecture. This transition in part can be attributed to the acknowledgement that Javanese construction methods carried great climatic, and thus health, benefits. This cultural accommodation was also the result of the Dutch fascination with the aristocratic lifestyle of Java's elite. By trying to emulate and even outdo the Javanese elite, the Dutch sought to garner their prestige and distinguish themselves as Java's new ruling class. Colonial architecture thus came to play a crucial part in establishing and maintaining cultural hegemony.⁶⁹

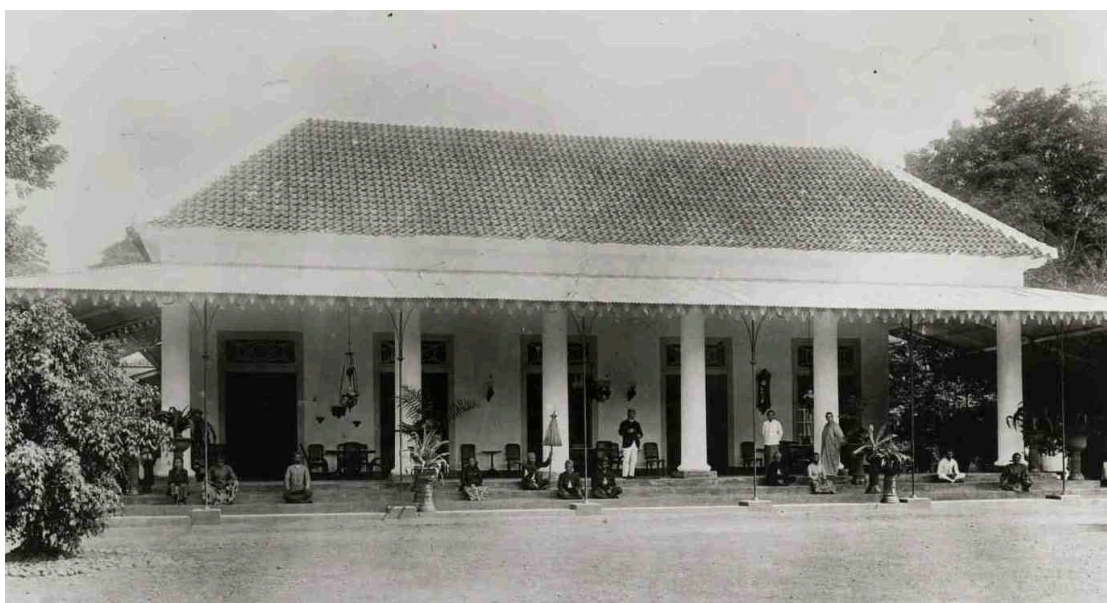


Fig. 1.6. The official Residency house of Pasuruan in 1897. Resident A. Salmon is surrounded by his servants, one of whom holds his golden *payung*, while standing on the porch of his typical colonial house. Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image Code: 34029).

This syncretism between Dutch and Javanese architectural typologies was most visible in the residences, outstations (*passanggrahan*), and offices of colonial officials. The nineteenth century colonial mansion in particular was modeled after the houses of

⁶⁹ V.I. van de Wall, *Oude Hollandsche Bouwkunst in Indonesië* (Antwerpen: De Sikkel, 1942). Peter J.M. Nas (ed.), *The Past in the Present: Architecture in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007).

the Javanese aristocracy (fig. 1.7 and 1.8). The latter were part of an Austronesian architectural tradition, several traits of which, such as a rectangular ground plan and a high-pitched roof, were transferred to the colonial villas. The colonial mansion also took after Javanese houses in the way they were laid out. Similar to traditional Javanese designs, the colonial mansion had a front porch (in Javanese: *pringgitan*), a large interior space (*djerambah*), a private section for the family (*dalem*), and a back porch (*gadri*). The straightforwardness of this design allowed for its emulation throughout Java, which is famously described by colonial criticaster Multatuli in 1860:

“Given: an oblong rectangle: which you are required to divide into twenty-one compartments, three across, seven down. We will number these compartments, beginning at the top left-hand corner and going from left to, so that number 4 comes under number 1, number 5 under 2, and so on. Numbers 1, 2, and 3 together form the front veranda, which is open on three sides and whose roof rests at the front on columns. From there you pass through double doors into the inner, which is represented by compartments 4, 5, and 6. Compartments 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, and 18, are rooms, most of which have doors opening into adjoining ones. The three highest numbers, 19, 20, and 21, form the open back verandah, and the numbers I have omitted – 8, 11 and 17 – form a kind of corridor. I am really proud of this description!”⁷⁰

Arguably the most important part of the colonial mansion was its front porch where most of the daily activities took place. It was derived from the Javanese *pendopo*, a square open pavilion of which the core is encompassed by wooden pillars that support a high-pitched roof, and served as the location for public meetings and celebrations. In contrast with large Javanese houses, where the *pendopo* was located in front of the house, the Dutch attached it as a front porch to theirs. It goes to show that the Dutch did not simply duplicate Javanese traditions, but adopted what they believed was necessary while still

⁷⁰ Multatuli [Pseudonym of Eduard Douwes Dekker], *Max Havelaar or the Coffee Auctions of the Dutch Trading Company* (London: Penguin Books, 1987) 119 [Translated from the original: *Max Havelaar of de koffieveilingen der Nederlandsche Handelsch-Maatschappij*, 1860].

maintaining a sense of difference. This differentiation was obviously most visible in the European elements of these buildings.⁷¹

The Javanization of colonial architecture coincided with the widespread adoption of the so-called “empire-style”, a neo-classicist style modeled after Greco-Roman example, resulting in a unique syncretism in colonial architecture. It was Daendels who first adopted this style for the buildings of the colonial government, a relation that was cemented during the British interregnum. While the use of Greco-Roman colonnades and whitewash was associated with colonial authority before the restoration of Java to the Dutch, it was not until the construction frenzy brought in motion by the Cultivation System that it became prevalent all over the island. For instance, neo-classicist colonnades characterized the porches of colonial villas, distinguished them from their inspiration: the Javanese *pendopo*. Moreover, in contrast to Javanese houses, those of the Dutch were whitewashed – although we now know Greco-Roman buildings were not white, which was in part to reflect the tropical sun but also to clearly identify colonial buildings. This cultural accommodation resulted in buildings that were better adapted to the climate and clearly distinguished themselves as the homes of Java’s ruling class. The appeal of the empire-style was such that even Javanese officials began to adopt it in the second-half of the nineteenth century (fig. 1.7). The colonial government issued several

⁷¹ See the following contributions in Peter J.M. Nas (ed.), *The Past in the Present*: Johannes Widodo, “Modern Indonesian Architecture: Transplantation, Adaptation, Accommodation and Hybridization,” 17-24. Jan J.J.M. Wuisman, “The Past in the Present: The Place and Role of Vernacular Architectural Traditions and Building Styles of the Past in the Present,” 25-44. Cor Passchier, “Colonial Architecture in Indonesia: References and Developments,” 97-112. In addition: V.I. van de Wall, *Oude Hollandsche Bouwkunst in Indonesië*, 10-12 and 29-32. Huib Akihary, *Architectuur & Stedebouw in Indonesië, 1870-1970* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1990), 14-15. C.L. Temminck Groll, *The Dutch overseas: architectural survey: mutual heritage of four centuries in three continents* (Zwolle: Waanders Publ., 2002) 142-144. D.C.M. Bauduin, *Het Indische Leven*, 42-47. Wertheim, W.F., *Indonesian society in transition: A study of social change* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1956), 173. Rob Nieuwenhuys, *Tempo Doeloe: fotografische documenten uit het oude Indië, 1870 – 1914* (Amsterdam: Querido, 1961) 37.

manuals in which it prescribed how the houses of colonial officials (1854), *Bupatis* (1870), and Residents (1879) should be constructed. These standards ensured that the appearance of colonial authority on Java remained ubiquitous.⁷²



Fig. 1.7. The *Bupati* of Pekalongan (Central Java) receives members of the European civil service in 1869. The *payung* hierarchy is fully displayed in front of the *Bupati*'s Joglo-style *pendopo*. The traditional high-pitched roof is supported by neo-classicist pillars, providing a fascinating example of cultural exchange between the Javanese aristocracy and Dutch authorities. Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image Code: 26692).



Fig. 1.8. The official residence of the Assistant-Resident of Sumedang (West Java) in 1880. The administrator poses in front of his house with his crouching servants (a third servant sits to the left of the house). The official's *payung* stands on the side-porch to the right. The Javanese inspired high-pitched roof, neo-classicist pillars, and porches make this a typical colonial residence. Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image Code: 3466).

⁷² See the following contributions in Peter J.M. Nas (ed.), *The Past in the Present*: Cor Passchier, "Colonial Architecture in Indonesia: References and Developments," 97-112. Abidin Kusno, "The Afterlife of the Empire Style: *Indische Architectuur* and Art Deco," 131-146.

In sum, the decade following the Java War witnessed a conscious policy by the Dutch colonial authorities to rule the colony indirectly by on the one hand strengthening the position of the Javanese aristocracy, while on the other bolstering their own influence through a process of Javanization. This was reflected in a profound cultural accommodation between the European and Javanese colonial elites. Many of the cultural traits that struck the British observers as odd in the 1890s were forged during this period. In addition, the middle decades of the nineteenth century also witnessed the institution of racial segregation. Here also outward appearance could distinguish between ruler and ruled as well as between the various ethnic groups on Java.

The Construction of Racial and Sartorial Hierarchies

The history of dress in colonial Java is a superb example of how cultural developments and policies were tied to the legitimization of power. Throughout the period of the VOC the introduction of dress items in the European household that were rooted in Asian cultures in general and Javanese society in particular, reflected the social and conjugal policies of the trading company. A process of hybridization was condoned in this period. During the nineteenth century, however, dress came to play a crucial role in legitimizing colonial authority through the maintenance of a racialized legal stratification. As a consequence, dress was brought under government control ever more.

The VOC's policy of restricting the immigration of European women and encouraging lower Company officials either to marry or to cohabit with (Eur-)Asian women was reflected in the early introduction of indigenous clothing into the European household. Jean Gelman Taylor has convincingly argued that these mixed race

relationships resulted in the domination of the private sphere by Asian culture. Eurasian daughters followed the sartorial choices of their Asian mothers by adorning themselves in a *kain*, an uncut died or plaid length of cloth wound around the waist and falling down to the ankles, and a *kebaya*, a long-sleeved blouse that extended to the hips (fig. 1.11).

European men similarly adopted variations of the *kain* and *kebaya* as their leisure and sleeping wear in the private sphere. However, in public European men always appeared in European dress, while their (Eur-)Asian partners only did so at official occasions.

Thus, at least in public European dress signified European culture and status.⁷³

In the course of the VOC-era Javanese dress had already undergone significant changes as the result of Islamization, Western influences, and the increased import of textiles from India that together established clearer social hierarchies. Where before Javanese dress consisted mainly of the *kain*, worn by women from the shoulders and by men from the waist down, these new influences encouraged men and women to cover their torso and shoulders respectively. The quality and designs of the *kain*, breast-, waist-, and shoulder-wrappers signified the wearer's social status. At the same time, the Javanese nobility at the courts began to adorn their bodies in *batik* cloth. *Batik* refers both to the time-consuming painting technique, based on the application, removal and re-application of dye resistant wax, and to the features and quality of the final product. These expensive *batiks* became the sole privilege of the Javanese elite, while certain patterns were reserved for the Javanese royal families. *Batik* cloth was thus essential in

⁷³ Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, 52-77. Jean Gelman Taylor, "Costume and Gender in Colonial Java, 1800-1940," in Henk Schulte Nordholt (ed.), *Outward Appearances*, 85-116. Inger McCabe Elliot, *Batik: fabled cloth of java* (Singapore: Periplus Editions, 2004); Clarkson N. Potter, 1984) 112-115.

differentiating the Javanese elite from the commoners, dressed in plaid cloth, as well as from the Dutch patterned *kains* and *kebayas* (fig. 1.3, 1.10, and 1.12).⁷⁴



Fig. 1.9. Colonial novelist P.A. Daum and his family on the front porch of a hotel in Batavia in 1894. This photograph shows the private and public outfits of Europeans in the colony. Daum is wearing *batik* trousers and a white jacket, his wife (Hendrika Daum-Vink) the traditional *sarong* and *kebaya*, their daughter and youngest son European dress, while his sons are clad in white colonial suits. Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image Code: 66629).



Fig. 1.10. Kartini with her husband, the *Bupati* of Rembang (East Java) in 1903. While Kartini is dressed in a traditional *sarong* and *kebaya*, her husband combines a European dinner jacket with his *kain*. Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image Code: 15469).



Fig. 1.11. An oil painting from J.D. Beynon in 1873 of an Indo-European girl wearing a *batik sarong* and white *kebaya*. Source: *Collection of the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands* (Object Number: 1913-1).

⁷⁴ Jean Gelman Taylor, "Costume and Gender in Colonial Java, 1800-1940," 91-94. Inger McCabe Elliot, *Batik: Fabled Cloth of Java*, 36 and 68-69.

The sartorial hierarchy that had taken shape during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was roughly shaken up in the wake of the Java War and the arrival of the Cultivation System. It was through dress that the Dutch actually made one of their strongest statements as the new rulers of Java. By wresting away both the privilege of wearing and producing *batik* from the Javanese aristocracy, the Dutch illustrated in unmistakable terms who was in control of the island. Both European men and women adopted clothes fabricated from *batik* cloths. Women with European status adorned themselves in *batik kain* or the more popular *sarong* – a cut rectangular cloth sewn into a tube – that was created by the *batik* shops owned and operated by Eurasian women. Here they created a particular kind of *batik*, known as *batik Belanda* (Dutch *batik*), which distinguished itself from Javanese *batik* by its typical patterns and colors. The growing importance of the *kain* or *sarong* as a status symbol was reflected in the shortening of the long-sleeved overblouse, which allowed for the admiration of the intricate *batik*work. The differences in *batik* designs and patterns set European women apart from Javanese aristocratic women, while both were distinguished from the commoners by the use of *batik* cloth. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century, with the industrialization of *batik* production, that *batik* dress became widespread throughout Java. Even then, the quality of the cloths and intricacy of the designs set apart the rulers from the ruled (fig. 1.9).⁷⁵

In the same vein, European men also clad themselves in *batik* clothing from the 1830s onwards. However, in contrast to European women they did not replace their leisurely *kain* with a *batik* model, but adopted *batik* trousers instead. These were modeled

⁷⁵ Harmen C. Veldhuisen, *Batik Belanda 1840-1940: Dutch Influence in Batik from Java. History and Stories* (Jakarta: PT. Gaya Favorit Press, 1993). M.J. de Raadt-Apell, *De Batikkerij Van Zuylen te Pekalongan Midden –Java (1890-1946)* (Zutphen: Uitgeverij Terra, 1981).

after Chinese styles, meaning that they were made without closures and held-up with a string. The application of *batik* cloth for trousers was a Dutch innovation that signaled a transfer of power that had just taken place. Like European women's *kains* and *sarongs*, these *batik* trousers were characterized by unique Eurasian patterns and designs. The substitution of the *kain* in favor of *batik* trousers in the private sphere was also a sign of the prevalence of European notions about masculinity. By breaking with Javanese unisex clothing, Dutch men contrasted their own masculinity with the in their eyes feminine appearance of Javanese men. From the perspective of the European observer it was another way in which colonial rule was legitimized. That distinction was even more prevalent in the public sphere, where European men stood out through their white colonial suits (fig. 1.9).⁷⁶

The overhaul of the sartorial hierarchy in the 1830s was not limited to the breaking up of the monopoly on *batik* use and production, but was simultaneously structured to reinforce a new legal stratification that was to become, in the words of historian Cees Fasseur, the “cornerstone of the colonial administration”.⁷⁷ During Company rule legal stratification was primarily based on religion; European and non-European Christians alike were subject to Dutch legislation. In fact, all subjects living under the aegis of the VOC fell under its jurisdiction. This practice of legal and judicial unification was slowly but surely replaced by a racially differentiated legal stratification during the first decades of the nineteenth century. Inspired by enlightenment ideals, men

⁷⁶ Inger McCabe Elliot, *Batik: Fabled Cloth of Java*, 32. Jean Gelman Taylor, “Costume and Gender in Colonial Java, 1800-1940,” 90. Dorine Bronkhorst and Esther Wils, *Tropenrecht: Indische en Europese Kleding in Nederlands-Indië* (The Hague: Stichting Tong Tong, 1996).

⁷⁷ Cees Fasseur, “Cornerstone and Stumbling Block: Racial Classification and the Late Colonial State in Indonesia,” in R. Cribb (ed.) *The late colonial state in Indonesia: political and economic foundations of the Netherlands Indies, 1880-1942* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1994) 31-57.

like Daendels, Raffles, and Van der Capellen, argued that Europeans and indigenous peoples were better off under their own legislation and judicial practices, at least as long as these did not violate the new universal principles proclaimed in Europe. However, this idealistic motivation could hardly masque the real intent of legal stratification, which contributed to the preferential treatment of Europeans vis-à-vis the indigenous population. For instance, Europeans legally had access to, among other privileges, superior criminal law, greater guarantees of personal liberties, and better labor laws.⁷⁸



Fig. 1.12. The *Landraad* (Residency court) of Pati presided by the Resident. This lithograph from 1876 is a colored-in version of a photograph from 1865. The image reflects the *payung* and sartorial hierarchies as well as the deference customs. The golden *payung* of the Resident is held by his servant, whose head just sticks out above the table, while the *Bupati* of Pati has also brought his *payung* along. The person seated to left is the Chinese Captain (representative of the local Chinese community), donning Chinese dress, while the person on the far right, wearing a turban, is the *penghulu*, an Islamic functionary. The low officials and commoners are seated on the ground. Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image Code for the lithograph: 47A69. For the photograph: 3516).

⁷⁸ A. van Marle, "De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië, Iets over Ontstaan en Groei," *Indonesië*, Vol. 5 (1951) 97-121, 314-341, and 481-507.

The legal differentiation between Europeans and indigenous peoples for the law mirrored the institution of indirect rule: the indigenous population was placed under the rule of their own chiefs and laws. Similar to the development of indirect rule, the first three decades of the nineteenth century can be characterized as a transition phase. For instance, the 1818 government regulations contained no mention of a racial differentiation, but in 1824 the European courts of Batavia, Semarang, and Surabaya already closed their doors to non-Europeans. It was the implementation of the Cultivation System that finally cemented a racialized legal stratification in legislation. Thus, the ratification of various books of law in 1848 for the first time made the official distinction between Europeans and indigenous peoples and those legally equated with either group. This dualism recurred in article 109 of the government regulations of 1854, which also contained the article that served as the foundation of indirect rule (art. 67). The following year (1855) a separate category of “foreign Orientals” was created, which was on the one hand subject to European civil and trade laws, while on the other to indigenous public law. The logic behind the creation of this in-between category was that it provided Europeans with more security in their economic dealings with the Chinese middlemen in the colony. This tripartite legal differentiation remained in force till the end of colonial rule.⁷⁹

The colonial authorities were convinced that it would be impossible to uphold both systems of indirect rule and legal stratification if the various population groups could not be distinguished by their appearance. This matter was complicated by the large

⁷⁹ The Government Regulation of 1854, including extensive descriptions of the historical background and development of the respective articles, can be found in: C.W. Margadant, *Het Regeeringsreglement van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol 1-3 (Batavia: G. Kolff, 1894-7). Cees Fasseur, “Cornerstone and Stumbling Block,” 31-57. A. van Marle, “De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indie,” 97-99.

Eurasian population on both sides of the legal divide between Europeans and non-Europeans, since racial traits, such as skin color, did not differentiate between colonizer and colonized. The solution was found in ethnic dress, its requirement for all inhabitants of the colony would enable the authorities to distinguish the various legal groups. This was deemed crucial for the maintenance of public order and legal prosecution. For instance, by donning European dress, an indigenous person might “abuse” European privileges regarding preliminary detention to their benefit. Similarly, it was feared that Chinese middlemen could use European dress to evade the pass- and zoning-system (*passen- en wijkenstelsel*) that was in place to regulate their economic activities.⁸⁰

The city of Surabaya was the first to require its inhabitants to dress according to their ethnicity. Article 26 of Surabaya’s police regulations of 1829 stated that it “is prohibited for all, in the evening or at night, to appear on the roads and streets in clothing that deviates from one’s ethnicity and social standing.”⁸¹ Other towns, residencies, and districts were soon to follow Surabaya’s example: The districts of Gresik, Madura, and Sumenep in 1831, Bagelen residency in 1845, the district of Buitenzorg (Bogor) and the Pekalongan residency in 1846, Tegal residency in 1847, and Semarang and the Kadu residency in 1849. In 1851 Surabaya’s regulations were applied to all remaining residencies and districts on Java and Madura, with the exception of the city of Batavia.⁸²

⁸⁰ The 1915 debate in the Dutch senate (*Eerste Kamer*) on the breakdown of the sartorial hierarchy on Java provides a historical overview of its legislation. The contribution by senator L.W.C. van den Berg (member of the *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij*) in particular is very enlightening. *Handelingen der Staten-Generaal, 1914-1915*, I, Eerste Kamer, 25ste Vergadering, 17 Februari 1915, 238-242. The legal position of the Chinese population in the colony has been the subject of a recent study by P. Tjiook-Liem, *De Rechtspositie der Chinezen in Nederlands-Indië 1848-1942* (Amsterdam: Leiden University Press, 2009).

⁸¹ “No. 8: Policie Reglement voor de stad en voorstreken van Soerabaija,” in: *Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië 1829*, 21-30.

⁸² Batavia already had its own police regulations in place since 1828, which can be found in *Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië 1828*, No. 63. These did not include a sartorial requirement until 1872. For the regulations regarding Semarang and the Kadu residency see: *Staatsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1849*,

Finally, in 1872 two separate Indies-wide Police Regulations, reaffirming legal stratification for Europeans and indigenous subjects, were formulated. Both included the provision on ethnic dress. The 1872 regulations were more profound, since they applied to all public spaces during day and night and made it illegal to “disguise” oneself by donning dress unrelated to one's ethnicity.⁸³

The creation of the colonial sartorial hierarchy required defining ethnic dress, which resulted in a rigid categorization of what one was supposed to wear. Fixed ethnic “costumes” were ascribed to European, Javanese, Chinese, and Arab inhabitants of the colony. For instance, Javanese men were expected to don a *kain*, Chinese men to have a pigtail, Arabs to wear a turban, and Europeans to clad themselves in a white suit (fig. 1.12). However, the sartorial transgressions of the Europeans, by adorning themselves in leisure clothing that was rooted in Javanese culture and fabricated from *batik* cloth, appeared at odds with this sartorial hierarchy. This seeming contradiction can be explained in two ways. For one, the subtle differences in the *batik* design and patterns, the white color of the *kebaya*, and the *batik* trousers for men, still differentiated the Dutch from the Javanese. Their continued adoption reflected the deep roots of Eurasian elements in Javanese society as well as an understanding of differentiating oneself according to Javanese custom. Second, the ability to transgress the sartorial hierarchy itself was an indication of the power of the new ruling class. It only confirmed the privileged position that those with European legal status enjoyed in the colony.

No. 4 and 59 respectively. The decision to make Surabaya's regulations applicable to the whole of Java, as well as a historical overview of towns, residencies, and districts that had already adopted them, can be found in: *Staatsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië* 1851, No. 26.

⁸³ The 1872 police regulations for European and indigenous subjects can be found in: *Staatsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië* 1872, No. 110 and No. 111 respectively.

Just as Europeans adopted Javanese structures of dress to associate themselves publicly with local concepts of power, Java's male elite similarly adopted European dress to link themselves to European authority. Like the adoption of neo-classical elements to their homes and *pendopos*, the Javanese male elite transgressed the sartorial hierarchy and experimented with adding European structures of dress. The photographic record suggests that the extent to which one was allowed to try out European dress depended on one's rank in the Javanese feudal hierarchy. Members of the princely houses of Mangkunegaran in particular gained a reputation for being receptive to European sartorial influences. For instance, Prince Mangkunegara IV is credited with the creation of a ceremonial suit that consisted of a tailcoat (*rokkostuum*) – minus the tails to display the ceremonial *kris* – in combination with a traditional *kain*. The name that was assigned to this hybrid costume was in fact a referral to its dual roots: *rokkie Jawa* (fig. 1.10).⁸⁴

Particular European elements were also added to costumes of indigenous civil servants by the colonial government. The high-collared blue jackets had intricate silver or golden oak-leave embroidery on its collars and sleeves, the oak-leaves being a European symbol of power, and were fitted with buttons emblazoned with a capital “W” in reference to the Dutch monarch. Both elements also decorated the costumes of European civil servants, establishing a clear relationship between the two civil services (fig. 1.3 and 1.4).⁸⁵

⁸⁴ John Pemberton, *On the Subject of Java* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994) 57-58 and 110-11. For the photographic record of Javanese civil servants see: Rob Nieuwenhuys, *Tempo Doeloe: fotografische documenten uit het oude Indië, 1820-1914* (Amsterdam: Querido, 1961). Rob Nieuwenhuys, *Baren en Oudgasten: Tempo Doeloe – een verzonken wereld. Fotografische documenten uit het oude Indië, 1870-1920* (Amsterdam: Querido, 1981). Rob Nieuwenhuys, *Komen en Blijven: Tempo Doeloe – een verzonken wereld. Fotografische documenten uit het oude Indië, 1870-1920* (Amsterdam: Querido, 1982). Rob Nieuwenhuys, *Met Vreemde Ogen: Tempo Doeloe – een verzonken wereld. Fotografische documenten uit het oude Indië, 1870-1920* (Amsterdam: Querido, 1988).

⁸⁵ The appearance of the costumes of Javanese colonial civil servants was circumscribed in regulations dating from 1870: *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, No. 2308 and No. 2410 (1870).

The period of the Cultivation System thus witnessed the processes that led the British travel guide authors to believe that the Dutch risked ceasing to be Europeans. In their appearance, their use of status symbols, the deference they demanded, the houses they lived in, and the food that they consumed, the Dutch colonials looked little like the British in India, let alone the Dutch in Europe. This was as much by design, however, as it was the result of an unconscious process of cross-cultural exchange. Instead, colonial culture was manipulated to strengthen and legitimize colonial authority. The last three decades of the nineteenth century would see this policy being undermined from within, although the façade remained in-tact till the opening of the twentieth century.

Keeping Up Appearances: The Last Decades of the Nineteenth Century

The abuses that accompanied the Cultivation System and indirect rule would set off a modernization process of the colonial administration that did, however, preserve its feudal appearance. The great financial successes of the Cultivation System were achieved at the expense of the Javanese peasantry.⁸⁶ Through the prospect of cultivation percentages (*kultuurprocenten*) – a percentage of the profits one's district delivered – the colonial government encouraged Javanese officials to employ the almost unrestricted power provided to them vis-à-vis the peasantry. While the European civil service supervised the whole process, the Javanese officials coerced the peasantry into cultivating cash crops for the European export market. When the subsequent abusive exploitation of

Detailed images of the "Europeanized" jackets of the indigenous civil service are depicted in the appendices of L.Th. Mayer, *Een Blik in het Javaansche Volksleven*, Vol. 2 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1897).

⁸⁶ The Cultivation System brought enormous benefits to the Netherlands. The profits in the period 1831-1850 consisted of approximately 234 million guilders, while the period 1851-1870 saw an even greater return of 491 million guilders. These benefits allowed the Netherlands to pay off the interest on and part of their national debt, balance the national budget, finance railroad and canal construction at home, compensate Surinam slave-owners for the abolition of slavery, and afford not to introduce income taxes. See: Cees Fasseur, *Kultuurstelsel en Koloniale Baten*, 117-119.

the peasantry resulted in an outbreak of typhoid fever (1846-1850) and severe famines (1849-1850) on Java, most contemporary observers agreed that these occurrences demonstrated the need for reforms. However, political and financial expediency dictated that the Netherlands could not forgo the great benefits that the Cultivation System provided so easily. Therefore the dismantling of the Cultivation System took place slowly in fits and starts during the 1850s and 1860s, culminating in its abolition in 1870.⁸⁷ The two key means by which the system was taken apart were the reduction of the power of the Javanese civil service and the opening of the colony for private agricultural entrepreneurship. Both developments drastically altered the organization of colonial rule, but as will be demonstrated, not its outward appearance.⁸⁸

The abolition of the Cultivation System necessitated a reevaluation of the functioning of the European and Javanese branches of the colonial civil service. The loss of their primary responsibility of overseeing the cultivation of cash crops was accompanied by ending their respective rights to cultivation percentages in 1866. In that year a broad liberal reform of the civil services implemented a more direct form of colonial governance; increasing the power of the European branch while curtailing the powers of its indigenous counterpart. This has often been described as a process of de-feudalization or modernization, although it is worth pointing out that this only applied to the organization of colonial rule, not the appearance thereof. For instance, in 1867 the government abolished private landholdings for indigenous officials, limited their rights to

⁸⁷ The government regulations of 1854 incorporated references to this slow dismantling of the Cultivation System. For instance, see: articles 54 and 55 in: C.W. Margadant, *Het Regeeringsreglement van Nederlandsch-Indië*. In 1870 the Agrarian Law was proclaimed (*Staatsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië* 1870, No. 55), which allowed the opening up of unreclaimed land in Java for long term-leases, as well as the Sugar Law (*Staatsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië* 1870, No. 117), which began a phasing out of the government sugar industry in favor of private enterprise. R.E. Elson, *Village Java*, 152.

⁸⁸ R.E. Elson, *Village Java*, 128-152. Cees Fasseur, *Kultuurstelsel en Koloniale Baten*.

feudal services, and raised their government salaries in compensation.⁸⁹ In essence, the Javanese “chiefs” were once again turned into “civil servants”. The loss of “real” power was compensated by another government decision of the same year that granted those *Bupatis* entitled to a yellow *payung* – the highest in rank following its golden equivalent – the right to decorate it with a golden stripe. The thickness of the stripe was not allowed to supersede 1/12th of the *payungs*’ radius.⁹⁰ The addition of the golden stripe was a significant gesture on top of the promise to maintain hereditary principles in the succession of *Bupatis*. The symbols of feudal society were thus stripped of their traditional meaning, while the new signs were privileged. It signified a return to policies of the early nineteenth century, which made up for the loss of power with symbolic gestures. In practice this encouraged indigenous civil servants to maintain relevancy in society by demanding ever more extractive deference rituals from the peasantry.⁹¹

Perhaps even more surprising was that the European administrators clung to the feudal appearance of colonial authority as well. The overhaul of the colonial administration in 1866 entrusted the European branch of the civil service with greater powers vis-à-vis their indigenous counterparts. The modernization of the colonial organization turned the European officials into administrators whose responsibility it was to protect the common Javanese against the abuses of both their aristocracy and European private entrepreneurs. They were also to encourage agriculture and education, implement executive orders from Batavia, and maintain colonial authority on Java. In other words,

⁸⁹ *Staatsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië 1867*, No. 122, 123, and 125. R.E. Elson, *Village Java*, 148. H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 107-156.

⁹⁰ “No. 53: Songsong of Zonnescherm. Nadere bepalingen daaromtrent,” *Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië voor het Jaar 1867* (Batavia, 1868).

⁹¹ H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 80-104. Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*, 35-43. Brownlee, John M., “Colonial Knowledge and Indigenous Power in the Dutch East Indies,” *Explorations in Southeast Asian Studies. The Journal of the Southeast Asian Studies Student Association*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring 1998) 19-29.

the European officials were reconfigured as the heralds of progress and justice in a feudalized world. However, in carrying out these tasks the European officials adopted a paternalistic attitude that fell back upon the sinews of power they had become accustomed to during the Cultivation System. Paradoxically then, when the organization of colonial rule was rationalized, its feudal appearance not only remained, but was even enhanced, turning the Dutch officials into Oriental lords.⁹²

The feudal performance of authority was not limited to Dutch and Javanese civil servants, but extended to the various new social groups that arose at this time. The opening of the colony for European businesses brought a new group of private entrepreneurs to the colony, who were quick to follow the example set by the European administrators. They constructed villas in line with colonial architecture, communicated with their personnel according to the strict language hierarchy, demanded traditional forms of deference (like crouching and the *sembah*), and conformed to the sartorial hierarchy. These new enterprises together with the expansion of the welfare tasks of the colonial government resulted in a growing demand for cheap specialized labor. In 1879 the colonial government therefore sponsored the founding of the *Hoofdenscholen* – schools for the children of the Javanese aristocracy – that provided the colony with a growing educated labor force. The colonial government employed most of these students in non-traditional positions, for instance as teachers, vaccinators, or irrigation officers, but kept their appearance purposely as traditional as possible.⁹³

⁹² On the paradox of the modern/feudal civil servant see: H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 80-104.

⁹³ Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*, 23-29. J.A.A. van Doorn, *De Laatste Eeuw van Indie: Ontwikkeling en Ondergang van een Koloniaal Project* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1994) 31-35. For an elaborate study on indigenous doctors: Liesbeth Hesselink, *Healers on the Colonial Market: Native Doctors and Midwives in the Dutch East Indies* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2011).

The integration of civil servants in non-traditional professions into the larger feudal and social hierarchies of colonial society was an indication of the reluctance on the part of the colonial authorities to modernize the grounds of its legitimacy. Already in 1824, heads of the forestry service, senior heads of waterworks, employees of the vaccination service, salt works and warehouses were assigned specific titles, ranks, *payungs*, and ceremonial rights. Following the dismantling of the Cultivation System, new professions were added to this list, such as government tellers and prison guards (1874), teachers (1879), indigenous doctors (1892), veterinarians (1893), clerks of the post, telegraph, telephone, and railroad services (1896), conductors (1897), Sundanese translators (1898), sub-district chiefs (1900), forestry personnel (1901), and finally pawnshop personnel (1906). To integrate them into the hierarchal structure their rank was equated with that of existing officials. For instance, in 1879 head teachers were equated in rank with senior forestry chiefs. All of these professionals were assigned a *payung*. Different color schemes on *payungs* referred to the branch of government a person was working in: blue for the indigenous administration and education, blue and green for a legal position, and brown for a health care provider. So even when the colony was opening up to overseas private enterprise and developing modern public services, feudal symbols of power and deference rituals were still deemed indispensable to legitimize colonial rule.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ A complete overview of – including copies of – the official regulations regarding the *payungs* and entourage of Javanese officials can be found in: J.E. Jasper, “Staatstie, Gevolg en Songsongs van Inlandsche Ambtenaren in de Gouvernementslanden op Java en Madoera,” *Extra Bijlage van het Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch-Bestuur*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Batavia, 1904) 1-73. Pawnshop personnel were among the new professionals to be added to the feudal hierarchy in 1906. The regulations regarding their distinctions we promulgated after Jasper published his article and can be found in: *Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië* 1906, No. 393. Leslie H. Palmier, *Social Status and Power in Java* (London: The Athlone Press, 1960) 35. D.H. Burger, *Structural Changes in Javanese Society: The Supra-Village*, 18-20. For an interesting case

Throughout the nineteenth century the Dutch colonial government followed a dualistic policy of both de-feudalization and re-feudalization of colonial Javanese society. On the one hand, the newly founded Dutch colonial state set out to bend the Javanese royal houses and nobility to its will. It subordinated both princes and nobles to a European civil service, which instructed, controlled and steered the *priyayi* in desired directions. Moreover, throughout the century certain powers and privileges were taken away from this traditional elite. On the other hand, it was clear that the colony could not be ruled without the support of the *priyayi*, who therefore needed to be compensated. Their feudal rights and privileges were clearly prescribed in several regulations. The most important concession arguably was that the office of *Bupati* was made hereditary (a hereditary nobility is a European, not a Javanese tradition). The balance of this somewhat contradictory policy varied during the century. In general it can be said that during the time of the Cultivation System the emphasis was on re-feudalization, while before and after this period de-feudalization was more common.

The tendencies to re- or de-feudalize colonial Javanese society were often directed at different aspects of social life. The de-feudalization policies often targeted the real power and influence of the princes and nobles. Their ability to rule was undermined in favor of the European civil service. Re-feudalization policies however, focused more specifically on the appearance of power and its symbolic importance. For instance, the colonial government strictly prescribed the ranks, titles, entourages, retinues, symbols of power (e.g. *payung*, lances, betel boxes), social conventions and the like that provided the Javanese elite with a semblance of power, while its real influence was transferred to

study on Javanese doctors and their *payungs*: Liesbeth Hesselink, "The unbearable absence of parasols: the formidable weight of a colonial Java status symbol," *IIAS Newsletter*, No. 45 (Autumn 2007) 26.

Dutch hands. By the end of the nineteenth century this had led to a situation in which the Javanese aristocracy was less powerful than in the past, while it appeared to be more powerful than ever.

The new situation invites an analogy to the traditional Javanese wayang performances. The beautiful wayang kulit (leather shadow puppets) – skillfully carved to the tiniest detail, patiently painted with several layers of bright coloring, and finished with carved handles of buffalo bone – resemble the Javanese *priyayi* in their ceremonial attire, surrounded by their various symbols of power and large entourage. Both looked exquisite, extravagant even, but most of all, they appeared powerful. However, it was the hands of the *dalang* (puppeteer) that guided both puppets and *priyayi*. It was the *dalang* who made the puppet move, who decided on its actions and direction. In a conversation with Snouck Hurgronje, one of the Javanese *Bupatis* described his relationship to the Dutch in this manner:

“They have degraded us from powerful chiefs to fancy civil servants with a high salary, beautiful titles, but in fact differing little from lower police officers. They (the population) consider us wayang puppets, who are moved by ever changing dalangs, the European civil servants, without any free will or insight”⁹⁵

The *Bupati* and other Javanese officials may have appeared as decorated and heroic as wayang puppets, but in fact they were nothing more than a shadow of their former selves. As the Dutch well realized, in the shadow theatre it is the source of light and the *dalang* that makes or breaks the performance. In the theatre of the colonial state therefore, the Dutch compensated the Javanese elite for the loss of political, economic, military and

⁹⁵ Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, “De Inlandsche Bestuursambtenaren, vooral op Java,” *De Gids*, Vol. 72 (1908) 220.

social power (de-feudalization) by granting them the appearance of power (re-feudalization).⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Two fascinating historical studies regarding the importance of wayang performances in Javanese society are: Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Mythology and the Tolerance of the Javanese* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1965). Laurie J. Sears, *Shadows of Empire: Colonial Discourse and Javanese Tales* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1996).

Chapter 2

Rituals and Power: The Cultural Hegemony of Colonial Rule Contested

Prologue: Turn of the Century Challenges to Cultural Hegemony

By the end of the nineteenth century the Dutch had firmly embedded themselves in Javanese society through a process of cultural accommodation that legitimized their authority. This complex system of dominance was challenged and finally transformed by rapid technological innovation, evolutionary thinking, shifting demographics, the emergence and intensification of the Dutch civilizing mission, and the rise of Indonesian nationalism. These developments resulted in greater European control over the colony, increased belief in Western superiority, and a growing emphasis on racial segregation in colonial society. The implementation of the Ethical Policy was of particular importance. On the one hand it provided the Dutch with a new discourse to legitimize colonial authority by emphasizing their relative modernity and civilization vis-à-vis the indigenous population. Consequently, the profound cultural hybridity of the nineteenth century was rejected as a form of degeneration. On the other hand, the civilizing policies created the conditions for the emergence of the nationalist movement, which became highly critical of the feudal aspects of the colonial relationship.

During the last three decades of the nineteenth century, technological innovations in transportation and communications greatly reduced the relative distance between the Netherlands and Java and further enhanced colonial control and exploitation. For instance, the invention of steamships together with the opening of the Suez canal in 1869 reduced the duration of the voyage from Amsterdam to Batavia from four months to a

mere six weeks. By the middle of the 1880s two large shipping companies – the *Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland* (1870) and the *Rotterdamsche Lloyd* (1883) – succeeded in establishing a weekly connection between the metropole and the new deep-sea harbor at Tanjung Priok (1877-83) near Batavia.¹ Almost simultaneously, steam engines also revolutionized overland travel after the construction of a railroad track between Semarang and Yogyakarta in 1873. Within decades, an extensive railroad network connected Java's large cities and towns and opened up the island's mountainous interior. Steam power did not remain the sole alternative to animal power for long; in 1899 the streetcars of Batavia already operated on electricity, while the introduction of the automobile in 1900 further enabled European travel in and control over its prized colonial possession.²

Technological advances also facilitated a more distinctive European lifestyle in the tropics. Innovations in communications technology, most notably the telegraph (1870) and telephone, but also radio (1919), enabled Europeans to remain informed about developments at home and to stay connected with friends and family. Technological progress also allowed for the proliferation of the latest European fashions, either imported items of dress or created from designs, and products in the colony. Department stores sprang up that offered the latest European merchandise, including canned and less

¹ For a detailed study of, among others, these companies and their cultural significance in the history of empire: Kris Alexanderson, *Fluid Mobility: Global Maritime Networks and the Dutch Empire, 1918-1942* [Ph.D. Dissertation, Rutgers University, 2011].

² Herman Burgers, *De Garoeda en de Ooievaar: Indonesië van Kolonie tot Nationale Staat* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2011) 100-103. Wim Ravestijn and Jan Kop (eds.), *For Profit and Prosperity: The Contribution Made by Dutch Engineers to Public Works in Indonesia, 1800-2000* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2008) 273-308. Suzanne Moon, *Technology and Ethical Idealism: A History of Development in the Netherlands East Indies* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2007). Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981). Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850-1940* (New York, Oxford, Toronto and Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988).

perishable foods as cheeses, alcoholic beverages, cigars, and cigarettes. The rapid succession of electrical equipment, such as stoves, fans, lights, and radio, were employed to create a more hygienic and European household in a tropical environment. For many Europeans these technological developments did not just enable the Europeanization of colonial society, but were announced as evidence of European superiority.³

Developments in the biological and medical sciences seemingly confirmed and explained this alleged Western superiority. The most obvious example was the application of Charles Darwin's revolutionary concept of evolution to human societies in order to explain the West's supposed cultural, intellectual, and even physical dominance. When discoveries in the field of medical science excluded the possibility that the indigenous people belonged to a different species than Europeans, a variety of explanations that employed evolutionary discourse was formulated to explain the different levels of development that the colonizers and colonized had achieved respectively. A popular concept in the Netherlands, and among colonial powers in general, was that there were various evolutionary stages of societal development and that European men had simply progressed to a more advanced stage than the colonized. Indigenous society was thus perceived as a distant mirror of an early, medieval self, passing through an evolutionary phase that European men had left behind centuries ago. A prominent member of Dutch parliament summarized this perspective as follows: "What the natives are now, we once were; what we are now, they will once become."⁴ Underlying this evolutionary discourse was a strong paternal and maternal symbolism

³ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, "Summer Dresses and Canned Food," 151-180.

⁴ J.A.A. van Doorn, *Indische Lessen: Nederland en de Koloniale Ervaring* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1995) 34.

that referred to the indigenous peoples as immature children that needed to be raised with European parental support.⁵

The climate was considered the determining factor behind the different stages of evolutionary development of the Dutch and the indigenous peoples. While the moderate European climate allegedly stimulated intellectual and technological development, the hot and humid tropical environment was thought to slow down the development of civilization. Although the belief that the tropical environment changed one's physical constitution was discredited by the end of the nineteenth century, in part by the Dutch Nobel Prize winner Christiaan Eijkman, climatologic factors were still thought to produce lazy, indolent, uncreative, superstitious people. This climatic determinism implied that Europeans who tried to acclimatize to the tropics would inevitably take on some of these character traits as well and regress on the evolutionary scale. To prevent degeneration Europeans sought protection against the heat by seeking out cooler mountain climates and repatriated after a certain number of years. The fear in degeneration was also reflected in the reevaluation of cultural accommodation as a means to acclimatize to the local environment. Since indigenous people and their cultures were considered backward, their influence in a European's life should be limited to a minimum. Evolutionary and climatological determinism thus stimulated the Europeanization as well as segregation of colonial society.⁶

⁵ Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 121-127. P. de Rooy, Ann Laur Stoler, W.F. Wertheim, and Jan Bremen (e.a.), *Imperial Monkey Business: Racial Supremacy in Social Darwinist Theory and Colonial Practice* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1990).

⁶ Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas*, 149-154. Ann Laura Stoler, "Making Empire Respectable," 645-646. Christiaan Eijkman, *Over Gezondheid en Ziekte in Heete Gewesten* (Utrecht: J. van Druten, 1898).

The opening of the colony for private enterprise in 1870, following the abolition of the Cultivation System, attracted a large number of Europeans who used the new technical advances to maintain a metropolitan lifestyle and resist cultural accommodation and degeneration as much as possible. In part, this was in response to the domination of colonial society by civil servants, who prided themselves on their rights to indigenous deference and who made up more than half of the professional population (in service of the government and army). By 1900, the majority of the European population worked in non-governmental jobs, such as, planters, managerial personnel at mining companies, trade houses, and banks, lawyers, physicians, and journalists. In addition, the character of government employ had changed with the addition of civil engineers, architects, and medical personnel to its ranks.⁷

Overall, the size and composition of the European population group changed drastically. Spread out over the archipelago, the total group of people with European status numbered 43,876 in 1860. On Java alone, this number had increased to 54,511 (38% women) by 1890 and 192,571 (47% women) by 1930. In the same period, the indigenous population of Java, which had only totaled 4.5 million in 1815, expanded from 12.5 million in 1860, 23.6 million in 1890, to 40.9 million in 1930.⁸ Between 1890 and 1920, the increased immigration of European women (300%) was relatively greater than that of men (200%).⁹ Together with the implementation of the mixed marriage law of 1898, which stipulated that women followed the legal status of their spouse, the immigration of European women resulted in greater gender balance. Some historians

⁷ J.A.A. van Doorn, *De Laatste Eeuw van Indië*, 23-46. Herman Burgers, *De Garoeda en de Ooievaar*, 100-103.

⁸ *Census of 1930 in the Netherlands Indies*, Vol. 8 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1936) 84-86.

⁹ A. van Marle, "De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië, Iets over Ontstaan en Groei," 321.

have argued, almost nostalgically, that the increased presence of European women led to the destruction of a harmonious nineteenth century colonial society. However, as Frances Gouda has convincingly argued, the decision to allow women to enter the colony was purposefully designed by the colonial authorities to create a stronger European community. Even so, indigenous influences were never far off, especially considering that by 1930 only 21% of all women with European status were born in Europe. Till the end of colonial rule, the combined Creole and Eurasians group would remain far greater than the group of immigrants.¹⁰

Taken together, these technological, economic, and demographic changes as well as the evolutionary racism that supported a sense of Western superiority led to the Dutch equivalent of the civilizing mission. Throughout the nineteenth century there had been accusations against the immorality of exploiting the indigenous people for the sole benefit of the Netherlands, but it was not until the closing of the century before this criticism was generally acknowledged. The new perspective on the colonial relationship was famously put into words by the lawyer C.Th. van Deventer, who argued that the Netherlands had a “debt of honor” to fulfill in the Indies. Likewise journalist P. Brooshooft proposed an “Ethical direction in colonial policy” aimed at developing and civilizing the indigenous people of the Netherlands Indies and creating a form of limited self-government under Dutch patronage.¹¹ Finally, in 1901, this change of heart regarding the colonial relationship was officiously announced in the annual Queen’s speech, in

¹⁰ Laura Ann Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*. Frances Gouda, “Nyonyas on the Colonial Divide: White Women in the Dutch East Indies, 1900-1942,” *Gender & History*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (1993) 318-342. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Women and the Colonial State: Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000) 19.

¹¹ C.Th. van Deventer, “Een Eereschuld,” *De Gids*, Vol. 63, No. 2 (1899) 205-257. P. Brooshooft, “De Ethische Koers in de Koloniale Politiek,” *De Locomotief*, Vol. 50, No. 177-180 (6-9 August 1901), in

which she stated that the Netherlands had a “moral duty” to fulfill towards the people of the Indies.¹²

The Ethical Policy, however, was not a clearly defined set of policies, but rather a new general outlook on the colonial relationship. A broad array of initiatives fell under its umbrella, such as the improvement of the socio-economic condition of the indigenous people, making Western education more widely available and accessible to them, encouraging a process of Indianisation of the colonial administration, providing limited extension of democratic institutions, and improving infrastructure, public sanitation and health, and the irrigation system. Many of these developments were not just beneficial to the indigenous people, but also highly profitable to Dutch entrepreneurs and the colonial government. From the outset this raised questions about intentions behind the Ethical Policy.¹³

The Ethical Policy signified a break with the nineteenth century hegemonic ideology rooted in Javanese feudalism, which was to be replaced by the discourse of the civilizing mission. As the historiography has demonstrated, the moral burden to civilize the less developed people in the colonies provided the supposedly superior Westerners with the legitimization of their continued colonial enterprise.¹⁴ However, this new hegemonic ideology was strikingly different from its nineteenth century predecessor. The

¹² Cees Fasseur, *De Weg naar het Paradijs en andere Indische Geschiedenissen* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1995) 29.

¹³ Elsbeth-Locher Scholten, *Ethiek in Fragmenten: Vijf Studies over Koloniaal Denken en Doen van Nederlanders in de Indonesische Archipel 1877-1942* (Utrecht: HES, 1981). Maarten Kuitenbrouwer, *Nederland en de Opkomst van het Moderne Imperialisme: Koloniën en Buitenlandse Politiek, 1870-1902* (Amsterdam/Diemen: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1985). H.L. Wesseling, “Bestond er en Nederlands Imperialisme?,” *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, Vol. 99, No. 2 (1986) 214-225. Robert Cribb (ed.), *The Late Colonial State in Indonesia: Political and Economic Foundations of the Netherlands Indies, 1880-1942* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1994). J.A.A. van Doorn, *De Laatste Eeuw van Indië*.

¹⁴ Harald Fischer Tiné and Michael Mann (eds.), *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission: Cultural Ideology in British India* (London: Wimbledon Publishing Company, 2004). Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

contrasts between the two discourses could not have been greater: Javanization, feudalism, and autocratic rule were theoretically replaced with Europeanization, modernity, and democratic principles. To make matters more complicated, while the new hegemonic discourse was supported by the Dutch and colonial governments, it faced serious criticism on the ground from its civil servants. Consequently, the replacement of one hegemonic discourse by another was far more complicated than anticipated. This situation only became more complex when the nascent nationalist movement, in part the result of the Ethical Policy, produced its own hegemonic ideology, starting a competition among ideals that ended with the government reverting to coercive measures in the 1920s and 1930s.

The Ethical Policy and national awakening in the Netherlands Indies did not develop in isolation from global events. The Spanish-American War of 1898 that resulted in the annexation of the Philippines by the United States served, depending on one's perspective, as a cautionary tale or hopeful example of how a colonial power could be ousted by a modern and progressive rival. In a sense, the American presence in Southeast-Asia forced the Netherlands to follow its civilizing example.¹⁵ Around the same time the Chinese community in the Indies showed support through its associations, newspapers, and also the cutting of their pigtails for the growing opposition to the Qing-dynasty. The successful revolution of 1911 fueled a renewed sense of Chinese identity and nationalism, which served as an example for the nascent Indonesian nationalist

¹⁵ For instance, an article in the vernacular press argued in favor of a revolutionary stance against colonialism and capitalism by referring to the French, Russian, and Philippine Revolutions. Reference to *Padjadjaran*, 11 October 1920, No. 33, in *Overzicht van de Inlandsche en Maleisisch-Chineesche Pers (IPO)*, No. 43 (Weltevreden: Drukkerij Volkslectuur, 1920). Another article stated that the Netherlands should follow the example of the US in the Philippines. *Darmo Kondo*, 3 May 1919, No. 49, in *IPO*, No. 18 (1919).

movement.¹⁶ The latter also looked towards British India for inspiration, for instance with regards to the Indianisation of the civil service or the foundation of the Indian National Congress. Japan was the country that attracted most attention however. Its rapid industrialization and development, following the Meiji Restoration of 1868, symbolically reached its completion with the defeat of Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. Taken together, the examples that other Asian nations provided in combination with the outbreak of World War I shaped the outlook of both young nationalists as well as the Dutch with regards to the future.¹⁷

The promulgation of the Ethical Policy accelerated the development of a section of the *priyayi* class from a traditional and hereditary elite to a modern and education based elite. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the colonial state had founded schools to provide the growing administration of the colonial state with cheap Western educated labor.¹⁸ However, while the *priyayi* class on Java expanded in conjunction with the general population, the number of administrative posts remained by and large the same. As a consequence, an increasing number of educated lower *priyayi* was forced to seek work outside the administrative civil service in either different government employ or in the private sector. The expansive growth of the colonial state during the Ethical Policy relied on educated labor for, among others, its pawnshop service, people's credit system, *Opiumregie* (sale and production of opium), post-, telephone, and telegraph services, and

¹⁶ For a contemporary interpretation of Chinese nationalism in the Indies: P.H. Fromberg, *De Chineesche Beweging op Java* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1911). Also see: P. Tjiok-Liem, *De Rechtspositie der Chinezen in Nederlands-Indië*.

¹⁷ Kees van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War, 1914-1918* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007). Ahmat Adam, *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1913)* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).

¹⁸ For instance, in 1848 a school was established that trained scribes and administrators, followed in 1851 by a school for indigenous doctors (*dokter djawa*), in 1852 by a teacher training school, in 1879 by a school for Native Heads (*Hoofdenscholen*), for the training of prominent *priyayi* children into administrators, and in 1893 by the First and Second Class Native Schools.

state railways. Similarly, the liberalization of the colonial economy offered opportunities for Western educated *priyayi* on plantations, in factories, in shopping and finance. This new group of intellectuals produced the majority of people who would become active in the nascent nationalist movement.¹⁹

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Western educated indigenous elite, working as clerks, teachers, doctors, engineers, and overseers, emerged as the new middle class of colonial society. Theirs was a hybrid world between East and West. As students and professionals they participated in a Western world in which they dressed like Europeans, spoke Dutch, read European literature, listened and danced to Western music, watched the latest Hollywood movies in theaters, and played European sports. At the same time, especially considering the *priyayi* background of most intellectuals, they were also rooted in indigenous society with its own languages, social customs, and cultural performances. It was their challenge to combine these experiences – East and West – in their endeavor for *kemajuan* or progress, in which the notion of modernity was key. According to historian Takashi Shiraishi, this new elite strove for modernity as exemplified by the Dutch in particular and Western civilization in general. However, they disagreed on how to achieve this modernity, what relationship it would have with indigenous cultural and religious elements, and what the role of the Dutch would be.²⁰

The proliferation of opinions on how to move through an age of progress to achieve modernity was reflected in the diversity of associations within the nationalist movement. Some of these associations emphasized ethnic identities and interests; others focused

¹⁹ Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*, 31-100.

²⁰ Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca and London; Cornell University Press, 1990) 26-27.

more on religious values, ideologies, or secular principles. To complicate matters further, certain associations were politically oriented, while others were mainly cultural organizations or both.²¹ As a consequence, it is difficult to speak of one distinct and teleological nationalist movement, instead it is better to speak of a broad national awakening reflected in the increased proliferation of indigenous associations.²² Depending on their outlook – ethnic, religious, ideological, secular – these associations formulated their own hegemonic ideologies as alternatives in competition with that of the European overlord.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, progressive Europeans, Javanese nationalists, conservative European civil servants, and Javanese *priyayi* contested the seemingly enduring system of dominance that the Dutch had developed in colonial Java. This contestation was not merely an ideological struggle for hegemony, but one that was reflected in material culture and outward appearance. The following chapters all emphasize this cultural element within the contestation of colonialism, such as the rituals and displays of power, dress, architecture, and food. This chaotic period of anxiety and change comes to an end as a result of the communist rebellions of 1926 and 1927 in West-Java and Sumatra, which elicited a conservative turn from the colonial authorities that was supported by a large majority of the European community. Thus began a period of both overt and covert coercion by the colonial state to maintain “peace

²¹ The most prominent associations with a predominantly Javanese outlook were *Budi Utomo* (1908), the Committee for Javanese Nationalism (1919), and *Taman Siswa* (1922); with a distinct religious outlook were the *Sarekat Islam* (1912), *Muhammadiyah* (1912), and *Nahdlatul Ulama* (1926); with an ideological basis were the *Indische Social-Democratische Vereening* (1914), its successor *Perserikatan Komunis di Hindia* (1920) which changed its name into *Partai Komunis Indonesia* in 1924; and finally with a secular perspective the *Indische Partij* (1912) and *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (1927).

²² William O'Malley, “Second Thoughts on Indonesian Nationalism,” *Indonesia: Australian Perspectives* (1980) 601-613.

and order” in the colony. This state of coercion ended with the Japanese takeover in 1942.

Rituals and Power

In the spring of 1913 Raden Soemarsono²³, a young Javanese public prosecutor, was on his way to report to his new European superior, the Assistant Resident J.C. Bedding of Purwakarta (West-Java). Soemarsono had just been transferred from the Dutch East Indies cosmopolitan capital, Batavia, to the backward provincial town of Purwakarta. On his arrival at the local police court he was shocked to see that his fellow countrymen were crouching before the European civil servant, sitting on the floor, and addressing Bedding in high Javanese. After each sentence they also brought their hands together in a gesture of respect and obedience (*sembah*). These longstanding feudal forms of deference, known collectively as *hormat* (respect), were viewed as a thing of the past by the Western educated and highly Europeanized Soemarsono. When Assistant Resident Bedding noticed that Soemarsono was dressed in European fashion (trousers, jacket and a headscarf), a clash between tradition and progress (*kemajuan*) ensued. Bedding demanded that Soemarsono change his European trousers for a Javanese *sarong* (wraparound skirt) and take his place on the floor. The Javanese public prosecutor refused. He had attended a European secondary school, spoke fluent Dutch, sat on chairs in the presence of Europeans, and was used to being treated as an equal. Grudgingly, Bedding allowed Soemarsono to attend the meeting. However, he provided him no chair, and the prosecutor could not sit on the floor because he was dressed in Western trousers and that would represent submission to Javanese deference forms. Thus, Soemarsono

²³ “Raden” is a Javanese aristocratic title for male members of the lower aristocracy.

would have been forced to stand throughout the meeting. Rather than submit to that humiliation, he excused himself to attend to the pile of paperwork that came with his new office.²⁴

Due to Soemarsono's connections with powerful Dutch central administrators, and through them to the Governor-General, the aftershocks of this confrontation in the small provincial town of Purwakarta would soon reverberate throughout the Netherlands Indies. The confrontation was the latest example of a European civil servant deliberately acting against government stipulations from 1904 that prohibited Dutch officials from demanding traditional Javanese forms of deference in their contacts with the indigenous people of Java. At the peak of the Ethical Policy (1901-1927), the colonial government could not tolerate this kind of behavior any longer. The promulgation of the stern *hormat*-circular of 1913 reflected these anxieties. Contemporaries referred to the circular as the "most curious piece of Indies legislation" in history.²⁵ It went much further in condemning the behavior of European administrators than its predecessors and resulted in increased support of the colonial government for the nascent nationalist movement. The circular's enactment resulted in a colony wide debate about the importance of cultural exchange and hybridity to the maintenance of colonial rule on the one hand and Javanese and European identities on the other hand.

The conflict between Bedding and Soemarsono had its roots in nineteenth century colonial policies aimed at establishing colonial cultural hegemony over Java. During the formative years of the colonial state, they aligned themselves with the traditional

²⁴ The reconstruction of the meeting between Soemarsono and Bedding is based upon the correspondence between G.A.J. Hazeu and Raden Soemarsono, which can be found in: Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, The Netherlands.

²⁵ P.H. Fromberg, "De Inlandsche Beweging op Java," *De Gids*, Vol. 78. (1914) 28-29.

Javanese aristocracy, known as the *priyayi* class. The system of indirect rule that ensued was beneficial to the Dutch and Javanese elite alike and left the Javanese peasantry under the governance of their own aristocracy and familiar feudal institutions. In addition, the Dutch embarked on a process of cultural accommodation to legitimize their authority and assumption of the highest rank in the Javanese feudal order. By adopting Javanese symbols of power, deference rituals, dress, architecture, food and even social customs, the Dutch colonizers in a clearly recognizable manner embedded themselves into Javanese society.²⁶

This cultural project of control became contested as the result of the civilizing mission ideology, which from 1901 onwards intended to legitimize colonial authority and hegemony on more modern grounds. The colonial government began to encourage the development of Java under Dutch leadership and in accord with Western ideas about modernity, civilization, science, and technology. This new policy resulted in a division within colonial officialdom between progressives and conservatives. The supporters of the Ethical Policy sought to ally with the emerging Western-educated nationalists in seeking far-reaching reforms in the existing feudal system of cultural hegemony. Consequently, cross-racial blocs of progressives supporting the modernization of colonial administration and conservatives supporting its feudal characteristics squared off during the first decades of the twentieth century. Crucially, the colonial government itself pushed hard for reforms, resulting in limitations on the use of Javanese symbols of power and deference rituals from 1904 onwards as well as the abolition of a sartorial hierarchy

²⁶ Benedict R.O'G. Anderson, "The Language of Indonesian Politics," in *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990) 123-151. John M. Brownlee, "Colonial Knowledge and Indigenous Power in the Dutch East Indies," 19-29. Leslie H. Palmier, *Social Status and Power in Java*, 1-36. Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*, 45-46.

in 1903 that forced colonial subjects to dress according to their ethnicity. Soemarsono's experiences in 1913 demonstrate that those measures had not sorted the desired effect almost a decade later. The *hormat*-circular of 1913 was the peak of the broad contestation of the feudal hegemonic ideology.²⁷

Tensions and social disruptions resulted from the Dutch colonial government's ambivalence with regards to the prohibition of Javanese trappings of power. The implementation of the Ethical Policy and the emergence of the nascent nationalist movement finally forced the government into action and towards a confrontation with its own officials. Both European civil servants and Javanese *priyayi* had lost considerable administrative, political, and economical power by the end of the nineteenth century, for which they had compensated with increased feudal deference demands. This made the threat of losing prestige, from their perspective all they had left, a highly sensitive topic. While the government was mainly concerned with prohibiting its European officials from employing Javanese status symbols and expecting traditional deference, the interference of the nationalist movement expanded the criticism to Javanese feudalism in general.²⁸

Numerous historians have agreed that the legitimacy of colonial regimes often depended upon the preservation of traditional local elites.²⁹ Although the institution of indirect rule in the Netherlands Indies has been the subject of excellent historiographical studies, the actual rituals, displays and social conventions that made colonial power

²⁷ The standard work on the Ethical Policy has been written by Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in Fragmenten*. For a political study of the Ethical Policy see Steven Wedema's, "*Ethiek*" und Macht: *Die niederländisch-indische Kolonialverwaltung und indonesische Emanzipationsbestrebungen, 1901-1927* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1998). Suzanne Moon, *Technology and Ethical Idealism*.

²⁸ John M. Brownlee, "Colonial Knowledge and Indigenous Power," 19-29. Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*, 45-46.

²⁹ On the preservation of traditional elites: Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989) 269-270. Nicholas Dirks' introduction to Bernard Cohn's *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*.

visible have received scant attention.³⁰ This is a bit surprising, since both contemporaries and historians have often referred to the myth of Dutch colonialism. This entailed that the small Dutch nation could not rule its large empire through force alone and needed to rely on a degree of consent. However, these studies have considered cultural accommodation as the byproduct of interactions with the Javanese elite, not as constitutive of them. This dissertation turns that argument around by stating that material culture and outward appearance were crucial instruments in the maintenance of colonial authority, beginning with the adoption of rituals and symbols of power of the Javanese elite.

The Trappings of Colonial Power

Arguably the most visible and sensitive adaptations by the Dutch colonizers were Javanese deference rituals that encompassed social behavior, dress codes, a stratified language system, honorific titles and regulations regarding the make-up of an officials' entourage and symbols of power.³¹ The most common social behaviors were the crouching walk (*jongkok*), sitting crossed legged on the floor (*sila*), and presenting the *sembah* out of respect for ones superiors. These rituals were combined with the strict linguistic protocols that prescribed that a superior was to be addressed in high Javanese (*krama*), while he or she would respond in low Javanese (*ngoko*). Additionally, the various ethnic groups on Java (Sundanese, Javanese, Madurese, Chinese, Arabs and Dutch among others) were forced to dress according to their ethnicity. The only exceptions to this rule were the Dutch, who were, interestingly enough, allowed to wear Javanese inspired clothing. This was true especially of the large Eurasian segment of the

³⁰ H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*. Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*.

³¹ *Hormat* can be translated used as a noun, translated as respect or respectful, or as a verb, in which case it refers to showing or revealing someone respect.

European population. And finally, one's social position was often reflected in certain symbols of power (*ampilan*), of which the most famous and important was the Javanese *payung* (parasol). The color of the *payung* represented the office or birth of its bearer. Those of highest rank were gilded; those of lesser rank were gilded to some extent or had other coloring.³²

By adopting these deference rituals and symbols the Dutch essentially tried to manipulate to the Javanese concept of power in order to maintain colonial authority. Historian Benedict Anderson has argued that the Javanese concept of power differs from that in the Western world. Javanese power, he suggests, is concrete (it exists outside of its bearers), homogenous (all of the same type), its quantity is constant (zero-sum game) and is not morally ambiguous ('power simply is').³³ Where wealth and technology might increase the power of an individual in the Western world, on Java power is obtained and enhanced through asceticism. Thus, spiritual purity helps maintain or increase power, whereas impurity diffuses power. While personal ascesis was the fundamental way to accumulate and absorb power, this process could be furthered by the possession of certain objects or persons regarded as being filled with power. For this reason Javanese rulers gathered as many heirlooms (*pusaka*) as possible, including *krisses* (Javanese spiritual daggers), spears and musical instruments. Anderson concludes that the "Javanese tradition of political thought, therefore, typically emphasizes the signs of Power's

³² The Javanese hormat-etiquette – *sembah*, *jongkok*, *sila*, and language diglossia – have been referred to in many studies, although they are hardly ever the central topic. The exception is Benedict Anderson's "Sembah-Sumpah: The Politics of Language and Javanese Culture," in Ibid., *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990) 194-237. For an early nineteenth century description of *hormat*-etiquette: Thomas Stamford Raffles, *A History of Java*, Vol. I (London: John Murray, 1817) 308-312.

³³ In contrast, Anderson argues that Western power is abstract, heterogeneous, has no limits and is morally ambiguous. Benedict Anderson, "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture," in Ibid., *Language and Power*, 17-77.

concentration, not the demonstration of its exercise or use.”³⁴ This suggests that by adopting Javanese rituals and symbols of power, the Dutch also adopted the corresponding concept of power that made them relevant. This in effect minimized the Dutch reliance on the Western concept of power, which depended more on coercion and force. The adoption to Javanese society to legitimize and maintain colonial rule was both the result of an unconscious cultural exchange, as well as a conscious policy.

By the end of the nineteenth century Dutch civil servants lived a seigniorial lifestyle on Java. Although they were less powerful than they had been under the cultivation system, they still stood alone at the apex of the social hierarchy of colonial society. The Javanese, and even other European Residents, were constantly made aware of their inferior social position due to the plethora of deference rituals and symbols of power deployed by civil servants. In their interactions with the Javanese these officials demanded to be addressed with the title of *kandjeng tuan*, meaning “your highness”. Not only did Dutch civil servants demand these signs of deference from the common people, but also from the lower Javanese aristocracy. Only officials as high as the *Bupati* and *Patih* were exempt.

Contemporary photographs, such as those in the previous chapter (fig. 1.1, 1.4, 1.6, and 1.12) clearly convey the appearance of Dutch civil servants as seigniorial lords. The similarities between the state portraits of a Dutch Resident in 1904 and a Javanese *Bupati* in 1868 (fig. 1.3 and 1.4) are striking. Both officials were eternalized in the company of a barefooted servant carrying their *payung*. The photograph of the Residency house in Pasuruan from 1898 (fig. 1.6) also shows an abundance of servants, most sitting in the deferential *sila* position on the ground, while a golden *payung* on the veranda

³⁴ Benedict Anderson, “The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture,” in *Ibid.*, *Language and Power*, 28.

marks the house as that of the local Resident. Similar to Javanese court culture, the size of one's entourage was considered a reflection of one's power. Finally, the house itself also radiated a sense of power as well. The Roman columns gave the house a Western appearance, but its ground plan, structure and high-hipped roof were adaptations of the Javanese *pendopo*. Just like the Dutch official whom it provided with shelter, the house was a significant hybrid product of the colonial age.³⁵

The colonial administration of the interior also adopted more obscure Javanese rituals and ceremonies to legitimize its authority. One of these was the custom of the Javanese aristocracy to be escorted by as many servants and lower ranking bureaucrats as possible when touring their district. Both high and low ranking European civil servants³⁶ demanded this privilege during their tours as well. Lower ranking Javanese administrators, such as *Wedanas*, Assistant-*Wedanas* and village heads were expected to escort the European civil servant on horseback or on foot in lieu of a horse. The Dutch Orientalist Snouck Hurgronje reported a case in 1903 where Javanese dignitaries had to run (!) after the carriage of a Resident as his retinue. At the first stop, the most elderly had to ask the forgiveness of the Resident since they could no longer keep up.³⁷

Some Javanese traditions were not so much copied as reinvented by Dutch civil servants. For example, the Javanese aristocracy organized ceremonial festivities for such

³⁵ "De Pajong," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 9, No. 246, 24 October 1904.

³⁶ Under Dutch rule Java was divided in several *residenties* (provinces) in which the highest civil servant was the Resident. These provinces, contained several traditional Javanese units called *regentschappen* (regencies) headed by a *Bupati*, who in turn was supervised by an Assistant-Resident. The two civil services – European and indigenous – had equivalent positions below these ranks. For example, below the Assistant-Resident stood the *Controleur* and Assistant-*Controleur* who worked with the *Wedono* and Assistant-*Wedono* who were led by the *Bupati*. Below these ranks stood the village headmen, who were officially not part of the *Pangreh Praja* (indigenous civil service) and not of aristocratic birth.

³⁷ Snouck Hurgronje to Governor-General Roosenboom, 16 August 1903, in Gobee, E. and C. Adriaanse (eds.), *Ambtelijke adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936* (1959) Vol. 2, 1027-1028. "Nota Betreffende de Verhouding tusschen het Europeesch en het Inlandsch Bestuur op Java en Madoera," *De Indische Gids*, vol. 11, No. 2 (1889) 1521-1524.

occasions as the births, circumcisions, marriages, and the deaths of family members. These ceremonies were crucial for the legitimization of their authority and the accumulation of power. As Benedict Anderson has argued, these moments were essential in the personal ascesis of the aristocrats. The *Garebeg Puasa* celebration at the end of the Ramadan is a prime example. To commemorate the end of the fasting period, a *Bupati* would proceed to a mosque in procession with his *payung*, after which he would hold court. At court lower bureaucrats would come to ask the *Bupati*'s forgiveness for their shortcomings throughout the year by entering with a low crouching walk, make the *sembah* and perform a knee-kiss (*sungkem*).³⁸

Since the Dutch were not Muslims they could not insert themselves in this celebration other than as honored guests of a *Bupati*. Dutch civil servants did, however, organize a similar ceremony as the *Garebeg Puasa* every New Year's Day. This day was chosen because of its importance for Europeans. Like true Javanese aristocrats, European officials held court while Javanese civil servants and village headmen paid their respects. In the words of one Dutch civil servant this was a yearly "day of reconciliation" between the European civil servants and their Javanese subjects.³⁹ This ceremony served the dual purpose of ingraining a sense of inferiority in the Javanese aristocracy while cementing European superiority.

An essential part of the deference rituals that upheld colonial hierarchy was the Javanese language stratification. The differentiation of Javanese into two main levels of discourse probably occurred in the late seventeenth century. It had become the custom

³⁸ Snouck Hurgronje to the Director of the European Administration of the Interior, 20 April 1904, in *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936* (1957) Vol. 1, 518-525. Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*, 24-25.

³⁹ A.H.J.G. Walbeehm, "Het Leven van den Bestuursambtenaar in het Binnenland," in R.A. van Sandick (ed.), *Onze Koloniën*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Baarn 1913).

that a person of high rank would address his social inferiors in *ngoko* (low Javanese) and that the reply would be given in *krama* (high Javanese).⁴⁰ According to Dutch Orientalist, linguist and first colonial advisor for native affairs Hazeu, the subdivision of both language types was so highly refined, that “all nuances of rank of a feudal society could be expressed therein.”⁴¹ It is therefore not surprising that the Dutch adopted the Javanese language stratification to position themselves in Javanese society. But the Dutch did not simply adopt a Javanese deference tradition; instead their manipulation went much further. Language differentiation “was above all a function of the increasing impotence of the Javanese upper class – and indirectly of Dutch colonial encouragement, in other words were a sort of compensation for a loss of real authority.”⁴² Javanese linguistic development was therefore in part the result of colonial rule. The Dutch colonizers on Java did not simply adopt indigenous deference practices, but shaped these rituals and conventions to strengthen their colonial dominance.

Similar to the Javanese aristocracy, the Dutch used this language differentiation in their personal and professional lives. With the exception of high indigenous officials, such as *Bupatis* and *patih*s, all Javanese were addressed by the Dutch in *ngoko*, and were expected to reply in high Javanese. But around the turn of the century an increasing number of Javanese aristocrats had enjoyed Western education in the Dutch language. Consequently, a significant addition was made to the colonial Javanese language

⁴⁰ Anderson describes the difference between the two sublanguages as follows: “While *Krama* is essentially an honorific language, and thus largely spoken up the social hierarchy, full mastery requires a high degree of education. [...] *Ngoko*, on the other hand, is terse, acerbic, humorous, and sensuous. It is spoken down the social hierarchy and among close equals, friends and family. [...] *Krama* is official, aspirative – a little like a mask. *Ngoko* is private, cynical, passionate – a little like the heart. But neither can be fully appreciated without the other, and both “live” in their complementarity.” Benedicht Anderson, “Language of Indonesian Politics”, in *Ibid.*, *Language and Power*, 131-132.

⁴¹ G.A.J. Hazeu to The Committee “Mangajoe Basa Djawa”, 6 December 1918, Folder 77, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, The Netherlands.

⁴² *Ibid.*

hierarchy. Dutch officials addressed the Western educated Javanese in Dutch, although they still expected the latter to reply in *krama*. Remarkably, Dutch replaced *ngoko* in these conversations, supposedly a ‘inferior’ language. However, it simply would not do for the Dutch to speak *ngoko* to the Javanese and have them answer in Dutch.

In the writings of Raden Adjeng Kartini the tensions surrounding the use of the Dutch language by the Javanese elite are apparent. As the daughter of the *Bupati* of Jepara, Kartini enjoyed access to Western education and knowledge and became a protagonist of freedom from traditional restraints, enlightenment, rationality and progress. In a letter to her Dutch friend Stella Zeehandelaar in 1900, Kartini addressed the language stratification and the role of the Dutch language within, writing:

“My brothers speak in high Javanese to their superiors, who answer them in Dutch or Malay. Those who speak Dutch to them are our personal friends; several of whom have asked my brothers to speak to them in the Dutch language, but they prefer not to do it, and Father also never does. The boys and Father know all too well why they must hold to the general usage.”⁴³

Underlying the last sentence is a sense of fear and uncertainty. Not because Kartini’s father and brothers cannot or do not want to converse in Dutch, but because of the possible repercussions when they do. For instance, in the same letter Kartini elaborates on the story of an intelligent young Javanese boy who made the mistake of addressing a Resident in Dutch. According to Kartini, instead of a promising career in the indigenous civil service he was ‘banished’ to an outpost as a petty clerk. Kartini cynically remarks that his banishment was not for naught, since “he had learned wisdom there; namely that

⁴³ Kartini to Meijuffrouw Zeehandelaar, 12 January 1900, in *Kartini, Letters of a Javanese Princess* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1976) 40-41.

one cannot serve a European official better than by creeping in the dust before him, and by never speaking a single word of Dutch in his presence.”⁴⁴

The refusal of European civil servants to converse in Dutch with their colleagues in the indigenous civil service was topic of many spirited debates in the decades around 1900. Knowledge of the Dutch language brought with it a certain level of social prestige. In a sense it allowed the speaker to distance him or herself from traditional society and place oneself on a more equal footing with Europeans. As early as 1890 the Governor-General promulgated a government circular that encouraged European civil servants to communicate in Dutch with their educated indigenous counterparts. The fear of losing prestige and weakening colonial rule prevented many Europeans from acting on this circular. Instead they demanded compliance with the ‘traditional’ Javanese language stratification, albeit with modifications involving the insertion of the Dutch language. As can be deduced from Kartini’s writings, the fear of offending Dutch civil servants was still too great, even for high Javanese aristocrats, to challenge the social order and refer to the existence of the circular.⁴⁵

In the Indonesian national heroine Kartini we encounter a voice of reason, a voice that protested against the conformity of traditional Javanese society, a voice that even challenged the Dutch adaptation of Javanese forms of deference. Kartini was fully aware of the oppressiveness of Javanese deference rituals, which she considered a burden. In 1899 in a letter she explained to her friend Stella Zeehandelaar how deeply the various *hormat* rituals and conventions influenced even her private life:

⁴⁴ Ibid., 41.

⁴⁵ “Hormatgebruiken. Eerbiedsbetoon. Nederlandsche Taal. Aanmoediging van het gebruik der Nederlandsche taal door Inlandsche ambtenaren. Herinnering aan de gegeven voorschriften betreffende de afschaffing of beperking van de specifiek Inlandsche hormatgebruiken,” *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. XL, No. 6496 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1907) 265-268.

“In order to give you a faint idea of the oppressiveness of our etiquette, I shall mention a few examples. A younger brother or sister of mine may not pass me without bowing down to the ground and creeping upon hands and knees. If a little sister is sitting on a chair, she must instantly slip to the ground and remain with head bowed until I have passed from her sight. If a younger brother or sister wishes to speak to me, it must only be in high Javanese; and after each sentence that comes from their lips, they must make a *sembah*; that is, to put both hands together, and bring the thumbs under the nose.”⁴⁶

In the same letter Kartini succinctly describes her opinion of Javanese deference rituals, by writing that “the ceremonies, the little rules, that are instilled into our people are an abomination to me.”⁴⁷ Kartini does declare she will not withhold her elders their due deference, but that beginning with herself, she will propagate the dismissal of all ceremony. Additionally, from her writings it becomes clear she detests one thing even more than showing deference to other Javanese: showing deference to Europeans.

In another letter to Stella Zeehandelaar in 1900, Kartini clearly describes her position with regards to the use of Javanese *hormat* traditions by the Dutch colonizers:

“There is too much idle talk about the word “prestige”, through the imaginary dignity of the under officials. I do not bother about prestige. I am only amused at the manner in which they preserve their prestige over us Javanese.

Sometimes I cannot suppress a smile. It is distinctly diverting to see the great men try to inspire us with awe. I had to bite my lips to keep from laughing outright when I was on a journey not long ago, and saw an Assistant Resident go from his office to his house under the shade of a gold umbrella, which a servant held spread above his noble head. It was such a ridiculous spectacle! Heavens! If he only knew how the humble crowds who respectfully retreated to one side before glittering sunshade, immediately his back was turned, burst out laughing.

There are many, yes very many government officials, who allow the native rulers to kiss their feet, and their knees. Kissing the foot is the highest token of respect that we Javanese can show to our parents, or elderly blood relatives, and to our own rulers. We do not find this pleasant to do this for strangers; no, the European makes himself ridiculous in our eyes whenever he demands from us those tokens of respect to which our own rulers alone have the right.”⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Kartini to Mejuffrouw Zeehandelaar, 18 August 1899, in *Kartini, Letters of a Javanese Princess*, 13.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

⁴⁸ Kartini to Mejuffrouw Zeehandelaar, 12 January 1900, in *Kartini, Letters of a Javanese Princess*, 42.

What strikes the reader of Kartini's letter are the many indications of cynical amusement with the behavior of Dutch civil servants: "I am only amused"; "I cannot suppress a smile"; "I had to bite my lips to keep from laughing outright". Moreover, she mocks the emphasis that the Dutch place on their so-called prestige. Kartini clearly does not buy into the "ridiculous spectacle" that Dutch colonizers maintain is crucial to legitimizing their authority in the eyes of the Javanese population. She even goes as far as calling the Dutch prestige imaginary, in essence undermining the cultural grounds on which colonial rule was constructed. However, although Kartini presented herself as a modernizer in most of her writings, here we also find a woman defending the rights of her class. She clearly resents the Dutch adoption of Javanese deference customs to which in her eyes only the Javanese rulers are entitled. In this respect her criticism was not unique.

In 1889 an anonymous author, using the pseudonym of "Regent" (*Bupati*) wrote a short article in which he critiqued the feudalization of the Dutch colonial civil service and the accompanying loss of power and influence of the Javanese aristocracy. He aimed his criticism mainly at the low ranking Dutch civil servants, such as controllers (*controleurs*), who despite their low rank behaved like petty kings. They demanded to be addressed as *kandjeng tuan*, a honorary title reserved for *Bupatis* and Residents, and honored according to the Javanese language stratification. In addition, they toured their districts with a large entourage of indigenous civil servants to demonstrate their might and prestige, while simultaneously undermining that of their indigenous colleagues. The reality of colonial rule that the "Regent" describes here, makes clear that the Dutch branch of the civil service held much more sway than the indigenous branch. It clearly bothers the author that lower ranking indigenous civil servants are controlled by the

Dutch, instead of by their traditional rulers who have to show them the same deference as well. He then proudly, and even a little defiantly, states that Europeans can never demand the same deference as *Bupati*:

“Many a Assistant-Resident looks with envious eyes at how indigenous chiefs hold on to indigenous customs with respect to their *Bupatis*. However, this submission is only natural, since the *Bupati* is not only the first head of the regency, but also by right of his birth the natural head of the indigenous population.”⁴⁹

As Kartini did a decade later, the author also distinguishes between the right of the Javanese aristocracy to demand traditional deference and the lack of justification for the Dutch to do the same.⁵⁰

The *Bupati* of Demak, Hadi Ningrat, elaborated on the relationship between the European and indigenous branches of the colonial civil service in 1893. In that year he wrote a report for the colonial government in which he explored the reasons for the demise of the prestige of the indigenous civil service and aristocracy. Hadi Ningrat recognized two major contributing factors to the diminished prestige of the Javanese elite. First, since the abolition of the Cultivation System (1866) European civil servants have reached out to the population directly, often bypassing indigenous leaders (i.e. *Bupati*). Second, while European civil servants had to comply with increasing educational and intellectual standards, these standards were not set for the indigenous civil servants, further increasing the difference between the two parts of the colonial civil service. Consequently, the prestige and stature of the indigenous aristocracy was diminished in the eyes of both the Javanese people and Europeans alike. To compensate

⁴⁹ “Nota Betreffende de Verhouding tusschen het Europeesch en het Inlandsch Bestuur op Java en Madoera,” *De Indische Gids*, vol. 11, No. 2 (1889) 1524.

⁵⁰ “Nota Betreffende de Verhouding tusschen het Europeesch en het Inlandsch Bestuur,” 1521-1524.

for their lack of power, many indigenous civil servants not only demanded more deference from the Javanese people, they also showed more to their European superiors in the hope of at least having some measure of influence. Hadi Ningrat argues that more education for the Javanese elite will remedy this imbalance and bring prestige back to the indigenous civil service.⁵¹

The first challenges to the adoption and use of Javanese deference forms by the colonizer came from the upper echelon of the Javanese aristocracy and civil service, from persons who felt their rights were violated or ignored. In essence, they not so much opposed Javanese deference rituals per se, but their adoption and exaggeration by the Dutch. They were not alone in their criticism; among the Dutch there was also a growing sense of unease with the existing situation by the end of the nineteenth century. This more progressive movement among the Europeans in the Indies and in the Netherlands would result in the promulgation of the Ethical Policy in 1901, the equivalent of the civilizing mission.

One of the strongest opponents of the use of Javanese deference rituals by Dutch colonial civil servants and private entrepreneurs was H.E. Steinmetz. A young controller himself, he was well aware of the deference practices pervasive on Java. In 1888 he wrote a book under his pseudonym “Eckart”, titled *Indische Brieven aan een Staatsraad*, in which he was highly critical of the behavior of European civil servants towards their Javanese subordinates in general, specifically their abuse of *hormat* traditions. He characterized the first years of the career of any Dutch civil servant as the *hormat*-period, since it was then that one was most susceptible to the influences of the indigenous civil

⁵¹ Hadi Ningrat, “De Achteruitgang van het Prestige der Inlandsche Hoofden en de Middelen om daarin Verbetering te Brengen,” *Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur*, Vol. 17 (1899) 367-385.

service and took exaggerated deference for granted. It was not surprising then, according to Steinmetz, that the young civil servant quickly learned to be “angered when an indigenous person passes him or his house without uncovering his head nor dismounts his horse; when a lower ranking civil servant dares to address him in Malay; a *Wedana* or tax collector enters his home with footwear, etc.”⁵² Interesting enough, Steinmetz also brought a new perspective to the debate by observing that Javanese who willingly show European civil servants plenty of deference can easily manipulate them, especially, since indigenous civil servants depended on their European superiors for career promotions and other benefits of the occupation.

Steinmetz believed the Javanese themselves have come to see how humiliating their traditional deference rituals were, especially when directed to Europeans. He therefore reached the same conclusion that Hadi Ningrat and Kartini would after him:

“The Javanese realizes more and more, that the Javanese deference rituals are humiliating. As a rule he still wants to show them towards Javanese, prescribed within a system; but with repugnance he shows them towards his European superiors; not out of aversion, but because they are not customary among Europeans, who only have limited understanding of them, demand deference rituals, but do not know that a certain approachable attitude is required in return, in one word because they are outside the system.”⁵³

Therefore, Steinmetz argued that the colonial government should prohibit European civil servants from demanding traditional Javanese deference rituals. He reasoned that they were humiliating for the Javanese, time-consuming, and they did nothing to further European prestige. To those who insisted that Javanese deference was necessary for maintaining colonial prestige and authority, Steinmetz replied they should do something

⁵² Eckart [Pseudonym of H.E. Steinmetz], *Indische Brieven aan een Staatsraad* (Haarlem: De Erven F. Bohn, 1888) 181-182.

⁵³ Eckart [Pseudonym of H.E. Steinmetz], *Indische Brieven aan een Staatsraad*, 181-182.

about the of cohabitation Dutch men with concubines, their alcoholism and their godlessness. He charged that these were the things undermining the prestige of Europeans, not the lack of Javanese deference. Steinmetz's plea came too soon: the bureaucrats of the Indies were not yet ready to follow his lead.

Steinmetz was certainly not the only colonial administrator who believed the time had come to begin the de-feudalization of colonial society. The most influential and vocal protagonist of this perspective was the first official advisor for native affairs in the Netherlands Indies, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje. Originally trained as an Arabic and Islamic scholar in the Netherlands, Snouck Hurgronje found his way to the Indies after a research visit to Mecca. He believed that understanding Islam in general and local cultures specifically could improve the effectiveness of Dutch colonial policy. From 1898 till 1907 he was the first to hold the office of Advisor for Native Affairs, a position that reflected the times. It was a post independent of the Department of the Interior (responsible for the civil service) with a direct and personnel connection to the Governor-General. His task was twofold, namely to serve as a barometer of distress for the indigenous and Arab population in the Indies and to advise the Governor-General on all issues concerning these groups. Moreover, the advisor acted as an ombudsman for "educated natives" and nationalist organizations. Snouck Hurgronje was a progressive thinker and a strong supporter of the Ethical Policy who wanted to develop the inhabitants of the Indonesian archipelago. He even took it upon himself to tutor and mentor several young Javanese sons of the high *priyayi* and provide them with a Western education. Most of his students would go on to hold prominent positions in Javanese

society in the decades that followed. Of special interest here are his perceptive thoughts on the dualistic character of colonial rule and society.⁵⁴

“Ridiculous”, that is how Snouck Hurgronje described the use of exaggerated deference under colonial rule in 1896. In a letter that supposedly dealt with the issue of the introduction of desks for students in Javanese schools, he digressed into a long dissection of the dualistic character of colonial rule. He argued that it seemed unthinkable to him that interference of “modern Europeans” would lead to an increase in *hormat* instead of a decrease or moderation of it. The attitude European civil servants displayed towards these Javanese deference rituals baffled Snouck Hurgronje. Civil servants, he argued, believed in the unchanging nature of Javanese culture and thus defended their continued use of indigenous customs and traditions. Snouck Hurgronje believed just the opposite: that society and culture changed continually and should not be fossilized but guided in a modern direction. In his writings there was a tension between a sense of modernity and traditionalism. In essence, Snouck Hurgronje argued for a complete de-feudalization of colonial Javanese society by replacing traditional forms of homage and servitude with more cosmopolitan forms. After this long deviation from the intended subject of the letter, he reached the only conclusion possible: desks should be placed in Javanese schools.⁵⁵

Snouck Hurgronje sought to draw attention to the consequences of the contradictory colonial policy of de- and re-feudalization. After almost a century of indirect rule, many of the feudal Javanese traditions regarding ranks, titles, entourage,

⁵⁴ H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 181-182.

⁵⁵ Snouck Hurgronje to the Director of Education, Religion and Industry, 10 September 1896 and Snouck Hurgronje to the Director of the Administration of the Interior, 13 March 1902, in Gobeel, E. and C. Adriaanse (eds.), *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, Vol. 2, 1019-1027.

social deference conventions and the like had become outdated and difficult to maintain due to changing historical circumstances. Technological, political, social, and economic changes resulted in a society that was rapidly becoming less in harmony with its feudal core of ritual and deference. The diverging tendencies of de- and re-feudalization resulted in growing tensions among various social groups, old and new, in colonial society. It was not until the promulgation of the Ethical Policy in 1901, however, that there was finally enough political support to attempt to resolve the uncertainties, hence anxieties, caused by these dualistic policies by modernizing the outward appearance of colonial rule.

Throughout the period of the Ethical Policy it was the office of the Advisor of Native Affairs who took the initiative in dismantling the feudal façade of Dutch colonial rule. In 1903 Snouck Hurgronje instigated change by advising the Governor-General to prohibit the use of large retinues for both European civil servants and *Bupatis* while they were touring their districts. In his letter urging the change, Snouck Hurgronje writes that he was informed by various sources in indigenous society about the burden of escorting high-ranking Dutch and indigenous civil servants. For instance, he was told about a district where a Dutch Assistant-Resident demanded to be escorted by at least five indigenous civil servants on horseback whenever he went out with his carriage.

According to Snouck Hurgronje, these honorary retinues were a waste of time and money and had no purpose other than fulfilling the European desire for display. He therefore proposed to prohibit the use of retinues for high-ranking civil servants when touring in a carriage, while only requiring those Javanese civil servants to serve as an escort whose presence and expertise had an actual purpose. Within four months Snouck Hurgronje's advice was turned into an official government circular, that prohibited the use of escorts

and honorary retainers for European civil servants. It was the first sign of things yet to come.⁵⁶

In the Netherlands Indies, circulars were instructions that fell somewhere between strong advice and binding laws. This meant that compliance with these instructions was expected, but most of the time it was not monitored or enforced by the colonial government. Consequently, the theory and practice of colonial rule as reflected in government circulars could be miles apart. It depended on the local civil service representatives to execute these circulars and enforce compliance. Snouck Hurgronje acknowledged as much in 1904, stating: “the lips of a civil servant fold into a smile when pronouncing the word ‘circular’.”⁵⁷ The promulgation of multiple government circulars against the feudal character of colonial society was a challenge to that order but by no means meant its end.

The beginning of the Ethical Policy and Snouck Hurgronje’s circular regarding retainers of European and Javanese officials prompted Steinmetz to make his case against *hormat* traditions once again. Since the publication of his critical book, Steinmetz had passed through the hierarchy of the colonial civil service and reached the office of Resident of Pekalongan in central Java. His rise to prominence was remarkable since it occurred despite his highly critical opinion on the colonial relationship. Within the European civil service he was among the most progressive and staunchest supporters of the Ethical Policy. This resulted in his appointment as the president of the “diminished

⁵⁶ The advice of Snouck Hurgronje can be found in: Snouck Hurgronje to Governor-General Roosenboom, 16 August 1903, in Gobe, E. and C. Adriaanse (eds.), *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, Vol. 2, 1027-1028. This resulted in an official circular: “Dienststreken. Eergeleide. Misbruiken ten aanzien van het eergeleide bij dienststreken van Europeesche en Inlandsche ambtenaren,” *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 37, No. 5946 (Batavia: G. Kolff & Co, 1904) 395-397.

⁵⁷ Snouck Hurgronje to the Directeur van Binnenlandsch Bestuur, 20 April 1904, in Gobe, E. and C. Adriaanse (eds.), *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, Vol. 1 (1957) 525.

welfare committee.” One of the institutional icons of the Ethical Policy, it was founded in 1904 with the task of examining the causes of poverty in the Indies and recommending ways to improve the situation. In the same year as his appointment to the committee, Steinmetz also proposed to prohibit European officials from demanding traditional Javanese deference, titles, honors, and servitude: in other words; that *hormat*-abuses should be brought to an end.⁵⁸

The Governor-General requested the advice of Snouck Hurgronje in the matter, and the latter in general concurred with Steinmetz’ ideas. He described Javanese *hormat* as an outdated remnant of a period of isolation in the history of colonial Java. Due to improved modes of transport and communication Java was no longer secluded from the outside world. Its broadening horizons laid bare the backwardness of these feudal traditions, which needed to be replaced with less stilted cosmopolitan forms of deference. Snouck Hurgronje cited Japan and Siam as examples of the move he envisioned, and as evidence that the time was ripe for further reform to the grounds of cultural hegemony. He disagreed, however, with Steinmetz on one important issue: to whom the new deference regulations should be applied. Steinmetz merely wanted to prohibit European officials from demanding deference from their Javanese counterparts, as he already proposed in his book in 1889. Snouck Hurgronje intended to take it further by applying it to indigenous civil servants as well. The advisor for native affairs wanted to prevent awkward situations from occurring, such as a meeting organized by a Resident, in which all present sat on chairs until the arrival of a *Bupati*, when the lower indigenous civil

⁵⁸ For instance, see the introduction by Steinmetz to the general conclusions of the committee: “Brief van den Voorzitter der Welvaartkommissie [Steinmetz] aan de Leden der Welvaartkommissie dd20 Maart 1914 no. 35,” *Onderzoek naar de Mindere Welvaart der Inlandsche Bevolking op Java en Madoera, Vol. XII: Oorzaken der Mindere Welvaart* (Batavia: Drukkerij G. Kolff, 1914).

servants would have to slide off their seats and onto the floor. To avoid confusing situations like this, Snouck Hurgronje concluded that European officials should be prohibited from demanding Javanese deference forms and encourage their Javanese counterparts to replace these forms in their own social contacts by cosmopolitan forms as well.⁵⁹

Just a few days after taking office, Governor-General Van Heutsz was confronted with the recommendations of Steinmetz and Snouck Hurgronje. The infamous general had pacified Aceh (north Sumatra) in the previous years, and was rewarded with the highest office in the colony. With similar military decisiveness he dealt with the issues discussed in the recommendations in front of him. He ruled that the time that European officials could surround themselves with Javanese symbols of power and demand feudal deference was over. In November 1904, he signed and promulgated two circulars with the intention of modernizing colonial rule and the relationship between the European civil service and Javanese society. In a letter to the Minister of Colonial Affairs Idenburg in the Netherlands, Van Heutsz commented on his actions:

“In addition to that [the *hormat*] circular, which is primarily based on the editorship of Dr. Snouck Hurgronje, I have prohibited civil servants from surrounding themselves with chiefs on horseback during every triviality, while they conveniently sat in their carriages, let themselves be received and honored with triumphal arches, flags, fireworks and the like, as well as carrying the nowhere prescribed golden *payung*.”⁶⁰

In short, Governor-General Van Heutsz with the information provided by the advisor of native affairs Snouck Hurgronje had launched an almost all-encompassing attack against

⁵⁹ Snouck Hurgronje to the Director of the Administration of the Interior, 26 May 1904, in Gobee, E. and C. Adriaanse (eds.), *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, Vol. 2, 1028-1035.

⁶⁰ Governor-General J.B. Van Heutsz to Minister of Colonial Affairs A.W.F. Idenburg, 13 March 1905, Box 13, Inventory no. 129, Collection A.W.F. Idenburg, The Historical Documentation Center for Dutch Protestantism (HDC), Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

what he described as, the “foolishnesses” of the feudal colonial order. The *payung* circular of November 3rd prohibited the use of *payungs* by European civil servants, which was followed on November 16th by the “*hormat*-circular”, prohibiting most other forms and rituals of deference.⁶¹

The language of the *hormat*-circular reveals the underlying concerns and beliefs shared by Snouck Hurgronje and Van Heutsz – the two had previously worked together during the pacification of Aceh – with regard to the future development of the colony. The circular stated that more modern international forms of respect should replace the Javanese feudal forms of deference to stimulate increased participation of the Javanese in modern society. Traditional *hormat* was not only described as outdated, it was also time consuming, humiliating for those whose sense of dignity had just been awakened, and adverse to the development of trust among colonizer and colonized. In a sense, the circular intended to align the exterior appearance of colonial rule with its more modern interior institutions and developments. It also preemptively undermined the argument against its promulgation, by claiming that:

“It is a false notion indeed to think that the authority, through simplification of indigenous social formalities, would be endangered and that maintenance of customs such as appearing before superiors without foot-wear, sitting on the floor, accompanying discussions with *sembah* etc. would involve an interest of state.”⁶²

⁶¹ “No. 6118. Hormat Gebruiken. Eerbiedsbetoon. Afschaffing of beperking van de specifiek-Inlandsche hormatgebruiken,” *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 38 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1905) 314-316. The *payung* circular has not been published in the official *Bijblad*. It was however promulgated on November 3, 1904. These dates and the essence of the circular can be found in the colonial press and in the *hormat* circular of 1906: “Hormatgebruiken. Eerbiedsbetoon. Nederlandsche Taal. Aanmoediging van het gebruik der Nederlandsche taal door Inlandsche ambtenaren. Herinnering aan de gegeven voorschriften betreffende de afschaffing of beperking van de specifiek Inlandsche hormatgebruiken,” *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 40, No. 6496 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1907) 265-268.

⁶² “No. 6118. Hormat gebruiken,” *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 38, 315.

This was a carefully worded warning to those European civil servants who maintained that these measures would diminish their prestige and consequently colonial authority. Nonetheless, the *hormat*-circular of 1904 left these conservatives with room for maneuvering, since it stated that the process of change should be most strongly encouraged in areas of modern development (e.g. urban settings), which left most of colonial Java open to a less urgent interpretation.⁶³

The Appearance of Colonial Rule Contested

The *payung* and *hormat* circulars – as the Van Heutsz measures were known – provoked a fierce debate in colonial society that lasted till the end of colonial rule. Although supporters of the new progressive policy could be found, its opponents were far more prominent in the colonial press. The editor of the largest European newspaper in Surabaya, was one of the few who applauded the decision of the Governor-General to prohibit the use of *hormat*. As long as *hormat* keeps the Javanese stuck in the feudal age, he argued, it would be impossible to uplift them into strong, self-conscious economical individuals. More importantly, he stated, colonial rule should not be based on traditional deference but on virtuousness and moral superiority of the colonizer. In other words, he interpreted the circulars as measures to redefine the grounds of cultural hegemony in the colony.⁶⁴

The conservative editor of Batavia's largest paper dismissed this praise from his colleague by stating:

⁶³ "No. 6118. Hormat gebruiken," *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 38, 314-316.

⁶⁴ *Soerabaiasch Handelsblad*, 26 November 1904.

“It will take some time, we argue, before the native is convinced of the virtuousness of our government. Till the time of his persuasion, our authority rests upon the prestige of the European name and – in absence or loss of that prestige – on the point of the bayonet. *Payungs are cheaper than bayonets and less cruel.* They are more beautiful as well, though this does not need to be part of the consideration.”⁶⁵

The perspective of the author is clear: colonial authority depends on *hormat* and other Javanese symbols of power. Thus, the basis of cultural hegemony cannot be changed abruptly without incurring the risk of maintaining authority by force. Just as his Batavian colleague, the editor of the newspaper in Semarang warned that *hormat* was more than ceremonial deference, that it was an essential part of the fabric of Eastern societies. By “maintaining indigenous institutions – even if only symbolically – the ruler does not incite complaints and resistance, which makes it possible to rule peacefully and with relatively few means a numerically powerful native population.”⁶⁶ In other words, the circulars were a direct threat to the existence of the Netherlands Indies.

By far the most attention in the press was given to the abolition of the *payung*. During the nineteenth century it had become *the* symbol of colonial rule and many Europeans in colonial society therefore greeted its dismissal with a strong sense of nostalgia. To add insult to injury, the *payung* was only taken away from European civil servants; it remained as a symbol of power for Javanese officials. Governor-General Van Heutsz, only recently hailed as a national hero due to his victory in the Aceh conflict, was now depicted as the enemy of the *payung*, European prestige, and colonial society in general. His notion of rule through moral superiority instead through the golden *payung* was rejected as being too naive. The European press tried hard to demonstrate the

⁶⁵ The italics are mine. Karel Wybrands, “Een idealist-practicus,” *Het Nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch Indië*, Vol. 9, No. 278, 30 November 1904.

⁶⁶ *De Locomotief*, 26 November 1904. Also see the discussion of this article in: “De Hormat,” *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (1905) 265-266.

foolishness of Van Heutsz's policy. According to one article, an anonymous *Bupati* had informed the newspaper about how the abolition of the *payung* for European officials undermined their authority and prestige in Javanese eyes. Others reported that the Javanese believed that the Governor-General punished the European civil servants by taking away their *payungs*. Finally, with a sense of humor some made fun of the situation by placing an advertisement that offered golden *payungs* for ridiculously low prices.⁶⁷

The anxiety surrounding the abolition of the *payung* is best captured in a nostalgic poem published in the conservative newspaper *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië* (see next page below and fig. 2.1), titled "A Resident's farewell to his *payung*".⁶⁸ The poem begins with an evolutionary reference, characteristic of the times, which implies that the *payung* degenerates from the symbol of power of the Dutch to the shelter of a lowly roasted-peanut salesman. This might be interpreted as referring to the changing use of *payungs* from symbols of power to mere sunscreens. But a different meaning is hinted at here. Since the *payung* remained a symbol of power for Javanese officials, the latter are here equated with a common roasted-peanut salesman. The insinuation is twofold: true power in the colony lies in the hands of European civil servants, not in those of the Javanese. Moreover, without the *payungs* of the Europeans, all others will lose their importance. This was actually not completely far fetched. In his memoirs, *Bupati* Achmad Djajadiningrat recalls that although he had the right to carry a *payung* as *Bupati* of Serang (west Java), out of respect for his European colleagues he

⁶⁷ For example: "Nog even iets over de pajoengs," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 9, No. 283, 6 December 1904. "De pajoeng," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 10, No. 16, 19 January 1905. *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 10, No. 18, 21 January 1905. "Hormat," *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (1905) 431-433.

⁶⁸ "Eens Residenten Afscheid aan zijn Pajong," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 9, No. 281, 3 December 1904.

stopped using it when they had to. Djajadiningrat was one of Snouck Hurgronje's pupils, Western educated and therefore the exception rather than the rule. Most of his colleagues in the indigenous civil service continued the use of their *payung*.⁶⁹

The language of the poem is revealing as well. For instance, it becomes clear that the *payung* was thought to have brought the office of Resident much prestige. Terms as 'stately', 'proudly', 'noble', and 'graceful' all refer to the seigniorial position of the Dutch Resident. The accompanying photograph confirms and reinforces this image. The European Resident is dressed in his official costume, seated in a carriage while two of his servants sit on the bridge. One holds the reins, wearing a top hat, while the other holds the gilded *payung* as another clear symbol of the authority of their passenger. The photo makes the sentence, "You stood so graceful, o *Payung*, on the coach, Which the studs friskily moved forward," come to life. Just as interesting are the references to the support and protection the *payung* provides its bearer with. In a sense, the implication is that without the *payung* the European officials have lost their armor vis-à-vis the indigenous population of Java. This is the essence of the debate on the *payung* and *hormat* circulars: the Europeans felt that without the shield of feudal Javanese symbols of power and deference, they could no longer command authority in the colony as easily as before. Instead they believed colonial rule would fall back on the threat of the bayonet. As the poem shows, they blamed Van Heutsz directly for his anti-*hormat* policy. Protagonists of the circulars – pushing the "currents of anti-*hormat*" forward – dismissed this as a foolish notion and argued that sincere morality was a much stronger basis for colonial rule.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Achmad Djajadiningrat, *Herinneringen van Pangeran Aria Achmad Djajadiningrat* (Amsterdam; Batavia: G. Kolff & Co., 1936) 224-226.

⁷⁰ "Eens Residenten Afscheid aan zijn Pajong," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 9, No. 281, 3 December 1904



Fig. 2.1. Resident A. Salmon of Pasuruan posing in his carriage in 1898. Several servants, one of whom is holding a ceremonial golden state *payung*, accompany the Dutch official in the portrait. Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image Code: 34028).

A RESIDENT'S FAREWELL TO HIS *PAYUNG*

The cap on my head, the parasol above it...
O, double aureole, what extinguished your glow?
Don't take the *Payung* from us, o believe
We would rather miss our top hat.

My parasol, I see you degrading
To shelter of a roasted-peanut salesman
No longer shall I parade along the main roads
In the shadow of your golden glow! Alas!

Let the high hat be the offering for your anger....
Alas, it is too late: gone complaint and tear:
No *Payung* anymore! On the currents of anti-*hormat*
It floats: a wreckage! Van Heutsz has done it!

How good it was, when I, so calm and stately,
Proudly stepping in the shadow of the noble metal.
Approvingly nodding, though moderate in greeting
Basking in your glow, your precious splendor.

No longer will you decorate my gallery,
When I hold my monthly audience.
Nothing remains in my office: only paperwork...
The cap, well yes! But it might be lost as well!

You stood so graceful, o *Payung*, on the coach
Which the studs friskily moved forward.
Every servant was proud to carry you.
And cheerily the people honored you.

Farewell, honored emblem! No lamentations!
No longer may I slumber in your protection:
No longer shall you wait for me at certain place:
Destiny is cruel: it robs me from your support.

They carried you behind me into the store,
Where I sometimes bought sardines for breakfast
Ah, without *Payung* I could do nothing:
The *Payung* followed me at every corner.

My parasol, I see you degrading
To shelter of a roasted-peanut salesman
No longer shall I parade along the main roads
In the shadow of your golden glow! Alas!

Source: The nostalgic poem can be found in the Dutch language newspaper *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 9, No. 281, 3 December 1904 (Translation by the author).

The European press also resorted to using indigenous contributors to the debate on the *payung* and *hormat* circulars to lend credibility to their own arguments. These contributions were aimed at a predominantly European audience, but brought some new perspectives to the debate nonetheless. For instance, an author who called himself “Wongso” (a pseudonym) in the conservative *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië* argued that the Dutch should not try to “enforce evolution” upon the Javanese. Instead they should respect and protect Javanese culture. That would be true enlightened colonial policy. Wongso wrote in response to the writings of Goenawan, a doctor djawa in training, who earlier stated on hearing about the circulars that “cheers of joy went up from the hearts of the young Javanese”. The contrast between the two is fascinating. Goenawan was Western-educated and a member of the proto-nationalist young Indies movement. He represented the Javanese who looked to the West for guidance and inspiration. Wongso’s line of reasoning signified he either was a European working under a Javanese pseudonym, or a member of the traditional Javanese aristocracy. Wongso accused Goenawan of being someone who belied his nationality, being neither indigenous nor European, but worst of all: a hybrid. Consequently, Wongso argued that Goenawan had lost the right to judge the values and conventions of the Javanese and attempted to undermine the foundation of the Javanese society. He rhetorically wondered if Goenawan truly believed that *Bupatis* would rather not sit on the floor like their fellow countrymen as well. In short, the conservative Wongso – and the Europeans he represented – claimed that he knew what is best for both colonizer and colonized, which obviously was the retraction of the circulars.⁷¹

⁷¹ “Wongso” [Pseudonym], “Schetsen uit het Javaansche Volksleven No. 17. De Javaan en zijn hormatgebruiken,” *Het Nieuws van de Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 10, No. 128 and No. 129, 5 and

The fall-out of the circulars quickly reached the metropole itself, where the Minister of Colonial Affairs Idenburg was confronted with many disgruntled Indies veterans (military and civil service personnel), most of whom he considered very conservative. In a letter to Governor-General Van Heutsz, Idenburg assured him he supports the content of the circulars, but that it has created many influential enemies at home. Through public opinion these conservatives spread the perspective that the *hormat*-circular undermined an “important principle of Government.” Consequently, the Queen heard of the matter and questioned Idenburg on the issue. The Minister of Colonial Affairs tried to convince Queen Wilhelmina of the moral justness of Van Heutsz views, which probably was not too hard since it was a speech of the Queen that signified the beginning of the Ethical Policy. However, Idenburg requested more information from Van Heutsz since he feared that he might be questioned once more in parliament.⁷² In a reply, Van Heutsz promised the necessary paperwork to fully inform Idenburg. He ended his correspondence with a rhetorical question: Those before him used the *payung* and he abolished it, “who had the most authority and prestige?”⁷³

In February 1906 Governor-General requested an update from Snouck Hurgronje on the effectiveness of both the *payung* and *hormat* circulars. In a reply Snouck Hurgronje explained that the *payung* circular has been highly successful, mainly because it dealt with such a strong visual symbol. However, the *hormat* circular should be considered a failure. European civil servants still demanded that their Javanese

6 June 1905. Goenawan, “De Javaan en zijn hormatgebruiken,” *De Java Bode*, 22 May 1905 and 23 June 1905.

⁷² Minister of Colonial Affairs Idenburg to Governor-General Van Heutsz, 14 February 1905, Inventory no. 079, Collection J.B. Van Heutsz, The National Archives, The Hague, The Netherlands.

⁷³ Governor-General Van Heutsz to Minister of Colonial Affairs Idenburg, 13 March 1905, Box 13, Inventory no. 129, Collection A.W.F. Idenburg, HDC, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

counterparts sit on the ground in the *sila* posture, present a *sembah* everytime they spoke, and use the stratified Javanese language in their conversations. He thus advised Van Heutsz “that a renewed, strong inculcation of the intentions of the Government in this regard seems anything but redundant.”⁷⁴ Van Heutsz agreed with his advisor and issued another *hormat*-circular in April 1906.⁷⁵

With the *hormat*-circular of 1906, Governor-General Van Heutsz expressed his sincere discontent with the continued use of Javanese *hormat*-traditions by the European civil service. In the opinion of Van Heutsz, those civil servants who acted in accordance with the spirit of the circular were the exception instead of the rule. The failure of most European civil servants to comply with the government regulations not only undermined its explicit wishes, but also resulted in the perseverance of the feudal deference traditions in colonial society. The circular makes it clear that in the eyes of Van Heutsz the days of the seigniorial civil servants were over. They needed to obey the orders of the central bureaucracy. The circular explicitly mentions two examples of undesired behavior. First it referred to the refusal of many European civil servants to converse in Dutch with their indigenous counterparts. Second, European civil servants are called upon to stop forcing indigenous civil servants from using the *payung* as a symbol of power. The *payung* was taken out of European hands, not those of the indigenous bureaucracy. The Governor-General therefore urged his civil servants to comply with all his previous circulars.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Snouck Hurgronje to Governor-General Van Heutsz, 1 March 1906, in Gobee, E. and C. Adriaanse (eds.), *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, Vol. 2, 1037-1038.

⁷⁵ “No. 6496. Hormatgebruiken. Eerbiedsbetoon. Nederlandsche Taal. Aanmoediging van het gebruik der Nederlandsche taal door Inlandsche ambtenaren. Herinnering aan de gegeven voorschriften betreffende de afschaffing of beperking van de specifiek Inlandsche hormatgebruiken,” *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 40 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1907) 265-268.

⁷⁶ “No. 6496. Hormatgebruiken. Eerbiedsbetoon,” in: *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 40, 265-268.

The public debate following the promulgation of the 1906 circular was relatively timid, which seems to suggest that the anger about the abolition of the *payung* had ebbed away.⁷⁷ Nonetheless, the circular was oil on the fire of the ongoing debate about who knew best how and on what grounds to govern the Netherlands Indies: the European civil servants who worked in the field or the central bureaucrats in their office buildings in Batavia? For instance, the editor of the largest Batavian newspaper stated bluntly that one could not blame the civil servants, to whom he referred as “men of reality” for not following the dreadful instructions within the *hormat* circulars. By insinuation, the editor labeled Van Heutsz and his advisors, such as Snouck Hurgronje and later Hazeu, as mere “men of theory” who were not familiar with Javanese reality. Obviously, those who supported the circulars interpreted this disparity between theory and practice differently. The eloquent civil servant Henri Borel protested against the seigniorial behavior and arrogance of his fellow civil servants in the field. In his opinion to be a civil *servant* meant to *serve* the colonial community as opposed to feeling or believing to be superior to that community. Many Europeans outside the civil service shared this opinion, since they too felt discriminated against by the, in their eyes, arrogance of the civil servants. In part, this reflected the broader modification of social hierarchy in colonial society by the transfer of prestige and influence from European civil servants to specialists, such as engineers.⁷⁸

An underlying theme throughout this debate was which group was most able to maintain cultural hegemony in the colony. The European civil servants represented those

⁷⁷ “Een Tweede Hormat-Circulaire,” *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (1906) 1101-1102.

⁷⁸ Wybrands, Karel, “Regeerings-beleid en Regeerings-organen.” *Het Nieuws van de Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 11, No. 92, 23 April 1906. Henri Borel, “Ambtenaar,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 14, 28 July 1907, 269-271. A. Muhlenfeld, “Iets over de naleving der voorschriften in bijblad 6061, 6118 en 6496,” *Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur*, Vol. 35, 33-39.

who argued in favor for maintaining Javanese feudal traditions, whereas bureaucrats such as Snouck Hurgronje and Hazeu were advocates of the Ethical Policy and its emphasis on modernization of the colonial relationship. In support of the *hormat*-circular of 1906, an article in a Dutch newspaper argued that colonial rule should be based on moral superiority, dignity, and strong character. Good civil servants do not need symbols of power nor Javanese deference to administer the colony. To those who argue otherwise, it is asked why draw the line with the *payung* and *hormat*? Why do the civil servants not convert to Islam, dress like the Javanese or wear a headscarf? The conclusion is that Europeaan civil servants should put aside their vanity and base their prestige on their moral superiority. In response, an anonymous author, using the pseudonym of “Carlo”, rhetorically wondered in a popular Indies weekly:

“If one could keep this country under our authority completely, through nothing else than *hormat* [deference], without a single soldier, wouldn’t that be the ideal-situation from a colonizing perspective?”⁷⁹

He adds that the physical weakness of the Dutch (i.e. their limited numbers in the Indies) is compensated for by the mental weakness of the Javanese (i.e. their proneness to submission). In the end, the gap between practice and reality appeared unbridgeable to both sides of the argument, resulting in a stalemate.

In the last year of Van Heutsz’ term as Governor-General of the Netherlands Indies, he once more challenged the persistent reality of European civil servants demanding deference from the Javanese. This time it was newspaper articles mentioning abuses by civil servants in the press that prompted him to undertake action.⁸⁰ He was

⁷⁹ Carlo [Pseudonym], “Indische Indrukken XXIV,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 3, No. 14, 29 July 1906, 301-304. *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 13 June 1906.

⁸⁰ “Dingen van de Dag,” *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, 30 December 1908, 1-2.

especially disappointed with the unwillingness of European civil servants to converse with the educated Javanese in Dutch. Asked about this situation, the new advisor of native and Arabic affairs Hazeu shared his own experiences with Van Heutsz⁸¹:

“When I stayed in Tjandjoer in May 1907, I personally witnessed how mister A.A.A. van Dijk, the Assistant-Resident, was addressed in Sundanese, and accompanied by *sembah*, by the same *Jaksa* [indigenous legal official] who only several hours later had a conversation with me in Dutch.”⁸²

According to Hazeu, many European civil servants still demanded that they be addressed in high Javanese (*krama*), not in Dutch. The situation was complicated further by the sense among European and Javanese civil servants that a mutual conversation in Dutch would not reflect the hierarchy enough.

Van Heutsz’ last circular in 1909 regarding the issue of *hormat* was also the most threatening in its language. It opened by stating that the Governor-General “can and will not allow that his clear orders be considered unwritten.”⁸³ The circular of 1909 demanded of all European civil servants complete compliance with the previous circulars of 1904 and 1906 or incur serious consequences. In addition, it ordered everyone to report on instances of disobedience. It is remarkable that despite its threatening language this particular circular did not cause as much of a public stir as its predecessors. The press might have lost interest, or simply had more important things to cover, such as the national awakening of the Javanese. What did happen however, was that within the

⁸¹ In 1907 Hazeu succeeded Snouck Hurgronje as advisor for native and Arabic affairs. He had served as Snouck Hurgronje’s assistant in working on native languages and society since 1904 and shared his tutor’s opinions on *hormat* and the need to modernize colonial rule.

⁸² G.A.J. Hazeu to Governor-General Van Heutsz, 11 March 1909, Folder 17, Inventory no. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands. Note: the modern spelling of “Tjandjoer” is Cianjur, which lies in West-Java where the predominant language was Sundanese, not Javanese. As the example demonstrates, the objections against using Dutch are the same.

⁸³ “No. 7029. Eerbiedsbetoon. Nederlandse Taal. Herinnering aan de gegeven wenken en bevelen met betrekking tot de aanmoediging van het gebruik der Nederlandsche taal door Inlandsche ambtenaren,” *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 43 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1910) 120-121.

colonial administration panic struck among the civil servants. They felt cornered and mistreated by the Governor-General and two of them decided to address him privately.

The Resident of Rembang, Gonggrijp, in his letter to the Governor-General stated that he believed the latter had been misinformed, either due to inexperience or malevolence. This is an indirect accusation against Snouck Hurghronje and Hazeu, whose position was the envy of most civil servants but whose “ethical tendencies” were detested. Moreover, Gonggrijp argued that he has – in his twenty-five years of service – never received any indication that civil servants are disobedient to the government. Instead, Gonggrijp believed that the fault of the “disobedience” lay with the Javanese officials, since they refused to converse with their European counterparts in Dutch. For instance, he demanded of his *Jaksa* to address him in Dutch, but the *Jaksa* refused to do so because he believed it to be impolite.⁸⁴ The Resident of the Preanger, Boissevain, wrote a letter with a similar message to Van Heutsz. According to him he spoke to a *Bupati* who explained to him why Javanese officials could not speak Dutch with European civil servants. When the *Bupati* visited the Director of the Administration of the Interior he took his place on the ground, made a *sembah*, but did not speak Dutch. According to the *Bupati*, “Javanese traditions and speaking Dutch do not go together.”⁸⁵ Both Residents directly implied that Van Heutsz should listen to the advice of the European civil servants, like themselves, instead of trusting the opinion of academic bureaucrats such as Hazeu. However, by the end of Van Heutsz’ tenure as Governor-General (1904-1909), the advisor for native affairs had become influential, the European

⁸⁴ Resident of Rembang Gonggrijp to Governor-General Van Heutsz, 27 April 1909, Folder 17, Inventory no. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

⁸⁵ Resident of Preanger-Residencies W.T.L. Boissevain to Governor-General Van Heutsz, 30 April 1909, Folder 17, Inventory no. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

civil service was on the defensive, *payungs* for Europeans were a relic of the past, and deference traditions appeared to follow suit.

The *hormat*-debate coincided with the birth of a nationalist movement in the Indies. This was not accidental since both can be considered in part as results of the Ethical Policy. The rise of the “young Javanese”, as the first nationalists were called, reignited the debate on Javanese deference traditions and changed its dynamic drastically. Where previously the question was to what extent Europeans could demand Javanese deference forms, the young Javanese questioned the pervasiveness of Javanese feudalism in general. In other words, they did not just want to modernize the interactions between Europeans and Javanese, but among all members of colonial society. Interestingly, most of the young Javanese themselves originated from the privileged *priyayi* class, but as a result of their education and work outside the traditional civil service, many came to consider themselves as a class of new intellectuals. The appearance of the young Javanese as new participants in the *hormat* debate led to the forging of new cross-ethnic alliances. The protagonists of the Ethical Policy and the young Javanese together opposed the coalition of European civil servants and Javanese aristocrats.⁸⁶

The diverging opinions on the matter of *hormat* were reflected in the rapidly expanding vernacular press. For instance, in January 1912, in the *Pemberita Betawi* an anonymous author urged his fellow countrymen to stop showing old-fashioned forms of deference, such as crouching, to their superiors. He stated that these practices had their use in the past, but they do not belong in the present century of progress. However, in the

⁸⁶ Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*. Akira Nagazumi, *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism. The Early Years of the Budi Utomo, 1908-1918* (Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies, 1972). A.P.E. Korver, *Sarekat Islam 1912-1916: Opkomst bloei, en structuur van Indonesië's eerste massabeweging* (Amsterdam: Historisch Seminarium van de Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1982).

same month champions of *hormat* traditions voiced their concerns in the *Pantjaran Warta*. In this newspaper deference was presented as a product of civilization and development, without which society would move in the wrong direction. To prevent this degeneration from occurring, the young generation needed to be taught to be more, not less, respectful of its social superiors. It is not hard to find many other articles in the vernacular press that were critical as well, for example challenging the young Javanese to cease behaving like hypocrites. Where, on the one hand, they argued in favor of abolishing *hormat* traditions in their contacts with their superiors, on the other, they continued to exact deference from their inferiors! This was just the beginning of a society-wide debate on the issue of *hormat*, which would reach its peak in the following decade.⁸⁷

This development did not come as a surprise to the office of the advisor for native affairs. Just months after the foundation of Budi Utomo in 1908, the first Javanese political organization in the Indies, Hazeu reported that he had seen the debate coming. Only to the untrained observer, he argued, did the Javanese appear unchangeable and static – a sneer to his conservative adversaries – but in part due to the educational policies of the colonial government the opposite had now been demonstrated. The resulting group of Javanese intellectuals consisted of young civil servants as well as those trained in modern professions, such as medicine and teaching. In essence, they became a new social group, which distanced itself from the traditional aristocracy by emphasizing merit over birth. Their rapid organizational development resulted in the founding of the Sarekat Islam in 1912. Its rise made it clear to Hazeu that the era when the calm Javanese simply

⁸⁷ *Pemberita Betawi*, 17 January 1912, in *Koloniaal Tijdschrift* (KT), Vol. 1 (1912), 219. *Pantjaran Warta*, 18 January 1912, in KT, Vol. 1 (1912) 229-230. *Bintang Soerabaja*, No. 82, in KT, Vol. 1 (1912) 724.

accepted everything unpleasant were gone for good. The young Javanese also applauded the *hormat*-circulars, but still dealt with oppression in their daily life. They still had to squat, present *Bupati*'s with *sembah*, depend on him for job allocations, their career, and the education of their children. In short, he could make or break them. Therefore they wanted to end the hereditary character of the office of the *Bupati* and instead have merit not birth determine appointment.⁸⁸

The rise of the nationalist movement not only caused great anxiety among the Javanese but was also met with suspicion and fear among the European population. In several letters of the successor of Van Heutsz, Governor-General Idenburg, one can find mention of “nervous anxiety”, “fear”, and “a nauseous panic” among the European and Chinese groups in the Indies. Moreover, he alludes to the clear schism that has developed within the European community between the protagonists of the Ethical Policy and those supporting society as it was:

“The difference in opinion that becomes clearer between myself on the one hand, with a relatively small group such as Dr. Hazeu and Dr. Rinkes [...], and the large heap of Europeans and Chinese here in the Indies on the other hand, is in my opinion thorough. At stake is the question of whether we are sincere in uplifting the natives both mentally and materially or whether everything remains the same and exploitation by the state is merely replaced by exploitation by private enterprise.”⁸⁹

In fact, what happened in the Indies was a great fragmentation of political order and social society. Several groups came forth to advocate their plans for the future direction of colonial society. The accompanying anxiety resulted in conflicts that were

⁸⁸ D.A. Rinkes, “Oude en Nieuwe Stroomingen onder de Bevolking,” *Indisch Genootschap. Verslagen der Algemene Vergaderingen over de Jaren 1915-16--1920* (18 November 1916) 55-78.

⁸⁹ Idenburg (Governor-General) to H.H. van Kol (Member of Dutch Parliament), July 7, 1913, in S.L. van der Wal, *De Opkomst van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlands-Indië: Een Bronnenpublicatie* (Groningen: J.B. Wolters, 1967) 297-298.

unthinkable a decade earlier. One of the most influential of those conflicts was the one between Raden Soemarsono and Assistant-Resident Bedding in the summer of 1913.

A Turning Point: Soemarsono, Bedding and the hormat-circular of 1913

The small and dusty provincial town of Purwakarta seemed like an unlikely place for the confrontation between Assistant-Resident Bedding and Raden Soemarsono. Although Purwakarta was a part of the Residency of Batavia, life in the town hardly resembled the hustle and bustle of the cosmopolitan colonial capital. In fact, Purwakarta and surroundings was considered “ride-through” country for those travelling by train between Batavia and Bandung. Its relative isolation gave the town an aura of backwardness, at least according to Hazeu, and shielded it from modern developments such as the Ethical Policy and the nationalist movement. It was precisely because time seemed to have moved more slowly in Purwakarta that made it into a prime location for a clash between a protagonist of *kemajuan* (progress) and defenders of the old order.⁹⁰

Purwakarta was a typical nineteenth century colonial town, in that its layout clearly reflected the duality of colonial governance. The centers of Javanese and colonial rule were separated from each other, seemingly leaving the traditional center of power intact. Till this day a large pond lies at the heart of Purwakarta. On its southern shore the large residence and office of the Assistant-Resident was located. Constructed in the empire style it bore most of the traits of a typical Indies colonial house, with its columned porches, a high-hipped roof, and a typical ground plan based on Javanese architectural designs. The small European community lived to the south and east of the residence,

⁹⁰ At the time Purwakarta was the capital of the Regency of Krawang within the larger Residency of Batavia. The town was connected to the railroads in 1902.

forming a self-contained neighborhood. The traditional town center, the town square (*alun-alun*) with two holy banyan trees, could be found to the west of the pond. The square was surrounded by the residence and office of the *Bupati (Kabupaten)*, the local mosque and a prison building. Looking out over the *alun-alun* was the *pendopo* of the *Bupati* where most civil servant meetings were held. This most likely was where Bedding and Soemarsono met and squared off for the first time.

The different paths that both men followed that led to their crucial confrontation in 1913 shed a light on the anxiety and difference of opinion between the two civil servants. Bedding arrived on Java in 1893, almost a decade before the promulgation of the Ethical Policy, embarking on a 32 year long career in the European civil service. While passing through the civil service hierarchy, starting at the bottom as an Aspirant-Controller and ending at the top as Resident, he lived and worked all over Java.⁹¹ The Krawang regency, of which Purwakarta was the capital, held special meaning for him. From 1900 till 1906 he was placed in Purwakarta as an Aspirant-Controller, unaware that he would eventually return as the Assistant-Resident from 1911 till 1916. From his personal photo album it is possible to sketch an image of his life in Purwakarta (Fig. 2.2 and 2.3). The residence he lived in and the clothing his family wore indicate how the life of the Bedding family was suspended in the nineteenth century. In private his wife still wore the *sarong* and *kebaya*, an adaptation of Javanese dress, and he himself the typical white colonial suit (*jas tutup*). By this time, in the large colonial cities of Batavia

⁹¹ In 1893 Bedding began his career as an Aspirant-Controller (in Sukabumi and later in Sumedang), became Controller in 1898 (successively was stationed in the Preanger Regencies, Purwakarta, Ambarawa, Pandegelang, and Modjoagung), was promoted to Assistant-Resident in 1911 (holding office in Purwakarta and later Blitar) and finally made it as Resident of Banten in 1922. During his long Indies career Bedding twice returned to the Netherlands on a long leave (in 1907 and in 1916). Bedding retired and repatriated in 1925.

Europeans had already adopted European fashion, but this had clearly not yet reached the isolated provincial town of Purwakarta. Bedding not only was, but also lived the seigniorial life of a European civil servant of the old stamp.



Fig. 2.2. The Bedding family in the garden of their house in Purwakarta. F.l.t.r.: F. Bedding (brother), his wife F. Bedding-Hoeke, their daughter, Assistant-Resident J.C. Bedding, his daughter Emmy and his wife A. Bedding-Van Rees. Both men wear the customary white suit (*jas tutup*). Their wives however are dressed in *sarong* and *kebaya*, which is very similar to the dress of the Javanese. Interestingly, both daughters wear the most European looking outfit of the family (circa 1915). Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image Code: 119353).



Fig. 2.3. Assistant-Resident Bedding and his family on the front porch of their colonial empire style home in Purwakarta (circa 1911). Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image Code: 119332).

In contrast, Raden Soemarsono was among the first Javanese of noble descent – *Raden* is an aristocratic title that means ‘of noble blood’ – to receive a Western education in the Indies. In 1901 he was one of just three Javanese who took part in and passed the admissions exam for the European secondary school in Batavia. After finishing his European education he first held the office of Assistant-Wedana (assistant-district head) within the indigenous civil service in Bogor, before being appointed as *Jaksa* of Batavia in 1911. Finally, he was reassigned to Purwakarta in 1913. In the words of Hazeu, Soemarsono thus made the transfer from “Grosz-Stadt Batavia” and the Residence of the Governor-General to an “old-fashioned provincial town”. In addition to his Western education, Soemarsono also stood out because of his involvement in the nascent nationalist movement. He was an active member of Budi Utomo (1908), considered the first political organization in the Netherlands Indies, and eventually even held a commissioner’s position within the organization. In addition, he also was active as an advisor to the Sarekat Islam (1911), generally considered the first broad nationalist political movement in Indonesian history. He balanced his private activities in these early nationalist movements with his work as the *Jaksa* of Purwakarta. This was a precarious combination, since while he worked for the regional colonial administration; he simultaneously critiqued the colonial system. This made him, and many others like him, vulnerable to accusations and attacks from both European civil servants and more traditional Javanese aristocrats.⁹²

However, the ‘young Javanese’ did have influential allies in government circles. It was Snouck Hurgronje who tutored many of the leaders of the first wave of

⁹² G.A.J. Hazeu to the Governor-General, 18 and 20 August 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

nationalists, and his successor Hazeu continued with his work. The position of the advisor of native and Arabic affairs actually grew in importance with the increasing anxieties surrounding the 'nationalist awakening'. As, with Raden Soemarsono, this placed Hazeu in precarious position. On the one hand he directly influenced the Governor-General through his advices on all matters relating to indigenous developments, but on the other hand, his many contacts with the indigenous movements made him vulnerable to criticism from more conservative civil servants. One of Hazeu's contacts was Raden Soemarsono, and their relationship was the indirect cause of the explosion of public debate on the importance of culture in legitimizing colonial authority.

Towards the end of July 1913 Soemarsono appealed to his mentor Hazeu for support. In his letters to Hazeu he explained that Assistant-Resident Bedding and the Resident of Batavia had accused him of incitement and revolutionary mindedness. Additionally, Soemarsono was suspected of having transgressed the Indies press-law, a grave offense that in previous years had resulted in several Javanese being exiled. Soemarsono realized he faced serious charges, and going through his plea for help one gets the distinct impression that Soemarsono expected to be suspended, fired even, or worse. He clearly looked to Hazeu for a way out of his predicament. Although Soemarsono admitted he had a difficult personality because of his honesty and sincerity, he assured Hazeu that his "consciousness still tells him he did nothing wrong."⁹³ Hazeu

⁹³ *Jaksa* of Purwakarta Raden Soemarsono to the Advisor of Native and Arabic Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu, 28 July 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

reassured his mentee, promised he would look into the matter and kindly asked him to send all the relevant information that could help him in doing so.⁹⁴

Soemarsono's plea was not the first cry for help originating in Purwakarta that reached Hazeu. In February of the same year, a young Javanese clerk by the name of Raden Priwaridinata visited his mentors Hazeu and his colleague Hellwig, the Dutch Official Overseeing the Education of Young Javanese of Respectable Birth. Under their guidance, Priwaridinata had enjoyed a European secondary education for three years after which he joined the civil service as a clerk in 1910. However, almost three years later a promotion had still eluded him. While discussing this matter with Hazeu it became clear that something was amiss with the civil service in Purwakarta. Priwaridinata confessed that in December 1912 he had a quarrel with his European superior, the Assistant-Controller Linck, who wrongly accused him of not submitting paperwork by a certain deadline. The Assistant-Controller went as far too call Priwaridinata a liar, a slow worker, and stated he "would not be deceived by a native person." Moreover, Linck claimed that during this one-sided conversation, Priwaridinata's attitude towards him had been impolite. Consequently, the young Javanese was summoned by the *Bupati* in Purwakarta to explain his behavior. Ever since, Priwaridinata was thwarted, picked on, and offended by other civil servants. When Hazeu showed his displeasure and vowed to look into the matter, Priwaridinata thanked his mentors for their goodwill in fighting for his rights and expressed the hope it would result in a more harmonious relationship between the European and indigenous civil servants in Purwakarta. The desperation and isolation that Priwaridinata experienced in the conservative environment of Purwakarta is captured in a

⁹⁴ Raden Soemarsono to G.A.J. Hazeu, 28 July 1913 and 17 August 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands. Raden Soemarsono to D.A. Rinkes, 8 August 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

short sentence in one of his letters to his mentors: “Who else will comfort me, if not you?”⁹⁵

Within two days of the meeting with Priwaridinata, Hazeu’s interest in the case had reached Assitant-Resident Bedding of Purwakarta. Bedding contacted Hazeu and Hellwig and assured them that a large investigation was unnecessary since he would take it upon himself to set matters straight. Hazeu and Hellwig credulously agreed and wrote Bedding a letter in which they stated that they knew Prawaridinata as a decent young man, a character assessment which was confirmed by his former superior, the Assistant-Resident of Meester Cornelis, who described him as hard-working, modest, dutiful, and calm. Aspirant-Controller Linck however, had less favorable credentials, at least according to Hellwig:

“Considering the rumors that mister Linck is fond of servile deference and very sensitive for submitted humility, therein one maybe find a given that might explain much.”⁹⁶

The insinuation is clear: the modern educated Prawiradinata did not show Aspirant-Controller Linck the amount of *hormat* the latter expected – either in the form of squatting, making the *sembah* or using the language stratification – and was consequently treated as an outcast in the community. Although Bedding agreed with Hazeu and Hellwig that Linck had been at fault, he advised against further investigation of the matter and the publicity it might cause, which could only damage the prestige of the European civil service as a whole. Linck was reprimanded by Bedding and forced to

⁹⁵ See the correspondence between Raden Prawiradinata, Advisor of Native Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu, Official Overseeing the Education of Young Javanese of Respectable Birth Hellwig, and Assistant-Resident Bedding, in Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

⁹⁶ Hellwig to Hazeu, 25 February 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

apologize to Priwaridinata, which seemingly brought the matter to a close. However, for Priwaridinata the civil service had lost its charm for good. In June he accepted a new position with the Indies People's Credit Union, which paid better and was not as oppressive. Meanwhile, Linck was "punished" for his behavior with a promotion to the rank of controller and a transfer out of Purwakarta.⁹⁷ Priwaridinata would get his retribution by serving as a key-witness in the Soemarsono case that occurred several months later.

From the correspondence between Soemarsono and Hazeu we can reconstruct a chronicle of events in Purwakarta and their relationship to the final *hormat*-circular of 1913. According to Hazeu, Soemarsono was an educated young man who had a strong sense of mission to modernize his compatriots, to compete with the Chinese, and to unite the Javanese. He corresponded regularly with better-known early nationalists such as Dr. Wahidin and Tjipto Mangkoenoesoemo. This progressive worldview was reflected in his aversion to Javanese feudal society and traditions and his refusal to either demand or submit to *hormat* customs. In Batavia and Bogor this progressive attitude was more or less accepted. There he was able to express his opinion, but when he was transferred to Purwakarta this posture became a real challenge. Prawiradinata's experience had revealed to Hazeu the 'tradition of rigid conservatism' that prevailed among both the European and indigenous civil service in Purwakarta. The clash between Bedding and Soemarsono, when the latter refused to change his dress, to sit on the ground, or to conform to the language stratification, was only a precursor of things to come. Soemarsono's behavior not only came as a shock to Bedding, but also to the Javanese civil servants in the district.

⁹⁷ It was the start of a successful Indies career, which resulted in Linck holding the office of Resident of Kedoe from 1933-1938.

The latter, according to Hazeu, feared that they would lose their traditional influence over the local population if the behavior of Soemarsono was tolerated.⁹⁸

Officially Soemarsono acted within his rights and the boundaries drawn-up by the various *hormat*-circulars of the previous decade. Given his association with the nascent nationalist movement, Bedding and the traditional Javanese elite in Purwakarta found pretence to blacken the *Jaksa*. In Purwakarta, Soemarsono took it upon himself to aid the local branch of the Sarekat Islam in gaining legal recognition. He found himself diametrically opposed by the traditional *Bupati* and his family, who perceived the Sarekat Islam as a threat to their prestige and rank. In May 1913, the *Bupati* even ordered the Sarekat Islam to cease the acceptance of new members because it only encouraged estrangement instead of unity among the common people.⁹⁹ The order was to no avail: in part due to Soemarsono's support, the Purwakarta branch of the Sarekat Islam grew to 15,000 members before the end of the year.¹⁰⁰

Around the same time, on May 25, 1913, Soemarsono lectured on the occasion of the five-year anniversary of Budi Utomo. He proposed that the Javanese had to come together as one people and one nation and that their nationalism should be both economical and political. This was not a new or revolutionary lecture; Soemarsono had presented it before in Batavia where it was even published. In the environment of Purwakarta it was received differently. A newspaper report on the lecture stated that something was "fermenting" in Purwakarta. The European citizens even organized a secluded meeting in the local club to discuss a plan of action. Finally, the attitude and

⁹⁸ Advisor of Native and Arabic Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu to Governor-General A.W.F. Idenburg, 18 August 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

⁹⁹ *Het Nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 18, No. 113, 19 May 1913.

¹⁰⁰ Soewardi Suryaningrat, "Staat de Regeering werkelijk sympathiek tegenover de S.I.?", *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (13 November 1913) 48.

activities of Soemarsono were turned against him. Assistant-Resident Bedding and the *Bupati* both believed that the nationalist tone of the lecture could have a “disastrous influence” on the less developed Javanese bureaucrats. After consultation with the Resident of Batavia, Bedding summoned Soemarsono and warned him that he needed to withhold himself from using any language inciting criticism of the colonial government or suffer the consequences.¹⁰¹

Soemarsono was not one to be put in place that easily. Within weeks of the lecture he helped to spread the famous pamphlet titled “*If I were for once to be a Dutchman...*” from the hand of Soewardi Surjaningrat. In the pamphlet, Soewardi imagines what it is like to be a Dutchman who celebrates a hundred years of independence from Napoleon’s France, while being an oppressor in Asia. Soewardi finds the whole notion of a celebration an insult to the indigenous people, even more so since they are expected to participate and help finance the whole occasion. The only right thing that a ‘liberty loving Dutchman’ should do, he argues, is to democratize the Indies. Soewardi turned his Western style education and knowledge against the colonizers. In addition, this was the first time the demand for a parliament and suffrage was expressed and widely disseminated in both Dutch and Malay. It would eventually lead to the exile of Soewardi and by association it reflected very badly on Soemarsono. Assistant-Resident Bedding was thus quick to accuse Soemarsono of incitement and transgression of the press-law for illegal distribution of political pamphlets.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ “Gisting,” *Het Nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 18, No. 125, 2 June 1913.

¹⁰² Soewardi Surjaningrat, “Als ik eens Nederlander was,...,” *Uitgave van het Indische Comité tot Herdenking van Neerlands Honderjarige Vrijheid*, (Bandung: 1913). Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and the Spread of Nationalism* (London; New York: Verso, 2006) 116-119. A complete translation of the pamphlet can be found in: Savitri Prastiti Scherer, *Harmony and Dissonance: Early Nationalist Thought in Java*, M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 1975. With regards to

Hazeu was not convinced of the harmful intentions of Soemarsono. Instead he focused on Soemarsono's complaints about the feudal traditions that were still commonplace in Purwakarta. Hazeu contacted his other pupil, Prawiradinata, to discuss the situation in Purwakarta. Prawiradinata, whom Hazeu described as 'absolutely reliable', independently confirmed Soemarsono's side of the story. Moreover, his experience in Purwakarta convinced Hazeu that something was rotten in the culture of the civil service. Hazeu based his opinion on letters from Assistant-Resident Bedding and the *vice-Jaksa* of Purwakarta that Soemarsono had handed over to him. Apparently, the *vice-Jaksa* had dared to sit on a chair during a meeting of the police court in absence of the Assistant-Resident (who normally presided). Bedding suspected that Soemarsono had instigated his friend to do so and wrote the following letter to restore order to his police court:

“Considering you are expected at the session of the police court tomorrow, I notify you, that I do not allow you to sit on a chair, since that is a preference I have personally only granted to *Jaksa* R. Soemarsono. You always used to sit on a mat and without my permission, you allowed yourself to sit on a chair. There is no reason for that.”¹⁰³

According to Soemarsono, this short notice illustrated the relationship between the modern and educated Javanese on the one hand and those “European and indigenous civil servants, who still place value in the old worn out *hormat*-customs within the civil service”¹⁰⁴ on the other.

press-censorship: Mirjam Maters, *Van Zachte Wenk tot harde Hand. Persvrijheid en Persbreidel in Nederlands-Indië, 1906-1942* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 1998).

¹⁰³ Assistant-Resident J.C. Bedding to *vice-Jaksa* of Purwakarta Mas Wirasaputra, 7 July 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

¹⁰⁴ *Jaksa* of Purwakarta Raden Soemarsono to Advisor for Native and Arabic Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu, 17 August 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

The correspondence made a lasting impression on Hazeu, who a day after receiving it from Soemarsono, immediately contacted Governor-General Idenburg about the issue. Hazeu made his opinion very clear by stating: “I’m biting my lip from annoyance while writing this letter.”¹⁰⁵ He argues that the underlying problem is that the educated Javanese do not understand why they are treated differently later in their careers than they were in school. For example, first they are trained as equals, make European friends, are free to state their own opinions, and learn the Dutch language and culture. However, when they start their career in the indigenous civil service, in “nine out of ten instances, they are confronted with a European superior with a completely different mentality.” The Assistant-Resident Bedding being a case in point. Hazeu then warns the Governor-General, that if this situation does not change, he fears the consequences, since the Javanese no longer tolerate every humiliation as they used to.

In response, Governor-General Idenburg asked Hazeu for advice on how to turn the situation around. Within a day Hazeu had his answer ready: a new, but even tougher, *hormat*-circular was needed. This needed to be one which made it impossible for someone like the “Assistant-Resident Bedding, to have the power to decide individually if a native of modern development and civilization is allowed to sit on a chair in the company of European civil servants.”¹⁰⁶ For the maintenance of peace and order in the Indies, Hazeu argued, this step is absolutely necessary. The Governor-General agreed completely and issued another *hormat*-circular within less than a month from Soemarsono’s first appeal for help from Hazeu.

¹⁰⁵ Advisor for Native and Arabic Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu to Governor-General A.W.F. Idenburg, 18 August 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

¹⁰⁶ Advisor for Native and Arabic Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu to Governor-General A.W.F. Idenburg, 20 August 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Hazeu immediately informed Soemarsono of the good news. His documented complaints had made it possible for the colonial government to undertake action against the abuse of its civil servants. Moreover, he assured Soemarsono that he did not have to fear for his position, let alone exile. However, Hazeu had advised the Governor-General to transfer Soemarsono to a more progressive district to prevent relations from deteriorating further in Purwakarta. For now Soemarsono should get his satisfaction from the knowledge that the Governor-General would start an inquiry in the behavior of Assistant-Resident Bedding.¹⁰⁷ Soemarsono's reply was full of thankfulness, but also disappointment. He and the other intellectuals were very pleased with the *hormat*-circular, but he wondered why things always needed to escalate before changes were made. Soemarsono writes that he trusts Hazeu as if he was his own father and therefore shares some of his additional concerns with him. The most important one being that education is no longer enough for the Javanese. He writes: "Give us active and passive suffrage and a national parliament next to the existing Council of the Indies [...]. The Javanese wants to participate in political life."¹⁰⁸ Hazeu, who arguably prevented Soemarsono from being exiled, could not agree with his friend more.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Advisor for Native and Arabic Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu to the *Jaksa* of Purwakarta Raden Soemarsono, 22 August 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

¹⁰⁸ The *Jaksa* of Purwakarta Raden Soemarsono to the Advisor for Native and Arabic Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu, 5 September 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

¹⁰⁹ After their confrontation in Purwakarta, Soemarsono's and Bedding's paths diverged. In September 1913 Soemarsono was transferred to Purworedjo, which was thought to be a more progressive district. But the restless Soemarsono could no longer be constrained by the regulations of the civil service and in 1917 was fired as *Jaksa*. He remained an active Budi Oetomo member. Bedding, just like Linck before him, was not truly punished and went on to a successful career. When he retired in 1925, he did so as the Resident of Bantam.

The *hormat*-circular of the 22nd of August 1913 was far more threatening than all its precursors.¹¹⁰ Hazeu's hand is clearly recognizable in the text of both the circular and the accompanying attachment. The circular opened with an extensive overview of the preceding *hormat*-circulars, after which it concluded that these had been willfully ignored by a considerable part of the European and Indigenous civil service. In essence, the circular stated that all who continued to diametrically oppose government policies would face severe punishment. The circular is a clear product of the Ethical Policy, since it reiterates that there is no reason to be afraid of the national awakening of the Javanese, "instead, it should be interpreted as the first result of the long lasting attempts to uplift the natives."¹¹¹ Finally, it emphasized that civil servants are there for the people, not the other way around.

Just as important as the circular itself, was the attached confidential document that elaborated on the changing relationship between the European civil service and the indigenous people. Its message was clear: No longer could Europeans be considered the superiors of the growing number of highly educated young Javanese. Consequently, the attitudes towards these Javanese intellectuals needed to adapt to the times. Three case studies were provided to show how not to proceed, and although these were anonymous, two of the three examples are familiar. The first dealt with Prawiradinata's quarrel with Linck and the third with Soemarsono's confrontation with Bedding. The occasional recourse to harsh language in this document showed the dissatisfaction of the government

¹¹⁰ The *hormat*-circular of 22nd August 1913 was given the administrative number 2014, which in the years to follow became synonymous with the struggle against the abuse of power and demands of *hormat*. The number can be spotted throughout the European and vernacular press of the time.

¹¹¹ "No. 7939. *Hormat-Circulaire* 1913," *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 48 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1914). The confidential attachment can be found in: "Nota bij de *hormatcirculaire* van 22 Augustus 1913," Folder 57, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

and seemed to promise a strong move towards de-feudalization of the colonial relationship. However, when this confidential note leaked to the press and the judgment of the government on its own civil servants became public, an unprecedented debate in both the European and the vernacular press erupted. This time, all groups in colonial society were involved in the quickly escalating debate.¹¹²

In the periodical for European civil servants, which was publicly available, the complaints and defenses over the public humiliation of the civil servants were numerous. Several themes return in all of them. First, the frustration over receiving a public reprimand by the colonial government. According to Resident W. Boissevain, for instance, it was tolerable when the native press critiqued the civil service, but not when the government did so. Second, the civil servants complained about the apparent influence of government advisors (they were indirectly pointing towards Hazeu) who had no real practical experience. In other words, the European civil servants knows the Javanese best, so why not listen to their advice? Finally, the Javanese were themselves to blame for the maintenance of *hormat*-traditions. If they do not want to speak Dutch with the European civil servants because it would be impolite, how could the official disagree?¹¹³

In the aftermath of the *hormat*-circular a recurring theme emerged in the vernacular press. The highly controversial article that Soemarsono helped disseminate, titled “If I were to be a Dutchman...” written by Soewardi, served as a source of

¹¹² “Nota bij de hormatcircular van 22 Augustus 1913,” Folder 57, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

¹¹³ W.T.L. Boissevain, “Protestbeweging van de Vereeniging van Ambtenaren bij het Binnenlandsch Bestuur,” *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1914) 69-78. “De zevende hormat-circular en de uitlatingen van Dr. Rinkes,” *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1914) 365-367. Tertius, “Geef acht, B.B.!,” *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1914) 376-380. G.Th. Stibbe, “Nog een Protest,” *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1914) 493-495.

inspiration for many young Javanese. With titles such as “If I were to be a *Bupati*/anti-Sarekat-Islam/*Jaksa*/indigenous civil servant”¹¹⁴, these articles challenged the traditional Javanese feudal order. Through them the young intellectuals directly defied the authority of the traditional elite. A striking example can be found in the newspaper *Doenia Bergerak*, where an article under the title “If I were to be a *Bupati*...” appeared. The author argues he would turn an ordinary receipt into a thousand guilder banknote, ignore the *hormat*-circular, not be bothered by the deaths of his subjects, befriend European capital, receive the highest titles and honors, crush the natives who refuse to squat before him, reintroduce feudal services and appoint his family members to the highest positions.¹¹⁵ Other popular subjects in the vernacular press were the abolition of the oppressive language stratification and the use of honorary titles.¹¹⁶ These articles demonstrate that the discussion regarding the culture of colonial rule was no longer merely a debate regarding the relationship between Europeans and Javanese; it now incorporated all of colonial society. This in turn resulted in the forging of new alliances.

In October 1913 the adjunct-Advisor for Native Affairs, D.A. Rinkes, offered the support of the colonial government to Tjokroaminoto, then president of the Sarekat Islam, with the founding of local branches of its organization. While the central government supported the Sarekat Islam, the broader awakening of the Indies was considered a result of the Ethical Policy, many European and indigenous civil servants opposed the growth of the organization (the situation in Purwakarta comes to mind). According to Rinkes, this was to be expected, since these traditional elites were not used to being criticized and

¹¹⁴ *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 40, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 685. *Oetoesan Hindia*, No. 39 *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 690-691. *Pantjaran Warta*, No. 66, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 804. *Pantjaran Warta*, No. 87, *KT*, Vol. 4 (1915) 943.

¹¹⁵ *Doenia Bergerak*, No. 32, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 682-683.

¹¹⁶ For instance see: *Pemberita Betawi*, No. 234, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 87-88. *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 12 and No. 18, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 513-514.

questioned publicly. Tjokroaminoto therefore accepted Rinkes' offer, after which both men toured Java together. These shared presentations by Rinkes and Tjokroaminoto represent the precarious coalition between the protagonists of the Ethical Policy and the nationalist movement. On behalf of the government Rinkes spoke at Sarekat Islam gatherings and told the audience that civil servants were there for the people, not the other way around. Moreover, he presented the latest *hormat*-circular as evidence of the sincere intentions of the government to develop the Indies and its inhabitants. The servile deference traditions were considered an obstacle in the way of progress. The Javanese were no longer obliged to crouch or make the *sembah*.¹¹⁷

That the message of Rinkes was well received can be seen in the many referrals to the *hormat*-circular in the vernacular press and during Sarekat Islam meetings. The circular provided the new generation with ammunition in defending itself against unjust treatment and demands by social superiors. With the help of the Sarekat Islam this information was quickly disseminated all over Java. During a gathering in Semarang almost a year later, for example, the supporters of the local Sarekat Islam branch carried around a banner stating: "2014: Do not forget this circular!" For those who missed the reference, other banners provided some clarification: "We, Javanese do no longer want to be trampled upon." Even more to the point: "The Javanese does not want to squat like a frog."¹¹⁸ Meanwhile, the vernacular press promised to monitor the abuse of power in colonial society and report any offence against it. Indeed, from 1913 onwards the vernacular press is filled with examples of abuses of power.

¹¹⁷ Adjunct-Advisor for Native Affairs D.A. Rinkes to President of the Central Sarekat Islam R. Oemar Said Tjokroaminoto, October 25, 1913, in: S.L. van der Wal, *De Opkomst van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlands-Indië*, 346-353. *Oetoesan Hindia*, No. 24, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 519. *Djawa Tengah*, No. 7, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 526.

¹¹⁸ The description of the march can be found in: *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 165, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 1410.

To the dismay of European civil servants and the European colonial press, Rinkes's speeches and the growth of the Sarekat Islam were fully supported by Governor-General Idenburg. The cooperation angered the already humiliated European civil servants even further. After the leaking of a confidential document to the press, now the colonial government added insult to injury by debating the recent reprimand publicly with the nationalists. According to the periodical for European civil servants the speech by Rinkes could only result in complete disobedience from the Javanese, who were told no longer to show deference to their superiors. This was a grave mistake, since obedience and servitude were important character traits of the Javanese people, thus: "whoever disconnects the Javanese of these traits, changes their character, takes away their most precious possession, and turns them into anarchists during this current phase of their evolution." In the years that followed, both the European civil servants and the traditional Javanese elite would use this 'conservation-argument' to defend their preference for re-feudalization of society.¹¹⁹

The push for further de-feudalization of colonial society did not end with the *hormat*-circular of 1913. Barely three months later Idenburg promulgated a circular that addressed the hereditary principles of the office of *Bupatis*. In order to gain the support of the Javanese *Bupatis*, the Dutch had granted them the privilege of hereditary office. Since 1854 this was fixed in Article 69 of the government regulation of the Netherlands Indies. However, with the emergence of a Western-educated, self-conscious, and ambitious generation of young Javanese the Article was heavily scrutinized. According to a report by Rinkes from January 1913 this new generation considered it a humiliation to squat,

¹¹⁹ "De zevende hormat-circulaire en de uitlatingen van Dr. Rinkes," *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1914) 365-367.

crouch and make *sembah* for the *Bupatis* and to depend on their favoritism with regards to promotions, the education of their children and the care of their families. Instead they preferred their *Bupati* to be “the best and most suitable from their own midst,” instead of “a lesser developed person, who accidentally was born in a *Kabupaten* [home and office of a *Bupati*].”¹²⁰ On November 29, 1913, Idenburg gave into these criticisms by circumscribing the qualifications with regards to the hereditary succession of the office of *Bupatis*. Successions would no longer be assumed; instead the candidate needed to be competent, zealous, honest, loyal and fluent in the Dutch language. Although the hereditary principle was not abandoned, these qualifications were a first step in the direction towards placing merit over birth.¹²¹ The blind obedience of the Javanese for their social superiors was quickly eroding, or as a local newspaper put it: “The common man no longer wants to kneel for the nobility of birth, but only for the nobility of the mind.”¹²²

The de-feudalization policies resulted in a rapid about-face with regard to Governor-General Idenburg’s public image within the nationalist movement. Since taking office, Idenburg had been identified with unpopular christening policies in the Indies. By the end of 1913 people seemed to have forgotten about those. For instance, the Sarekat Islam branch in Surabaya organized a march in support of the government circulars regarding *hormat* and Article 69. At the front of the procession of approximately 10,000 people, a large portrait of Idenburg was carried and a Dutch flag was waved. According

¹²⁰ Adjunct-Advisor for Native Affairs D.A. Rinkes to Governor-General Idenburg, January 16, 1913, in: S.L. van der Wal, *De Opkomst van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlands-Indië*, 124.

¹²¹ For more information on Article 69 see: B.A., “De Bakens Verzet,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 14 (22 January 1914) 167. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, “Handhaving Artikel 69 Regeerings-Reglement,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 9 (18 December 1913) 102-103.

¹²² *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 287 and 288, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 385.

to the local vernacular newspaper, in the eyes of the Javanese the Governor-General's image transformed from "*salahnya Idenburg*" ("harmful Idenburg") to "*sucinya Idenburg*" ("Holy Idenburg").¹²³ This reinterpretation of Idenburg was the result of his de-feudalizing policies and signifies the coalition between progressive Europeans and Javanese in the Indies.

The Reactionary Movement and the Push for Re-Feudalization

The promulgation of the *hormat*-circular following the case of Soemarsono in 1913 was a turning point in the struggle over cultural hegemony in the Indies. Since 1901 the main challenge had come from European protagonists of the Ethical Policy – like the advisors Snouck Hurgronje and Hazeu, and Governor-Generals Van Heutsz and Idenburg. From August 1913 onwards the nationalist movement joined their cause and eventually took center stage. The precarious alliance between these groups was short lived as the result of increased anxieties in between 1914 and 1919. By the end of this period the nationalist movement had to face the opposition alone. Meanwhile a strong coalition of European civil servants, the traditional Javanese aristocracy, and the majority of European civilians in the colony pushed for a re-feudalization of colonial society, or at least a freezing of the current developments. For the first time since 1901, the balance of power between these two blocs started to shift in favor of the conservative coalition.

This shift in the balance of power is represented most clearly by the ascent of Assistant-Resident M.B. Van der Jagt in the minds of the colonial public. As the son of an administrator of a sugar plantation, Van Der Jagt grew up and was educated in the

¹²³ *Oetoesan Hindia*, No. 233-234, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 388. *Bintang Soerabaja*, No. 48, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 825-826.

Indies. Arguably this provided him with a very different perspective on the colonial relationship from that of his contemporaries who advocated the Dutch equivalent of the civilizing mission. In two important articles in 1915, he set out to convince the reader that the Ethical Policy, which according to Van der Jagt aimed to “Europeanize the natives”, was a huge miscalculation. In his opinion, a rebellion was sure to erupt when the Javanese discovered that they were not truly capable of competing with Europeans on the job-market, nor would they ever become equal to Europeans. Therefore, instead of “civilizing” the Javanese, he proposed to protect indigenous society and culture against negative European influences.¹²⁴ Who was better equipped for this work than the European civil servant, “who listening to the East and staring at the West monitor the pulse of evolution.” This was a clear rebuke to the Advisors of Native Affairs and the central government, which he believed should be guided by the civil service and not the other way around. Van Der Jagt presented the several *hormat* and *payung* circulars as examples of naïve policies. For instance, he argued that with the abolition of the *payung* “a cheap and practical symbol of power was lost for the government.”¹²⁵ Moreover, all *payungs* used by the Javanese lost their importance and standing as well, since they derived their symbolic power from those of the Europeans. He therefore hoped that “the day on which the aristocratic spirit among the European and indigenous population and civil service branches will have lost its effect is still a long time away.”¹²⁶

In a private correspondence with new Governor-General Van Limburg-Stirum, Hazeu referred to Van Der Jagt’s writings as another example of how out of touch with

¹²⁴ M.B. van der Jagt, “Ethische Koers en Bestuursambtenaar” (part one), *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1915) 1191-1215.

¹²⁵ M.B. van der Jagt, “Ethische Koers en Bestuursambtenaar” (part two), *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1915) 1328-1345.

¹²⁶ M.B. van der Jagt, “Ethische Koers en Bestuursambtenaar” (part two), 1333.

recent developments the European civil servants in the colony were. The Javanese were modernizing quickly, demanding equal rights, and seeking an end to feudal abuses by Europeans and their traditional elite alike. Musing about *payungs* and waxing nostalgic about the good old days, as he accused Van Der Jagt of doing, would not reverse the direction of societal development. Quite the contrary, the stubborn maintenance of old customs and habits actually threatened the prestige and authority of the colonial government. To push his argument even further, Hazeu advised the Governor-General to make haste since “the clock is ticking away.”¹²⁷

Hazeu based his advice in part on events during the conference of the Sarekat Islam in 1916. During the conference one of the speakers, Raden Prawiroatmodjo (an assistant-*Wedana*), directly challenged the existing *hormat*-conventions. Prawiroatmodjo started his speech with thanking the government for the *hormat*-circular of 1913 in which it emphasized that the civil servants were there for the people and not the other way around. In addition, he impressed on his audience that “as long as the people are willingly subjecting themselves to slavish treatments, there can be no real progress.”¹²⁸ He encouraged all to stop making *sembah* and performing the knee-kiss and instead to show deference in a more modern manner.¹²⁹

The dissatisfaction of the nationalists with the continuing feudal practices in colonial society was also expressed through the growing vernacular press, which served as a tool to raise awareness of both abuses and concerns in colonial society.¹³⁰ Moreover,

¹²⁷ Advisor for Native and Arabic Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu to Governor-General Van Limburg-Stirum, 29 September 1916, Folder 67, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

¹²⁸ Verslag van het Sarekat Islam Congres (1e Nationaal Congres) 17-24 Juni 1916 te Bandoeng, Folder 67, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

¹²⁹ Verslag van het Sarekat Islam Congres (1e Nationaal Congres), 60-62.

¹³⁰ Ahmat B. Adam, *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1913)* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).

the educated Javanese also published in Dutch language periodicals. Good examples are the writings of Tjipto Mangunkusumo, one of the most prominent leaders of the nationalist movement. In July 1918 he published three consecutive articles in his periodical titled *De Indiër*, through which he attacked the indigenous aristocracy and the feudal grounds of colonial rule. He argued that the colonial government should not work against evolution, but instead should aim for the leveling of society: “nobility as the criterion for aptitude regularly disappoints, whenever a people has began its democratic development.”¹³¹ In addition, he contended that the aristocracy had lost the respect of the common people by collaborating with the Dutch and restraining modern developments. He wondered if the Dutch really wanted to follow in the aristocrats’ footsteps. In short, Tjipto made a strong argument for the introduction of a meritocracy and democracy.¹³²

In 1918 Tjipto went head to head with Assistant-Resident Van der Jagt in the People’s Council. Although the body mostly had a symbolic meaning,¹³³ it did provide a forum for both Tjipto and Van der Jagt to disseminate their opinions on the future of the Indies. Through his publications Assistant-Resident Van der Jagt had presented himself as an official with a conservative worldview. He was convinced that the maintenance of colonial rule depended on non-interference with Javanese traditions, such as the rule of the aristocracy and *hormat*-customs. During the first meeting of the People’s Council

¹³¹ Tjipto Mangunkusumo, “Het Binnenlandsch Bestuur,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 2, No. 153.

¹³² Similar writings by other prominent nationalists can also be found. For example, Soetardjo wrote six articles on the subject in *Vrijzinnig Weekblad*. Soetardjo, “De ontvoogding van het Inlandsch-Bestuur,” *Vrijzinnig Weekblad*, No. 7, 10, 17, 19, 21, 32, 47 (1918). Tjipto Mangunkusumo, “Het Binnenlandsch Bestuur,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 2, No. 153, 154, 155, 3-5 July 1918.

¹³³ Something that Tjipto was brave enough to point out more often than not during its meetings. He openly challenged the legitimacy of the council that not truly represented the people, as its name suggested, but consisted instead of appointed members by the government. Together with some other nationalist leaders he only accepted this position to be able to be heard on a larger podium.

(*Volksraad*) he made his perspective clear by bringing back the *payung* from distant memory:

“The Government gave up a cheap means of power, higher authorities robbed the people of its symbol of power like the crown is for the Westerner, and *the symbolic bridge between an Oriental people and the Western bearer of authority was destroyed.*”¹³⁴

The nostalgic message of Van der Jagt was clear to all contemporaries: leave Javanese culture and society untouched for the benefit of its people and the colonial government. There was much criticism of Van der Jagt’s first lecture in the People’s Council. For instance, the liberal editor Stokvis of the *Locomotief* provided a very different interpretation; “the worst *hormat* is precisely one of the causes of a not very symbolical distancing between colonizer and colonized.”¹³⁵ This time, the protagonists of the Ethical Policy did not have to do the defending themselves; the leaders of the nationalist movements took over.

During the next meeting, Tjipto immediately retaliated by attacking the dignity of the European civil servants. According to Tjipto they are just dull servants who need to execute orders of the government and no longer the dictators of yesteryear, the little kings within their districts. He accuses Van der Jagt and his conservative colleagues of trying to bring back the “older sister of Miss Ethics, the hag Mrs. Ancien Regime”. Tjipto’s words found approval and support of Tjokroaminoto, the leader of the Sarekat Islam, who reminded the People’s Council of the *hormat*-circulars. These confirmed, he argued, that the civil servants and aristocrats were there for the people, not the other way around. In

¹³⁴ My italics. “Aanvullingsbegroting van *Nederlandsch-Indië* voor het dienstjaar 1919, algemeene beschouwingen” (24 and 25 June and 15 November 1918), *Handelingen van den Volksraad. Tweede gewone zitting 1918-1919*.

¹³⁵ J.E. Stokvis, “Het B.B.,” *De Taak*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 10 Augustus 1918 and 7 September 1918. M.B. van der Jagt’s response: “B.B.,” *De Taak*, Vol. 2, No. 6, 7 September 1918, 69-70.

addition, Tjokroaminoto shared his concerns about the anxieties that permeated colonial society in 1918, especially the increasing threat of violence against the indigenous population to restore colonial authority.¹³⁶

Van der Jagt responded the following day. He immediately called out the councilors Tjipto and Tjokroaminoto for attacking and blackening the reputation and prestige of European civil servants. Moreover, he challenged their “ignorance” by arguing that it was the nationalist movement that was becoming more violent and dangerous by the day. He referred to their attempts to modernize and uplift Javanese society as “breaking and dismantling” of a beautiful civilization. The innocence of the nationalist movement was long gone; it had become a danger to colonial authority that needed to be stopped.¹³⁷

The main participants in the debate about the character of the colonial relationship came together at a People’s Council meeting to discuss the possibility of a native militia in November 1918. As a representative of the government Hazeu also attended the meeting, and from his notes we can get a sense of the incredible tension between Van der Jagt on the one hand and the indigenous members of the People’s Council on the other. It was clear to Hazeu that the emotional debate in the People’s Council carried over to the preparatory meeting. Van der Jagt made his presence and position known by purposely addressing one of the Javanese members in low Javanese because he was unsure if the person was worthy of a conversation in either Dutch or high Javanese. When it was proposed only to enroll the intellectual Javanese into a possible militia, Van der Jagt

¹³⁶ “Aanvullingsbegroting van Nederlandsch-Indië voor het dienstjaar 1919, algemeene beschouwingen,” *Handelingen van den Volksraad. Tweede gewone zitting 1918-1919*, 162-181.

¹³⁷ Aanvullingsbegroting van Nederlandsch-Indië voor het dienstjaar 1919, algemeene beschouwingen,” 190-204.

remarked that there were no Javanese intellectuals. Moreover, he even argued that there was more culture in the chair he sat upon than in the Javanese people, since all culture on Java was imported from abroad. This was too much for Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo to tolerate. He told Van der Jagt: “The difference in opinion between the two of us is too considerable for me to be able to cooperate with you.”¹³⁸ Thereafter, Tjipto angrily left the meeting room. Van der Jagt clearly stood by his remarks in the People’s Council and with a certain pride represented the conservative bloc in colonial politics. One last time would Hazeu try to counter this push for de-feudalization.

Frustrated by the actions of Van der Jagt, the Advisor for Native Affairs once more took up his pen to write the Governor-General. He made his position very clear: the behavior and comments such as those made by Assistant-Resident Van der Jagt would be impossible had the latter complied with the several *hormat*-circulars. Therefore, the government should make a powerful stand against those civil servants who still ignored, opposed or ridiculed these government regulations. Such continued contempt for the highest authority, according to Hazeu, could not be tolerated from a disciplinary perspective. Moreover, the nationalists would interpret inaction as the government’s lack of seriousness in its attempts to curtail feudal traditions. This time, however, Hazeu’s warning fell on deaf ears.¹³⁹

Hazeu and the other Ethical protagonists had become a minority among the Europeans in the colony. Most Europeans viewed the rise of the nationalist movement with skepticism and fear. The uncertainty of World War I and several incidents in the

¹³⁸ Note by G.A.J Hazeu titled “Optreden en mentaliteit v/d As.-Resident v.d.Jagt,” November 1918, Folder 17, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

¹³⁹ G.A.J. Hazeu to the Governor-General, 9 December 1918, Folder 70, Inventory no. 10, Collection Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Archipelago only made the situation worse. The outbreak of unrest in Koedoes (Java, October 1918), Toli-Toli (Sulawesi, June 1919), and Garut (Java, July 1919) only reinforced the position of the conservative bloc led by Van der Jagt. According to the European press, these attacks on colonial authority were the result of instigation by the radical members of the Sarekat Islam. Although Hazeu once more tried to defend the Sarekat Islam, which he mostly considered a positive development, it was to no avail. In 1918 and 1919 he was repeatedly mocked in the colonial press and held responsible for indoctrinating successive Governor-Generals with dangerous ethical ideals (see the political cartoon below). His name even became a synonym for weakness in dealing with the colonized. In one of the more personal attacks in a conservative newspaper, Hazeu's academic background was ridiculed, he was called a moron, "a being stripped of all strength; a weak, hesitant, old-hag; a sentimental boy, too dull to exercise any authority". When it became clear to him that even the Governor-General had begun to distrust his advice, he requested to be repatriated to the Netherlands to become a professor. When he announced his repatriation in 1919, the conservatives celebrated while the nationalists mourned his departure.¹⁴⁰

With the semi-voluntary departure of Hazeu from the Indies in 1920, the alliance between the protagonists of the Ethical Policy and Javanese nationalists lost its most influential intermediary. Hazeu, like Snouck Hurgronje before him, had held the trust of both the nationalist movement as well as that of several Governor-Generals. However,

¹⁴⁰ Karel Wybrands, "Het Hazeu-isme in werking," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, No. 82, 2e blad, 8 April 1919. Karel Wybrands, "De Adviseurs-Misere," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, No. 171, 1e blad, 25 July 1919. Diederik Baltzerdt [Pseudonym for Karel Wybrands], "Wat gisteren in de krant stond," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 24, No. 221, 23 September 1919. Djajadiningrat Hoesein, "Dr. G.A.J. Hazeu," *De Taak*, no. 12 and no. 13, 18 and 25 October 1919.

the events of 1919 resulted in strong skepticism within the colonial government and in European public opinion towards the intentions of the nationalist movement. The highly critical attitude of Van der Jagt, as presented in the meetings of the People's Council, was now preferred over the perceived naïve attitude of Hazeu. To many it appeared that European civil servants were indeed more knowledgeable about indigenous society than Hazeu had ever been. As a result, the influence of conservative civil servants on colonial policy increased at the expense of the successive Advisors for Native Affairs. The vernacular press not only mourned the departure of Hazeu, but the devaluation of his former office in general. The office of Native Affairs was often depicted as an instrument of the civil service that spied on indigenous society, an office without any independent power, and therefore an office that could no longer be trusted.¹⁴¹

Javanese nationalists and intellectuals now found themselves isolated without the political backing of congenial Europeans in their arduous struggle against the Dutch and Javanese advocates of re-feudalization. The young Javanese did not balk at this struggle but instead continued to challenge the cultural hegemony of Dutch colonial rule. They did so by expanding their argument for de-feudalization of European-Javanese relationships, like the *hormat*-circulars had done, to include the interactions between the Javanese aristocracy and the common man. Criticism of the deference regulations was now directed to the entire conservative alliance of Europeans and Javanese aristocrats. The editors of the vernacular newspaper *Neratja* noted the occurrence of this shift by differentiating between those who defended the interests of the Indies – the *sini*-party (“here”) – versus those who defended the interests of the Netherlands – the *sana*-party

¹⁴¹ *Neratja*, 3 till 8 April 1922, No. 66 till 70, *IPO*, No. 15 (1922) 50-51. *Bintang Timoer*, 8 December 1926, No. 84, *IPO*, No. 51 (1926) 452-453.

(“there”). According to the editors, the *sana*-party, consisting of European conservtives and Javanese aristocrats, had become dominant in colonial politics.¹⁴²

In the wake of the incidents that occurred in 1918 and 1919, the conservative reaction rapidly gained strength. In 1922, Van der Jagt’s successor in the People’s Council, J.W. Meijer Ranneft, clearly articulated the conservative position in an essay prepared for the general conference of European civil servants.¹⁴³ According to Meijer Ranneft the European civil service was the necessary link between the colonial government and the indigenous peoples. Their knowledge of local people and culture as well as their ability to rule independently and responsibly, made them the best go-betweens within colonial space. For instance, based on his knowledge of Western methods and Eastern society, Meijer Ranneft concluded that: “A democratic instrument of power, such as a modern police force, costs several millions more than the old Asian instrument of power: The *Hormat*.”¹⁴⁴ The statement was a direct referral to the institution of mobile police units in the previous year and the failed policy of de-feudalization that had made them necessary. Meijer Ranneft insinuated that only a policy of re-feudalization could lead to longtime colonial stability. Therefore the prestige of both the European civil service and the indigenous aristocracy, which he called the backbone of society, needed to be restored to its nineteenth century glory. The restoration

¹⁴² *Neratja*, 30 July 1919, No. 147, *IPO*, No. 31 (1919).

¹⁴³ Instead of being penalized for his politically offensive behavior in the People’s Council, Van der Jagt was promptly promoted to the office of Resident by the new conservative Governor-General Fock. Under the latter’s governorship the autocracy of the civil service was reinforced. See: H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 383.

¹⁴⁴ J.W. Meijer Ranneft, *De Toekomst van het Binnenlandsch Bestuur*, 10.

of the feudal aura of the Javanese aristocracy would serve as a counterweight to the nationalist movement.¹⁴⁵

The strength and conviction of the conservative position led to great suspicion among the Javanese nationalists. In January of 1923 the newspaper *Neratja* published an article in which it was suggested that the colonial government had revoked the *hormat*-circular of 1913. Other outlets of the vernacular press quickly responded to this “breaking news”. A contributor to the *Sinar Hindia* even went so far to compare the revocation of the circular to being forced to lick old and stinking saliva from the ground. While other reactions were less savory, they all agreed that the general populace could not, and would not, accept a return to old-fashioned feudal customs.¹⁴⁶ While none of the *hormat*-circulars was in fact revoked, the fear, anger and distrust within the nationalist movement were very real. For instance, in 1925 a newspaper warned its readers to ensure that the colonial government could not reinforce its power by restoring feudal traditions. A similar argument was made a year later, which emphasized that the period of “Eastern autocracy” is over and the period of “Western democracy” begun.¹⁴⁷ These articles demonstrated the great mutual distrust between the nationalists and the conservative coalition, as well as the growing strength of the latter.

The communist revolts of 1926 and 1927 in West-Java and Sumatra marked the limit of Dutch colonial cultural hegemony. In its wake the impasse over de- or re-feudalization of colonial society was finally broken. The Ethical Policy and the

¹⁴⁵ J.W. Meijer Ranneft, *De Toekomst van het Binnenlandsch Bestuur*. H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 376-387.

¹⁴⁶ *Boedi Oetomo* (Javanese edition), 25 January 1923, No. 10, *IPO*, No. 5, (1923) 183. *Sinar Hindia*, 22 till 29 January 1923, No. 14 till 20, *IPO*, No. 5 (1923) 195. *Hindia Baroe*, 27 August till 2 September 1925, No. 191-195, *IPO*, No. 36 (1925) 454.

¹⁴⁷ *Hindia Baroe*, 27 August till 2 September 1925, No. 191-195, *IPO*, No. 36 (1925) 454. *Bintang Timoer*, 27 December 1926, No. 99, *IPO*, No. 1 (1927) 26-31.

nationalist movement had undermined and challenged the existing colonial order until it had become dangerously unstable and intolerable. The revolts forced the colonial government to fall back on colonial rule through coercion. The use of force, the threat of fines, banishment, or a lifetime in interment camps became all too real. The political rights of the indigenous peoples were curtailed even further than before. No longer could the colonial government seriously claim to rule through consent. The majority of the European population did not consider this an issue, however. The resulting revolts instilled great fear in their midst and drove the conservatives more securely into a position of power.¹⁴⁸

Contemporaries already suggested that there might be a correlation between the diminished importance of traditional Javanese symbols of power and deference customs on the one hand and the communist uprisings on the other hand. For instance, in a critical article in 1927, the retired editor of a European colonial newspaper in Surabaya, Samuel Kalff, argued that the *hormat*- and *payung*-circulars were based on an erroneous interpretation of Javanese society:

“The golden *payung* has long endured; its abolition had, and still has the disapproval of many. The endeavor to at least partly meet the demands of traditional *hormat* forms can only be greeted with approval. It is worth being defended against those who forget that an Eastern people, which still has great respect for outward appearance, needs to be governed according to Eastern traditions.”¹⁴⁹

Kalff touched upon several key arguments of the conservative position in the Indies.

Foremost he argued that the Javanese were not ready to be ruled in a “modern” democratic fashion but needed to be governed according to their own cultural traditions.

¹⁴⁸ H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 387-394.

¹⁴⁹ Samuel Kalff, “Eerbewijzen in Indië,” *Haagsch Maandblad*, Vol. 8, (July-December 1927) 651.

Reintroducing traditional symbolisms and forms of deference thus might restore the diminished respect for authority, resulting from the various *hormat* regulations, and prevent revolutionary outbreaks such as the communist rebellions. Finally, Kalff also used the *payung* as the ultimate instrument of restoring cultural hegemony.¹⁵⁰

European civil servants like Van der Jagt and Meijer Ranneft exploited the anxiety in the aftermath of the rebellions to push through a more conservative colonial policy. In their eyes, the communist uprising had proved that they had been right all along. The *hormat*- and *payung*-circulars and the democratizing policies had undermined colonial authority and prestige. The solution, as Kalff suggested above, was to strengthen the European civil service and the indigenous aristocracy by reinstating certain symbols of power and deference forms. As one historian observed, they intended to turn the clock back by a quarter century. A great sense of nostalgia for the autocratic rule of yesteryear came over the colony. This naïve longing for the past ignored the profound changes that had altered colonial society completely. The symbols of power and deference forms had in fact lost their meaning and importance. They had become relics of a feudal past. The progressive *Bupati* Achmad Djajadiningrat understood this well when he argued in 1929 that the “glory of the *payung*” was irreparable.¹⁵¹

The conservative turn in Dutch colonial politics resulted in the strengthening of the European civil service and Javanese aristocracy, by exempting both from control by representative institutions of local government, but failed to revoke the *hormat*- and *payung*-circulars. In part, this can be explained by the ignorance of these circulars among

¹⁵⁰ Samuel Kalff, “Eerbewijzen in Indië,” 643-651.

¹⁵¹ For an informative description of the conservative reaction to the Communist Rebellions see: H.W. van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 387-394. Achmad Djajadiningrat’s comments can be found in: R.A.A.A. Djajadiningrat, “De positie van de regenten op Java en Madoera in het huidige bestuursstelsel,” *Indisch Genootschap. Verslagen der Vergaderingen over de Jaren 1926-1930*, 15 November 1929, 90.

these conservative groups. The continued criticism in the vernacular press suggests that both Europeans and Javanese aristocrats simply continued to disregard these circulars. For instance, in February 1927 we can read how a *Bupati* forced his inferiors to address the local Assistant-Resident in Javanese accompanied with numerous *sembah*.¹⁵² The emphasis that the conservative reaction placed on symbols of power and *hormat* can also be seen in the changed attitude towards the Javanese Principalities. Since these were semi-independent territories, the jurisdiction of the colonial government was limited here. The *hormat*- and *payung*-circulars, for instance, did not apply to the Principalities. The government had other ways to influence its cultural hegemony there, however.

Epilogue: The Governor-General's Visits of the Principalities

The Governor-General of the Indies visited the capital cities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta in 1915 and 1928. A comparison of the meticulously drafted protocols for these official state-visits reflects the transition from de- to re-feudalization due to the conservative reaction. The protocols deal with everything, from appropriate dress, issues of timing, who is where at what time, the seating arrangements, the number of soldiers and salutes, and so on. Of particular interest are the references to *hormat*.

In the protocol of 1915 we recognize the invisible hand of Hazeu, the influential protagonist of de-feudalization at the time.¹⁵³ Just as his *hormat*-circular ended feudal traditions in the area under Dutch rule, the protocol broke with the feudal traditions in the relationship with the rulers of the Principalities. For instance, the fourth article of the protocol states that the Governor-General will break with the tradition of walking arm in

¹⁵² *Soeloeh Rajat Indonesia*, 23 February and 2 March 1927, No. 8 and 9, *IPO*, No. 13 (1927) 412.

¹⁵³ Since Hazeu was on leave in the Netherlands at the time, this protocol was probably written by his temporary replacement D.A. Rinkes.

arm with the *Susuhunan* (of Surakarta) and Sultan (of Yogyakarta). This nineteenth century custom reflected the balance of power, by having the Javanese rulers effeminately leaning on the arm of the Dutch Governor-General. According to the protocol of 1915 a more modern handshake, before walking next to one another, should suffice. In addition, the protocol specifically asserts that the Governor-General will not bring his golden *payung*. Indicating an attempt indirectly to implement the *payung*-circular in the Principalities. The Javanese rulers were still allowed to be accompanied by their *payungs*, but only if they remained closed and at a distance.¹⁵⁴

The seating arrangements were another matter where Governor-General Idenburg wanted to set an example. Idenburg insisted that during his visits to the Principalities all officials would sit on chairs. He resolutely dismissed the notion of people sitting on the ground in the *sila*-posture. But, Idenburg could only influence the interactions that would take place in the offices of his Residents, not those in the kratons (palaces). In Surakarta a game of musical chairs ensued in which princes and Javanese officials were offered chairs in the home of the Dutch Resident in the morning, but during the evening ceremonies in the kraton were seated on the ground once more. Just as the *hormat*-circulars, the example that the Governor-General set in 1915 seemed to herald a new modern relationship between the government and the Principalities.

In 1928, the strong hand of Van der Jagt replaced the spirit of Hazeu. The latter had climbed the hierarchy of the colonial administration and had become Governor of Surakarta in 1927, just in time to organize the next visit of a Governor-General to the

¹⁵⁴ *Programma van het ceremonieel tot de plechtige ontvangst te SOERAKARTA van Zyne Excellentie den Gouverneur-Generaal van Nederlandsch-Indië op 13 t/m 15 December 1915. Also: Overzicht van het Ceremonieel bij de plechtige ontvangst te Djokjakarta van Zyne Excellentie den Gouverneur-Generaal van Nederlandsch-Indië A.W.F. Idenburg van 15-17 December 1915.*

Principalities. This time, a golden *payung* accompanied the Governor-General as in the good old days. Symbolizing a re-feudalization of the diplomatic relations with the Principalities. The urge to set a modern example was replaced by the desire to return to the past.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ *Programma van het Ceremonieel in acht te nemen tijdens de komst en het verblijf van Z.E. den Gouverneur-Generaal Jhr. Mr. A.C.D. De Graeff en Mevrouw De Graeff te Soerakarta op 21, 22, 23 en 24 Mei 1928.*

Chapter 3

Dressing—"Up":

The Contested Meaning of Dress as a Social Marker in Colonial Java, 1900-1927

In the fall of 1913 Raden Moehamed Enoch, a junior engineer at the Department of Public Works, patiently waited in line to purchase a second class train ticket at the Bandung railway station. Dressed in a European suit, Enoch exemplified the generation of 'young Javanese', who enjoyed a Western education, were fluent in Dutch, came from the lower aristocracy, but worked in a non-traditional profession. At his turn, Enoch approached the window and in Dutch kindly requested a train ticket to Madiun, his hometown. The European ticket officer, clearly annoyed, replied in Malay and told Enoch to wait. When the ticket officer immediately after accepted a European man at his window, Enoch stepped up to his colleague at the counter for third class tickets, only to be denied service once more. Upon Enoch's inquiry to why he was not served at either window, the ticket officer yelled at him – this time in Dutch! – and told him in unmistakable words to shut up or suffer the consequences. Enoch did not relinquish and pushed on, which provoked the ticket officer into bellowing: "you are a native, and thus need to buy your ticket at the window for natives." Instead, the proud Enoch demanded to speak to the station chef, who acknowledged Enoch's right to purchase tickets at the window for second and third class, a right previously limited to Europeans.¹

¹ The transcript of the conversation between Raden Moehamad Enoch and the two European ticket officers can be found in: Raden Moehamad Enoch to Head Inspector of the State Railways Ten Damme, 24 November 1913 and Raden Moehamad Enoch to Advisor for Native Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu, 1 December 1913, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

The incident at the Bandung railway station was the cause of so much controversy and anxiety due to Enoch's transgression of the racial and cultural boundaries within colonial society. On his return to Madiun, Enoch described the episode in writing to G.A.J. Hazeu, then the advisor for native affairs. From their correspondence it becomes evident that Enoch was particularly bothered by the fact that he wore European attire and spoke Dutch, but that the ticket officers still did not treat him as an equal. When recalling the moment the ticket officer scolded him for the impudence of a native questioning his judgment, one can feel Enoch's astonishment and unbelief in writing: "[but] I was dressed in European style." While Enoch believed he could breach the divide between colonizers and colonized by dressing-"up", the European ticket officers interpreted his actions as a transgression of the colonial order of things. Their attempt to humiliate and re-educate Enoch by sending him to the window for 'natives' backfired as a result of the Ethical Policy, the Dutch equivalent of the civilizing mission, which attempted to modernize the colonial relationship. Thus, Enoch's correspondence with the advisor for native affairs resulted in a reprimand of the European personnel of the Bandung railway station and an official apology of the head inspector of the Netherlands Indies State Railways.²

The fall-out between Enoch and the ticket officers in Bandung was not an isolated incident. Going through the Dutch colonial and the vernacular press in the Netherlands Indies, one is struck by the increasing number of confrontations between colonizers and

² Though it is interesting to note that Head Inspector Ten Damme was reluctant in apologizing. In his letter he argued that Enoch was only asked to wait until the customers for an earlier train had been served. Moreover, he stated that the division between 'natives' and Europeans had not been abolished yet at the Bandung railway station, but would be going forward. In short, Ten Damme apologized for the inconvenience, but refused to take the blame. Enoch specifically challenged the notion that 'natives' had been served separately from Europeans. According to Enoch he 'always' purchased his tickets at one of the European counters. Head Inspector of the State Railways Ten Damme to Raden Moehamad Enoch, 2 February 1914, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

colonized in which dress played a key role during the first decades of the twentieth century. Prior to the turn of the century, the colonized inhabitants of Java had to dress according to their ethnicity (e.g. Javanese, Chinese or Arab), while only Europeans were allowed to somewhat transgress this sartorial hierarchy. European men and women wore European dress in public, but changed into clothing akin to Javanese dress in the private sphere. For women this consisted of a *sarong* (wraparound skirt) and *kebaya* (light cotton blouse). The *sarong* was made out of a traditional Javanese *batik* cloth (named after the production method). European men wore trousers made from *batik* combined with a white collarless jacket. But, after 1900 the main direction of cultural exchange, as reflected in dress, was reversed. As can be seen in the incident with Raden Moehamad Enoch, the non-European groups on Java started dressing-“up” in an European fashion. Consequently, this forced Europeans in the colony to do the same, since one could not appear more native than a “native”. The meaning of dress as a social marker was thus drastically reconstituted during this period.

Recent studies have suggested that anxieties over dress and rapid sartorial transformations are indicative of larger societal and cultural conflicts. According to Emma Tarlo, the key to unpacking these controversial moments is to focus on the question of “what to wear rather than a description of what is worn.”³ This allows us to see the human body as a social rather than a physical entity, around which clothes serve as a marker of various identities. These identities are at times defining, but at others consciously managed and expressed. Through clothing people communicate and express themselves and identify with or differentiate from others. Although people can control

³ Emma Tarlo, *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996) 8-9.

what to wear and intend to communicate, they have little influence on how their message will be received. It is therefore relevant to ask, for instance in the case of Moehamad Enoch, what clothes meant to their wearers and to their observers and within what set of constraints these actions occurred.⁴

The subject of appearance in the history of the Netherlands Indies has attracted considerable scholarly attention in the last two decades. The influential edited volume *Outward Appearances: Dressing State & Society in Indonesia* has in fact inspired many sartorial studies in other former Asian colonial societies.⁵ The volume consists of a collection of sublime essays dealing with the sartorial transformations in colonial Indonesia.⁶ Of the various contributors, Jean Gelman Taylor in particular has developed into a connoisseur on the subject.⁷ In addition, various non-academic publications have emerged dealing with descriptions of colonial dress.⁸ Taken together this body of work

⁴ In addition to the work of Emma Tarlo, other relevant publications on the meaning of dress include: Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 1-9. Alison Lurie, *The Language of Clothes* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1981) 1-31.

⁵ This is not to say that these studies would not have occurred without the publication of *Outward Appearances*, however, it was the first of its kind and is till this day the place to begin researching the issue of dress in colonial societies. Recently a comparative volume on the issue of dress and politics in Asia and the Americas was published, which adds to the large literature available on the subject. Henk Schulte Nordholt, *Outward Appearances: Dressing State and Society in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1997). Mina Roces and Louise Edwards (eds.), *The Politics of Dress in Asia and the Americas* (Brighton/Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2007). Chie Ikeya, "The Modern Burmese Woman and the Politics of Fashion in Colonial Burma," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 67, No. 4 (November 2008) 1277-1308.

⁶ The following essays are of particular interest: Kees van Dijk, "Sarong, Jubbah, and Trousers: Appearance as a Means of Distinction and Discrimination," 39-84. Jean Gelman Taylor, "Costume and Gender in Colonial Java, 1800-1940," 85-116. Rudolf Mrázek, "Indonesian Dandy: The Politics of Clothes in the Late Colonial Period, 1893-1942," 117-147. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, "Summer Dresses and Canned Food: European Women and Western Lifestyles in the Indies, 1900-1942," 151-180.

⁷ Jean Gelman Taylor, "Official Photography, Costume and the Indonesian Revolution," in Jean Gelman Taylor (ed.), *Women Creating Indonesia: The First Fifty Years* (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 1997) 91-126. Jean Gelman Taylor, "Identity, Nation and Islam: A Dialogue about Men's and Women's Dress in Indonesia," in Mina Roces and Louise Edwards (eds.), *The Politics of Dress in Asia and the Americas* (Brighton/Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2007) 101-120.

⁸ Dorine Bronkhorst and Esther Wils (e.a.), *Tropenecht: Indische en Europese kleding in Nederlands-Indië* (The Hague: Stichting Tong Tong, 1996). On *Batik* Belanda see: M.J. De Raadt-Appel, *De Batikkerij Van Zuylen te Pekalongan* (Zutphen: Uitgeverij Terra, 1980) and Harmen C. Veldhuizen, *Batik Belanda, 1840-1940. Dutch Influence in Batik from Java. History and Stories* (Jakarta: Gaya Favorit Press, 1993). On the

provides the historian with an in depth overview on the issue of dress in colonial Indonesia, but has surprisingly not yet addressed the question of what to wear in the larger context of the social and cultural transformations that were taking place in the early twentieth century.

The changing meaning of dress, the social structures surrounding clothing and the social body, and the correlating anxieties with this process are at the heart of this chapter. In contrast to previous studies on dress in colonial Indonesia, I consider the sartorial dilemmas and changes against the backdrop and as part of the attempted transition of colonial cultural hegemony based on Javanese feudalism to more modern grounds of authority. Dress was an important element in the Dutch attempt to rule its colony through cultural hegemony. By adopting Javanese symbols of power, deference rituals, dress, architecture, food, and even social habits, the Dutch colonizers embedded themselves in Javanese society in a clearly recognizable manner. This cultural project of control came undone as the result of the civilizing mission ideology, which from 1901 onwards intended to legitimize colonial authority on more modern grounds. It was this unraveling of the structure of Dutch colonial rule that resulted in a rapid shift in the meaning of dress, turning it from an instrument of oppression into one of liberation, especially for educated Javanese men.

Though the genealogy of dress in the Netherlands Indies is not at the heart of the argument, other studies have described it in detail, I do argue for a reinterpretation of the causes behind its development. In the historiography a myriad of explanations have been brought forward to explain the process of Europeanization of dress of both the colonizer

general development of *Batik*: Inger McCabe Elliot, *Batik: Fabled Cloth of Java* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1984).

and the colonized. The most popular explanations surround the increase in the number of Europeans, especially women, in the colony, the technological progress that made a European lifestyle in the tropics possible, and the growth of racist ideology, all since the 1870s. Paradoxically, these seemingly logical explanations do not explain why change only occurs after the turn of the century, but not before. The main reason for this delayed process of Westernization, I argue here, was the importance of dress as a social marker in legitimizing and maintaining colonial authority and order.

This process of reinterpreting and redefining the meaning of dress occurred in a shared colonial space and was a shared experience. The chronologies of social change and the development of dress can therefore not be separated by ethnicity, but need to be studied as interrelated processes in a single colonial space. Where other studies focus specifically on ethnic genealogies of dress, in this chapter the emphasis lies on the importance of ethnic interactions. One of the major consequences of the Ethical Policy, and its tripartite objective of immigration, education and irrigation, was the rapid expansion of colonial space – the space where colonizer and colonized interacted with one another – during the first decades of the twentieth century. These new sites of interaction between the different races and classes on Java, such as theaters, pawnshops and trains, are employed here to illuminate how dress as a social marker was fiercely contested and eventually came to undermine colonial authority.

Dress and Power: Marking Differences in Colonial Society

In nineteenth century Dutch colonial Java, dress was a crucial social and racial marker between colonizers and colonized. As a consequence of the long history of racial mixing

among Europeans, Javanese and other groups, such as the Chinese and Arabs, skin color alone did not set people apart. For instance, many Eurasians appeared racially Javanese but held European status and vice versa. Thus, when racial stratification became the cornerstone of the Dutch colonial administration in the nineteenth century, it was essential to be able to discern who belonged to which ethnicity.⁹ Strict dress regulations that stated that everyone in the colony had to dress according to his or her ethnicity were thus key to disentangle and bring order to this racially hybrid colonial space.

The racial stratification on Java was mirrored in dress and anchored in clear regulations that circumscribed who was allowed to wear what, when and where. The guiding principle of this sartorial hierarchy was enshrined in the second article of the colonial police regulations for natives, which stated:

“Whoever appears in public, disguised in a different dress than the one corresponding with one’s ethnicity or position, with the exception of masked or costumed-parades, will be punished with a ticket in between sixteen and twenty-five guilders.”¹⁰

This regulation assigned the European colonial government and civil service with the power to decide what the acceptable ethnic dress was of the various ethnicities on Java. Similar to what Bernard Cohn has argued regarding the British in India, the Dutch categorized their colonial subjects and in true anthropological fashion assigned them

⁹ For instance, the Netherlands Indies had a dualistic civil service, consisting of a European and an indigenous branch, a differentiated judicial system, and regulations that restricted the ability to live, work or travel in certain areas all depending on ethnicity. By 1855, the Dutch officially recognized three separate legal ethnic groups on Java: Europeans and their equals, ‘foreign Easterners’ and their equals (mostly Chinese), and ‘natives’. Cees Fasseur, “Cornerstone and Stumbling Block: Racial Classification and the Late Colonial State in Indonesia,” in Robert Cribb (ed.), *The Late Colonial State in Indonesia: Political and Economical Foundations of the Netherlands Indies, 1880-1942* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1994) 31-57.

¹⁰ The text of the article can be found in: “De staart van den Chinees,” *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 7, No. 42, 18 February 1905.

fixed ethnic costumes and identities.¹¹ On Java alone, this meant distinguishing between the main groups of Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Chinese, Arabs and Europeans. But distinguishing between these groups was not as easy as it seemed, since the presence of so many ethnicities is in itself reflected of a long history of cross-cultural exchange and interaction. For instance, while *sarong* (or *kain*) and *kebaya* were branded as the traditional Javanese costume, these items were in fact the result of a mixture of Javanese, Hindu and European influences.¹² Nonetheless, the police regulation made it possible for race to remain the cornerstone of the colonial administration.

The sartorial hierarchy that was consequently ‘invented’ to distinguish between colonizer and colonized was part of a larger attempt by the Dutch to legitimate colonial authority through cultural hegemony. The colonial government set out a conscious policy of adopting Javanese status symbols, deference rituals, social conventions, strict language stratification, architectural styles as well as dress codes, to support its claims to power. In addition, the Javanese aristocracy, also known as the *priyayi* class, was co-opted and symbolically strengthened through a policy of re-feudalization. As part of the categorization mentioned above, the Javanese aristocracy’s attire was regulated in separate regulations dating back to 1820 for the *Bupati* (the highest indigenous members of the civil service) and 1824 for the remainder of the civil servants. These instructions specifically prescribed what the aristocrats were allowed to wear at certain occasions,

¹¹ As Emma Tarlo has convincingly argued, the term ‘costume’ denotes something static, a classification divorced from context, an item that belongs in a museum. In contrast, the terms ‘clothing’ or ‘dress’ stand for items that are worn, used and not as easy to classify. Emma Tarlo, *Clothing Matters*, 1-9. About classifications of ethnic costume in colonial societies: Rudolf Mrázek, “The Indonesian Dandy,” 117-120. Bernard Cohn, “Cloth, Clothes, and Colonialism: India in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Ibid.*, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) 106-162.

¹² Jean Gelman Taylor has described the various roots of sarong and kebaya in her many contributions on dress. Jean Gelman Taylor, “Costume and Gender in Colonial Java,” 103-105. And Jean Gelman Taylor, “Official Photography, Costume and the Indonesian Revolution,” 91-126.

which status symbols they could carry, like the *payung*, and how large their retinues could be.

The position of the Europeans in this sartorial hierarchy was ambiguous. With their insertion on the top of the Javanese feudal pyramid, European attire came to indicate those with premier status in the colony. Instead of continuously emphasizing their difference through donning European dress, the Europeans in the private sphere adorned themselves with clothing akin to indigenous dress. This distinction between a European public sphere and an orientalized private sphere goes back to the days of the East India Company when many European men cohabitated or married an indigenous or Eurasian woman, with the result that locally born women and thus local culture dominated the private sphere. According to contemporaries, it was the British interregnum (1811-1816) that ensured that these influences did not spill over into the public sphere, creating a situation in which Europeans had distinct public and private appearances.¹³

In the private sphere European men and women thus deviated from their own sartorial hierarchy by wearing items that appeared to derive from indigenous society. European women wore the *sarong* and *kebaya*, while European men dressed in *batik* trousers and a white collarless jacket. According to Jean Gelman Taylor, during the nineteenth century the same attire, *sarong* and *kebaya*, was invented for European and Javanese women alike, with subtle variations designating who held European and who native status. A seminal moment in its development was the Dutch victory in the Java War (1825-1830), which broke the resistance of the aristocracy to colonial rule, after

¹³ For a contemporary description of the history of dress in colonial society see: V.I. van de Wall, "Indische Kleederdrachten," *D'Orient*, Vol. 3, No. 43, 25 October 1924. More recent works: Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983) 100.

which the Dutch appropriated *batik* as a dress material from the Javanese aristocracy. In addition, Eurasian women started their own *batik* production, creating specific Dutch patterns called *batik Belanda*. The *batik* material used by the Dutch was thus easily recognizable as different, while at the same time familiar enough to be recognized as that of the colonizer. The adoption of the *batik* method must be considered in similar vein as the embrace of the ceremonial parasol, *payung*, and traditional Javanese forms of deference by the Dutch to legitimize their colonial authority.¹⁴

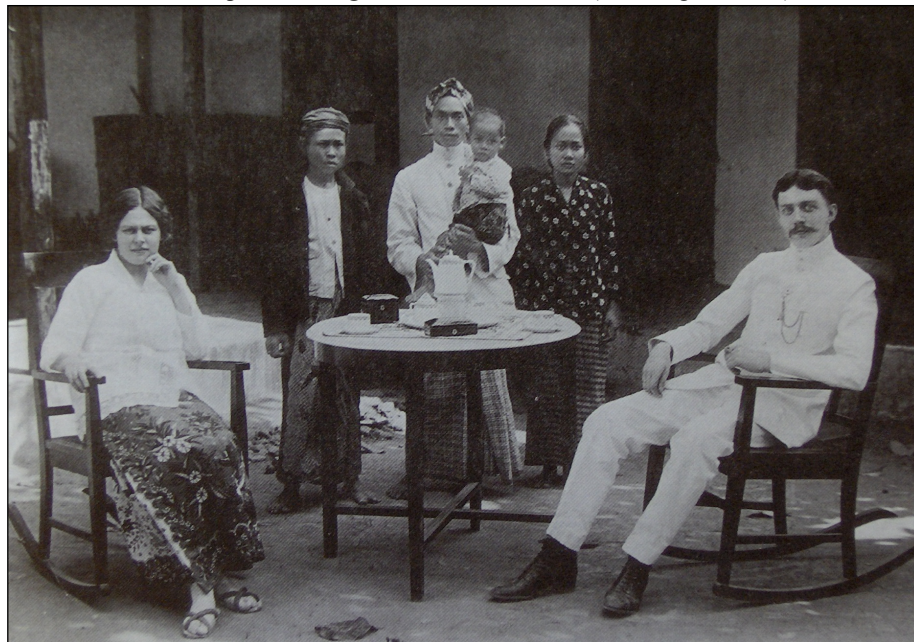
While European women and the Javanese elite, both men and women, wore a *batik sarong* and *kebaya* following the Java War, this unisex attire was considered too feminine for European men. Instead they adopted *batik* trousers and a white collarless jacket (not too dissimilar from a *kebaya*) as their outfit in the private sphere. The common Javanese could not afford the expensive *batik* materials and therefore wore *sarongs* from simple cloths. However, the development of a *batik* industry outside the confines of the Javanese elite by Eurasians and Chinese alike resulted in the innovation of *batik* stamps, which enabled faster production and therefore cheaper *batik* materials. In combination with the import of *batik*-imitation from the Dutch cotton industry, this slowly enabled the common Javanese to purchase *batik* materials as well, turning it into the ‘national’ dress by the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁵

¹⁴ Jean Gelman Taylor, “Official Photography, Costume, and Indonesian Revolution,” 103.

¹⁵ Jean Gelman Taylor, “Identity, Nation, and Islam,” 101-107.



Fig. 3.1. The photo above is of a European family in 1911. The European man wears a *batik*-pantaloen and *kebaya*, while his wife is dressed in a *sarong* and *kebaya*. The Javanese servants all show off ethnic dress, with the exception of the man, who as manager of the household is allowed to wear a white jacket. The picture below (Fig. 3.2) is taken in 1914 and shows another Dutch family in the Indies. Here the European man wears the high-collared colonial suit (*jas tutup*). Source: E. Wils (e.a.), *Tropenecht: Indische en Europese kleding in Nederlands-Indië* (The Hague: 1996) 31 and 47.



The key to this sartorial hierarchy was that the Dutch were both recognizable as belonging to the Indies, as well as being different. For instance, the use of the color white in European colonial dress, both in the private and public sphere, served as a distinct marker of colonial power. According to a Dutch journalist in Batavia, the color white

served as the protective armor of colonial authority and prestige.¹⁶ The color was not primarily chosen because of its reflective properties, but to signify dominance in the colonial context. The Islamic association of the white color with death enabled the Dutch to turn this into ‘their’ color. Moreover, on Java white was also connected to Christianity, setting it apart even more starkly as the color of the colonizers. Finally, white dress implied that the wearer did not perform manual labor and could afford the expensive bleaching process.¹⁷ The white *kebaya*’s of European men and women and the colonial high-collared white suit (*jas tutup*) were thus essential in marking difference. Only certain Javanese men and women were allowed to don white dress in colonial society, as can be seen in the images below (Fig. 3.1 and 3.2).

The peculiarity of Dutch sartorial choices becomes readily apparent in the travel accounts of English men and women accustomed to practices in the British Empire. In their nineteenth and early twentieth century descriptions of the Netherlands Indies they expressed bewilderment with the Dutch adoption of ‘native costume’, with which they meant the *sarong* and *kebaya* for women and *batik* trousers for men. In these accounts one finds descriptions of Dutch colonial dress as: a “dishabille beyond all burlesque pantomime”, “ungraceful and slovenly in the extreme”, a “disregard for delicacy and propriety”, a “grotesque travesty of native garb”, “unbecoming”, “ungainly”, a “state of un-dress”, and simply as “not pretty”.¹⁸ Interestingly, nineteenth century travel accounts

¹⁶ Karel Wybrands, “Het naderend Einde,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, No. 233, 1e blad, 5 October 1916.

¹⁷ Dorine Bronkhorst and Esther Wils (e.a), *Tropenecht*, 83. C. Vis-Janssen Van Raay, “De Witte Kleur bij de Inlandsche Volken,” *De Indische Verlofganger*, Vol. 6, No. 40, 11 May 1928. “De triomf van de witte jas,” *Het Nieuws van de Dag in Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 10, No. 199, 29 August 1905. On the symbolic importance of the color white in general: Alison Lurie, *The Language of Clothes*, 184-187.

¹⁸ William Edwards, *De Zieke reiziger, or, Rambles in Java and the Straits : in 1852* (London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1853). William Walker of Bombay, *Jottings of an invalid in search of health, comprising a run through British India and a visit to Singapore and Java: a series of letters reprinted from the Times*

were more obsessed with the ‘publicity of private life’ than with the adoption of native clothes itself. In the eyes of the English the Dutch too easily surrendered to the tropical climate by not limiting the use of ‘native dress’ to the private sphere. Instead, the Dutch shamelessly wore these clothes in the openness of their porches and gardens, during social visits, and while strolling or riding through the neighborhood. By the turn of the century these concerns of propriety made way for a more ominous interpretation of Dutch colonial appearance. In 1897, George Murray Reith interpreted the *sarong* and *kebaya* as signs of the Dutch inadequacy of raising the native to their own level, but instead their tendency of sinking to the level of the natives. Reith even predicted that the Dutch in the Indies would cease to be Europeans if these sartorial practices would continue.¹⁹ Ranging from concerns of propriety to those of race and identity, the main observation by the Anglo-Saxon travel accounts can be summarized in the words of Emily Richings: “Dutch Puritanism certainly undergoes startling transformations under the tropical skies.”²⁰

By the end of the nineteenth century various ethnic groups on Java started to display a tendency to wear a composite fashion consisting of both local and European dress items.²¹ This trend forced the colonial government to reconsider the boundaries of its sartorial hierarchy. For instance, the *peranakan* Chinese led the way in adopting European clothing to such an extent that the Dutch colonial press noted that it would have been hard to distinguish them from Eurasians without their obligatory pigtails. What

of India (Bombay: Times of India Office, 1865). Anna Forbes, *Insulinde: experiences of a naturalist's wife in the eastern archipelago* (London: Wm. Blackwood and Sons, 1887). Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore, *Java, the Garden of the East* (New York: Century, 1897). George Murray Reith, *A padre in partibus: being notes and impressions of a brief holiday tour through Java, the Eastern Archipelago and Siam* (Singapore: Sibgapore and Straits Print. Off., 1897). Emily Richings, *Through the Malay Archipelago* (London: H. Drane, 1909).

¹⁹ George Murray Reith, *A padre in partibus: being notes and impressions of a brief holiday tour through Java, the Eastern Archipelago and Siam*, 188-190.

²⁰ Emily Richings, *Through the Malay Archipelago*, 15.

²¹ The term ‘composite fashion’ comes from Emm Tarlo’s work *Clothing Matters*, 42-55.

made the colonial press particularly uneasy was the tolerance of the colonial government towards these perceived Chinese transgressions of the sartorial hierarchy, which might encourage the indigenous peoples to follow their example.²² These concerns seemed justified by the increasing popularity of a composite fashion among the urbanized indigenous peoples of Java. Many indigenous men added any combination of trousers, a jacket, a shirt, shoes, or a hat to their outfit.²³ However, fines were still handed out to those who, in the opinion of colonial authorities, transgressed the ethnic hierarchy of dress.²⁴ The contradictory signals of the colonial government, tolerating the increase of a composite fashion while still imposing an ethnically based sartorial hierarchy, were the cause of much unease and confusion in colonial society. The colonial government sought to clarify this situation by redefining the boundaries of the sartorial hierarchy.

The response of the colonial government to the, at this point still relatively timid, contestation of the ethnic hierarchy of dress was mainly informed by the opinion of Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, since 1898 the advisor for native affairs. In between 1900 and 1905 he was consulted multiple times with regards to possible transgressions of the sartorial hierarchy by hajjis (Muslims who fulfilled the pilgrimage to Mecca), the Western educated indigenous elite, and Chinese subjects. Snouck Hurgronje's correspondence sheds light on both the motivation behind these sartorial challenges as

²² "Kleeding naar den Volksaard," *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 2, No. 10, 12 January 1900. "Zonder start," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 9, No. 132, 10 June 1904. "Schetsen uit het Javaansche Volksleven. No. XV. Het zelfrespect van den Inlander en de Ethische Koers," *Het Nieuws van de Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 10, No. 17, 20 January 1905.

²³ Snouck Hurgronje to the Directeur van Onderwijs, Eeredienst en Nijverheid, 25 December 1900 and Snouck Hurgronje to the Directeur of Onderwijs, Eeredienst en Nijverheid, 26 October 1902, in Gobe, E. and C. Adriaanse (eds.), *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936* (1959) Vol. 2, 1041-1045, 1326-1328.

²⁴ "Een vriend die my myn feilen toont...", *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 2, No. 229, 2 October 1900. "Een Inlander die graag Europeaan wil zijn," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 8, No. 241, 19 October 1903. "Politie-Nieuws," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 10, No. 50, 1 March 1905.

well as the colonial government's response to them. Differences in dress, he argued, have always existed on Java, and just as in Europe fashion was always in flux. Not only did he believe it was impossible to contain these cultural trends, but as a true protagonist of the civilizing mission ideology he also thought it was:

“unfathomable, that a civilized government would force Arabs to wear a turban, Chinese a pigtail, and natives a *sarong* over their trousers, when these subjects have rejected these elements of their appearance themselves.”²⁵

In other words, Snouck Hurgronje contradicted and undermined the sartorial policy of the nineteenth century. His advice led to two separate government circulars, in 1903 and 1905, that mirrored this vision. Both circulars stated that the subjects of the Dutch colonial government were free to choose how to dress and wear their hair, as long as ‘disguises’ were not used to evade or deceive the colonial authorities. These circulars were part of a broader turn in Dutch colonial politics that corresponded with the start of the Ethical Policy in 1901, which aimed to legitimize colonial authority on modern grounds.²⁶

The advisor for native affairs' correspondence regarding the request of a indigenous doctor, a so-called *dokter djawa*, to wear European clothes, provides an insight in the appeal of European dress. The *dokter djawa* was among the few indigenous professionals, teachers and civil servants being the others, who received a Western education in the second half of the nineteenth century. Becoming a Western-trained doctor was especially alluring for those in the lower *priyayi* circles who had little to no

²⁵ Snouck Hurgronje to the Governor-General, 12 June 1905, in Gobe, E. and C. Adriaanse (eds.), *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje*, Vol. 2, 1590.

²⁶ “Circulaire: Chinesen en het afscheren van hun staarten”, 27 March 1905, in: Folder 17, Inventory no. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

chance of reaching into the prestigious upper-echelons of the indigenous civil service. As a doctor, or a teacher for that matter, they were incorporated in the feudal rank and file of the civil service and thus maintained their *priyayi* status. Consequently, their place within the colonial hierarchy was clearly defined within several regulations, dealing with the status symbols, such as the *payung*, they were allowed to carry, their official title as well as their costume. Although they were recipients of Western education, they were nonetheless required to dress according to their ethnicity. The underlying reasoning seems to have been that the *dokters djawa* needed to gain the trust and respect of the common people in order to convince them of the benefits of Western medicine. However, it also served as a visible reminder that despite their Western education the *dokter djawa* remained lower in rank than many civil servants without extensive (Western) education.²⁷

The discrepancy between their social rank and education level led a *dokter djawa* by the name of Raden Moekadi to request permission to dress in a European fashion. He described this as trousers, a jacket and an ethnic headdress. Before answering this request, Snouck Hurgronje elaborated on what he believed to be motivation for the indigenous people in general to prefer the switch to European attire. He argued that European dress was considered more practical than the ‘picturesque’ Javanese *kain* or *sarong*, which restricted movements too much. In addition, many Javanese with a Western education apparently felt ashamed of their ethnic costume, because in the eyes of the Europeans it was associated with an inferior civilization. Donning European clothes was thus considered a way of appearing more civilized and modern. Foremost, Snouck

²⁷ Liesbeth Hesselink, *Healers on the Colonial Market: Native Doctors and Midwives in the Dutch East Indies* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2011). For the controversy surrounding dress and the *payung* as a status symbol for indigenous doctors, see: Liesbeth Hesselink, “The Unbearable Absence of Parasols: The Formidable Weight of a Colonial Java Status Symbol,” *IJAS Newsletter*, No. 45 (Autumn 2007) 26.

Hurgronje reasoned that the request by the *dokter-djawa* was in large part motivated by the desire to distance himself from traditional society and hierarchy through association with Europe. He believed that European dress was regarded as an instrument of power and a shield against the yoke of traditional feudal and colonial societies. For instance, the more European the appearance, the less appropriate traditional deference, such as sitting or crouching on the floor, adherence to the language hierarchy, and other social conventions, was to become. Snouck Hurgronje believed that this development should not be repressed, but allowed to run its natural course. However, he does warn of the possibility that the *dokter djawa* wants to abuse the right to wear a European costume to treat others in a manner they are trying to avoid for themselves. Dressing-“up” in European fashion was thus a challenge to both the feudal hierarchy and the grounds on which colonial authority was based.²⁸

Snouck Hurgronje’s elaborate advice resulted in the dress-circular of 1903, which essentially allowed the inhabitants of the colony to wear any article of clothing they preferred as long as they did not have the intention of using it as a disguise to evade or break the law. This was a significant relaxation of the sartorial hierarchy in the Indies, allowing colonial subjects to dress in a composite fashion as long as their appearance still clearly communicated their ethnic background. For instance, this could be achieved by one’s headdress, hairstyle, and footwear.²⁹ Within two years the sartorial regulations were loosened even further when several Chinese subjects requested, and were allowed, to cut-off their pigtails. With the 1905 regulation the ethnic sartorial hierarchy officially came to

²⁸ Snouck Hurgronje to the Directeur of Onderwijs, Eeeredienst en Nijverheid, 26 October 1902, in Gobee, E. and C. Adriaanse (eds.), *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje*, Vol. 2, 1041-1045.

²⁹ The first dress-circular was promulgated on June 2, 1903. For more details, see the discussion by Snouck Hurgronje of this circular: Snouck Hurgronje to the Governor-General, 12 June 1905, in Gobee, E. and C. Adriaanse (eds.), *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje*, Vol.2, 1587-1591.

an end. The requirement that one's appearance should communicate one's ethnicity was let go of and replaced by a general condition which stated that one could not pretend to belong to another ethnic group in order to break or evade the law. At least on paper the colonial subjects in the Indies were now free to dress and style their hair as they wanted to, but in practice this proved to be much harder. The conservative Dutch colonial and Javanese elite resisted these practices wherever they could.³⁰

The dress circulars of 1903 and 1905 were part of a much broader attempt to de-feudalize and modernize the grounds of colonial authority. Progressive forces in both the Netherlands and the Indies strove to legitimize colonial rule through 'civilized and modern' Western concepts of judicial equality, a form of representation and participation in governance. An important, but often overlooked, element of this part of the Dutch civilizing mission ideology was the transformation of colonial cultural hegemony based on feudal Javanese traditions to, in the words of Snouck Hurgronje, more 'international and cosmopolitan' forms. Therefore numerous circulars regarding the abolition of traditional Javanese symbols of power, deference forms, and social conventions were enacted from 1904 onwards. This was a long and protracted process. Although European progressives were in the position to change colonial policies, most Europeans were highly skeptical of these changes to colonial society. Similarly, the Western educated Javanese professionals and nationalists who supported the new colonial turn were at first outnumbered by the highly conservative Javanese aristocracy. Dress played an important

³⁰ The second, and more influential, dress-circular was promulgated on March 27, 1905. It stated: "The government wishes to leave her subjects free from interference with regards to their hairstyle as well as their dress, as long as it is clear that there is no intend to evade or break the law." The circular can be found in: "Circulaire. Chinesen en het afscheren van hun staarten", 27 March 1905, Folder 17, Inventory no. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

role in this struggle between these (roughly) two racially mixed alliances for the redefinition of cultural hegemony.³¹

The groups that profited foremost from the revised sartorial policy in the colony were the Western educated Javanese elite, most of whom were employed by the colonial authorities and the Chinese *peranakan* community. Their respective requests for change had prompted the dress circulars of 1903 and 1905 in the first place. Both groups employed European dress to evade the constraints of the feudal colonial hierarchy of the nineteenth century. As Snouck Hurgronje had suggested, the Western educated Javanese felt humiliated by the amount of feudal deference they had to observe towards indigenous, often less educated, and European superiors. With the ban on European clothing lifted, many used Western dress as a shield against feudal deference traditions, such as sitting on the floor, crouching and speaking according to the language stratification in the presence of a superior. However, it was not uncommon, as Snouck Hurgronje also anticipated, for these newly ‘liberated’ individuals to still demand feudal deference themselves from their own inferiors. For the common colonial subject therefore, little seemed to have changed.³²

In terms of semiotics, one of the most noteworthy consequences of the change in sartorial politics was the availability of previously reserved items of white clothing, especially jackets and trousers, to the indigenous people. Outside the civil service, where dress regulations still prohibited the use of the color white for its indigenous members,

³¹ Between 1904 and 1913 various circulars were promulgated that prohibited the (ab)use of feudal deference and symbols by European civil servants. A detailed discussion can be found in the previous chapter. The circulars can be found in the *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, No. 6118 (1904), 6496 (1906), 7029 (1909), and 7939 (1913).

³² *Darma Konda*, *KT*, Vol. 2 (1913) 1207-1208. *Bintang Soerabaja*, 29 December 1911, *KT*, Vol. 1 (1912) 96. Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*. Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite*, Leslie H. Palmier, “The Javanese Nobility under the Dutch.”

the indigenous peoples could now dress in what for a century had been the privileged color of the colonizer. Interestingly, white work costumes were prohibited within the European civil service until 1904, when the old black uniforms were finally discarded. Only five years later, in January 1909, the white costumes were also made available to the indigenous members of the civil service. The loss of the privilege of wearing a white jacket or suit was therefore felt mostly outside the civil service.³³ For instance, the conservative Dutch journalist Karel Wybrands believed that the increasing violence against European planters in the colony was the result of the change in sartorial policy: “The white jacket was an armor and provided safety. The planter did not need a revolver, he had his preponderance and if needed his fists.”³⁴ Without this white body armor, the prestige and safety of Europeans could no longer be guaranteed. Most Dutch observers were not as pessimistic as Wybrands, but instead mocked the indigenous “dandy’s” attempts to dress-“up” like Europeans. One author seemed to strike a cord when he argued that true emancipation and progress were dissimilar from merely evading instead of ending deference rituals.³⁵

Several local and international developments led to an acceleration of the adaptation of European dress since the promulgation of the dress circulars. They contributed to the growing tensions between the traditional indigenous elite and Dutch conservatives on the one hand, and the progressive Western educated indigenous elite and Dutch progressives on the other hand. The growth and reach of the vernacular press

³³ “De triomf van de witte jas,” *Het Nieuws van de Dag in Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 10, No. 199, 29 August 1905. “Europeesche kleeding voor Inl. Ambtenaren,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 6 June 1909.

³⁴ “De Bittere Consequentie,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, No. 301, 1e blad, 23 December 1916.

³⁵ Corax [Psdnm.], “Indrukken van den Dag: LXXVI,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 5, No. 15, 2 August 1908, 308-309.

went hand-in-hand with the birth and expansion of the nationalist movement. Both developments signaled a more critical perspective on traditional society and colonial rule. In addition, the Chinese revolution of 1911 and the rise of Japan in Asia had a major impact on how the educated Javanese looked at their own position in the world. The indigenous journalists of the first hour almost all were highly active in the nationalist movement. They spread the knowledge of what happened in the wider world across Java through their press network and advocated a modernization of Javanese and colonial society.³⁶

Dressing-“Up”: Challenging Colonial Hierarchies

Going through the correspondence of Moehamad Enoch conjures up an image of a confident young engineer who adopted European clothing to signal that he was a man of the modern age. To observers on both sides of the colonial divide his clothes and posture communicated that he was an educated person, who probably was fluent in Dutch and worked in a non-traditional occupation. His appearance would also have been recognized as a challenge to the racial and cultural boundaries of colonial society. Moehamad Enoch's European suit was perceived, and very much intended, as a provocative means of demanding equal treatment to Europeans in colonial space. When he strode into the Bandung railway station on a Sunday afternoon in November 1913 his appearance demanded that he would be treated like a European, that is, be allowed to travel in their class and communicate in their language. When this privilege was withheld, Moehamad Enoch proved to be anything but the submissive subject the Dutch believed the Javanese to be by complaining to the colonial authorities. The new European appearance was

³⁶ Ahmat B. Adam, *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness*.

clearly accompanied by a recalcitrant attitude. Although Moehamad Enoch's story is one of exceptional courage, his was certainly not an isolated incident.³⁷

During the fall of 1913 many other indigenous young professionals – teachers, railroad employees, pawnshop personnel, clerks and civil servants – dressed-“up” in European clothes to challenge the colonial hierarchy of dress in particular and the cultural hegemony of colonial rule in general. Both the colonial and vernacular press at great lengths reported on the sudden popularity of European dress in indigenous society. A close reader of these dress-related press reports concluded that:

“There is a sociological relevance to this since September 1913 surprisingly rapid spreading movement, with every age a new costume comes into vogue and anyone who still doubts the dawn of the liberation of the people in the Indies, he should, with a little sociological insight into these symptoms, come to the conclusion to change the décor.”³⁸

This observation revealed a specific moment at which the hierarchy of dress was contested and insinuated that in the theater that is colonial society, a change of dress needed to be accompanied by a change of décor. In other words, the author believed that by dressing-“up” in European fashion the colonial relationship itself could and should be changed. This is therefore not merely a change of fashion or style but, as he calls it, a sociologically important moment in colonial history. This association between dress and the character of the colonial relationship helps explain why it took a decade before the colonial hierarchy of dress was discarded like an old piece of clothing from September 1913 onwards.

³⁷ The correspondence of Moehamad Enoch can be found in the archive of the former advisor of native affairs, Folder 29, Inventory no. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

³⁸ Although the author of these words is unknown, the article where they stemmed from was published in the periodical of the *Indische Partij* titled *De Indiër*. Both Soewardi Soeryaningrat and Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo had written several times on dress in the periodical and it seems likely that either of them could have made this observation. “Teekenen,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 29 (7 May 1914) 46.

In 1913 the nascent nationalist movement and the European driving forces behind the Ethical Policy coalesced into a coalition to redefine the cultural hegemony of colonial rule. The pivotal moment that forged this progressive coalition was the promulgation of the so-called “*hormat*”-circular in August 1913, which prohibited European civil servants from demanding traditional Javanese deference from their colonial subjects. More than anything, I argue, it was this circular that accelerated the change of dress among both the colonizers and the colonized. While most histories dealing with the issue of dress in the Netherlands Indies have focused on the dress-circulars of 1903 and 1905, they have not been able to explain why it took a decade for these circulars to have a considerable effect. The *hormat*-circular emboldened Javanese nationalists, and through their political organizations and newspapers also the common man, openly to challenge the colonial and Javanese feudal order by donning European attire. It was argued that when one dressed in European clothes, especially trousers, one could not submit to traditional deference, such as crouching and sitting on the floor or adhering to the language hierarchy. European clothes thus became a provocative weapon to exact equal treatment from the conservative European and indigenous forces in colonial society. The correlation between the *hormat*-circular of August 1913 and the rapid adoption of European dress by many groups in indigenous society from September 1913 onwards is difficult to overstate.³⁹

³⁹ In the existing academic literature the correlation between wearing European dress and non-conformation to the traditional deference rituals is often referred to, but is never linked to the promulgation of several *hormat*-circulars, let alone the acceleration of pace of adopting European dress after the 1913 circular. For instance: Kees van Dijk, “Sarong, jubbah, and trousers,” 39-84. Rudolf Mrázek, “Indonesian Dandy,” 117-147. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, “Summer dresses and canned food,” 151-180. The *hormat*-circular can be found in: *Bijblad op het Staatsblad van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 48, No. 7939 (1913). The corresponding affidavit can be found in: *Nota bij de hormatcircular van 22 Augustus 1913*, in: Folder 57, Inventory no. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

The significance of the *hormat*-circular of August 1913 lies in its bringing together European and indigenous progressive forces in their attempts to modernize the colonial relationship. Since the beginning of the Ethical Policy in 1901 the colonial government had striven towards legitimizing colonial authority on more modern grounds. Previous circulars dealing with deference traditions and dress hierarchies were largely unsuccessful due to the strength of both European and Javanese conservative forces. However, by 1913 the nascent nationalist movement – Budi Utomo was founded in 1908 and the Sarekat Islam in 1911 – had gained considerable mass just as the progressive European forces reached the peak of their influence as well. This resulted in a broad attack on colonial cultural hegemony, which was symbolized by the *hormat*-circular.⁴⁰ Through the circular the colonial government publicly scolded its civil servants for not complying with previous briefings outlying a more modern colonial relationship. Not only was this message disseminated through the vernacular press, but also by the adjunct-advisor for native affairs Rinkes at meetings of the Sarekat Islam. The colonial official's presence at these mass meetings symbolized the progressive coalition that had come into existence and that would successfully challenge the status quo during the next half decade. Rinkes' encouraged his audience, often dressed in white suits, to inform the authorities about any abuses of power, as Moehamad Enoch had done, to ensure that the modernization of the colonial relationship would endure.⁴¹

⁴⁰ One of the central arguments in my dissertation is that 1913 was a turning point in the cultural history of the colony and Indonesia. The *hormat*-circular (deference) in the short term was the most provoking events, but in the same year concubinage was prohibited, feudal services were abolished, the domestic travel regulations by ethnicity were abandoned, a new education system introduced, and racial segregation minimized.

⁴¹ For the emergence of Budi Utomo and the Sarekat Islam see Akira Nagazumi, *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism* and A.P.E. Korver, *Sarekat Islam, 1912-1916* respectively. The latter also deals with the fascinating role that D.A. Rinkes played in the legalization of the association. One of the many criticisms of

Throughout the fall of 1913 the colonial and vernacular press reported on groups within indigenous society that replaced their *sarong* and headscarf with trousers, a jacket, shoes and a hat. The protagonists of this movement came from the lower *priyayi* (teachers, pawnshop employees and lower civil servants) and the nascent middle class (merchants, clerks). They had enjoyed extensive Western education that made them intellectually equal or even superior to many Europeans, Eurasians and the traditional Javanese elite to whom they were socially inferior. The Javanese deference rituals made this a painful and often humiliating contradiction. The *hormat*-circular encouraged these young intellectuals to dress-“up” in a European fashion to ensure that these degrading situations could not continue. For instance, the Batavian newspaper *Pemberita Betawi* stated how local indigenous teachers had, “just like elsewhere on Java at school meetings”, decided to wear European clothing to work from now on.⁴² Reports of teachers doing the same in Malang, Bandung and Surabaya soon followed.⁴³ Other commentaries described how young intellectuals founded voluntary associations in which its members were free to dress in a European fashion and interact according to international forms of deference.⁴⁴ In addition to indigenous teachers, pawnshop-employees, lower civil servants, clerks, personnel of the railway services and many

Rinkes can be found here: “De zevende hormat-circulaire en de uitlatingen van Dr. Rinkes,” *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1914) 365-367.

⁴² *Pemberita Betawi*, No. 294 and 296, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 382.

⁴³ Soewardi Suryaningrat, “Europeesche Kleeding,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 15 (29-1-1914) 180. *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 24, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 513-514. “Uit Bangil,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 19, No. 26, 2 February 1914. “Inlandsche onderwijzers en de westersche kleederdracht,” *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 16, No. 37, 13 February 1914.

⁴⁴ *Bintang Soerabaja*, No. 214, *KT*, Vol. 2 (1913) 1632. Soewardi Suryaningrat, “Javanen in Europeesche Kleeding,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 16 (5 February 1914) 191-192.

others also exchanged their Javanese clothes for a European suit.⁴⁵ The exiled early nationalist Soewardi Suryaningrat reacted to these developments from afar in his ‘confinement’ in the Netherlands, exclaiming:

“Bravo! This proves the unwillingness to be treated as inferior in the future. This is what happened when one was dressed in indigenous clothing. If one appears European in the Indies, one looks more prominent. That is the right that the indigenous peoples demand for themselves, to be prominent and engaged.”⁴⁶

The traditional conservative groups in indigenous society fiercely contested the sudden acceleration in the Westernization of indigenous appearance. Most members of the high *priyayi* class rejected any change to the sartorial hierarchy in defense of their feudal privileges and position in colonial society. A Dutch newspaper observed that many *Bupatis* were “everything but pleased with the novelty” of their subjects donning European clothes. For instance, the *Bupati* of Malang called on two indigenous teachers in his district who had exchanged their traditional outfits for a European one. He demanded an explanation as to why they had done so. Both teachers answered that European dress was neater, more virtuous and more practical. It also took far less time to dress-up in European clothes than in a Javanese outfit.⁴⁷ Another Javanese *Bupati* refused to receive an indigenous engineer working at the Department of Public Works because he wore European dress without any indigenous markers, such as a headscarf.⁴⁸ And the local *priyayi* in Bodjonegoro tried to prohibit young people from wearing European

⁴⁵ *Pemberita Betawi*, No. 262, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 222. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, “Het ‘Prestige’ in Gevaar,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 7 (4 December 1913) 82. Soewardi Suryaningrat, “Europeesche Kleeding,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 15 (29 January 1914) 180.

⁴⁶ Soewardi Suryaningrat was exiled for publishing a pamphlet titled “*If I were to be a Dutchman...*” in which he criticized colonial rule. In the Netherlands he enjoyed a large amount of freedom, but he could not return to the colony. Soewardi Suryaningrat, “Europeesche Kleeding,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 15 (29 January 1914) 180. Soewardi Suryaningrat, “Javanen in Europeesche Kleeding,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 16 (5 February 1914) 191-192.

⁴⁷ “Uit Bangil,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 19, No. 26, 2 February 1914.

⁴⁸ *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 110, *KT*, Vol. 4 (1915) 1100.

footwear to maintain a clear class distinction.⁴⁹ But unlike the dress circulars of 1903 and 1905, the *hormat*-circular of 1913 was far more difficult to ignore. Not only did the Governor-General and the office of native affairs support it, but also a rapidly growing vernacular press and nationalist political movement heralded the new policy. Both *Bupatis* mentioned above were scolded by the Governor-General's office and forced to allow their subjects to dress according to their own free will. This was a clear sign that times were changing.

Dressing-up in a European manner was often not politically but socially motivated. Educated Javanese wanted either to evade deference demands, associate themselves with modernity, or both. Rudolf Mrazek has described this Westernized Javanese as the quintessential "Indonesian dandy".⁵⁰ Their desire to appear modern was clearly reflected in the conservative *priyayi*'s criticism that the young Javanese were hypocrites. It was said that these educated youngsters no longer showed their respect to social superiors, but that they still demanded traditional deference from their own social inferiors. There probably was some truth to this claim, Snouck Hurgronje had already warned for this double standard when he responded to the request of Dokter Djawa's to dress in a European fashion. The educated Javanese were aware that they were intellectually the equals or even superiors of the traditional elite, but that they stood socially well below them. As a consequence, plenty of these intellectuals sought to improve their own social standing without breaking the feudal hierarchy down completely.⁵¹

⁴⁹ *Oetoesan Hindia*, 7 January 1920, No. 4, *IPO*, No. 2 (1920).

⁵⁰ Rudolf Mrázek, "The Indonesian Dandy," 117-147.

⁵¹ Dressing-"up" in European fashion was not necessarily a nationalist statement, for some, maybe even for many; it was simply a sign of self-advancement. Rudolf Mrázek had pointed this out in his work on the

The widespread adoption of European dress among the educated Javanese raised all kinds of questions about the national and ethnic identities of the indigenous peoples. Could one be true to one's ethnicity and cultural background when one wore a pantaloons? Could one still be considered a nationalist in that case? These questions were discussed by Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo and Soewardi Suryaningrat in the periodical *De Indiër*.⁵² Soetatmo was one of the most vocal advocates of Javanese nationalism and a fierce defender of Javanese dress. In two articles he shared his shock and amazement about the "fast and unexpected change of clothes" that he witnessed in his personal environment and in colonial society in general since the fall of 1913. This led him to wonder why this change transpired and if it transpired for the right reasons. Soetatmo quickly established a correlation between the changes in outward appearance and the *hormat*-circular in August 1913. According to him, by wearing a pantaloons and a hat, one could demand respect and evade humiliating deference demands from those who considered themselves one's superiors. However tempting, he urged his countrymen not to dress-up because:

"As a means to evade insults and avoid conflict, European dress for us Javanese is not recommended, not even as a means to shed servile tendencies. A slave is and will remain a slave even if he wears the costume of a king. Who ever tries to hide his servile character with a pantaloons and a hat is a dissimulator."⁵³

In Soetatmo's eyes, Europeans did not respect the person wearing the clothes, but the clothes themselves. He therefore urges his compatriots to act like *Satryas* (Hindu caste of warriors and kings) by demanding equal treatment while wearing traditional Javanese

Indonesian Dandy. A similar argument can also be discerned from W.J. O'Malley, "Second Thoughts on Indonesian Nationalism." For a criticism of the young Javanese: *Djawa Tengah*, No. 227, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 104.

⁵² *De Indiër* was weekly founded by the *Indische Partij* in the Netherlands after their three leaders, Douwes Dekker, Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Soewardi Soeryaningrat were exiled from Java in 1913.

⁵³ Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo, "Taal en Kleeding," *De Indiër*, Vol. 2, No. 3 and 4 (12 November 1914) 9-11.

clothing. True nationalists should don indigenous dress to inspire and rally their people for their cause, not estrange them by wearing a European outfit.⁵⁴

Soetatmo's Javanese nationalist opinion on the changes in colonial society drew a strong response from Soewardi Suryaningrat, at the time a clear protagonist of a more inclusive Indies nationalism. Soewardi strongly rejected Soetatmo's reasoning that a true nationalist cannot wear European clothing. According to Soewardi, nationalism is not deposited in a *sarong* or headscarf, but in the hearts of the people. He agreed that Javanese dress should not be too easily discarded, but at the same time one should be open to the benefits of European dress. For instance, European dress is more affordable and practical in daily usage. Most importantly, Soewardi argued, European dress emancipates the indigenous people by exempting them from servile obedience:

“Time and again it is surprising to witness the change in the servile attitude and manners, yes even of the opinions, into unforced, frank, but always Eastern-polite manners, because of a change of clothes.”⁵⁵

Where Soetatmo argued that Europeans only respected the pantaloons and not its bearer and therefore should refrain from dressing-up in a European fashion, Soewardi believed this advantage should be used to emancipate the indigenous people. For him, European

⁵⁴ Soetatmo was inspired by an old Javanese manuscript titled “*Niti-Sastro*” and clearly had a weak spot for the traditional hierarchy in Javanese society. The *satrya* had to struggle for the benefit of the common man. This was part of the Javanese worldview and the basis of the aristo-democracy. For Javanese Nationalism in general and the role of Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo in particular: Farabi Fakihi, “Conservative corporatist: Nationalist thoughts of aristocrats. The ideas of Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo and Noto Soeroto,” *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, Vol. 168, No. 4 (2012), 420-444. Hans van Miert, *Een Koel Hoofd en een Warm Hart: Nationalisme, Javanisme en Jeugdbeweging in Nederlands-Indië, 1918-1930* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1995). Takashi Shiraishi, “The Disputes between Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo and Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo: Satria vs Pandita,” *Indonesia*, Vol.32 (October 1981), 93-108. And finally, for the opinion of a Dutch colonial civil servant on Soeriokoesoemo and Javanese nationalism: Schrieke, “Nota over het Congres voor Javaansche Cultuurontwikkeling,” Folder 57, Inventory no. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

⁵⁵ Soewardi Suryaningrat, “Onze Nationale Kleeding,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 37 (2 July 1914) 136.

clothing was a “weapon with which we force the colonizers, to give our people their legitimate rights.”⁵⁶

The difference of opinion between Soetatmo and Soewardi reflected the divergence in the nationalist movement and among the educated Javanese in general. The Indies lacked a singular and cohesive nationalist movement but instead had various competing visions for the future of the colony. The choice of dress signaled these different hopes and expectations for the future. Javanese nationalists like Soetatmo were mainly concerned with restoring Java to the former glory of Majapahit. They believed preserving Javanese cultural traditions, such as wayang, gamelan, and dance performances, as well as living according to Javanese ideas of power and social relations could achieve this. In essence, they advocated the establishment of an aristocratic autocracy in which there would be more equality among the aristocrats, but a wide gap with the common people. Hence they resisted European dress, which made the distinction between aristocrats and commoners disappear.⁵⁷ In contrast, Indies nationalists like Soewardi strove for a more inclusive ideal of an independent post-colonial state based on democratic values. They were highly critical of both the colonial and feudal *priyayi* order and regarded European clothes as a means of uniting all the colonized against these oppressive systems of rule.⁵⁸

In the following decade the question of what to wear was a hotly debated topic in the vernacular press. Both sides of the debate used harsh words to accuse the other of not

⁵⁶ Soewardi Suryaningrat, “Onze Nationale Kleeding,” 138.

⁵⁷ On the universalizing and egalitarian influence of the suit: Henk Schutte Nordholt, “The State on the Skin: Clothes, Shoes, and Neatness in (Colonial) Indonesia,” *Asian Studies Review*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 22.

⁵⁸ “Advisor for Native Affairs (D.A. Rinkes) to Governor-General (Idenburg), November 30, 1915”, in: S.L. van der Wal, *De Opkomst van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlands-Indië*. 404-452. *Oetoesan Hindia*, No. 180, *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 94.

being nationalistic enough. For instance, in 1921 an author in the *Hindia Dipa* accused those who sported European clothing of being unpatriotic. These Westernized characters supposedly no longer spoke Javanese and only read Dutch newspapers and periodicals. According to the author, they completely disregarded their cultural background. This provoked a response in the same newspaper, repeating Soewardi's reasoning that patriotism is not deposited in one's clothing but in one's heart.⁵⁹ Others went further in refuting the above accusations by arguing that donning Javanese dress without improving the welfare of the common man was even less nationalistic.⁶⁰ At the heart of these disagreements lay the question of who belonged to the nation and what it represented. For the Javanese nationalists the nation consisted of the aristocracy and was characterized by its elite culture. In contrast, the Indies nationalists assumed that all the colonized were part of a single nation that through modernization sought to be connected to the wider world. However, these were the extremes of the debate, in which many sought a way in between. A contributor to a vernacular newspaper from Bandung presented a strong case for composite dress. By wearing traditional headwear, the indigenous peoples could adopt European dress without disregarding their nationality.⁶¹

⁵⁹ In the following issues of *Hindia Dipa* other authors took offense to this stance. For the debate: *Hindia Dipa*, 21 November and 5 December 1921, No. 14 and 16, *IPO*, No. 1 (1922) 30-31.

⁶⁰ In 1922 the newspaper *Darmo Kondo* published various articles on the issue of dress. Most of the arguments found in these articles are a repetition of the dynamic between Soetatmo and Soewardi. *Darmo Kondo*, 24 May 1922, No. 40, 3 June 1922, No. 43, *IPO*, No. 25 (1922) 458-459. *Darmo Kondo*, 1 till 8 August 1922, No. 51 till 53, *IPO*, No. 31 (1922) 169.

⁶¹ *Padjadjaran*, 27 November 1920, No. 38, *IPO*, No. 50 (1920).



Fig. 3.3. The Committee for Javanese Cultural Development in Surakarta, July 1918. Source: KITLV Image Archive No. 32923. The main participants and organizers of the conference showcase a variety of composite appearances. Anywhere from donning a European suit without Javanese headwear to sporting a traditional *kain* in combination with a European jacket, shirt, and tie, with or without Javanese headwear. Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo (second row to the far right) wears a traditional *kain* with a white colonial ‘tutup’ jacket and Javanese headwear. Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo (second row in the middle) also wears a traditional *kain* and tops it with a European jacket and bowtie, while remaining loyal to Javanese headdress. In contrast, the president of the conference, Sastro Widjono only wears European clothing (third from the left in the front).

Although the debate about dress and national identity continued till the end of colonial rule and beyond, there were indications that European dress had become more broadly accepted by 1924. In the previous year, the periodical of the Java Institute, aptly titled *Djawa*, announced an essay competition on the subject of: “The advantages and disadvantages of Western dress for the inhabitants of Java, Madura and Bali.”⁶² Founded in 1919, the Java Institute was the academic bulwark of the Javanese nationalists and essential to their protection of Javanese cultural traditions. Significantly, first prize was awarded to an essay on the benefits of European over indigenous dress, while second place went to an essay that propagated indigenous dress. Whereas the former was

⁶² Interestingly, the Javanese nationalist ideal of a ‘greater Java’, including Madura and Bali, was represented within the essay question. “Prijsvraag,” *Djawa*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (June 1923) 92.

published in *Djawa* (June 1924), the latter remained hidden in the periodical's archives. Taken together this was a clear indication that, at least to a certain extent, the Javanese nationalists had conceded the argument on dress.⁶³

The second place essay was clearly written by a passionate Javanese nationalist who sought to reconcile his ideals with reality. According to the author, the rejection of *sarong* and headscarf by so many of his fellow countrymen could only be considered “a negation of Javanese culture”. This was especially damaging to the *batik*-industry, which he believed to be a cornerstone of Javanese culture. While the young professional Javanese preferred European dress, the common man could not afford hand painted *batik*. In addition, European men and women, as will be demonstrated below, also replaced their *sarongs* and *batik* trousers with European clothing items. As a consequence, the *batik*-industry, and with it Javanese culture and identity, was in peril. The author did recognize the appeal of European dress. He stated that even when a traditionally dressed Javanese is “more educated and intelligent than a white person,” the latter still treated him with contempt. In addition, he argued that: “Modern natives find the indigenous traditions too subservient, servile and obsequious and therefore consider European clothing to be more in accordance with their free spirit.” Sporting European clothing was not the solution, however. Just like Soetatmo, the author believed that “it takes moral and ethical courage to present oneself as an indigenous person in a circle of European mediocrity.” He thus proposed to at least keep wearing Javanese dress at official occasions and when going out in public with a female companion. Moreover, he urged

⁶³ A copy of the archives of *Djawa* can be found in the library of the KITLV under: *Bundels met Gegevens, BG I, No. 2; Pryspraak Kleeding en Woning Java Instituut*.

nationalist leaders to don traditional dress to inspire and lead their compatriots. These measures would also ensure the preservation of the *batik*-industry and Javanese identity.⁶⁴

In contrast, the winning essay titled “European dress for the Javanese”, by Roesalam Dwidjadisastra, shows hardly any signs of doubt about the preferable style of dress. Based on a study of hygiene, practicality, and cost efficiency the indigenous teacher from Madiun concludes that European dress is by far preferable over indigenous dress. The tone of the essay is optimistic instead of nostalgic. Dwidjadisastra proves the greater practicality of European dress by arguing that it allows for a greater freedom of movement, while working, cycling, running, horse riding, tennis and gymnastics. Instead of locating Javanese identity in the *batik*-industry and its designs, Dwidjadisastra finds it in international modernity. In similar fashion he used arguments derived from modern hygiene to discard Javanese foot- and headwear.⁶⁵ In the end, the strongest argument in Dwidjadisastra’s winning essay was that European dress improved social interaction. Not only did European clothes helped to make a better impression, they also communicated that a person had too much self-respect to crouch or crawl on the floor for another person. After more than a decade the *hormat*-circular still left its mark on the sartorial decisions that were made.

Javanese women and their appearance played a minor, albeit relevant, role in the fierce debate about dress in colonial society. The limited participation of Javanese women in this debate, as well as the limited discussion of their appearance, was reflective

⁶⁴ “De Voor- en Nadeelen van den Europeesche dracht voor ons Inlanders,” *Bundels met gegevens BG I, no 2; prysvraag kleeding en woning Java Instituut*.

⁶⁵ The original essay differed from the article that was published in *Djawa*. Although the tone and argument of the essay remained the same, a translator changed the wording and organization of the essay. The original essay can be found at the KITLV: “De Europeesche kleederdracht voor den Javaan,” *Bundels met gegevens BG I, no 2; prysvraag kleeding en woning Java Instituut*. For the published version: Roesalam Dwidjadisastra, “De Europeesche Kleederdracht voor Inlanders,” *Djawa*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (June 1924) 101-104.

of their position within the nationalist movement in general. The nationalist discourse that was created in the 1910s and 1920s was centered on the 'new Indonesian man' and directed women to subordinate positions.⁶⁶ By the time of Indonesian independence, as Jean Gelman Taylor has convincingly argued, dress clearly reflected the different gender roles assigned by this nationalist discourse. While the European suit marked Indonesian men as the holders of power, traditional Javanese dress for women made them the guardians of national culture.⁶⁷ However, in the 1910s and 1920s this outcome was not so certain. The vernacular press offers numerous signs that Western educated Javanese girls and women experimented with European clothing just as their male counterparts did.⁶⁸ Yet, their attempts at dressing-up in Western fashion were not seen as part of the struggle against Dutch colonial rule or the traditional aristocracy, but instead in terms of morality, decency and social freedom. These Westernized Javanese women thus posed a dual challenge to the colonial hierarchy and the Javanese gender hierarchy.⁶⁹

Most of the Javanese women who dressed-up in European fashion stemmed from an aristocratic background and had attended schools run by the colonial government. By the 1910s the dress code at these elementary schools prescribed European dress, which contrasted with the situation at non-governmental schools, like the famous Kartini-

⁶⁶ Jean Gelman Taylor, "Official Photography, Costume and the Indonesian Revolution," 95.

⁶⁷ Mina Roces has framed this binary as follows: "*men/modernity/political power/Western dress versus women/tradition/no political power/national dress*". Mina Roces, "Gender, Nation and the Politics of Dress in Twentieth-Century Philippines," 355. Jean Gelman Taylor, "Official Photography, Costume and the Indonesian Revolution," 94-100. Chie Ikeya, "The Modern Burmese Woman and the Politics of Fashion in Colonial Burma," 1280.

⁶⁸ For instance: *Neratja*, No. 208, 2 November 1920, *IPO* (1920) No. 45. *Sinar Hindia*, No. 8, 12 January 1921, *IPO* (1921) No. 3, 10-12. *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 83-87, 7-12 April 1924, *IPO*, (1924) No. 16, 116. *Swara Tama*, No. 26, 20 July 1928, *IPO* (1928) No. 30, 176. That many of these issues also played in Sumatra can be seen in: *Oetoesan Melajoe*, No. 82, 28 April 1920, *IPO* (1920) No. 20. *Oetoesan Melajoe*, 11 and 26 January 1920, *IPO* (1920) No. 3. *Oetoesan Sumatra*, No. 16, 7 February 1928, *IPO* (1928) No. 8, 326-327.

⁶⁹ Jean Gelman Taylor, "Official Photography, Costume and the Indonesian Revolution," 94-100. Cora Vreede-De Stuers, *The Indonesian Woman*.

schools, where indigenous costume was mandatory.⁷⁰ At the government run schools Javanese boys outnumbered Javanese girls by a wide margin. For instance, in 1915 only 5,494 female students attended these elementary schools, which came down to a little less than 19% of total attendance.⁷¹ In addition, Javanese girls were not expected to transition to high schools, but return to the patriarchal households and traditional dress. Taken together, the traditional Javanese gender roles and the comparatively small number of female students go a long way in explaining the difficulties for Javanese women in switching appearances. Nonetheless, if the vernacular press serves as a reliable indicator, a considerable number still did. This coincided with the entry of Western-educated women in the workplace as secretaries, telephone operators, and teachers. This penetration of the masculine public domain that generated much anxiety.⁷²

The rapid Westernization of the appearance of Javanese men immediately raised the question of what this implied for Javanese women. From the sources it becomes clear that this was not merely about female appearance, but Javanese women entering the political domain and modernity with their male brethren. The author of the article in *De Indiër* that attributed great social significance to the sartorial changes in 1913 was all in favor for Javanese women casting aside their “national costume.” He considered clothing a means for spiritual revolution and strongly opposed the “poor fools who go up against

⁷⁰ Jean Gelman Taylor, “Costume and gender in colonial Java, 1800-1940,” 109. Also see the article in *Panggoegah*, in which the author argued that Javanese women should attend Kartini schools instead of governmental schools so that they learn how to run a household instead of a public profession. *Panggoegah*, No. 26 and 27, 10-20 September 1921, *IPO* (1921) No. 39, 44-45.

⁷¹ The statistics come from: Kees Groeneboer, *Weg tot het Westen: Het Nederlands voor Indie 1600-1950. Een Taalpolitieke Geschiedenis* (Leiden: KITLV Publishers, 1993). See specifically Appendix XVIII on pages 497-498. In 1915 the number of male students attending government elementary schools was 23,752. By the end of colonial rule the number of girls had increased both in absolute numbers as well as in comparison to boys. In 1940, 33,925 girls attended government run elementary schools, which was 38% of total attendance.

⁷² *Panggoegah*, No. 22, 26 and 27, 1 August, 10 and 20 September 1921, *IPO* (1921) No. 39, 44-45. *Sinar Hindia*, No. 8, 12 January 1921, *IPO* (1921) No. 3, 10-12.

the spirit of the age.”⁷³ However, by referring to women’s dress as “national costume,” a reference to *sarong* and *kebaya*, the author unwittingly laid bare the weak spot of his argument. As many observers pointed out, how could the nationalist movement discard its national dress and with it its connection to the past? Although there were some nationalists who applied this argument to both genders, in practice most men saw it as their exclusive prerogative to adopt Western clothing. In doing so, Javanese men sought to undermine the control of the colonial state and feudal traditions, without allowing women to escape from their dominion.⁷⁴

The aforementioned Javanese nationalist Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo for instance, strongly stated that women should not even consider dressing in European clothes. The ever-changing whims and fancies of Parisian fashion were not only a threat to a man’s finances, but also to the development of a steadfast female character. According to Soeriokoesoemo: “Nothing is more dreadful for a *poetri* [daughter] than to put on the airs of a fashion-doll or a suffragette.”⁷⁵ These Western tendencies starkly contrasted the Eastern dignity of the *poetri*, who would be better off as the loyal housewife of a Javanese man. This was an oft-made argument that was employed to shield masculine public space from feminine intrusion. Many Javanese men felt threatened by the entrance of Javanese women in the workplace and therefore looked for novel ways to discredit this development.⁷⁶

In the decade following the major sartorial transformation of 1913, many observers in the vernacular press warned against the negative influences of Western

⁷³ “Teekenen,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 29 (7 May 1914) 46.

⁷⁴ Jean Gelman Taylor, “Official Photography, Costume and the Indonesian Revolution,” 91-126.

⁷⁵ Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo, “Taal en Kleeding,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 2, No. 3 and 4 (12 November 1914) 9-11. Kees van Dijk, “Sarong, Jubba, and Trousers,” 66-67.

⁷⁶ *Panggoegah*, No. 22, 26 and 27, 1 August, 10 and 20 September 1921, *IPO* (1921) No. 39, 44-45.

education on Javanese adolescents. It was argued that Western schooling made them long for Western knowledge and social freedoms alike. Specifically girls were deemed susceptible for these tendencies, adopting short skirts and thin European clothes that left little to the imagination.⁷⁷ The sensual character of European dress, by virtue of the amount of skin it left exposed, was considered an affront to Javanese and Islamic tradition alike.⁷⁸ Additionally, these young women demanded the right to socialize freely with their friends, of both genders. They went out unsupervised, walked arm-in-arm, practiced European dances, visited the movie theater, and bicycled around town while showing their bare legs, and sometimes even a thigh, in public.⁷⁹ Many authors warned against the lust and passion that these young women incited in men by donning European outfits while performing such Western activities. Dancing and cycling in particular were often criticized for arousing the excitement of the opposite sex.⁸⁰ One author even argued that young Javanese women differed too much from their European counterparts to imitate the latter safely. For instance, whereas European girls enjoyed a socially free upbringing, meaning they mingle with boys, Javanese girls did not and were not prepared to counter male advances successfully. What is more, Javanese girls supposedly blossomed sooner than European girls, making their social interactions with boys even more dangerous.⁸¹ Most authors therefore advised female adolescents to take only from

⁷⁷ *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 83-87, 7-12 April 1924, *IPO* (1924) No. 16, 116. *Pertjatoeran*, No. 68 and 69, 23 and 27 June 1925, *IPO* (1925) No. 29, 140-141.

⁷⁸ *Pantjadjanja*, No. 21, 21 May 1926, *IPO* (1926) No. 24, 495-497. *Oetoesan Sumatra*, No. 16, 7 February 1928, *IPO* (1928) No. 8, 326-327.

⁷⁹ *Djawa Tengah*, No. 3, 5 January 1920, *IPO*, No. 6 (1920).

⁸⁰ *Boedi Oetomo* (Malay edition), No. 8 and 9, 19 and 21 January 1921, *IPO* (1921) No. 4, 45-46. *Persamaan*, No. 12, 20 August 1924, *IPO* (1924) No. 36, 496.

⁸¹ *Sri Djojjobajo*, No. 15, 28 April 1924, *IPO* (1924) No. 23, 444-445.

the West what is useful (knowledge for the household) and leave out what is dangerous (European dress and a public career).⁸²

Following the sartorial transformations in 1913, both Javanese men and women dressed-up after Western fashion. Whereas the Westernization of the appearance of Javanese men was framed in terms of political struggle, that of women was framed in terms of (im)morality, (in)decency and social freedoms. This in part explains why the nationalist discourse that centered on the modern Javanese man and reduced the Javanese woman to traditional subordinate, won out after independence. The reason behind the construction of the nationalist discourse lies in the threat that these modern Javanese adolescents and women formed to existing gender relations.⁸³ Chie Ikeya has recently suggested that in 1930s Burma the resistance to the modernization of Burmese women compared to the lack thereof in the case of Burmese men should be considered against the backdrop of a crisis in masculinity and shifting gender relations.⁸⁴ This seems to apply to Java in the late 1910s and 1920s as well. The extent to which the Westernization of Javanese adolescents can be considered part of the global modern girl phenomenon is open for debate. Based on the above, it seems likely that use of the term would be appropriate for the developments in Java as well.⁸⁵

European Attitudes: Out-dressing the Javanese

⁸² *Sinar Hindia*, No. 240, 30 November 1918, *IPO* (1918) No. 48. *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 86, 10 May 1919, *IPO* (1919) No. 19.

⁸³ Jean Gelman Taylor, "Official Photography, Costume and the Indonesian Revolution," 94-100.

⁸⁴ Chie Ikeya, "The Modern Burmese Woman and the Politics of Fashion in Colonial Burma," 1279-1280.

⁸⁵ Barlow, Tani E., Madeleine Yue Dong (e.a.), "The Modern Girl around the World: A Research Agenda and Preliminary Findings," *Gender & History*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (August 2005) 245-294.

The abolition of the nineteenth century dress regulations and the consequent adoption of European dress by an increasing number of Javanese undermined the sartorial and colonial hierarchies of the Netherlands Indies. In theory, a ‘native’ could dress like a colonizer, while a colonizer could be seen wearing attire akin to native dress. What was the implication for their respective statuses in colonial society?⁸⁶ The possible blurring – or worse, reversal – of the boundaries between colonizers and colonized was cause for great anxiety among the Dutch. The maintenance of dress as a social marker was considered imperative to demonstrating European superiority and legitimizing colonial rule. The Dutch on Java therefore tried to differentiate themselves from the dressed-“up” Javanese by out-dressing them in European fashion. This is very similar to what happened in nineteenth century British India, where Emma Tarlo found that the increasing European appearance of Indian men encouraged “the British to make their own sense of sartorial correctness more rigid”.⁸⁷ In Java, this process of rigidization signaled the end for the *sarong*, *kebaya* and *batik* trousers in the European wardrobe.

In the fall of 1916, Karel Wybrands, the conservative editor of the largest Dutch newspaper in the Indies, dramatically declared that the end of colonial rule was near. With much bombast he proclaimed that the abolition of traditional deference rituals and the sartorial hierarchy had irreparably damaged colonial authority. He especially mourned the loss of the privileged “white jacket”, which he believed had served as the white man’s armor in the Indies but was now worthless as it was widely adopted by indigenous people. Wybrands saw a correlation between the Javanese dressing-“up” and

⁸⁶ Rudolf Mrázek has addressed this question as well in his contribution on the ‘Indonesian Dandy’. He wondered: “If a ‘native’ dresses as he wishes, will he still be a ‘native’? Where will he belong?” In his work Mrázek shows how the Indonesian Dandy created great anxiety among the Dutch colonizers. Rudolf Mrázek, “Indonesian Dandy,” 121.

⁸⁷ Emma Tarlo, *Clothing Matters*, 33-42.

their increased rebelliousness: “the blunderer Van Heutsz [Governor-General] has allowed natives and Chinese to dress like us ... and now the attacks on Europeans are frequent.”⁸⁸ With the latter he referred to the increase in physical confrontations between European planters and their indigenous workers as well as the growing contestation of colonial authority by the associations within the nascent national movement, such as the Sarekat Islam. In this context, it is not difficult to see how the mass meetings of the Sarekat Islam, which were attended by hundreds of indigenous people adorned in white European jackets, were upsetting to the editor. Just like the Javanese journalist who assigned a ‘sociological relevance’ to these sartorial transformations, Wybrands too argued that the changes in appearance were reflective of a broader shift in mentality. While the two observers seemingly agreed on the phenomenon, they strongly differed in their reception of it.⁸⁹

The conservative current in European colonial society, of which Wybrands was a prominent member, believed it was a fallacy that by dressing-“up” the Javanese could become their equals. Wybrands’ newspaper openly wondered why for the Javanese switching to the, for them, impractical and unbecoming European dress was considered progress. Instead the Javanese needed to remain Eastern: “If against all laws he tries to molest his being by adopting Western ways to look like a Westerner, he becomes just as much of a misnomer as the Westerner who tries to be a Easterner.”⁹⁰ The conservative civil servant M.B. van der Jagt, another vocal advocate of the conservative perspective, concurred with this assessment:

⁸⁸ It was under Governor-General Van Heutsz stewardship (1904-1909) that the first format and dress circulars were promulgated. See the sections above for more details. Karel Wybrands, “Het Naderend Einde,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch Indie*, No. 233, 1e blad, 5 October 1916.

⁸⁹ “Teekenen,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 29 (7 May 1914) 46.

⁹⁰ “Vooruitgang,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 21, No. 138, 14 June 1916.

“Europeanization covers the Indies with a varnish of European civilization and she drapes the childish people, generally speaking, with a European cloth, adorned in which they love to observe and admire themselves in the mirror of vanity, as a result of which they imagine that within limited time their place on the world’s stage will be equal to that of her European educator [...].”⁹¹

Van der Jagt continues by stating that what the indigenous people perceive in their mirror of desire is not real; it’s only an imaginary perspective on the world. Still according to Van der Jagt, in reality strict natural laws have assigned Easterners and Westerners separate places, positions, and developmental paths in this world.

The conservative movement in general, and Van der Jagt in particular, grounded this evolutionary racism in cultural relativism. This is apparent in Van der Jagt’s speech during the first meeting of the newly installed People’s Council in 1918, in which he attacked the nationalist movement head on:

“It is no longer a leftist frankness, a semi-courageous sharing of his opinion, a desire to adopt the attitude, actions, and characteristics of the European. It is no longer the gesture of the man with a slit coat, the borrowed blue glasses, the brown shoes, and the two pens in the udder pocket, all expressions which, although unpleasant, can be tolerated with a smile as innocent children’s diseases, the measles and the pox of a primitive people willing to progress, yet as presently constituted it is a evil, yes criminal action, masked by beautiful words and phrases and epigraphs that leads the common Javanese to the wrong track. An action, which is busy robbing him of several excellent characteristics, [...], without being able to give the good characteristics of the Westerner, of another race, in return.”⁹²

Van der Jagt chose to ridicule the Javanese dressed-“up” as European, several of whom were also members of the People’s Council, and denounced the new mentality they displayed. He blamed both the European protagonists of the Ethical Policy and the Javanese leaders of the nationalist movement for ‘wrecking and demolishing’ indigenous

⁹¹ M.B. van der Jagt, “Ethische Koers en Bestuursambtenaar,” *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1915) 1203-1204.

⁹² “Aanvullingsbegroting van Nederlandsch-Indië voor het dienstjaar 1919, algemeene beschouwingen,” *Handelingen van den Volksraad. Tweede gewone zitting 1918-1919*, 200-201.

culture and society. The suggestion is that the conservative Europeans and Javanese aristocrats are more in touch with the common people, whom they need to protect from this civilizing onslaught. To prevent the submissive and peaceful Javanese from turning into an estranged rebel, Javanese culture, including all its feudal components, as to be restored, protected, and employed to maintain colonial rule.

Conservative voices, such as those of Wybrands and Van der Jagt ridiculed and belittled the Javanese who dressed-“up” in European fashion to emphasize their continued otherness. No matter how hard the indigenous people would try, in their eyes they would always remain different. Instead of challenging this ‘natural’ divide, they proposed to cherish it. In that regard they found themselves in alliance with the some conservative Javanese aristocrats who wanted to maintain traditional culture and society, and with it their privileged position. Those Javanese, who did dress-“up”, were mocked for the color of their shoes, shirts or ties, for the manner in which they combined European and Javanese items of dress, and for their desire to become European. Mocking the Javanese was not enough to restore order to the sartorial hierarchy, however; it was necessary for the Europeans to Occidentalize themselves as well.⁹³

The Europeanization of the colonial Dutch in both the private and public spheres was the result of endogenous and exogenous developments and forces alike. In the literature on dress in the Netherlands Indies the emphasis has mostly been on the exogenous forces, such as the increased immigration of European men, and especially,

⁹³ There are many examples of Dutch colonials ridiculing the appearance of the Westernized Javanese. Rudolf Mrázek employed the description by Edgar du Perron to make a similar argument. Rudolf Mrázek, “Indonesian Dandy,” 132. For contemporary examples: J.W.H., “Een beginselverklaring,” *Indologenblad*, Vol. 7, No. 14 (20 July 1916) 249-251. “Inlanders in Europ. Klederdracht,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 24, No. 146, 25 June 1919. “Naar de Soerabajasche Jaarmarkt-Tentoonstelling,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 8, 16 Juni 1907, 148-152.

women from Europe. The argument is that technological and scientific progress, in transport, communication, and hygiene, allowed these newcomers to maintain a European lifestyle in the tropics. This group of ‘pure’ Europeans became the flag-bearers of European civilization and modernity. Everything that derived from indigenous society was suspect, for instance, the *sarong* and *kebaya* were ascribed with degenerative powers.⁹⁴ The narrative of the sartorial history on Java is far more complex than this. It is no coincidence that the European attempt to out-dress the colonized and maintain a colonial sartorial order was mirroring the pace of the Javanese embrace of Western attire. The timing and tempo of the sartorial changes, slowly beginning around the turn of the century and accelerating after 1913, indicate that endogenous developments played a decisive role. In the end, it was the interaction between colonizers and colonized that pushed for change.

The increased emphasis on a distinct European appearance to differentiate between colonizer and colonized resulted in a backlash to the *sarong*, *kebaya* and *batik* trousers that were adorned by Europeans throughout the nineteenth century. These hybrid items of dress had become ingrained in Dutch colonial culture and society to such an extent that they were hard to shed, especially for creoles and Eurasians with strong ties to Java. The Eurasian owned and run *batik*-industry that catered to the European market represented both a financial interest and an emotional attachment for many (Indo-)Europeans on Java. The *sarong*, *kebaya*, and *batik* trousers therefore did not vanish from the colony but were phased-out during the first three decades of the twentieth century. These items of dress first retreated in a more rigid and enclosed private sphere in the

⁹⁴ On the adoption and rejection of sarong and kebaya by European women see: Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, “Summer dresses and canned food,” 158-161. Jean Gelman Taylor, “Costume and gender in colonial Java, 1800-1940,” 101-105. Dorine Bronkhorst and Esther Wils (e.a), *Tropenrecht*, 28-43.

1910s, before disappearing altogether from the life of the majority of Europeans in the 1920s. Many Eurasians remained loyal to what they considered their dress in the private sphere till the Japanese invasion in 1942.⁹⁵

At the turn of the twentieth century the European women wore *sarong kebaya* and men *batik* trousers in a highly elastic private space, which included the house, its porches, gardens, the interior of hotels, and even social visits and strolls in the neighborhood. This visibility of the hybrid attire explains why it was so strongly associated with life in the colony for most Europeans. However, parallel with the Javanese adoption of European dress, the *sarong*, *kebaya* and *batik* trousers were exposed to an increasing criticism. In the year 1900, Bas Veth designated the *sarong* and *kebaya* as an indecent, unceremonious, and immodest dress. He encouraged 'pure' European women to wear a peignoir instead, because: "the *sarong* and *kebaya* originate from the kampong, the peignoir from Europe." Veth's criticism was ahead of the times. A fierce rebuttal of Veth's work, among many others, argued that the *sarong* and *kebaya* were far more hygienic than its contemporary the European peignoir. The author rhetorically wondered why a woman would prefer to sweat and reek in a peignoir when she could wear the comfortable and beautiful *sarong* and *kebaya* instead.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ For instance, the various editions of the travel-guide by Johan Frans van Bemmelen demonstrate that not until the 1911 edition were sarong and kebaya not explicitly recommended as dress for European women in the tropics. J.F. van Bemmelen, *Guide to the Dutch East Indies by invitation of the Koninklyke Paketvaart Maatschappij* (Royal Steam Packet Company) (Batavia/London: G. Kolff and Co./Luzac and Co., 1897). J.F. Bemmelen, *Guide through Netherlands India* (Amsterdam/London: J.H. de Bussy, 1903 and 1911). Another example of a travel guide that recommended the traditional Indies dress: Henri Borel, *Van Batavia naar Rotterdam. Reisgids van de Rotterdamsche Lloyd* (Amsterdam: 1905). For a discussion of five contrasting household guides see: Vilan van de Loo, "Tobben in Indie: Wijze vriendinnen adviseren Hollandse vrouwen," *Indische Letteren*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (July 1994) 66-80.

⁹⁶ Bas Veth, *Het Leven in Nederlandsch Indië* (The Hague: P.N. Van Kampen & Zoon, 1900) 25-27. And the fierce reprimand by Koopman, *Het Paradijs der Vrouwen. Tegenschrift op Veth's "Leven in Indie"* (Batavia: 1900) 16-17.

By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century the attitude towards *sarong* and *kebaya* began to change. A popular household guide from 1908 argued that although it seemed that the tropical climate justified imitating the sartorial choices of the natives, this would be a grave mistake. The female author declared: “A European cannot be dressed like a coolie, drape himself like a native, even if he wore clothes from the most exquisite materials.” By no means did she intend to imply the complete removal of the *sarong* and *kebaya* from the European wardrobe but merely its disappearance from the public eye.⁹⁷ Another observer concurred in a travel account by arguing that no self-respecting young European woman should show herself on the streets while donning *sarong* and *kebaya*.⁹⁸ A similar statement can be found in the guide on to the exhibition on colonial life in Amsterdam in 1913, which claimed that in the colony one could hardly see European women in *sarong* and *kebaya* anymore, although they still wore them in the confines of their houses.⁹⁹ Apparently, the increased sartorial correctness of the Dutch had resulted in the creation of a more restricted private sphere. All three sources above explicitly mention the rigid distinction between the private sphere in the confines of the house – where one remains hidden – and the public sphere – where one exhibits and performs ones European identity. Especially in the principal towns of Java, those with large European enclaves, one could clearly no longer be seen in “native costume”.

In the course of the 1920s the *sarong* and *kebaya* for women and the *batik* trousers for men, would also be banned from the confines of the household. When the

⁹⁷ J.M.J. Catenius-Van der Meijden, *Ons Huis in Indie. Handboek bij de keuze, de inrichting, de bewoning en de verzorging van het uis met bijgebouwen en erf, naar de eischen der hygiene, benevens raadgevingen en wenken op huishoudelijk gebied*. (Semarang: Masman & Stronk, 1908). A similar description of the more restricted private space, in which *sarong* and *kebaya* were still allowed, can be found in: Creusesol, *Naar de(n) Oost! Opmerkingen van een Indischman* (Utrecht: Van der Heide & Leijdenroth, 1908). B. van Helsdingen-Schroevens, *De Europeesche vrouw in Indie* (Baarn: Hollandia-Drukkery, 1914).

⁹⁸ Maurits Wagenvoort, *Nederlandsch-Indische Menschen en Dingen* (H.J.W. Becht; Amsterdam, 1910).

⁹⁹ *Ons Huis in Indie: Tentoonstelling “De Vrouw 1813-1913”* (1913).

Dutch writer, journalist and former advisor for Chinese affairs Henri Borel toured Java in 1920, he noticed the changes since his repatriation from the island in 1913. He was struck by the Europeanization of colonial society in general, and in particular by the sartorial transformations. In his report to a Dutch newspaper he wrote: “I have been on Java for several months and still have to see the first [European] lady in *sarong* and *kebaya*.” Instead he noticed that women now wore peignoirs, skirts and blouses, and kimonos. Interestingly, the kimono was not considered degenerative attire; instead its Japanese origins gave it a romantic prestige.¹⁰⁰ Likewise, the European men had traded-in their *batik* trousers for English striped pajama’s, which had their origins in the Indian subcontinent. In other words, the adoption of non-European dress was accepted as long as it served to differentiate the Europeans from the Javanese. The famous Eurasian playwright, author and observer of Indies culture and society, Hans van de Wall, confirmed Borel’s observations in a long article on the history of dress in the Indies. Tracing back the origins of European colonial attire to the seventeenth century, he concluded that the age of *sarong*, *kebaya* and *batik* trousers was now (1924) clearly in the past.¹⁰¹ Household and travel guides from the late 1920s and 1930s similarly discussed the former mainstays of Indies dress solely in the past tense.¹⁰²

The turning point in the rejection of *sarong*, *kebaya* and *batik* trousers by Europeans is not as easily to pinpoint as that of the accelerated adoption of Western dress

¹⁰⁰ The Japanese themselves were also not considered as backward as the Javanese. In 1898 they were the first non-European group to be recognized as legally equal to Europeans in the colony. This was a reflection of Japan’s impressive modernization and growing power and influence in Asia. The respect of Japanese culture has to be considered against this background. For more on the 1898 regulations see: Cees Fasseur, “Cornerstone and Stumbling Block,” 31-57.

¹⁰¹ V.I. van de Wall, “Indische Kleederdrachten,” *D’Orient*, Vol. 3, No. 43, 25 October 1924.

¹⁰² For instance: C.J. Rutten-Pekelharing, *Waaraan moet ik denken? Wat moet ik doen? Wenken aan het Hollandsche meisje, dat als huisvrouw naar Indie gaat* (Gorinchem: J. Noordduin & Zoon, 1927) 6-14. D.C.M. Bauduin, *Het Indische Leven* (The Hague: H.P. Leopold, 1927 and 1941) 12-18. Jo van Ammers-Kuller, *Wat ik zag in Indie* (Amsterdam: J.M. Meulenhof, 1939) 87.

by the Javanese in the fall of 1913. Generally speaking, the decade of the 1910s seems to be the period in which these hybrid items of dress retreated in a more rigid private sphere before becoming taboo altogether.¹⁰³ The decline of the Eurasian *batik*-industry during the same decade seems to support this conclusion. Although this decline was in part to blame to the economic disruptions caused by World War I, the sartorial choices of Europeans were crucial in its marginalization. Instead of recovering after the war, the Eurasian owned *batik*-industry continued to shrink.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ This decade has been recognized as the turning point in the works of Elsbeth Locher-Scholten and Jean Gelman Taylor. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, "Summer dresses and canned food," 160. Jean Gelman Taylor, "Costume and gender in colonial Java, 1800-1940," 105-108. Dorine Bronkhorst and Esther Wils (e.a), *Tropenrecht*, x, 28-43.

¹⁰⁴ Harmen C. Veldhuizen, *Batik Belanda*, 128-129.



Fig. 3.4. Caption: “*Lain Doeloe! Lain Sekarang!*” [Past! Present!] Menno van Meeteren-Brouwer, “*Lain Doeloe! Lain Sekarang!*,” *De Reflector*, Vol. 2, No. 28, 14 July 1917.

The Song of Songs of the Sarong-Kebaya

*O sarong-kebaya,
Elegant dress,
How fancy you look
By day and by night!
Thou shows us the forms
Of feminine beauty,
And arouses the storms
Of lovers loins!
Thou caresses the eyes
Of every man
Through your lines and curves
Till it becomes unbearable
And he jumps from passion
For the Indies woman
Who wears you with so much grace
With love and fidelity
O, gracious cloth,
So tendril and slim,
So stately wide,
Kebaya so pale,
Until the end of times,
Stay o, stay
Worn by the women
Around their beautiful bodies!*

“Het Hooglied van de *Sarong Kabaai*,” *De Reflector*, Vol. 3, No. 45, 9 November 1918.

A cartoon from 1917 provides us with further evidence of this sartorial transition (Fig. 3.4). Titled “*Lain doeloe! Lain sekarang!*”, Indonesian for “past and present”, it contrasts the European appearance of the nineteenth with that of the twentieth century. The *sarong*, *kebaya* and *batik* trousers have been replaced by a modern dress, which shows the calves, for the woman and a suit complete with open jacket and tie for the man, that seem to be directly transferred from a Parisian boulevard. Just as telling is the posture of the native peasant in the illustration. Where in the past he is depicted as squatting on the ground, his hat removed, and not even daring to look up in the presence of Europeans, he now stands tall with his hat on his head and confidently looking at the passers-by as well as the contemporary viewer. This is a reference to the belief that the

old sartorial hierarchy was more effective in supporting cultural hegemony and in legitimizing European superiority than the new one.¹⁰⁵

The countless nostalgic reminiscences about the colonial attire of ‘tempo doeloe’ (the good old days), in particular the *sarong* and *kebaya*, are a further indication of the sartorial transformations that took place in the 1910s. They signaled that these changes were occurring, even indicating a certain understanding as to why, as well as a melancholy that these changes were necessary at all. The publication of a satirical, and highly sexist we might add, poem in the weekly *De Reflector* in 1918, is a case in point (see above). Before presenting the reader with the actual poem, the author elaborates on the contemporary fashion in the Indies. According to him, a sense of false shame caused European women to feel embarrassed donning the lovely *sarong* and *kebaya*, which was replaced by ungainly European reform dresses that made its bearer look dowdy. The author clearly is not bothered by the indigenous character of *sarong* and *kebaya*, instead it becomes apparent from the poem he is saddened not to be able to enjoy European women in such a sensual outfit anymore. To his dismay, by 1918 most young European women boasted of never even having worn *sarong* and *kebaya*.¹⁰⁶

The *sarong* and *kebaya* did not disappear from Java, but it was no longer the customary dress for European women. These changes transpired first in the principal cities and towns and were imitated by the European women in the interior in the following years.¹⁰⁷ For millions of indigenous women a *sarong* and *kebaya* remained the

¹⁰⁵ Fashion comparisons with the past were a popular subject in many periodicals. For instance: *D'Orient*, Vol. 8, No. 5, 19 February 1927. *D'Orient*, Vol. 8, No. 22, 28 May 1927.

¹⁰⁶ “Het Hooglied van de Sarong Kabaai,” *De Reflector*, Vol. 3, No. 45, 9 November 1918. For a similar nostalgic sentiment: “De Sarong,” *Het Indische Leven*, Vol. 2, No. 41 (28 May 1921) 810-811. “Uit mijn Boudoir: De Sarong-Kabaja,” *De Zweep*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (4 February 1922).

¹⁰⁷ It is not difficult to find examples of European women who remained loyal to *sarong* and *kebaya* in the remote interior of Java. For instance: “Een Hollandsche Vrouw in de Rimboe,” “*Indië*” *Geïllustreerd*

everyday outfit, and even for many people caught in between, like creoles and Eurasians, these changes occurred at a much slower pace. Especially the large Eurasian group was faced with a difficult dilemma: reject the *sarong* and *kebaya* and disavow an important part of their heritage, or become branded as a native. A popular solution among Eurasians was to remain loyal to *sarong* and *kebaya* in an enclosed private sphere – ‘out of sight, out of mind’ – while donning European dress in public. The continued operation of several Indo-European *batik* businesses is a testimony to the success of these measures.¹⁰⁸ The days that European women would show themselves in public adorned in *sarong* and *kebaya* were, to the sorrow of the author of the poem above, gone.

To dress-“up” in a more fashionable and European manner than the Javanese, the Europeans in the colony focused on fashion in Europe and the United States. Modern technology, and the networks of trade, transport and information it sustained, enabled Europeans to keep up to date with the latest developments on the other side of the globe. Regular fashion columns in the main periodicals and newspapers in the Indies reported on the latest developments in Paris, London, Berlin, New York and San Francisco. Special mail order catalogues for the Indies enabled its European inhabitants to order the latest European fashion with only the slightest delay. For those who could not wait, or could not afford the luxury of ordering clothes from Europe, hiring an indigenous seamstress (the “*djait*”) who could recreate European fashion from patterns or a mere image was a great solution. In the 1910s and 1920s large department stores further

Weekblad voor Nederland en Kolonien, Vol. 2, No. 39 and 40, 25 December 1918 and 1 January 1919, 613-615 and 634-637. The island of Madura is another example where these developments occurred at a much slower pace. In 1924 an observer from Java stated that travelling on Madura was like going back in time. “Oosthoeksche Causeriën van Brammetje,” *D’Orient*, Vol. 3, No. 45, 8 November 1924.

¹⁰⁸ This distinction between private and public sphere is still a characteristic of the large Indo-European group living in the Netherlands. Dorine Bronkhorst and Esther Wils (e.a), *Tropenecht*. Harmen C. Veldhuizen, *Batik Belanda* and M.J. De Raadt-Appel, *De Batikkerij Van Zuylen te Pekalongan*.

facilitated the Occidentalization of the Europeans in the colony by offering the latest fashion in Java's principal towns.¹⁰⁹

Advertisements and images from fashion columns shed some light on how the Europeans perceived themselves in contrast to the other groups in colonial society. A fascinating example is an advertisement for *Petodjo* lemonade in 1926 with the slogan: "nine types, one taste" (Fig. 3.5).¹¹⁰ The catchphrase is illuminated by an illustration of nine (ten including the waiter) characters, marked as ethnically different by their appearance. The differentiation between a traditionally dressed Javanese man and woman, a Malay, Arab and Chinese man, and a European family seems to hark back to the sartorial hierarchy of the nineteenth century. In contrast, the European family appears entirely modern. The man is dressed in a suit, with open jacket and tie, while what seem to be his wife and daughter are adorned in relatively short and semi-sleeveless summer dresses. This marks them as participants and members of the modern world, whereas the other characters seem to be immobilized in the past. That is all, with the exception of the most intriguing character in the advertisement: the Indonesian dandy. Dressed in a modern suit, wearing sunglasses and a *peci*, he stands tall and proud as a participant of the modern age. His presence is an acknowledgement by the artist that a complete return to the sartorial hierarchy of the past is impossible. The new group of Western educated

¹⁰⁹ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, "Summer Dressed and Canned Food," 161-175. The Dutch colonial press was filled with advertisements and announcements of new departments stores offering the latest European fashion to the colonial consumer. For instance: "Winkelbezoek," *De Reflector*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 8 January 1916. "Modern Bandoeng," *Het Indische Leven*, Vol. 1, No. 8 (11 October 1919) 151. [Iris], "Een bezoek aan Au Palais des Modes," *Het Indische Leven*, Vol. 1, No. 16 (6 December 1919) 308. "De installatie van het nieuwe Warenhuis "Adler"," *D'Oriënt*, Vol. 6, No. 42, 15 October 1927.

¹¹⁰ The advertisement was part of a broad campaign by the Petodjo company to brand its new lemonades, syrups and mineral water (which had a Malay name: *Aer Blanda*, "Dutch water"). The company itself had been in business as a producer of ice since 1878.

natives is here to stay. But at the same time, those who do not belong to that small group are recast in fixed ethnic places.



Fig. 3.5. Caption: “Nine types – one taste. *Petodjo Lemonade*.” From left to right: a Javanese servant, Javanese woman, Malay man, European girl, Indonesian dandy, European woman, European man, Chinese man, Arab man and a Javanese man. In: *D’Oriënt*, Vol. 5, No. 7, 13 February 1926.



Fig. 3.6. Caption: “The most suitable dresses for women in the tropics remain the loose dresses with wide skirts with or without short sleeves.” Illustration by Anny Oldenzien in: *D’Oriënt*, Vol. 8, No. 40, 28 September 1929.

European dress as the attire of the ruling and educated classes is also visible in the drawings of Anny Oldenzien, which accompanied her fashion columns, titled “fashion in the tropics”, in the weekly the *D’Orient*. Through these columns Oldenzien kept her

readers up to date with the latest European fashion, especially the practical summer clothes. What makes her illustrations so fascinating is that she placed the latest European fashion in a specifically colonial context. In these drawings we are presented with the ideal image of the European woman in the tropics (Fig. 3.6). She wears a short sleeveless summer dress that barely covers the knees. Her hair is cut short in a bob, a popular style in the Indies and reflected in many advertisements. A small Japanese parasol protects her now exposed skin from the tropical sun. The European man is depicted wearing a modern white suit with dress-shirt, open jacket, tie and a tropical helmet. Like the *sarong* and *kebaya*, the colonial suit, the *djas toetoe*, had lost most of its popularity as well. Its white color was no longer a European privilege, the suit itself was adopted by many indigenous peoples, and the constriction of a closed jacket all ensured that by the end of the 1920s it was no longer fashionable among Europeans.¹¹¹ In sharp contrast to these modern images of Europeans, the Javanese are depicted in their traditional dress of *sarong* and *kebaya*. Through images like this the Dutch tried to reestablish a sartorial hierarchy. In these depictions there is no sign of the modernized Javanese or “Indonesian dandy”, which maximizes the disparity between ruler and ruled, colonizer and colonized, master and servant.¹¹²

The attempt to out-dress the Javanese and create an Occidentalized sartorial hierarchy had some unforeseen consequences as well. Where the European appearance

¹¹¹ The high-collared white colonial suit, the so-called *jas tutup*, fell out of fashion’s grace as well. Although it did not disappear entirely, its popularity waned among Europeans dwelling in the principal towns of Java. In 1920 Henri Borel noticed that the suit had almost completely disappeared from Batavian social life. In 1924 Hans van de Wall concluded that the suit belonged to the past and had no future. “Wat in Indie verdwijnt,” *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 22, No. 286, 7 December 1920. V.I. van de Wall, “Indische Kleederdrachten,” *D’Orient*, Vol. 3, No. 43, 25 October 1924. “Een Nieuwjaarswensch voor 1927,” *D’Oriënt*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1 January 1927.

¹¹² For other examples of Oldenziel’s drawings which include both European and indigenous subjects: *D’Oriënt*, Vol. 8, No. 35, 24 August 1929 and *D’Oriënt*, Vol. 9, No. 16, 19 April 1930.

should radiate the power and superiority of the colonizer, women's dress appeared to do just the opposite. The new Western feminine fashion that promoted increasingly shorter skirts, bare arms, shoulders and neck undermined the prestige of European women in the eyes of the indigenous peoples. In the vernacular press the modern Western woman was used as a model of how not to dress and behave as a woman.¹¹³ Although some indigenous young women rebelled by doing precisely that, as has been argued above, the vast majority was deterred by these warnings.

The Dutch colonial press also expressed concern at the effects that women's dress could have on European prestige in general. The imagery of sensual and "naked" European women was difficult to ignore: not only could they be seen in real life, but also in various advertisements and movies. According to one author, the climate in Europe forces women to cover themselves when going outside, but in the Indies "all Easterners, most of whom stand on a lower step of civilization, can check out the modern dressed women and feel them up with their eyes."¹¹⁴ Some of these critiques were struck dumb by the more conservative international fashion of the 1930s, but the clear, and at times problematic, distinction that existed between European and indigenous women, since the rejection of the *sarong* and *kebaya* by the former, would remain till the end of colonial rule.¹¹⁵

A tentative study of advertisements suggests that the modern girl phenomenon is very much applicable to European women in the Netherlands Indies. The advertisements depict often sensual and athletic women with bobbed hair, who are always smiling and

¹¹³ For instance, see the articles about the dress of European women in: *Keng Po*, 3 March 1928, *IPO* (1928) No. 11, 538. *Swara Tama*, No. 10, 9 March 1928, *IPO* (1928) No. 11, 510-511.

¹¹⁴ "Kleeding-Excessen," *De Indische Courant*, Vol. 7, No. 21, 8 October 1927.

¹¹⁵ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, "Summer Dresses and Canned Food," 165-175. Dorine Bronkhorst and Esther Wils (e.a), *Tropenecht*, 112-141.

look confident and cosmopolitan (see examples below). In addition, the style of these advertisements, angular and elongated bodies, as well as the specific commodities, such as toiletries, cosmetics, cigarettes, and cars, they promote fit straight in with international developments. It seems likely, but more specific research is necessary to confirm this, that the modern girl not only undermined the sartorial hierarchy and European prestige in the Indies, but even more so the existing gender relations within the European community in the colony itself. The critique of many men in the colonial press should therefore not be considered as merely protecting a colonial hierarchy, but also a gender hierarchy.¹¹⁶

Social Bodies and Dress in Colonial Space

Thus far the focus has been on the transformation of the colonial sartorial hierarchy on Java in general, and how social bodies were marked in particular. In this last section the attention shifts to examples of how the reinterpreting and redefining of the meaning of dress were experienced in a shared colonial space. As argued above, both the Javanese and the Dutch juggled with their sartorial identities in relationship to one another. Studying these developments separately is like telling only one half of a story. From my research three interesting sites of interaction have emerged: the colonial theater, pawnshops and trains. These sites were characterized by interactions in which dress played a crucial role in marking the social body in colonial space.

In the spring of 1915, the outspoken Javanese journalist Marco Kartodikromo visited a European theater in Surakarta in the company of a European woman and Javanese friend. His European female friend had urged Marco Kartodikromo to dress-up in European clothes, which he wore most of the time anyway, to avoid making a scene.

¹¹⁶ Barlow, Tani E., Madeleine Yue Dong (e.a.), "The Modern Girl around the World," 245-294.

Instead, he arrived at the theater in traditional Javanese appearance, intentionally shaking things up. Kartodikromo wanted to make a statement: he did not want to be European and was proud to be Javanese as well as a Muslim. Adorned in his Javanese attire he caused quite the spectacle by penetrating what was perceived as a segregated European sphere within colonial society. Although the various ethnic groups on Java had their own theaters, these were not entirely exclusive. Like many other sites in colonial space, see the example of trains below, segregation was not achieved through prohibition but financial burdens. In other words, in the case of a European theater it was simply assumed that it was financially out of the reach for the indigenous people to attend. Clearly, for Marco Kartodikromo this was not a problem, he had made his case.¹¹⁷

Theaters are not only interesting for the audience they attracted, but also for the performances that took place there. The European theater that Marco Kartodikromo visited possibly performed one of the popular plays about colonial society, in which Europeans played the roles of Javanese characters (Fig. 3.7 and 3.8). Precisely at the time that European women rejected the *sarong* and *kebaya*, while European men preferred pajamas to *batik* trousers, the popularity of these plays reached unprecedented heights. On stage, European actors clad themselves in the attire of the colonized. In the limelight there was no shame in wearing *sarong* and *kebaya*, or even more traditional Javanese outfits normally reserved for the royal families. The actors and actresses were often praised for their ability to “crawl into the skin of a native,” to portray the other’s movements as well as their mentality with lifelike precision. In the eyes of most Europeans in the audience, this was not imitation, but art and entertainment. It was a way

¹¹⁷ *Pantjaran Warta*, No. 89, *KT*, Vol. 4 (1915) 944.

of showing respect to traditional indigenous and colonial society, its ways and rhythm now being disturbed by the arrival of the modern age in the Indies.¹¹⁸

While Europeans dressed-“down” to portray the Javanese on stage, the opposite scenario played out in indigenous, often Chinese owned, theaters. There, indigenous theater ensembles dressed-“up” in European fashion to play European characters (Fig. 3.9 and 3.10). These performances often occurred outside of the gaze of the majority of the European population, in the indigenous and Chinese neighborhoods of Java’s towns. In 1927 a Dutch journalist explored these shadowy areas of “dark Batavia”, for a series of articles on its opium dens, gambling houses, brothels, and indigenous entertainment, such as theaters. This was the Batavia unknown to the average European, in stark contrast to the European neighborhoods. On one of their stops they visited the Thalia Theater, since 1908 offering entertainment to 1,500 people at a time. According to the author, the quality of play seems “to us, people of the twentieth century, to descend from another age.” He speculated that this probably is what European theater looked like half a century ago, framing the indigenous theater not only in a geographically specific area of town, but also along an evolutionary scale.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ The many European weeklies are a great place to find descriptions, reviews and photographs of the European theater productions in the Indies. For instance: “Karina Adinda te Soerabaja,” *De Reflector*, Vol. 1, No. 11, 4 March 1916. “Sonna,” *De Reflector*, Vol. 2, No. 14, 7 April 1917. “Dewi Angreni,” *De Reflector*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 3 February 1917. “Pangeran Negoro Joedho,” *De Reflector*, Vol. 3, No. 36, 7 September 1918. “Tooneel,” *De Reflex*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 9 December 1922. For some general articles on the state of acting and European dilettantism in the colony see: “Het Europeesche Tooneel in Indië,” *De Reflector*, Vol. 4, No. 35 and 36, 30 August and 6 September 1919. Hans van de Wall, “Muziek en Tooneel,” *Het Indische Leven*, Vol. 1, No. 7 (4 October 1919) 124-125.

¹¹⁹ From early December 1926 to late February 1927, Leo Hulsman and his photographer created a fascinating portrait of the Chinese and indigenous neighborhoods of Batavia for the Dutch weekly *D’Oriënt*. In particular see Leo Hulsman, “Batavia...de Stad der Schaduwen, I and VIII,” *D’Oriënt*, Vol. 5, No. 49, 4 December 1926 and Vol. 6, No. 5, 29 January 1927.

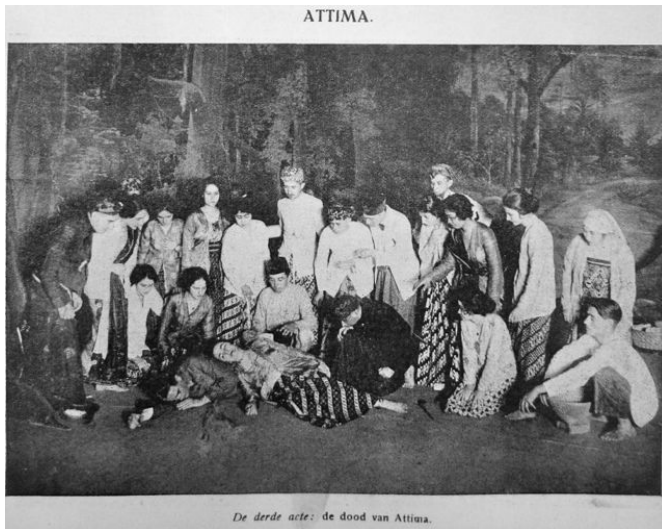


Fig. 3.7. *De Reflector*, Vol. 7, No. 50, 9 December 1922.



Fig. 3.8. *De Reflector*, Vol. 1, No. 27, 24 June 1916.



Figs. 3.9 and 3.10. Leo Hulsman, "Batavia...de Stad der Schaduwen, VIII and IX," *D'Oriënt*, Vol. 6, No. 5 and 6, 29 January and 5 February 1927.

The sight of Javanese actors and actresses donning European attire particularly struck the journalist. Backstage he witnessed how actresses in European dress were crouching in front of their mirrors, where in preparation for their performance they "as transformed by magic turn their dark faces into seemingly European faces." What made the behavior of these actresses so fascinating to the author was that they were crouching despite being dressed in European fashion. This was a contradiction in the mind of many,

as seen above, not just Europeans. Clearly, the theater had its own set of rules, its own sartorial hierarchy. The Dutch journalist watches on in amazement when the women change out of their European dresses into their *sarongs*, which he stated suit them much better. At the end of the article he is therefore left with more questions than when he arrived:

“And you wonder, what negligence in taste has brought these people to exchange the picturesque indigenous cloth on stage for the them unbecoming and graceless half-European dress...you wonder ... with bewilderment and annoyance.”¹²⁰

Few turned the question around: Why did Europeans dress like Javanese on their stages? What impression must that have made on the few Javanese, like Marco Kartodikromo, who were in a position to attend European theaters? It seems that Europeans reveled in these plays for it allowed them to return to the colonial world of yesteryear, one in which the colonial hierarchy was clear and unchallenged. In addition, it demonstrated they were still in control, even in the field of cultural production. On the other side, the indigenous theater shows an attempt to pry open the doors to the modern world. Where the Europeans were looking back the Javanese were looking forward.

Pawnshops as Corrective Sartorial Sites and the Strike of 1922

In 1904 the colonial government commenced the exploitation of pawnshops on Java and Madura. Within two decades, almost 400 pawnshops with around 6,000 indigenous employees flourished on the two central islands of the Dutch Southeast-Asian Empire. The exploitation of pawnshops had been wrested from the Chinese, who in the nineteenth century were essential as middlemen in linking the pre-capitalist rural economy with the

¹²⁰ Leo Hulsman, “Batavia...de Stad der Schaduwen, IX,” *D’Oriënt*, Vol. 6, No. 6, 5 February 1927.

capitalist urban colonial economy. With the promulgation of the Ethical Policy in 1901, the Dutch administration wanted to protect the indigenous people against abuses by bypassing the Chinese middleman, who had held positions of tax collectors, usurers, pawnbrokers and contractors. The direct involvement of the colonial government resulted in a rapid growth of colonial administrative space and the number of sites where colonizer and colonized could interact. On the one hand, ordinary Javanese used government-pawnshops for easy access to cash; on the other, the pawnshop-service provided several thousand Javanese with much coveted government positions, which essentially meant admission to the *priyayi* class. Both pawnshop experiences, that of customer and employee, reveal how the meaning of dress as a social marker changed after 1913. In the Dutch colonial press the pawnshops were depicted as a place where Javanese were stripped of their presumptive adoption of European dress and thereby revealed for what they really were: natives.¹²¹

The aftermath of World War I was an anxious period in the Netherlands Indies. Facing the threat of a communist uprising at home, the Dutch government made serious political concessions to the nationalist movement in the Indies, including a promise of self-government, to prevent similar threats from developing there. This shift in colonial policy, coupled with rising inflation and the continuing high profits of European businesses, resulted in what has been described as “the age of strikes.” Indigenous workers organized trade unions and used the strike, or the threat thereof, to improve their

¹²¹ *Gedenkschrift uitgegeven ter gelegenheid van het 25-jarig bestaan van den Gouvernements Pandhuisdienst: 1901 – 1 April – 1926.* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1926). Also see *Een en ander naar aanleiding van de staking bij den pandhuisdienst. Brochure uitgegeven door het hoofdbestuur van den bond van Europeesch pandhuispersoneel.* (Yogyakarta: N.V. Uitgevers-Maatschappij H. Bruning, 1922?). Akira Nagazumi, “The Pawnshop Strikes of 1922 and the Indonesian Political Parties,” *Archipel*, Vol. 8 (1974) 187-206.

economic position. The fear of revolutionary outbreaks led the colonial officials to remain neutral in the struggles between European employers and indigenous employees. Consequently, at the end of 1918 and throughout 1919, several successful strikes took place in the Indies before this window of opportunity closed again by the end of 1919.¹²²

Unsurprisingly, the European colonial press was highly critical of these strikes and was quick to criticize and ridicule them. In the columns of European reporters and editors the demands for higher pay, equal opportunities and better treatment fell on deaf ears. The protestors were described as ungrateful and arrogant workers who needed to be put in place by the colonial government. The haughty and entitled attitude of the indigenous peoples was equated with their increased use of European clothes. The colonial government might have allowed the indigenous people to choose what to wear, but in the view of the Dutch press the social hierarchy according to dress was very much intact. In the pawnshops European commentators found an institution that could reverse these transgressions of the social and racial hierarchies. In early 1920 a conservative newspaper declared that: “thousands and thousands of workers, know no road as well as that from their home to the pawnshop and back.”¹²³ According to the article, however, the naïve workers were not entirely to blame. The populist leaders of the nationalist movement were at fault by instigating hatred and distrust between the common people and the Europeans. When the strikes are over, the workers are starving while the populist leaders carry on their ‘vampires-work’ somewhere else.

¹²² Takashi Shiraishi introduced the term “the age of strikes” in his seminal work: *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990) 109-116. Another good source on the many strikes in this period is: Ruth McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965).

¹²³ “Stakingen en hare gevolgen,” *Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 25, No. 65, 18 March 1920.

A political cartoon in the conservative weekly *Het Indische Leven* conveys a similar message (Fig. 3.11). In five tableaux we can see a Javanese man, condescendingly called “little striker” and depicted as a young man, go from riches to rags. The evolutionary undertone in the cartoon is strong. The “young man” is not ready to be equated with European status and therefore is doomed not only to return to his lower position on the evolutionary ladder but to be punished for his indolence with death. During the first week of the strike he wears a European jacket and shoes, carries an umbrella and smokes a cigar. In the second week he already has lost his shoes, umbrella and cigar, quickly followed by his jacket at the local pawnshop. The suggestion is that the pawnshop takes away that to which the Javanese has no right. For this particular man it is too late. Deceived by his populist leaders, by week four he is starving, followed by death a week later. In the background we see a “leader of the people” in a white colonial costume walk away from his victim.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ The political cartoon was published in the conservative weekly *Het Indische Leven* and was drawn by famous Indies’ cartoonist Menno van Meeteren-Brouwer. The weekly itself was associated with the highly conservative newspaper *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*. Menno van Meeteren-Brouwer, “Stakertje!,” *Het Indische Leven*, Vol. 1, No. 51, 7 August 1920. For a similar cartoon: “De Staking bij Nix geëindigd,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 25, No. 29, 4 February 1920.

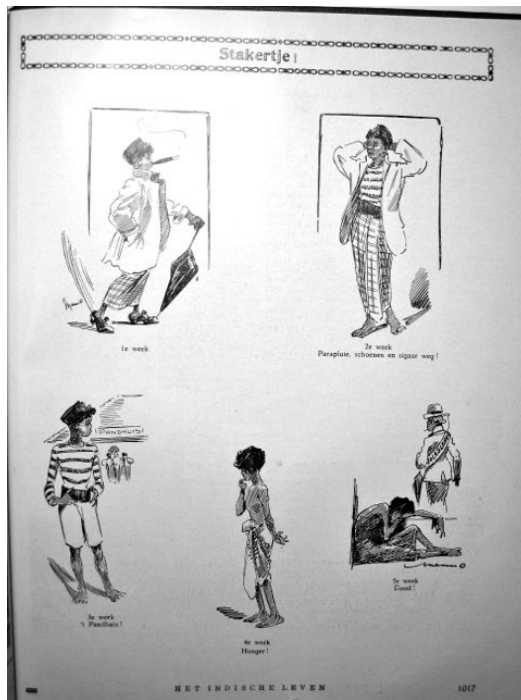


Fig. 3.11. Caption:
 “Little striker!
 1st week
 2nd week: Gone are the Umbrella, shoes and cigar
 3rd week: The pawnshop!
 4th week: Hunger!
 5th week: Death! [Written on the sash of the person walking away: “leader of the people”]”

Menno van Meeteren-Brouwer, “Stakertje!,” *Het Indische Leven*, Vol. 1, No. 51, 7 August 1920.



Fig. 3.12. Caption:
 “The time of Lebaran! All personnel revels in joy of shoes, socks, jackets, glasses and allowance. But it does not last, the joy quickly passes, behold the long and somber line at “Uncle Jan’s [pawnshop]”.”

D. Admiraal, “Lebaran-tijd!,” *Het Indische Leven*, Vol. 7, No. 37, 24 April 1926.

The second cartoon dates from April 1926, just several months before the communist uprisings on Java and Sumatra (Fig. 3.12). The cartoon presents the contemporary observer with an idealized imagery of a modern European woman, wearing a modern dress, silk stockings and high-heeled shoes and sporting a modern haircut. Her appearance contrasts starkly with that of her indigenous servant, who wears the traditional *sarong* and *kebaya*, which in the recent past had been the costume of European women in the Indies as well. The benevolent European woman gives her servant ten guilders for the celebration of Lebaran, the festivities at the end of Ramadan, while at the same time she is being robbed by one of her male servants in the background. With their

“allowance” and booty the servants of the innocent European mistress purchase European clothing. By wearing a white European suit – the color is significant – and a blouse over a loose pantaloons the indigenous servants showcase their modernity, civilization, and social status. In the eye of the European observer, however, this is just presumptuous behavior disguising their true selves. Since this is a lifestyle they cannot sustain, the servants find themselves forced to sell their “luxury items” at the local pawnshop. With the official dress hierarchies no longer maintained by laws and regulations, the pawnshop is touted as the institution that corrects these usurpations and exposes people for who they really are.¹²⁵

In January 1922, the members of the Native Pawnshop Worker’s Union, the P.P.P.B. (*Perserikatan Pegawai Pegadaian Boemipoetra*), themselves went on a strike. Their motivation for doing so and the European response to the strike demonstrate how dress was used to challenge existing social conventions. The P.P.P.B. had threatened a broad strike before in 1919. In fact several individual pawnshops went on strike in that year but in the end a general strike never materialized.¹²⁶ The concerns of the P.P.P.B. in 1919 were not entirely about financial issues but had more to do with the demand for respectful treatment of its members by the European administrators in the pawnshop-service. Since most of the indigenous employees were recruited from the grey area between the lower *priyayi* class and the common people, this was a sensitive topic. In 1906 they were granted the right to carry a *payung* (ceremonial parasol), the most revered Javanese symbol of power. This mark of distinction installed a sense of pride, which

¹²⁵ The political cartoon was published in the conservative weekly *Het Indische Leven* and was drawn by D. Admiraal. “Lebaran-tijd!,” *Het Indische Leven*, Vol. 7, No. 37, 24 April 1926.

¹²⁶ For some small successful pawnshop strikes during “the age of strikes” see: *Oetoesan Hindia*, 8 January 1919, No. 5, *IPO* (1919) No. 2. *Oetoesan Hindia*, 15 May 1919, No. 93, *IPO* (1919) No. 20.

clashed with the harsh reality of working under a European superior who, just like his employees, did not stem from the highest Dutch social classes. Most administrators were actually of Eurasian descent, making them very sensitive to their status in colonial society as well.¹²⁷

Following the promulgation of the *hormat*-circular in August 1913, the pawnshop workers were among the many groups officially asking permission to dress in European fashion. Referring to the 1903 and 1905 circulars, the Governor-General's office simply acknowledged the right of every indigenous person to dress however they chose. These changes did not go unnoticed in the European colonial press. A reporter in a Surabayan newspaper stated: "After the indigenous teachers, the indigenous pawnshop employees have now *dared* to exchange their native dress for a European one."¹²⁸ Through their European attire, the indigenous pawnshop employees sought to evade the traditional deference demands placed on them by their European administrators. The latter, however, did not budge, because to do so would be paramount to granting equal social status to their employees. By 1919 this led to a stream of complaints in the vernacular press about the treatment of pawnshops employees by their European administrators. In the *Oetoesan Hindia*, for example, a pawnshop employee stated that he refused any longer to "speak Javanese, to crouch, or to make the *sembah*" for his European bosses.¹²⁹ According to the

¹²⁷ For a detailed analysis of the social position of pawnshop-personnel: Akira Nagazumi, "The Pawnshop Strikes of 1922," 187-206.

¹²⁸ "Europeesche kleederdracht voor Inlanders," *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 16, No. 54, 5 March 1914. "De Inlanders en de Europeesche kleeding," *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 16, No. 273, 21 November 1914.

¹²⁹ These are all references to traditional Javanese forms of deference. The Javanese language distinguishes between a high form, which those with a low social status use to address their superiors, and a low form which those with high social status use towards their social inferiors. It was also common for social inferiors to approach their superiors while crouching, sit on the floor in their presence, and make the *sembah* gesture when conversing with them (it consists of bringing the palms of the hands together while touching ones nose). *Oetoesan Hindia*, 26 March 1919, No. 37, *IPO* (1919) No. 13.

P.P.P.B.'s own periodical, the choice was clear: "to strike or to crouch!"¹³⁰ In the end, the P.P.P.B. was too divided to organize a strike in 1919, therefore missing an opportunity in a period in which the colonial government maintained a neutral position. Several incidents in 1919 pushed to government to take a stronger stance from 1920 onwards, of which the P.P.P.B. was going to be its first major victim.

The pawnshop-strike of 1922 was the result of the lingering anxieties about social conventions between European and indigenous employees of the pawnshop-service. In early January 1922, a pawnshop employee in Yogyakarta refused to carry pawns to the auction hall. According to him, the work was too humiliating for a member of the *priyayi* class, who traditionally do not perform any manual labor. Until recently special servants had carried the pawns around, but due to spending cuts that task now fell upon the regular pawnshop employees. Angered by the employee's refusal, the European administrator fired him in the spot. Later that day, all indigenous employees decided to strike in support of their fellow worker. After the incident, the strike spread like wildfire across Java, ultimately encompassing 118 out of 372 pawnshops. The advisor for native affairs, Rudolf Kern, observed that the strike was not due to financial demands, but about status. The indigenous employees felt disrespected and humiliated by their European administrators and their insistence on maintaining racial and social difference within the pawnshop-service. But even Kern could not protect the pawnshop-employees against the retaliation of the colonial government. The "age of strikes" had ended two years prior, and the government, by laying off all strikers, made it clear it accepted no challenge to its

¹³⁰ A summary of the article in the P.P.P.B.'s periodical *Soeara Boemi Poetera* can be found in: *Oetoesan Hindia*, 3 April 1919, No. 66, *IPO* (1919) No. 14.

authority. In total 1,195 indigenous employees lost their jobs and their *priyayi* status. The pawnshop had once more acted as a corrective instrument.¹³¹

As mentioned above, pawnshop-employees had been wearing European dress since 1914 in the attempt to rise in the social hierarchy. Contrary to their expectations this had not led to better treatment by their European administrators. In 1922, the European press was quick to make the correlation between those employees who went on strike and their appearance. A political cartoon featured in the sensationalist weekly *De Zweep* (“the whip”) depicts two indigenous pawnshop employees on strike and a third who is presented as a strikebreaker (Fig. 3.13). The two protestors are portrayed in European suits, complete with European ties, hats, pants, shoes, canes, sunglasses, and cigarettes. The only social feature of their indigenous background is the Javanese headdress (*blangkon*) beneath their hats. They look smug, arrogant, uninterested, and above all unsympathetic. They are contrasted with the appearance of Javanese man dressed in a traditional manner. In his *sarong*, *kebaya* and *blangkon* the “strikebreaker” looks respectful, serene, and natural. The two employees on strike are amazed by the appearance and behavior of the strikebreaker, noting that he is dressed ‘like a regular native’ and is willing to carry teacups, to the auction hall. For the European observer the implication is a simple one: the best “natives” are those who know their place in the hierarchy.¹³²

¹³¹ The best analysis of the pawnshop-strike of 1922 can be found in the correspondence of the advisor for native affairs correspondence: Advisor for Native Affairs R.A. Kern to Governor-General D. Fock, 23 January 1922. And: Advisor for Native Affairs R.A. Kern to Governor-General D. Fock, 16 March 1922. Also: Former Advisor for Native Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu to Advisor for Native Affairs R.A. Kern, 21 September 1922. All correspondence can be found in Folder 291, Inventory 291, Collection Kern, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

¹³² Cor van Deutekom, “De Pandhuisstaking,” *De Zweep*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (15 January 1922). This is one of several cartoons that referred to the pawnshop-strike of 1922. For others: D. Van Dries, “De Teekenaar,” *De Zweep*, Vol. 1, No. 10 (10 March 1922). Menno van Meeteren-Brouwer, “Regeerings-optreden bij de



Fig. 3.13. Caption:

“(The 1st pawnshop-employee on strike): Wah ze, look at that mean guy. What a Strikebreaker, he is crazy enough to carry tea-cups to the auction hall himself.

(The 2nd pawnshop-employee on strike): Wah, what a blighter! Just look at his clothes; he walks around like a regular native!”

Cor van Deutekom, “De Pandhuisstaking,” *De Zweep*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (15 January 1922).

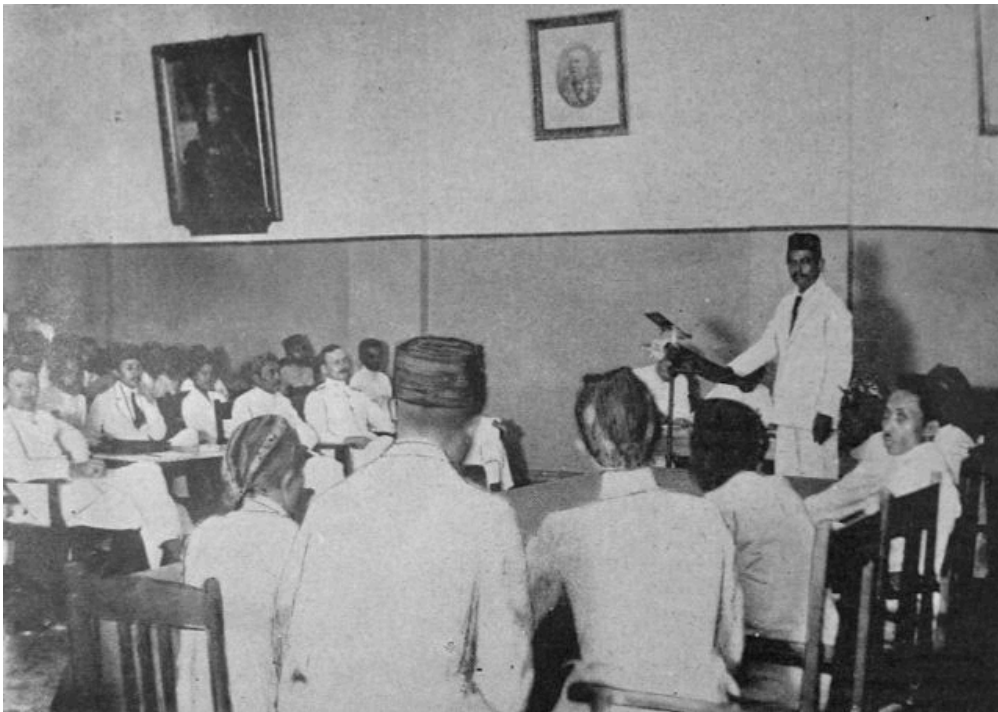


Fig. 3.14. Abdoel Moeis, one of the leaders of the Union of Pawnshop workers, addresses the strikers. Most present wear a white suit, open jacket and a tie in combination with a Javanese headscarf or *peci*. *De Reflector*, Vol. 7, No. 7, 11 February 1922.

Social Derailment on the Railroads

The construction of railroads on Java completely changed the dynamics of colonial society. Originally intended to bring agrarian products from the island's interior to its deep-sea harbors, they came to transport European manufactured products in the opposite direction as well. Perhaps even more important were the ways trains facilitated movement of people. The hundreds of thousands of Javanese who annually travelled by rail broadened their horizons considerably. The train stations, the railroad tracks, and the engines themselves were for many Javanese a first introduction to the power and influence of the colonizer and modernity. Contemporaries were well aware of the major impact that the railroads had on colonial society. In a government report on the standard and cost of living on Java and Madura, it was concluded that improved modes of transportation, especially the railroads, allowed for easier export of cash crops and import of cheap European manufactured products. The report mentions a broad range of products that had become available to the colonized peoples. These included Swiss *sarongs* and headscarves, Lyonnais cottons, jewelry from Berlin, canned food, furniture, cutlery, petroleum lamps, lemonade, mineral water, and even alcoholic beverages. Several reporting districts made a direct correlation between European fashion and the opening of a local railroad station. For instance, a *Bupati* from Banten noticed that:

“European clothing is common in populated places like Menes, Labuan etc., especially among the youth, including hajji's. The wearing of rings, nice buttons, etc. increases among men and women and a well-to-do native without a watch and necklace, is unthinkable.”¹³³

¹³³ “Kostbaarder worden van Levenswijze der Volksklasse,” *Onderzoek naar de Mindere Welvaart der Inlandsche Bevolking op Java en Madoera, Vol. IXa: Overzicht van de Uitkomsten der Gewestelijke Onderzoekingen naar de Economie van de Desa en Daaruit Gemaakte Gevolgtrekkingen, Deel I: Eigenlijk Overzicht van de Samentrekkingen der Afdeelvingsverslagen (1904-1906)*. (Batavia: Drukkerij G. Kolff & Co., 1911) 52, 53-58.

While the railroads provided the populace of the interior of Java with a growing supply of European products, they also increased the chances of interactions with the colonizers. More often than not, dress informed these interactions on the Netherlands Indies' Railway.

The railway companies on Java adopted and supported the racial hierarchy and segregation of colonial society more broadly. Till 1902 the State Railways differentiated between first, second and third class cars on the trains. The first two classes were intended for Europeans only, whereas the third class was racially mixed. However, European third class passengers paid a higher ticket price than their indigenous travel companions, who travelled at a discounted price. By the turn of the century this system was fiercely criticized by members of the European community who demanded that European prestige needed to be upheld in third class as well. This scrutiny was part of a broader concern about poor Europeans, especially Indo-Europeans, whose lifestyle was seen to undermine European authority and prestige in the colony. It was argued that fellow Europeans should not have to ride a train like "herrings in can", together with misbehaving, dirty and "awkward-smell-spreading-natives."¹³⁴ One European observer made a curious comparison by stating that at a time when associations were founded for the protection of animals, there needed to be an association for the protection of the European third class train passenger as well.¹³⁵ The State Railways finally honored the demand for a separate third class railroad cars for European passengers in 1902.¹³⁶

Private railway companies, like the Netherlands-Indies Railways Company (N.I.S.M.),

¹³⁴ "Afzonderlijke wagons," *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 2, No. 259, 7 November 1900. "Derde-klasse-wagens," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 7, No. 100, 5 May 1902.

¹³⁵ "3e klasse reizigers," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 6, No. 130, 12 June 1901.

¹³⁶ "Op den uitkijk," *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 4, No. 70, 22 March 1902.

did not follow suit, however. Consequently, when travelling third class with the N.I.S.M., a European passenger still had to “sit in between natives of the lowest social order, whose exhalations are unbearable.”¹³⁷

The continued racial segregation of railroad travel in the Netherlands Indies was first challenged by the Chinese community, quickly followed by the nascent indigenous nationalist movement. In April 1913, an anonymous Chinese man complained about the difficulties surrounding railroad travel for his countrymen. Recently, he and two friends, who were dressed in European attire, took a seat in a European third class train car. They were reprimanded, ejected, and forced to sit among the “coolies” for the remainder of the journey. The man considered this a grave injustice, because, he reasoned, if a Chinese dresses as well as a European and can afford a European ticket, why then is he not allowed to travel with Europeans? He then goes on to suggest that the railways create a separate third class car solely for Chinese passengers.¹³⁸ The confronted passenger did not have to wait long for the State Railways to change its policies. In August 1913, the same month in which the *hormat* circular was promulgated, the racial segregation of the railways was abolished. The vernacular newspaper *Bintang Soerabaja* was quick to conclude that the colonial government intended to teach Europeans no longer to look down upon the other races in the colony with contempt. The Dutch equivalent paper responded differently to the decision.¹³⁹ The *Soerabaiasch Handelschblad* argued that as

¹³⁷ H.B., “Indische Omtrekken,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 39, 19 January 1908, 789-790.

¹³⁸ “Reizen in de derde klasse,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 18, No. 74, 1 April 1913.

¹³⁹ *Bintang Soerabaja*, No. 213, *KT*, Vol. 2 (1913) 1632.

long as natives maintain customs and habits that make “civilized” people cringe in disgust the State Railways should preserve racial segregation.¹⁴⁰

Racial segregation on the railways in the Indies was replaced by a system based on class and appearance. This meant that affluent Javanese, Chinese and Arabs were now allowed to travel in first- and second-class train cars, as long as they could afford it. In addition, a two-tiered color system was introduced in all classes to differentiate between those who appeared European and those who did not. In other words, all three respective classes were available at two different tariffs. Europeans and the colonized who held European legal status needed to purchase a white ticket, whereas indigenous peoples of the poorer classes bought discounted green tickets. The catch of this new system of “affirmative action” was that those who did not share European status, but dressed like Europeans were forced to purchase white tickets. Thus, to travel with a white card meant that one had to dress and behave “white.” At the other end of the spectrum, the new system forced financially constrained indigenous peoples to dress according to their ethnicity.

The new railroad regulations reflected the great sartorial anxieties and struggles of the time. They took effect around the same time as the *hormat* circular that resulted in such profound “sociological change” and placed dress at the forefront of the identity politics of the time. By linking wealth and appearance to one another these regulations were meant to discourage indigenous peoples from dressing-“up” in European style. Between 1913 and 1926, to wear European clothes meant that one could incur the costs of being European – an option that was only available to the lucky few. As was argued

¹⁴⁰ In the Netherlands Indies newspapers often copied each other’s articles. While the original article was published in the *Soerabaiasch Handelsblad*, I encountered it in the *Sumatra Post*. “Geen rassenonderscheid meer,” *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 16, No. 11, 14 January 1914.

above, those who overreached could always be transformed to their original state by the pawnshops.

Instead of diminishing colonial anxieties, the new railway regulations became a hotly debated topic in the vernacular press. For instance, an indigenous civil servant purchased a green children's ticket for his 4 year-old daughter. However, according to the ticket officer in the train, he should have purchased a white children's ticket, because his daughter wore a dress instead of a Javanese costume. The civil servant was thus forced to pay the difference.¹⁴¹ In another newspaper we read about a very similar situation in which a man had to purchase three white tickets for his sons because they wore pantaloons instead of *sarongs*.¹⁴² Obviously these regulations were not only annoying for indigenous parents who dressed their children in European clothing, but costly as well. An indigenous man wearing a white colonial suit with a *kopiah* (a Arabic fez) complained in a newspaper about being forced to purchase a white ticket. Since he spoke Malay and wore a *kopiah*, he was under the impression he should be allowed to travel with a green ticket. The European suit, however, deemed these indigenous social features irrelevant in the eyes of the conductor.¹⁴³ These experiences were shared in the vernacular press not just to complain about the situation, but to make both members of nationalist organizations and the colonial government aware of the discomfort these regulations caused.

Contrary to the critical opinion of the vernacular press, contributors to the Dutch colonial press had some praise for the new regulations. An article in a conservative newspaper in Batavia argued, for example, that it was only fair for indigenous people

¹⁴¹ *Bromartani*, 29 January 1919, No. 8, *IPO*, No. 5 (1919).

¹⁴² *Djawi Hisworo*, 28 March 1919, No. 37, *IPO*, No. 13 (1919).

¹⁴³ *Kaoem Moeda*, 18 May 1920, No. 92, *IPO*, No. 20 (1920).

dressed in European clothes to pay European prices. According to the author, the colonial government intended for “an indigenous person who mimics a European to accept the financial consequences of doing so.” The leadership of nationalist organizations, such as the Sarekat Islam and Insulinde, he insisted, should therefore quit their pleas for lower ticket prices for these “imitators”. The author of the article reminisces pointedly about the dress hierarchy of the past, when an “indigenous person was dressed as an indigenous person, and a Chinese like a Chinese.” He blames the protagonists of the Dutch “civilizing mission” for the capital mistake of abolishing the dress hierarchy before cynically concluding that at least the salesmen of “yellow shoes, purple ties, and high-collars profit” from this mistake.¹⁴⁴

By the end of 1926, the colonial government finally decided to allow indigenous people to travel with green tickets regardless of the ethnic background of their dress. It was a decision that signified the end of the old sartorial hierarchy as well as the failed attempts by the railways to maintain it to some extent. Ironically, this change in policy did not simply stem from benevolence, but from a desire to remain competitive with the rapidly growing autobus-industry. As was to be expected, writers in the vernacular press celebrated the announcement of equality, but those in the European press felt profoundly betrayed. Indigenous people could now travel in the same trains as Europeans, dressed however they wanted, for only a fraction of the cost of European tickets. It indicated that European dress was no longer the privilege of the colonizer and that the restrictive railway regulations and pawnshops in the Indies could not reverse this tendency.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ “Inlanders in Europ. Klederdracht,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 24, No. 146, 25 June 1919.

¹⁴⁵ “Algemeene tarieven S.S.,” *De Indische Courant*, Vol. 6, No. 87, 27 December 1926. “Onredelijk,” *De Indische Courant*, Vol. 8, No. 290, 4 September 1929.

Epilogue

By the end of the 1920s the transformation of the colonial sartorial hierarchy was complete. The nineteenth century sartorial hierarchy, which was based on ethnic differences, was replaced by a gendered one in which Western fashion stood at the pinnacle as the social marker of power, modernity and progress. This makeover of outward appearance took place at an accelerated pace between roughly 1913, the promulgation of the *hormat* circular, and 1927, when the European suit had become the standard for indigenous men. As Rudolf Mrazek has demonstrated, the famous generation of 1928, including among others Sukarno, Sartono and Sjahrir, all consistently donned the European suit with a *peci* in public.¹⁴⁶ By replacing, and covering, the many ethnic variations in male appearance, the European suit had both a universalizing and egalitarian impact on the new Indonesian man. While the suit marked them as Indonesian rather than Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese and so forth, the *peci* similarly differentiated them from the European colonizers.¹⁴⁷

The acceptance of the European suit and *peci* as the national dress for the new Indonesian man by the generation of 1928 was the culmination of developments following the *hormat* circular of 1913. In his autobiography from 1965, Sukarno reflected on these sartorial issues in surprisingly similar wording as those Javanese who adopted European dress in 1913. He condemned the *sarong* and *kebaya* for their feudal character and demeaning effect on its wearer whom, according to Sukarno, it turned into a servile and subservient creature. In contrast: “The minute an Indonesian dons trousers he walks

¹⁴⁶ The new reality of Western dress was acknowledged in regulations, such as those of the railways that took effect in January 1927, which allowed for indigenous people to adorn European clothes unpunished. Rudolf Mrazek, “Indonesian Dandy,” 137-139.

¹⁴⁷ On the importance of the suit: Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*, 14. Henk Schutte Nordholt, “The State on the Skin: Clothes, Shoes, and Neatness in (Colonial) Indonesia,” 22-23.

erect like any white man.” Sukarno continued to argue that to become as progressive and equal to the former colonizers, Indonesians needed to “put on modern clothing.”¹⁴⁸ In 1914 Soewardi Suryaningrat had already argued something very comparable when he stated: “if one appears European in the Indies, one looks more prominent.”¹⁴⁹ These words still held value more than a decade later.

The new sartorial hierarchy did result in a seemingly clear gender divide between Javanese men and women. As many historians have noted, the new European clad Indonesian man supposedly represented power, modernity and movement, while the ethnically dressed Indonesian woman symbolized tradition and immobility. As I have demonstrated, this binary glances over more contradictory elements, such as the experiments of educated Javanese women with “modern” dress and behavior by the end of the 1910s and early 1920s. The fierce conservative criticism of Javanese women dressing-“up” as compared to similar efforts by Javanese men cannot be completely explained by the modern versus traditional dichotomy. As Chie Ikeya has argued in the case of Burma, it seems likely that a crisis in masculinity as well as a shift in understanding gender relationships was at the core of the matter.¹⁵⁰ Consequently, the emergent new Indonesian man cast the new Indonesian woman into the role of mother of the nation.

While European and Javanese women both wore the *sarong* and *kebaya* at the turn of the century, by the 1920s this was no longer the case. Both European men and

¹⁴⁸ Sukarno: *An Autobiography as Told to Cindy Adams* (New York: The Bobbs-Merill Company Inc, 1965) 80-81. Jean Gelman Taylor was the first to bring up Sukarno’s reflections on the issue of dress in several of her articles on dress in colonial and post-colonial Indonesia. For instance: Jean Gelman Taylor, “Official Photography, Costume and the Indonesian Revolution,” 119-120.

¹⁴⁹ Soewardi Suryaningrat, “Europeesche Kleeding,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 15 (29-1-1914) 180.

¹⁵⁰ Chie Ikeya, “The Modern Burmese Woman and the Politics of Fashion in Colonial Burma,” 1277-1308.

women had Westernized quickly in their attempts to “outdress” the Westernizing Javanese men. The ties that *sarong*, *kebaya* and *batik* trousers provided to indigenous society were broken. This rupture with the past was particularly challenging for Eurasian families, whose roots lay in Java. The Eurasian adoption of Occidental fashion was slower than that of European immigrants and was never complete. In the private sphere they maintained both material and immaterial bonds with their hybrid past, like the *sarong* and *kebaya*. In the public sphere European and Eurasian women were confronted with being too Western whenever the fashion showed too much skin. This potentially undermined colonial prestige and was therefore discouraged in the 1930s. Longer skirts and sleeves on European summer dresses became the norm. This new sartorial hierarchy would remain in place until the Japanese conquest in 1942.

Chapter 4

Mirror Images:

Anxieties over Physical and Cultural Degeneration/Westernization

The announcement in May 1920 that Tjokroaminoto, president of the Sarekat Islam – the colony's largest mass movement – travelled to the mountain resort of Tosari for recovery from illness caused the colonial press to heave a cautious sigh of relief. Conservative Europeans held Tjokroaminoto personally responsible for the recent radicalization of the Sarekat Islam, which they argued had resulted in the murder of a European administrator in Toli-Toli (Celebes, June 1919) and a deadly standoff between the authorities and a local farmer and his family in Garut (Java, July 1919). The press expectantly wondered if this retreat due to poor health signaled the end of Tjokroaminoto's political career. To their dismay Tjokroaminoto after a week descended from the mountains to resume his duties as president of the Sarekat Islam, but not before he had organized and led a meeting of the local Tosari branch of his movement. When several weeks later, on July 7th, a strike broke out among the indigenous servants of the sanatorium where Tjokroaminoto had stayed, the European press was quick to assign him the blame. The press concluded that the national awakening that originated in Java's lowlands had now contaminated the primitive and servile highlanders known as the Tenggerese as well. By visiting a mountain resort Tjokroaminoto had not only rejuvenated his body in European

fashion, but had simultaneously infected a space that till then was considered secluded by Europeans.¹

The small village of Tosari, hidden at an altitude of 6,000 feet in East Java's Tengger Mountains, was one of colonial Java's premier mountain resorts. Its sanatorium and hotels were a renowned destination for convalescents and attracted Europeans from throughout Southeast Asia. Dating back to the 1840s, Tosari modeled for the many mountain resorts on Java that developed quickly from the turn of the twentieth century onwards. The ascent of mountain resorts coincided with the development of new (pseudo-)scientific notions regarding race, evolution, disease, and hygiene. This was not by chance, these "scientific" developments were crucial for the transformation of colonial policies and the legitimization of authority, which were reflected in the resorts in Java's hills. In the highlands the Dutch sought recovery from tropical diseases and respite from the climate in the hot and humid lowlands. The resorts were also intended to find seclusion from both indigenous peoples and the demands of colonial society. Most resorts were evocative of Europe in their appearance to provide the colonizers a space in which they could feel "at home" overseas. Places like Tosari were thus instrumental in the formation of a homogenous European identity that starkly contrasted with that of the colonized "Other".²

¹ For the perspective of the European colonial press on Tjokroaminoto's visit to Tosari and the ensuing strike: *Sumatra Post*, Vol. 22, No. 120 and 135 (25 May 1920 and 11 June 1920). *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 36, No. 362-4 (10-12 July 1920). *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 25, No. 160 (12 July 1920). And the announcement of Tjokroaminoto's retreat to Tosari in the vernacular press: *Oetoesan Hindia*, 21 May 1920, extra number, *IPO*, No. 21 (1920). For a description of the events in Toli-Toli and Garoet, see: Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990) 113. Steven Wedema, *"Ethiek" und Macht: Die niederländisch-indische Kolonialverwaltung und indonesische Emanzipationsbestrebungen, 1901-1927* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998) 195-201.

² Eric T. Jennings, *Imperial Heights: Dalat and the Making and Undoing of French Indochina* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2011). Dane Kennedy, *The Magic Mountains:*

Tjokroaminoto's visit to Tosari's sanatorium challenged the segregating function of the colonial mountain resort, but also provides an insight in the Javanese response to the new discourse the resorts were meant to support. Tjokroaminoto's mere presence as a guest instead of as a servant was seen as an intrusion of a secluded European space in the colonies. However, since the privilege of visiting these resorts was tied to one's affluence, the rising Indonesian middle-class, of which Tjokroaminoto was a leading figure, could "buy" its way in. Paradoxically, Tjokroaminoto and other members of the new generation of Indonesians bought into the pseudo-scientific and racialized discourse of mountain resorts as modern and recuperative spaces, while at the same time rejecting their symbolic importance as the exclusive domain of the "superior race." The organization of a local branch of the Sarekat Islam and the outbreak of the strike in the wake of Tjokroaminoto's visit further demonstrated the idea of a secluded European space in the colonies was an illusion given the growing self-awareness and politicization of the colonized. Tjokroaminoto's belief in the restorative powers of Tosari reflected in part Javanese concerns about their own physical bodies, while the actions of the Sarekat Islam show how these anxieties differed from those of the Europeans.

The incident at Tosari reveals that both the Dutch and the Javanese had become increasingly concerned with the health and racial purity of their respective physical

Hill Stations and the British Raj (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). Monika Bührlein, *Nuwara Eliya: "Hill Station" und Zentraler Ort im Hochland der Insel Ceylon (Sri Lanka)* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1991). S. Robert Aiken, "Early Penang Hill Station," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 77, No. 4 (Oct. 1987) 421-439. Anthony D. King, "Culture, Social Power and Environment: The Hill Station in Colonial Urban Development," *Social Action*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (July-Sept 1976) 195-213. Robert R. Reed, *City of Pines: The Origins of Baguio as a Colonial Hill Station and Regional Capital* (Berkeley: Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, University of California, 1976). Robert R. Reed, "Remarks on the Colonial Genesis of the Hill Station in Southeast Asia with Particular Reference to the Cities of Buitenzorg (Bogor) and Baguio," *Asian Profile*, Vol. 4, No. 6 (December 1976) 545-591. Robert R. Reed, "The Colonial Genesis of Hill Stations: The Genting Exception," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 69, No. 4 (1979) 464-468. Nora Mitchell, *The Indian Hill-Station: Kodaikanal* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1972). J.E. Spencer and W.L. Thomas, "The Hill Stations and Summer Resorts of the Orient," *The Geographical Review*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (October 1948) 637-651.

bodies. These concerns in large part resulted from developments in Western science in the fields of evolutionary biology, climatology, and medicine that stressed racial difference as a marker between the colonizers and the colonized. But just as important was the turn to the Ethical Policy, which no longer legitimized colonial authority through the Dutch immersion in Javanese feudal culture but instead based it on a higher degree of modernity and civilization. These two developments led to the rejection of cultural accommodation, acclimatization, and racial mixing in favor of the cultivation and firm delineation of racial and cultural boundaries. This was reflected in the Dutch fear of degenerating to the level of the “natives” and the obsession with the maintenance of “white prestige” in the colony. The mountain resort was essential in mitigating these colonial anxieties. The Javanese were not passive bystanders to this transformation of colonial discourse. Various groups, such as members of the Sarekat Islam, propagated against the “Westernization” of indigenous bodies and argued for their purification. These concerns led to debates over the consumption of alcohol and the smoking of opium, but above all to disapproval of and efforts to put an end to concubinage and mixed marriages. Dutch and Javanese concerns over their respective physical bodies were part of a cohesive process that in the end undermined rather than strengthened colonial hegemony.³

³ The expansive literature on concubinage and mixed marriage from the European perspective: Laura Ann Stoler, “Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of race and Sexual Morality in 20th Century Colonial Cultures,” *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (1989) 634-660. “Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (1992) 514-551. Frances Gouda, “Nyonyas on the Colonial Divide: White Women in the Dutch East Indies, 1900-1942,” *Gender & History*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (1993) 318-342. Nicole Lucas, “Trouwverbod, Inlandsche Huishoudsters en Europese Vrouwen. Het Concubinaat in de Planterswereld aan Sumatra’s Oostkust 1860-1940,” in *Vrouwen in de Nederlandse Koloniën. Zevende Jaarboek voor Vrouwengeschiedenis* (Nijmegen: SUN, 1986) 78-97. Reggie Baay, *De Njai: Het Concubinaat in Nederlands-Indie* (Amsterdam: Athenaeum-Polak & Van Genneep, 2008). Petra Groen, “Zedelijkheid en Martialiteit: Het Kazerneconcubinaat in Nederlands-Indië rond 1890,” in Marieke

Shifting Colonial Paradigms: Acclimatization, Medicine, and Racism

The rapid expansion of European colonial domination throughout Asia and especially Africa in the late nineteenth century brought the condition of the physical body to the forefront of colonial concerns. The growing military presence of European soldiers and their high mortality rates gave rise to a widespread debate over the possibility of European acclimatization to tropical climates. Until the end of the nineteenth century, the prevailing belief in the Netherlands Indies was that Europeans could acclimatize by being attentive to indigenous customs concerning clothing, diet, and lifestyle. These viewpoints of medical professionals supported the Dutch colonial policy of cultural accommodation, racial mixing, and the Javanization of colonial authority.

During the second half of the nineteenth century the notion of race was gradually infused into the acclimatization debate, which resulted in the belief that Europeans could not remain healthy in the tropics and could only prevent physical and cultural degeneration by maintaining European habits and lifestyles for the duration of their limited stay in the colonies. By the turn of the twentieth century the racialized perspective had the upper hand in the Netherlands Indies, much later than in the British and French colonies. This proved to be particularly problematic for the state of affairs on Java, because it not only contrasted sharply with the hybrid system of colonial rule, but also raised the issue of the status of the large Eurasian population. The mountain resorts, and

Bloembergen and Remco Raben (ed.), *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief: Wegen naar het Nieuwe Indië, 1890-1950* (Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2009) 25-51. Hanneke Ming, "Barracks-Concubinage in the Indies, 1887-1920," *Indonesia*, Vol. 35 (1983) 65-93. Tessel Pollman, "Bruidstraantjes. De Koloniale Roman, de Njai en de Apartheid," in *Vrouwen in de Nederlandse Koloniën. Zevende Jaarboek voor Vrouwengeschiedenis* (Nijmegen: SUN, 1986) 98-125. Betty de Hart, "'De verwerpelijke van alle gemengde huwelijken'. De Gemengde Huwelijken Regeling Nederlands-Indie 1898 en de Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap 1892 vergeleken," in *Gaan & Staan. Jaarboek voor de Vrouwengeschiedenis*, vol. 21 (Amsterdam: IISG, 2001) 60-81. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, "Marriage, Morality and Modernity: The 1937 Debate on Monogomy," in *Ibid.*, *Women and the Colonial State: Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000) 187-218.

mountains in general, emerged as crucial sites for the protection of colonial bodies and the creation of a larger homogenous European community.⁴

Early nineteenth century physicians approached the issue of acclimatization from within the prevailing Hippocratic tradition that emphasized the influence of the environment, morality, and lifestyle on the human physical constitution. Within this framework, bodily characteristics were perceived as fluid and adaptive, which meant that the human constitution could adjust to new variables, such as different environments. Migration between different climate zones, it was reasoned, triggered necessary changes in the body's metabolism, thermoregulation, muscle activity, and skin activity (perspiration). The transition period that a body needed to acclimatize to a new environment was referred to as a time of "seasoning," which was characterized by physical discomforts and diseases. For instance, the physician Cornelis Swaving described that on arrival on Java in 1842 he suffered through bursts of sweating, anorexia, congestion towards the liver, fevers, lack of physical strength, listlessness, sleeplessness alternated with insomnia, and ulcers among others, before developing a healthy physical constitution he had not even enjoyed in recent European summers.

⁴ The historiography on the acclimatization debate in the Netherlands Indies is thin compared to that of Britain and France. For the Netherlands Indies: Annemarie De Knecht-van Eekelen, "The Debate about Acclimatization in the Dutch East Indies (1840-1860)," *Medical History*, Vol. 44 (Jan. 2000) 70-85. Hans Pols, "Notes from Batavia, the Europeans' Graveyard: The Nineteenth-Century Debate on Acclimatization in the Dutch East Indies," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (Jan 2012) 120-148. For the larger debate: David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). David Arnold (ed.), *Warm Climates and Western Medicine* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996). Philip D. Curtin, *Europe's Encounter with the Tropical World in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1989). Mark Harrison, *Climates and Constitutions: Health, Race, Environment and British Imperialism in India, 1600-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). Dane Kennedy, "The Perils of the Midday Sun: Climatic Anxieties in the Colonial Tropics," in John Mackenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and the Natural World* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1990). David Livingstone, "Race, Space and Moral Climatology: Notes toward a Genealogy," *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (2002) 159-180. Eric T. Jennings, *Curing the Colonizers: Hydrotherapy, Climatology, and French Colonial Spas* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006). Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

Swaving argued that the process of acclimatization could be expedited by adherence to the principles of health studies and moral conduct. It was not the climate that made people sick, but the inability to adapt to the new environment.⁵

The German physician Carl Waitz, a contemporary of Swaving, also argued that Europeans could acclimatize to the tropical climate. According to Waitz humans were physiologically conditioned to particular climate zones, but that, like animals and plants, they had the ability to acclimatize to different environments. In the case of Java, he believed that through a process of acclimatization Europeans would physiologically become “more or less equal” to the indigenous inhabitants of the island. Waitz’ key contribution was his argument that Europeans should examine and embrace elements of the lifestyle of the Javanese to further the acclimatization process. For instance, he claimed that European dress was the greatest obstacle for the acclimatization of Europeans in the tropics, while European food was too difficult to digest. In contrast, the Javanese dressed lightly, consumed small portions of easily digestible food, did not perform physical labor during the hottest hours of the day, and frequently bathed in cold water. Waitz estimated that by following the Javanese lead, the process of acclimatization would take about a year. However, if one maintained a European lifestyle in the tropics, the duration of the process was extended considerably. Waitz’ medical arguments for a process of cultural accommodation coincided with the implementation of a conscious policy of Javanization of colonial authority by the government.⁶ Like the cultural policy

⁵ Hans Pols, “Notes from Batavia, the Europeans’ Graveyard,” 121-122 and 135-138. Eric T. Jennings, *Curing the Colonizers*, 9-37. Cornelis Swaving, “Iets over den invloed van het klimaat dezer gewesten op den Europeaan,” *Natuur- en Geneeskundig Archief voor Neerland’s-Indië*, Vol. 1 (1844) 86-87. C. Swaving, “De Invloed van Java’s Klimaat op den Gezonden Europeaan en Gezondheidsregelen voor den Nieuw Uitgekome,” *Indisch Archief*, Vol. 1 (1849) 161-180.

⁶ Waitz’ *Onderrigtingen en Voorschriften* was published in 1829, the policy of Javanization started in earnest with the introduction of the Cultivation System in 1830 (see chapter 1).

of the government, the belief that acclimatization of Europeans in the tropics was possible would remain predominant till the end of the nineteenth century.⁷

Opposition to the optimism of physicians like Waitz and Swaving emerged as early as the 1840s. In general, most physicians agreed that the human constitution was shaped by the environment, morality, and lifestyle, which explained the differences between various peoples and cultures. In addition, most participants in the acclimatization debate concurred that the tropical climate changed Europeans' physical constitution. The consensus was that due to the stifling heat the body tried to cool itself down by increasing perspiration, decreasing muscle activity, slowing down its metabolism, which reduced the demand for food, breathing less deeply, leading to a diminished uptake of oxygen, all of which resulted in a changed composition of the blood (blood count and water content). This disorder became known as tropical anemia.⁸ The issue that physicians diverged over was the ability of the human body to overcome tropical anemia. Some physicians came to believe that the human constitution was fixed to a particular climate, not only making acclimatization impossible, but risking physical and mental degeneration when migrating to other environments. Europeans could therefore only temporarily stay in the tropics, mitigating the dangers by precautionary measures and strict moral guidelines. This climatic determinism was the first indication

⁷ Hans Pols, "Notes from Batavia, the Europeans' Graveyard," 128-131. F. A. C. Waitz, *Onderrigtingen en Voorschriften, om de Gewone Ziekten van Europeanen in Heete Gewesten te Ontgaan, en Zich aldaar Spoedig aan het Klimaat te Gewennen, Bijzonder met Betrekking tot Nederlandsch Indië* (Amsterdam: Sulpke, 1829). C. Waitz, "Kritiek. Beschouwing van eenige stellingen voorkomende in het werkje van den heer W. Bosch, 'De Dysenteria Tropica', 's Gravenhage, 1844," *Tijdschrift voor Neerland's Indië*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1846) 381-395.

⁸ For a general description of tropical anemia see: Christiaan Eijkman, *Over Gezondheid en Ziekte in Heete Gewesten* (Utrecht: J. van Druten, 1898) 14-15. Although Junguhn and Swaving disagreed on many fronts in the acclimatization debate, they both agreed on the changes the climate instigated in the European physical constitution: C. Swaving, "De Invloed van Java's Klimaat," 168-169. Franz Junghuhn, "Nog een woord gevoegd bij het iets over acclimatisatie," 327.

that the colonized were considered physically different than the colonizers, laying a part of the foundation on which the notion of race could thrive by the end of the century.⁹

The German botanist, geologist, and mountaineer Franz Junghuhn was among the first to publish a more pessimistic account on the issue of acclimatization in 1842. He argued that the European body naturally thrived in the northerly climate to which it was bound, but would inevitably suffer in the tropics. The main culprit, he believed, was the high temperature, which alone was responsible for the occurrence of tropical diseases among Europeans on Java. Within two years, Junghuhn stated, the stifling heat would cost 50% of European newcomers their lives. The majority of the survivors would gradually see their health deteriorate, stumbling from one disease to the next, turning into mere shadows of their former selves. He did not believe in physical acclimatization, as Europeans could not change into the natives' velvet skin with large pores resistant to heat. He therefore concluded that it was impossible for Europeans to permanently acclimatize to the tropics.¹⁰ Several Dutch colonial physicians concurred with Junghuhn's writings. The physician Willem Bosch, for instance, stated that European life expectancy in the tropics was reduced by as much as 80% for soldiers and 60% for civilians.

⁹ Other contributing factors to the belief in racial difference were the fascination and study of somatic differences and contrasts in physique by the end of the eighteenth century. This also marks a divergence from much earlier thinking that saw climate as the key to differences in skin-color and temperament. For more elaborate discussions of the debate on acclimatization in the 1840s: Annemarie De Knecht-van Eekelen, "The Debate about Acclimatization in the Dutch East Indies," 70-85. Hans Pols, "Notes from Batavia, the Europeans' Graveyard," 138-141.

¹⁰ Franz Junghuhn, "De Gematigde en Koude Streken van Java, met de aldaar Voorkomende Warme Bronnen: uit een Natuur-Aardrijks- en Geneeskundig Oogpunt Beschouwd, als Stellende een Middel daar ter Voorkoming en Genezing van die Ziekten, Waaraan Europeanen, ten gevolge van hun lang verblijf in heete luchtstreken, gewoonlijk lijden," *Tijdschrift voor Neerlands Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1842) 81-82. Also see: Franz Junghuhn, "Nog een woord gevoegd bij het iets over acclimatisatie van dr. Swaving," *Indisch Magazijn*, Vol. 1 (1844) 316-333.

Moreover, Bosch argued that without racial mixing European descendents on Java would only be able to reproduce till the third generation, basically suggesting extinction.¹¹

Although Junghuhn insisted that Europeans could not acclimatize in tropical environments, he did believe that they could temporarily accommodate themselves to the heat by finding ways to lower their bodily temperature. Most importantly, Junghuhn believed that seeking out the cooler mountain climates on Java could temporarily serve as “medicine” against the Europeans’ suffering. At an altitude of 3,000-5,000 feet, he argued, one encountered a Mediterranean climate, while at 6,000-9,000 feet a European could even imagine being back in Amsterdam. Additionally, the vegetation in Java’s mountains appeared more familiar to the European observer than the tropical flora and fauna of the lowlands. Junghuhn therefore proposed the establishment of a hill station at the Dieng Plateau (Central Java) – at an altitude of 6,300 feet and an average temperature of 53.5°F (12°C), which should include a military and civilian institution for convalescents as well as access to the nearby hot springs for hydrotherapy. In addition, he proposed to found an institution that allowed soldiers, officers, and civilians who planned to stay in the Indies for over three years to reside in the mountains every two years for six months. In essence, he wanted to recreate the rejuvenating experience of European winters in every other year in order to prevent physical and mental deterioration in the tropics. Although Junghuhn’s proposed hill station on the Dieng Plateau would never be

¹¹ W. Bosch, *De Dysenteria Tropica, Benevens een Vlugtig Onderzoek Aangaande de Vraag of de Mensch de Natuurkundige Geschiedheid Heeft, om Zijn Geboortegrond te Verlaten en Elk Klimaat te Gaan Bewonen, door Berekening der Sterfte in Oostindië Wederlegd* (Den Haag: Noordendorp, 1844). S. L. Heijman, “Een Woord over Acclimatisatie,” *Natuur- en Geneeskundig Archief voor Neerland’s Indië*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (1846) 311-359. For a critical assessment of Bosch’s work: C. Waitz, “Repliek op een woord over akklimatisatie door Dr. S.L. Heijman (in het Natuur- en Geneeskundig Archief voor Nederl. Indië, 3e jaarg, bladz., 311-359),” *Tijdschrift voor Neerland’s Indië*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1846) 381-395.

constructed, his prescription for rejuvenation in the mountains was almost universally accepted.¹²

In contrast to the British and French colonies, where racial fears of degeneration came to dominate the debate on acclimatization, in the Netherlands Indies most physicians remained optimistic about the possibility of acclimatization.¹³ In part, this can be explained by the reliance of Dutch colonial rule on cultural accommodation, the continued toleration of racial mixing, and the large proportion of Eurasians among the group of Europeans. A pessimistic perspective on the issue of acclimatization would be detrimental to both the system of colonial governance as well as maintaining social control. Nonetheless, developments in science and medicine in the second half of the nineteenth century gradually infused the acclimatization debate with the issue of race. The “evolution revolution” in the biological sciences inspired social theorists to abuse and apply Charles Darwin’s notion of evolution to human societies and proclaim the superiority of the white race. The founding of the field of microbiology based on the work of Robert Koch and Louis Pasteur on germ theory together with breakthroughs in tropical medicine, such as Ronald Ross’ discovery of the malarial parasite, largely disproved that tropical diseases were caused by the climate. Taken together, these

¹² For a critical perspective on Junghuhn’s ideas: C. Swaving, “De Invloed van Java’s Klimaat,” 161-180. F. Junghuhn, “De Gematigde en Koude Streken van Java,” 112-121.

¹³ See for instance the following publications on the issue of acclimatization, which all stress the relevance of habits and lifestyle in adapting to the tropical climate: L.H. Verwey, *De Acclimatatie van Nederlanders in Indië, en van Indiërs in Nederland* (The Hague: P.J. Kraft, 1863). “De invloed van tropische gewesten op den mensch in verband met kolonisatie,” *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 23 (1894) 127-137. C.L. van der Burg, *Persoonlijke Gezondheidsleer voor Europeanen die naar Nederlandsch-Indië Gaan of Daar Wonen* (Amsterdam: J.H. de Bussy, 1895).

developments necessitated a revision of the acclimatization debate, which, as in the British and French colonies, had become obsessed with the cultivation of difference.¹⁴

The principal Dutch representative of the new scientific developments was bacteriologist Christiaan Eijkman, whose demonstration that Beriberi was caused by food deficiency led to the discovery of vitamins. This won Eijkman the 1929 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. During his long career in the colonies, especially as Director of the Medical Laboratory in Weltevreden (1888-1896), he made several valuable discoveries that changed the debate on European acclimatization to the tropics. Foremost, through extensive comparative experiments Eijkman was able to demonstrate that heat induced tropical anemia – a point of consensus among nineteenth century participants in the acclimatization debate – did not exist. He found that the blood count, the specific gravity, and the water content of Europeans in the tropics was no different from either that of the indigenous population or of Europeans in a cooler climate. He reached similar conclusions after comparing the metabolism, respiratory functions, perspiration, and temperature regulation in Europeans and indigenous peoples. In other words, Eijkman had scientifically demonstrated that Europeans did not physically change their constitutions in the tropics, nor did they differ physiologically from the indigenous population. In addition, he showed that tropical heat did not cause diseases, although it

¹⁴ For an overview of the impact of the “evolution revolution” on Dutch colonial society see Frances Gouda’s chapter titled “The Native ‘Other’ as the Medieval, Childlike, and Animal ‘Self’ (or as Fundamentally Different): Evolutionary Ideas in Dutch Colonial Rhetoric in Indonesia,” in her book *Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995) 118-156. Also see: P. de Rooy, Ann Laura Stoler, W.F. Wertheim, and Jan Breman (ed.), *Imperial Monkey Business: Racial Supremacy in Social Darwinist Theory and Colonial Practice* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1990).

did facilitate the growth of germs, the real sources of disease, much better than moderate climates.¹⁵

Although Eijkman felt he had successfully proven that heat induced tropical anemia did not exist, he did wonder why so many Europeans felt listless and worn out by the tropical climate. This condition reminded him of the diagnosis of neurasthenia, which American neurologist George Beard had introduced in the 1860s to describe the physical and mental symptoms that were caused by the anxieties about modern life in America. Although neurasthenia was, as Eijkman prudently pointed out, an objectively unproven syndrome, in his opinion colonial anxieties might lie at the core of Europeans' difficulties in coping with the tropical climate. However, Eijkman did not seem to take the issue of tropical neurasthenia too seriously, as he called it a fleeting syndrome that quickly disappeared once Europeans found themselves surrounded by fresh air again. This was why many Europeans sought out cooler climates for convalescence, such as that in the mountain resorts, and mostly opted to repatriate. Eijkman therefore concluded that acclimatization depended more on the imitation and adoption of habits and a lifestyle more suited to the tropical climate (external processes), than on changes in one's physical constitution (internal processes). From this perspective, Eijkman believed that "the sobriety of food consumption of the indigenous people, their airy clothing, their *festina lente*, their calm and resigned attitude, all merit, from a purely sanitary perspective, to serve as an example for the white tropical inhabitant."¹⁶

¹⁵ Christiaan Eijkman, *Over Gezondheid en Ziekte in Heete Gewesten*. G. Grijns, "Het Soortelijk Gewicht van het Bloed der Europeanen in de Tropen," *Geneeskundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 34 (Batavia, 1894) 480-489. Christiaan Eijkman, "Vergelijkend Onderzoek van de Physische Warmteregeling bij den Europeeschen en den Maleischen Tropenbewoner," *Geneeskundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 34 (Batavia, 1894) 544-580.

¹⁶ Christiaan Eijkman, *Over Gezondheid en Ziekte in Heete Gewesten*, 20.

As a man of science, Eijkman seemed to have shifted the debate about acclimatization away from the issue of race and the emphasis on the climate as the main culprit of tropical diseases. By suggesting the existence of tropical neurasthenia as well as the rejuvenating influence of cooler climates, however, Eijkman left room for speculation on the issues of both the climate and race. Even so, Eijkman's work had steered the acclimatization debate towards emphasis on morality and lifestyle in the tropics. He believed that the living conditions for Europeans on Java had already improved dramatically during the last decades of the nineteenth century. This was in part the result of the improved medical facilities and the widespread knowledge of hygiene. The quality of the immigrants also played an important role. Since the opening of the colony in 1870, more middle class European men with their wives moved to Java, turning colonial society into, what he deemed, a more civilized place. The superior moral conduct and lifestyle of these new immigrants made them much more suited for life in the tropics and likely to adhere to health and hygienic guidelines than the poor lads who sought employment in the colonial army earlier in the century. Eijkman suspected further improvements in the near future, since he believed that science, technology and industry could either make "man suited to any climate, or any climate suited for man".¹⁷

In contrast to Eijkman, the physician and anthropologist Jacob Herman Friedirch Kohlbrugge interpreted the scientific discoveries in the fields of biology and medicine as confirmation that a more pessimistic perspective on European tropical acclimatization was warranted. During his Indies' career as acting physician in the sanatorium at Tosari (1892-99) and civic physician in Sidoarjo near Surabaya (1901-06), Kohlbrugge became

¹⁷ Ibid., 19-25. A similar observation about the positive influence of middle class European men and especially civilized European women on colonial society can be found in: R.A. van Sandick, "Indische Schetsen. I. Voorheen en Thans," *Vragen van den Dag* (1891).

fascinated with the influence of the mountain climate on the health of Europeans, comparative anatomy between Europeans and the indigenous peoples, and, what he called, the Javanese psyche. His work in the Tengger Mountains and the tropical lowlands allowed him to study and publish extensively on all of these issues.

Kohlbrugge's relationship with science was strained by his orthodox-Christian beliefs. Much of his work was influenced by his desire to demonstrate that evolutionary processes, which he did not entirely reject, and the idea of common descent, which he vehemently denied, should be studied separately. This did not prevent Kohlbrugge from contributing to science, but deeply influenced his perspective on the possibility of European acclimatization and the physical and mental characteristics of the Javanese.¹⁸

The premise of Kohlbrugge's work on acclimatization was that the tropical climate was to blame for the differences in mental and cultural development between Europeans and the Javanese. His own comparative anatomical research on the brains of his diseased European and Javanese patients confirmed Eijkman's research that there were no indications of physiological differences between two.¹⁹ He therefore concluded that if Europeans and Javanese had the same brains, the difference in their respective intellects could only be explained by external factors. The most likely candidate, in his opinion, was the tropical climate, which prevented humans from physical and mental exertions. Based on climatological differences, Kohlbrugge argued that the West stood for progress, innovation, freedom, independence, individualism, patriotism, freedom of

¹⁸ A description of Kohlbrugge's comparative research on the blood count of Europeans in the tropics, at high altitude, and in Europe: J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Action du Climat des Tropiques et du Climat D'Altitude sur le Sang de l'Homme," *Geneeskundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 35 (Batavia, 1895) 437-448. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Climatologie en tropische ziekten," *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 4 (1900) 119-124. Kohlbrugge's lifework culminated in an elaborate attack on the theory of common descent: J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, *Critiek der Descendentietheorie* (Utrecht: Oosthoek, 1936).

¹⁹ J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, *Die Gehirnfurchen malayischer Völker vergleichen mit denen der Australier und Europäer: ein Beitrag zur Evolutionslehre* (Amsterdam: J. Müller, 1909).

thought, intellectualism, reason, science, culture over nature, and physical strength, while the East was characterized by tranquility, collectivism, despotism, lack of patriotism, mental confusion, emotion, fantasy, passion, prophets, dictators, nature over culture, and physical weakness. Due to the climate, Kohlbrugge concluded, the Javanese were intellectually less developed children compared to the adult Europeans.²⁰

Kohlbrugge's reasoning was not without political implications. In his climatic determinism Kohlbrugge employed the rhetoric of evolutionary differentiation between human races to argue that the civilizing mission could not overcome these climatically induced differences. The Javanese would always remain less developed and childlike in contrast to Europeans, who as the inhabitants of more moderate climates, he considered the most productive people in earth. Kohlbrugge thus proved to be a staunch opponent of the Ethical Policy, stating that within the confines of the tropical climate the Javanese could never be Europeanized. Consequently, Kohlbrugge warned: "We cannot turn the West into the East and the hot East into the cool West."²¹ Many in colonial society shared Kohlbrugge's opinions. A columnist for the *Weekblad voor Indië*, for instance, argued that the difference between the level of European and Javanese civilization and welfare could be explained by ten degrees Celsius: "Take them away and man invents railways, wireless telegraphs, canned flower cabbage, and crystal palaces."²² In the columnist's opinion, any attempt to uplift the Javanese was doomed from the outset. He therefore

²⁰ J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, *Blikken in het Zieleleven van den Javaan en zijner Overheerschers* (Leiden, Brill, 1907) 47-52 and 90-101.

²¹ J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, *Blikken in het Zieleleven van den Javaan*, 90. Kohlbrugge seemed to have agreed in part with S.R. Steinmetz, who argued that there was in fact a single human race, but at different stages of development. S.R. Steinmetz, "De Rassenkwesie," *De Gids*, Vol. 71 (1907) 104-139.

²² Carlo [Pseudonym], "Indische Indrukken," *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 2, No. 46, 11 March 1906, 850. A similar opinion on the climate can be found in the editorial of the same weekly: M. van Geuns, "Britsch-Indische Ervaringen," *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 10, No. 34, 7 December, 785-786. R. Broersma, "Java's Kolonisatie en de Wetenschap," *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 5, No. 40, 24 January 1909, 789.

advised the government to put the Ethical Policy on hold until the temperature around the equator equaled that of the Netherlands.

The climate was also identified by a special government committee as one of two main causes behind the diminished welfare of the Javanese in recent years. The committee's final report in 1914 was permeated with evolutionary discourse in order to explain that the climate and character flaws together were responsible for the low level of intellectual, cultural and economic development of the Javanese. According to the committee, the continuous influence of the tropical heat created a situation in which a "struggle for survival" and a process of "selection" were nonexistent. It was argued that the absence of cold winters and large temperature swings enabled the Javanese to live stress free of clothing and housing concerns. In addition, the fertile volcanic soil facilitated a year-round harvest. Consequently, the report stated, there was no incentive to work hard, be innovative, or strive towards progress. The lack of seasonal cold also withheld Javanese society from a climate that toughened human constitutions and eliminated the weak. In other words, the committee believed that the crucial differences between Europeans and Javanese were the result of climate differences. The impact of the climate thus explained why the Javanese lingered in a developmental stage that the Dutch had passed through ages ago.²³

Following his premise of climatic determinism to its logical conclusion, Kohlbrugge strongly argued that Europeans could not acclimatize in the tropics. A popular proverb at the time summarized Kohlbrugge's position quite well: "no one walks

²³ *Onderzoek naar de Mindere Welvaart der Inlandsche Bevolking op Java en Madoera, Vol. XII: Oorzaken der Mindere Welvaart* (Batavia: Drukkerij G. Kolff&Co., 1914) 6-22.

underneath the palm trees unpunished.”²⁴ Kohlbrugge warned Europeans who planned to migrate permanently to Java that due to the climate their family lines would disintegrate, as their offspring would “transform gradually, but surely, into Indo-Europeans and finally into Javanese.”²⁵ The pace at which this process of transformation occurred depended on whether a European man brought a European wife, found a Creole partner, married a Eurasian woman, or conceived children with an indigenous woman. In addition, the fate of the children that sprang from these unions depended on how quickly they were sent to the Netherlands for their education (preferably by age 6-8) as well as the quality of their upbringing. Trying to prevent this metamorphosis, as Kohlbrugge called it, from occurring by only marrying “unmixed Europeans” (i.e. immigrants and Creoles) would prove ineffective, since by the third generation the family line would have become extinct due to infertility of the descendents. The only manner in which Europeans could survive Java’s tropical conditions was by strengthening themselves physically through racial mixing. However, according to Kohlbrugge this defeated the purpose of European settlement, because even though Eurasians were more fertile and viable, their character changed in such a manner that they ceased to be Europeans.²⁶

In his writings Kohlbrugge did not differentiate on the basis of skin color or physiology, but on the climate one grew up in and the upbringing one received. In his

²⁴ The common saying in the Netherlands Indies – “*Men wandelt niet straffeloos onder de palmen*” – was popularized by its use in colonial novels and biographies. However, the saying originated from the second volume of Goethe’s *Wahlverwandschaften* (1809): “*es wandelt niemand ungestraft unter Palmen*”. For an example of its use in the Indies press: Corax [Psdnm.], “Indrukken van den Dag XXIV,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 14, 28 July 1907, 300-302.

²⁵ J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, *Blikken in het Zieleleven van den Javaan*, 111-112.

²⁶ Kohlbrugge used the term “metamorphoses” instead of degeneration, because objectively speaking, he argued, one cannot know if it is better to be European or Javanese. However, the way Kohlbrugge has constructed his argument makes it clear that he is in fact talking about a degeneration process. This is confirmed by the use of the term degeneration in the next chapter of his book. This was not lost on his contemporaries. For instance, see the criticism of C. Snouck Hurgronje, “Blikken in het Zielenleven der Javaan?,” *De Gids*, Vol. 72 (1908) 423-447. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, *Blikken in het Zieleleven van den Javaan*, 109-114 and 128.

mind, it was not a coincidence that most great thinkers, statesmen, and scientists of his age stemmed from moderate climates, while the inhabitants of tropical climates were, as a necessary adaptation to the stifling heat, slow, idle, and indolent. This effect of the climate on Europeans and Eurasians was not without its consequences for their offspring. According to Kohlbrugge, the poor upbringing of (Indo-)European children accelerated their degeneration to the level of the Javanese. He particularly referred to the overwhelming presence of servants in the Indies household, and especially of the indigenous nanny – the *baboe*, who took care of the children's every whim. In contrast to a decent European upbringing, the *baboe* allowed (Indo-)European children to hit her, to boss her around, she would not let infants cry themselves to sleep, nor would she force children to eat only during dinner time. As a consequence, the children would not develop obedience, restraint, and determination. Kohlbrugge believed that only repatriation before the age of 6 to 8 years could rescue these children from degeneration. Moreover, during their temporary stay in the tropics, Europeans should seek rejuvenation in the cooler mountain climates of Java in combination with adherence to strict European morality to stall their metamorphosis. Kohlbrugge was sure of one thing: "if Europeans go to the Indies and stay too long, [they] are doomed to degenerate."²⁷

Twentieth Century Anxieties over Physical and Cultural Degeneration

The nineteenth century scientific breakthroughs and technological innovations led to vast sanitary improvements and new hygienic guidelines that consequently resulted in a steep drop in the mortality rate of Europeans in the tropics. Remarkably, by the early twentieth

²⁷ J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, *Blikken in het Zieleleven van den Javaan*, 117-156. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "The Influence of a Tropical Climate on Europeans," *The Eugenics Review* (April 1911).

century the mortality rate of Europeans was often lower than that of the indigenous peoples in tropical climates. In the Netherlands Indies, this turnaround confirmed the belief of those who argued that the example of the indigenes in adapting to the tropical environment was no longer required. Moreover, the Javanese and their culture were now considered dirty, unhygienic, degenerative, and even dangerous to Europeans' health and identity. The Javanese was thus transformed from a reliable guide to life in the tropics, to a primitive, unhygienic, disease vector that needed to be kept at a safe distance. In contrast, the Dutch now considered themselves, and Europeans in general, as superior modern beings that were far more civilized, hygienic, and intellectual than the natives. It was this newfound modern identity that pervaded the Ethical Policy – with its civilizing discourse – and legitimized colonial authority. Although the acclimatization debate was still raging by the turn of the century, both sides – as represented by Eijkman and Kohlbrugge above – acknowledged that the tropical climate had a negative impact on Europeans on Java. The extent of this impact was up for debate, ranging from tropical neurasthenia to complete physical and mental degeneration. Either way, Europeans needed protection from the degenerative influences of the climate, the indigenous people and their culture.²⁸

During the first decades of the twentieth century, tropical neurasthenia was a prevalent diagnosis for an assumed disorder of the central nervous system that could not be attributed to a single causative factor.²⁹ The popularity of this diagnosis reflected the

²⁸ Philip D. Curtin, *Death by Migration: Europe's Encounter with the Tropical World in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 7-11.

²⁹ According to doctor and psychiatrist Van Loon, of the European civil servants that received furlough in between 1915 and 1924, no less than 45.7% was diagnosed with neurasthenia and another 8.7% with related diseases. F.H.G. van Loon, "Wie is Geschikt voor de Tropen?," *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 19 (1930) 1-25. As Anna Crozier has argued, tropical neurasthenia could be employed to regulate the behavior of Europeans in the colonies. While the colonial authorities could remove undesirable persons from

lingering ambiguity over the disproof of climatic determinism by modern medical theories. Consequently, a broad agglomeration of symptoms became associated with tropical neurasthenia, such as listlessness, depression, headache, irritability, nausea, constipation or diarrhea, respiratory problems, insomnia or excessive sleep, heart palpitations, and impotence. The alleged causes of tropical neurasthenia were almost as varied as its symptoms and included the continuous tropical heat and humidity, the consumption of spicy food, concerns over hygiene and tropical diseases, monotonous tropical nature without seasons, the materialism and individualism of colonial society, and loneliness. It was reasoned that tropical neurasthenia could be prevented or cured by taking away its causes, for instance, by seeking out dry moderate climates with European seasonal vegetation, the consumption of European food, following Western hygienic conventions, and cultural and intellectual interactions with other Europeans. In other words, living a Western lifestyle in an environment that resembled that of Europe. This is precisely what the European mountain resorts on Java offered.³⁰

The sudden rise in the diagnosis of tropical neurasthenia was matched by a proliferation of medications that supposedly countered nerve disorder. Western pharmaceutical companies employed savvy advertisement campaigns that anticipated European anxieties over life in the tropics to market their products. These campaigns were illustrative of the advanced interconnections of the global economy as well as

colonial society under the pretense of tropical neurasthenia, individuals could give themselves a respectable exit-route back to Europe by being diagnosed with neurasthenia. See: Anna Crozier, "What Was Tropical about Tropical Neurasthenia? The Utility of the Diagnosis in the Management of British East Africa," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (Oct. 2009) 518-548.

³⁰ F.H.G. van Loon, "Het Zenuwlijden der Blanken in de Tropen," *Geneeskundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 67 (1927) 435-478. F.H.G. van Loon, "Wie is Geschikt voor de Tropen?," *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, Vol. 19 (1930) 1-25. Anna Crozier, "What Was Tropical about Tropical Neurasthenia?," 518-548. Anna Greenwood, "The Strange History of Tropical Neurasthenia," *The Psychologist*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (March 2011) 226-227.

Europeans' conviction that through science and technology the world had become makeable. Nerve medicines such as Sanatogen, produced by Bayer, were thus presented as the scientific solution to European acclimatization in the tropics. The active ingredients in Sanatogen were casein (milk endosperm) and glycerin phosphorus, which supposedly strengthened one's bones, muscles, and nerves respectively (a critical American commentator noted that a glass milk had the same effect).³¹ Through its impressive advertisement campaign (roughly from 1910-1930) in newspapers and periodicals, Sanatogen ("The Nerve Strengthening Food") was presented as the cure for tropical neurasthenia and its diverse symptoms, such as anemia, listlessness, depression, sleeplessness, eating and intestinal disorders.³²

Sanatogen's advertisements often depicted a depressed European man or woman, sometimes with a illustration of the person in better health after taking Sanatogen.³³ However, one of its more interesting advertisements depicted a European mother with her two children playing in a Dutch springtime environment, which is described as "fresh, young, and happy" without any "dust, heat, and weakness" (Fig. 4.1). Before the colonial observer became desperate by the contrast between a healthy European and unhealthy Javanese environment, the accompanying texts provides some reassurance: "A Dutch spring is probably an impossible ideal at present, but you can certainly achieve that

³¹ For an elaborate advertisement of Bayer's Sanatogen: *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 15, No. 129 (9 June 1910). Sanatogen was not only advertised in the tropics, but also in America and Europe. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* therefore published various reports on Sanatogen's claims, all of which were highly critical of the product. For instance: "Sanatogen: A Scientific Investigation of Its Alleged Action on the Recuperating Powers of the Blood," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Vol. 63, No. 13, (26 September 1914) 1127-1129.

³² A very small selection of Sanatogen's diverse advertisements: *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 15, No. 254 and 262 (5 and 5 November 1910); Vol. 16, No. 180 (5 January 1911); Vol. 17, No. 154 and 223 (5 July and 26 September 1912); Vol. 18, No. 97 (28 April 1913); Vol. 33, No. 77 (2 April 1928).

³³ For instance: *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 44, No. 3 and 52 (3 December 1927 and 27 January 1928). *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 33, No. 77 (2 April 1928).

“spring-feeling” of happy, cheerful health with Sanatogen.”³⁴ Together with other nerve medications, for instance Biocitin and Virol, Sanatogen came to be considered as a scientific medicine against European degeneration in the tropics. However, taking dubious medications was certainly not enough to protect the European constitution in the tropics.



**Geniet een Lente-Gezondheid
met Sanatogen.**

Lente in Holland! Boomen en bloemen ontluiken. De Natuur is frisch, jong en gelukkig – geen stof, geen hitte, geen slapheid – zou het niet een gezondheidsbad voor U zijn?

Een Hollandsche Lente is op het oog en blijk waarschijnlijk een onbereikbaar ideaal voor U, maar dat „lente-gevoel” van vroolijke, opgewekte gezondheid is een zeer zeker bereikbare mogelijkheid door Sanatogen.

Sanatogen zal cellen en vezels van Uw lichaam en zenuwen hernieuwen en versterken, zoodat deze weerstand kunnen bieden aan de uitputtende werking van het Tropische klimaat.

Begin nog heden Sanatogen te gebruiken, dan zult gij niet langer sukkelen met „zwakte”. Gij zult U niet langer nerveus of afgemat voelen.

Dr. G. Mulder Jr. vroeger te Batavia schrijft:
„Ik heb het genees- en versterkingsmiddel Sanatogen dikwijls met veel succes in mijn praktijk in Indië toegepast, speciaal bij zwakte-toestanden.”

Een bekend Londensch geneesheer zegt:
„Sanatogen gaat naar de kern van de gezondheid, de cellen en bouwt die op tot een blijvend krachtig lichaamsgestel”.

Nieuwe kracht met:

SANATOGEN
Het zenuwsterkend voedsel
Verkrijgbaar in alle Apotheken en Toko's

**Voedt spieren, beenderen en lichaam
overvloedig. Veel beter dan rijst**



**Quaker
Oats**

**UW
BABY**



Quaker Oats

MOEDERS, die hun kindje zelf voeden, hebben krachtig gezond bloed noodig. De voedende bestanddeelen van de moedermelk zijn afhankelijk van het gebruikte voedsel. Gedurende dezen tijd is

Quaker Oats

een bepaald onmisbaar voedsel voor U. Het zal Uw bloed versterken, het voedsel voor Uw kindje dus alles verschaffen, wat het voor een gezonden groei behoeft. Overal wordt het door doktoren aanbevolen. Quaker Oats is veel en veel voedzamer dan vleesch of rijst en ook veel gemakkelijker verteerbaar.

Fig. 4.1 (left): “Enjoy Spring Health with Sanatogen”, in: *De Indische Courant*, Vol. 5, No. 225 (16-6-1926).

Fig. 4.2 (upper right): “Quaker Oats: Nourishes Muscles, Legs, and Body. Much Better than Rice.” *D’Oriënt*, Vol. 5, No. 20, 15 May 1926.

Fig. 4.3 (lower right): “Your Baby”. Quaker Oats is advertised as being much better for mothers who breastfeed as it is “much and much more nutritious than meat or rice”. The presence of an indigenous servant shows how much these advertisements were tailored to the colonial market. *D’Oriënt*, Vol. 4, No. 36, 5 September 1925.

In addition to taking medical supplements, Europeans became convinced of need to strengthen their bodies physically to achieve greater resistance to the tropical

³⁴ *De Indische Courant*, Vol. 5, No. 225 (16 June 1926).

environment. Physical exercise was considered a crucial way of maintaining physical and mental health, not only by strengthening one's muscles, but also one's immune and central nervous system. Travel guides and household manuals therefore advised to be physically active during the cooler mornings and evenings, preferably by engaging in sports that strengthened the bonds within the European community.³⁵ The first decades of the twentieth century therefore witnessed an explosion of associations and leagues for sports such as swimming, tennis, football, field hockey, cycling, rowing, sailing, golf, croquet, skittles, hiking, mountaineering, horse riding, and gymnastics. Most of these associations were for Europeans only, especially a sport like swimming was strictly segregated by race. Although the Javanese began to play some of the sports themselves, for instance soccer, they had to establish their own associations and leagues. Taken together, medical supplements and physical exercise protected European bodies from the tropical climate. Nonetheless, the various indigenous influences on the colonial lifestyle of most Europeans required still other forms of purification.³⁶

The degenerative influence of indigenous servants in the European household was a popular theme in the early twentieth century. Most Europeans depended on a variety of indigenous servants, such as a house-boy (*djongos*), cook (*kokkie*), gardener (*kebon*), nanny (*baboe*), and seamstress (*djait*), to manage their households. While the number of

³⁵ C.L. van der Burg, *Persoonlijke Gezondheidsleer voor Europeanen die naar Nederlandsch-Indië Gaan of Daar Wonen* (Amsterdam: J.H. de Bussy, 1895) 153. A.H. Nijland, *Hygiënische Wenken voor het Leven in Nederlandsch-Indië* (Leiden: S.C. van Doesburgh, 1921) 35. E.H. Hermans, *Gezondheidsleer voor Nederlandsch-Indië. Een Boek voor Ieder die naar Indië Gaat, of Daar Woont* (Amsterdam: J.M. Meulenhoff, 1925) 33-43.

³⁶ *De Indische Sport: Weekblad voor Sport in Ned.-Indië*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 6 July 1905. "Sport en Succes in het Leven," *De Reflector*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 25 December 1915. "De Mode: Sportweek," *De Reflector*, Vol. 2, No. 16, 21 April 1917. G.J. Nieuwenhuis, *Lichamelijk Opvoeding in Indië* (Weltevreden: Vereeniging Nederlandsch-Indisch Onderwijs Kongres, 1918). "Iets over lichamelijke opvoeding," *Het Indische Leven*, Vol. 4, No. 16 (2 December 1922) 312-313. "Sport in Netherland India," *Tourism in Netherland India*, Vol. 7, No. 6 (Nov.-Dec. 1932).

servants used to signify one's status in colonial society, their position in the colonial household became contentious as Europeans came to regard their servants as uncivilized, unhygienic, and a danger to the health of their families. The conviction that Europeans were inherently more sanitary than the indigenous peoples strikingly contrasted with the reality in which indigenous servants prepared their food, washed and fitted their clothes, cleaned their homes, and most importantly, took care of their children. This ambivalence towards indigenous servants was reflected in European household manuals, which simultaneously described servants as lazy, dirty, and unreliable as well as gentle, skilled, and compliant. According to Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, servants came to be considered useful children in need of European guidance. The ambivalence towards indigenous servants, Locher-Scholten has convincingly argued, thus mirrored the political discourse of the period that on the one hand cultivated racial difference, but on the other hand was aimed at civilizing indigenous society.³⁷

The *baboe* (nanny) became the embodiment of the danger that servants in particular, and indigenous society in general, posed to European culture and identity on Java. The *baboe*'s servitude towards European offspring (i.e. always giving in) allegedly resulted in children without perseverance, sense of duty, and work ethic. Her unhygienic native habits further set a bad example and even endangered the children when she dressed, fed, and bathed them. In addition, it was argued that a *baboe*'s care produced children who spoke better Malay than Dutch, believed in indigenous superstitions, and

³⁷ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, "So Close and yet so Far: The Ambivalence of Dutch Colonial Rhetoric on Javanese Servants in Indonesia, 1900-1942," in Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (ed.), *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1998) 131-153.

were susceptible to the low sexual morality of the natives.³⁸ In colonial public opinion, the “lack of civilization and development” of the indigenous woman made her “absolutely unsuitable as nanny for [European] children.”³⁹ Consequently “*Baboe-ism*”, the vice of placing one’s children in the care of indigenous nannies, was referred to as the “cancer of Indies society” and a “curse for the European child”.⁴⁰ In the *baboe*’s care, European children would quickly degenerate to the level of the native, which endangered the survival of European culture and identity in the tropics.

The metropolitan European mother was presented as the antidote to the corrupting influence of the *baboe* on European children, and indirectly on the future of the European community in the tropics.⁴¹ The tendency among European women, especially creoles and Eurasians, to delegate the upbringing of their children to the care of indigenous women, came to be considered an indication of their own degeneration. It was their laziness, indolence, ego-centrism, and vanity – character traits often ascribed to Indo-Europeans – that resulted in the decision to employ a *baboe*. The vicious cycle of degeneration through one’s upbringing therefore did not start with the *baboe*, but with the mother of the children, or if one wanted to go the root of the problem, their indigenous

³⁸ Frances Gouda, “Nyonyas on the Colonial Divide: White Women in the Dutch East Indies, 1900-1942,” 318-342. For an extensive discussions on the issue of *Baboe-ism* in the colonial press, see: Ofoei [Pseudonym], “Indische Penkrassen,” *Het Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 7, No. 11 and 42 (3 July 1910 and 5 February 1911) 173 and 701-702. “Huishoudelijke Praatjes: Het Baboeïsme en nog Wat. Het Baboeïsme en de Pest,” *Bijblad van het Weekblad voor Indië voor Dames*, Vol. 8, No. 8, 11 June 1911, 191. “Het Kind en de Baboe,” *Het Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 16, No. 26, 5 October 1919, 365-366. H. Tobi-v.d.Kop, “Iets over Kinderopvoeding in Indie,” “*Indie*” *Geïllustreerd Weekblad voor Nederland en Koloniën*, Vol. 3, No. 52 (24 March 1920) 845-847.

³⁹ “Het Kind en de Baboe,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 16, No. 26, 5 October 1919, 366.

⁴⁰ Ofoei [Pseudonym], “Indische Penkrassen XXI,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 7, No. 42 (5 February 1911) 701-702. Corax [Pseudonym], “Indrukken van den Dag LXI,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 52 (19 April 1908) 1053-1055.

⁴¹ Frances Gouda, “Good Mothers, Medeas, or Jezebels: Feminine Imagery in Colonial and Anticolonial Rhetoric in the Dutch East Indies, 1900-1942,” 236-254. Frances Gouda, “Nyonyas on the Colonial Divide: White Women in the Dutch East Indies, 1900-1942,” 318-342. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Women and the Colonial State*.

ancestors. The only way in which this cycle could be stopped or even reversed was by the mother reclaiming the upbringing of her offspring following European bourgeois standards. The idealization of European motherhood not accidentally coincided with the rapid increase of European women in the colony. Although European women came to be considered as the guardians of European cultural values and identity, the prevalence of *Baboe-ism* simultaneously allowed for her continued oppression by her male counterparts. When, for instance, European women lobbied for suffrage in the colonies, one commentator flatly stated: “first do your duty, than demand your rights.”⁴²

The indigenous cook was another servant with access, albeit indirect, to one of Europeans’ most private affairs: the consumption of food. The place of the *kokkie*, as the indigenous cook was called in Dutch, and her kitchen in the household gradually received much scrutiny, focusing both on the supposed unsanitary conditions of her kitchen and her inability to prepare a decent European meal. European women were therefore encouraged to take back control over the kitchen in her household, either by closely supervising the *kokkie* or by preparing meals herself. By reclaiming the kitchen and food preparation the European woman supposedly protected the physical constitutions of her family members. European women could find an abundance of advice on hygiene and cooking in the various household guides and Indies periodicals. In addition, such modern novelties as refrigerators and gas and electronic stoves, made the kitchen a more sanitary space for food preparation as well.⁴³

There was more at stake than the issue of who prepared the food: the Dutch began to scrutinize rice as their staple food, and the rice-table in particular. The latter came to be

⁴² Ofoei [Pseudonym], “Indische Penkrassen XXI,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 7, No. 42 (5 February 1911) 701-702.

⁴³ B. van Helsdingen-Schroevens, *De Europeesche Vrouw in Indië*, 25-26.

considered by some as both a cause and indication of degeneration. For instance, a popular commentator described the rice-table as a hodgepodge and a “ravenous, gluttonous, animalistic agglomeration of extremely stinking food.”⁴⁴ Its consumption allegedly undermined one’s sense of taste and propriety. Implicitly, the suggestion was made that European bodies and minds needed European food to thrive. Western companies like Quaker Oats played to these sentiments, for instance, by advertising that oats were the ideal food for the tropics, since they were more nutritious than rice, strengthening one’s blood, muscles, and bones. The Quaker Oats campaign intelligently incorporated colonial anxieties to sell its product, like the fear of tropical anemia or the concern that children physically developed slower than in Europe due to the tropical climate (Fig. 4.2 and 4.3).⁴⁵ The importation of Quaker Oats to colonial Java was enabled by the invention of light airtight canisters. Similarly, the development of canned and freezer containers on ships made a wide array of European food products available in the colony.⁴⁶ The emphasis on European food was reflected as well in agricultural initiatives on Java itself. While private entrepreneurs expanded the cultivation of numerous European vegetables in Java’s mountains as well as dairy products, the colonial

⁴⁴ Ofoei [Pseudonym], “Indische Penkrassen XXIX,” *Het Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 8, No. 6, (29 May 1911) 126-128.

⁴⁵ The Quaker Oats advertisement campaign in the colonial press was modern, intelligent, and appealing. For instance, it was used to convince mothers that Oats helped produce the best breast milk; men that it improved their physical strength and ability to play sports; professionals that it was the best way to start the working-day; parents that it was the best food for toddlers, teenagers, and adolescents; and all Europeans that Quaker Oats were “much better than rice” and the best food in the tropics. See for instance the numerous advertisements in the weekly *D’Oriënt* (Wetevreden): Vol. 4, No. 36 and 49 (1925); Vol. 5, No. 10, 40, 44, and 48 (1926); Vol. 6, No. 4, 5, 11, 13, 14, and 16 (1927); Vol. 8, No. 1, 3, 4 (1928); Vol. 17, No. 14 (1938).

⁴⁶ Quaker Oats promoted its packaging method in its advertisements: *D’Oriënt*, Vol. 8, No. 12 and 14, 16 and 30 March 1929. With regards to canned food, see: Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, “Summer dresses and canned food: European women and Western lifestyles in the Indies, 1900-1942,” 151-180.

government experimented with the large-scale cultivation of wheat.⁴⁷ Although rice and the rice-table did not disappear, changes in food consumption played an important role in the formation of a European identity in the tropics.

Hill Station or Mountain Resorts: The Yang Plateau Debate

Java's mountain resorts have received surprisingly little attention from social and cultural historians. This is all the more perplexing if one considers that the Dutch on Java were arguably the first to gain access to the highlands of their Asian possessions – already by the end of the seventeenth century – and experience some of the benefits of living at higher altitudes. The eighteenth century establishment of estates on the slopes of the Priangan mountains eventually resulted in the founding of the first European hill station in Asia, the town of Buitenzorg (Bogor). However, compared to the hill stations in British India, its possible Dutch equivalents Buitenzorg and later Bandung were located at relatively low altitudes (900 and 2,500 feet respectively, compared to Simla's 7,200 feet). On Java the Dutch never really developed counterparts to Simla, Darjeeling, Dalat,

⁴⁷ Prompted by the isolation of World War I the government started experiments with wheat cultivation in the Indies in 1916. At various locations in Java's mountains the government provided farmers and planters with different wheat-seeds to study which kind of wheat would perform the best on Java. The administrator C.F.J.A.A.E. Opolski of the tea plantation 'Wanasoeke', near Cipanas in the Priangan Mountains, conducted the most promising experiment, for which he was rewarded with a 75-year lease of 110 hectares of land for the cultivation of wheat in 1922. The government even granted him an expansion of the land-lease in 1923. However, many nearby planters protested against Opolski's presence, fearing that the wheat cultivation and the accompanying deforestation would drastically alter the hydrological and climatological conditions of the region. In addition, they accused Opolski of abusing his land-lease for the logging of wood. In 1926 Opolski finally returned the land-lease to the government, after which the area was turned into a tea-plantation. Although Opolski's mission had failed, he had demonstrated that wheat cultivation on Java was a possibility. "Tarwe voor het leger," *Algemeen Landbouweekblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 1, No. 19 (10 November 1916). M. Buijsman, "Tarwe in Indië," *Algemeen Landbouweekblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 2, No. 6 (10 August 1917). "Het Tarwebedrijf in de Preanger," *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 38, No. 218 (22 August 1922). "Tarwe cultuur in Nederlandsch Indië," *Algemeen Landbouweekblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 7, No. 14 (6 October 1922). "De "Poerbasari"-concessie," *Het Nieuws voor den Dag van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 28, No. 190 (17 August 1923). "Het Tarwe-Drama," *Het Nieuws voor den Dag van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 31, No. 114 (15 May 1926).

or Baguio. Nor was there a seasonal migration into the mountains. Instead, using the island's topography to their advantage, the Dutch constructed mountain resorts at relatively short distances from every major town on the island. This allowed for shorter stays, such as weekend outings, in the highlands. Nonetheless, the function of the smaller mountain resorts was very much the same as of the hill stations elsewhere: to protect European bodies and maintain white prestige.⁴⁸

The development of a string of European mountain resorts across the island of Java coincided with the implementation of the Cultivation System and the enforcement of Dutch authority from the 1830s onwards. Similar to the development of hill stations in British India, it was the colonial army that took the first steps towards the development of mountain resorts on Java. The army established a garrison system that stationed military forces in every major city on the island as well as in the nearby hills. Soldiers who fell ill in the hot and humid coastal cities could thus be sent to one of the neighboring cooler mountain garrisons for convalescence. For instance, forces stationed in Batavia (in Weltevreden, to be precise) could recuperate in Buitenzorg (Bogor), the seat of the Governor-General and first mountain resort to develop since 1809. When it became clear that Buitenzorg's climate was not ideal for healing, higher stations were opened in the Priangan mountains, such as Sindanglaya (1850s), Sukabumi (1880s) and Cimahi (1898). Similarly, troops stationed in Semarang or the Principalities could convalesce in Ungaran (1840s), Platungan (1840s), and Salatiga (1840s), while those struck by tropical diseases in Surabaya could find solace in Malang (1830s) and Tosari (1890s). In addition to

⁴⁸ Anthony D. King, "Culture, Social Power and Environment: The Hill Station in Colonial Urban Development," 195-213. Robert R. Reed, "Remarks on the Colonial Genesis of the Hill Station in Southeast Asia with Particular Reference to the Cities of Buitenzorg (Bogor) and Baguio," 545-591. Robert R. Reed, "The Colonial Genesis of Hill Stations: The Genting Exception," 464-468. J.E. Spencer and W.L. Thomas, "The Hill Stations and Summer Resorts of the Orient," 637-651.

stationing military forces, all these towns housed hospitals and infirmaries to help European soldiers recover from their tropical diseases, after which they returned to their lowland garrisons.⁴⁹

The construction of *pasanggrahans* – way stations – throughout Java by the colonial government was part of the infrastructural building frenzy during the Cultivation System, which aimed at making the island more accessible, controllable, and above all, exploitable. The *pasanggrahans* were constructed along the major road networks and served as way stations for civil servants touring the country. Characteristic of this period of colonial governance, the construction of *pasanggrahans* was part of the feudal service requirements for the Javanese. Like the houses of colonial officials, the *pasanggrahans* were built after a standard design that was clearly inspired by Javanese architectural styles, such as the high-hipped roof and porches (see. Fig. 4.4). The *pasanggrahan* system was widespread over Java and reached deep into the islands' interior and high into its mountain ranges. In addition to their primary function as way stations, the *pasanggrahans* at higher altitudes quickly became popular destinations for European civil servants seeking recuperation from tropical discomforts or a breath of cool air. By 1898, at least 43 *pasanggrahans* were used for the rejuvenation of European civil servants and a small numbers of civilians.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Sanatoria in Nederlandsch-Indië," *Verslagen der Algemeene Vergaderingen van het Indisch Genootschap, 1896-1900*, 243-272. N.P. van der Stok, "Het Klimaat van Insulinde en Onze Reconvalescenten-Inrichtingen," *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (1886) 1418-1500. Also see the entries of the places mentioned in the *Encyclopaedie voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 1-4 (The Hague; Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff; E.J. Brill, 1896-1905).

⁵⁰ In 1898 Kohlbrugge sent out a questionnaire to all Residents and physicians on Java regarding the presence of health resorts and mineral hot springs in their respective areas. He used this information for the presentation of the Netherlands Indies at the 1900 Colonial Exhibition in Paris. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Sanatoria in Nederlandsch-Indië," 243-272. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Bronnen en badplaatsen in Nederl.-Indië, die tot herstel van gezondheid door Inlanders en Europeanen gebruikt worden," *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 23,



Fig. 4.4. A depiction of a nineteenth century Pasanggrahan on Java. These way-stations for European and indigenous civil servants were also used for recuperation. They were mostly Javanese in design, a big contrast with the mountain resorts of the twentieth century. Source: *Collection of the KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands* (Image code: 37A266).

Following the opening of Java for private enterprise in 1870, the interest of the civilian population in mountain retreats increased significantly. Growing numbers of middle-class European immigrants, many of whom were accompanied by their spouses, sought to follow the soldiers and civil servants to the cooler mountain climates. Mostly through private initiatives, sometimes supported by subsidies from the colonial government, mountain hotels that catered to civilians sprang up throughout Java. Some of these hotels were founded in well-known places, such as garrison towns. For instance, in Sukabumi several hotels could be found close to one another. Others hotels grew out of existing pasanggrahans that the government was willing to sell, as long as the new hotel would reserve a couple of rooms for civil servants at all times. The development of the sanatorium of Tosari is illustrative: the local pasanggrahan was purchased in 1875 by private interests and reconstructed as a sanatorium between 1886 and 1892. To receive

No. 2 (1901) 883-890. For a short overview of pasanggrahans in colonial Indonesia: *Pasanggrahans in Nederlandsch-Indië* (Wetevrdem: 1929-1930).

government subsidies, the new sanatorium always had six rooms available for civil servants. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, Tosari's first acting physician, Kohlbrugge, still only marked 19 places on Java as a mountain resort, of which 12 were primarily military establishments. The fast growing European population required more prestigious resorts and some looked towards the British hill stations as blue prints for future developments on Java.⁵¹

The criticism of the absence and state of the development of mountain resorts on Java started with the writings of Franz Junghuhn in the 1840s. The German physician and mountaineer was convinced that the European physical body could only tolerate the tropical heat by frequent recuperation in the Javanese mountain climate. The only existing stations for convalescence at this time (1842), Plantungan (1690 ft.) and Ungaran (1040 ft.), were too low to allow Europeans to escape the beatings of the tropical heat and humidity. Junghuhn therefore proposed to follow the lead of the British in India, who had already established hill stations as Simla (7,234 ft.) and Darjeeling (6,710 ft.) in the Himalaya's and Nuwara Eliya (6,128 ft.) on Sri Lanka. He even claimed that Java's mountain climates over 6,000 feet were more promising than that of any British hill station because of their low humidity and complete lack of snow. Junghuhn suggested the construction of a hill station on the Dieng Plateau (at 6,000 ft.). His passionate argumentation fell on deaf ears; although the number of mountain resorts increased considerably in the following decades, none was established in Junghuhn's highest

⁵¹ J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Sanatoria in Nederlandsch-Indië," 243-272. For a short history of Tosari: "Filosofie in de Bergen. III. Geschiedenis van Tosari," *Soerabaijasch Handelsblad*, Vol. 83, No. 112 (16 May 1935).

climate zones. The highest resort on Java, Sindanglaya, was founded in the 1850s and at an altitude of 3,530 ft. it fell far short from Junghuhn's criteria.⁵²

Physician N. B. van der Stok and civil servant J. L. van Gennepe took up Junghuhn's campaign in the 1880s and 1890s. In 1886, Van der Stok published a long article in which he argued at length that the only natural medicine against living in a hot and humid climate was to move to a cold and dry climate. He asserted that the Dutch possessed no true sanatoria, since the climate of the existing resorts was neither cold nor dry enough. Following this logic he also rejected Junghuhn's proposal of using the Dieng Plateau as the site for the first true Dutch hill station due to its humid climate. Instead Van der Stok focused another mountain range that had received praise from Junghuhn: the Yang Plateau in the Residence of Besuki at the Argupuro mountain in the far eastern corner of Java. At an altitude varying between 7,650 and 10,000 feet, the Yang plateau with its cool and dry climate could truly rival the British hill stations. Van der Stok's argument struck a cord with the civil servant J. L. van Gennepe, who at the time of publication was controller in Besuki and highly familiar with the Yang Plateau. Several years later, in 1895, Van Gennepe presented the most detailed blueprint for a Dutch hill station on Java to date. In contrast to the proposals of his predecessors, Van Gennepe's plans for the Yang Plateau raised the interest of the colonial government and the colonial community at large. The proposal resulted in an exploration of the Yang Plateau, an official and public debate about the benefit of hill stations, and most importantly, the

⁵² Franz Junghuhn, "De Gematigde en Koude Streken van Java," 81-121. Franz Junghuhn, *Java, Zijne Gedaante, Zijn Plantentooi en Inwendige Bouw*, Vol. 3-4 (The Hague: Mieling, 1853-1854) 730-731 and 1358-1359.

decision to support the establishment of a range of smaller mountain resorts instead of a grand hill station after British example.⁵³

During his long career in the colonial civil service (1877-1906), Van Gennep was probably most renowned for his tireless efforts to transform the pristine Yang Plateau into a large-scale Dutch hill station. It was during the early phases of Van Gennep's established career, as he worked up from clerk to Assistant-Resident, that he was stationed in the Residency of Besuki, home of the Yang Plateau. Between 1881 and 1886 the young Controller (his civil service rank) enjoyed most of his spare time hunting in and around the Yang plateau, which was famous for its abundance of wildlife, especially Java deer. His fascination with the Yang Plateau led him to the writings of Junghuhn and Van der Stok on Java's mountains, which simultaneously exposed him to the authors' views on the health advantages of the mountain climate for Europeans. The relationship between health and the tropical climate became a matter of personal concern for Van Gennep in 1893, when illness forced him to go on leave in the Netherlands for several years. It was during these years in the metropole that Van Gennep wrote and published his pamphlet advocating the creation of a hill station on the Yang Plateau. One of the main arguments he presented to argue his cause was that a hill station could reduce the costs of civil servants and soldiers on leave by letting them recuperate in the Indies. It is likely that, although he never admitted as much, his personal experience of being forced to repatriate temporarily might have been central to his zeal.⁵⁴

⁵³ N.P. van der Stok, "Het Klimaat van Insulinde en Onze Reconvallescenten-Inrichtingen," 1418-1500. Franz Junghuhn, *Java, Zijne Gedaante, Zijn Plantentooi en Inwendige Bouw*, Vol. 3-4, 1069-1109. J.L. van Gennep, *De Hoogvlakte van het Jang-Gebergte op Java, de meest geschikte plaats voor de Oprichting van een Sanatorium, een Krankzinnigengesticht en een Europeesche Landbouwkolonie* (Semarang/Amsterdam: G.C.T. Van Dorp & Co./Scheltema & Holkema's Boekhandel, 1895).

⁵⁴ Van Gennep arrived on Java in 1870, where he worked as a clerk. After passing the required civil service exam in 1876 (*Groot-Ambtenaarsexamen*) he was appointed as *Aspirant-Controleur* and not much later

The title of Van Gennep's 1895 pamphlet reflected the grand scale of his plans: "*The Yang Plateau on Java, the most suitable location for the establishment of a sanatorium, mental-institution, and a European agricultural colony.*"⁵⁵ Van Gennep argued that the Netherlands lagged behind Britain in the development of hill stations and consequently in its responsibility towards the health of its European citizens in the tropics. Whereas Britain had already established 12 hill stations at altitudes over 6,000 feet, the Netherlands had none. The Yang Plateau could fill this perceived lacuna by becoming the equivalent of Simla or Darjeeling on Java. The etymological meaning of the name of the highlands boded well: Yang – or Iyang – derived from the old Javanese word *hyang*, meaning God, making the plateau the "land of God[s]". Here, Van Gennep argued, the Dutch could live like modern Olympians overseeing their subjects. He compared the cool and dry climate of the Yang, considered essential for recuperation from tropical diseases, to that of central Europe. The average daily temperature on the Yang Plateau was 60°F, 45°F in the shade, while at night the temperature dropped till 32°F, giving the area a familiar European winter appearance at dusk. The alpine environment of the plateau would remind the visitor of Switzerland. In addition, comprising 3,550 hectares of rolling grassy meadows spread out over three adjacent plateaus, the Yang Plateau was easily large enough for the construction of a large hill station including agricultural businesses. The lowest plateau was located at an altitude of

Controleur, an office that brought him to the Residency of Besuki – which contained the Yang Plateau – before being transferred to Madura in 1886/7. In 1893 he fell ill and was forced to convalesce in the Netherlands. On his return to the Indies in 1896 he was appointed as Assistant-Resident, the rank with which he retired from the civil service in 1906. *Java Bode*, Vol. 19, No. 188 (12 August 1870). *De Locomotief*, Vol. 25, No. 218 (14 September 1876). *Bataviaasch Handelsblad*, Vol. 20, No. 78 (4 April 1877). *Java Bode*, Vol. 40, No. 291 (9 June 1877). *Bataviaasch Handelsblad*, Vol. 29, No. 285 (8 December 1886). *Bataviaasch Handelsblad*, Vol. 36, No. 75 (30 March 1893). *Java Bode*, Vol. 45, No. 202 (1 September 1896). *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 11, No. 6 (8 January 1906).

⁵⁵ J.L. van Gennep, *De Hoogvlakke van het Jang-Gebergte op Java*.

6,000 feet; the central plateau, known as the *alun-alun besar* ('large square'), at 7,100 feet; and the smallest plateau near the Argopuro mountain at 8,300 feet. All three plateaus were incorporated in Van Gennepe's extensive plans (see Fig. 4.5).⁵⁶

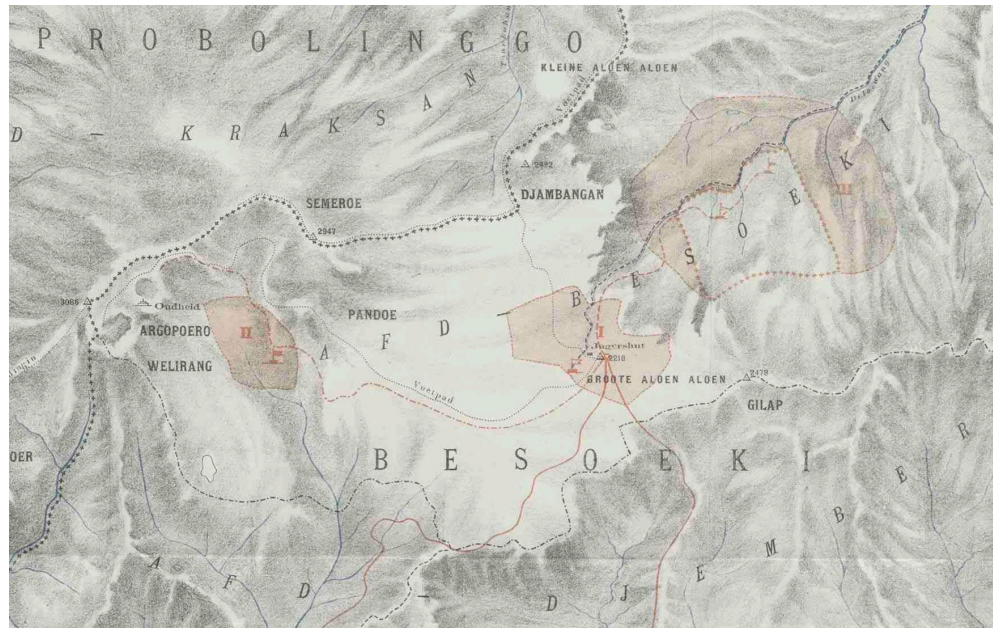


Fig. 4.5. A section of the map detailing Van Gennepe's plans for the Yang Plateau. The map shows how visitors to the plateau would arrive from the south via either of two railroads (solid red lines). The central train station is located in the central plateau (*alun-alun besar*; labeled I) where Van Gennepe envisioned the sanatorium (white flag) and European town. From there one could take a smaller train (dotted red lines) to the western plateau (II), which would be a prime tourist spot with a hotel (red flag), Hindu monuments (labeled "*Oudheid*"), and the Argopuro summit nearby, or to the eastern plateau (III), where in Van Gennepe's vision a mental institution (white flag) and Beriberi hospital (red flag) would arise. The map was an appendix to Van Gennepe's "*De Wenschelijkheid tot Exploitatie van de Hoogvlakte van het Jang-Gebergte in Oost-Java*," *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (1896) 611-644.

Van Gennepe's main goal was the establishment of a European mountain town with a modern sanatorium at its center. To support his argument Van Gennepe referred to the recent work of several European physicians who had emphasized the importance of protecting European bodies from the tropical heat by seeking out cool mountain climates. For instance, he referred to the works British physician Andrew Davidson, the German

⁵⁶ J.L. van Gennepe, *De Hoogvlakte van het Jang-Gebergte op Java*, 1-23 and 46-47. J.L. van Gennepe, "*De Wenschelijkheid tot Exploitatie van de Hoogvlakte van het Jang-Gebergte in Oost-Java*," *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (1896) 611-644. J. Groneman, "*Naar het Jang-gebergte*," *De Locomotief*, Vol. 46, No. 274, 275, 281, 284 and 287 (24 and 25 November, 2, 6 and 9 December 1897).

physician Karl Däubler, and Java's own German-Dutch physician Kohlbrugge, who all emphasized the healing effects of mountain climates in the tropics.⁵⁷ The hill station at the Yang Plateau, Van Gennep argued, should become the place in Java where sick, infirm, and healthy Europeans go to find both relaxation away from the exhausting heat of the lowlands or recovery from tropical diseases. The core of the hill station would comprise a sanatorium for the sick, a hotel for the healthy, and a European town for the elderly and the infirm. All should be constructed in a clearly recognizable European architectural style that was in harmony with the climate and would make people feel at home. This entailed European landscaping, the establishment of a theater for cultural performances, and the option to engage in activities such as hiking or tennis. The hill station would also allow elderly Europeans to retire in the Indies if they chose. In Van Gennep's mind the center of the hill station – the central plateau – should be an exclusively European zone, where unhealthy and older Europeans could be shielded from the tropical environment and the indigenous gaze.⁵⁸

In the same vein, Van Gennep believed that the hill station could also solve the problem of the large Eurasian population living in poverty, disdainfully referred to as paupers, by providing them work in an agricultural colony. According to Van Gennep, the social position of poor Eurasians made it difficult for them to perform manual labor in the lowlands. In colonial society, manual labor was associated with the colonized, while administrative and managerial work was reserved for the colonizers. By removing the

⁵⁷ Andrew Davidson, *Hygiene & Diseases of Warm Climates* (Edinburgh: Pentland, 1893). Karl Däbler, *Die Grundzüge der Tropenhygiene* (Munich: Lehmann, 1895). J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Action du Climat des Tropiques et du Climat D'Altitude sur le Sang de l'Homme," 437-448. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Malaria en hare Genezing te Tosari," 449-477.

⁵⁸ J.L. van Gennep, *De Hoogvlakte van het Jang-Gebergte op Java*. J.L. van Gennep, "De Wenschelijkheid tot Exploitatie van de Hoogvlakte van het Jang-Gebergte," 611-644.

poor Eurasians from the indigenous view, they could, reasoned Van Gennepe, work the fields without feeling humiliated. In addition, the European climate on the Yang Plateau not only provided a healthier climate to work in, but also the opportunity to cultivate European grains and vegetables. A Eurasian agricultural colony would thus simultaneously help solve the challenge that pauperism posed for European prestige while providing Europeans with a healthier and familiar diet. Finally, Van Gennepe's project also included the establishment of a mental institution and Beriberi hospital in the lower regions of the Yang Plateau. The hill station would thus provide the colonial government with the opportunity to remove any signs of European physical weakness – the sick, infirm, elderly, and poor – from colonial society and maintain the health of all its European citizens.⁵⁹

The success of the whole project, Van Gennepe realized, depended on the accessibility of the Yang Plateau. The remote location of the plateau made it almost inevitable that it needed to be connected with the railroad network on Java. Van Gennepe therefore proposed the construction of a railroad or a suspension railway (!) to connect the Yang Plateau directly with either Bangsalsari or Rambipuji to the south, where it could be linked to the larger railroad system that was being developed on Java. In addition, he wanted to have a smaller train to connect the three adjacent plateaus with one another. The European community would also be connected to the lowlands via telegraph and telephone. Even more spectacular was Van Gennepe's proposal to generate hydroelectricity for the hill station – and the trains! – by using the many mountain streams on the Plateau. For Van Gennepe, modern technology was thus essential for

⁵⁹ J.L. van Gennepe, *De Hoogvlakte van het Jang-Gebergte op Java*, 28-35. J.L. van Gennepe, "De Wenschelijkheid tot Exploitatie van de Hoogvlakte van het Jang-Gebergte," 624-625.

ensuring the success of his proposed hill station. It would enable Europeans to enjoy the comforts of the metropole, while at the same time demonstrate Europeans' superiority rooted in scientific and technological prowess.⁶⁰

The arguments that Van Gennep employed in support of the Yang Plateau hill station fell into three broad categories: the absence of a suitable mountain resort in Java, the protection of European prestige, and the financial benefits for the colonial government. According to Van Gennep, all of the existing mountain resorts on Java were either too warm, too humid, or both to serve as a hill station. The one exception was the sanatorium of Tosari (5,600 ft.) on the hills of the Tengger Mountains. However, Tosari was small, inaccessible, had insufficient water supplies and space (due to the hilly terrain) to expand, and had many shortcomings in its organization and design. The establishment of a large hill station above 6,000 feet was thus a necessity. By providing an exclusive European space *outside* of colonial society, the sick, elderly, and poor – the groups undermining European prestige – could be relocated to a safe zone. According to Van Gennep, the colonial government could also expect significant financial profits as the result of the increased usage of the railroads; the sale, lease, or rent of land on the Yang Plateau to Europeans; the increase of tax revenue due to a boost of commercial activities, especially from agricultural developments (i.e. flour factory, brewery); and finally, a decrease in the costs of furlough and repatriation for civil servants and soldiers.⁶¹

Van Gennep's proposal came at the most opportune moment, as the colonial government had shown great interest in the development of mountain resorts in the

⁶⁰ J.L. van Gennep, "De Wenschelijkheid tot Exploitatie van de Hoogvlakte van het Jang-Gebergte," 613-616 and 625.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 625-644.

1890s. It was already in the process of researching a new location for a military convalescence resort, for which it would select Cimahi in 1898. It also subsidized the newly established sanatorium of Tosari on the condition that it reserved several rooms for civil servants. In line with these developments, the government took the Yang Plateau plans seriously. In November 1896, only months after Van Gennep's return to Java, the government appointed a committee explore the Yang Plateau in order to see if the region was in fact suitable for the establishment of a sanatorium and hill station. The committee consisted of Van Gennep, physician P.A. Platteeuw from the department of health, and J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, the acting physician at Tosari. When Platteeuw was detained because of an outbreak of cholera, Kohlbrugge decided to visit the Yang Plateau by himself. After his visit in January 1897, Kohlbrugge advised against the whole enterprise and interestingly even made his objections public before the other committee members had visited the plateau at all. To prevent any further discord, the government added a prominent private physician, J. Groneman of Yogyakarta, to the rump committee. This triumvirate visited the Yang Plateau in October 1897 and quickly after their return delivered a positive assessment. Although the matter was now in the hands of the colonial government, Van Gennep, Groneman and Kohlbrugge engaged in an unfriendly public debate about the advantages and disadvantages about hill stations in general and the plans for the Yang Plateau in particular.⁶²

⁶² In the first public statements by Kohlbrugge and Groneman after their respective returns one can already recognize the roots of an enduring polemic: J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Geografische Beschrijving van het Janggebergte (Argopoero) op Java," *Tijdschrift van het Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Vol. 14 (1897) 695-712. J. Groneman, "Naar het Jang-gebergte," *De Locomotief*, Vol. 46, No. 274, 275, 281, 284 and 287 (24 and 25 November, 2, 6 and 9 December 1897). For an overview of the government appointments: "De Polemiek over de Jang-Hoogvlakte," *De Locomotief*, Vol. 48, No. 208 (9 September 1899).

As the acting physician of Tosari's new sanatorium, which opened in 1892, Kohlbrugge was always going to be a controversial member of the committee that was asked to inspect the Yang Plateau for its suitability as a hill station. While Kohlbrugge was arguably the most experienced physician on the effects of the mountain climate on European constitutions, his position in Tosari could only raise questions about his objectivity with regards to the Yang Plateau. His decision not to wait for his fellow commissioners and the speed with which he publicly rejected the Yang Plateau as a suitable site for a hill station further undermined his credibility. According to Kohlbrugge, Van Gennep's efforts in propagating his proposal, which he called confusing and fanciful, were worthy of a better cause. In his official report, Kohlbrugge could not hide his disdain for civil servants like Van Gennep, as he inferred that European administrators should not meddle in fields they have no knowledge of, like climatology. In essence, Kohlbrugge's report was a comparison of the conditions in Tosari and the Yang Plateau. Clearly, the physician disagreed with Van Gennep's assessment that Tosari was less suited for convalescence than the Yang Plateau. Kohlbrugge even argued that the climate on the plateau was far more humid and the daily temperature swings far greater than in Tosari, making the latter a much healthier place. Not only was the Yang Plateau unsuited for recuperation from many tropical diseases, Kohlbrugge even claimed that the region could only be recommended as a place for Europeans to retire if one wanted to discard these people as quickly as possible.⁶³

⁶³ J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Rapport Betreffende een Geneeskundig-Topografisch en Voorbereidend Climatologisch Onderzoek van de Hoogvlakte van het Janggebergte," *Natuurkundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (1898) 307-347. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Geografische Beschrijving van het Janggebergte (Argopoero) op Java," 695-712.

Kohlbrugge advised the colonial government to refuse to establish the plans for a hill station on the Yang Plateau. In his opinion, it would be much more beneficial to the European community on Java if the government supported the establishment of smaller mountain resorts throughout the island. These could be founded by private entrepreneurs with the aid of small government subsidies, such as the ones granted in the past to sanatoria in Sindanglaya, Sukabumi, and now Tosari. Kohlbrugge also argued that in contrast to British India, the average temperatures on Java were lower, making it less necessary to found British style hill stations or to move over 6,000 feet to find solace from the heat.⁶⁴

After the return of the three other commissioners a very public war of words with Kohlbrugge erupted. The physician from Yogyakarta, Groneman, was an especially fierce defender of Van Gennep's plans. In numerous newspaper articles he repeated all the pros – health arguments, financial arguments, lack of a hill station on Java similar to those in British India – and hammered on his difference of opinion with Kohlbrugge. According to Groneman, the committee strongly disputed Kohlbrugge's claims that the climate on the Yang Plateau was humid and the temperatures too varied. In his opinion, the only way to explain the discrepancy between their respective findings was either a lack of scientific seriousness or malcontent on the part of Kohlbrugge. Eventually, Groneman directly accused Kohlbrugge of trying to protect his personal interest in Tosari, afraid that a hill station on the Yang Plateau would end the sanatorium's

⁶⁴ J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Rapport Betreffende een Geneeskundig-Topografisch en Voorbereidend Climatologisch Onderzoek van de Hoogvlakte van het Janggebergte," 344. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Sanatoria in Nederlandsch Indie," 268.

government subsidy.⁶⁵ Van Gennep made a similar accusation by stating that a physician who has publically praised the positive effects of Java's mountains on Europeans' health and whose responsibility it is to reduce people's suffering, cannot reasonably be opposed to his proposal, unless he intends this project to fail.⁶⁶ In a lecture on sanatoria in the Netherlands Indies in 1899, Kohlbrugge fiercely rejected the accusations of self-interest and proclaimed he would rise above the polemics by no longer participating in them. As was the case in later discussions, Kohlbrugge was far better at doling out criticism than in receiving it.⁶⁷

Nonetheless, the colonial government seemingly sided with Kohlbrugge on the matter of the Yang Plateau. In February 1900, the authorities publicly replied to the committee's findings. Foremost, the Governor-General made it clear that even if the Yang Plateau would be considered the healthiest environment for Europeans on Java, the colonial government had no interest whatsoever in taking on the financial responsibility for such a grand project. Moreover, the colony's highest authority was not convinced that a stay on the plateau could replace a leave to Europe, nor for that matter, that it would

⁶⁵ Many of Groneman's publications on the Yang Plateau were collected in a short publication: J. Groneman, *Op het Jang Gebergte in Oost-Java* (Zutphen: W.J. Thieme en Co., 1902). Some of the newspaper publications: J. Groneman, "Naar het Jang-gebergte," *De Locomotief*, Vol. 46, No. 274, 275, 281, 284 and 287 (24 and 25 November, 2, 6 and 9 December 1897). J. Groneman, "Een en Ander over 't Jang Sanatorium," *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 13, No. 97 (28 March 1898). J. Groneman, "Het Jang Sanatorium," *De Locomotief*, Vol. 47, No. 220, 236, and 246 (27 September, 15 and 27 October 1898). J. Groneman, "Nogmaals de Jang-Hoogvlakten," 336-338.

⁶⁶ J.L. van Gennep, "Opmerkingen naar aanleiding van Dr. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge's 'Geografische Beschrijving van het Janggebergte (Argopoero) op Java'," *Tijdschrift van het Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Vol. 16 (1899) 259-276. A more or less objective observation of the polemics between the Yang Plateau committee members can be found here: C.L. van der Burg, "J.L. van Gennep. Opmerkingen naar aanleiding van Dr. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge's Rapport enz.," *Tijdschrift van het Koninklijk Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, Vol. 17 (1900) 336-338. "Een Sanatorium op Java," *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 4, No. 176 (29 July 1902).

⁶⁷ J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, "Sanatoria in Nederlandsch Indie," 268-272. Kohlbrugge's *Blikken in het Zielenleven der Javaan* (1907) received much criticism from colonial specialists. In this instance too, Kohlbrugge had no problem pointing blame at others, but shying away from engaging with criticism. For instance: C. Snouck Hurgronje, "Blikken in het Zielenleven der Javaan?," 423-447.

save the colonial treasury travel and furlough expenses. The government did offer Van Gennep a substantial annual subsidy of fl. 15,000 guilders, considerably more than the fl. 9,000 that Tosari received annually, if he succeeded in finding private capital to establish a sanatorium on the Yang Plateau.⁶⁸

Since Van Gennep and Groneman could not find any investors on Java, the project seemed to end there. However, by this time, news of the apparent failure of the Yang Plateau plans had reached the Netherlands as well, where some interested financiers had founded the Committee for the Exploitation for the Yang-Plateau in 1902. With the support of both Groneman and Van Gennep, the committee requested to lease the central highland (*alun-alun besar*) of the Yang Plateau, which was granted in 1907 under the condition that the committee would oversee the construction of a sanatorium. Van Gennep still had great plans for the region, but in the end not one of his investors was willing to take a chance on the sanatorium. In 1916, the Committee disbanded itself and sold the lease to B. Ledeboer, who became famous as a conservator of the Yang Plateau environment. This did not mean the end of speculations about the Yang Plateau as a hill station, Van Gennep himself repeated his arguments in 1925 and 1932, but nothing would ever come of it.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ “Een Sanatorium op Java,” *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 4, No. 176 (29 July 1902). “Het Jang-Sanatorium,” *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 18, No. 121 (24 April 1903). “De Exploitatie van het Janplateau,” *Soerabaiasch Handelsblad*, Vol. 55, No. 69 (22 March 1907).

⁶⁹ “De Exploitatie van het Janplateau,” *Soerabaiasch Handelsblad*, Vol. 55, No. 69 (22 March 1907). “Het Jang-Plateau,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 25, No. 33 (9 February 1920). For the speculation on the future of the Yang Plateau after 1916: J.L. van Gennep, “Het Ijang-Plateau; Een Oud Plan, Opnieuw Beschouwd,” *“Indië” Geïllustreerd Tijdschrift voor Nederland en Koloniën*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (15 and 29 April 1925) 29-36 and 46-52. J.L. van Gennep, “Het Jang-Hoogland,” *De Indische Verlofganger*, Vol. 10, No. 24 and 25 (15 and 29 January 1932). ““Het word ernst met den Ijang.” De ontsluiting. Hotelplannen. Indië’s hoogste vliegveld,” *De Indische Courant*, Vol. 14, No. 156 (20 March 1935). “De Yang-plannen,” *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 41, No. 112 (19 May 1939).

The failure of the Yang Plateau hill station to materialize was indicative of the attitude of the colonial government and Dutch colonial society in general towards the principle of the hill station modeled after the British example. The government's rejection of Van Gennep's plan did not mean that the authorities valued Kohlbrugge's meteorological findings over those of the other committee members. In fact, most physicians and experts on Java seemed in concordance with Van Gennep's and Groneman's assessment of the Yang Plateau's climate. However, the report did validate Kohlbrugge's vision on the place of mountain resorts in the Netherlands Indies. By offering private investors subsidies to establish small mountain resorts throughout Java, the colonial government saved itself from the large investment that the construction of a grand hill station would take. In addition, in this manner, Europeans on Java never had to travel too far to reach a place in the Java's hills for convalescence or rejuvenation, a system that was tried and tested by the colonial army for decades. From this perspective, the significant subsidy that the government offered Van Gennep was both a token of goodwill and an indication that it shared his concerns.

European Enclaves in Java's Mountains

In the four decades following the government's rejection of Van Gennep's Yang Plateau proposal, the number of mountain resorts on Java increased significantly. In 1937 the special hotel-issue of the *Travelers Official Information Bureau's* periodical claimed with pride that: "There is no large city on Java without its satellite hill stations, usually within one or two hours motor ride of the centre of the city."⁷⁰ The usage of the term "hill station" is somewhat misleading since these mountain resorts were much smaller than

⁷⁰ "Hotel Number," *Tourism in Netherland India*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (1937).

their British-Indian counterparts. However, the term was familiar throughout the colonial world that referred more to the function of these retreats as enclaves of European civilization than the differences between them. The proliferation of mountain hotels, sanatoria and agricultural colonies represented a scattered version of Van Gennep's ideal; the establishments were founded on Java, but simply not in one single place. However, this new reality was very much in accord with Kohlbrugge's advice to the colonial authorities in 1897. What bound the various establishments together was their intention to create a safe haven for European bodies.



Fig. 4.6. Map of the most important mountain resorts on Java in the period 1900-1942. A star marks the large towns with significant European populations (defined here as more than 3,000 European inhabitants in the 1930 census). The map shows how the distribution of mountain resorts corresponds to the vicinity of large towns as well as the geographic tripartite partition of the island. Thus, the Priangan mountains facilitate Batavia, Buitenzorg, and Bandung; central Java's mountain ranges, including the Dieng Plateau facilitate Semarang and the Principalities; and the Tengger mountains facilitate Surabaya and Malang. Source: Custom map created by the author with *National Geographic's Online Map Maker*.

The growing popularity of mountain resorts in part can be explained by the relatively rapid increase of the European population in the colonies: this officially

recognized social group consisted of approximately 91,100 people in 1900, but by 1940 had expanded to nearly 291,500 souls.⁷¹ This increase was in large part the result of the immigration of European men *and* women who had no intention of retiring or settling down on Java. The acclimatization debate was therefore of the greatest importance, since these people planned on returning to the metropole as healthy Europeans. Whether they believed that Europeans could acclimatize or that they could not, either way the tropical climate was expected to exact a toll, ranging from mere neurasthenia on the one end to physical and cultural degeneration on the other. The preventive cure for either was thought to be regular visits to the cool mountain climate. Popular expressions in Dutch colonial society, such as “getting a cold nose” or “going up” referred to this perceived wisdom.

The Dutch did not just seek protection from the impact of the tropical climate on their physical constitution. The breakthroughs in bioscience and medicine had given rise to the notion that the indigenous people were less civilized, unhygienic, and even inherently different. These beliefs translated into the rejection of cultural accommodation as a means of acclimatization, and instead emphasized the relevance of maintaining a European lifestyle in the colonies. To prevent further cultural and mental degeneration the Dutch tried to reduce the indigenous elements in their daily lives, ranging from people – concubines, nannies, and cooks – to social customs, food, and material culture – architecture, furniture, and dress. Mountain resorts were considered one of the few places where a European climate and lifestyle in the tropics was possible and therefore became essential in cultivating, strengthening, and reproducing European identities. As such,

⁷¹ A. van Marle, “De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië, Iets over Ontstaan en Groei,” *Indonesië*, Vol. 5 (1951) 490.

mountain resorts – by protecting the European body, cultural identity, and mentality – were not only crucial in facilitating, but also in representing the colonial project. By providing a place for the sick to recuperate, the healthy to strengthen their bodies, and the poor and infirm to shelter from the indigenous gaze, the mountain resorts supplied the colony with physically strong and mentally healthy Europeans to advance the colonial project and uphold European prestige.

Technological advancements were intrinsically linked to the development of the mountain retreats that dotted the island. The entry of railroads into Java and the extension of road networks around the turn of the twentieth century were crucial in opening-up Java's interior, and especially its mountainous regions. While the trains connected Java's largest towns with each other, reducing the time of long distance travel, it was the car that truly enabled Europeans to take to the mountains. In 1907, a car dealer invited the editor of a popular weekly to accompany him on a promotional drive from Pasuruan (the nearest train station) to Tosari (see Fig. 4.7 and 4.8). To the editor's amazement, the car transformed the ascent, which used to take a full day on horseback and palanquin, into a pleasurable trip of 75 minutes. The experience made the editor exclaim: "the impossible has proved to be possible: a car without requirements has inaugurated a new era."⁷² In addition to transporting Europeans into the mountains, technology also allowed Europeans to live a modern lifestyle in these isolated regions. The introduction of running

⁷² Consequently, the journey from Surabaya, the largest city nearby, and Tosari was reduced to less than three hours: an hour-and-a-half by train and 75 minutes by car. If one departed from Surabaya in the morning, one would arrive before lunch in Tosari, making it a perfect weekend-destination. M. van Geuns, "De Auto op Java," *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 22 (22 September 1907) 431-437. "Een Herstellingsoord voor Midden-Java," *Het Nieuws voor den Dag van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 18, No. 103-105 (6, 7 and 8 May 1913). H.J. Mook, *Gids voor Tosari en het Tenggergebergte* (Koog aan de Zaan: Firma P. Out, 1916). Johan Koning, "Rust- en Herstellingsoorden op Java: "Nongko Djadjar"," *Panorama Geïllustreerd Weekblad*, Vol. 48, No. 22, 10. C.J. Nauta, "Het Hotelwezen in Indië," *De Zweep*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (6 January 1923).

water, sewage systems (often septic tanks), and electricity (sometimes even hydroelectricity) provided Europeans with the comforts of home.⁷³



Fig. 4.7. In his description of the drive from Pasuruan to Tosari, the author wondered: “Is there nothing impossible in this world?” The advent of the car on Java enabled the Dutch to live a more European lifestyle, while it also represented their superiority over the colonized. In the accompanying picture this contrast becomes strikingly clear. The “modern” Dutch, notice the fancy dresses of the women, pose with their cars (a FIAT and a Spijkerwagen), while the indigenous people were posed sitting on the ground watching these modern marvels. Source: M. van Geuns, “De Auto op Java,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 22 (22 September 1907).

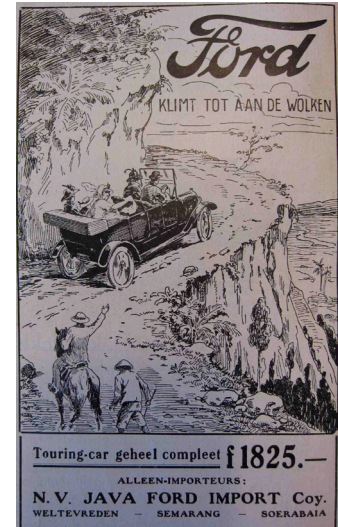


Fig. 4.8. “Ford: Climbs to the Clouds”. The advertisement contrasts the past – man on horseback, native on foot – with the present – the Ford car, carrying fashionably clad Europeans to their mountain destination. Source: *D’Orient*, Vol. 3, No. 19 (10 May 1924).

The rapid expansion of the quality and quantity of mountain resorts on Java occurred, as the Governor-General had indicated to Van Gennep, primarily through private initiatives. The most impressive and illustrative of which was the establishment of the Netherlands Indies Hotel Association (NIHV) in February 1920. The NIHV owned four of the most prestigious mountain hotels in Java and quickly after its founding gained a majority share in two hotels in Yogyakarta. The association had thereby organized itself in such a way that it owned a pair of hotels in the three largest tourist destinations of

⁷³ “Een Herstellingsoord voor Midden-Java,” *Het Nieuws voor den Dag van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 18, No. 103-105 (6, 7 and 8 May 1913). Jan Jochems, “Van Hoog in de Bergen,” *De Zweep*, Vol. 1, No. 41 and 42 (14 and 21 October 1922).

Java: the Sanatorium Ngamplang and Hotel Tjisoeroepan in Garut; Sanatorium Tosari and Hotel Nongkodjadar in the Tengger Mountains; and the Grand Hotel Djokja and Hotel Toegoe in Yogyakarta. All NIHV hotels underwent a major renovation and modernization, providing them with electric lighting, potable tap water, and hot and cold water in the bathrooms. The modernization of the mountain hotels included the further Europeanization of their appearance, the expansion of their European fruit, vegetable, and flower gardens as well as their sports facilities outside, such as tennis courts, swimming pools, and in the case of Hotel Ngamplang, even a golf course. To facilitate travel from the nearest train stations, the NIHV also operated its own car rental company (see Fig. 9).⁷⁴

As a consequence of all its investments, the NIHV did not immediately turn a profit, but it did attract an impressive clientele. During the period 1924-1926, the associations' four mountain hotels annually received 36,250 visitors on average. Considering the size of the European community on Java of approximately 192,571 people in 1930, this was an impressive achievement.⁷⁵ The NIHV also actively promoted its establishments, and Java in general, in the United States and Australia, by offering the benefits of booking vacation itineraries on Java through a single company. Together with the efforts of the official Tourist Bureau, this resulted in about 3,200 foreign tourists annually during the late 1920s. Still, by far the majority of the NIHV's clientele consisted of Europeans who lived on Java. The large number of guests that its four hotels received

⁷⁴ M.A.J. Kelling, "Het Hotelwezen in Ned. Indië," *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (1929). "N.I. Hotelvereniging," *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2 December 1920). "Een Hotel-Kongsie," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 25, No. 6 (8 January 1920). "De Ned. Indische Hotel Vereniging als Bedrijf," *De Indische Courant*, Vol. 2, No. 12 (28 September 1922).

⁷⁵ *Volkstelling 1930, Deel VI: Europeanen in Nederlandsch-Indië* [*Census of 1930 in Netherlands India, Volume VI: Europeans in Netherlands India*] (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1933) 8.

suggests that the visitor total of all mountain resorts on Java must have been significantly higher. This serves not only as an indication of the popularity of mountain resorts, but also of their perceived health benefits and cultural relevancy.⁷⁶ However, the NIHV, as so many other companies, was not resistant to the economic crisis of the 1930s and was forced to file for bankruptcy in September 1932. Most of its hotels would find new owners, but the days of the large hotel association were over.⁷⁷

An advertiser who stated that the Tosari Sanatorium was “one of the few places where climate and lifestyle remind one of the mother country,” succinctly summed up the rationale of the existence of mountain resorts of Java.⁷⁸ The appearance of these hill retreats was crucial in enabling such reminiscences. For instance, the bungalows of Sanatorium of Tosari were often described as Swiss chalets, Sanatorium Garoet as a Swiss mountain village or even a German castle, and Hotel Nongkodjadjar as an English country mansion. In creating a familiar European space in the tropics, the Dutch fell back on architectural styles that they associated with European mountain cultures, especially those of the Alps. In addition to architectural borrowing from Swiss, Germanic, and Italian styles, this was also reflected in hotel names, such as Hotel Villa Dolce (Italian for “Sweet Villa”) and Hotel Beau Séjour (French for “Nice Stay”). Rarely did the Dutch construct mountain resorts in a traditional Dutch style, signifying that in Asia they

⁷⁶ “Nederlandsch-Indische Hotelvereeniging,” *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 43, No. 125 (8 April 1927).

⁷⁷ The NIHV expanded its activities on Java by leasing several hotels run by the State Railways (*Staatsspoorwegen*, hence the hotels were referred to as “S.S.-Hotels”), which approximately at the same time as the NIHV established its own hotel franchise. As a government company, the State Railways’s four hotels could be found in administrative cities, such as Batavia, Buitenzorg, and Cimahi. When the railway company failed to make these hotels profitable, the government decided to lease two of them to the NIHV, the ones in Batavia and Buitenzorg, while closing a third (also in Buitenzorg). The Hotel Association at its peak thus operated eight hotels spread out over Java. “De S.S.-Hotels,” *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 25, No. 175 (31 July 1923). “De Verpachting van de S.S. Hotels,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 30, No. 210 (8 August 1925). “Het Hotelbedrijf past zich aan de gewijzigde omstandigheden aan,” *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 47, No. 33 (9 January 1932). “Het Faillissement der N.I. Hotelvereeniging,” *Soerabaijasch Handelsblad*, Vol. 80, No. 204 (7 September 1932).

⁷⁸ H.J. Mook, *Gids voor Tosari en het Tenggergebergte*, 1.

associated themselves broadly as part of a larger European cultural community (see Fig. 4.10, 4.11, and 4.12).⁷⁹

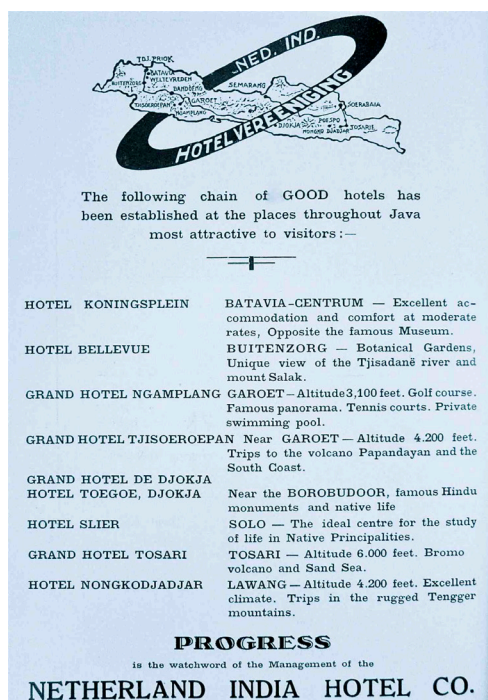


Fig. 4.9: Advertisement for the Netherland India Hotel Co.. Source: "Touring in Netherland India," *Tourism in Netherland India*, Vol. 6, No. 6 (Nov.-Dec. 1931).



Fig. 4.10: Advertisement for Hotel Nongkodjadjjar that emphasizes a European lifestyle centered on sports. *D'Oriënt*, Vol. 17, No. 14, 2 April 1938.

Similar to the appearance of mountain resorts, their interior design and layout were meant to invite and facilitate a European lifestyle. Most hotels had several, if not all, of the following features: a restaurant, a tea room, a conversation- or common room, a music-room, a billiards- or recreation room, and a library. Interestingly, it was in these interior spaces that the Dutch incorporated more distinct references to their own cultural heritage. The Sanatorium Garoet, for example, had a billiards-room decorated in an "Old-Dutch style," which consisted of furniture with thick upholstery, wooden paneling, wallpaper, curtains, and the use of Delftware decoration. Another popular feature in

⁷⁹ Henri Borel, "Een Droom. Uit Tosari," *De Gids*, Vol. 63, 342. Ganesa [Pseudonym.], "TOSARI: Aanteekeningen en Herinneringen van een Ziekteverlofganger. I-VI," *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 23, 27-29, 32-33 (1907). "Een Pracht Sanatorium op Java," *"Indie" Geïllustreerd Weekblad voor Nederland en Koloniën*, Vol. 1, No. 31 (31 October 1917) 488-489. Jan Jochems, "Van Hoog in de Bergen," *De Zweep*, Vol. 1, No. 41 and 42 (14 and 21 October 1922).

common rooms was the installation of a traditional Dutch hearth, which was considered incomplete without Delftware tiles, to recreate the intimacy of a European winter evening (see Fig. 11).⁸⁰

The outdoor facilities served both to maintain the European physical constitution as well as to provide an opportunity for social interaction along bourgeois European lines. The average mountain resort offered at least some of these amenities: tennis courts/lawns, a swimming pool or lake access, a croquet and skittles field, a shooting range, a golf course, horse riding, and a several miles of hiking trails. These facilities reflected new medical beliefs that physical exercise was crucial to maintain one's physical constitution in the tropics, which in turn was intrinsically linked to the European identity.



Fig. 4.11: A typical conversation room at a Dutch mountain resort in Java. The hearth, furniture with thick upholstery, curtains, and carpets, it all served to remind the visitor of home. Source: *Bromo-Hotel Tosari* (Surabaya: Van Dorp & Co., ca. 1925).

⁸⁰ H.J. Mook, *Gids voor Tosari en het Tenggergebergte*, 16. W., "Een Nieuw Berghotel," *Het Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 7, No. 43 (12 February 1911) 719-720. "Het Sanatorium "Garoet" te Ngamplang," *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 13, No. 35 (10 December 1916) 822-824. *Bromo-Hotel Tosari* (Surabaya: Van Dorp & Co., ca. 1925). "Op de Poentjak," *D'Oriënt*, Vol. 15, No. 40 (3 October 1936).

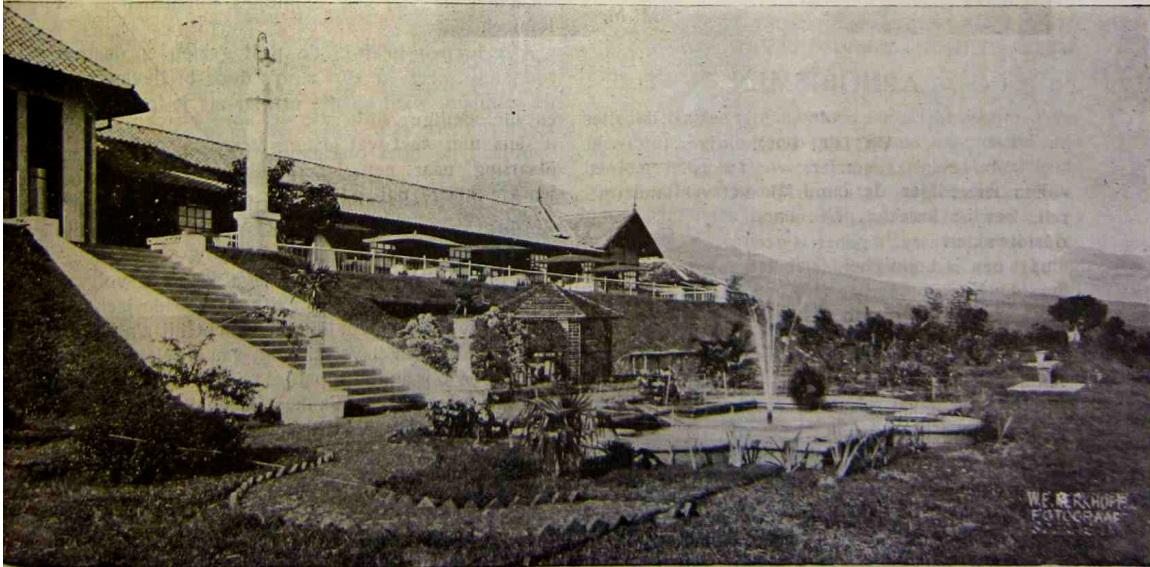


Fig. 4.12: Sanatorium Garoet's architecture reminded many visitors of Switzerland and Germany. Source: *De Reflector*, Vol. 2, No. 45 (10 November 1917).

The landscaping of the resorts' property and interpretation of the natural environment were also crucial in furthering the idyll of a European enclave. According to one author, walking through the obligatory flower garden of a mountain resort would make one forget Rudyard Kipling's (in)famous statement that "East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." Most resorts had planted various flowers that reminded people of Europe on their grounds, such as roses, geraniums, violets, pansies, heliotropes, carnations, clovers, buttercups, daisies, verbenas, and cornflowers. The Dutch were also fascinated by the presence of pine trees, especially the *Cemara* trees indigenous to Southeast Asia, which reminded many of Germany's Black Forest. While pine trees were common at high altitudes, some resorts, such as the Sanatorium Garoet, planted them at lower altitudes to create a seemingly more European environment. Resorts that produced their own dairy products often advertised that they had cattle grazing in green meadows that resembled those in the Netherlands. Equally relevant to this picturesque image of an imagined Dutch landscape was that most of these resorts

produced and cultivated their own dairy products and vegetables from which they served traditional Dutch dishes.⁸¹

Since the eighteenth century the Dutch had experimented with the cultivation of “European” potatoes and vegetables in Java’s mountains. However, it was not until the twentieth century that the cultivation of European vegetables became more relevant to European identity and their development expanded considerably. As part of the disentanglement of centuries of cultural accommodation, the belief took hold that European bodies needed European food to remain healthy in the tropics. Mountain resorts therefore established their own vegetable gardens – cultivating potatoes, cabbages, and onions among other things – and dairy farms – for milk and butter – to provide themselves with the main ingredients of the European diet. Perhaps even more crucial was the preparation of the food served. A true health resort needed a modern European kitchen managed by a European chef. Some hotels even created separate kitchens for the preparation of European dishes and rice-table dishes. Others, like Sanatorium Tosari, got rid of the rice-table altogether. Instead, its guests could savor the dishes conjured up by a European chef from locally grown potatoes and vegetables. The only dishes for which

⁸¹ One advertiser even suggested that the difference in vegetation resembled that between the Dutch and the Javanese: “The jungle of the tropics and the forest of Europe! Feudalism and democracy! There the trees equal and orderly, rising in gradual rows; here a wild, mighty trunk, rises high over its vassals, the wild bushes and weaker trees, while its crown and branches are draped in valuable mosses, ferns, and lianas.” H.J. Mook, *Gids voor Tosari en het Tenggergebergte*, 9. Also see: Henri Borel, “Een Droom. Uit Tosari,” 344. “Het Sanatorium “Garoe” te Ngamplang,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 13, No. 35 (10 December 1916) 822-824. Johan Frans van Bemmelen, *Guide to the Dutch East Indies by invitation of the Koninklyke Paketvaart Maatschappij* (Royal Steam Packet Company) (Batavia/London: G. Kolff and Co./Luzac and Co., 1897) 76-77 and 88-89. “The Mountain Resorts of Java,” *The Java Gazette*, Vol. 1, No. 7 (January 1933) 1-4.

rice was still appropriate were sweet desserts. Although it seems like an oxymoron, one contemporary observer praised Tosari's "tasteful Dutch food."⁸²

The interaction of the climate, the European appearance of the resorts' buildings and terrain, the European interpretation of the mountain environment, and the European food, all worked together to cultivate, maintain, and reproduce a European identity. One author in 1933 described the effects of "going up" as follows:

"The atmosphere in mountain stations over 4000 ft. is delightful, with a sparkling quality to the air which acts like champagne on the jaded spirits. The early mornings are so bracing! Everything is so different from life in the hot towns: waking up under warm blankets, icy cold washing water, a marvelous appetite, a glorious feeling of health and a desire to exert oneself!"⁸³

A visit to the mountains was thus thought to bring about a rejuvenation of body and soul – that is, a recharging of the European element. In the tropics all Europeans suffered from the climate, not just those diagnosed with tropical illnesses, and their identities therefore depended on regular recuperation in the mountains. However, this did place a burden on those Europeans who were unable, most often due to financial limitations, to maintain their bodies and identities. These Europeans, often of Eurasian descent, ran the risk of an accelerated degeneration to the level of the Javanese, which was thought to undermine European prestige. Solutions to these problems were also found in the Java's mountains.

The large Eurasian population on Java was caught in the middle by the new developments that rejected cultural accommodation and encouraged the assumption of

⁸² Ganesa [Pseudonym.], "TOSARI: Aanteekeningen en Herinneringen van een Ziekteverlofganger. I-VI," *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 23, 27-29, 32-33 (1907). H.J. Mook, *Gids voor Tosari en het Tenggergebergte*, 4 and 12. A. Koorevaar, "In en om Java's Paradijs," in *Ibid.*, *De Aarde en Haar Volken* (1907) 385-391. "Het Sanatorium "Garoe" te Ngamplang," *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 13, No. 35 (10 December 1916) 822-824. J.M.B. Gelink, "Het Meer van Tjileuntja," *D'Oriënt*, Vol. 17, No. 26 (25 June 1938). "Indische Boter," *Algemeen Landbouweekblad voor Nederlandsch Indië*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (15 July 1921). "Groenteteelt in den Tengger," *Algemeen Landbouweekblad voor Nederlandsch Indië*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (16 July 1927).

⁸³ "The Mountain Resorts of Java," 4.

European cultures and lifestyles. This especially placed poor Eurasians, often referred to as paupers, in the difficult position of having European status, but not being able to afford what was considered a European standard of living. In the perception of many Europeans these “paupers” were the embodiment of physical and cultural degeneration. The existence of a destitute group of Europeans was simultaneously perceived as a deterrent to acclimatization through cultural accommodation as well as a weakening of European prestige and thus colonial authority in general. To salvage some of this prestige, European middle class goodwill organizations, more so than the government, tried either to slow down the process of degeneration or to remove the paupers from colonial society completely. Not surprisingly, needy children received most of the pity.

Many Dutchmen and women were of the opinion that if European children, especially those of Eurasian descent, were not sent back to Europe for their education, they would acquire characteristics – such as being lazy, slow, careless, and negligent – that were associated with the colonized. To prevent that Eurasian children living in the slums of colonial cities would “pine away and slowly decay, physically and mentally,” several charitable associations were founded that offered these children stays in vacation-camps in Java’s mountains. There they would be well fed, enjoy the fresh air, and flourish under the tender care of wealthy European benefactors. Some of these associations acquired their own buildings in the mountains to facilitate these camps that could be found in resorts near every major city on Java.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ For instance, the *vacantiekolonie* of Batavia was located in Sukabumi, while that of Semarang could be found in Salatiga. Annelieke Dirks’ recent dissertation, titled *For the youth : juvenile delinquency, colonial civil society and the late colonial state in the Netherlands Indies, 1872-1942* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Leiden University, 2011), is the most thorough and informative publication on youth policies in the Netherlands Indies. Primary sources that deal with youth vacations: “Over gezondheids- en vacantiekolonien in Ned.-Indië,” *Bijblad van het Weekblad voor Indië voor Dames*, Vol. 7, No. 46 (5 March 1911) 804-805. “Het Tehuis te Soekaboemi van de Vereeniging “Kinder-Vacantie-Kolonien” te Batavia,” *De Reflector*, Vol. 1,

Java's mountains had more to offer in the fight against pauperism than merely serving as a destination for destitute Eurasian children. The cool mountain climate, fertile soils, and relative isolation also made them a suitable space for the establishment of agricultural colonies for poor Indo-Europeans. The idea to reduce pauperism by turning deprived Eurasians into productive farmers first surfaced in the 1880s. One of the strongest advocates of agricultural colonies was the planter Teun Ottolander, who argued that agricultural colonies could end the development of a class of paupers, which would be "ill-fated and intolerable in a colonial territory." He therefore proposed to break down the racialized dichotomy between large agricultural plantations owned by Europeans and small-scale Javanese farming by encouraging poor Eurasians to become farmers. He believed that the development of a respectable European peasantry in the Indies would reduce the differentiation between Europeans and Eurasians in colonial society. According to Ottolander, the agricultural working conditions at an altitude of 3,000 feet in Java's temperate mountains were very similar to those in the Netherlands. The isolation of the mountains would also provide some isolation from the indigenous gaze, although Ottolander believed that hard work, especially physical work, was nothing to be ashamed of. He therefore called on poor Eurasians to take up a spade and stop dreaming about holding a pen (i.e. to gain a "respectable" administrative position).⁸⁵

Ottolander was certainly not alone in proposing agricultural colonies in Java's hills to counter pauperism and its undermining effects on colonial prestige. In 1895 Van

No. 25 (10 June 1916). "De Vacantiekolonie te Soekaboemi," *De Reflector*, Vol. 2, No. 26 (30 June 1917). "Kinderherstellings- en Vakantiekolonies," *Het Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 16, No. 18 (10 August 1919) 241-242. "De Vacantiekolonie te Salatiga," *Het Indische Leven*, Vol. 1, No. 49 (24 July 1920) 974-975.

⁸⁵ "Europeesche Landbouwkolonies in Indie. Een Utopie?," *Algemeen Landbouwweekblad voor Nederlandsch Indië*, Vol. 16, No. 23-28, 30-32, 34-35 and 37 (December 1931 till March 1932, Bandung) 629-633, 661-664, 688-691, 717-719, 746-749, 770-773, 823-824, 851-853, 878-880, 920-923, 950-952, and 996-997. "De Kleine Landbouw voor Europeanen," *Algemeen Landbouwweekblad voor Nederlandsch Indië*, Vol. 6, No. 41 (7 April 1922).

Gennep proposed the establishment of an agricultural colony on the Yang Plateau and in the 1890s the colonial government even supported two separate experiments with Indo-European agricultural colonies on Java. In 1890 a small colony was established for destitute retired soldiers in Puspo (2,000 ft.), in the Tengger Mountains, where they received 3.5 hectares of land each, furnished homes, and the right to cultivate coffee.⁸⁶ In West-Java the association Soeria Soemirat, which aimed to improve the condition of the Indo-Europeans in the colonies, established its own cooperative agricultural colony in Cibogo (3,500 ft.) near Bandung. The colonists here received less than a hectare of land each and supposedly were guided by an administrator. However, within a decade, both experiments had failed miserably, due to a combination of alcoholism among the colonists, bad administration, the delegation of labor to indigenous people, in part resulting from concerns over European prestige, and the fierce competition with indigenous farmers on the marketplace. The advocates of agricultural colonies were not discouraged, they argued that these failures resulted from a lack of motivation caused by the absence of rights to the land. If the colonists could own the land, or at least lease it for a considerable amount of time, they would be more invested in its cultivation.⁸⁷

The failure of the experiments in Puspo and Cibogo did not mark the end of agricultural colonies on Java, but a rather unruly beginning. For instance, in 1903 the committee that was tasked with studying the condition of the pauper-class in the Indies

⁸⁶ Interestingly, although the agricultural colony in Puspo failed to profitably cultivate coffee, their dairy production was sufficient to provide the nearby Sanatorium Tosari with enough milk. The physician at the Sanatorium, during the years of the experiment Kohlbrugge, in return took care of the health of the colonists. See: "Europeesche Landbouwkolonies in Indie. Een Utopie? Historische Failures," *Algemeen Landbouweekblad voor Nederlandsch Indië*, Vol. 16, No. 26 (24 December 1931).

⁸⁷ H. van Kol, *Uit Onze Koloniën* (Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1903) 596-600 and 708-713. "Europeesche Landbouwkolonies in Indie. Een Utopie? De Agrarische Slagboom," *Algemeen Landbouweekblad voor Nederlandsch Indië*, Vol. 16, No. 26 and 27, (24 and 31 December 1931).

advised that agricultural colonies were among the best ways to reduce pauperism.⁸⁸ This advice, combined with the criticism following the experiments in the 1890s, resulted in new regulations in 1904 that enabled poor Eurasians to lease a maximum of 7 hectares of land for agricultural purposes for a period of 75 years. This was a modification of the 1875 regulations that reserved the right to landownership to the indigenous population.⁸⁹ In between 1904 and 1922 the colonial government granted almost 200 leases to individuals and cooperative associations. Most of these leases were granted in the Priangan Mountains in West-Java, where the majority of Europeans lived. Although the Eurasians farmer faced many obstacles, such as a lack of skills, competition from Javanese farmers, and problems with reaching the marketplace, some succeeded and cultivated European vegetables, wheat and flowers and produced dairy that some many Europeans craved.

By the 1920s the Association for Indo-Europeans (IEV) wanted not only to expand the number of agricultural colonies, but also proposed that Eurasians, as children of the land, should be allowed to own a maximum of 70 hectares of agricultural land. This time, however, there was a strong response from the nationalist movement. The vernacular press was outraged by the hypocrisy of Eurasians, who on the one hand acted like they were superior to the indigenous people, but on the other hand demanded the same privileges. Some journalists suggested that if Eurasians wanted the same rights, they either had to share their own, for instance access to the best education, or accept the

⁸⁸ “Overzicht van het Rapport der Pauperisme-Commissie,” *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (1903) 1040.

⁸⁹ In 1908 the area of the land that could be leased was expanded to 17.7 hectares. In 1905 the government had granted 8 requests for land leases, which had increased to 145 by 1912 and 195 by 1922. The relevant regulations can be found in the *Staatsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië*: 1875 (No. 179); 1904 (No. 326); 1905 (No. 153); and 1908 (No. 263).

duties that came with indigenous status, like feudal services.⁹⁰ One of the staunchest critics was Raden Tjondrokoesoemo, who cynically described the line of reasoning of the IEV as follows: “what is yours, we partly own; but what is ours, is yours to stare at with wide open-mouth.”⁹¹ In various articles, Tjondrokoesoemo defended the Javanese “holy right to the land” and warned that a large Eurasian class of large landowners would throw back the Javanese into slavery.⁹² Tjondrokoesoemo’s words almost landed him in prison, as he was accused of inciting hatred against the Dutch. His aristocratic background (three of his family members were *Bupati*) and clean reputation meant that the court acquitted him.⁹³ Nonetheless, the fierce resistance of the vernacular press resulted in the rejection of the IEV’s proposal that Eurasians could own land and shifted the attention away from Java as the location for agricultural colonies. In the following decade, the IEV established such colonies on Sumatra and New Guinea respectively.

The fierce Javanese protests against Eurasian landownership are illustrative of the growing strength of the nationalist movement and the limits placed on the European incursion on Javanese lands. Similarly, Java’s mountain resorts on Java were far from exclusive spaces for Europeans. A contributor to the internationally oriented *The Java Gazette* warned its readers in 1933 that although designed to resemble a European environment in form and appearance, this “resemblance is only fleeting, for the tropics

⁹⁰ *Boedi Oetomo* (Malay edition) No. 38-39, 28-31 March 1924, *IPO*, No. 15 (1924) 111-112. *Boedi Oetomo* (Malay edition), No. 40-44, 2-11 April 1924, *IPO*, No. 18 (1924) 187-188. *Neratja*, No. 93-97, 19-24 May 1924, *IPO*, No. 22 (1924) 375. *Darmo Kondo*, No. 38, 24 May 1924, *IPO*, No. 23 (1924) 406-407.

⁹¹ *Darmo Kondo*, No. 62, 16 July 1924, *IPO*, No. 31 (1924) 214-216.

⁹² *Darmo Kondo*, No. 59-61, 7-12 July 1924, *IPO*, No. 29 (1924) 105-107. *Boedi Oetomo* (Malay edition) No. 46, 16 April 1924, *IPO*, No. 19 (1924) 215-216. *Boedi Oetomo* (Malay edition) No. 34-36, 19-24 March 1924, *IPO*, No. 14 (1924) 1-3.

⁹³ “Een Persdelict,” *De Indische Courant*, Vol. 4, No. 208 (26 May 1925).

will out, if only in the colour of the natives' skins!"⁹⁴ The illusionary façade of European mountain resorts could thus hardly hide the presence of indigenous elements. Most resorts were established near existing indigenous kampongs, which provided the hotels and sanatoriums with the necessary menial labor and provisions. The presence of servants in the hotel was required for cleaning, laundry services, cooking, dishwashing, serving meals, gardening, carrying luggage, and maintenance duties among others. Of course, a European could perform some of these tasks, for instance that of chef, but most were considered too lowly and humiliating. At least in these mountain resorts European guests did not have to worry about managing these servants, a reprieve from their own households, and could thus more easily ignore their presence. However, with the advent of the nationalist movement, both managing and ignoring hotel servants became much more difficult.⁹⁵

The period 1918-1920, aptly dubbed the "age of strikes" by historian Takashi Shiraishi, witnessed a widespread increase in the self-worth of many indigenous professionals. The national awakening made people aware that colonial exploitation depended on the manipulation of the labor force. This insight and the government's initial policy of benevolent neutrality, resulted in the establishment of a wide range of labor unions, such as those of railroad workers, teachers, pawnshop personnel, typographers, drivers, and many others. These developments did not pass over hotel personnel on Java, who began to realize that they were essential in keeping these establishments operational.

⁹⁴ Njonja Goenoeng [Pseudonym], "The Mountain Resorts of Java," *The Java Gazette*, Vol. 1, No. 7 (January 1933) 3.

⁹⁵ In a description of mountain resort Sindanglaya the author advises the reader to spend some vacation time in this beautiful and healthy environment, enabling them to return to work rejuvenated. Housewives too will enjoy their stay, he continued, because they can forget all about their servants and household and enjoy the red gloss on the cheeks of their children. "Sindanglaya en omstreken," *Het Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 7, No. 17 (14 August 1910) 262-265.

This self-conscious attitude and finally resulted in a several strikes in hotels on Java. For instance, in May 1919 the employees of the Simpang Hotel in Surabaya went on strike over the improper behavior of their European superior. A strike in the large city of Surabaya did not surprise the Dutch; in fact it was considered as part of the larger developments in the Indies at the time. More shocking, however, was the outbreak of a series of strikes in Tosari.⁹⁶

Mountain resorts like Tosari were supposed to be European enclaves devoid of any sign of the nationalist movement that developed in the lowlands. The outbreak of separate strikes in the Sanatorium Tosari and a nearby Hotel Montagne in 1919 therefore caused outrage among the colonial press, while the vernacular press celebrated them. Apparently, the dismissal of an indigenous servant by the European chef at the Sanatorium Tosari resulted in a showing of solidarity by the remaining personnel. In consultation with the sanatorium's administrator, the fired servant was allowed to return to work while the European chef was thanked for his services. The strike that erupted after the visit of Tjokroaminoto in the summer of 1920 made matters even worse, as it established a clear connection between the Sarekat Islam – the nationalist movement and everything it represented – and the people of Java's highlands. It was a subtle reminder that the Dutch might be able to avoid the impact of the tropical climate in the mountains, but no longer that of the national awakening.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ For a discussion of the "age of strike": Takashi Shiraishi Takashi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990). The strike in the Simpang Hotel in Surabaya is described in: *Oetoesan Hindia*, No. 85, 5 May 1919, *IPO*, No. 19 (1919).

⁹⁷ These strikes were reported and discussed in both the vernacular and colonial press: *Oetoesan Hindia*, 3 May 1919, Extra Number. "Een Staking," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 24, No. 184 (9 August 1919). *Oetoesan Hindia*, No. 30, 12 February 1920, *IPO*, No. 7 (1920). "Staking te Tosari," *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 36, No. 362-364 (10-12 July 1920). "Staking," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 25, No. 160 (12 July 1920). *Titir*, No. 3, 21 January 1926, *IPO*, No. 5 (1926) 241.

That Europeans could not remove themselves entirely from the racial hierarchies and exploitative characteristics of colonial society became shockingly apparent in September 1925, when hotel servants in Garut murdered a European woman in cold blood. The victim, Mrs. Campbell-Macfie, the spouse of the Spanish Consul in Sydney, visited the mountain resort of Garut on her vacation itinerary throughout Southeast Asia. When she did not show up for breakfast the morning after her arrival, the director of Hotel Villa Dolce went into her room, where he found the deceased body of Mrs. Cambell-Macfie with numerous deep cuts to her neck and arms. Interestingly, since the victim was not sexually assaulted and nothing appeared to be stolen at first, the colonial press ruled out an indigenous culprit. Instead, it was widely speculated that Mrs. Cambell-Macfie was murdered by a European (who apparently was not seeking lust and booty) as an act of vengeance, a planned murder, perhaps even committed by an assassin. The Hotel Villa Dolce that was named and constructed to evoke an Italian atmosphere seemingly had attracted an Italian vendetta as well. These imaginative and highly racialized speculations in the press quickly turned suspicion towards an indigenous killer when four suitcases and other valuables of the victim were found in a nearby watering hole. The indigenous servants of Hotel Villa Dolce were all interrogated, which indeed led to the arrest of the culprits.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ A selection of the more relevant articles on the Garoet murder case and trial: "Geheimzinnige Misdaad," *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 41, No. 287 (21 September 1925). "De Moord te Garoet. Gebrek aan Pieteit," *De Indische Courant*, Vol. 5, No. 9 (24 September 1925). "De Moord te Garoet," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 30, No. 262 (30 September 1925). "Na den Moord te Garoet," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 30, No. 320 and 321 (27 and 28 November 1925). "De Moord te Garoet," *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 31, No. 50 (26 February 1926). "De Moordzaak te Garoet. De Aanvang der Rechtzitting," *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 42, No. 247 (11 August 1926). "De Moord te Garoet," *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 42, No. 248, 249, 251 and 252 (12, 13, 16 and 17 August 1926). "De Garoetsche Moordzaak," *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 42, No. 317 and 324 (21 and 28 October 1926).

Just as interesting as the racial prejudices surrounding the murder was the history leading up to it. The police investigation brought to light that two indigenous servants of Hotel Villa Dolce and, surprisingly, a British-Indian servant from another establishment, Hotel Papandajan, had murdered Mrs. Campbell-Macfie. The British-Indian servant and one of Hotel Villa Dolce's servants were so-called "*trein-mandoers*", who picked up hotel guests at the train station in Cibatubatu and accompanied them from there in the smaller train to Garut. Apparently, the servant at Hotel Villa Dolce was disgruntled because his base salary was recently cut by the hotel-owner, while the British-Indian man was concerned that Hotel Papandajan was losing the competition with Hotel Villa Dolce, which could cost him his job. They therefore concocted a plan that addressed both of their problems. By murdering and robbing a wealthy guest, apparently Mrs. Campbell-Macfie made that impression, they would financially benefit in the short term, while the blemish of the murder would doom Hotel Villa Dolce, which in turn boded well for Hotel Papandajan. The three culprits finally confessed, although their stories differed on who actually stabbed the victim, and were sentenced to life in prison. Nine years later the "Garuet murder case", as the episode was remembered, served as the premise of a peculiarity in Dutch colonial literature: a detective novel.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ See the previous footnote for information on the murder case. In 1934 a distinctive book, written by J. Palet (a pseudonym for Anita Rambonnet) and titled *The Murder in the Mountain Hotel. An Indies Detective Novel*, was published in Batavia. The book received praise for its unexpected twists and turns and untraditional use of the colonial setting. For instance, there is no mention of *guna-guna* (Javanese superstitious beliefs), vengeful concubines, or dangerous nannies. However, the twists and turns were not so unexpected for readers with any knowledge of the murder of Mrs. Campbell-Macfie. In the book the European woman being murdered was French; the first suspects European (a French man in town, the hotel-owners, other guests); the timeline precisely the same (arrival on Friday, murder during the night, discovery Saturday afternoon); the murder weapon and method similar; and most importantly, in the end, a hotel servant did it. The only original deviation in the story, meant to confuse the reader about the culprit, was that the French woman was part of a drug trafficking organization and the hotel owners were part of its clientele. The work by Anita Rambonnet, she wrote another detective novel (titled "*13*") in 1937, was not spectacular, but both its setting (mountain resorts) and character (detective novels) make them fascinating contributions to Dutch colonial literature. J. Palet, *De Moord in het Berghotel. Een Indische Speurders-*

Two Sides of the Same Coin: Fears of Degeneration and Westernization

During the first decades of the twentieth century both the Dutch and the Javanese became increasingly concerned with identity politics. The rapid changes within colonial society triggered by the Ethical Policy, scientific and technological progress, and developments in the wider world, forced a reconsideration of the colonial relationship as well as a reinvention of colonial identities. The Dutch, as discussed above, redefined themselves by reinterpreting the impact of the tropical climate and of their cultural accommodation to Java on their physical and mental constitutions. Being a colonizer – or modern being – meant to protect ones body from both the heat and the degenerative impact of indigenous peoples and cultures. Simultaneously, the Javanese redefined their own identity against this new colonial modernity, weighing to what extent it could be Westernized without a loss of self. In many ways, these Dutch and Javanese concerns were mirror images of the same process of redefinition in the colonial encounter. Both colonizers and colonized feared a loss of (national/racial/religious) identity due to degeneration or Westernization respectively. Their solutions were similarly sought in changes in morality and lifestyles. Although both processes have received scholarly attention, they have never been treated as two sides of the same coin.

By the end of the nineteenth century only a very limited number of Javanese had received a Western education, let alone been exposed to Western culture. With the onset of the Ethical Policy the educational opportunities quickly increased for the small upper and nascent middle classes of Javanese society. As students they became familiar with the modern Western world, wore European dress, spoke Dutch, adopted Western social

Roman (Batavia: G. Kolff & Co., 1934). For a contemporary review: “Een Oorspronkelijke Detective-Roman,” *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 49, No. 70 (24 February 1934).

behavior, practiced European sports, consumed European food, and even alcoholic beverages. As the Dutch legitimized their colonial authority through their superiority rooted in modernity, this modern lifestyle became even more associated with status and power. Henk Schulte Nordholt has recently suggested that by 1930 the appeal of a modern lifestyle took precedence over nationalist concerns for most middle-class Javanese (2.5% of the population). Moreover, he argued that it was the middle class investment in modernity that facilitated Dutch colonial rule. However, for most Javanese the Western example was not flawless, instead they tried to strike a balance between Western modernity, Javanese cultural traditions, and religion. Roughly three perspectives on Western modernity developed: the first propagated adoption of Western science and technology and rejected the Javanese past; the second wanted to appease Western modernity with Javanese cultural traditions; and the third, Islamic-Reformism, tried to create a distinct Islamic modernity. All perspectives, however, argued for the rejection of certain elements of Western culture that would undermine Javanese identity.¹⁰⁰

During the first decade of the national awakening (1910s) there seemed to be a consensus among Javanese nationalists within Budi Utomo, the Islamic-Reformists in the Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah, and the various youth movements, that to find harmony between Western modernity and Javanese and religious traditions, Javanese intellectual and political development needed to be accompanied by an increased moral consciousness. This was to be achieved by purifying – depending on one’s outlook a

¹⁰⁰ Henk Schulte Nordholt first published his original thesis in 2009: Henk Schulte Nordholt, “Onafhankelijkheid of Moderniteit? Een Geïllustreerde Hypothese,” in Marieke Bloembergen and Remco Raben (ed.), *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief*, 105-120. In 2011 this important contribution also appeared in English: Henk Schulte Nordholt, “Modernity and Cultural Citizenship in the Netherlands Indies: An Illustrated Hypothesis,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Singapore, 2011) 435-457.

cultural or religious process – Javanese society from the vices that pervaded it. Some of these vices, such as alcoholism and the use of opium, were closely associated with colonialism, while others, like gambling, were considered more general weaknesses of the Javanese people.

It was during this period that the most relevant and common vices among the Javanese became popularly known as the “Seven-M’s” (“Mim Pitu” in Javanese). The expression referred to seven vices that all began with the letter “M”: *main* (gambling), *madon* (chase after women; prostitution; adultery), *minum* (alcoholism), *madat* (opium), *maling* (thievery), *mada* (lying), and *mangani* (gluttony). In 1909, it was the Dutch theosophist D. van Hinloopen Labberton who first employed the expression in the context of the national awakening at a gathering of Budi Utomo.¹⁰¹ Although the idiom existed before, it took on a special meaning within the nationalist movement. For instance, the expression was used by Tjokroaminoto at a Sarekat Islam congress in 1913 to explain that becoming a member of his movement meant one had to promise to strive for self-betterment, moderation in behavior, self-education, restraint from criminal activities and lying, and to work hard. Of the seven vices, the Sarekat Islam specifically considered alcoholism, opium, gambling, and prostitution as social evils that needed to be reduced, if not exterminated. In its 1917 program, tackling these vices formed the core of the movement’s social objectives.¹⁰² In addition to these larger organizations, in 1914 a small association named “Mim Pitu” was established in Batavia. It was one of the many

¹⁰¹ “De Theosophie en Boedi-Oetomo,” *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (1909) 534-535. “Toestanden in de Vorstenlanden,” *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (1912) 797-800. *Algemeen Handelsblad*, Vol. 87 (24 April 1914).

¹⁰² *Sarekat Islam Congres*, Vol. 2 (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1 January 1917). A.P.E. Korver, *Sarekat Islam 1912-1916: Opkomst bloei, en structuur van Indonesië’s eerste massabeweging* (Amsterdam; Historisch Seminarium van de Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1982) 49-78.

smaller self-help associations that sprang-up throughout Java in which the members promised to adhere to agreed-upon moral guidelines, in this case the rejection of the seven M's. Interestingly, the seven M's of Budi Utomo, the Sarekat Islam, and Mim Pitu slightly differed at times when different vices that began with the letter "M", such as *misuh* (cursing), and *matenni/modol* (murder), were added and others subtracted.¹⁰³

The various associations within the nascent national movement considered the turn of the century increase of alcohol consumption among the indigenous people of Java as a reflection of the far-reaching Westernization of colonial society. While during the nineteenth century only members of the high Javanese aristocracy surrounded themselves with an aura of authority by dressing, wining, and dining like – and with – the Dutch, the expansion of Western education exposed many indigenous students to Western culture and its vices.¹⁰⁴ At meetings of the Sarekat Islam, for instance, it was commonplace to proclaim that alcoholism was the result of the desire of Western educated natives to imitate Europeans.¹⁰⁵ The negative consequences of alcoholism – ranging from a loss of (ethnic/religious/proto-national) prestige, physical deterioration, financial costs, and abuses – were thus attributed to Western influences. In addition, many believed that the colonial government's official position of disapproval of alcoholism among its subjects was insincere, since it profited financially from the added income from excise and import

¹⁰³ In Salatiga a similar association was founded named "*Insulinde's Dageraad*". Its members declared to live a clean life, to honor women, children and the elderly, as well as reject the consumption of alcohol, opium, and cigarettes. This association was founded by Dutch schoolteachers, but was quickly run by its indigenous members. *Sinar Djawa*, No. 172, (1913), *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 1398. For Mim Pitu see: *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 29, No. 90 (19 March 1914). J.F.H.A. Later, "De Inlandsche Beweging," *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (1916) 922.

¹⁰⁴ M.C. Ricklefs, *Polarizing Javanese society: Islamic, and other visions, c. 1830-1930* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007).

¹⁰⁵ *Oetoesan Hindia*, Extra No. (2 July 1915), *KT*, Vol. 4 (1915) 1393. *Pemberita Betawi*, No. 262 (1 October 1916), *KT*, Vol. 5 (1916) 213.

duties on alcoholic beverages. Put in the words of a contributor to the critical periodical *De Indiër* in 1913:

“First [the Dutch] introduced alcohol to the Indies, profited from its sale, and subsequently [promulgated] circulars and [organized] conferences to fight its presence. And then [they] say that the degenerated native starts drinking in addition to his opium consumption as well? How much profit does the government make with its opium monopoly again?”¹⁰⁶

The fight against the consumption of alcohol and opium in the indigenous world was thus far more, as its broad support within the national movement already suggested, than a religious purification movement. This was an anti-colonial struggle that aimed to liberate the indigenous peoples from the hold of Westernized alcoholism that profited the colonial government.

In contrast to the proliferation of alcoholic beverages, which was considered the result of mimicry and Westernization, the spread of opium, which was imported but not consumed by the Dutch from the seventeenth century onwards, was more directly associated with colonial exploitation. This was not without cause: until 1918 at least 10 percent of the total annual revenue of the Netherlands Indies directly flowed from the government’s sale of opium. As a consequence of the Ethical Policy, in 1910 a more “humanitarian” system of government production and sale of opium, called the *opiumregie*, replaced the financially lucrative opium farms. Supposedly, this would allow the government actively to discourage the use of opium, but the statistics did not back those claims up. A journalist in the vernacular newspaper *Bintang Soerabaja* therefore

¹⁰⁶ “Ardjoena” [Pseudonym], “Ook dat nog,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 6 (27 November 1913) 65-66. The colonial government had considered prohibition in its colonial territories at several times, but interestingly never extended such measures to Java and Madura (it did in some of its outer possessions, like New Guinea and Nias). Obviously, this only resulted in further speculation over the financial relevance of the excise and import duties on alcoholic beverages. However, in contrast to the revenue from the Opium monopoly, the alcohol revenues were relatively insignificant. For a detailed discussion see: A.H.J.G. Walbeehm, “Een Drankverbod voor Nederlandsch-Indië,” *Indisch Genootschap* (16 January 1912) 119-147.

cynically stated that the overhaul of the farm system “was intended to reduce opium consumption, just as the government intended to reduce the number of debtors, travelers, phone customers, and slaughtered animals through its pawnshops, railroads, telephone-company, and slaughter houses.”¹⁰⁷ In the end, it was the emphasis on self-improvement by political and cultural associations such as Budi Utomo, Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah, and Taman Siswa that had drastically reduced the number of opium users by the 1930s, and consequently a large share of colonial revenues.¹⁰⁸

The broad purification movement against the “Seven M’s” was reflective of a crucial phase in the national awakening of what was to become present-day Indonesia. In addition to being religiously and culturally inspired, this movement can foremost be characterized as anti-colonial. As the examples of *minum* (alcoholism) and *madat* (opium) show, these vices were inherently associated with colonial society and Javanese feudalism, on which colonial authority had relied for so long. The fight against these vices was also the first step in redefining what it meant to be a colonial subject, Javanese, Sundanese, or later Indonesian. After establishing control over the “Seven M’s,” the question that remained what other Western influences needed cleansing from new identities. The vernacular press clearly reflected this shift in emphasis from vices in the 1910s to identity-politics in the 1920s. For instance, although most in the nationalist movement agreed on the fight against the seven vices, when it came to identity-politics

¹⁰⁷ *Bintang Soerabaja*, No. 154 (1913), *KT*, Vol. 2 (1913) 1485-1486.

¹⁰⁸ For Budi Utomo’s perspective on opium see: G.A.J. Hazeu to the Governor-General, 30 December 1908, Folder 24, Inventory No. 10, Collection G.A.J. Hazeu, KITLV, Leiden, The Netherlands. For that of the Sarekat Islam: Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, “De Indische Regeering moet zich schamen,” *De Indiër*, Vol. 1, No. 11 (1 January 1914) 130. For the historiography of the opium farm system and opiumregie: J.R., Rush, *Opium to Java: Revenue farming and Chinese enterprise in colonial Indonesia, 1860-1910* (London: 1990). S. Chandra, “What the Numbers Really Tell Us About the Decline of the Opium Regie,” *Indonesia*, Vol. 70 (October 2000) 101-123. J.C. van Ours, “The Price Elasticity of Hard Drugs: The Case of Opium in the Dutch East Indies, 1923-1938,” *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 103, No. 2 (1995) 261-279.

the various associations argued for their favored identity, be it Javanese-nationalist (Budi Utomo; Committee for Javanese Nationalism), Islamic-Reformist (Sarekat Islam; Muhammadiyah; Nahdlatul Ulama), or a modern-secular ideology (PKI; PNI).¹⁰⁹

The extent to which cultural accommodation to the West became problematic was one of the most discussed subjects in the vernacular press during the early 1920s. The underlying fear was that the tendency of the educated Javanese to imitate the Dutch would eventually lead to a societal and individual loss of Self.¹¹⁰ The debate was permeated with platitudes, such as, that the Javanese should only adopt from the West what is useful, or that the Javanese must reject Western materialism and individualism in favor of Eastern spirituality and collectivism.¹¹¹ The underlying anxieties became more concrete in the many discussions of specific examples of Westernization, ranging from the modernization of *hormat* rituals and the question of what to wear, as discussed in the previous chapters, to concerns over language, education, science, technology, architecture, interior design, consumption, the arts, and music. The diverging perspectives of the various currents within the nationalist movement on these specific examples resulted in the creation of competing (national) identities.¹¹²

Strikingly, it was through the discussion of the, mostly negative, effects of Westernization on indigenous women that the acceptable extent of cultural accommodation and the creation of new identities was determined. Although Javanese women did participate in these discussions, especially on topics such as child marriage, polygamy,

¹⁰⁹ The Polarization of Javanese society is the subject of M.C. Ricklefs' wonderful: *Polarizing Javanese Society: Islamic and Other Visions c. 1830-1930*.

¹¹⁰ *Hindia Dipa*, No. 4 (5 September 1921), *IPO*, No. 40 (1921) 83-84.

¹¹¹ For instance, see: *Sinar Hindia*, No. 240 (30 November 1918), *IPO*, No. 48 (1918). *Jong Java*, No. 1 (31 October 1920), *IPO*, No. 46 (1920). Or the articles from Soerya in: *Neratja*, No. 236 (13 December 1920), *IPO*, No. 51 (1920). *Neratja*, No. 98 (28 May 1921), *IPO*, No. 23 (1921) 447.

¹¹² Ki Hadjar Dewantara, "Some Aspects of National Education and the Taman Siswa Institute of Jogjakarta," *Indonesia*, Vol. 4 (October 1967) 152.

and divorce more often than not they were merely the subjects of conversation in support of a larger discourse.¹¹³ Many contributors in the vernacular press, by ascribing Western educated indigenous women with a penchant for European dress, dances like the foxtrot, bicycles, sports as tennis, unaccompanied social engagement with the opposite sex, and criticism of traditional social and marriage customs (like child marriage and polygamy), contrasted the Westernized with a more authentic woman.¹¹⁴ While many of the male contributors had few qualms about adopting European dress, cycling, and playing sports themselves, they argued that the “authentic” indigenous woman – the definition of which depended on their place in the nationalist movement – needed protection, or purging, from all alienating and immoral Western influences, which not only threatened herself, but also her progeny and hence the nation. Women, through their motherhood, thus came to be defined as mothers of the nation and bearers of an authentic national culture, while men were allowed greater liberties in balancing Western influences in their lives.¹¹⁵

This dichotomy was especially apparent in discussions over mixed marriage. It was often suggested that Westernized indigenous women preferred a marriage to European men, whom they believed would be more intellectually understanding and not

¹¹³ For a discussion of women’s associations and the subjects discussed in their periodicals: Cora Vreede-de Stuers, *The Indonesian woman: struggles and achievements* (The Hague: Mouton, 1960).

¹¹⁴ For a selection of vernacular press articles on these topics: *Oetoesan Hindia*, No. 9 (13 January 1921). *Boedi Oetomo* (Malay edition), No. 8 and 9 (19 and 21 January 1921). *IPO*, No. 4 (1921) 45-46. *Panggoegah*, No. 26 and 27 (10 and 20 September 1921), *IPO*, No. 39 (1921) 44-45. *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 31 (11 February 1922), *IPO*, No. 7 (1922) 225. *Darmo Kondo*, No. 46 (14 June 1922), *IPO*, No. 27 (1922) 16-17. *Oetoesan Hindia*, No. 162-167 (19-26 August 1922), *IPO*, No. 36 (1922) 340-341. *Neratja*, No. 164-169 (3-11 September 1923), *IPO*, No. 37 (1923) 474-475.

¹¹⁵ In 1931 the Federation of Indonesian Women’s Associations (*Perikatan Perhimpunan Isteri Indonesia*, short PPII) proclaimed the Indonesian woman as the mother of the nation. Cora Vreede-De Stuers, *The Indonesian Woman*, 91. Elizabeth Martyn, *The Woman’s Movement in Post-Colonial Indonesia*, 30-51. For articles in the vernacular press see: *Kemadjoean Hindia*, No. 20 (27 April 1923), *IPO*, No. 18 (1923) 211. *Kemadjoean Hindia*, No. 39-45 (26 May till 2 June 1923), *IPO*, No. 23 (1923) 416-417. *Persamaan*, No. 12 (20 August 1924), *IPO*, No. 36 (1924) 496.

subject her to the humiliation of polygamy or Islamic marriage customs.¹¹⁶ While marriages between indigenous men and European women were condoned, the unions between indigenous women and European men were fiercely rejected. Interestingly, it was here that the language of racism to indicate difference between the colonizers and colonized was used as well. It was in the discussion of mixed marriage that European racial idioms were turned against the colonizer.

Both the Dutch and Javanese reinterpreted and configured their identities in response and relationship to one another. They often did so in very similar language and along similar lines. Both were obsessed with the possible danger to both the physical and mental bodies. For the Dutch this resulted in the mountain resorts, for the Javanese this became most evident in their discussion of mixed marriages, which has received almost no attention from historians thus far.

Mixed Marriages: Race, Gender, and Colonial Identities

The changing discourse on what it meant to be European in the tropics was mirrored by a Javanese counter-reaction that emphasized the cleansing of the colonized body from colonial vices. This purification movement was not exclusively religious or cultural in nature, but instead reflected a growing general concern about matters of race within the Javanese nationalist movement. These sentiments, inspired by the new colonial discourse, were most clearly reflected in the growing criticism of the custom of concubinage and mixed marriage in the colony. It is not surprising that most studies on these issues have missed the significance of the Javanese response to them, since they have dealt almost exclusively with the European perspective. These studies show how the Dutch came to

¹¹⁶ *Sinar Hindia*, No. 8 (12 January 1921), *IPO*, No. 3 (1921) 10-12.

regard interracial sexual contacts as a threat to white prestige in the colony. The glossing over Javanese opinions is representative of most of the histories of colonialism, which therefore often fail to recognize that these debates took place in a shared colonial space.¹¹⁷

By the turn of the twentieth century, the infusion of the colonial relationship with racism, the promulgation of the Ethical Policy, and the Indonesian national awakening, made it inevitable that interracial relationships would receive fierce scrutiny by colonizers and colonized alike. Until this time, the majority of mixed race relations occurred within the institution of concubinage. From the outset the VOC had limited the immigration of European women to its Asian possessions and only allowed marriages with non-European (converted) Christians. The restrictive conjugal policies of the VOC implicitly encouraged, although never officially condoned, European men to take a slave as their *nyai* (concubine). The institution of concubinage underwent a nominal change when the abolition of slavery in 1860 made the position of the *nyai* voluntary. However, since poor indigenous women had few other options the practice of concubinage continued while *nyais* were referred to as “housekeepers”. By the end of the nineteenth century, approximately 50% of European men cohabitated with a *nyai*, while of all

¹¹⁷ The enormous literature on concubinage and mixed marriage from the European perspective: Laura Ann Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). Frances Gouda, “Nyonyas on the Colonial Divide,” 318-342. Nicole Lucas, “Trouwverbod, Inlandsche Huishoudsters en Europese Vrouwen,” 78-97. Reggie Baay, *De Njai: Het Concubinaat in Nederlands-Indië*. Petra Groen, “Zedelijkheid en Martialiteit: Het Kazerneconcubinaat in Nederlands-Indië rond 1890,” 25-51. Hanneke Ming, “Barracks-Concubinage in the Indies, 1887-1920,” 65-93. Tessel Pollman, “Bruidstraantjes. De Koloniale Roman, de Njai en de Apartheid,” 98-125. Betty de Hart, “‘De verwerpelijste van alle gemengde huwelijken’. De Gemengde Huwelijken Regeling Nederlands-Indie 1898 en de Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap 1892 vergeleken,” 60-81. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, “Marriage, Morality and Modernity: The 1937 Debate on Monogomy,” 187-218.

European marriages on Java only 11% were so-called mixed marriages (on average 87 annually between 1886-1897).¹¹⁸

From the 1880s on, growing concerns over European prestige and degeneration slowly but surely discredited the institution of concubinage. To live outside of marriage with an indigenous woman without any rights – she could be sent away with or without her children at any time – came to be regarded as immoral and indicative of a lack of impiety. It was impossible, the critics argued, that high-ranking civil servants, as representatives of Dutch authority and European civilization, could command respect when living in concubinage. The advantages that used to be attributed to concubinage were either rejected or transferred to the care of European women.¹¹⁹ While the *nyai* used to be thought of as a valuable guide to the indigenous environment, she now was considered a degenerative influence on her “partner,” one who encouraged indigenous items of dress, food, superstitions, and ultimately turned him into a lazy, egocentric, and indifferent person. In addition, the relaxation of conjugal restrictions and the growing presence of European women on Java made it no longer necessary for the *nyai* to serve as a counter to loneliness, boredom, alcoholism, sodomy, prostitution and the spread of venereal diseases among European men.¹²⁰ These growing concerns, the civilizing

¹¹⁸ A. van Marle, “De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië, Iets over Ontstaan en Groei,” 97-121, 314-341, and 481-507. Reggie Baay, *De Njai: Het Concubinaat in Nederlands-Indië*. J.G. Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*.

¹¹⁹ For a description of the seventeenth century advantages of concubinage see: J.G. Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, 15-17. For nineteenth century descriptions: Ann Laura Stoler, “Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in 20th-Century Colonial Cultures,” 634-660. Nicole Lucas, “Trouwverbod, Inlandsche Huishoudsters en Europese Vrouwen,” 78-97.

¹²⁰ “P.,” *Java-Bode*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (3 January 1885). Eckart [Pseudonym for H.E. Steinmetz.], *Indische Brieven aan een Staatsraad* (Haarlem: De Erven F. Bohn, 1888). R.A. van Sandick, “Indische Schetsen. I. Voorheen en Thans”. Adelante [Pseudonym], “Concubinaat bij de ambtenaren van het binnenlandsch bestuur in Nederlandsch-Indië,” *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 2 (1898) 304-314 and 610-617. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, “Prostitutie in Nederlandsch Indië,” *Indisch Genootschap. Verslagen der Algemene Vergaderingen van 8 January 1901-29 May 1905* (19 February 1901) 17-36. R.A. Kern, “De Controleurs

mission rhetoric, and the birth of the nationalist movement led the government to prohibit concubinage in 1904 for all its civil servants and to gradually diminish its presence in the colonial army between 1913-1928. Following the example of the authorities, the occurrence of concubinage in the private sector quickly diminished after 1920.¹²¹

The decrease of concubinage led to an increase in European marriages, mixed marriages, and prostitution. Among the critics of concubinage roughly two positions could be recognized. One emphasized the danger of degeneration and therefore rejected any kind of inter-racial relationships, even between “pure” Europeans and Eurasians. From this viewpoint, there was little difference between concubinage and mixed marriage; both had degenerative influences on the European man as well as his offspring. The other perspective concerned religion and/or moral behavior and stressed the ethical value of marriage over living in sin. Since among Europeans, men outnumbered women till the end of colonial rule, reality was far more complicated.¹²² In practice, both perspectives were reflected in a racialized class hierarchy in which immigrant Europeans (*baren*) constituted the upper class, well-to-do creoles and Eurasians the middle class (*totoks*), and poor Eurasians (*paupers*) the lower class. This hierarchy was a reflection of the perceived level of degeneration of each group. Immigrant Europeans, affluent creoles and Eurasians were expected to marry other, preferably “white”, Europeans, while pauper Eurasians could marry indigenous women without much consequence for their social

en ‘t Concubinaat,” *Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur*, Vol. 28 (1905) 250-252. “Het Westersche Prestige,” *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, Vol. 34, No. 46 (25 February 1929).

¹²¹ Nicole Lucas, “Trouwverbod, Inlandsche Huishoudsters en Europese Vrouwen,” 78-97. Hanneke Ming, “Barracks-Concubinage in the Indies, 1887-1920,” 65-93. Laura Ann Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*. R.A. Kern, “De Kontroleurs en ‘t Concubinaat,” 250-252.

¹²² Adelante [Pseudonym], “Concubinaat bij de ambtenaren van het binnenlandsch bestuur,” 304-314. J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, “Prostitutie in Nederlandsch Indië,” 30-36. Maurits Wagenvoort, *Nederlandsch-Indische Menschen en Dingen* (Amsterdam: H.J.W. Becht, 1910) 90-95. B. van Helsdingen-Schroevens, *De Europeesche Vrouw in Indië* (Baarn: Hollandia Drukkerij, 1914) 6-8.

standing. Consequently, of all European marriages, the percentage of mixed marriages rose from 13% in 1900, 20% in 1925, 27,5% in 1925, before dropping to 20% in 1940.¹²³ Most of these mixed marriages occurred between poor Europeans, often soldiers, and their former concubines.

The number of mixed marriages in the Indies only proliferated following the relaxation of conjugal restrictions in 1848 that no longer defined marital unions as those between Christians and non-Christians, but as between people with a different legal standing. Since the legal division between population groups largely corresponded with ethnicity – i.e. Europeans, Indigenous peoples, and foreign Easterners – the term mixed marriage quickly gained a highly racial connotation. The 1848 regulations were mainly created to allow European men to marry their concubines and acknowledge their children.¹²⁴ However, when towards the end of the nineteenth century several European women and indigenous men engaged in marital unions – on average 3 marriages annually between 1886-1897, the colonial authorities became obsessed with matters of European prestige. Even though most of the women in these marriages supposedly were poor Eurasians, the colonial authorities wanted to create a deterrent for “white” European women from following this example.¹²⁵

This preventive desire resulted in the mixed marriage regulations of 1898, which stipulated that in marriage women, as well as the children that sprang from this union,

¹²³ A. van Marle, “De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië, iets over Ontstaan en Groei,” 322-323. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, “Familie en Liefde. Europese Mannen en Indonesische Vrouwen,” Esther Captain, Marieke Hellevoort, and Marian van der Klein (ed.), *Vertrouwd en Vreemd: Ontmoetingen tussen Nederland, Indië en Indonesië* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000) 45-50.

¹²⁴ The 1848 regulations stipulated that a mixed marriage was only possible if the indigenous half would subject itself to European law beforehand. This left some important questions unanswered, for instance, what if the indigenous partner could not subject her- or himself, or did not want to (i.e. would lose some particular rights, such as to own land), to European law? And what would be the legal status of the children that sprang from these unions? The 1898 marriage regulations resolved these issues.

¹²⁵

followed the legal status of their husband. The reasoning behind this stipulation was that the entity of the family benefited from legal equality. Since in European, Islamic, and Chinese law the husband was considered the patriarch, women and children received his legal status. However, this was only part of the explanation. By calling a mixed marriage for Eurasian women not “annoying”, while that of European women was “most contemptible,” the justification of the marriage law reaffirmed the racial class hierarchy. Essentially, it was implied that since poor Eurasian women were already partly accustomed – degenerated – to indigenous disposition and morality, their immersion in the kampong was not a loss for the European community. By contrast, the loss of European women who did not “straddle the border between the races” to a mixed marriage was revolting and humiliating for all Europeans. The condition that women followed the legal status of their spouses was thus a purposefully designed disincentive to discourage white European women from marrying indigenous men.¹²⁶

The gradual replacement of concubinage by mixed marriages after 1898 was not just the result from European fears of degeneration but was also accelerated by the increased criticism from indigenous social groups. Within the nascent nationalist movement the institution of concubinage was considered humiliating for all indigenous people. During its early years the Sarekat Islam in particular critiqued the prevalence of the nyai in Indies society, which in part encouraged the government to begin the abolition of barracks-concubinage in 1913. At this stage, the main critique of concubinage was that it ran counter to Islamic regulations by enabling people to cohabit outside of marriage. For many, mixed marriages were thus considered as a solution for the degrading position

¹²⁶ J.A. Nederburgh, *Gemengde Huwelijken*. *Staatsblad* 1898 No. 158. *Officieele Bescheiden met Eenige Aanteekeningen* (1899) 9-21. Betty de Hart, “‘De verwerpelijste van alle gemengde huwelijken’,” 60-81. A. van Marle, “De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië,” 314-341.

of the *nyai*. However, some orthodox Muslims within the Sarekat Islam argued that mixed marriage did not solve the problem, as unions between Muslims and Christians were prohibited. Moreover, since the women followed the legal state of her husband, she would most likely adopt his religion as well. Nonetheless, the issues of concubinage and mixed marriages were not urgent enough at this time and received scant attention in the vernacular press. That suddenly changed in 1915.¹²⁷

The engagement of Raden Adjeng Soehito, daughter of the former *Bupati* of Karanganyar, and Hubert Dorren, infantry lieutenant in the colonial army, in 1915 set off a lasting public debate over the institution of mixed marriage. The unprecedented stir in the vernacular press was as much the result of the emergence of identity politics in the nationalist movement as it was of the social background of the bride. Soehito's noble birth made her an unlikely spouse for a European man. Traditionally, aristocratic girls lived in seclusion from the outside world after their 12th birthday until their arranged marriage. That Soehito and Dorren had been able to make each other's acquaintance implied that the former had enjoyed a relatively progressive upbringing. Nonetheless, many journalists considered Soehito's choice for a European over a noble a grave insult to Javanese *adat* (customs), the nobility, and society in general. In addition, these commentators argued that the common Javanese could not distinguish between an engagement/marriage and concubinage in interracial relationships; they would only see "the "impossible" image of a Javanese noble woman taking the place of her many sisters

¹²⁷ "Als de Sarekat Islam naar Deli komt," *De Telegraaf*, Vol. 21, No. 5478 (1 July 1913). *Pantjaran Warta*, No. 258, 259 and 265 (1913), *KT*, Vol. 3 (1913) 225.

who as “housekeeper” [nyai] offered their services to a European.”¹²⁸ Apparently, concubinage and mixed marriages were endurable as long as they involved poor Javanese women, but became unbearable when a noble woman was involved.

The proliferation of opinions on the marriage between Soehito and Dorren was roughly divided between two perspectives: a religious and a progressive one. Those who emphasized the relevance of Islamic faith vehemently opposed any marital union between a European man and indigenous woman based on the conviction that the 1898 stipulation that women followed the legal status of their spouse, implied that women had to renounce their religion as well. Employing the same logic, these critics stated they would have fewer problems with marriages between European women and indigenous men. In contrast, the progressive Javanese took the marriage as an indication that European men, who previously felt too superior to marry Javanese women, but were not ashamed to live with them in concubinage, now dared to display their affection publicly. While the progressives interpreted the engagement as the “fruit of progress,” the Islamic critics dubbed it the “sour fruit of progress.” However, it appeared that the majority of the Javanese considered the marriage as a “dubious sign of the times.” Even most progressives, according to one commentator, who publicly welcomed the marriage, would refuse their own daughter a similar opportunity.¹²⁹

In the following decades the marriage between an aristocratic or Western educated Javanese woman (the two often were interchangeable) and a European man

¹²⁸ Ki Wiroloekito, “Gemengde Huwelijken,” *De Vrouw in Indië. Orgaan voor de Vrouwen in Ned.-Indië. Bijvoegsel van het Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 3, No. 18 (1 May 1915). “Een niet alledaagsche verloving,” *Algemeen Handelsblad*, Vol. 88, No. 28084 (8 June 1915).

¹²⁹ For instance, during the debate in this particular union, the vernacular paper *Kaoem Moeda* propagated the religious perspective, while the progressive point of view was represented in *Sinar Djawa*, No. 134 (1915), *KT*, Vol. 4 (1915) 1238-1239. “Een Opzienbarende Verloving,” *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 30, No. 123 (27 April 1915).

almost always guaranteed a flaring up of the debate over mixed marriages.¹³⁰ The preference for a European instead of a Javanese husband was perceived as a major challenge to Javanese masculinity. The reasons behind Javanese women's choice of a foreign groom became a hotly debated topic between men and women in the vernacular press. As a generalization, most women argued, often in the publications of women's associations, that an explanation could be found in the institution of Javanese marriage, in which women were without any rights and always at risk of child marriage, repudiation and divorce, and polygamy. By marrying a European man, the Javanese woman legally became European and was no longer threatened by these shortcomings. Most men, in contrast, explained their decreased popularity by blaming the Western education of Javanese women, which supposedly impressed European language and culture upon them, resulting in an idealization of and search for chivalrous and gentlemanlike Europeans. While according to some this adulation of everything European would only result in veiled concubinage, others retorted that these women could better relate with men who were their intellectual and progressive equals.¹³¹

¹³⁰ The engagement and ensuing marriage between R.A. Soehito and H.C.M. Dorren was not an isolated incident, but rather the first instance of a mixed marriage that stirred controversy in the vernacular press. In the following years various other mixed marriages between European men and Javanese noble women were criticized. For example the marriages between Raden Adjeng Kadilah (daughter of the *Bupati* of Demak) and Anton J. Burger in 1915; between Raden Adjeng Roesdijah (princess at Yogyakarta's court) and G. Ch. Werner in 1920; between Raden Adjeng Kardjemi Siti Sondari and Ed. Philipp in 1920; and between Raden Adjeng Moersih (princess in the house of Paku Alam) and a European man in 1922. Respectively see: *Kaoem Moeda*, No. 228 (1915), *KT*, Vol. 5 (1916) 86. "Weer een," *De Sumatra Post*, Vol. 17, No. 266 (13 November 1915). "Gemengde Huwelijken," *De Indische Gids*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (1916) 979-980. *Neratja*, 7-9 September 1920, No. 168-170, *IPO*, No. 37 (1920). *Oetoesan Hindia*, 8 September 1920, No. 168, *IPO*, No. 37 (1920). *Oetoesan Hindia*, 22 November 1920, No. 219, *IPO*, No. 48 (1920). *Oetoesan Hindia*, 12 till 19 December 1922, No. 240 till 245, *IPO*, No. 51 (1922) 536.

¹³¹ Cora Vreede-De Stuers, *The Indonesian Woman: Struggles and Achievements*, 61-74. *Pemberita Betawi*, No. 283 (1912-1913), *KT*, Vol. 2 (1912-1913) 595. *Poesaka*, 2 June 1919, No. 9, *IPO*, No. 23 (1919). *Perempoean Bergerak*, 16 December 1919, No. 7, *IPO*, No. 1 (1920). *Padjadjaran*, 25 October 1920, No. 35, *IPO*, No. 43 (1920).

Almost simultaneous to the engagement of Soehito and Dorren, the *Indische Vereeniging*, an association of Indonesian students in the Netherlands, organized a debate on the topic of mixed marriages.¹³² Whether the timing of this event was partly inspired by the ongoing writings in the vernacular press, or that it solely resulted from the experiences of the Indonesian students in the metropole remains unclear. However, in 1914 the parents of Indonesian students in the Netherlands received a letter that stated that after the completion of their studies, every young man does best to take a wife of his own people (*volk*), and thus share his educational experiences, instead of alienating himself by marrying a European woman. The president of the *Indische Vereeniging*, Sam Ratu Langi, felt that his Dutch mentors were forcing him and others to refrain from relations with European women. He parried by arguing that the Indies students came to the Netherlands to gather knowledge in order to forward the development of their homeland. Consequently, if they would fall for a European woman, she must have demonstrated great compassion with their cause. In addition, he presented the educational gap that existed between indigenous boys and girls as an important reason why students, like him, could more easily relate to European women.¹³³

At the debate, Dutch ethical advocate J.H. Abendanon explained that it had been the intention of the letter to elucidate that marriage with an indigenous woman resulted in the sharing and proliferation of the students' knowledge, which would benefit the whole of indigenous society. Moreover, he warned the students that returning with a European

¹³² The *Indische Vereeniging* was founded in 1908. Since its members came from different places throughout the Netherlands Indies, they referred to themselves as "*Indisch*" (stemming from the Indies'). The members of the *Indische Vereeniging* belonged to the Indies' intellectual elite and many played leading roles within the nationalist movement. The politicization of the association was reflected through its successive name-changes, first to *Indonesische Vereeniging* (1922), the first time the term Indonesia was used, and its translation into Malay, *Perhimpunan Indonesia*, in 1924.

¹³³ "Bespreking over Gemengde Huwelijken in de Vergadering der Indische Vereeniging op 30 Juni 1915," *Indische Vereeniging. Voordrachten en Mededeelingen*, No. 10 (Delft, 1916) 56-59.

wife could be interpreted as if they deemed indigenous women too inferior to be their spouses. During the subsequent discussion some agreed with Abendanon by arguing that having a European wife would be counter-productive since the commoners did not trust Europeans, while the direct family would consider her an outsider. Soewardi Suryaningrat added that the contrasts between the spiritual inner being and nationalist feelings of Europeans and the Indies people were too great for mixed marriages to work; unless these were marriages with Indies' born Europeans and Eurasians who better understood the indigenous peoples. Interestingly, some students employed strongly racial and evolutionary language in their rejection or defense of mixed marriages. For instance, one student argued that the Indies blood should remain "pure and unadulterated". Another contended that the degeneration of the Eurasian race stemmed from their descent of mostly poor European men and Javanese women (whom he implicitly equated with prostitutes), which led him to encourage interracial marriages between European and indigenous intellectuals. Remarkably, in contrast with the debate in the vernacular press religion was only peripherally mentioned as a possible obstacle for mixed marriages.¹³⁴

A considerable number of the members of the *Indische Vereeniging* would be transformed from discussants to the discussed, when after the completion of their studies they returned to the Indies with a European fiancée or spouse. In 1919 the marriages of several prominent figures in the nationalist movement with European woman led to yet another round of critical debates in the vernacular press. The former president of the *Indische Vereeniging*, Ratu Langi, who had defended mixed marriages in 1915, arrived in Java in the company of his spouse, Suzanne Houtman, who as a scientist and physician

¹³⁴ "Bespreking over Gemengde Huwelijken in de Vergadering der Indische Vereeniging op 30 Juni 1915," 59-73.

was anything but a typical European woman in the Indies. Soewarno, another former student, returned to Java as a physician together with his wife J.C. van der Kaaden, who was also a physician-scientist. These unions were perceived as threatening by the colonial and vernacular press alike.¹³⁵ Clearly, these highly educated European women were not deterred by the 1898 marriage regulations, nor did the indigenous men refrain from this marriage in favor of sharing their knowledge with a less educated indigenous spouse. Consequently, Europeans and indigenous people alike felt rejected by these unions.¹³⁶

The challenges of being in a mixed marriage can be illustrated by the example of Soetomo, the initiator behind the founding of Budi Utomo, and his wife Everdina Johanna de Graaff-Brüning (fig. 13). Soetomo and De Graaff-Brüning encountered each other in the missionary hospital of Salatiga, where he worked as a dokter djawa and she as a nurse. Here the two fell in love and quickly decided to get married. Although Soetomo offered to request European legal status so that she would not have to revert to indigenous status, Everdina refused, as it would limit him in his work for the national awakening. According to Soetomo's autobiography, their marriage was received scorn from both the colonial and vernacular press. The latter described the marriage as on the one hand a loss of a nationalist and educated Javanese man to Javanese women. On the other hand it emphasized that by turning a European woman Muslim this was a victory for Islam. Worse than the public debate was that Everdina's sister completely broke with

¹³⁵ In addition to Soewarno and Ratu Langi, many other prominent young Indonesians married a European woman, such as: Soetomo, Radjiman, Abdul Rivai, Lukman Djajadiningrat, Tjipto Mangoenkoesomo, Sutan Sjahrir, Noto Soeroto, Sukawati, Surio Santoso, and Djatikoesoemo. A. van Marle, "De Groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië, Iets over Ontstaan en Groei," 336.

¹³⁶ *Oetoesan Hindia*, No. 5, 8 January 1919, *IPO*, No. 2 (1919). *Kawan Kita Jang Toeloes*, No. 9, 7 February 1919, *IPO*, No. 7 (1919). *Neratja*, No. 116, 16 June 1919, *IPO*, No. 25 (1919). "Dr. Mas Soewarno," *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Vol. 34, No. 318 (14 June 1919).

her, resulting in a falling-out that was never reconciled. Soetomo and De Graaff-Brüning remained married and lie buried together on Java.¹³⁷



Fig. 4.13. Dr. Soetomo and his wife Everdina Johanna de Graaff-Brüning. From: Paul W. van der Veur, *Towards a Glorious Indonesia. Reminiscences and Observations of Dr. Soetomo* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1987).

By 1919, and throughout the 1920s, the debate on mixed marriages in the vernacular press became more concerned with questions of race and racial purity. It became commonplace to use phrases as “the betrayal of one’s race”, “the degradation of our race,” and “loyalty to ones race.”¹³⁸ It was particularly popular to discuss matters of race through the purity of blood (*darah*). Mixed marriages, and the Eurasian children these unions produced, were thus discussed in terms of the “contamination of Javanese blood.” The emergence of race in these discussions is unsurprising, although not very often discussed in the academic literature. Indigenous intellectuals, who had studied in the Netherlands, or even those who enjoyed a certain level of education in the Indies,

¹³⁷ Paul W. van der Veur, *Towards a Glorious Indonesia. Reminiscences and Observations of Dr. Soetomo* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1987) 87-98. *Neratja*, No. 4, 7 January 1919, *IPO*, No. 2 (1919).

¹³⁸ *Kawan Kita Jang Toeloes*, No. 9, 7 February 1919, *IPO*, No. 7 (1919). *Poesaka*, No. 9, 2 June 1919, *IPO*, No. 23 (1919). *Djawi Hisworo*, No. 130, 19 November 1919, *IPO*, No. 48 (1919).

inevitably came into contact with European notions of race and the various theoretical discourses that it supported. One might argue that like the adoption of enlightenment discourses and the notion of democracy, the educated and informed Javanese also adopted the discourse of race. This is not to say that they truly bought into the racial discourse, just as some Europeans did not, but it did allow the nationalist leaders to turn the discourse of race against the institution of colonialism itself.

Against the background of rapid transformations within colonial society both the Dutch and the Javanese reinterpreted their own identities in relation to each other. While the Dutch were anxious over the influence of the tropical climate and their socializing with the “natives”, the Javanese were similarly concerned over the extent of their Westernization. Not only were these processes two sides of the same coin, they actually reinforced one another by cultivating difference. By the end of the 1920s, the cultural accommodation that characterized nineteenth century Java appeared like something from a distant past.

Epilogue

Performing Colonialism: Fairs and the Production of Difference

By walking through several large horseshoe shaped bamboo arches, reflecting the Moorish theme, one would enter Surabaya's third annual fair (*Jaarmarkt*) in 1907. The fair, a combination of an indigenous trade- and funfair, was an initiative of the local colonial authorities in 1905 to stimulate the development of the regional artisan industry. A wide variety of indigenous artisans displayed their craftsmanship and sold the products of their labor, while indigenous entertainers presented traditional cultural performances. In addition, there was a marquee for Europeans where alcoholic beverages could be consumed while listening to a *Wiener Damenkapelle*. According to a witty, at least to contemporary standards of humor, report on the fair in a popular European weekly on Java, the fair successfully attracted thousands of visitors from all ethnic and social groups on Java: Arabs, Chinese (with and without pig-tails), Sundanese, Javanese, Madurese, Malay, and naturally (Indo-)Europeans. All promenaded the fairgrounds adorned in their best ethnic dress, seemingly in accordance with the sartorial hierarchy. However, the author was surprised to encounter a considerable number of modernized or "fake Javanese", who were partly clad in European dress. He disdainfully referred to them as *Pithecanthropus Erectus* (Eugene Dubois' "Java Man") and *aapmenschen* (monkey people) dressed-up with a brown slouch on their heads, a dress-shirt with striped tie around their necks, a green waistband, black jacket, golden chain watch, and cheap

payung. Only his *sarong* and smelly *terompahs* (sandals) were deemed authentic (see Fig. 1).¹

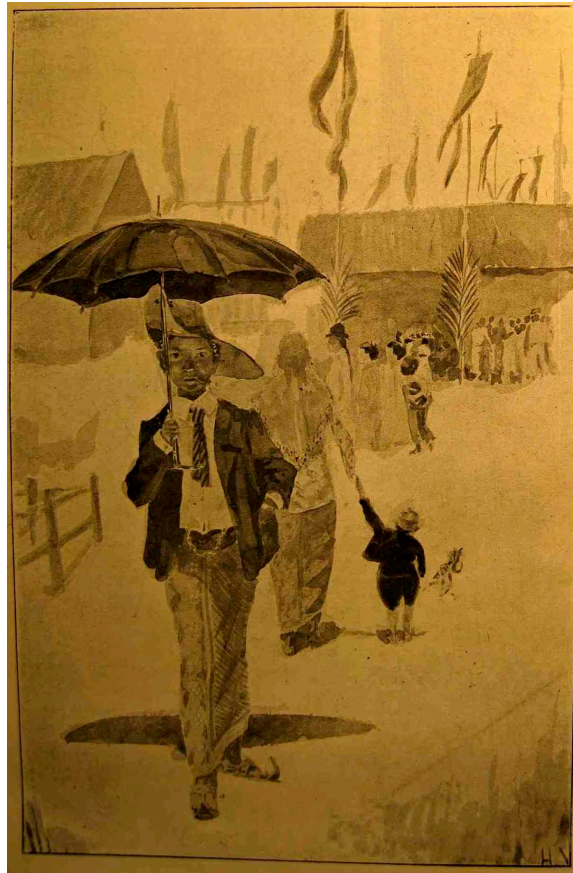


Fig. 5.1: “The Modernized Javanese,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 8 (16 June 1907) 150.

Historians of Dutch colonialism and Indonesia have largely ignored the proliferation of fairs, exhibitions, or *pasar malams* (Javanese nights’ fairs) in twentieth century colonial Java. This is all the more surprising when one takes into account that Batavia’s *Pasar Gambir*, Surabaya’s *Jaarmarkt*, and Bandung’s *Jaarbeurs*, drew hundreds of thousands of visitors from diverse ethnic backgrounds and all walks of life. These fairs were massive sites of interaction in colonial space where all the anxieties that

¹ “Naar de Soerabajasche Jaarmarkt-Tentoonstelling,” *Weekblad voor Indië*, Vol. 4, No. 8 (16 June 1907) 148-152.

existed within colonial society came together. The periodical report of the 1907 fair in Surabaya, for instance, referred to the Dutch civilizing mission, the Javanese contestation of the sartorial hierarchy as well as an indigenous fascination with Westernization, a normalization of the language of evolutionary racism, and ethnically segregated fairgrounds. Almost all other anxieties that have been discussed in this dissertation would also be present at these fairs, such as confrontations over social etiquette, concerns over hygiene, morality, and physical constitutions, contrasting architectural styles, and different patterns of food consumption.

Java's colonial fairs were organized and orchestrated by the colonial authorities and consequently reflected the character of the colonial relationship and its legitimization. It is my contention that these fairs can be interpreted as stages on which colonialism was performed. The architecture of the buildings, the design of the fairgrounds, the presence of a plethora of indigenous and Western merchandise, and the appearance of the visitors themselves were all part of the crucial decor. These microcosms of colonial society were crucial in striving for twentieth century colonial cultural hegemony. Here the Dutch presented themselves as developmental guides, the harbingers of modernity, and developers of technological and scientific advantages demonstrating their supposed superiority and legitimizing their colonial domination. It was thus a performance in contrasts: the modern Dutch versus the backward and feudal Javanese. However, the tone and emphasis of this hegemonic discourse changed considerably over time. While at first the developmental aspect was stressed, by the 1920s the Dutch accent on their modernity had resulted in far greater segregation at these fairs than before.

The emergence of large fairs in colonial Java corresponded with the implementation of the civilizing mission ideology. The committee that studied the declining welfare of the native population of Java and Madura, a prestigious representative institution of the Ethical Policy, in 1904 advised that to stimulate indigenous artisan industry the government should encourage the organization of annual fairs. These events would allow artisans access to larger markets to sell their wares, gain a larger clientele, compare their work with that others, and as a result improve their overall business opportunities. The colonial authorities, it was advised, could facilitate this development by offering artisans free transportation to and exhibition stands at these fairs. Finally, the committee believed that by combining the exhibition of indigenous arts and crafts with entertainment, a larger number of visitors could be attracted. In essence, what the proposal came down to, was that towns would transform their *pasar malams*, traditional night fairs, best described as funfairs, into a mixed trade-fair.²

The towns to premiere the organization of these combined trade- and funfairs were Batavia and Surabaya. In 1904, Batavia organized its first *Pasar Gambir* (a *pasar* is a market, while Gambir referred to its location, the present Merdeka square) with the objective of “promoting indigenous trade and industry.” Surabaya followed suit with its *Jaarmarkt* (annual fair) in 1905 with which it aimed to expose those who were yet unfamiliar to indigenous craftsmanship and their products, to create a larger market for indigenous artisans to sell their products, and to encourage them to work more regularly. Both fairs experimented with the creation of an indigenous kampong where artisans

² *Rapport van den Directeur van Onderwijs, Eeredienst en Nijverheid Betreffende de Maatregelen in het Belang van den Inlandsche Nijverheid op Java en Madoera in Verband met de door het Moederland voor dit Doel Beschikbaar te Stellen Fondsen* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1904). “Tentoonstellingen, jaarmarkten en pasar’s,” *Onderzoek naar de Mindere Welvaart der Inlandsche Bevolking op Java en Madoera, Vol. XI: Voorstellen en Besluiten der Welvaartskommissie in 1914* (Batavia: Drukkerij “Papyrus”, 1914).

would not only sell their wares, but also show off their craftsmanship. Visitors could thus admire *batik*-painting, -stamping, and -waxing, woodworking, weaving, bamboo plaiting, rattan weaving, gold- and silversmiths, ivory turning, horn-, bone-, and turtle-cutters, stone-cutters, tanners, and pottery-bakers. However, already in 1908 Batavia's *Pasar Gambir* could not manage its budget and had to cancel its "*kampung kerajinan*" (crafts village), after which its fair reverted to its more general objective of entertainment. In contrast, Surabaya's fair and its "*kampung tukang*" (artisan village) were a great success, and flourished till 1915. By that year, however, the specter of World War I prevented any fairs from being organized for some time.³

The resumption of Java's annual fairs in the early 1920s corresponded with a significant change in their character; now the objective was to emphasize Western superiority and prioritize European commercial exploitation over indigenous economic development. Of the three largest fairs on Java (Bandung premiered its *Jaarbeus* in 1919, while Surabaya resumed its *Jaarmarkt* in 1923) it was the colonial capital's *Pasar Gambir* that established itself as the ultimate colonial fair from 1921 onwards. The *Pasar Gambir* became renowned for the elaborate design of its temporary buildings, which drew architectural inspiration from Java, Sumatra, Malaya, and China, in combination with Western styles, such as Art Deco and Modernism. The result was not a simple imitation of one architectural type, but rather the creation of an Oriental "fairy-tale" setting. Its temporary bamboo and palm leaf buildings were brightly painted and decorated with thousands of electric lights, making the fairgrounds a magnificent sight to

³ *Verslag van de Eerste Tentoonstelling-Jaarmarkt te Soerabaja* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1906). *Verslag Nopens De Pasar Gambir Gehouden Op Het Koningsplein Te Weltevreden Van 28 Augustus - 2 September 1906* (1906). See the excellent book by Kees van Dijk on the impact of World War I on colonial society: *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War, 1914-1918*.

behold at day and at night. The illuminative ornamentation of the Oriental buildings reflected the Dutch understanding of the colonial relationship; through the enlightened example of the Dutch even underdeveloped Java could, in time, achieve modernity.⁴

By employing material culture and outward appearance, the fairs in a highly visual manner contrasted Western modernity with indigenous backwardness to legitimize colonial authority. The indigenous entertainments and exhibitions that predominated fairs prior to World War I were largely replaced by their Western counterparts. For instance, all fairs had several movie theaters, showing Hollywood's latest productions, and stages where one could listen or dance to Western music, varying from classical to jazz. Entertainment with a competitive character, such as dance contests (i.e. foxtrot and waltz), automobile- and motorcycle races, and sports (soccer, field hockey, baseball, and track), were among the more popular attractions. Meanwhile, Western import companies rented the majority of the exhibition stands to advertise their merchandise, ranging from automobiles, gas stoves, bicycles, cameras, telephones, electric machinery, as well as the latest fashion, alcoholic beverages, cigarettes and ice-cream. Visitors could also enjoy typical Dutch fare, a rarity only a decade before, at the more exclusive restaurants, such as pickled herring, *rolmops* (pickled herring rolled around savory filling), *spekbokking* (cold smoked herring), mackerel, mussels, Russian salad, Dutch cold cuts, *croket* (croquette), and sausage rolls.⁵

⁴ The most informative contemporary articles on the colonial fairs are: M.A.J. Kelling, "Het Jaarbeurswezen in Nederlandsch-Indië," *Koloniale Studiën*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1925) 210-242. G.J. Dijkerman, "Het Jaarmarktwezen in Nederlandsch-Indië," *Koloniale Studiën*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (1927) 121-152. An interesting article about the main architect of the *Pasar Gambir* for over a decade: Van den Eeckhout, "De Tentoonstellings-Architect van Batavia," *Elsevier's Geïllustreerd Maandschrift*, Vol. 44, No. 87 (January-June 1934).

⁵ For an overview of the program and entertainment at the Batavia's *Pasar Gambir*, see the various program descriptions: *Programma van den Pasar Gambir*, 1923-1933.

Whereas all Dutch contributions to the fair emphasized Western modernity, the indigenous entertainments and exhibitions were rooted in Java's past. Although these sections had become relatively small compared to their early twentieth century equivalents, all the major forms of indigenous craftsmanship could be admired, such as *batik* and the creation of *wayang* puppets. In addition, several music – *gamelan* and *angklung* – and dance performances – *ronggengs* and *topengs* – occurred throughout the day. However, it should be remembered that the colonial fairs represented the indigenous peoples and their cultures as seen through the eyes of the colonizers. The contrast between, on the one hand, Western ice cream, jazz-music, and Hollywood films, and on the other hand *nasi goreng* (fried rice), gamelan-music, and *wayang*-performances, was intentionally produced. The implied message behind this contrast was straightforward, it signified to the indigenous observer what they were, primitive, and what they could become, modern.⁶

The colonial fairs also exposed the European anxieties and uncertainties that had percolated throughout colonial society since the turn of the century. The exhibitions at the fair demonstrated that a European lifestyle in a tropical climate was possible, especially now that modern technology offered a helping hand. Simultaneously, indigenous society and culture were depicted as exotic, not as something that needed to be imitated to further one's acclimation. This differentiation was, perhaps, most clearly reflected in the recurring hygienic exhibition at the *Pasar Gambir*, where the Dutch demonstrated the great strides they had made in improving the sanitary and hygienic conditions of the natives in the colony. In addition, the *Bureau voor Volkslectuur* (government agency that published informative literature for the indigenous population) provided indigenous

⁶ *Programma van den Pasar Gambir*, 1923-1933.

visitors with pamphlets on how to purify water, prevent the outbreak of diseases, and take care of one's personal hygiene. Fundraisers to send poor Eurasian children to summer camps in the Java's mountains to recuperate from the tropical climate and indigenous influences were another indication of the growing concerns over European prestige.⁷

The increased segregation of colonial society, due to growing concerns over European prestige and identity, was mirrored at the colonial fairs. For Europeans and non-Europeans there were segregated restrooms, dining facilities, movie-theaters, parties (such as bal-masques), and seating arrangements at sports events. Moreover, the sports-events themselves were differentiated based on ethnicity as well, which meant, for instance, that there were two soccer tournaments each year. Although the situation was akin to an *apartheid*-regime, the key difference was that segregation was not based on skin color alone. An educated and affluent Javanese clad in a European suit and fluent in Dutch could, if he wanted, attend most European entertainments. Nonetheless, the increased segregation of colonial society in general, and the fairs in particular, drew fierce criticism from the nationalist movement and vernacular press, which argued that the Dutch were "whitening" the colonial elite. In 1925, the news that a "municipal" swimming pool was only accessible to Europeans made the vernacular newspaper *Hindia Baroe* even call for a boycott, that never transpired, of the *Pasar Gambir*.⁸

The colonial fairs were also interpreted, especially by the more political elements in the nationalist movement, as yet another way in which the Dutch were manipulating and conquering Javanese culture and society. The replacement of the traditional Javanese *pasar malam* with colonial fairs was considered to benefit only the colonizer not the

⁷ *Programma van den Pasar Gambir*, 1923-1933.

⁸ *Hindia Baroe*, No. 110, 20 May 1925, *IPO*, No. 22 (1925) 380-381. *Hindia Baroe*, No. 130, 15 June 1925, No. 25 (1925) 522.

colonized. While the original intent of Ethical Policy protagonists to promote Java's culture, lifestyle, and economy was acknowledged, these progressive men lost control over the fairs, just as they did over colonial policy in general, which resulted in the predominance of conservative European merchants and importers. This was reflected, according to an article in 1928, in the introduction of entrance fees and rent for exhibition stands for everybody. As a consequence, the poor indigenous artisans could only afford a stand at the dark fringes of the fairgrounds, hardly able to compete with the European stands basking in electric light in the center. Moreover, the abundance of European imported merchandise made it almost impossible for the indigenous arts and crafts to be sold at a profit. It was clear that the colonial fairs by the 1920s had moved away from their once noble civilizing objectives.⁹

In the twentieth century colonial fairs thus changed from being an instrument of the Ethical Policy to one that supported the reactionary movement of the 1920s and 1930s. The fairs emphasized and made visible the differences between the modern Dutch and primitive Javanese. In this manner the Dutch legitimized their continued colonial dominance, the exploitation of the Javanese, and the increased segregation of colonial society. The indigenous peoples were simultaneously confronted with their past and possible future. Consequently, modernity and progress became the keywords of the new colonial hegemonic ideology, which was, as has been suggested by Henk Schulte Northolt, not without its successes. A large part of the nascent indigenous middle class

⁹ The story of J.E. Jasper, a Dutch civil servant, is worth mentioning in this context. As a representative of the civilizing mission ideology, Jasper had been the driving force behind the organization of Surabaya's *Jaarmarkt* at the beginning of the twentieth century. By the time the *Jaarmarkt* resumed in 1923, Jasper was transferred to another post. However, when he found out that the fair now privileged European economic interests, he took the initiative of organizing a *Jaarmarkt* according to Ethical principles in Yogyakarta. "Het Jaarmarktwezen," *Timboel*, Vol. 2, No. 15 (1928) 225-227.

bought into the Dutch hegemonic ideal, especially its materialism and individualism. However, even though coercive apparatus of the colonial state was operating at full force by this time, there were still cultural counter-movements to be found. For instance, the Java Institute (1919) organized its own fairs according to more traditional Javanese methods, while other associations, like Taman Siswa and Muhammadiyah, had created their own educational systems to educate children outside the reach of the colonial state. As a result of strong political coercion, the 1930s became a period in which open political discontent was almost impossible, making cultural contestation an important alternative. Consequently, the modern colonial hegemonic ideology was far less pervasive and accepted than its nineteenth century predecessor. The crisis created by the ambivalent hegemony of the colonial authorities was thus never truly resolved.¹⁰

¹⁰ Henk Schulte Nordholt, "Modernity and Cultural Citizenship in the Netherlands Indies: An Illustrated Hypothesis," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (October 2011) 435-457.

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