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FLUID MOBILITY: GLOBAL MARITIME NETWORKS

AND THE DUTCH EMPIRE, 1918-1942

by

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A Dissertation submitted to the

Graduate School-New Brunswick

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Program in History

written under the direction of

Professor Bonnie Smith

and approved by

New Brunswick, New Jersey

May, 2011

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Fluid Mobility: Global Maritime Networks and the Dutch Empire, 1918-1942

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This dissertation explores how Dutch anxieties over the loss of imperial hegemony in Southeast Asia evolved into a transnational and transoceanic project of colonial control during a time of increasing political unrest and rapid cultural change within the Netherlands East Indies. The maritime world became a contested arena during the interwar years where the tensions of empire comingled with the liberating and transgressive possibilities of oceanic travel. Shipping companies enforced racial, class, gender, and religious hierarchies among a fluidly mobile population of increasingly resistant and outspoken colonial subjects. Dutch shipping companies used segregated and highly policed onboard spaces as colonial classrooms to instill the proper behavior expected of both colonial subjects and European travelers once ashore. The colonial government depended on maritime businesses to control the flow of anti-Western and anti-colonial ideas such as pan-Islamism and Communism across its colonial borders. Dutch Consulates in port cities such as Jeddah and Shanghai completed these transnational surveillance networks by collecting information on suspicious persons including Indonesian hajjis studying in Mecca and Cairo and seamen moving between

Europe, China, and the Netherlands East Indies. This dissertation reveals the unique and vital role shipping companies played in expanding colonial politics, culture, and society across transoceanic spaces, reconceptualizing our geographic understanding of empire as inhabiting the vast overlooked spaces between metropole and colony.

Acknowledgements

I have been lucky enough to experience the support and friendship of many special people throughout my years of graduate study. First, I would like to thank all my professors at Rutgers who have helped shape me as a historian. My advisor Bonnie Smith is an inspiration to me both academically and personally and I am grateful to her for her guidance, knowledge, and encouragement. My dissertation committee members, Michael Adas, Matt Matsuda, and Frances Gouda, have all greatly impacted my approach to history and I thank them immensely for their input on this project. A year of funding from the Fulbright IIE helped make a year of research in the Netherlands possible, along with a year of fellowship from the Rutgers History Department. I would also like to thank all the archivists and staff where I conducted research. Elena Glasberg read through many early drafts. My undergraduate professors at Bard College, Alice Stroup, Tabetha Ewing, and John Fout, originally inspired me to explore my passion for history.

A very special thanks goes to my wonderful friends from around the world. Thank you to my fellow graduate students at Rutgers who created a stimulating and vibrant learning environment, especially Kate Burlingham, Laurie Marhoefer, Rachel Schnepfer, Cynthia Kreisel, Marc Matera, Andrew Daily, Pam Epstein, and Jennifer Miller. In the United States, I would like to thank Iris Cohen, Rachel Blackwell, Becca Cohen, Alexis Agathocleous, Andrew Hiller, Dan D'Oca, Susanna Welbourne, Taylor Strong, Jeanne Vaccaro, Charlotte Sims, Timothy Ryan Olson, Tyler Ferreira, Rachel Blaustein, Alison Fensterstock, and Zak Vreeland. In Australia, I would like to thank David Gonzalez and Max Coffman. In the Netherlands, I would like to thank Bianca

Moerel, Lauren Evans, Ulla Valk, Louise Waterfield, Liz Bostock, Margo van de Linde, Erin Woshinsky, Raoul Dumas, Steve Malenka, Servio Switzer, Jennifer Lyon Bell, and Nina Siegal. Caragh Cuddihy deserves an honorary Ph.D. for always bringing a smile to my face and a song to my heart during all the sleepless nights of writing and all the days in between.

Finally, I would like to thank my mother Judith Alexanderson. Without her support over the entirety of my life, I would not be the person I am today. She has always encouraged me to follow my dreams and has helped make my intellectual and personal aspirations a reality. This dissertation is dedicated to her.

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List of Abbreviations

ARD	Algemeene Recherche Dienst
B&S	Butterfield & Swire
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CID	Criminal Intelligence Department
CMCS	Chinese Maritime Customs Service
CSU	Chinese Seamen's Union
<i>f</i>	Guilders
FCP	French Concession Police
GG	Gouverneur-Generaal
GMD	Guomindang
KPM	Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij
KUTV	Communist University of the Toilers of the East
JCJL	Java-China-Japan Lijn
MS	Motorship
NEI	Netherlands East Indies
PH	Penoeloeng Hadji
PID	Politieke Inlichtingendienst
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia
RL	N.V. Rotterdamsche Lloyd
SMN	Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland
SMO	Nederlandsche Stoomvaart Maatschappij Oceaan
SMP	Shanghai Municipal Police
SS	Steamship
VOC	Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie

Introduction

Water 360°: The World Ocean

[I]f we think, after all, that the boat is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack, from brothel to brothel, it goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens, you will understand why the boat has not only been for our civilization, from the sixteenth century until the present, the great instrument of economic development . . . but has been simultaneously the greatest reserve of the imagination. The ship is the heterotopia par excellence. In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates.

-Michel Foucault¹

Over the past two decades, the “oceanic turn” or “new thalassology” has supported the idea that “oceans matter” and historians have subsequently transformed the sea from a “non-place” that divides people, places, and things, to a connective space that is itself worthy of historical investigation.² The fluidity of oceans calls for a global perspective and ocean theories like Greg Denning’s “theater of the sea” and Eric Tagliacozzo’s “urban ocean” are examples of the transnational perspectives used to analyze oceans, seas, and waterways.³ For colonial historians, oceans can also change our understandings of global networks of connectivity, our geographic concepts of

¹ Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” *Diacritics*, xvi (1986): 27.

² From the Greek *thalassa* or “sea.” Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, and Kären Wigen, *Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007), 3, Bernhard Klein and Gesa Mackenthun, eds., *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 3.

³ Greg Denning, “Deep Times, Deep Spaces: Civilizing the Sea,” in Klein and Mackenthun, “*Sea Changes*”, Eric Tagliacozzo, “An Urban Ocean: Notes on the Historical Evolution of Coastal Cities in Greater Southeast Asia,” *Journal of Urban History*, 33 (2007): 914.

borders and horizons, and subvert our notions of imperial hierarchies of power.⁴

Understanding oceans as vibrant living spaces has provided historians with a way to transcend spatial and temporal categories and maritime worlds provide a tool to dive deeper into colonial history.⁵

The ship plays a fundamental role in thinking through the maritime and as Michel Foucault suggests, the ship is a perfect heterotopia that allows simultaneous real and mythic contestation of space.⁶ While ships themselves are contained spaces, they also surpass national borders by moving through global seas, a spatial combination that allows peer communities to develop onboard that transcend national, cultural and linguistic barriers.⁷ At the same time, Dutch colonial ships were highly controlled and policed spaces where colonial authorities sought to limit the interconnectivity of societies onboard. The myth/reality dichotomy is representative of the problematic spatiality onboard ships where accepted terrestrial boundaries were simultaneously transgressed and reinforced. Within interwar Dutch empire, ships were highly contested spaces due to the reworking of travelers' and workers' political, racial, class, religious, and gender identities as they moved along global maritime networks.⁸

This dissertation engages with new thasasslogy and maritime history by investigating the maritime world of Dutch empire during the 1920's and 30's. Dutch

⁴ Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, "The Mediterranean and 'the New Thalassology'," *The American Historical Review*, 111, no. 3 (2006):723, Raymond Grew, "Expanding Worlds of World History," *The Journal of Modern History*, 78 (2006): 882.

⁵ Heather Sutherland, "Southeast Asian History and the Mediterranean Analogy" *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 34, no.1 (2003): 8.

⁶ Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.

⁷ Maria Borovnik, "Seafarers' 'Maritime Culture' and the 'I-Kiribati Way of Life': The Formation of Flexible Identities?" *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 26, no. 2 (2005): 136-7, 146.

⁸ Tamson Pietsch, "A British Sea: Making Sense of Global Space in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Global History*, 5, no. 3 (2010): 423-24.

ships flowed along global maritime networks connecting the Java and South China Seas, Indian Ocean, Red Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic and Pacific Oceans with port city nodes throughout Asia, the Middle East and Europe. It contends that empire existed outside the connective webs linking metropole and colony and explores how maritime networks played an important role in defining colonial structures in the Netherlands East Indies. Three areas of Dutch colonial shipping are used as examples: hajj pilgrim shipping between the Netherlands East Indies and Jeddah onboard the *Kongsi Tiga* (Trio Line), a joint venture between the *Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland* (Netherlands Steamship Company), *N.V. Rotterdamsche Lloyd* (Rotterdam Lloyd, Limited), and *Nederlandsche Stoomvaart Maatschappij Oceaen* (Netherlands Ocean Steamship Company); Asian shipping onboard the *Java-China-Japan Lijn* (Java-China-Japan Line) connecting the Netherlands East Indies with China, Japan, the Philippines, Indochina, and Malaysia; and the passenger liners *Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland* (Netherlands Steamship Company), *N.V. Rotterdamsche Lloyd* (Rotterdam Lloyd Limited), and *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij* (Royal Packet Navigation Company) linking European, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Asian ports.⁹ All of these colonial shipping businesses were political and cultural agents of empire and beyond simply playing an economic role in imperialism expansion, Dutch shipping companies participated in political and cultural struggles over identity and mobility, defined through colonial notions of race, class, and gender. This dissertation further argues that colonial contests over control and conciliation were acted out onboard ships and that global

⁹ Chinese business associations were known as *kongsi* and reflect the tendency of Dutch shippers to use Chinese and Indonesian names within maritime transport. The JCJL also named all their ships beginning with *Tji*, the Bahasa Sunda word for “river.”

maritime networks helped create political and cultural connectivities that defined anti-colonial struggles during the interwar years.

Dutch Shipping and Maritime Historiography

Not surprising for a country, quite literally, reclaimed from the sea, the Netherlands has always had a contentious relationship with water. On the one hand water and the sea have served as enemies to the nation's very existence, while on the other, oceans have provided a connective space central to the Netherlands' global history over the past half millennium. Within this waterlogged landscape, the maritime world has played a fundamental role in Dutch historiography and Dutch maritime history is a popular topic among historians.¹⁰ Dutch maritime historiography is influenced by the Netherlands' collective historical "memory" captivatingly focused on the Dutch Golden Age, roughly spanning the late sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries. The maritime activities of the *Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (Dutch East India Company) made this period of economic and cultural prosperity possible and secondary sources reflect the company's pivotal role in creating, using Charles Boxer's classic term, the Dutch seaborne empire.¹¹ Research on Dutch participation in the early modern maritime world covers an immense range of topics that provide a rich historiography of VOC ships themselves, their maritime routes, Dutch interactions with indigenous actors, and

¹⁰ Especially when compared with the volume of maritime historiography for other European nations. See Frank Broeze, *Maritime History at the Crossroads: A Critical Review of Recent Historiography* (St. John's, Nfld: International Maritime Economic History Association, 1995).

¹¹ Although quite different from my approach to the subject, Charles Boxer continues to be assigned at many universities. See C.R. Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire, 1600-1800* (New York: Knopf, 1965). Another tome of required reading for maritime historians is Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

relationships between the Netherlands and the world. Many of these studies have followed in step with newer maritime histories of the early modern Atlantic and Indian Oceans that explore the transnational connections and interactions between different regions and people along their rims.¹² Historians continue to put on their white gloves and pour through the oversized bound volumes housed at the VOC archive in The Hague, with new books and articles being published every year.¹³

Unfortunately, the rich historiography and theoretical considerations of early modern maritime history are not matched by the historiography of nineteenth and twentieth-century Dutch shipping, which has captured fewer imaginations among maritime historians.¹⁴ The very structures inherent to modern imperialism have played a

¹² For the Atlantic see Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2005), Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000) and Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993). For the Indian Ocean see K.N. Chaudhuri, *Asia before Europe: Economy and Civilization of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), M.N. Pearson, *The Indian Ocean* (London: Routledge, 2003), Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2006), and the articles in Pamela Gupta, Isabel Hofmeyr, and M. N. Pearson, eds. *Eyes Across the Water: Navigating the Indian Ocean* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2010). For Dutch relationships to India see C.G. Brouwer, *Al-Mukhā: The Transoceanic Trade of a Yemeni Staple Town As Mapped by Merchants of the VOC, 1614-1640: Coffee, Spices & Textiles* (Amsterdam: D'Fluyte Rarob, 2006) and Om Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal, 1630-1720* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

¹³ Most recently see Robert Parthesius, *Dutch Ships in Tropical Waters The Development of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) Shipping Network in Asia 1595-1660* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010) and Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹⁴ For shipping during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries see for example E.M. Jacobs, *Merchant in Asia: The Trade of the Dutch East India Company During the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2006), J.R. Bruijn, *Varend Verleden: de Nederlandse Oorlogsvloot in de Zeventiende en Achttiende Eeuw* (Amsterdam: Balans, 1998), Frank Broeze, *De Stad Schiedam: De Schiedamse Scheepsrederij en de*

role in this disparity and, as Sugata Bose notes, “colonial frontiers came to obstruct the study of comparisons and links across regions and left as a lasting legacy a general narrowing of scholarly focus within the framework of area studies.”¹⁵ This dissertation reconnects these links by investigating the fluid connectivity of oceanic waters by thinking in terms of the World Ocean.¹⁶ The World Ocean approach recognizes the continuities between bodies of water rather than investigating a geographically conjectured independent sea basin or waterway. Investigating five Dutch shipping companies who crisscrossed the World Ocean will allow us to re-envision the spatiality of Dutch Empire into a concept of water 360°, where water enveloped all aspects of empire and oceans served as fundamental arenas where colonial political, cultural, and social struggles were negotiated.

The importance of the global maritime world to Dutch imperialism has a long history, but nineteenth-century technological advances revolutionized the shipping industry and multiplied transoceanic networks through faster and cheaper travel and

Nederlandse Vaart op Oost-Indië omstreeks 1840 ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1978), Femme Gaastra “Vragen over de koopvaardij: de 'Enquête omtrent den toestand van de Nederlandsche koopvaardijvloot' uit 1874 en de achteruitgang van de handelsvloot” (Inaugurele rede Universiteit Leiden. Leiden, 2004), accessed November 15, 2010, www.wetenschapsagenda.leidenuniv.nl/content.../20feboratie_gaastra.pdf. For connections between the VOC and more contemporary maritime histories see Jelle van Lottum, *Across the North Sea: The Impact of the Dutch Republic on International Labour Migration, C.1550-1850* (Amsterdam: Aksant Academic Publishers, 2007).

¹⁵ Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2006), 7. While Immanuel Wallerstein’s macro-models helped transcend these regional limitations, he also placed the West at the core of World Systems. Subaltern studies and other micro-approaches aimed at recovering marginalized voices from the periphery. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1989) and Ranajit Guha, ed., *A Subaltern Studies Reader: 1986–1995* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).

¹⁶ The World Ocean consists of five principal areas; Atlantic, Indian, Pacific, Southern, and Arctic.

transport.¹⁷ The *Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland* (Netherlands Steamship Company) was founded in Amsterdam in 1870 followed shortly after by *N.V. Rottemdamsche Lloyd* (Rotterdam Lloyd Limited) in 1873. The two were collectively known as the “Dutch Mails” and transported cargo, passengers, and post between Europe and the Netherlands East Indies, stopping at port cities in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, India, and Southeast Asia along the way.¹⁸ In 1891, SMN and RL jointly founded the *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij* (Royal Packet Navigation Company) to serve as a feeder service for coastal transport to local ports throughout the Netherlands East Indies archipelago. Together, the SMN, RL, and KPM worked to expand their shipping routes around the globe by establishing additional feeder lines, including the *Java-China-Japan Lijn* (Java-China-Japan Line) started in 1902, which transported cargo, passengers, and Asian manual laborers or coolies around the *Nanyang* (Southern Ocean).¹⁹ In 1892, British shipping company Alfred Holt flooded the Amsterdam-Java

¹⁷ Most notably the Suez Canal completed in 1869 and the availability in 1880 of triple-compound engines specifically designed for ocean liners traveling through deep waters over longer distances. For the history of maritime technologies see C.A. Davids, “The transfer of technology between Britain and the Netherlands, 1700-1850” in *Anglo-Dutch Mercantile Marine Relations 1700-1850*, eds. J.R.Bruijn and W.F.J.Mörzer Bruyns (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum ‘Nederlands Scheepvaartmuseum’, 1991), 7-23.

¹⁸ Despite these new Dutch firms, the official government mail contract was given to the British-owned company (albeit under a Dutch name) *Nederlandsch-Indische Stoomvaart Maatschappij* (NISM), which had a monopoly over Indonesian shipping from 1865 to 1890. Despite the Dutch government’s initial lack of financial support of the SMN and RL, the NISM’s contract was eventually overturned by Parliament in 1888, as the NISM was based in Singapore and the Dutch were increasingly weary of relying on foreign companies for essential needs concerning their colonies.

¹⁹ SMN and RL also established the *Java Bengalen Lijn* in 1906 with regular service between Java to Calcutta, via Sabang and Rangoon “in view of the ever increasing traffic between the Netherlands and British India and the general agreed upon wish that the Dutch flag would have a fair share in it.” Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, *Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland* (SMN), 1869-1972, nummer toegang 2.20.23, inventarisnummer 396, 1906. By the next year, the SMN and RL were sending 12 round-trip voyages

route with nine ships by the name *Nederlandsche Stoomvaart Maatschappij Oceaan* (Netherlands Ocean Steamship Company) sailing under Dutch flag. KPM negotiated a deal with SMO that in exchange for not entering into Netherlands East Indies coastal trade, the British company would receive an equal share in the annual pilgrim traffic between the NEI and Jeddah. Thereafter, SMO, SMN, and RL created a hajji shipping pool called *Kongsi Tiga* (Trio Line) or the Trio transporting religious pilgrims between the NEI and the Middle East.²⁰

The SMN, RL, KPM, JCJL, and SMO all experienced tremendous growth between 1900 and 1942, despite economic downturns after WWI and during the 1930s. Compared to their pre-war earnings, Dutch shippers were making substantial profits during the 1920s and 30s, which proved to be a lucrative time for colonial maritime enterprises.²¹ With these profits, companies invested in new luxury motor ships such as SMN's MS "Johan van Oldenbarnevelt" and MS "Marnix van Sint Aldegonde" launched in 1930 and RL's MS "Balorean" and MS "Dempo" launched in 1930 and 1931 respectively.²² SMO purchased the MS "Tantalus" in 1923 and both the MS "Alcinous"

between Java, Rangoon, and Calcutta as part of the JBL and the following year that number had climbed to 15. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 396, 1907.

²⁰ Joseph Norbert Frans Marie à Campo, *Engines of Empire: Steamshipping and State Formation in Colonial Indonesia* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), 244.

²¹ For example, Between 1900 and 1914, SMN and RL combined profits from passenger transport averaged f2,767,561 per year which more than quadrupled between 1920 and 1929 to f12,261,896 per year, before dropping to f9,219,449 per year from 1930 to 1939. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 1033. SMN saw their capital expansion increase from 3.5 million to 7 million guilders between 1870 and 1900, but from 1900 to 1930 this mushroomed from 7 million to 35 million guilders, enough to compensate for the stagnant years between 1930 and 1940 when capital remained at 35 million. From 1940 to 1950 the company again saw a drastic rise from 35 million to 45 million guilders. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 291.

²² MS "Johan van Oldenbarnevelt" and MS "Marnix van Sint Aldegonde," both accommodated 338 first, 281 second, and 64 third class passengers introduced in 1930 and RL's MS "Balorean" and MS "Dempo" both accommodated 236 first, 253 second,

and MS “Phrontis” in 1926.²³ Shipping’s economic well-being was further exhibited through the newly built *Scheepvaarthuis* (Shipping House) in Amsterdam housing the head offices of SMN, KPM, and JCJL. Designed by architects J.G. en A.D.N. van Gendt from *De Stijl* school, the lavishly ornate building embodied the success of Dutch shipping and was (and still is) considered one of the Netherlands’ architectural masterpieces.²⁴

Despite these economic advances, SMN, RL, KPM, JCJL, and SMO, were operating within a world of colonial instabilities both politically and culturally. The late colonial period was full of tensions and contradictions and the Ethical Policy’s goals of development, recognition of indigenous culture, and “Indianization” were in direct conflict with continued Dutch paternalism, repression, and a belief in Western superiority.²⁵ As colonial enterprises, Dutch shipping companies were involved in these colonial struggles and were exposed to the economic, political, and cultural instabilities of the interwar years including two economic depressions, rising nationalism, worker strikes, and Communist uprisings in Java and Sumatra in 1926-27. When historians label the interwar period as being “not easy” for the shipping industry, this is in fact more true

70 third, and 68 fourth-class passengers. To help increase their passenger services both companies introduced a *Boottrein* (Boat Train), RL’s running from the Netherlands to Marseille and SMN’s to and from Genua, cutting down travel time by a few days and still getting you to the ship before heading through the Suez Canal. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 397. 1928

²³ By 1931, their NEI fleet had five ships all on average only three years old. G.J. de Boer, *De Nederlandse Blauwpijpers* (Alkmaar: De Alk, 1997), 51-52.

²⁴ Built between 1913 and 1928 in two phases, the *Scheepvaarthuis* (Shipping House) also housed the Head Offices of the *Koninklijke Nederlandse Stoomboot-Maatschappij* (Royal Dutch Steamboat Company), *Nieuwe Rijnvaart Maatschappij* (New Rhine Shipping Company) and *Koninklijke West-Indische Maildienst* (Royal West-Indian Mailservice).

²⁵ Marieke Bloembergen and Remco Raben, eds., *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief: wegen naar het Nieuwe Indië, 1890-1950* (Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2009), 9.

of political and cultural uncertainties than economic ones.²⁶ Despite their financial wellbeing, the same fears and paranoia felt by the colonial government over threats to Dutch authority were shared by colonial businesses and were a defining characteristic of this period in the NEI.

In order to protect their interests, all five companies, SMN, RL, KPM, JCJL, and SMO, shared the common goal of eliminating competitors by forming cartel-like agreements with each other. Known as *conferences*, these oligarchic shipping pools set rates for cargo and passengers and essentially functioned as “a collective monopoly” by binding each other through loyalty or rebates to the exclusive use of conference ships, discouraging internal competition between conference members through price fixing, and eliminating outside competition through rate wars and other influences.²⁷ Conference members formed additional organizations to establish extra protection against outside competitors. For example, in 1908 the SMN, RL, and KPM formed the *Nederlandsche Scheepvaart Unie* (Netherlands Shipping Union) to ensure KPM retained a virtual monopoly over local shipping within the NEI, allowing the RL and SMN to focus their resources on expanding other routes. These protective organizations were also formed during difficult economic times, for example in 1920 when the SMN, RL, KPM, and JCJL formed the *Vereenigde Nederlandsche Scheepvaartmaatschappij* (United

²⁶ In 1929, SMN, RL, SMO (together with the *Nederlandsche Amerikaansche Stoomvaart Maatschappij*) started the *Silver-Java-Pacific Lijn* between the west coast of the United States and Rangoon or Calcutta via the NEI, Manila and Singapore. Gemeentearchief Rotterdam, Koninklijke Rotterdamse Lloyd N.V. (fa. Willem Ruys & Zonen): Correspondentie 1929-1976, inventarisnummer 454.05, 0445. In 1931 the Java-Bengalen Lijn, Java Pacific Line and Silver Line were combined into the Silver Java Pacific Line Gemeentearchief Rotterdam Srchief Koninklijke Rotterdamse Lloyd N.V. (fa. Willem Ruys & Zonen): Correspondentie 1929-1976, inventaris nummer 454.05, 0448.

²⁷ W.G. Huff, “Shipping Monopoly, Monopsony and Business Group Organization in Pre-World War Two Singapore,” *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 7, no. 2 (2000): 63.

Netherlands Navigation Company) to protect themselves against the post-war economic downturn.²⁸ Other protective measures included the establishment of private booking offices in place of independent agencies, who could potentially book cargo and passengers onboard rival liners.²⁹ Further, interlocking the transoceanic routes of SMN and RL together with the more localized routes of KPM and JCJL aimed at creating a national oligarchy over shipping to and from the Netherlands East Indies by diverting sea traffic away from Singapore to the NEI ports of Padang, Tanjung Priok, Surabaya, and Makassar.³⁰ SMN, RL, SMO, JCJL, and KPM wanted to ensure that the “defense of our interests in the Netherlands East Indies is in our own hands.”³¹

Widespread mutual cooperation was also apparent between shipping companies and the Dutch colonial government, whose relationship Joep à Campo terms a “bilateral monopoly.”³² The colonial administration’s liberal economic policies helped stimulate the NEI’s shipping industry, but in exchange they expected shipping companies to form

²⁸ The VNS was also founded with the *Koninklijke Nederlandsche Stoomboot Maatschappij, Holland Amerika Lijn, Van Nievelt, Goudriaan en Co’s. Stoomvaart Maatschappij* (Nigoco) and *N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij “De Maas”* (Van Ommeren), with routes between the Netherlands and British India, Australia, East Asia, and East Africa. Shortly after they were founded, VNS also added routes to West Africa together with *Hollandsche Stoomboot Maatschappij* and *Koninklijke Hollandsche Lloyd*.

²⁹ These efforts helped the companies earn record profits on passenger fares in 1921 and 1922. For example SMN and RL, who had earned an annual average of f2,767,561 from passenger fares between 1900-1914, earned f16,348,569 in 1921 and f15,907,473 in 1922. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 1033.

³⁰ The first overseas manager of KPM, L.P.D. op ten Noort, devised a strategy of consolidating both long-distance and local transportation into Dutch hands.

³¹ Effective 1 January 1921, the offices of the shipping agencies in Batavia, Tanjung Priok, Semarang, Surabaya, Macassar, Manado, Padang, Emma Harbour, Sabang and Calcutta were run exclusively as booking agencies for SMN, RL, and KPM. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 396,1919.

³² During the early years of their mail contracts, SMN and RL were paid f6000 per journey before 1895 and f8000 afterwards. Campo, “Engines of Empire,” 88. See also Joseph Norbert Frans Marie à Campo, “Steam navigation and state formation” in *The late colonial state in Indonesia: political and economic foundations of the Netherlands Indies 1880-1942*, ed. Robert Cribb (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1994), 11-29.

powerful, nationalistic monopolies cooperative with the colonial government and supportive of Dutch imperial policies.³³ Shipping was vital not only for the economic and logistic well being of Dutch empire, but also for protecting it against both foreign and indigenous threats to Dutch imperial authority.³⁴ Shipping and government were mutually dependent on each other to achieve their most important shared imperial goal: upholding Dutch imperial authority in Southeast Asia under the banner of *Pax Neerlandica*.³⁵

It was this need for mutual support against not just economic, but also political and socio-cultural threats that ensured the Dutch government and shipping companies were colonial bedfellows. It also explains why the general colonial policy during the early twentieth century overwhelmingly favored Dutch businesses over foreign ones in the economic development of the NEI.³⁶ While shipping companies received lucrative contracts, loans, and subsidies from the Dutch colonial government, these payments also allowed the government to impose its demands upon the businesses it aided.³⁷ For example, the JCJL was awarded a low-interest loan for f3,750,000³⁸ divided over the first

³³ Campo, *Engines of Empire*, 89.

³⁴ Singgih Tri Sulistiyono, "The Java Sea network: patterns in the development of interregional shipping and trade in the process of national economic integration in Indonesia, 1870s-1970s" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2003), 99.

³⁵ The law and order imposed by the colonial state in the Netherlands East Indies. See Peter Boomgaard, "Smallpox, vaccination, and the Pax Neerlandica - Indonesia, 1550-1930," *Bijdragen Tot De Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde*, 159, no. 4 (2003): 590-617.

³⁶ Frans-Paul van der Putten, *Corporate behaviour and political risk: Dutch companies in China, 1903-1941* (Leiden: Research School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies, Leiden University, 2001), 45.

³⁷ Campo, "Engines of Empire," 89.

³⁸ f300,000 the first five years, f250,000 the second five years, and f200,000 the final five years. It was the first low-interest loan awarded to a shipping company by the Dutch government in The Hague, but NEI bank the *Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij* had actually bought 75% of the shares. The rest were divided among KPM, SMN, and RL.

fifteen years of its operations, but on top of having to repay the loan, the Dutch government in The Hague also had the right to approve any major directorial appointments or changes to company regulations, as well as mandating that two-thirds of JCJL ships would be built in the Netherlands and at least thirteen round trips would be made each year between Java and China.³⁹ Despite a Danish firm offering to establish the same routes without needing any loans, the Dutch government preferred to pay for the creation of a new Dutch-owned shipping line precisely because their loan bought them control over the company. The government ultimately wanted to ensure that shipping companies would be both cooperative with and supportive of the imperial regime.⁴⁰

Despite their oligarchic conferences, protective organizations, and close relationships with the Dutch colonial government, in reality it was impossible for any of these shipping companies to command absolute oligarchies within the World Ocean's fluid waters.⁴¹ While rate fixing and through-freight policies were effective in negotiations with foreign companies who respected the conference system, local Chinese shipping firms and Indonesian coastal vessels had fewer reasons to negotiate. These locally owned ships operated more cheaply than Dutch liners and exercised more freedom and flexibility in terms of scheduled routes and ports of call. They continued, therefore, to be an extremely popular form of maritime transport for Indonesian and

Hiroshi Shimizu, "Dutch-Japanese Competition in the Shipping Trade on the Java-Japan Route in the Inter-war Period," *Southeast Asian Studies*, 26, no.1 (1988): 4.

³⁹ Ibid., 4. Putten, "Corporate behaviour," 44-45.

⁴⁰ This was also true for the NHM who were looking after their colonial interests in the NEI by controlling 75% of the company. Putten, "Corporate behaviour," 45.

⁴¹ Rather than a monopoly, Dutch shipping was better described as "horizontal integration" through cartelization. Joseph N.F.M. à Campo, "Engines of Empire: the Rôle of Shipping Companies in British and Dutch Empire Building," in *Shipping, technology, and imperialism: papers presented to the third British-Dutch Maritime History Conference*, eds. Gordon Jackson and David M. Williams (Brookfield, Vt.: Scolar Press, 1996), 80.

Chinese passengers. Also, Chinese ships played an integral role in local Chinese commercial activities making them even more resilient to Dutch shipping conferences.⁴²

Beyond the economic implications of local Chinese and Indonesian shipping, this competition served as a mode of resistance to colonial policies and shifted power away from the Dutch to local Chinese and Indonesian agents.⁴³ In the face of such ideological threats and logistic difficulties of stopping such traffic, Dutch shipping companies were themselves forced to opt for a containment policy of “mosquito fleets” rather than outright elimination. For example, KPM was particularly vulnerable to *perahu* (sail) shipping and the company was “almost obsessive” in the amount of detailed information it kept on non-conference shipping rivals.⁴⁴ Beyond keeping tabs on its rivals, KPM was also responsive to the needs of local Chinese traders in order to persuade them to use KPM liners instead of Chinese vessels.⁴⁵ While the maritime world may have reflected colonial notions of racial hierarchy and privilege between Europeans, Chinese, and Indonesians, it also reflected the vulnerabilities faced by Dutch authorities in maintaining colonial control in the region as well as the many ways indigenous agents could not only bypass colonial regulations, but also use them to their own advantage.⁴⁶

This short introduction to the five shipping companies investigated in this dissertation raises a few themes worth pointing out here. First, the fact Dutch shipping companies expected to retain total control of maritime transport to and from the NEI underlines how shipping companies shared in a Dutch imperial epistemology about

⁴² Campo, “Steam Navigation,” 21.

⁴³ Eric Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States Along a Southeast Asian Frontier, 1865-1915* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 371.

⁴⁴ H. W. Dick, “Prahu Shipping in Eastern Indonesia in the Interwar Period,” *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 23, no. 1 (1987): 105.

⁴⁵ Campo, “Steam Navigation,” 21.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

power, entitlement, and hierarchy that also informed their business decisions. Second, shipping companies and the Dutch colonial government worked together to protect Dutch imperial authority against political and socio-cultural threats to colonial hegemony. Third, despite many bureaucratic policies, regulations, and laws, colonial realities often prevented their successful execution and the unexpected agency and actions of “ordinary” colonial subjects could instead force Dutch shipping interests to yield to local demands. All three themes reappear in later chapters and help inform this dissertation’s exploration of Dutch empire, colonial power struggles, and the maritime world during the interwar years.

The majority of historical works on the SMN, RL, KPM, SMO, and JCJL are descriptive narratives that lack substantial critical analysis and this dissertation seeks to correct that lack of engagement in order to better understand both the interwar Dutch empire and modern maritime history. Historical works written during the colonial period or shortly after, and often commissioned by the shipping companies, are still frequently cited by contemporary historians and underline the lack of substantial contemporary literature in the field.⁴⁷ Newer works often fail to engage in theoretical analyses of the maritime world, instead relying on uncritical descriptive narratives, quantitative inventories of ships and passengers, and visual imagery.⁴⁸ There are also a number of

⁴⁷ See M.G. de Boer and Johannes C. Westermann. *Een halve eeuw Paketvaart: 1891-1941* (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij, 1941) and I.J. Brugmans, *Van Chinavaart tot oceaانvaart; de Java-China-Japan Lijn-Koninklijke Java-China-Paketvaart Lijnen, 1902-1952* (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Java-China-Paketvaart Lijnen, 1952).

⁴⁸ Anne Doedens and Like Mulder, *Oceanreuzen: een eeuw Nederlandse passagiersvaart* (Baarn: Bosch & Keuning, 1990), G.J. De Boer, A.J.J. Mulder, and H.A. Slettenaar, *Koninklijke Java - China - Paketvaart Lijnen (K.J.C.P.L.)* (Alkmaar, NL: De Alk, 1994), G.J. de Boer, *Nederlandse passagiersschepen. Van maildienst tot cruisevaart* (De Alk, N.L.: Alkmaar, 1976), Philip Cockrill and J. Haalebos, *Koninklijke Paketvaart*

works by non-academic writers that are surprisingly similar to these recent academic works on the subject, also highly descriptive with heavy usage of visual images.⁴⁹ The heavy description and visual material used in place of analysis and theoretical rigor, hints at the ways shipping satisfies a certain nostalgia for a lost age.⁵⁰ Some publications even sell themselves as bringing *tempo doeloe*--the colonial good old days--to life by focusing on luxurious interiors, attentive servants, and the general sense of Dutch maritime grandeur of a bygone age.⁵¹ For academic historians seeking to engage with maritime history critically rather than simply make an inventory of it, these books do nothing to

Maatschappij (1891-1941) with the Java-China-Japan-Line to 1970 (Newbury, Berkshire: Hampstead Norreys, 1982), A.J.J. Mulder, H.J. Legemaate, and J.R. van Diessen, *De eeuw van de 'Nederland': geschiedenis en vloot van de Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' : 1870-1970* (Zierikzee, N.L.: Asia Maior, 2003), G.J. de Boer, *De Nederlandse Blauwpijpers* (Alkmaar, N.L.: De Alk, 1997), A.J.J. Mulder, *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij: wel en wee van een indische rederij* (Alkmaar, N.L.: De Alk, 1991).

⁴⁹ For example, Arne Zuidhoek who has published over forty books on Dutch steam and motor shipping. See Arne Zuidhoek, *Passagiersschepen uit Nederland* (Baarn, N.L.: Fontein, 2000), B.W. Scholten and F. M. Haalmeijer, *Rotterdamsche Lloyd: N.V. Rotterdamsche Lloyd opgericht op 6 juli 1883* (Rotterdam: De Boer Maritiem, 1988), Hans Boomsma and J.B. Mangé, *Vergane bootglorie herleefd: hoogtepunten uit de Nederlandse scheepvaarthistorie (1920-1960)* (Dordrecht: History Book, 1992), Edward P. de Groot, *Varen op de Oost: incidenten, rampen en nostalgie op de vaart naar Indië* (Alkmaar, N.L.: De Alk, 1994), Nico Guns, *Koninklijke Rotterdamsche Lloyd: beknopte geschiedenis van een rederij* (Zutphen, N.L.: Walburg Pers, 2004).

⁵⁰ For more examples see William H. Miller, *The Great Luxury Liners, 1927-1954: A Photographic Record* (New York: Dover Publications, 1981), William H. Miller, *Picture History of German and Dutch Passenger Ships* (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2002), Dick Gorter, *Nederlandse koopvaardij schepen in beeld* (Alkmaar, N.L.: De Alk, 1970). See also the memoirs of former Dutch maritime workers in Anthony van Kampen, *De Oude Chinalijn: herinneringen van oud-Chinalijners ; Verzameld ter gelegenheid van het 50-jarig bestaan der Maatschappij* (Amsterdam: Vereniging van Oud-Personeel der J.C.J.L. en K.J.C.P.L, 1952), F. Luidinga, Tjalling Luidinga, and F. van Popta-Luidinga, *Het scheepsjournaal van Tjalling Luidinga 1890-1941: gezagvoerder bij de Rotterdamsche Lloyd* (Rijswijk, N.L.: Luidinga, 1995).

⁵¹ See W.H. Moojen, *Toen schepen nog schepen waren* (Sneek: Bosman & Bosman, 1999), A. Alberts, *Per Mailboot naar de Oost: Reizen met de Lloyd en de Nederland Tussen 1920 en 1940* (Bussum, N.L.: Unieboek BV, 1979).

encourage a more expansive and sophisticated maritime historiography of early twentieth-century Dutch shipping.

This dissertation investigates early twentieth-century Dutch maritime history through a post-colonial lens focusing on the colonial conflicts between power and agency, authority and transgression, and subversion and state power. Contemporary maritime historians who deal with these issues in terms of Dutch shipping are few and far between. Joep à Campo's work on the KPM has provided new theories over how colonial shipping and government worked together in a shared colonial project. Jeroen Touwen also explores the relationship between KPM and colonial government, though for the most part concludes that ships helped successfully bring the goals of the Ethical Policy to the Outer Islands.⁵² Frans-Paul van der Putten has explored the political challenges and responses of JCJL in China during the interwar years while Hiroshi Shimizu explores connections between JCJL and Japanese shippers. Although these historians explore the relationships between government and business, they work mainly from a socio-economic viewpoint that shies away from incorporating race, class, and gender into their analyses, leaving a gap in our knowledge over the socio-cultural aspects of the modern Dutch maritime world.

This dissertation explores the simultaneous establishment and transgression of maritime boundaries and the Dutch colonial fears that surrounded them during an increasingly troubled period between colonizer and colonized. Despite increased technologies to construct and maintain maritime boundaries at sea and on shore, Dutch fears over the oceanic "wild space" surrounding the Netherlands East Indies grew

⁵² Jeroen Touwen, *Extremes in the Archipelago: Trade and Economic Development in the Outer Islands of Indonesia, 1900-1942* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2001).

substantially due to heightened colonial paranoia during the interwar period. Eric Tagliacozzo has explored these same concepts in his work on maritime borders and smuggling in Southeast Asia between 1865-1915, highlighting the concomitant relationship between boundary production and boundary transgression.⁵³ The maritime boundaries explored in this dissertation were often constructed due to the colonial paranoia and fears of the Dutch government and Dutch shipping companies authorities and were often disregarded by colonial subjects who had their own agenda over how the sea could and should be used.

Historians working on the British seaborne empire have recently published works exploring issues of maritime boundaries, identity formation, mobility, and colonial power. Glen O'Hara and Tamson Pietsch explore how maritime travel caused those onboard to rework and rethink their own identity and those of others who they encountered across maritime networks.⁵⁴ These negotiations and redefinitions of identity were informed by travelers' ideas of race, class, and gender. The effects of maritime mobility on identity suggest that the importance of transnationalism to maritime historians is not only that global flows were contested sites of power between various state and individual actors, but were also spaces for individuals to create meaning over the multifarious worlds experienced through maritime travel.

Other British maritime historians such as Jonathan Hyslop and Mark Ravider Frost address the maritime world's ability to allow indigenous actors to shape their own

⁵³ Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades*, 3.

⁵⁴ Glen O'Hara, "The Sea is Swinging into View': Modern British Maritime History in a Globalized World," *English Historical Review*, vol.cxxiv, 510 (Oct. 2009): 1124-25, Pietsch "A British sea," 423-24.

lives and utilize maritime networks for their own purposes.⁵⁵ These investigations encourage maritime historians to reconsider notions of colonial power structures and racial hierarchies and reveal the vulnerabilities and limitations of colonial authority and, as Hyslop suggests, show how the colonial state often “leaked like an old rowing boat.”⁵⁶ This dissertation echoes these recent studies by exploring the World Ocean as a space where transformation and mobility overlapped with boundary formation and colonial control. Further, global maritime networks encouraged the negotiation and redefinition of colonial hierarchies of power through the maritime world’s fluid effects on colonial notions of race, class, and gender.

Dutch maritime historiography has some major gaps that this dissertation seeks to fill. Topically, there is a large discrepancy between volumes of research on the VOC and those available on nineteenth and twentieth-century steam and motor ships, while theoretically much of the literature on modern shipping fails to engage with recent canonical developments engaging race, class, and gender as analytical tools to understand colonialism. The research presented here focuses on the colonial maritime world of the 1920’s and 30’s and investigates the topic through an ethnographic lens that enables a critical analysis of colonial maritime history, incorporating both the destructive and creative characteristics of water and the sea.

Theorizing the Local, National, and Global

⁵⁵ Jonathan Hyslop, “Steamship Empire: Asian, African and British Sailors in the Merchant Marine c.1880–1945,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 44, no.1 (2009): 52, Mark Ravinder Frost, “Asia’s Maritime networks and the Colonial Public Sphere, 1840-1920,” *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies*, 6, no.2 (December, 2004): 93.

⁵⁶ Hyslop, “Steamship Empire,” 51.

The Indonesian archipelago consists of over 17,508 islands forming the nexus of the Java Sea, South China Sea, Aratura Sea, Banda Sea, Pacific Ocean, Celebes Sea, Molucca Sea, Indian Ocean, Makassar Strait, Carimata Strait, and Strait of Malacca. This water-centric geography creates what Heather Sutherland refers to as a “crucial transit zone” that can only be understood through the connections made between bodies of water.⁵⁷ Geographers and anthropologists are often at the forefront of transnationalism, globalization, and oceanic theorization and these disciplines have influenced how maritime historians explore connections over bodies of water.⁵⁸ Globalization describes the interconnectivity between people and places across national borders, usually hinting at exchanges of socio-economic factors while also suggesting a progressive notion of increased interaction over time, or what Anthony Giddens classically defined twenty years ago as the “intensification of worldwide social relations.”⁵⁹ Since then, historians have faulted Giddens for defining globalization with such broad strokes that for a few years left global analyses void of nation-states or borders of any kind.⁶⁰ Other historians reproached early globalization theories as overemphasizing an ahistorical concept of its unprecedented transformative powers.⁶¹ Since the 1990’s historians have successfully

⁵⁷ Sutherland, “Southeast Asian History,” 3.

⁵⁸ See the Introduction in Andrew C. Wilford and Eric Tagliacozzo, *Clio/Anthropos: Exploring the Boundaries between History and Anthropology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 4.

⁵⁹ Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

⁶⁰ Michael Lang, “Globalization and Its History,” *The Journal of Modern History*, 78 (December 2006): 900.

⁶¹ Donna Gabaccia, Franca Iacovetta, and Fraser Ottanelli, “Laboring Across National Borders: Class, Gender, and Militancy in the Proletarian Mass Migrations,” *International Labor and Working-Class History*, no. 66 (Fall 2004): 59.

challenged the idea that globalization is something new by showing the long history of such multifarious long-distance connections.⁶²

Along with stepping away from globalization's implied progressivism, transnationalism has recently offered historians a concept that overcomes globalization's over-generalizations and tendency to homogenize the effects of global capitalist progression.⁶³ Transnationalism describes global interconnectivities and the re-conceptualization of traditional boundaries such as nation-states, while also addressing the fact that nation-states still play a key role in our definitions of the world in which transnationalism occurs.⁶⁴ While transnationalism has its critics who fear the term fails to recognize the importance of the local along with the global, other historians have used the term to re-imagine local as well as global spatiality.⁶⁵ Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton's use of *translocality* as a way of recognizing "spatial logics and the spatializing violence that global visions can and often do produce," encourages the fluid integration

⁶² See for example Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) and more recently Peter N. Stearns, *Globalization in World History* (London: Routledge, 2010).

⁶³ Philip Crang, Claire Dwyer, and Peter Jackson, "Transnationalism and the spaces of commodity culture," *Progress in Human Geography*, 27, no.4 (2003): 440.

⁶⁴ Anthropologist Steven Vertovec notes, "the scales, spaces and mechanisms of globalization and transnationalism are just too entangled to allow [for] such clear abstractions" between the two concepts. Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism* (London: Routledge 2009), 3.

⁶⁵ See Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 91, Gregory Mann, "Locating Colonial Histories: Between France and West Africa," *The American Historical Review*, 110, no.2 (April 2005): 410. Jerry Bentley reminds maritime historians in particular that "any project to construct maritime regions needs to devote careful consideration to the relationships between individual regions and the larger world." Jerry H. Bentley, "Sea and Ocean Basins as Frameworks of Historical Analysis," *Geographical Review*, 89, no. 2 (1999): 218.

of the local, national, and global while encouraging a more “kinetic” idea of spatiality.⁶⁶ These “trans-alties” provide maritime historians with tools to make sense of the relationships between ship, land, ocean, and the fluid mobility that connected all three.

This dissertation expands on the notions of transnationalism and translocality by incorporating local, national, and global levels of empirical analyses into a singular study on the transoceanic world. Transoceanic is a useful term for maritime historians exploring global connections and interactions extending across the World Ocean while still incorporating the existence of nation-states and nationalisms along maritime networks.⁶⁷ This multi-level analysis provides a deeper understanding of the ocean’s permeable boundaries and the transgressions and policing that centered around these simultaneously liberating and threatening spaces during the early twentieth century Dutch empire. Exploring the maritime world through a transoceanic lens reveals how identities were recognized, transformed, and reinvented across maritime networks--connecting ships, port cities, and the littoral--while repositioning the historian from a “terracentric” viewpoint to the transoceanic perspective of water 360°.⁶⁸ This dissertation shows that transnational history cannot be understood without incorporating and analyzing transoceanic history.

This dissertation also explores the transformativity and fluidity of maritime networks through the transversal movement of ships, which inspired maritime travelers and workers to re-envision their own identities and those of others encountered along

⁶⁶ Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, eds. *Moving Subjects: Gender, Mobility, and Intimacy in an Age of Global Empire* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 10.

⁶⁷ Markus P.M. Vink, “Indian Ocean Studies and the ‘new thalassology’,” *Journal of Global History*, 2, no. 1 (2007): 60.

⁶⁸ Marcus Rediker, “Toward a People’s History of the Sea,” in *Maritime Empires: British Imperial Maritime Trade in the Nineteenth Century*, David Killingray, Margarete Lincoln and Nigel Rigby, eds. (Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2004), 195-206.

maritime networks.⁶⁹ Maritime worlds encourage a fluidity and mobility that allow for “mental remapping” by providing a place of change, movement, and reinvention. Some academics have termed this transit-based transformation of traveler and migrant identities as “cultural flexibility,” while others see the fluid properties of water itself helping to “liquefy” geographies and identities that would otherwise have created barriers between people along maritime networks.⁷⁰ Due to the fluidity of ships as “mobile elements” negotiating through the shifting spatiality of the maritime world, onboard spaces often experienced “slippages of dynamic” where real and imagined spatiality was manipulated by maritime actors.⁷¹ These colonial contestations over the power of fluid mobility are explored further in this project.

Colonial fears over fluid maritime mobility may have stemmed from the spatiality of ships themselves that served as models of colonial society, or what Paul Gilroy calls “a living, micro-cultural, micro-political system in motion.”⁷² Ships served as refracted images of colonial society partially reflective of colonial conceptions about spatial divisions and racialized concepts of class and gender.⁷³ However, the effects of transoceanic fluid mobility on travelers and seamen and the transformative spatiality of ships and oceans themselves skewed this colonial reflection in unexpected and

⁶⁹ Borovnik, “Seafarers’ ‘Maritime Culture,’” 138.

⁷⁰ Vink, “Indian Ocean Studies,” 52, Susan C. Anderson and Bruce H. Tabb, eds., *Water, Leisure and Culture: European Historical Perspectives* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), Crang, Dwyer, and Jackson “Transnationalism,” 440.

⁷¹ See Carolyn Cartier, “Cosmopolitics and the Maritime World City,” *The Geographical Review*, 89, no.2 (April, 1999): 278-289, Gilroy, “The Black Atlantic,” 16.

⁷² Gilroy, “The Black Atlantic,” 4.

⁷³ Eric Tagliacozzo, “Navigating Communities: Distance, Place, and Race in Maritime Southeast Asia,” *Asian Ethnicity*, 10, no. 2 (2009): 114.

unpredictable ways.⁷⁴ Dutch authorities and businesses policed and surveilled transoceanic networks and their connectivities in order to control these potentially dangerous refractions of Dutch empire abroad.

Central to understanding the connections between global maritime networks and Dutch empire is acknowledging that businesses were political actors. While business history makes up a large field within historical studies, businesses are too often assumed to be rational actors whose sole concerns are economic outcomes and maximizing profits. This dissertation reinserts human actions, personal reactions, and individual agendas into larger corporate decision-making structures in order to reinvestigate the connections between business and politics through a cultural as opposed to a technological lens. Businesses, especially within a colonial context where they often served as ambassadors and helpmates for colonial regimes, need to be incorporated into the fundamental structures of colonialism, equal to the important roles played by governments and social actors.

Assuming businesses are essentially apolitical, profit-driven, rationally neutral entities ignores the fact that businesses are run by human beings, each with their own set of cultural assumptions, political views, and past informative experiences. Failing to acknowledge that businesses have a social, cultural, and moral dimension ignores essential motivations and outcomes of company policies and activities, especially when

⁷⁴ Tony Ballantyne, “Rereading the Archive and Opening Up the Nation-State: Colonial Knowledge in South Asia (and Beyond),” in *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation*, edited by Antoinette Burton (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003), 104. See also Simon J. Potter, “Webs, Networks, and Systems: Globalization and the Mass Media in the Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Empire,” *Journal of British Studies*, 46 (July 2007): 621–646.

dealing with colonial business enterprises.⁷⁵ Business historians are often influenced by theories that tend to minimize the cultural influences and agendas of corporations, while focusing on their economic aspects and goals.⁷⁶ These theories are based on the assumption that businesses are economic actors only rather than political actors.⁷⁷ Part of the problem is that economics have become the default paradigm in business research, even when investigating strategic and moral arguments.⁷⁸ This dissertation helps expand our theoretical understandings of businesses by reinserting the *various* motivations behind business decision-making.

Rather than shying away from these important questions surrounding the moral, cultural, social, and political attributes and responsibilities of corporations, we would do better to find the appropriate language and ideas to help make sense of a complex issue.⁷⁹ This is an important undertaking due to the reliance within historical studies to overwhelmingly rely on economics as the default justification for corporate *modus*

⁷⁵ For examples of such analyses see Michael Miller, “The Business of the Hajj: Seaborne Commerce and the Movement of Peoples” (paper presented at the Seascapes, Littoral Cultures, and Trans-Oceanic Exchanges Conference sponsored by the American Historical Association, Washington DC, February 12-15, 2003) and Putten, *Corporate Behaviour*.

⁷⁶ Scott Taylor, Emma Bell, and Bill Cooke, “Business history and the historiographical operation,” *Management & Organizational History*, 4, no.2 (2009): 161-2, Steve Toms and John Wilson “In defence of business history: A reply to Taylor, Bell and Cooke,” *Management & Organizational History*, 5, no. 1(2010): 110-11.

⁷⁷ Paul C. Godfrey and Nile W. Hatch, “Researching Corporate Social responsibility: An Agenda for the 21st Century” *Journal of Business Ethics*, 70, no. 1(2007): 94.

⁷⁸ Tyler Earle Wry, “Does business and society scholarship matter to society? Pursuing a normative agenda with critical realism and neoinstitutional theory,” *Journal of Business Ethics*, 89, no. 2 (2009): 151-52.

⁷⁹ For discussions of this within geography and anthropology see Mona Domosh, “Selling Civilization: Toward a Cultural Analysis of America’s Economic Empire in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 29, no. 4 (2004): 454, Peter Benson and Stuart Kirsch, “Capitalism and the Politics of Resignation,” *Current Anthropology*, 51, no. 4 (2010): 463.

operandi.⁸⁰ Although historians are well versed in claiming politics, culture, and society form a large part of their analyses, too often they fail to follow through with substantive investigation of corporate complexities and continue to see businesses simply “doing” political acts rather than actually “being” political actors.⁸¹ Modern Dutch shipping companies in particular have largely escaped a more critical analysis of how colonial culture influenced their political motivations and actions.

This dissertation approaches business from a different standpoint, maintaining the central idea that businesses are run by human beings and far from being rational, profit-driven entities detached from their surroundings, businesses are driven by the decisions and actions of their employees. Since employees are a product of their cultural and social surroundings, employee decision-making steers corporations to behave in ways reflective of these cultural and social influences. By taking into consideration the human element of business, the following analysis hopes to delve deeper into our understanding of the roles businesses played in relation to colonialism. Unlike the classic understanding that the economics and politics of colonial rule were two sides of the same coin, this dissertation explores a more complex and nuanced model of colonialism where economics and politics form only two swells within a sea of interactions, actors, and events.⁸²

⁸⁰ Lisa Calvano, “Multinational Corporations and Local Communities: A Critical Analysis of Conflict,” *Journal of Business Ethics*, 82, no. 4 (2008): 800, Geoffrey Jones and Tarun Khanna, “Bringing History (Back) into International Business,” *Journal of International Business Studies*, 37, no. 4 (2006): 454-55

⁸¹ Andreas Georg Scherer, Guido Palazzo, and Dirk Matten, “The Business Firm as a Political Actor: A New Theory of the Firm for a Globalized World,” *Business & Society*, 48, no.4 (2009): 578.

⁸² Martin Thomas “Albert Sarraut, French Colonial Development, and the Communist Threat, 1919-1930,” *The Journal of Modern History*, 77, no. 4 (2005): 918.

Chapter Overview

This dissertation explores the maritime world in terms of fluid mobility, meaning the speed, efficiency, and scope with which information, goods and people moved across maritime networks and the effects this movement had on maritime actors. The metropole/colony analytical framework proposed by Laura Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper and used by countless historians over the past fifteen years not only obscures the fluid mobility of the maritime world, but also assumes a fundamental codependency between colonizer and colonized. In colonies like the Netherlands East Indies, focusing on the metropole/colony relationship overlooks the majority of transnational exchanges affecting millions of Indonesian and Chinese colonial residents. If we remove the Eurocentric expectation of the primacy of metropole/colony relations, we are left with a picture of various transnational exchanges happening across the Indian Ocean, South China Sea, and contiguous zones of Southeast Asia. This dissertation approaches colonialism from a maritime viewpoint that reveals the transnational exchanges of information, people, and goods between the Middle East, Asia, Europe, and the Netherlands East Indies and relegates the European metropole to one of many nodal points along these global maritime networks and one of many metropolises impacting the Netherlands East Indies.

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapters one and two focus on Kongsu Tiga's transport of hajj pilgrims between the Netherlands East Indies and Jeddah. Chapter one begins by investigating policies onboard hajj ships and how Kongsu Tiga used hierarchy and segregation to control passengers they viewed as simultaneously vulnerable and suspicious. Passengers considered "dangerous" such as Hadrami Arabs

and Meccan sheikhs were systematically separated from “ordinary” pilgrims in order to maintain control onboard. Similar racial and class hierarchies informed the company’s reactions to indigenous shipping initiatives by Indonesian Muslims who wanted pilgrim transport to remain in Muslim hands. The colonial government and Kongsu Tiga (comprised of SMN, RL, and SMO) worked together to maintain colonial hegemony over globally mobile colonial subjects and a Dutch monopoly over hajj shipping.

Chapter two travels along hajji networks beyond the space of the ship to explore the policing and surveillance of Indonesian Muslims throughout their pilgrimage. The Dutch Consulate in Jeddah acted as an information node connecting the colonial government and Kongsu Tiga to local Indonesian communities in Saudi Arabia, Cairo, and beyond. This colonial surveillance aimed to further control globally mobile colonial subjects while abroad, especially those exposed to anti-imperial and pro-Islamic propaganda while on hajj. A further surveillance node along these networks was the Kamaran quarantine station, a required stop for all British and Dutch pilgrim ships to and from the Middle East. This was another opportunity for the colonial government to gain information over Muslim colonial subjects.

Chapters three and four focus on the *Java-China-Japan Lijn* and its service transporting cargo and passengers throughout Asia, with a majority of routes between the Netherlands East Indies and Chinese port cities. Chapter three looks at how the JCJL dealt with its vulnerable position within a competitive Asian shipping market, where JCJL had to balance conciliation of public opinion and customer demands while maintaining European racial integrity and Dutch imperial authority. While expanding their passenger services to attract a “better” class of passenger successfully eliminated

unruly coolie passengers, it also forced the company to conciliate changing passenger demands instead of following a Dutch system of race onboard. They also had to contend with an increasingly politicized clientele who at times used the company to critique Dutch empire more generally. JCJL was forced to negotiate with governments, labor unions, and public opinion to quell a Chinese boycott started after two Dutch crewmembers sexually assaulted a Chinese passenger but usurped by Chinese communities across Asian maritime networks to attack Dutch policies towards overseas Chines in the Netherlands East Indies.

Chapter four explores the political aspects of Asian maritime networks by investigating the movement and policing of Communist activists and ideas across the World Ocean. Seamen were considered the most serious threat to preventing the spread of Communism in the Netherlands East Indies. The Dutch Consulate in Shanghai worked together with foreign colonial surveillance agencies to track to movements and activities of known or suspected Indonesian Communists and JCJL aided in this project by policing their ships for Communist propaganda and activists, while also trying to stop the smuggling of arms assumed to be headed for the wrong hands.

Chapter five looks at the passenger services of SMN, RL, and KPM transporting Dutch travelers and others between Europe and the Netherlands East Indies. These ships served as colonial classrooms where Europeans were taught how to be colonial rulers through interacting with Indonesian stewards and *baboes* onboard, viewing the “other,” and creating a unified European identity. With the many divisions on board came a steady stream of gender, racial, and class transgressions. Day excursions in the NEI were a way for tourists to experience an exotic yet safe glimpse into “native” authenticities.

The desire for a “timeless Indies” prevented Europeans from addressing the contemporary realities of Southeast Asia, further alienating colonizer from colonized.

This dissertation seeks to redefine Dutch empire during the interwar years by using a maritime perspective not focused simply on the geographical confines of the Netherlands East Indies, but gazing across global maritime networks traversing the simultaneously threatening and liberating waters of the World Ocean. The maritime world was not an in-between space, but an active political arena and shipping companies were active participants in the political and cultural struggles of empire. Colonialism did not stop at the geographic boundaries of colony and metropole, but traversed oceans onboard ships. Despite Dutch attempts at colonial omnipotence, ships were spaces where colonial subjects could not only voice their opinion, but also change the policies and behaviors of Dutch authorities. These increasingly powerful and opinionated voices and their ability to criticize Dutch authorities and colonial policies highlight the changing realities in Southeast Asia during the interwar period and the increasingly contentious relationship between colonizer and colonized. Ships were politicized stages and investigating the shipping industry illuminates the fissures, power struggles, and contradictions that dominated Dutch empire during the interwar period.

Chapter 1

Hajj Shipping: Maritime Business and the Colonial Project

Muslim Indonesians wake up!
The light of consciousness has thrown its rays
into your bedchamber, to wake you from
your long and quiet sleep.⁸³

For many men, women, and children who made the three-week journey from the Netherlands East Indies to Jeddah, it was their first time leaving Southeast Asia and the hajj pilgrim ships they traveled on were filled with hundreds of passengers from diverse geographic, ethnic, and economic backgrounds, all sharing a confined space at sea.⁸⁴ Hajjis' intimate exposure to such a diverse population onboard, all nevertheless united in their religious duty to fulfill the fifth pillar of Islam, introduced them to new experiences, identities, and ideas. This exposure was further intensified upon their arrival in the Middle East where thousands of hajjis from around the world converged, including Muslims free from European colonial rule and others active in nationalist struggles against European imperialism. In the eyes of the Dutch colonial authorities, the incorporation of Indonesians within such a concentrated and unpredictable group of Muslims was troubling. Not only were Indonesians generally believed to be naïve and easily influenced, but Dutch authorities were also suspicious of underlying allegiances and political agendas of Indonesian Muslims. Hajjis were therefore considered simultaneously vulnerable to and complicit in the spread of pan-Islamic, anti-colonial, and nationalist ideologies, which the Dutch suspected were circulating freely across hajj maritime networks.

⁸³ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken: Geheime Rapporten en Kabinetsrapporten, 1868-1940, nummer toegang 2.05.19, inventarisnummer 325.

⁸⁴ See appendix i, ii.

Both the Dutch colonial administration and Kongsí Tiga assumed hajjis could not be trusted to withstand the influence of subversive people and ideas they might encounter while on hajj and feared returning hajjis could contaminate the Netherlands East Indies by spreading subversive political ideas learned abroad. Controlling hajj networks, therefore, was necessary in maintaining Dutch political authority within the Netherlands East Indies and the Dutch colonial government and Kongsí Tiga worked together to police hajj maritime networks. The connections between the hajj, pan-Islamism, and Indonesian nationalism have been widely discussed by historians, but missing from this literature is the pivotal role shipping companies played in political contestations of power during the interwar years.⁸⁵ Kongsí Tiga safeguarded Dutch colonial hegemony across global maritime networks by regulating hajji behavior onboard, policing interactions between passengers, and managing onboard space according to colonial notions of race and hierarchy. The fluid mobility of pilgrims onboard hajj ships was particularly threatening for Dutch authorities and, therefore, controlling Kongsí Tiga ships was a fundamental part of the hajj policing project.

Indigenous shipping initiatives exemplified the political repercussions of foreign influences on hajji mentality and political consciousness. While some Indonesian Muslims argued that hajj transport should be under Muslim control, challenging both Kongsí Tiga's monopoly and Dutch colonial hegemony, all indigenous attempts at

⁸⁵ Although Michael B. Miller has recently written specifically about Kongsí Tiga ships, he assumes their involvement in the hajj trade was due to their ability to run well-maintained and smoothly operating liners across vast distances. While true, his analysis fails to address the other business practices carried out by the Dutch administration and the Kongsí Tiga in order to maintain a strong arm over their colonial subjects through hajj transport monopoly, an oversight that will be addressed here. Michael B. Miller, "Pilgrims' Progress: The Business of the Hajj," *Past and Present*, 191 (2006): 189-228.

establishing their own shipping lines were legally prevented by colonial law from doing so. By 1922, Kongsí Tiga had also positioned itself within this debate by helping the Dutch government draft the 1922 *Pelgrims Ordinnatie* (Pilgrims Ordinance) that established a new set of travel regulations over hajj shipping, while simultaneously awarding the shipping conference a monopoly over hajj transport between the Netherlands East Indies and Jeddah.⁸⁶ The Pilgrims Ordinance was a cooperative attempt between SMN, RL, and SMO of the Kongsí Tiga and the Dutch colonial administration to regulate maritime spaces and control the fluid mobility of maritime travelers. The colonial insecurities and fears informing these maritime regulations intensified during the 1920's and 30's, a period of increasing indigenous demands for religious autonomy, political independence, and cultural empowerment.⁸⁷

Through much of the nineteenth century, Dutch colonial authorities had viewed Indonesian Muslims with suspicion and considered the hajj a threat to Dutch colonial hegemony.⁸⁸ Dutch authorities outwardly expressed their distrust and underlying disapproval of Islam by making the pilgrimage more difficult for hajjis through prohibitive travel regulations established in 1825, 1831, and 1859.⁸⁹ A shift in

⁸⁶ The *Pelgrims Ordinnatie* (Pilgrims Ordinance) standardized minimum food, health, space, safety and hygiene requirements onboard pilgrim ships while also requiring all agents selling pilgrim fares to be licensed. Additionally, aspirant hajjis needed to be vaccinated before embarkation against smallpox, cholera, enteric, and typhoid and were required to purchase round-trip fares. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, Staatsblad 698, November 14, 1922.

⁸⁷ For an overview of the various political groups active during this time see Merle Calvin Ricklefs, *Polarising Javanese society: Islamic and other visions, c. 1830-1930* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007), 214-250.

⁸⁸ Jan van der Putten, "Of missed opportunities, colonial law and Islam-phobia," *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 34, no. 100 (Jan., 2006): 345-362.

⁸⁹ Fred von der Mehden suggests there was "hajjophobia" within the Dutch administration. Fred R. von der Mehden, *Two Worlds of Islam: Interaction between Southeast Asia and the Middle East* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993), 3.

government policy was seen after famed Dutch orientalist, Leiden University professor, and government advisor Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje began promoting religious freedom for Indonesian Muslims as NEI's *Adviseur voor Binnenlandse Zaken* (Advisor of Internal Affairs) from 1891-1906.⁹⁰ Other colonial officials followed suit and became highly knowledgeable in Islamic language, society, and culture.⁹¹

Negative attitudes towards hajjis escalated after the Communist uprisings during 1926-27. Throughout Western Java and Sumatra, strikes and rebellions were swiftly crushed by the Dutch, killing hundreds and sending thousands more to the Boven Digul prison camp.⁹² The *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (Indonesian Communist Party) was outlawed and most of its leaders were either incarcerated or forced into exile abroad. The Dutch government assumed many communist agitators had escaped incarceration by fleeing to Mecca under a hajji guise, which it felt explained the large number of hajji passengers between 1926-30.⁹³

The communist uprisings marked a watershed in Dutch colonial policing and surveillance, which afterwards closely monitored the international movements of colonial subjects, especially those potentially participating in subversive political activities.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Eric Tagliacozzo, "The Skeptic's Eye: Snouck Hurgronje and the Politics of Pilgrimage from the Indies" in *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement, and the Longue Durée*, ed. Eric Tagliacozzo (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009), 135-55.

⁹¹ Frances Gouda, "Immigration and Identity Politics in a Postcolonial World: Review of Recalling the Indies: Colonial Culture & Postcolonial Identities," *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 9, no. 4 (2008): 365.

⁹² Takashi Shiraishi suggests "once PKI and its affiliated associations and unions were destroyed, the organizational foci for the policy disappeared. The enemy consequently became diffuse, hidden, and no longer easily identifiable." Takashi Shiraishi, "Policing the Phantom Underground," *Indonesia*, 63 (1997): 3.

⁹³ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 731, 1926 Pelgrims.

⁹⁴ Expressions of modern Indonesian nationalism had been present prior to World War I with the emergence of betterment societies such as Budi Utomo and the widely popular Sarekat Islam, originally started by Muslim traders and small business owners looking to

Hajjis traveling to and from the Middle East became prime suspects in the transmission of subversive politics between pan-Islamic and anti-colonial movements in the Middle East and political agitators and groups such as PKI in Southeast Asia.⁹⁵ In order to counteract the threat of further anti-colonial rebellions, the Dutch administration chose to increase their levels of control over hajjis and enlisted the full support and cooperation of Dutch shipping companies.⁹⁶ As one official remarked after the uprisings, the colonial authorities needed to “hold the reigns tight, as punishment.”⁹⁷

Policing the ‘Tween Deck: Contamination and Transgression Onboard

Kongsi Tiga saw “Arab” passengers, a blanket term used by the Trio to describe Hadramis travelling to and from the Middle East and Meccan sheikhs working as pilgrim brokers in the Netherlands East Indies, as undesirable influences onboard their ships.

protect themselves against Chinese competitors. Increasingly popular with intellectuals and an emerging labor movement, Sarekat Islam saw ruptures in its membership at the Fourth Congress of the organization in 1919 when communists splintered from the group, leaving a largely middle-class organization by 1921. Sarekat Islam decreased its two million membership by more than half between 1922 and 1928 and “Communists continued to exert their influence covertly in local S.I. sections and to establish rival organizations, since they appeared to believe that the international religious orientation of S.I. might be used as a base for their own operations in making the Indonesian conscious of the global proletarian struggle.” Justus M. van der Kroef, “The Role of Islam in Indonesian Nationalism and Politics,” *The Western Political Quarterly*, 11, no. 1 (1958): 40.

⁹⁵ PKI had been closely linked with pan-Islamic ideas, much to the distress of the Comintern who were particularly dissatisfied with the connection of Islam with Indonesian communist thought.

⁹⁶ Europeans were “quite ready to believe that Muslims were responsive to appeals for concerted Islamic action” whether or not this was actually true. After all, by 1914 90% of the world’s Muslims lived under foreign rule. M.E. Yapp, “That Great Mass of Unmixed Mahomedanism’: Reflections on the Historical Links between the Middle East and Asia,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 19, no. 1 (1992): 8-9.

⁹⁷ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken: Geheime Rapporten en Kabinetsrapporten, 1868-1940, nummer toegang 2.05.19, inventarisnummer 325, 10 September 1931.

Both groups represented a toxic element to the *rust en orde* (tranquility and order) implemented onboard through Kongsu Tiga's extensive rules and regulations. Not only did Arabs behave insolently towards European crewmembers, they were believed to be detrimental influences on fellow Indonesian passengers. To counteract Arab influence onboard, Kongsu Tiga used segregation as a tool to prevent what they considered a dangerous mix of people onboard.

Colonial policies towards Hadrami residents within the Netherlands East Indies relied on strict segregation. Hadramis were obligated to live in *Kampong Arab* (Arab Villages) until 1919 and only since 1914 were they allowed to leave these settlements without first obtaining a travel pass.⁹⁸ Despite the segregation endured by this category of *Vreemde Oosterlingen* (Foreign Orientals), Hadrami communities were the most established and sizable Arab population in the NEI and held considerable economic and religious status in cities across the Netherlands East Indies during the interwar period. Regardless of their relatively small numbers--approximately 45,000 in 1920, 70,000 in 1930 and 80,000 by World War II--Hadrami quarters grew into active trading districts in cities like Batavia, Surabaya, Palembang, and Pekalongan, largely through the trade of textiles, clothes, building materials, and furniture.⁹⁹ Successful traders often invested their profits into additional businesses in real estate and money lending and in cities such as Palembang and Pekalongan, these Arab communities rivaled the Chinese in their influence on local politics and commercial activities.¹⁰⁰ This was partly due to the fact that since Hadrami women were prohibited from traveling, Hadrami men often married

⁹⁸ Huub de Jonge, "Abdul Rahman Baswedan and the Emancipation of the Hadramis in Indonesia," *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 32, no. 3 (2004): 375-6.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 373.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 375-6.

indigenous women who provided “a bridge” that eased their integration into local communities.¹⁰¹

Besides marriage, Islam provided a common identity between Indonesian and Arab communities and was a “powerful unifying force” that helped Hadramis gain financial, religious and cultural status in the NEI.¹⁰² Their command of the Arabic language and continuing close ties to the Middle East (largely due to circular migration and large remittances) suggested a close bond to the Islamic holy land and was therefore respected by many Indonesian Muslims.¹⁰³ Religion helped integrate Hadramis into Indonesian society and their successes in commercial trade were intricately connected to their revered religious positions among Indonesian Muslims.¹⁰⁴

Recent historiography has illustrated that Indonesian reverence towards Hadramis subsided with the rise of Indonesian nationalism during the 1920’s and 30’s. Although indigenous Muslims often viewed differences between Arabs and Indonesians in a positive light, Indonesian nationalism focused on Arab foreignness as opposed to shared religion.¹⁰⁵ Despite historians being well aware of these increasing divisions, Dutch contemporaries continued to see Hadramis as a political threat due to their influence over Indonesian Muslims. Also, Hadrami communities focused on “progress” within local communities through education: they built their own schools with curricula focused on

¹⁰¹ Natalie Mobini-Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening: Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Southeast Asia Program Publications, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1999), 23.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 24. For more on remittances see De Jonge, “Abdul Rahman Baswedan,” and Friedhelm Hartwig, “Contemplation, Social Reform and the Recollection of Identity. Hadramī Migrants and Travellers between 1896 and 1972,” *Die Welt des Islams*, New Series, 41, no. 3 (Nov., 2001): 327.

¹⁰⁴ Peter G. Riddell, “Arab Migrants and Islamization in the Malay World During the Colonial Period,” *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 29, no. 84 (2001): 117.

¹⁰⁵ Mobini-Kesheh, “The Hadrami Awakening,” 24, Riddell, “Arab Migrants,” 123.

Islamic religious teachings as well as modern languages, mathematics and geography.¹⁰⁶

Due to the elevated status of Hadramis within the Netherlands East Indies and the education available within such communities, the Dutch continued to try and diminish Arab power and prestige of during the 1920's and 30's.¹⁰⁷ Part of this strategy was to regulate and police Hadrami movements onboard Kongsji Tiga ships to and from the Middle East.¹⁰⁸

Colonial stereotypes of cunning Arabs were reflected in Kongsji Tiga's assumptions that such passengers benefitted unjustly from traveling on modest pilgrim fares while not technically partaking in the hajj. According to the 1922 *Pelgrims Ordinantie* (Pilgrims Ordinance) and the 1931 Simla Rules, a pilgrim was any "Muslim passenger, regardless of sex or age, traveling to or from the Hedjaz for pilgrimage."¹⁰⁹ The Kongsji Tiga felt many Arabs living and working in the Hedjaz, known as *moekimin* (stayers), took advantage of this loophole by traveling for "een appel en een ei."¹¹⁰ The Trio's opinion was that Arabs were not pilgrims, but rather merchants and agents who

¹⁰⁶ Hartwig, "Contemplation, Social Reform," 327.

¹⁰⁷ Mobini-Kesheh explains how the colonial government "hastened this breakdown of the traditional stratification system by its willingness to appoint prominent non-sayyids as heads of their local Arab communities. When the Arab population of a city grew large enough to warrant it, the government would appoint a prominent individual as an Arab 'officer' . . . to provide liason between his community and the government, to provide statistical information and advice to the government on issues related to Arabs, to disseminate government regulations and decrees, and to ensure the maintenance of law and order." Mobini-Kesheh, "The Hadrami Awakening," 26.

¹⁰⁸ The British also imposed travel restrictions for Hadramis traveling across the Indian Ocean. See Engsing Ho, "Empire through Diasporic Eyes: A View from the Other Boat," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 46, no. 2 (April 2004): 212.

¹⁰⁹ The 1931 Simla Rules were meant to improve the conditions of pilgrim ships traveling in and around the Indian Ocean.

¹¹⁰ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken: Consulaat (1873-1930) en Nederlands Gezantschap (1930-1950) te Djeddah (Turkije / Saoedi-Arabië), nummer toegang 2.05.53, inventarisnummer 147, 2 December 1929, Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden, GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1175, 19 May 1936, From International Agencies Ltd.

unjustly profited from the special arrangements made specifically by Kongsí Tiga for pilgrims. This only helped to reinforce the Trio's idea that Arabs were dishonest cheats.

¹¹¹ Further, Arabs were assumed to manipulate and abuse the ticketing system by traveling with the tickets of deceased pilgrims and, therefore, Kongsí Tiga enforced strict adherence to correct individual tickets for Arab passengers in the hopes of an "end to this abuse."¹¹²

Far more troubling than taking financial advantage of Kongsí Tiga's pilgrim fares was the effect Arabs had on Indonesian pilgrims onboard. The shipping companies felt "Arabs setting out for Netherlands India are troublesome passengers and often try to disturb the good order onboard."¹¹³ Arab passengers were accused of "bother[ing] the more rightful passengers through their arrogant behavior"¹¹⁴ and Dutch opinion was that "[i]n general, Arabs are disagreeable and harmful travel companions for Javanese. If they get the chance to snap up the best spots in the pilgrims quarters, they act the boss over their fellow Javanese passengers, they are 'korang adat' in relation to them."¹¹⁵ The reasons why Arabs were able to "unjustly take up more room" and get the best spots onboard was, according to the Trio, down to their "bold nature" and "experience in

¹¹¹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147, 2 December 1929 Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden.

¹¹² Kongsí Tiga was more lenient about Indonesian pilgrim tickets getting "mixed up" due to low Indonesian literacy rates and large parties usually traveling together in groups. Ibid.

¹¹³ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1176, 18 September 1930, from Van de Poll & Co to RL.

¹¹⁴ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147. 2 December 1929 Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. *Korang Adat*, an antiquated phrase with no exact definition, was used to imply someone was uncivilized and rude. Dirk H. Kolff, *Reize door den weinig bekenden zuidelijken Mulukschen archipel en langs de geheel onbekende zuidwest kust van Nieuw-Guinea: gedaan in de jaren 1825 en 1826* (Amsterdam: G.J.A. Beijerinck, 1828), 127.

traveling onboard ships.¹¹⁶ This “bold nature” also led to numerous reports that “in general many Arabs misbehave towards their fellow female passengers while traveling” and the suspicion that Arab men acted sexually inappropriate onboard was also “fully shared by the local agents of the Kongsji Tiga.”¹¹⁷

Kongsji Tiga’s European officers and captains onboard often filed detailed reports about the “nuisance and opposition” experienced from Arab passengers who acted as “leaders” onboard and “corrupted the temperament of the pilgrims with their arrogant and insolent behavior.”¹¹⁸ For example, the captain of RL’s SS “Sitoebondo” travelling from Jeddah to Tangjong Priok in the summer of 1930 complained about thirty Arab passengers onboard who he suspected of traveling with tickets belonging to deceased pilgrims. These passengers also continuously disregarded Kongsji Tiga’s onboard regulations by disobeying the bans on smoking and the use of stove devices onboard. They also got into fights, cut the line in the dining hall, littered, and regularly “troubled the doctor with traces of sickness” while refusing all vaccination injections. The captain noted they disturbed of “the good usual routine” of the ship through their “uncongenial and impudent behavior.”¹¹⁹

Colonial prejudices and stereotypes played a role in these condemning opinions of Hadramis, but most concerning to the Dutch was that Arab passengers were seen as negative influences on the behavior and temperament of Indonesian pilgrims. The underlying fears of Kongsji Tiga captains and officers was that better educated, wealthier,

¹¹⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147. 11 December 1929 Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden.

¹¹⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147. 2 December 1929 Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden.

¹¹⁸ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1176, August 1930, SS Sitoebondo 22.6.30 from Djeddah to Tandjong Priok 22 June-13 July 1930.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

and more independent Arabs had the ability to “taint our good name and damage the good spirit of the pilgrims.”¹²⁰ To keep colonial authority in tact, European crewmembers and Kongsí Tiga’s administrative staff deemed the combination of Indonesian pilgrims and Arabs as “very undesirable” and by the late 1920’s, local Kongsí Tiga booking agents warned all captains and officers beforehand if any Arab passengers would be traveling onboard.¹²¹

Contamination of Indonesian passengers’ “good spirit” was the most threatening and feared outcome of Arab influence onboard. Arabs represented possible agitators who could turn the tide of pilgrims’ compliant behavior against Dutch authority. In addition to this Arab threat, the combination of incendiary factors experienced both onboard hajj ships and within the Middle East provided seditious influences while pilgrims were spatially removed from colonial order in the NEI. The ship journey was meant to dampen any seditious ideas entertained while abroad before pilgrims returned to the Netherlands East Indies. In this way, policies onboard served to re-educate pilgrims who may have forgotten their place in the colonial order while on hajj. Kongsí Tiga worried that if these subversive Arab passengers were revered as holding an elevated status onboard, then “pilgrims would listen to these [passengers] more than the captain of the ship” and the Kongsí Tiga felt “surely we must remain boss on our own ships!”¹²²

In order to counteract these perceived negative influences, Kongsí Tiga attempted to separate Arab passengers from Indonesian pilgrims, stating “[a]s a general rule we consider it undesirable to book Arabs and pilgrims on the same ship... at all events [we

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147. 2 December 1929 Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden.

¹²² NL-HaNA, BuZa / Kabinetsarchief Politieke Rapportage, 2.05.19, inv.nr. 325.

try] to lodge Arabs and pilgrims separate from each other.”¹²³ If possible, ships would designate certain areas specifically for Arabs, which could be a “separate hatch” or in other cases “[w]henver possible, a separate *lockable* room is made available, for example the space under the forecandle head.”¹²⁴ Most importantly, European crewmembers were expected to “keep an eye on them, especially at night.”¹²⁵

Increasingly during the 1920’s, Arabs were denied passage altogether on ships that could be “fully booked with real pilgrims” and if any pilgrims *were* onboard, Arab passengers were forbidden from entering “any parts of the ships that pilgrims occupy.”¹²⁶ Instead Arabs had to wait “until the last few ships of the season,” which Kongsji Tiga hoped would have few to no pilgrims onboard aimed to transport all “non-Djawa” passengers together.¹²⁷ Kongsji Tiga would have denied Arabs transport altogether were it not “very troublesome to deny these people passage, and that it would bring us difficulties with the Hedjaz government.”¹²⁸ Kongsji Tiga was willing to forgo revenue earned from Arab passengers in order to avoid the threats they posed to colonial control onboard.

¹²³ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1175. 25 April 1932 SMN telegram to Abdoolabhoy Lalljee & Co. Merchants Head office Bombay, other offices Calcutta, Aden, Macalla, Berbera “if Consul Agrees you may accept Makallah passengers for Tanibar stop please arrange with Captain separate as much as possible arabs and pilgrims.”

¹²⁴ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1175, 11 March 1936.

¹²⁵ Italics my own. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147. 2 December 1929 Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden.

¹²⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147. 3 April 1929 Consul to Kongsji-Tiga.

¹²⁷ “For the past few seasons we have instilled a system where all Arabs who wish to depart to Netherlands East Indies and who do not have a return ticket with their own name on it must wait until the last ship and must purchase a one-way travel ticket for *f* 80.-” NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147, 2 December 1929, Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden.

¹²⁸ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1176, 18 September 1930, Van de Poll & Co to RL.

Colonial notions of racial and class hierarchies also informed Kongsu Tiga's policies regarding passengers in their higher-class accommodations. Upper-class passengers on pilgrim ships were divided into five categories and three classes of accommodation. Class A comprised European and high-ranking Indonesians. They had servants wait on them in their cabins, each with private bathroom and toilet and ate their meals in the salon together with European crewmembers. Class B consisted of Indonesian civil servants and non-European private passengers. They also had servants care for their cabins and were provided better food than ordinary pilgrims, but were not guaranteed use of a private bathroom or toilet and were prohibited from using the salon. C class passengers paid f150 extra for private cabin accommodation, but otherwise were treated as ordinary pilgrims, without special food, servants, or lavatories.¹²⁹

It was mandatory that all Indonesian cabin passengers were “ natives of better standing such as regents, merchants, etc. who are traveling for [their] own account and who can be relied on to behave decently.”¹³⁰ But even Indonesians of “better standing” were often discouraged from travelling in A-class cabins in an attempt to retain the most exclusive spaces onboard solely for European use. For example, during the 1937 hajj season Indonesian pilgrims Mr. and Mrs. Gelar Soeis Soetann Pengeran disembarked from *N.V. Rotterdamsche Lloyd's* SS “Buitenzorg” after a three-week journey from Tangjong Priok to Jeddah and immediately visited the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah to lodge a complaint about their sea voyage. Kongsu Tiga's agents in Medan and Batavia

¹²⁹ All upper-class passengers could return on any ship (provided a cabin was available) and did not have to wait their turn for the next available ship like steerage class pilgrims, a harrowing experience that could last for weeks. GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1202, GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1202, January 8 1938, and GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1202, 9-6-37 SMN to RL and SMO, Batavia.

¹³⁰ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1202, 11 August 1930.

had dissuaded the couple from travelling in A-class accommodations and instead assigned them to a B-class cabin for which they paid f400 each.¹³¹ Although the couple found both their cabin and service to their liking, they were denied the use of a toilet and bathroom adjacent to their cabin, despite being promised such access by Kongsig Tiga's ticketing agents in Batavia.¹³² Additionally, the couple was prohibited from eating in the salon with A-class passengers and European crewmembers, instead being served the same food as steerage passengers on the decks below. Only after several complaints to the captain were they eventually supplied with bread, cheese, and eggs for breakfast and supplemental sweets and puddings with their other meals, but they were still prohibited from entering the salon.¹³³

As a result of this complaint, the three Kongsig Tiga companies debated whether to continue accommodating pilgrims in upper-class cabins. Kongsig Tiga's management was concerned that allowing Indonesians access to higher-class accommodation would encourage them to take on European airmail, resulting in increased demands regarding their own comfort and a sense of entitlement to special privileges onboard. Further, the Dutch shipping firms were concerned over access to the salon, which they saw as a European space not to be defiled by Indonesian pilgrims, even those of higher social standing. SMN and RL questioned if British-owned SMO was trying to make a "political statement" by accommodating so many Indonesian passengers in A and B-class cabins and allowing "prominent natives to, more or less, travel like Europeans." SMO reassured the other firms that passengers only occupied these spaces when there were "no other

¹³¹ Paid in Batavia on December 14, 1937.

¹³² Instead a special place was set up for them on the after deck without tap or other facilities. GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1202, January 8 1938, Jeddah to RL.

¹³³ Ibid.

European passengers onboard” and access to the salon was only given when “there was no separate deck.”¹³⁴

Many Hadramis had the means to purchase A, B, or C-class tickets, but this opportunity was largely denied to them due to Kongsı Tiga’s view of their inability to “behave decently.” In theory, allowing Arabs transport in higher-class cabins would keep them separate from Indonesian pilgrims for the duration of the voyage, but this was clearly not in keeping with Kongsı Tiga’s more pressing agenda of denying Arabs elevated positions within onboard hierarchies. Throughout the 1930’s, Lallajee and Company, Kongsı Tiga’s agent in Makallah, was receiving “letters from many places in Hadurmout [sic] asking us to arrange for them second and even first-class passages for Singapore”.¹³⁵ The agents were prepared to sell these tickets “[p]rovided accommodation for the class is available on board the steamers,”¹³⁶ but they received little information from the Kongsı Tiga about how to proceed with such passengers; “[o]wing to absence of sufficient information about the fares, we experience great inconvenience as to charges, and have to wait until the arrival of steamers to ask the captains. We shall be obliged, if you will furnish us with full particulars about it.”¹³⁷ Kongsı Tiga remained vague with local agents about such fares due to internal conflicts over whether or not to allow Arab passengers higher-class accommodations.

The three companies comprising Kongsı Tiga could not always come to an agreement regarding this class of passenger and they struggled over the importance of profits versus the importance of maintaining colonial hierarchies onboard. SMO, the

¹³⁴ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1202, Inhoud van Oktober, November 1938.

¹³⁵ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1178. 24 June 1939, SMN to RL.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

only non-Dutch owned company in the Kongsy Tiga, was “quite prepared to accept Arabs in first class accommodation in any of our vessels fixed to call at Makallah, provided they were able to pay their passage money.”¹³⁸ RL disagreed and felt that despite SMO’s determination “to rent first class cabins to Arabs . . . This does not change our position, that we do not want the accommodations for European passengers made available for Arabs.”¹³⁹ SMN in particular took a hard line against offering cabin accommodation to Arabs, stating “we must not transport any Arabs in cabins that are also used by Europeans.”¹⁴⁰ Both SMN and RL felt “the cabins intended for European passengers must in no case be made available for the transport of Arabs.”¹⁴¹ Ultimately, the trio decided on a compromise to “look at these case by case if these reserved accommodations, which also would be rented to C category pilgrims, can be made available for Arab steerage passengers.”¹⁴² For the Dutch companies, profits took a backseat to concerns over racial and class contamination onboard and ultimately all three companies agreed that “[a]t the most, we can consider [providing] clerks cabins on ships where no pilgrims are traveling.”¹⁴³

Along with anxieties over contamination of European spaces, the SMN and RL were worried about the example higher-class Arab passengers set for Indonesian pilgrims, many of who had never before left the Netherlands East Indies and were experiencing the fluid mobility of global maritime networks for the first time. Both the Kongsy Tiga and the Dutch government wanted to ensure these experiences did not

¹³⁸ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1178.

¹³⁹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1178, 12 July 1939.

¹⁴⁰ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1178, 24 June 1939, SMN to RL.

¹⁴¹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1178, 27 June 1939, RL to SMN.

¹⁴² GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1178, 1 August 1939.

¹⁴³ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1178, 27 June 1939, RL to SMN.

include exposure to anti-colonial ideas that encouraged hajjis to question Dutch colonial authority. Indonesians of “better standing” onboard were also present within NEI social hierarchies and, therefore, did not transgress colonial norms or threaten colonial stability in the same way as Arabs travelling in the higher classes. But within the strictly regulated spatiality of Kongsu Tiga ships, even *Vreemde Oosterlingen* traveling in steerage held a position of power onboard and therefore presented a danger to Dutch colonial authority by subverting the colonial hierarchies implemented by Kongsu Tiga onboard.¹⁴⁴ Rather than reflecting the racial hierarchies present in the NEI, the fluid mobility of passengers instead refracted these hierarchies, ultimately revealing a quite different hierarchical structure onboard than the trio initially intended.

The Kongsu Tiga denounced the presence of Meccan sheikhs for many of the same reasons as Hadrami passengers. Pilgrims almost always used pilgrim brokers or sheikhs to arrange their food, accommodation, travel, and documents needed for the trip from the Netherlands East Indies to Jeddah.¹⁴⁵ Sheikhs were responsible for pilgrims up until their arrival in Jeddah, when they were transferred to the responsibility of a *mutawwif* or *dalil* (local sheikh) or his representative (*wakil*) who accompanied them throughout their travels to the holy places and arranged food, accommodation and transport in Saudi Arabia.¹⁴⁶ In Indonesia, sheikhs had contact with *Kijaji* (local clerics) at *pesantran* (rural Qur’anic schools) where they recruited and advised aspirant hajjis and

¹⁴⁴ “No Arabs are appointed kopala’s Hadji [head Hajji] onboard ship.” NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147, 2 December 1929, Consul to advisor inlandsche zaken weltevreden

¹⁴⁵ Ernst Spaan, “Taikongs and Calos: The Role of Middlemen and Brokers in Javanese International Migration,” *International Migration Review*, 28, no. 1 (Spring, 1994): 95.

¹⁴⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147, July 1930, Lijst of the voornaamste mpetawwifs (pelgrimssjeichs) der Djawa pelgrims en van hun wakils in Djeddah, 269 entires, plus 26 wakilsjeichs.

acted as advisors to prospective pilgrims and received premiums when recruiting pilgrims for the pilgrim broker.¹⁴⁷ Once onboard, there existed “a serious battle to take each other’s customers” as brokers worked to recruit pilgrims for their head sheikh in Mecca, earning commissions on each pilgrim they recruited.¹⁴⁸ Although many historians have simply echoed official colonial policy by labeling sheikhs as shady characters, it is important to unravel the meanings behind this vilification.¹⁴⁹

Using rhetoric from the Ethical Policy, Kongsji Tiga felt it their responsibility to protect “innocent” pilgrims from the conniving ways of Meccan sheikhs, but their deeper concern was that these Arab sheikhs infringed on Dutch control over the entire Hajj process. From canvassing passengers in the NEI, to maintaining order onboard, and controlling the influences on pilgrims after disembarking at Jeddah, the SMN, RL, and SMO were anxious to reform the use of sheikhs or cut them out of the Hajj process all together. Meccan sheikhs’ loyalty to the Dutch regime could not be trusted, they took advantage of pilgrims onboard and in Mecca, and they were troublemakers at sea.¹⁵⁰ Although there may have been sheikhs who had questionable business practices, the real concern of the Trio was their powerful position within the hajj trade and their ability to “prevent the smooth running of business.”¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ “The shipping agencies secured the services of pilgrim brokers by paying premiums bought by pilgrims via this broker.” Laurence Husson, “Indonesians in Saudi Arabia: Worship and Work,” *Studia Islamika*, 4, no. 4 (1997): 118.

¹⁴⁸ Kees van Dijk, “Indonesische hadki’s op reis” in *Islamitische Pelgrimstochten*, eds. Willy Jansen and Huub de Jonge (Muiderberg, N.L.: Dick Coutinho, 1991), 44.

¹⁴⁹ Kees van Dijk notes that “[a]ttempts to pilfer pilgrims of their money in fact began long before the departure for Mecca began. Within the arrangement of the Hajj appeared intermediaries that were not always honest. Because they worked on commission, they found it most important on winning as many customers as possible.” *Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁵⁰ Arabs played a crucial role in the pilgrim trade based in Singapore. Riddell, “Arab Migrants,” 123.

¹⁵¹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 149, 2 May 1931.

Like Arab passengers in general, Meccan sheikhs were considered “difficult passengers who quite often cause trouble or discontent on board.”¹⁵² They also attempted “to take more space on board for themselves than they have a right to.”¹⁵³ They were vilified for persuading the pilgrims to change from one sheikh to another during the outward voyage and advancing “part of their expenses [before sailing], which, later on, the pilgrims can only repay with great difficulty.”¹⁵⁴ Unlike Arabs, sheikhs traveled together with pilgrims on the steerage decks and therefore had more ability to influence fellow passengers and take advantage of Indonesian pilgrims.¹⁵⁵ The Dutch authorities noted the “tendency of Meccans to swear and pass the time by making unnecessary complaints” and these behaviors that were “really not valuable for society” could be mimicked by Indonesians once “back in the Fatherland.”¹⁵⁶ Kongsu Tiga believed pilgrims needed protection against wily sheikhs because “[m]ost pilgrims lack the courage to complain at the right moment.”¹⁵⁷ It was the job of the European captains and officers to take necessary actions to protect the pilgrim who “paid too little attention to himself,” for example, if he had been denied his rightful amount of space in the pilgrim

¹⁵² NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 144, 21 November 1938, International Agencies Ltd. to SMN, RL, SMO.

¹⁵³ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147, 9 October 1929, SMN, RL, SMO to Consulate.

¹⁵⁴ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 144, 21 November 1938, International Agencies Ltd. to SMN, RL, SMO.

¹⁵⁵ Unlike other Arab passengers, “[c]omplaints of Mekka-sechs committing adultery with Javanese women on board pilgrim ships have never yet reached our ears. We venture to think that news of such an endeavor would very certainly leak, especially since during the pilgrimage different and stricter notions of morality than under ordinary circumstances reign.” NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147, 9 October 1929, SMN, RL, SMO to Consulate.

¹⁵⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 172, 8 December 1931, Report of Vice Consul Djeddah.

¹⁵⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147, 11 December 1929, Consul to Advisor voor Inlandse Zaken Weltevreden.

quarters due to a “greedy sheikh” taking up too much space onboard.¹⁵⁸ All three Kongsi Tiga companies agreed “it would be in the interest of the pilgrims if this [sheikh] traffic could be stopped.”¹⁵⁹ Clearly, it was also in Kongsi Tiga’s interest.

The existence of sheikhs in general was not frowned upon by Kongsi Tiga, but the “Arabness” of Meccan sheikhs in particular was what concerned them. Some sheikhs were Indonesian and were “recruited from the ranks of Indonesian pilgrims who had worked or traded temporarily in Mecca.”¹⁶⁰ While Kongsi Tiga felt these Indonesian pilgrim brokers could be relied upon to further the Dutch agenda and support Dutch enterprises, Arab pilgrim brokers were seen as untrustworthy and considered “more damaging than recruiters of [the pilgrims’] own nationality.”¹⁶¹ Not only was it considered “logical that the bookings of the native pilgrims should be handled by people of their own race” but it was of “the greatest importance to our companies to have a broker corps on which we can rely and from which we can expect support at times when we have to face competition.”¹⁶² Broker loyalty was crucial to the Trio as challenges to Kongsi Tiga’s shipping monopoly increased during the 1920s and 30s. Kongsi Tiga recognized they would “naturally be much stronger if we were backed by a reliable and loyal corps of brokers and if the influence of the ‘mecca sechs’ on the bookings were less than it is at present.”¹⁶³ The influence of Meccan sheikhs depended on Arabs holding a

¹⁵⁸ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147, 9 October 1929, SMN, RL, SMO to Consulate.

¹⁵⁹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 144, 21 November 1938, International Agencies Ltd. To SMN, RL, SMO.

¹⁶⁰ Spaan, “Taikongs and Calos,” 95.

¹⁶¹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147, 11 December 1929, Consul to Advisor voor Inlandse Zaken Weltevreden.

¹⁶² NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.144, 26 October 1938, SMN, RL, SMO to International Agencies Ltd.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

certain position within Indonesian society, which the Kongsi Tiga saw based on “the fact that they come from the hedjaz and secondly owing to their having the disposal of more capital and their exercising a certain religious influence on the simple native.”¹⁶⁴

Ultimately these pilgrims brokers could not be trusted or depended upon to support Dutch shipping because it was “a matter of indifference to a ‘Mecca sech’ by which company the pilgrims travel, as his earnings are derived from the stay in the Hejaz, so that we can of course never expect any loyal support from the mecca sechs.”¹⁶⁵

Kongsi Tiga studied the possibility of counteracting the influence of the skeikhs but repeatedly failed to find “a satisfactory solution to the problem.”¹⁶⁶ They suggested a radical measure of shutting these sheikhs out of the colonies by refusing “to transport the sjechs altogether and if the same could be done to and from Singapore their outlay to travel to the Netherlands East Indies would be increased to such an extent that few would consider to make the voyage by other means.” But like Arab passengers in general, this would cause “great trouble with the Saudi Arabian government, which must be avoided.”¹⁶⁷ Surveillance was the only option to “stop this nuisance” and through “daily control of the pilgrims transports” and “daily inspections of the pilgrim living quarters” Kongsi Tiga’s European crewmembers could “prevent this evil from taking up further dimensions.”¹⁶⁸ European captains and officers were alerted to “this evil” with special instructions to “watch them and prohibit the use of Arabs on board pilgrim ships as go-betweens for the distribution of meat, etc or for the conveyance or maintenance of

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.144, 21 November 1938, International Agencies Ltd. to SMN, RL, SMO.

¹⁶⁸ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 144, 9 October 1929, SMN, RL, SMO to Consulate.

regulations over order on board.¹⁶⁹ By insisting Arabs were never appointed *Kopala Hajji* (Head Hajji) onboard, Kongsy Tiga further eroded the special status of these passengers, who otherwise held a revered position among Indonesian pilgrims.¹⁷⁰

Meccan sheikhs were also monitored when being issued tickets and were required to make themselves known to agents when purchasing tickets so it could be noted down. While all tickets were in principal expected to have the individual traveler's name on them, in reality there was a "difference in treatment" between Indonesian pilgrims and Meccan sheikhs. The Trio reasoned that since most pilgrims were illiterate and travelled in groups, their tickets were often unknowingly exchanged with others in the group and, therefore, Kongsy Tiga would "NOT stick rigidly to the rule of the personal marks of their tickets."¹⁷¹ But Meccan sheikhs on the other hand were "experienced travelers, they can all read and write and they invariably retain their own ticket."¹⁷² Jeddah agents were instructed to enforce the requirement of tickets with individual Arab names on them while overlooking the same "long-held custom" for Indonesian pilgrims.¹⁷³

By closely monitoring Meccan sheikhs through their behavior onboard and by keeping records of their identity through the issuance of personal tickets, the Kongsy Tiga ultimately hoped to build cases against individual sheikhs they felt should not be allowed to travel onboard their ships. If its agents could provide "concrete and well founded

¹⁶⁹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147, 11 December 1929, Consul to Advisor voor Inlandse Zaken Weltevreden.

¹⁷⁰ Captains and 1st Officers were warned beforehand if Arabs would be travelling with them. Also it is insisted that no Arabs are appointed "kopala's Hadji" onboard ship NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147, 2 December 1929, Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden.

¹⁷¹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147, 11 December 1929, Consul to Advisor voor Inlandse Zaken Weltevreden.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

cases of corruption or fraud, maltreatment of prospective pilgrims or misconduct in Java, visas to enter Java can be refused [in Jeddah] by the Dutch legation.” Although Kongsig Tiga recognized that “sjechs being refused admittance in this way will of course be replaced by others” they concluded that the new breed of Arab pilgrim broker would be “a better and less aggressive type of sjech.”¹⁷⁴

Kongsig Tiga was also under scrutiny from Indonesian Muslim communities themselves who questioned Dutch ability to ensure the safety and comfort of pilgrims, especially in terms of their interactions with sheikhs. Indonesian newspapers and magazines such as the Palembang periodical *Pertja Selaten* and the *Pewarté Deli* (Deli Herald) published articles that argued how “the Dutch government and Her representatives must take ‘harder’ action against the pilgrim sjeichs, etc.” This action was only possible “while still respectful of not bringing [the NEI’s] neutral position in terms of religion (kenetralen pada sgama) into danger.” Very aware of the power of public opinion within the NEI, the Dutch authorities responded to such articles feeling it needed “no argument that, in terms of our ‘hardness’ (refusal of visas, etc.), we cannot go any further than a definite limit. Overstepping these would lead the pro-Arabic magazines in the Indies, who claim to have the interests of pilgrims in mind, to propose these steps are meant as a hindrance to the pilgrimage.”¹⁷⁵ Controlling the power of pilgrim brokers was not only an internal dialogue within government and shipping circles, but also a public concern, making the issue all the more delicate in terms of

¹⁷⁴ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.144, 21 November 1938, International Agencies Ltd. to SMN, RL, SMO.

¹⁷⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.135, Jaar Verslag 1355 (1936-37).

Kongsi Tiga's actions and, therefore, the Trio always acted "with an eye on the danger to their own popularity."¹⁷⁶

Anxieties over mixing Arab and Indonesian passengers were based on fears of serious transgressions onboard that would challenge Dutch hegemony and these fears occasionally proved correct. For example, in 1926 Hajji Soedjak traveled back to the NEI on SS "Ajax" and while appointed *Kapala Hadji* (Head Hajji), he caused

much trouble: he held speeches onboard, where the pilgrims were urged towards various provocative actions, directly against the regulations of the ship and later against the quarantine regulations at Poeloe Roebiah which he advised to sabotage as not in harmony with their religion. If not for the fact that the brother of our [Jeddah] Advisor Tadjoedin was on board, things could have been worse.¹⁷⁷

He demanded the right to behave however he pleased on the ship. Rather than obedient submission to Dutch rules and regulations, Hajji Soedjak was redefining his place within colonial hierarchies by utilizing the sea's transgressive possibilities and his own fluid mobility, precisely what Kongsi Tiga and Dutch colonial authorities feared. Hajji Soedjak was behaving as a consumer with purchasing power rather than as a colonial subject.

Concerns about maintaining Dutch hegemony over globally mobile colonial subjects were couched in terminology defined by the "Ethical Policy." Naïve and innocent natives were the unsuspecting victims of conniving and dishonest Arabs, ready to take advantage of their essentialized good natures at any chance. Colonial perception of the hajj as "ordeal and pilgrims as victims" were common but as Sugata Bose suggests

¹⁷⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.147, 11 December 1929, Consul to Advisor voor Inlandse Zaken Weltevreden.

¹⁷⁷ As seen in the next section, Hajji Soedjak was instrumental in promoting indigenous shipping attempts that challenged Kongsi Tiga's monopoly. NL-HaNA, BuZa / Kabinetsarchief Politieke Rapportage, 2.05.19, inv.nr. 325.

“gives a very partial, loaded, and distorted picture of the journey to Mecca.”¹⁷⁸ It is not simply enough to restate the damning opinions Dutch colonialists held about Arabs, but rather to discover what fears and anxieties these racist ideas actually masked. Hadramis “were seen as outsiders who were rarely spoken about in positive terms. The image of the typical Hadrami was that of a usurer, a miser, and a swindler.”¹⁷⁹ Further, the “version of Islam that was practiced and preached by the Arabs, as a force, was generally perceived as a negative influence upon the pilgrims from the Dutch East Indies.”¹⁸⁰ The real meanings behind these economic and religious concerns were that Hadramis and Meccan sheikhs challenged Dutch authority in these two realms. Arabs could stir up trouble by highlighting the inequalities and suppression of Dutch colonialism through their own examples as individuals existing (at least partially) outside the colonial paradigm. The shipping companies, therefore, worked as a kind of watchdog for the Dutch colonial government, frequently to the detriment of their own profits.

Hajji Resistance: Competition and Control Over Hajj Shipping

In spite of the regulations imposed onboard Kongsu Tiga ships, competition within hajj shipping increasingly became an avenue for pilgrims to sidestep the Trio’s monopoly over hajj transport. Pilgrims used their consumer power to express dissatisfaction with Dutch treatment of Muslim pilgrims and increasingly purchased fares from companies they felt were most amenable to pilgrim interests. Opting for foreign shipping companies as well as exercising preference among the three Kongsu Tiga firms provided hajjis an

¹⁷⁸ Bose, “A Hundred Horizons,” 206.

¹⁷⁹ De Jonge, “Abdul Rahman Baswedan,” 382.

¹⁸⁰ Syed Muhd Khairudin Aljunied, “Rethinking riots in colonial South East Asia,” *South East Asia Research*, 18, no. 1 (March 2010): 106.

opportunity to voice their demands for more material comforts onboard and respect for the religious aspects of hajj pilgrimage. By exercising their economic options, pilgrims could force Kongsy Tiga and the Dutch colonial government to actively listen to and address their concerns and occasionally even pressured them to alter maritime policies.¹⁸¹ Indonesian Muslims found a political voice through their participation in the hajj due to their economic power as consumers of maritime transport.

Throughout the 1920's, hajj shipping throughout Asia was monopolized by a small number of European shipping companies who dominated pilgrim transport to and from the Netherlands East Indies, British India, and the Straits Settlements.¹⁸² These European companies cooperated with each other through shipping conferences, despite viewing each other as competitors. Intense struggles over rates meant that European companies constantly changed their fare prices to compete with or undercut European competitors.¹⁸³ But despite ongoing rate wars, these conferences “generally accepted the right of each [European] nation served by them to have a participating member. Thus, apart from extraordinary circumstances, the legitimacy of each member's existence was usually mutually recognized.”¹⁸⁴ Joep à Campo suggests European, Chinese and Indonesian shipping within Southeast Asia ascended “a technological hierarchy” but this chapter shows it also followed a racial hierarchy informed by colonial norms in the NEI.

¹⁸¹ The economic importance of hajj transport cannot be underestimated. If we average each ticket at 250 guilders and estimate the number of passengers between the 1919-1920 and 1939-1940 hajj seasons at 358,951, Kongsy Tiga earned approximately 89,737,750 guilders in hajj ticket sales, which would be worth approximately 688 million euros today, or 34.39 million euros per year.

¹⁸² NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.157, Eindverslag 1926-27.

¹⁸³ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1176, 9 Feb 1932. Other tariffs P&O \$77=f107,80, LI. Triestino 70=98, Mess Marine 65=91, so suggest that the trio lowers its price from f175 to f135.

¹⁸⁴ Frank Broeze, “Underdevelopment and Dependency: Maritime India during the Raj,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 18, no. 3 (1984): 445.

¹⁸⁵ Unlike the “horizontal integration” of European shipping conferences, Indonesian, Indian, and Japanese hajj transport competitors were excluded from cooperation with the Kongsji Tiga firms.¹⁸⁶

Religious and politic rhetoric was used as a tool by Asian firms to deter customers from Kongsji Tiga ships. These non-European competitors challenged the Dutch, not only by cutting prices, but also by objecting to Kongsji Tiga’s monopoly and the control the Trio wielded over colonized Muslims. By reinforcing ideas that Islamic pilgrimage should be in the hands of Muslims and that Europeans had no right to monopolize hajj shipping solely for their own financial profit, competing firms threatened European colonial rule through anti-colonial and pro-Islamic propaganda. The most threatening type of competition to pilgrim transport were attempts by Indonesians to create their own shipping firms. Unlike competition from European companies, the Indonesian attempts at Hajj transport were based on two ideas, that Indonesians should have a hand in their own enterprises and that Muslims themselves should be in charge of Muslim pilgrimage. These two points were considered threats to Dutch colonial power and both the Kongsji Tiga and Dutch colonial administration worked against the creation of indigenous hajj shipping companies in order to uphold the integrity of Dutch shipping and the Dutch colonial regime.

Due to both the economic and political repercussions of losing hajjis to competing firms, Kongsji Tiga viewed competition and the loss of passengers to such competitors seriously and commissioned numerous inquiries to investigate why passengers were slipping through their fingers. Even after their record-breaking hajj season in 1926-27,

¹⁸⁵ Campo, “Steam navigation,” 22.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

Kongsi Tiga sent employees to ask hajjis in person why some opted for foreign ships, especially vessels leaving from Singapore.¹⁸⁷ The answers were more complicated than simply not enjoying the food onboard or wishing to bypass required vaccinations in Netherlands East Indies ports.¹⁸⁸ Not only did pilgrims find the lower prices onboard Singapore ships “enticing,” they felt Singapore ships were more concerned with their comfort and that Singapore boats accommodated “much more baggage in their quarters than on the Java boats.”¹⁸⁹

Despite many regulations stipulated in the Pilgrims Ordinance and Simla regulations over required provisions onboard hajj ships, a lack of oversight and lackadaisical inspections left enforcement of correct procedures largely up to each individual ship. For example, pilgrims could be transported in “gunpowder rooms, that often lie in the mid-ship, have no portholes so that the ventilation is never as good as in the other pilgrim quarters. Moreover, the room is darker because the daylight cannot shine in.”¹⁹⁰ Yet transport in these rooms was “permissible, provided certain requirements are met, as stated in the [1922] *Pelgrims Ordinnatie*.”¹⁹¹ Even in the designated pilgrim quarters, the large, open rooms below deck were crowded with people and totally devoid of comfort, save for items brought personally by pilgrims. The Pilgrims Ordinance only required one saltwater shower and two latrines for every 100 passengers on board.¹⁹² In 1936, RL noted that quarantine authorities rarely applied the

¹⁸⁷ See Appendix i.

¹⁸⁸ Vaccination evasion was nullified in 1929 when the Straits Settlements began enforcing vaccinations for all departing pilgrims.

¹⁸⁹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.157, Eindverslag 1926-27.

¹⁹⁰ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.157, Eindrapport 1937-38.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² 1922 *Pelgrims Ordinnatie*, Article 6, sections i and j. Actually, first 50 pilgrims had 2 latrines and then 1 additional for every 50 pilgrims or part there of, up to 500, where 1

1926 Sanitary Convention regulations to their traffic and mostly only to the extent that each vessel “must have a suitable tween-deck space available, have part of the upper deck sheltered by an awning, and have a doctor on board.” For the rest--wooden upper deck, life saving appliances, hospital, permanent kitchens, latrines etc.—the company noted that authorities “do not bother” and they had “no reason to believe that they will change this system.”¹⁹³

Dutch ships had other advantages over foreign lines. Unlike Kongsí Tiga ships where food rations were provided, Singapore ships only provided firewood and water and it was up to passengers to bring their own food onboard and prepare it themselves. The report found that most pilgrims “were appreciative of the rice, dried fish, salted eggs and other provisions given to them” and “found the food provisions agreeable.”¹⁹⁴ British shippers generally felt that pilgrims preferred Singapore boats because “Netherlands East Indies pilgrims are given rations and are forbidden from bringing any other foodstuffs on board aside from those provided and that preparing their own food is forbidden,” but Kongsí Tiga countered this criticism by stressing that “if there are parts of his usual diet [not included in the rations] that he cannot go without, no one will deny him the fact he can prepare his own meal to his own taste.”¹⁹⁵ Food was a major consideration for Kongsí Tiga in terms of the benefits they offered over Singapore ships.

As shipping competition increased, comfort on board became a point of contention that allowed pilgrims an oppositional voice within the restrictive maritime environment of Dutch hajj shipping. Even among the three Kongsí Tiga firms, pilgrims

additionally per 100. This means that on a typical returning ship of 1700 passengers there would be 23 latrines and 17 showers, of which some were reserved for women.

¹⁹³ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1175, 16 June 1936.

¹⁹⁴ For daily rations see Appendix iii.

¹⁹⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.157, Eindverslag 1926-27.

developed strong preferences according to the treatment they received from each firm. All three companies kept tabs on their share of pilgrim revenue and SMN and RL trailed far behind SMO in terms of popularity among pilgrims. From 1920 to 1937, SMO transported approximately 49.3% of pilgrims, while SMN and RL together only averaged 50.7% of all 342,779 passengers.¹⁹⁶ SMN and RL were very concerned over this trend and made detailed inquiries to discover the reasons behind this disparity.

SMN and RL's investigations found four main reasons why pilgrims had a notable preference for the SMO ships, nicknamed "bluepipers." First, unlike SMN and RL ships that doubled as freighters outside of the hajj season, SMO had newer ships devoted exclusively to hajj transport with permanent pilgrim accommodations onboard. Second, SMO's exclusive use of the center castles and upper-steerage decks provided more room than the upper deck space, bathrooms, and WCs on SMN and RL ships. This resulted in smaller numbers of pilgrims in proportion to the size of onboard accommodation and, therefore, more space per pilgrim. Third, roomier accommodations along with the installation of bigger airshafts meant SMO ships were better ventilated below deck than SMN and RL vessels, making the voyage more comfortable for pilgrims. Finally, SMO ships were faster and the travel times shorter due to the fact they bypassed ports like Palembang, Muntok [Mentok], and Benkoelen [Bengkulu]. Some SMO ships even traveled directly from Tanjung Priok to Jeddah without stopping.

Due to the shorter travel time, more space onboard, better accommodations, and improved hygiene and health facilities, SMO ships were generally more comfortable than

¹⁹⁶ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 219. Not including the exceptional years of 1920 when Dutch ships were still being repatriated after WWI, 1924-25 when Hedjaz violence suspended all hajj travel from NEI, and 1925-26 when circumstances in Hedjaz still highly curtailed hajj pilgrimage. Total number of passengers including these years was 376,507.

those of RL and SMN and SMO ships also experienced lower mortality rates among passengers. The results were made clear to all three firms in official shipping data. For example, during the 1927-28 hajj season the SMN journey from Tanjung Priok to Jeddah took 22 days, RL 21 days, and SMO ships only 18 days.¹⁹⁷ During the return voyages that season, SMN's fleet experienced 170 pilgrim deaths, RL's had 169, and SMO's fleet only experienced 148 pilgrim deaths.¹⁹⁸ For all these reasons, SMO took the lead in the number of bookings every year and only after their ships were fully booked, did SMN and RL see their ships begin to fill up.¹⁹⁹

SMN and RL scrambled to make up for this disparity by taking the preferences of pilgrims into account and changed their businesses practices to accommodate pilgrim demands. RL added new motor ships to their pilgrim fleet in a bid to attract passengers. SMN bent to pilgrim preferences by expanding pilgrim space into the upper steerage deck and, although this would take considerable effort on the company's part, the firm understood that more onboard space was a major reason why pilgrims preferred SMO ships.²⁰⁰ Unfortunately, simply adding more space was not enough to turn the tide of hajj preferences and SMN lamented that pilgrims' overwhelming choice of SMO ships felt "as if our Company was being boycotted. This boycott is especially noticeable in the Batavia area, comprising the largest pilgrim center."²⁰¹ SMN felt the avoidance of pilgrims was not merely due to slower and older ships in their fleet, but to the "the

¹⁹⁷ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr.782.

¹⁹⁸ SMN transported 9519 on 7 returning ships, RL transported 10950 also on 7 ships, and SMO transported 10629 pilgrims onboard 9 ships, making the percentage of deceased pilgrim passengers 1.78%, 1.54%, and 1.39% respectively. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr.782. Jaarverslag 1928.

¹⁹⁹ Largely with pilgrims from Java and other fixed ports of call.

²⁰⁰ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 782, Jaarverslag 1928.

²⁰¹ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23.

Eastern mentality of the parties involved.”²⁰² Despite this patronizing excuse, pilgrims held SMN in a financial stronghold and the company was forced to ask for suggestions from local Kongsu Tiga agents advice over how to successfully sway public opinion.

Local agents concluded two main reasons behind SMO’s primacy and both concerned the respect pilgrims were shown by the firm in terms of their importance, not simply as obliging colonial subjects, but as paying customers who had a right to a certain level of attention while onboard. First, pilgrims on SMO ships were shown more benevolence by crewmembers. Unlike SMO, SMN had a policy onboard that saw “tidiness reign” and in order to accomplish that, they felt it

necessary that the pilgrims are repeatedly sent out of the room to the deck above and also again and again are driven away off the deck. The people find it simply dreadful, because they couldn’t recognize the reasons why it happened. It follows that during the roundtrip season of 1927 in certain instances the chasing away of people in a less tactful way appears to have taken place, with the result that the specific ship and therefore Company involved received a very bad name in the *dessas* [villages].

SMN’s onboard regulations for keeping ships clean alienated its passengers and made their voyages extremely uncomfortable. More damaging was the fact that this kind of treatment onboard highlighted the lack of respect SMN had for Indonesian Muslims as paying customers, who could potentially take their business somewhere else.

Second, passengers preferred the liberties they were shown prior to embarking on SMO ships. While SMN’s regulations were “very good from a European standpoint (the embarkment always ran orderly and calmly)” the pilgrims preferred the SMO manner of pushing off to sea, where all well-wishers who traveled with the aspirant hajjis to port were welcome onboard prior to departure in order to see their loved ones off. These well-wishers, who came from the *dessas* [villages] together with their family member in

²⁰² Ibid.

order to say farewell could “behold with their own eyes how the relative will be accommodated on the pilgrim ship.”²⁰³ The fact that these same family members would also wish to eventually go on hajj was a further economic incentive for family and friends to “come onboard and appreciate the facilities, so that when they are ready to depart they will choose the Company they had previously visited.”²⁰⁴

Pilgrims expressed their opposition to certain practices on board ships and shipping companies were at times very responsive to their requests. After hearing the above explanations as to why pilgrims were so unhappy with their service, SMN immediately changed its style of embarking to mimic the SMO model. Further, their “captains received instructions that the ship management must adapt more to the pilgrims’ wishes” in terms of receiving less supervision and being chased out of spaces on board in a harsh manner by crew members.²⁰⁵ Similar concessions were made to pilgrims’ desires to bring folding cots and deck chairs for use while on Kongsu Tiga ships. Although these items were “more and more in fashion” on both Dutch and British pilgrim ships, Kongsu Tiga saw them as unnecessary luxury items that upset order onboard.²⁰⁶ The 1922 Pilgrims Ordinance ambiguously stated that no cargo onboard could “unfavorably affect the health or safety of the passengers” and pilgrims were only legally provided with one third of a cubic meter of deck space per person and most baggage was stored in the hold for the duration of the voyage.²⁰⁷ Kongsu Tiga argued that

²⁰³ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 782, Jaarverslag 1928.

²⁰⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, Eindraport 1937-38.

²⁰⁷ 1922 Pilgrims Ordinance Article 26, section 2.

with cots and chairs in use “[l]ittle room remains in the pilgrim quarters and on deck in which to move, while it becomes very difficult to keep these areas clean.”²⁰⁸

While concerned over adequate amounts of space and maintaining proper hygiene in pilgrim living quarters, Kongsí Tiga also feared the inequalities such items might cause between passengers. The Trio was adamant about diminishing class inequalities among different passengers due to concerns over loss of colonial control and felt “[f]or the sake of the mass, it is actually better to forbid the use of deck chairs onboard pilgrim ships all together.” Kongsí Tiga believed owners of folding cots and deck chairs “unfairly furnish themselves at the cost of the legroom and deck space of their fellow passengers” and if the use of such comfort items were to continue, “people must little by little change over to the establishment of classes within pilgrim transport.”²⁰⁹ In the case of these “luxuries,” Kongsí Tiga was forced to amend its policies if it wished to retain passengers from Singapore-based competitors who were more lenient in their baggage allowances.²¹⁰ Kongsí Tiga conceded to pilgrim demands by continuing to allow the use of folding cots and deck chairs at the cost of 10 guilders extra per chair and cot.²¹¹ For pilgrims, ten guilders was a small price to pay in exchange for such material comforts in what were often uncomfortable living quarters, but the threat in Dutch eyes was that onboard power hierarchies would be eroded through the use of luxuries onboard.

While Kongsí Tiga could alter its policies in terms of fares and material circumstances for passengers, religious objections to the Dutch hajj shipping monopoly,

²⁰⁸ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, Eindraport 1937-38.

²⁰⁹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147, 2 December 1929, Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden.

²¹⁰ “Each year this is called attention to by the quarantine authorities at Kameron, while at Singapore they take less notice.” NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, Eindraport 1937-38.

²¹¹ Ibid.

based around larger nationalist and anti-colonial struggles, was a serious matter with no easy solution. Extremely alarming for Kongsu Tiga were the increasing pilgrim demands to “make use of a Muslim [owned shipping] opportunity.” In the context of rising anti-colonialism during the late 1920s and 30s, simply choosing one Kongsu Tiga firm over another increasingly failed to make a powerful statement against Dutch hajj transport monopolization. Indonesian Muslims wanted to control their own transport to and from the most important spiritual experience of their lives and many Muslims hoped that in the near future an entire hajj shipping firm would be established insuring hajj pilgrimage remained completely “in the hands of Muslims.”²¹²

The reformist Islamic organization *Muhammadiyah* made one of the most promising attempts at an Indonesian-owned hajj shipping company during the interwar years. First founded in Yogyakarta in 1912 by Hajji Ahmad Dahlan, *Muhammadiyah* embraced modernization and promoted modern religious, educational, and cultural reforms.²¹³ The organization was cultural and religious rather than political *per se*, and established schools, boarding houses, and co-operatives for peasants and traders.²¹⁴ Along with promoting education and maintaining local mosques, prayer houses, orphanages, and clinics, it also published a vast volume of printed material promoting Islamic reforms incorporating modern thought into religious doctrine.²¹⁵ If any indigenous group were to receive Dutch support, it would be *Muhammadiyah* who, like the colonial authorities, “launched a direct attack on the power and prestige of the Kijajis

²¹² GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1190, 3 Juli 1930.

²¹³ The Dutch government allowed other branches of *Muhammadiyah* to be set up outside Yogyakarta in 1921.

²¹⁴ M.A. Abdul-Samad, “Modernism in Islam in Indonesia with Special reference to Muhammadiyah,” in *Islam in the Indonesian Context*, ed. M.C. Ricklefs (Clayton: Victoria, Australia: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1991), 61.

²¹⁵ Kroef, “The Role of Islam,” 41.

and the sort of religious education they were providing the masses.”²¹⁶ The Dutch might have viewed this non-political, social organization as an ally in their quest to rid the Netherlands East Indies of subversive religious ideas and people within the *pesantran*.²¹⁷ Instead, Dutch suspicions of Muslims in general informed the way Kongsí Tiga and the Dutch colonial administration handled *Muhammadiyah*’s participation in hajj shipping. The group’s Islamic affiliation turned it into yet another enemy of Dutch colonial authority.

In 1930, *Muhammadiyah* planned to charter two ships under the name *Penoeloeng Hadji* (Hajji Helper) to carry pilgrims to Jeddah during the following hajj season. The organization argued that pilgrims were not truly completing the fifth tenet of Islam when traveling to the Middle East with Kongsí Tiga because they traveled with foreigners who were not Muslim. Unlike Dutch companies, PH promised to put the religious concerns of pilgrims above all else. Their ships would provide separate prayer areas for men and women and an educational course onboard instructing hajjis about the rites to be performed in Mecca. Improved material comforts onboard would include a restaurant, library, passenger access to a radio, and a medical staff including not only a doctor like on Dutch ships, but also both male and female nurses.²¹⁸ Further, firewood and water would be included in the fare price of f250, exactly the same fee charged by Kongsí Tiga

²¹⁶ Geertz, “The Javanese Kijaji,” 240.

²¹⁷ While they remained apolitical, their members were free to participate in other political organizations. Kroef, “The Role of Islam,” 41.

²¹⁸ Dahlan also set up a women’s section called *Ā’ishiyah* (after the prophet’s wife) in 1918 which had total autonomy in internal affairs but was under *Muhammadiyah* in external affairs and for young women *Nashi’at al-Āishiyah* was established. “*Ā’ishiyah* was very active, holding *tabligh* (religious meetings), religious speeches to its members as well as workers in batik enterprises and women in the general public. Together with *Nashi’at al-Āishiyah* a *musalla* (mosque) for women was built at Yogyakarta which became a centre for their activities.” Abdul-Samad, “Modernism in Islam,” 61.

that year. Unlike the Dutch shipping monopoly, PH was a non-profit endeavor aimed at eventually decreasing travel costs for hajjis, in order to make the pilgrimage accessible to larger numbers of Muslim Indonesians.

As much as it was an Islamic endeavor, PH was also an act of nationalist autonomy. Indigenous-owned ships would counterbalance Kongsy Tiga's "feeling as if the hajj-transport exits under their power."²¹⁹ Many Indonesian Muslims agreed, "[p]eople naturally prefer to depart with a ship that is dispatched through people of their own nation, unless they intentionally want to stuff another man's pocket."²²⁰ Some questioned why the situation of Indonesian pilgrims remained inferior "while other nations, Egyptians, and British Indians for example, were respected while undertaking the pilgrimage."²²¹ Others blamed the racist nature of colonial education. According to Indonesian critics, this resulted in a grave lack of confidence: "[o]ur nation has put very little trust in our own power and attaches little value to it; the cause of which can be found in the fact that we are raised to be weaklings, without any sense of responsibility for taking care of our own affairs."²²² Control over their own pilgrim transport meant Muslim Indonesians wouldn't need to "stay forever dependent on the help of foreigners."²²³ Nationalist autonomy was a major argument for the benefits to be gained from indigenous shipping lines and the necessity of such transport for the development of the Indonesian nation.

Public notices posted by local travel bureaus such as *Penoeloeng Hadji Hinda Timoer* in Batavia helped promote these ships by highlighting the vastly improved

²¹⁹ Revue Politiek, 28 March 1931.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1190, 14 June 1939.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

experience pilgrims would have onboard *Penoeloeng Hadji*. Official PH propaganda often inferred the detriments of Kongsy Tiga policies while promoting the special accommodations their ships could provide. PH ships were promoted as

satisfactorily big, good, and fast. On board will be a special room in which to pray and a place to get a breath of fresh air; in short, the conditions on board are exactly as those on shore. The service on board is performed through Muslims themselves, which undoubtedly each passenger shall be pleased. The provisions and all the work generally will follow Muslim law, while all regulations on board will strike all as contributing to the overall pleasure of all passengers. Unnecessary to commend, because all Muslim brothers know our duties as Muslims towards people who have a pure/chaste purpose.²²⁴

Many local Muslim newspapers were more outspoken in their criticisms of Kongsy Tiga, who they argued created inhospitable living conditions for Muslim passengers.²²⁵ Kongsy Tiga was accused of packing pilgrims onto ships like “herrings in a tin” and of treating pilgrims exactly the same as contract coolies. Only due to the insistence of their sheikhs were hajjis and coolies “no longer mixed together under one roof.”²²⁶ Additionally, there was no separation between men and women onboard as “proscribed by Islamic religion.”²²⁷ Kongsy Tiga also forbid pilgrims to transport livestock for ritual slaughter in Mecca, finding it “bothersome for the fellow passengers”²²⁸ and “within their rights to forbid such transport.”²²⁹

The most damning accusations against Dutch shippers were aimed at their capitalist greed and economic profits made off the backs of Indonesian Muslims. While

²²⁴ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1190, 1 February 1931, translation of public notice from *Reisbureau Penoeloeng Hadji Hinda Timoer*, Kali Besar West 2, Gebouw Chartered Bank, Batavia.

²²⁵ Muslim newspapers and magazines encouraged pilgrims to support *Penoeloeng Hadji* efforts and rallied behind the idea of Muslim owned and operated hajj ships.

²²⁶ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1190, 14 June 1939.

²²⁷ NL-HaNA, Cie. Bezitsspreiding, 2.15.19, inv.nr. 325.

²²⁸ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147, 2 December 1929 Consul to Advisor Inlandsche Zaken Weltevreden.

²²⁹ Ibid.

Muhammadiyah was trying to raise f500,000 in capital to charter its pilgrim ships, Kongsy Tiga earned millions of guilders in profit every year through its shipping monopoly. Common pilgrim perceptions viewed Kongsy Tiga as profiting off the backs of pilgrims and only being concerned with “the pulling in of money.”²³⁰ Nationalism played into perceptions of hajji victimization caused by Dutch greed:

Thousands roll from our pockets into those of another nation. Most [hajjis] are people from the farming class, who almost every year give their cash to the ‘money box’ of a foreign nation. People save their cents and guilders until eventually they reach an amount sufficient to cover the costs of hajj. The saved money, that men have struggled to earn, is now deposited in another man’s pocket. . . This is a shame, not because the money is given away . . . but that it winds up in the hands of others.²³¹

One of the major goals of *Penoeloeng Hadji* was to gain control of hajj transport profits in order to reinvest this money into Muslim communities and causes within the NEI. Making the hajj easier on pilgrims in terms of comfort, spiritual fulfillment, and economic accessibility, was one of these causes and PH hoped indigenous shipping would alleviate many pilgrim hardships, including the trend of hajjis who “brought money with them [on hajj] and returned with debts.”²³²

Kongsy Tiga initially felt that “not much would come of it” and hoped indigenous shipping attempts would dissolve by themselves without interference by Dutch authorities.²³³ But despite Kongsy Tiga being “inclined to think that these plans will have little plans of success,” it could not “altogether ignore them, as there is a possibility that by chartering ships of foreign companies the native organizations might succeed in

²³⁰ Revue Politiek, 28 March 1931.

²³¹ Revue Politiek, 28 March 1931.

²³² GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1190, 14 June 1939.

²³³ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1190, 3 July 1930.

offering a competing transport opportunity.”²³⁴ What swayed the Trio’s opinion was the fact they were actually losing fares and had “noticed that in the beginning of this season a number of pilgrims had adopted a wait and see attitude” and therefore were not purchasing pilgrim fares onboard Kongsig Tiga ships.²³⁵ Loss of revenue gave the Kongsig Tiga pause to consider to “what extent this competing business was driven by idealism among the natives.”²³⁶ Kongsig Tiga felt this naïve idealism would eventually leave these pilgrims with nothing. The *Penoeloeng Hadji* would

inevitably cause all kinds of inaccurate messages to be sent into the world, with the result that the prospective pilgrims, through false illusions, would at first hope for the arrival of a ship that will fulfill all religious demands and be much cheaper than the Kongsig Tiga, in short, that people shall instantaneously travel perfectly. In the meantime, the first ships of the bona-fide Companies would leave empty, or partially occupied, while the pilgrims continue to wait until it grieves them and they meanwhile become greatly duped.²³⁷

Kongsig Tiga doubted the ability of Indonesians to successfully carry out such transport and saw these attempts as misguided idealism doomed to fail. Kongsig Tiga even dared PH to try it and hopes they would “get into a mess with the return voyage.”²³⁸

Despite the trio’s seemingly lax attitude and conviction that *Penoeloeng Hadji* would fail on its own, Kongsig Tiga relied heavily on legal and diplomatic support to maintain its shipping monopoly and make sure the loss of tickets experienced at the beginning of the hajj season was quickly reversed. First, Kongsig Tiga turned to the 1922 Pilgrims Ordinance, which ensured Kongsig Tiga’s continued monopoly over hajj shipping by requiring a f90,000 guarantee for all hajj transport companies. Officially

²³⁴ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 144, 26 October 1938, smn, rl, smo to international agencies ltd.

²³⁵ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1190, 15 December 1931.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1190, 29 October 1931.

established to dissuade ‘moonlighting’ hajj shippers (mainly Chinese and Indonesian *perahu* or sailing vessels), the actual purpose was to make entry into hajj maritime transport virtually impossible for fledgling indigenous shippers unable to afford such a large fee.

The 1922 Pilgrims Ordinance provided additional provisions ensuring that indigenous shippers were essentially barred from challenging Kongsji Tiga’s monopoly and *Penoeloeng Hadji* was legally paralyzed by article 21 and 22 in the regulations. Article 22 required that anyone seeking a license to act as a pilgrim agent first needed a banking corporation, approved by the head of the Dutch Navy, to provide a minimum guarantee of f90,000. Without this license, one could not act as a pilgrim agent and according to Article 21 pilgrims going on steamers to Middle East ports could only be provided tickets from licensed pilgrim agents.²³⁹ In other words, to sell tickets to hajjis, one had to be licensed and one could only get licensed if they had a f90,000 guarantee approved by the Dutch government. What this meant for *Penoeloeng Hadji* was that despite its ability to raise f90,000 through profits from selling pilgrim fares, its legal inability to sell tickets before already having f90,000 created a near insurmountable obstacle and a frustrating catch-22 for *Muhammadiyah*, further revealing the inequalities of Dutch colonial law to increasingly dissatisfied Indonesian Muslims.

To overcome this crippling monetary formality, *Muhammadiyah* used grassroots networking to develop alternative strategies for raising the f90,000 guarantee. In addition to private donations from wealthy members of the organization, grassroots canvassers asked each aspirant pilgrim to contribute money that would later come off their hajj fare. *Muhammadiyah* believed it wasn’t technically acting as a pilgrim agent

²³⁹ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 661.

since the money would be going towards a “future” ticket. Not surprisingly, Kongsí Tiga saw the situation from a far different perspective, arguing that collecting such money amounted to the same thing as soliciting passengers and that, therefore, *Muhammadiyah* was acting as an agent. Kongsí Tiga was in fact the *only* company that met the legal requirement to act as a pilgrim agent in the NEI and in order to protect its interests from *Muhammadiyah*'s encroachment, it made a formal complaint to the colonial government about the “illegal” passenger canvassing taking place by PH representatives.

By making this complaint to the colonial authorities, Kongsí Tiga was displaying its colonial muscle to *Muhammadiyah* and any other indigenous groups thinking about starting a hajj shipping line. Not only was its monopoly protected under colonial laws, but the colonial government, to which the shipping companies could turn to for help in eliminating competitors, also supported Kongsí Tiga. Kongsí Tiga not only saw the laws as fair and felt it just to demand such a large guarantee from *Penoeloeng Hadji*, it also viewed itself as a benevolent guardian of hajj shipping. Kongsí Tiga's opinion was

that no legal impediment will be put in the way of an Indonesian shipping company for Hadji-transport by the government. Every organization that fulfills the pilgrim-ordinance (stbld. 1922 No. 698) may take part in this transport. To proceed is very correct. That these tough stipulations for their N.V.[business] are the same as for the Kongsí-Tiga has it seems the history of pilgrims transport to Djeddah behind it, especially that transport out of other Islamic lands, exhibited up until the present time. It is a somber history, where the Kongsí Tiga transport was a ray of light where other Western and Eastern shipping companies have failed.²⁴⁰

But the Trio was fearful of the fact that *Muhammadiyah* wished to bypass the f90,000 guarantee by using Article 67 of the Pilgrims Ordinance and claiming it was a non-profit group interested in shipping pilgrims on “ethical” grounds. The Kongsí Tiga saw this as an aggressive move because if the Kongsí Tiga was to turn to the Dutch government for

²⁴⁰ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1190, 13 June 1938.

help in upholding their monopoly while *Muhammadiyah* used Article 67, “the government then loads itself with appearances of granting a monopoly to Kongsí Tiga,” something from a political standpoint which was “supremely undesirable.” Such a tactic further convinced the Trio they were dealing with an “Islamic organization [that was] definitely less than neutral.”²⁴¹

To help alleviate the situation, Kongsí Tiga representatives met with the *Hoofdinspecteur van Scheepvaart* (Superintendent of Shipping) to discuss recent meetings regarding *Penoeloeng Hadji* between the *Hoofdinspecteur*, 3 leaders of *Muhammadiyah* (including Hadji Soedjak mentioned above), and the *Adviseur voor Inlandsche Zaken* (Advisor for Native Affairs), Emile Gobée.²⁴² The *Hoofdinspecteur* and *Adviseur* had “strongly dissuaded the gentlemen from *Muhammadiyah* from plunging into the adventure of pilgrim transport because ruin would be unavoidable, Kongsí Tiga will acquit themselves and a fierce rivalry battle will ensue and it is no question who will have the worst of it.”²⁴³ Both colonial officials and the Kongsí Tiga felt a dose of tough love might do just the trick to dissuade current and future attempts at indigenous hajj transport. The *Hoofdinspecteur* revealed that he considered “the plans of Mohammadijah as an instructive project in learning the hard way” and Kongsí Tiga also found it “not so objectionable, that the gentlemen learn a lesson, provided the intended conditions in the [1922 Pilgrims] Ordinance are maintained without any compromise.”²⁴⁴

Kongsí Tiga’s tactics in this meeting were to discredit the *Muhammadiyah* representatives personally and their organization as a whole. The *Hoofdinspecteur*

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² For more on Gobée see KITLV- Collectie Emile Gobée, inventaris 8, H 1085.

²⁴³ NL-HaNA, BuZa / Kabinetsarchief Politieke Rapportage, 2.05.19, inv.nr. 325.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

informed Kongsí Tiga “the gentlemen of Mohammídjah have made serious complaints of being discourteously treated by the Kongsí Tiga.”²⁴⁵ The shipping company fired back that the “aim of Muhammídjah was clear: through concessions, favors, and selling blank tickets, they were trying to trip up Kongsí Tiga’s monopoly and when this didn’t work, complaints began that we were treating them discourteously.”²⁴⁶ Now that they were there in person, Kongsí Tiga argued that these three leaders had unfavorable reputations, were to a large degree untrustworthy, and recruited people to their cause solely due to their own narcissism. Fortunately for Kongsí Tiga, after these communications the *Hoofdinspecteur* was convinced *Muhammídyah*’s complaints against Kongsí Tiga were unfounded, and that the *Muhammídyah* “gentlemen he had met with made a very unfavorable impression.”²⁴⁷

Kongsí Tiga was particularly nervous to discover whether the *Hoofdinspecteur* and *Muhammídyah* representatives had come to an arrangement concerning their non-profit status under Article 67. To Kongsí Tiga’s relief, the *Hoofdinspecteur* considered concession on this point a “dangerous give and take because once an exception is made, other similar requests will likewise be made.”²⁴⁸ *Muhammídyah* clearly expressed their dissatisfaction with this decision, which cemented the continuation of Kongsí Tiga’s monopoly, considering it a “bad course of action to punish by holding the reins tight, now that political configuration is so enormously altered in relation to a few years ago. In the

²⁴⁵ NL-HaNA, BuZa / Kabinetsarchief Politieke Rapportage, 2.05.19, inv.nr. 325, 10 September 1931, Zeer Geheim (Top Secret) correspondence from SMN, RL, and SMO Batavia offices to Head Offices in Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

²⁴⁶ NL-HaNA, BuZa / Kabinetsarchief Politieke Rapportage, 2.05.19, inv.nr. 325.

²⁴⁷ NL-HaNA, BuZa / Kabinetsarchief Politieke Rapportage, 2.05.19, inv.nr. 325, 10 September 1931, Zeer Geheim (Top Secret) correspondence from SMN, RL, and SMO Batavia offices to Head Offices in Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

²⁴⁸ NL-HaNA, BuZa / Kabinetsarchief Politieke Rapportage, 2.05.19, inv.nr. 325.

long run, the Government must yield to public opinion of the Native Side.”²⁴⁹ Kongsig Tiga agreed that “whoever has paid attention to and felt the native currents in the last years, must acknowledge that in many cases to change one’s policy serves one’s own purposes” but they also mourned this increased need for flexibility and conciliation with “native concerns,” lamenting how “the times have changed!”²⁵⁰

The *Hoofdinspectuer*’s decision prevented *Muhammadiyah*’s goal of *Penoeloeng Hadji* ships sailing during the 1931-32 season and Kongsig Tiga noted “when it became known, that de Penoeloeng Hadji was dissolved, the bookings came [to us] more freely.”²⁵¹ In fact, Indonesian Muslims did not succeed in chartering a hajj ship prior to WWII. The ongoing desire for Muslim and Indonesian-owned hajj transport constantly reminded the Kongsig Tiga that its monopoly was not popular among hajjis. Pilgrims opposed Kongsig Tiga’s capitalist motives and the colonial government’s cooperation in preventing the creation of indigenous shipping lines. It didn’t help that the 1930’s saw a large decrease in pilgrims, from 36,067 in 1929-30 to 17,776 in 1930-31 and only 4,624 the following season. These numbers continued to stay in the low thousands until 1937-38 when they returned to only half the number of passengers seen during the late 1920’s. These low numbers made the total monopoly over hajj shipping even more essential for Kongsig Tiga to maintain profits.

Pilgrims increasingly demanded access to comfort and respect as passengers and because of increased competition within hajj transport, Kongsig Tiga was forced to meet some of their demands. Once indigenous shipping enterprises began arguing for the right to charter their own hajj ships, the religion and comfort of Indonesian Muslims became a

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 1190. 15 December 1931.

politically charged debate. Although Kongsu Tiga saw itself as a “ray of light” within hajj transport, the companies sometimes used unscrupulous tactics to retain its shipping monopoly against what they saw as both ideological and financial competitors. Colonial laws made it nearly impossible for indigenous groups to set up their own hajj transport, which only added to frustrations of Indonesian Muslims within the NEI. Despite *Muhammadiyah*’s attempts to put control of religious pilgrim transport in “the hands of Muslims,” these attempts were not realized until after World War II.

Conclusion

Kongsu Tiga and the Dutch colonial government were both invested in controlling hajj maritime networks linking the Netherlands East Indies with Asia and the Middle East. These religious networks could expose colonial subjects to anti-colonial and pan-Islamic ideas threatening to Dutch colonial hegemony. Kongsu Tiga regulated hajj ships along racial and class hierarchies, which mirrored colonial policies in the NEI. Segregation between Indonesian pilgrims and potentially subversive passengers such as Hadramis and Meccan sheikhs attempted to shield globally mobile Indonesian Muslims from the ideological dangers of maritime fluid mobility. Segregating subversive passengers from “ordinary” pilgrims was an attempt to control colonial subjects outside the borders of the nation-state and protect Dutch colonial authority from pan-Islamism and anti-colonialism circulating in the Middle East and onboard Kongsu Tiga ships.

This chapter first investigated segregation policies onboard Kongsu Tiga ships and the fears over racial and class transgressions that fueled them. Kongsu Tiga targeted passengers who it feared had a negative effect on “ordinary” pilgrims and possessed the

ability to encourage these pilgrims to behave in “subversive” ways. Most notably, Arabs and Meccan sheikhs were considered to have a menacing and dangerous influence on Indonesian pilgrims partly due to the high esteem showed them by fellow Indonesian passengers. Kongsy Tiga worried that Arabs and sheikhs would influence the general “spirit” of Indonesian pilgrims by encouraging an anti-colonial, nationalistic, and pan-Islamic fervor onboard. Because passengers were already partaking in a journey that exposed them to examples of non-colonized Arab societies, the Kongsy Tiga attempted to separate Arab passengers from Indonesians to ensure colonial order on board.

The Kongsy Tiga struggled to maintain its monopoly over hajj shipping, not only for financial profit, but to foster Dutch control over globally mobile colonial subjects. While Kongsy Tiga was willing to negotiate and work in cartels with other European-owned shipping firms, it took a harsh stance against indigenous shipping companies, which often promoted themselves through anti-colonial and pan-Islamic propaganda. These religious and political jabs at Dutch authority encouraged the Kongsy Tiga and Dutch colonial administration to work together in undermining shipping companies that were viewed as enemies of their shipping monopoly and European colonial authority. With help from the Netherlands East Indies government, Kongsy Tiga eliminated competing lines from hajj transport in order to uphold their financial profits as well as their colonial supremacy in the region. In particular, the detrimental actions taken against *Muhammadiyah* attempts to establish their own hajj shipping line highlight how the politics of hajj shipping reflected growing tensions within the Netherlands East Indies. Indigenous Muslim groups in Southeast Asia, especially *Muhammadiyah*, were believed

to complete the circuit of Pan-Islamic ideas flowing through Hajj networks to and from the Netherlands East Indies.²⁵²

²⁵² Abdul-Samad, "Modernism in Islam."

Chapter 2

“A Dark State of Affairs”: Hajj Networks, Pan-Islamism, and Colonial Surveillance

We (Hollanders) can console ourselves with the thought that the pictures of the French, English, and Russian drawn by the Moslems they rule over are not more flattering than those of the Dutch drawn by the Jawah.

C. Snouck Hurgronje, 1889²⁵³

At the end of the 1930 hajj season, Mas Salamoen, the Vice Consul of the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah, decided to retire from service and return to his homeland in Southeast Asia. Although entitled to a first-class ticket home on board any Kongsji Tiga ship, he instead conducted a trip to Cairo, Jerusalem, Baghdad, Lahore, Qadian, Basra, Bombay, Calcutta, and Singapore before returning to the Netherlands East Indies. The Dutch colonial administration in Batavia financed Salamoen's trip in the hopes he would shed light on the "Muslim religious viewpoint" among Indonesian students living in these areas. The Dutch were concerned by the increasing popularity of radical schools of Islamic learning such as the Ahmadiyya movement, recently observed among Muslim students in Southeast Asia who were leaving the colonies specifically to "train in the propaganda of this new sect."²⁵⁴ Salamoen's tenure at the Consulate had, in the administration's opinion, provided him with years of experience identifying and understanding different Islamic teachings and his report provided the government in

²⁵³ C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century: Daily Life, Customs and Learning, the Moslems of the East-Indian Archipelago*, Trans. J.H. Monahan (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 248.

²⁵⁴ Such as the Ahmadiyya sect. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 122, 3 January 1930.

Batavia with invaluable insight from “someone who for years has lived in the center of Islam and has endeavored to study the different sects.”²⁵⁵

The Dutch colonial government hoped Salamoen’s insights would shed light on Indonesian Muslim students’ shifts away from purely religious studies to more political-based learning, a situation they saw as “a dark state of affairs.”²⁵⁶ This dark state of affairs reflected the confusing situation the Dutch found themselves in after the colonial uprisings of 1926-27 when, caught off guard by anti-colonial violence, the Dutch administration was scrambling to make sense of the reasons behind and persons responsible for the revolts. Salamoen’s report was commissioned because of the Dutch government’s concerns over foreign political influences infiltrating the Netherlands East Indies and the subversive ramifications these new ideas could have on colonial hegemony. The significance of hajji networks in delivering pan-Islamic, anti-colonial, and nationalist ideas from the Middle East to Southeast Asia was met by intensified surveillance and policing of the fluid mobility of hajjis.

While chapter one explored Kongsu Tiga ships and indigenous attempts to sidestep Dutch shipping monopolies, it is vital to remember that the hajj did not only take place at sea.²⁵⁷ The hajj was a transnational and transoceanic network consisting of centers of learning in the Middle East, receptive Muslim communities in the Netherlands East Indies, as well as maritime transport routes and ships themselves. Colonial policing and surveillance likewise traversed these networks in order to monitor hajjis throughout their pilgrimage. Dutch surveillance targeted the entire experience of the pilgrimage, not

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ See James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

just activities on board the ship. In the eyes of both the Kongsu Tiga and the Dutch colonial administration, the Hajj itself was an extension of the ship voyage and the movement and activities of hajjis were closely monitored throughout their journey abroad. The fluid mobility of hajjis was not purely relegated to their time at sea.

The *Bureau voor Inlandsche Zaken* (Office of Native Affairs) commissioned and paid for Salamoen's two-month trip, with the expectation that the resulting facts and figures that would shed light on "the political and religious influence, that works upon the Muslims in the Netherlands East Indies, originating in centers such as Cairo, Lahore and Qadian." The Dutch imagined that Indonesian students in the Middle East would eventually return to the Indies armed with these religious-based political ideas and become the catalyst for increasing political unrest. Hajjis often returned to Southeast Asia with increased prestige as seasoned religious people, recognized by their new titles and attire, and often became religious leaders and teachers within local communities.²⁵⁸

Hajjis themselves were threatening to Dutch authorities due to the amount of power and influence they held within their communities in Southeast Asia and their ability to link local communities with global hajj networks along which they could pass inflammatory ideas, experiences, and news from the Middle East. The Dutch feared that such hajjis spread anti-colonial sentiment and political unrest through the Netherlands East Indies, made more alarming due to the contemptuous attitudes of village *pesantren* (Islamic schools) towards Dutch colonial rule.²⁵⁹ Kongsu Tiga sought to protect "innocent" pilgrims from "undesirable" influences by regulating individual lives on board ships not

²⁵⁸ Many pilgrims on hajj came from the elite of the pesantry and the urban lower classes. See Moeslim Abdurrahman, "On Hajj Tourism: In Search of Piety and Identity in the New Order Indonesia," (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2000), 5.

²⁵⁹ Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 2, no. 2 (1960): 239, 242-43.

only to prevent exposure to larger ideologies, but also to prevent individual re-workings of identity onboard that could potentially result in individual and general hajji empowerment and subsequent anti-colonial mobilization.²⁶⁰ It was this threat of individuals developing oppositional consciousness while onboard hajj ships that the Dutch were fighting in their attempt to regulate the everyday realities of hajj maritime travel.²⁶¹

The Dutch intensified surveillance of hajjis by using the Dutch Consulate at Jeddah as a political tool to police Indonesian Muslims in the Middle East. Due to the fact that non-Muslim Europeans were not allowed to enter Mecca, the colonial government relied on Indonesian consular staff members to maintain close relations with the Indonesian community in Mecca and to track the movements of students in Cairo. The Consulate was also on the look out for subversive written materials and thinkers who they believed encouraged pan-Islamism in the fight for Indonesian independence. In the guise of international sanitary regulations and a concern for public health, the Dutch administration, along with the British colonial government, used the Kamaran quarantine station for the dual purpose of gathering personal information on all Hajjis travelling to

²⁶⁰ Vinay Gidwani and K. Sivaramakrishnan, "Circular Migration and the Spaces of Cultural Assertion," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 93, no. 1 (2003): 186-213.

²⁶¹ Geertz argues that "[d]espite the international aspects of the pilgrimage, the pesantren pattern remained a largely village-centered one. Outside of a vague pan-Islamism, which served more as a general support to the kijaji's prestige than as an actual political weapon or ideology." But despite this, it is clear the Dutch government did not see the connection as being so harmless and assumed the worst concerning possible repercussions of hajj migration and Kijaji influence on village life. Geertz, "The Javanese Kijaji," 242-43. See also Snouck Hurgronje's view from 1910 quoted in Harry J. Benda, "Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje and the Foundations of Dutch Islamic Policy in Indonesia," *The Journal of Modern History*, 30, no. 4 (1958): 342.

and from the Middle East. Both governments employed this information and the station itself as additional tools in their project of Hajj surveillance.

Surveillance and the Dutch Consulate

After the 1926-27 Communist uprisings, Dutch colonial opinion closely linked *Partai Komunis Indonesia* with pan-Islamic ideas.²⁶² Dutch general opinion was quick to accept that Indonesian Muslims were susceptible to calls for concerted political action, whether or not this belief had any basis in reality.²⁶³ Even more worrying than pan-Islamism was the assumed popularity of Communism within Islamic communities and the role Muslims played in making Indonesians conscious of their connections to global proletarian struggles.²⁶⁴ Both the colonial administration in Batavia and the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah suspected “Mecca would be a meeting place for fleeing communists from the Netherlands East Indies and that via this place a new destructive movement would be built up.”²⁶⁵ Due to the Dutch assumption of its being a haven for political agitators who had fled the Netherlands East Indies, Mecca became a major site of surveillance for the Dutch colonial administration during the late 1920’s and 30’s.²⁶⁶

²⁶² The Comintern was also distressed by the connections between Islam and Indonesian communist thought.

²⁶³ M.E. Yapp, “That Great Mass,” 8-9.

²⁶⁴ Justus M. van der Kroef, “The Role of Islam in Indonesian Nationalism and Politics,” *The Western Political Quarterly*, 11, no. 1 (1958): 40 and Ruth Thomas McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965. Reprint, Jakarta: Equinox Pub, 2006).

²⁶⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147, 6 July 1929.

²⁶⁶ Reid explains that even in the nineteenth century, hajjis residing in Mecca for a few years came to share “the international and distinctly anti-colonial outlook of the holy city.” Anthony Reid, “Nineteenth Century Pan-Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia,” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 26, no. 2 (Feb., 1967): 269.

The Dutch Consulate worked together with the Dutch administration in Batavia to monitor and gather information on the community of Indonesians living in Mecca known as the *Djawa-kolonie* or Jawi (People of Java).²⁶⁷ Obtaining the exact number of persons in this community was difficult. In a 1931 Dutch Consulate census, 3829 Indonesians were living in Mecca's Jawi community. This number did not include those Jawi who felt "more or less detached from the Dutch government, on account of their long stays in the Holy Land or on account of determination to stay in the Hedjaz for the time being, so that they have the misconception that our help is not directly needed." When added, these Jawi brought the total number to 4829.²⁶⁸ This number made up approximately 8% of Mecca's total population of 60,000.²⁶⁹

Dutch surveillance over the Jawi community aimed at tracking subversives who had fled the Netherlands East Indies and were possibly studying under clerics with anti-Western teachings either in Cairo or Mecca. The Meccan Jawi community was under particular scrutiny due to the numbers of inhabitants within the group from West Java and Sumatra. Out of the 3829 registered inhabitants in 1931, 908 came from West Java, 872 from Palembang, and 314 from the west coast of Sumatra.²⁷⁰ This meant that more than half of the Jawi community originated in areas of the Netherlands East Indies that had experienced the most volatile and threatening rebellions during 1926-27. This fact alone made the Dutch suspicious of these communities.

²⁶⁷ From the word Jawi for the Arabic alphabet used to express the Malay language, Jawi also refers to Malaysians in general due to a history of Arabs stereotyping all people for the Malaysian Archipelago as Javanese. See Mohd. Nor bin Ngah, *Kitab Jawi: Islamic Thought of the Malay Muslim Scholars*, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1983), viii.

²⁶⁸ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 172, 8 December 1931.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

These suspicions were explored and monitored through the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah, which served not only as a resource for Dutch colonial subjects while abroad, but as a political watchdog for the Dutch colonial government. The Consulate was the focal point for the Dutch government's collection of information and surveillance of the Jawi community in Mecca and throughout the Middle East, especially Cairo. The Dutch project of surveillance was extremely difficult in Mecca due to the fact that non-Muslims were unable to enter the city. This meant that the Dutch colonial government needed practicing Muslims in its service in order to enter the Indonesian pilgrim communities living, working, and studying in Mecca. To fill these roles were Indonesian Muslim civil servants who were invaluable to the Dutch colonial administration in carrying out their surveillance activities within Mecca and who often took a heavy personal toll for their efforts.²⁷¹ The Consulate was made up of a Dutch Head Consul and most other positions, including a secretary, an Arabic writer, an Indonesian writer, a driver, a sailor, and a porter to Mecca, were held by Indonesians who were required to have working knowledge of English, French, and some Arabic.²⁷² These Indonesians were recruited through help wanted ads in local NEI papers such as the *Javansche Courant*.²⁷³ This staff was crucial for the Consulate because these Muslims employees could enter Mecca, unlike the Christian Dutch Head Consul.

²⁷¹ The Dutch consulate workers usually suffered from poor health: "our personnel after two years staying in the Hedjaz are usually no longer at full capacity. The appetite decreases, they are thinner and weak and are usually return to Indie on leave due to illness. The last three years, the work demanded of the personnel has been particularly heavy. The large number of participants in the Hajj from our colonies was the cause of this." NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.158. 21 December 1929, medical report by Consulate.

²⁷² NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 121, 1933.

²⁷³ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 122. 1931. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 122, 4 February 1936.

The most important contact at the Consulate between the Dutch administration and Indonesian pilgrims was the Vice Consul, who served as a governmental go-between with Indonesian pilgrims both in Jeddah and Mecca,

[a]mong Indonesian pilgrims, the Vice Consul becomes more known. They come to the Vice Consul with complaints over lost or stolen goods, over swindling from the side of the sjeichs, with notifications of persons deceased, etc. . . All persons of standing among our pilgrims will receive a visit from the Vice Consul. In order to keep abreast of the communist agitation among our pilgrims, the Vice Consul must continuously stay in contact with a large number of our pilgrims.²⁷⁴

The Vice Consul visited pilgrims in Mecca to check on conditions there and, as seen from Salamoen's report above, was vital in maintaining personal connections with pilgrims in order to monitor and report back on their activities to the Dutch colonial government.

The thousands of Indonesians comprising the Jawi community lived in Mecca for a number of reasons, which the Dutch separated into three categories. First, there were small merchants living fulltime in Mecca who earned money from providing various services for the annual influx of Indonesian hajjis, including writing letters home, providing funeral services for deceased pilgrims, and running small restaurants and shops specializing in Indonesian items. The second group consisted of older pilgrims who were in the Hedjaz preparing to die, believing their death in the Holy Land ensured an afterlife in Paradise. The third and largest category of Jawis were students who either followed a strict religious course of study or one with more "modern views." The Dutch Consulate attempted to monitor every institution of learning attended by Indonesians in Mecca including the number of students, their educational tenets, and any extra-curricular student organizations stemming from these educational institutions.²⁷⁵ Out of the three categories of residents, the colonial administration took the most care in monitoring

²⁷⁴ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 122, 1 June 1927.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

students in Mecca, assuming they were most exposed to political propaganda while in the Middle East.

Due to their particular mistrust of students, the Dutch were also concerned with the community of Indonesian students located in Cairo, known as Azharists, and had similar apprehensions regarding what was being taught at al-Azhar University and among individual imams in Cairo not affiliated with the university. Many of the students in Cairo had originally traveled to Mecca through Jeddah and then moved onto Cairo, combining a period of study with their pilgrimage. Cairo emerged as a popular metropole for Southeast Asian reformists and the city was a focal point for the “application of new ideas of unity.”²⁷⁶ For Southeast Asian pilgrims, it was not uncommon for children to accompany relatives or parents to Mecca and eventually remain in the Middle East to study, very often in Cairo.²⁷⁷ It was suspected that al-Azhar created both religious and nationalist fervor in foreign students in the wake of Egypt’s 1919 revolution and pro-forma independence granted in 1922.²⁷⁸ The British were similarly concerned about their colonial students at al-Azhar, so much so that they persuaded the university to prohibit foreign students from taking part in political demonstrations at the risk of expulsion from the school.²⁷⁹

The Dutch colonial administration saw Cairo as the origin of many anti-Western, pan-Islamic ideas and the city was popular among Southeast Asian reformists.²⁸⁰ Not only were Muslim schools, universities, and bookstores (with both Arabic and translated

²⁷⁶ Michael Francis Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma Below the Winds* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 127.

²⁷⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.148, 30 January 1934.

²⁷⁸ Terence Walz, “Trans-Saharan Migration and the Colonial Gaze: The Nigerians in Egypt,” *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, 26 (2006): 94-5.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 103.

²⁸⁰ Laffan, “Islamic Nationhood,” 127.

volumes) thought to be subversive, but also the Cairo newspapers were consistently watched for all subversive ideas aimed at Southeast Asian readers and sympathizers.²⁸¹ Many of the first commercial printings of Jawi books originated in Cairo due to its “increasing print activity and greater freedom of expression.”²⁸² Due to these fears, the staff of the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah was also required to take surveillance trips to Cairo in order to monitor the situation there.²⁸³ These trips had begun earlier in the 1920’s, such as one undertaken by Prawira di Nata who traveled to Cairo in hopes of tracking young Indonesian Muslims in their studies. The administration found this trip ultimately useless by 1929 because it had been conducted prior to the communist uprisings of 1926-27 and the perceived exodus of communist activists to the Middle East on board hajj ships that followed.

Monitoring individual students and centers of learning was an attempt to control flows of information between the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Cairo and Southeast Asia had many links both socially and religiously. It was not uncommon for Indonesian theologians, unable to answer religious questions themselves, to send a *fatwa* to Cairo or Mecca. In exchange, students from Cairo and Mecca along with books and newspapers, brought new religious ideas back to Southeast Asia.²⁸⁴ In addition to religious ideas, political ideas also flowed back from the Middle East. Modernist ideas embracing social and educational reforms seeking to advance and uplift Muslim communities were traveled from Egypt and inspired new organizations such as *Muhammidiyyah*, seeking to

²⁸¹ For example the firm of Mustafa and 'Isa al- Babi al-Halabi, whose bookstore near al-Azhar was well known to non-Egyptian Muslims.

²⁸² Laffan, “Islamic Nationhood,” 129.

²⁸³ The British used similar surveillance trips to monitor its colonial population in Cairo. See Walz “Trans-Saharan Migration.”

²⁸⁴ Raden Abdulkadir Widjoatmodjo, “Islam in the Netherlands East Indies,” *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, 2, no. 1 (Nov., 1942): 48-57.

wrest influence away from traditionalists focused on the teachings of local clerics at village *pasantren*.²⁸⁵

In order to gain new insight into Cairo's student communities, the Dutch Consulate organized surveillance trips during the late 1920's. These trips resulted in reports given to Batavia, all of which supported the biases already formulated within the colonial administration over the subversive aspirations of students in Cairo. For example, in 1930 Dutch Consular employee Hoesein Iscandar had returned to Jeddah from his European leave and study trip. While waiting for the next available departing boat, he spent a few days in Cairo seeking out contacts with student compatriots. He ascertained an auspicious change in their attitudes and was asked by the Dutch colonial administration to put his findings down on paper. What Iscandar reported was "their lack of serious study, scanty amount of perseverance, and deceit of their parents and other family members who send them money."²⁸⁶

The recurring stereotype of a student population who both strayed from their studies, while still tapping financial resources from their families in the Netherlands East Indies was common. Another surveillance trip made in 1929 by the Dutch Consulate's medical doctor resulted in a similar "unfavorable" report of the al-Azhar students still receiving study money from the NEI. The report claimed most students had lost their purpose and ideals and many had "completely given up their studies." The colonial administration also attempted to gain the support of local Indonesian leaders in sharing their negative views towards al-Azhar students. Tengkoë Djamboë, *Zelfbestuurder* (Home Ruler) of the East Coast of Sumatra claimed he would never recommend sending

²⁸⁵ Von der Mehden, "Two Worlds of Islam," 14-15.

²⁸⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 171, 1 March 1930.

young men to study in Cairo claiming that “political interests have damaged religious motives, most are now without purpose and without ideal (ambition), they deceive the good-intentioned family heads in Java, who must send them money; the overwhelming majority totally drops out.”²⁸⁷

Dutch suspicions over the inflammatory ideas accessible to al-Azhar students encouraged the Dutch colonial administration to condemn the entire Indonesian learning community in Cairo. Indonesians at al-Azhar were labeled as lazy and intellectually unfocused, two characteristics which made their susceptibility to radical ideas all the more plausible and intensified Dutch fears over the effects they could have in fueling unrest upon their return to the NEI. In 1938 the well-known Javanese nationalist Dr. Raden Soetomo visited the al-Azhar University in Cairo and after returning to the Netherlands East Indies made a speech supporting “the institution and the students there from the Indies.” To counteract such positive propaganda, the Dutch colonial government enlisted Jeddah’s Vice Consul RAK Widjoasmodjo to “readily correct [such propaganda] after he returns to Java, in the interest of all, who have plans either for themselves or their children to study in Cairo (and in Arabia).”²⁸⁸ Widjoasmodjo was expected to collect information that would specifically disprove Dr. Soetomo’s speech supporting the al-Azhar community in Cairo and to provide the colonial administration with a report that could be used in its ongoing campaign to dissuade Indonesians from studying in Cairo. Cairo was ultimately seen as a dangerous place for Indonesian students due to “the frequently fierce anti-Western agitation of the Cairo-residing

²⁸⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 122, 3 January 1930.

²⁸⁸ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 122, 23 February 1938, letter about Vice Consul RAK Widjoasmodjo to MBZ in the Netherlands.

international alliance of Muslim young men and the influence on Indonesian students living there through classmates from other colonies and mandate areas.”²⁸⁹

The Middle East had a number of political influences upon hajjis traveling to and from Southeast Asia. Many pan-Islamic beliefs came out of Cairo and Mecca and students from the Netherlands East Indies were a major link in the movement of these ideas to communities in the Netherlands East Indies. Pan-Islamism was closely linked to anti-Western and anti-colonial rhetoric, which urged Indonesian Muslims to fight against Dutch domination and stressed both a religious and nationalist basis behind the absolute need for Indonesian sovereignty. Many pamphlets, speeches, meetings, and lectures were used to help promote pan-Islamic ideas to hajji communities, especially those from countries under European occupation. In international communities, especially those of Mecca and Cairo, information regarding various anti-colonial struggles in other parts of the world was exhibited as a model for Indonesians to emulate.

Perhaps the most alarming politics for the Dutch concerned pan-Islamism and its connection to nationalism, anti-Western, and anti-colonial sentiment.²⁹⁰ Moreover, the Saudi Arabian government was very anti-communist and went as far as closing down the Russian Consulate in Jeddah due to suspicions of disseminating communist propaganda.²⁹¹ Modes of communication within the Dutch administration flowed between the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah and Indonesia through the *Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken* (Office of Foreign Affairs) and the Governor General’s office, all of who frequently shared translated pan-Islamic articles discussing various subversive

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ A less serious strain of political surveillance was centered on Communism, although as we will see in chapter three, Communism was seen as more pernicious to the Netherlands East Indies when it arrived via China.

²⁹¹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 173, [1939].

political movements.²⁹² Pan Islamic ideas were dangerous to Dutch colonial hegemony and, therefore, the government censored Arabic books from abroad, especially from Egypt and Saudi Arabia, entered via the fishing port of Tuban in East Java, instead of normal ports of entry at Jakarta, Semarang and Surabaya, and successfully smuggled a few Arabic magazines and newspapers from Cairo and Beirut.²⁹³

The administration collected information, much of it originating in Cairo newspapers that targeted Indonesia as a prime example of Europe's unfair domination over other peoples and over Muslims in particular. These pro-Islamic newspapers, along with magazines and pamphlets, accused the Dutch of being imperial tyrants who were insensitive to Islam. Articles, such as one in *al-Fath* from 1930, claimed Muslim countries occupied by foreigners experienced a "weakening in the vocation, regimens, dogma, and rites of Islam."²⁹⁴ Therefore, it was the religious duty to strive towards the liberation of the "Muslim East" from Europeans.

The Dutch were singled out for having tricked the Indonesian population into supporting the colonial regime, mainly through education initiatives, which taught unwitting boys and girls to support their colonial repressors. Accusations also flew surrounding the forced use of foreign manufactures instead of local products. Dutch ships brought with them alcohol, musical instruments, luxury jewelry, and other "worthless items" all of which lessened the wellbeing of the Indonesian people and strengthened that of the Dutch; "[w]ith every glass of Dutch wine drunk and every bad

²⁹² For example, NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 171, 29 December 1930, Zaakgelastigde Nederland to MBZ Den Haag and Gouverneur-Generaal Batavia.

²⁹³ Usually entering via the fishing port of Tuban in East Java, instead of more common port entry at Jakarta, Semarang and Surabaya. Abdul-Samad, "Modernism in Islam," 59.

²⁹⁴ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 173, 6 May 1920, *Fath-el-nil* published in the NEI claimed Dutch colonial authorities persecuted Islam.

world spoken by the Dutch against Islam, an inexperienced young man is pacified, the national army has one less soldier, and they open their hearts in preference to Holland, and they revile in this with their voices.”²⁹⁵

At the same time, the fledgling nationalist parties striving for independence from the Dutch were “strongholds’ for Islam and deserved support from Muslims around the world. One *al-Fath* article stated, “Islam forbids Muslims to be ruled by non-Muslim governments.” But these nationalist attempts needed to follow Islam because this would be the only way to truly escape foreign control, through the tenets of Islam; “Islam is the defining sword of Eastern lands; through stupidity, ignorance, and short-sightedness too often that sword is cast into the wine vat.”²⁹⁶ These attacks also targeted the capitalistic intentions of the Dutch regime, something that struck at the heart of the Dutch administration as well as Dutch business in Southeast Asia.

Such articles backing Muslim integrity were of course alarming for the colonial administration, in part because the Dutch assumed that hajjis would return to Southeast Asia and spread anti-Dutch propaganda. The returning hajjis played a vital role in bringing back an Islamic conception of nationalist independence to the Netherlands East Indies, because their education abroad allowed them to unlearn Dutch values which, according to Indonesian activists, were keeping them satiated through the Dutch educational system, alcohol use, and the materialism of foreign goods.

It was already a turbulent time in the Netherlands East Indies and this pan-Islamic and anti-colonial rhetoric was an additional worry for the Dutch. Students and their political leanings had much to do with anti-colonial sentiment and the search for

²⁹⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 171, 4 December 1930, *Al-fath* article published in Cairo.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

independence and nationalist struggle. In 1929 the Jeddah Consulate wrote to Batavia that “[t]he development of subversive currents among the locals here and particularly the circumstances of extremists fleeing in 1927 to Mecca has induced the government over the past two years to pay special attention to the surveillance of returning pilgrims. We receive intelligence in regards to surveillance.”²⁹⁷ The Dutch Consulate in Jeddah was vital in linking the surveillance circuit connecting the Dutch administration in Batavia, Hajjis on board Kongsu Tiga ships, the Jawi community in Mecca, and Indonesian students in Cairo.

Another worrisome issue concerning the Dutch was that Hajjis in Mecca were exposed to the independence struggles of other colonized nations, which then served as examples of similar struggles coming to fruition. Anti-Western nationalism was seen as a worldwide struggle. A 1928 *al-Ahram* article by an “Anonymous Indonesian” stated

[t]he Local Dutch Authorities are in an awkward position to-day, and what frightens them more is the success of the New Chinese National Government, in China, which, will no doubt, lead to wide movement in Asia against the European Colonial Powers. The Javanese Leaders have sent out Circulars in which they have asked the Native population to work for restoring the dignity to the East. They added that the ‘Orient is for Orientals’ . . . the Javanese are ready to take the responsibility for their self-rule and to get rid of the Dutch occupation. We no longer need to be under guardians, and the best send off we give to the Dutch when leaving our lands is ‘Bon Voyage.’²⁹⁸

Further alarming to the Dutch were pamphlets that compared other Muslim nations fighting against European colonialism with the Netherlands East Indies. In the 1930’s, the political situation in Morocco served as an example for worldwide anti-European and anti-colonial uprising including in Southeast Asia. This information was spread through hajji networks and worked off a pan-Islamic view of political justice.

²⁹⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 147, 6 July 1929.

²⁹⁸ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 171, 28 July 1928, translation of letter to *ai-Ahram* from “Anonymous Indonesian.”

One pamphlet handed out and collected by the Consulate stated “not only is this about unarmed people naturally usurping justice from the enmity of armed people, it is for everyone a battle of enmity of religion versus religion, the enmity of Christians against Islam and the Koran and these morals and beliefs.”²⁹⁹

Within the Hedjaz, the Dutch had little control over how these pamphlets were disseminated, despite their desperate attempts at monitoring what was being circulated during the hajj to Indonesian pilgrims. The Dutch responded to the Moroccan pamphlets by saying “[t]he fact that the dissemination of these Morrokan pamphlets can occur is note-worthy. Presumably, this happened without the advance knowledge of the authorities who saw no chance of prohibiting them without the difficulties of getting face-to-face with the impudent North-Africans.”³⁰⁰

Other articles were more explicit in outlining the many nations that Indonesians could use as examples for independence: “Readers already know,” one stated, “that many lands in the East wish to be independent and have their own governments . . . China, Marokko, Malakka, Indie, Egypt, etc. People want independence . . . We want independence because we shall then rise in the view of the world. Previously, Muslims received no orders from foreigners. The Koran says that violence against the oppressors must make its appearance. Is Islam at present oppressed by the foreigners, yes or no? Surely our readers know the answer.”³⁰¹

To combat these attacks in the press, the Dutch government would actively prevent some articles from entering the Netherlands East Indies. As in the above

²⁹⁹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 135 1938, anti-French campaign in the Hedjaz led by Morrocans giving out pamphlets.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.171, 14 May 1928, Consulate Cairo to Consulate Jeddah.

example from *Seruan Azhar* calling for physical violence, although not an outright call for jihad, inflammatory writings were banned from legally entering Indonesia:

With an eye on the tendencies of this political article, I have let the editor know that the Dutch Government cannot permit this number. Therefore, it appears the shipment to NOI will have to be abandoned. The article in question is written by Abdul Kahar (alias Dalhar), one of the young leaders who holds hard feelings against the Embassy. The general content of this piece is of a harmless nature. The head of the European Department for Public Safety at the Ministerie van Binnenlandsch Zaken requested information over any edition of the different periodicals containing similar undesirable political lectures to stop them from spreading from Egypt to the Netherlands East Indies.³⁰²

Not all pamphlets could be stopped from entering the Indies and many pamphlets circulated among hajji communities. Therefore, the colonial administration also used surveillance amongst the hajjis themselves in order to further slow the spread of anti-colonial ideas. Surveillance extended to actual gatherings of students. For example at a public meeting in Cairo in 1929, the following surveillance report was written,

In the previous gathering, on the 14th of December, Taloet urged the necessity of students not concerning themselves with politics during their study periods. This advice seems to be followed, with exception of the Sumatrans, who have been raised against this notion and continue to concern themselves with politics. They associate with the Egyptian nationalists and follow the Wafd press with full attention. From time to time they visit the House of the Nation, i.e. the Wafd headquarters, with delegates from the Azhar and recently were seen at the Wafd Committee of the Gamalia district . . . Through the new rector of the Azhar, it is fixed that foreigners studying at the university must take the same exams as the Egyptian students. As a result, the young men are forced to spend more time on their studies and this explains their diminished political activities in the recent past.³⁰³

Gathering information on student meetings supplemented Dutch surveillance over political publications.

³⁰² NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 171, 14 May 1928, Consulate Cairo to Consulate Jeddah, example of articles in *Seruan Azhar*.

³⁰³ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 171, 9 April 1929 from Consulate Cairo to Consulate Jeddah.

The Dutch colonial government used the Consulate in Jeddah as a watchdog for its colonial pilgrims in the Middle East who had access to, in the Dutch opinion, extremely subversive ideas. The Dutch government installed spies in Mecca with the purpose of watching the Jawi community. The Dutch joined the British in this sort of espionage, feeling it was essential for “the appointment through our government of a spy for Mecca, such as what the British have, who can keep us updated on all the ways the pilgrims are being nuisances and how effective/efficient they will be.”³⁰⁴ These spies were meant to track the actions of individuals and report on how individuals affected the opinions of the Jawi community as a whole.

Health, Surveillance, and the Kamaran Quarantine Station

By the 1920's and 30's, contamination no longer simply applied to disease and the question of safety took on a different nature. Political contamination caused by anti-colonial sentiment and resulting in revolts and uprisings among colonized populations was as threatening to Europeans as disease had been in the nineteenth century. International health and safety standards developed as not only a medical tool in preventing the spread of contagious disease, but as a surveillance tool aimed at stopping the spread of political unrest. Health regulations surrounding the hajj were controlled by Europeans through various international treaties and agreements and were based on Western scientific values and beliefs. This automatically created a power situation that favored European intellectual knowledge and fostered cultural and technological

³⁰⁴ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.171. 22 March 1929, Consulate to MBZ.

hegemony, not to mention shipping monopolies, over parts of the world and systems of travel which had been going on for hundreds of years without European influence.

The surveillance of hajjis extended into larger projects aimed at monitoring and recording all pilgrims who entered and exited Mecca. Colonial governments exercised control over pilgrims traveling from British India, Singapore, and the Netherlands East Indies under the guise of quarantine. The quarantine island of Kamaran was a point of control for the British and Dutch governments. This island allowed European countries to regulate the movement of people to and from the Middle East and became a site where health and surveillance overlapped. The Netherlands was only one European nation to have a Consulate in Jeddah and was joined by Egypt, France, Turkey, Italy, the Soviet Union, Germany, and Britain.³⁰⁵ Out of these nations, the British and the Dutch played the largest role in overseeing the area due to the high number of colonial subjects each had traveling to the Middle East on hajj.³⁰⁶ Colonial control through health and safety seen at the Kamaran Quarantine Station worked hand-in-hand with the Dutch Consulate's surveillance over the movement and collection of data of internationally mobile colonial subjects. In this case, both the Dutch and British used the Kamaran Quarantine Station as a center for tracking all incoming and outgoing hajjis traveling between the Dutch and British Asian colonies.

³⁰⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.171, 20 November 1930.

³⁰⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 135. Number of pilgrims 1926-36:

	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35	35-36
N.O.I.	36410	34736	27846	29518	15664	4018	2009	2465	3424	3669
St.sett.	30193	14754	5879	6334	1863	474	512	748	1249	1909
Br.Ind.	36439	21322	19829	15310	9387	12767	10816	9937	13376	10574
Aden*	293	105	934	664	374	481	261	282	268	342
Persgolf					582					
China									87	137
Totaal	103335	70917	54488	52408	27288	17740	13598	13519	18454	16572

*Aden protectorate and East African coast.

During the nineteenth century, a pressing concern for European nations surrounding the hajj was the spread of disease to European colonies and more importantly, within Europe itself.³⁰⁷ The threat of cholera spreading to Europe by way of the hajj during the 1865 epidemic succeeded in “uniting rival European powers in a concerted politique sanitaire whose objective was regulation of the life of Western Arabia and, no less, of the most sacred ritual in Islam.”³⁰⁸ This intervention did little to stop nine cholera epidemics between 1865 and 1894, but it did successfully position Europeans in the political affairs, hygiene, and public health policies of the Middle East.³⁰⁹ As early as 1889, Dutch newspapers alarmed their readers with threats of the spread of diseases such as the plague from Indonesian pilgrims to the Middle East and predictions that such plagues would “contaminate the entire Muslim world.” More important was the idea that if diseases spread to Constantinople by way of Basra and Mesopotamia, they could quickly contaminate Europe as well, putting the “safety of Europe” at stake.³¹⁰ The idea of the Ottoman Empire being a gateway for contamination was a long held view and in the age of modern imperialism, European countries increasingly wanted secure plugs to try and stop any possible contamination leaks.

³⁰⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, Eindrapport 1927-28. Total pilgrims: 70,917 passed through Kamaran, 34,736 were transported aboard Kongsji Tiga ships. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.157, Eindrapport 1931-32. Total pilgrims: 27,288 passed through Kamaran, 15,664 were transported aboard a total of 28 Kongsji Tiga ships. Other lines: Holt Line (Blue Funnel) 1863 from Singapore on 7 ships, Mogelline and Nemazee 9387 from British India with 9 ships, 2 coastal steamers from Aden carrying 374. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, 1932-33, talk of expanding Kamaran, but did not happen due to the 1930's depression.

³⁰⁸ F.E. Peters, *The Hajj: the Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 302.

³⁰⁹ In 1894, the Sanitary Conference on the Mecca Pilgrimage met in Paris.

³¹⁰ Ras-el-Asjoead had set up a quarantine in Jeddah. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 536, 29 April 1989, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* article “Turkije met Pestgevaar.”

Cholera had been the major fear since the mid-nineteenth century.³¹¹ There were five quarantine stations for pilgrims at Kamaran, Tur [El-Tor], Sawakin [Suakin], Jeddah, and Yanbu [Yanbu' al Bahr]. By the 1920's, there wasn't much cholera being spread among pilgrims, however. Nonetheless, the quarantine requirements became more systematic and in 1926 the International Health Convention established a Paris office to "coordinate the sanitary control of the Meccan pilgrimage in cooperation with the Egyptian Quarantine Board."³¹² By 1930, the debarkation of pilgrims was highly regulated. Pilgrims were

[p]assed to sorting-houses, where their baggage was examined and their linen disinfected by steam; all leather articles were fumigated by formalin vapour and vessels containing water taken from the Holy Wells were boiled. From these sorting houses the travelers were placed by lots of fifteen in a disrobing room. Each individual received a small iron box in which to place personal valuables, and, after undressing, was given a linen gown and passed on to the baths.³¹³

The familiar scene of disinfection baths was a regular part of the Southeast Asian pilgrims' experience.

The Kamaran Quarantine Station was originally intended to stop both disease and other contaminants from moving through hajj networks into Europe. Before arriving in Jeddah, ships were required to stop at the island for inspection. The station was established in 1882 and first administered by the Constantinople Health Board and in June 1915 came under the administration of the Indian Government on behalf of the British government. The island of Kamaran off the coast of Saudi Arabia was 36 hours steaming from Aden and 48 from Jeddah. The estimated population was 1400 in 1917,

³¹¹ Cornelia Essner, "Cholera der Mekkapilger und internationale Sanitatspolitik in Agypten (1866 - 1938)," *Die Welt des Islams, New Series*, 32, no. 1 (1992): 41-82.

³¹² This system remained intact until the World Health Organization was started in 1948. See Peters, "The Hajj," 315.

³¹³ "The 1930 Pilgrimage To Mecca," *The British Medical Journal*, 2, no. 3650 (December. 20, 1930):1052.

1200 who lived in Kamaran Village, the main village on the island, and the rest in five hamlets. Fishing was a major source of income, but most inhabitants were dependent on the quarantine station for their survival. There was a minimal administrative structure on the island to maintain law and order under a European captain with an Indian staff. Pilgrim dues paid for the station's upkeep while a mix of residents' taxes and pilgrims' dues paid for civil services on the island.³¹⁴

In the eyes of the Dutch and British, Kamaran was originally established “primarily in order to protect the pilgrimage from the infection of cholera and other infectious diseases from Eastern countries with the attendant risk that these epidemics would become disseminated through Europe.”³¹⁵ But by May 1924, at a preparatory meeting for the 1926 International Sanitary Convention in Paris, British and Dutch health officials agreed that the island now held wider importance in terms of international contagion, no longer solely concerned with Europe, but with European colonies as well:³¹⁶

The protection of the pilgrimage against the introduction of infection by pilgrims coming from the South has an added importance on account of the impossibility of relying upon any reasonably effective measures being taken at Jeddah. There is in addition the possibility that the station maybe required and used for departing pilgrims going to the south in the case of infection occurring during the pilgrimage. This matter, it appears, is perhaps of greater importance in the case of pilgrims going to the Dutch East Indies than in the case of pilgrims going to India, as the Dutch East Indies have for many years been free from all epidemic cholera. An effective quarantine station at Kamaran represents from many points of view a measure of insurance against the spread of epidemics which is required, not only in the interests of pilgrims of all nations, but also to meet the risks of epidemic diseases on ships taking returning pilgrims southwards.³¹⁷

³¹⁴ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 156.

³¹⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 156, 18-19 May 1924.

³¹⁶ Ibid. The SMN and RL were very involved with the Sanitary Convention of 1926 and the negotiations leading up to it because the Pilgrim Ordinance's space requirement per pilgrim was contingent on the Sanitary Convention's decision.

³¹⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 156, 18-19 May 1924.

Considering the thousands of pilgrims who passed through Kamaran each year, the the risk of contagion was a serious concern. But the above statement also shows the European disregard for Saudi Arabia's ability to control the spread of disease and the need for Europeans to oversee the movements and welfare of all hajjis.

Concerns over contamination of the Netherlands East Indies made Kamaran an important concern for the colonial administration in Batavia. Although officially under British governmental oversight, the Dutch government was thoroughly involved with the quarantine island's administration and the Dutch Parliament approved the station's budget every year.³¹⁸ The Dutch government understood the importance of Kamaran in stopping infections traveling from the Middle East to NEI with returning hajji ships and the power it gave them of "regulating the return portions of our pilgrims as we ourselves wish it to be." At the same time, Dutch connections with the British on the island created hajji opinion that the Dutch were "more or less coupled with England in the eyes of the Muslims, not untinged with objection."³¹⁹ They were therefore ready to lay responsibility for the station on the British to downplay their own involvement.³²⁰

During the 1925-26 pilgrim season, pilgrims usually spent only a few hours on the island. Housed in basic mat huts, Dutch authorities assumed pilgrims would "not suffer much inconvenience" due to their short stays on the island. Ships arriving late in the afternoon would usually have to spend the night, but ships arriving earlier in the day could leave later in the afternoon. If a ship did stay overnight, the pilgrims "invariably

³¹⁸ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, 12 May 1932.

³¹⁹ It was too costly. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 156, 5 May 1924, secret report to Gouverneur Generaal NEI from Hoofdinspecteur in the Hoofdkantoor van den Burgerlijken Geneskundigen Dienst, J.J. van Lonkhuijzen.

³²⁰ Ibid.

sleep out in the open” because, as the European overseers of the station assumed, “the weather is warm and it is pleasanter in the open.”³²¹ In reality, sleeping in the open or in mat huts could be difficult especially in colder weather. Improvements for the future consisted of upgrading the pilgrim huts to masonry structures in the healthy sections of camp “which will be economical in the long run and add to the convenience of the pilgrims when the pilgrim seasons occur in the cold weather.” Masonry could extend the life of the huts, which were only expected to last for three to five years and needed annual repairs to remain usable. In the unhealthy sections of the camp, the mat huts would remain because it was “not necessary to have masonry huts for the camps of the unhealthy sections because, from the experience of the past ten years, the chances of ships now arriving with an out-break of some infectious diseases on board are remote and the mat huts now existing are quite suitable, if repaired annually, in case infected ship did arrive for quarantine.”³²²

Despite the usual favorable reports of life in the camps by the Dutch, in reality these camps could be nasty settings and were notorious for their sewage problems. Mr. E.S. Whittle, special engineer of the Kamaran lazaretto (sewage liquefaction pit) confirmed in a report on the lazaretto in 1927 that the “noxious gases from the pit are very offensive and pervade the camps.”³²³ Yet more important for European overseers in terms of hygiene was the method of bathing by Indonesian pilgrims. Dutch authorities objected to common pools of bathing water that were scooped out with a bucket, due to increased chance of contamination:

³²¹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, 1925-26, report on Kamaran.

³²² Ibid.

³²³ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, 1927.

Ordinary showers which squirt in the form of rain from above are not liked by oriental people. They are specially unpopular among women, who object to having their long hair wetted. In our Indies, wherever there is no river, for example in the mountains, they use a spout for bathing, but they like it to project in an oblique direction, (at a rather low level as they like to bathe in a sitting posture) and do not necessarily wet their hair.³²⁴

Ultimately, the attempt to change the method of bathing among pilgrims was abandoned and spouts at between 1 and 1.5 meters with a seventy degree angle water flow downward were installed. While comforts such as adequate sewage were often overlooked, personal hygiene such as bathing methods was a problem promptly dealt with, highlighting the priorities of camp administrators.

Despite the official role of Kamaran as a quarantine station, Kamaran also served as a surveillance site and important tool for the Dutch and British colonial governments to control the movements of South and Southeast Asians to and from the Middle East. It was a mandatory stop for all ships arriving from the Dutch and British colonies and, therefore, served to document the comings and goings of all ships and all passengers from both colonies.³²⁵ Kamaran provided the British and Dutch governments with detailed lists of every passenger aboard pilgrim ships. The information collected included names, gender, dates of birth, place of residence, and passport number. These lists could be compared with information at the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah to track the movements of Indonesian hajjis including their length of stay in the Middle East.

The importance of the Kamaran quarantine station as a site for surveillance over pilgrims and the Middle East in general was not lost on the British or Dutch colonial

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Of government sanctioned ships, local clandestine ships were often out of reach of the Dutch and British governments, see chapter 2 for more on this.

administrations. In classified documents, the Dutch were clearly concerned that Britain was using Kamaran as a spy station, stating that

Kamaran is in possession of a well-appointed radio station and an excellent landing area, that is regularly visited by British war planes. The opinion, that during the past few years Kamaran has become a military strategic point in the continuing struggle between the British and the States of South-Arabia (Yemen and Hadramout), is not totally clear. What is definitely true is that the visiting of Kamaran by airplanes from Aden in Yemen cannot go unnoticed. As is well-known, the Imam is no friend of England and his lands remain closed for the British and their airplanes flying from Aden to Kamaran naturally remain suspicious for the government and population there.³²⁶

By the beginning of the 1930's, the Dutch were more convinced that the British also saw the importance of surveillance on Kamaran and were indeed partaking in espionage activities. In 1931 the Dutch could confidently say that "if the British are using Kamaran as camouflage for other strategic purposes, then we have no fear they will terminate the Kamaran contract with us."³²⁷ The Dutch and British had a long history of correspondence warning each other of mutual political threats to their South and

³²⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, 28 January 1928, secret letter to Zaakgelastigde te Djeddah: "Ter illustratie het volgende. Ruim een jaar geleden lie teen der piloten per ongeluk zijn zakdeij boven Hodeida vallen, die niet het gerucht dor de stad, dat dit met opzet was geschied en dat het gevallene een geheime boodschap inhiel en men toog er dadalijk op uit het te vinden. Men bracht de zakdoej naar den Gouverneur van Hodeida, men bekeek en onderzocht die mauwkeurig, aangezien in een der hoeken met zwarte inkt iets in Latijnsche letters geschreven stond, dat niemand lezen kon en hun vermoedens, dat he teen geheime boodschap bevatte, werden reeds werkelijkheid. Naar ik meen werd den Imam te Sana et dit alles ook in kennis gesteld. Later bleek het geschrevene te zijn de naam van den pilot met het nummer van de wasscherij."

³²⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, 2 September 1931, Dutch assert that if the British are using Kamaran as a "camouflage voor andere strategische doeleinden, wij juist daardoor voor geen opzegging van het Kamaraantractaat door Engeland heben te vreezen."

Southeast Asian colonies and were concerned over “the smouldering and easily inflammable element of fanaticism” among South and Southeast Asian Muslims.³²⁸

Kamaran was not the only quarantine station run by Europeans in the Middle East. The station at Tor also served the European colonial project by serving as a laboratory for infectious diseases for British scientists who used pilgrims for their research. British doctor W. Doorenbos, the director of the quarantine council’s laboratory at Alexandria and the person in charge at the Tor station, was able to collect 20,730 stool samples from pilgrims to assess and contain different strains of cholera virus.³²⁹ Quarantine stations in the Middle East served colonial governments in terms of surveillance, military presence in the region, and scientific research.

There were other areas where the Dutch and British worked together on medical issues. They also had an agreement about the medical treatment of pilgrims in Jeddah and Mecca, and throughout the 1930’s other agreements were made between the two counties. In 1930, the Dutch government reacted favorably to a request from the Straits Settlements government that Indonesian medical staff would provide medical treatment at Jeddah and Mecca to British Malay pilgrims. If extra staff became necessary to accommodate this, the Straits Settlements government would pay for it. For example, in 1933 the Straits Settlements helped pay for the medicine and treatment of eighty Malaysian pilgrims³³⁰ and during the 1935-36 hajj season they paid for medicine totaling

³²⁸ Aan de Putte to Cremers, January. 4, 1866 A.R.A. Buitenlandse Zaken dossier 3076, quoted in Reid, “Nineteenth Century Pan-Islam,” 271.

³²⁹ “The 1930 Pilgrimage To Mecca,” 1052.

³³⁰ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.160, October 27 1930.

f906, which covered the treatment of 405 sick persons including 36 Europeans and 32 personnel of Europeans.³³¹

The Dutch colonial government could be held responsible for such outbreaks among pilgrims in the Hedjaz, creating a public relations disaster in terms of their image as an organized, well maintained, and powerful imperial nation.³³² In 1929, a small pox contagion broke out in the Hedjaz and the Dutch colonial government was held partially responsible:

[I]n connection to the continuing attempt to place the blame and responsibility for the appearance of small pox in this land on the Netherlands East Indies authorities, it is already well known that the vaccine regulation for pilgrims was already expanded through the stipulation that the doctors on board outgoing pilgrim ships are required, after a certain amount of time after departure from the final Netherlands East Indies port, to inspect the results of the vaccines of all pilgrims and to prepare a short report with all his findings. In case it is deemed necessary from a medical viewpoint, the ship's doctors can recommend that pilgrims who have no reaction to the inoculation must be revaccinated. Right now no requirement exists so some doctors also do a general inspection and revaccinate, while others do not. The case of the [outbreak onboard the SS] Tantalus teaches how important it is to have as much as is possible, the entire staff onboard pilgrims ships vaccinated against Small Pox.³³³

Medical supervision worked on two different levels in terms of protecting individuals and colonial possessions from outbreaks, but also protecting the Dutch colonial image in the eyes of the international community and maintaining trust in their managerial capabilities.

³³¹ Of these, 77 had malaria, 68 venereal disease or consequences, 50 affection of the airways-not TB, 24 affection of the eye, 13 dysenterie, and 173 other. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 161, 24 September 1933.

³³² Three new pokken cases NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 158, 10 February 1934. Out of 103 patients, 16 had Bronchitis, 11 constipation, 7 framboesia, 7 dysenterie, 5 enteritis, 5 flus, and 5 conjunctivitis. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 158, Hajj Season 1931-32.

³³³ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr.158, 21 March 1929.

Both the British and Dutch colonial governments saw the importance of the quarantine station, but the Kongsî Tiga was involved in a less concrete manner. On the one hand, it unwittingly participated in helping both colonial governments collect vital statistics and information necessary for surveillance of the hajj. On the other hand, the Kongsî Tiga debated internally over the necessity of stopping on the island. In 1932 a disagreement took place between SMO on one side and SMN and RL on the other. SMN and RL suggested discontinuing stopping at Kamaran, mentioning that the quarantine station was not actually Dutch. SMO wrote back very sternly that according to the 1926 Sanitary Convention they must stop there, so the Sanitary Laws would have to change in order to discontinue layovers there and argued that the station was very much a Dutch interest even if located on a British island, as made in agreements between the two governments. SMO also argued that the Dutch government voted on and approved the Kamaran budget.³³⁴ This discussion pointed to the fact that these shipping companies were not always privy to the agenda of the colonial administration. In this case, the Kongsî Tiga saw Kamaran as a necessity for public health's sake as regulated by the International Sanitary Convention and not necessarily the importance of the island as a point of surveillance.

Despite the Kongsî Tiga's belief to the contrary, health and sanitation issues within the hajj network were not only about the safety and well being of pilgrims. Colonial governments used this island to implement social control tactics and surveillance over hajjis moving between Asia and the Middle East. The Kamaran quarantine station was a site where both the Dutch and British could collect personal

³³⁴ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr. 157, 12 May 1932, Alfred Holt & Co to SMN and RL.

information about each and every pilgrim entering Saudi Arabia. They could later use this information to keep tabs on the location of potentially subversive colonial subjects or other travelers who were considered dangerous by the Dutch colonial administration. Beyond this, quarantine stations were also used for other military and scientific projects.

Backing the Kamaran quarantine station not only provided the Dutch with a tool for monitoring contagious disease, but also contagious political and cultural dangers travelling along hajj maritime networks.³³⁵ The station doubled as a colonial tool for policing the movement of colonial subjects and collecting personal data. Both the Dutch and British governments used Kamaran as a center for tracking all incoming and outgoing hajjis traveling between the Middle East, India, and the Netherlands East Indies. The seemingly benign sanitary motivations behind the Kamaran quarantine station went hand-in-hand with politically fueled motives of surveillance and policing of fluid mobility along maritime networks for both the Dutch and British colonial governments.³³⁶

Conclusion

The Dutch were correct in their assumptions of the political power the hajj had on individuals and Indonesian society. As the Dutch colonial administration itself recognized, the hajj was not only a religious experience fulfilling the fifth pillar of Islam. Mecca was an Islamic nexus where pilgrims could come together and exchange new ideas. Pilgrims had many opportunities to use the hajj as a political act against

³³⁵ For basic statistics on Kamaran see Alexander Melamid, "The Kamaran Islands," *Geographical Review*, 86, no. 1 (Jan., 1996): 108-110.

³³⁶ Sunil S. Amrith, *Decolonizing International Health: India and Southeast Asia, 1930-65* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

colonialism and hajjis were exposed to new people and ideas while abroad and were able to formulate new political opinions while in the Middle East and on board pilgrim ships. Some Indonesian pilgrims stayed in centers of learning such as Mecca and Cairo for up to a few years at a time as students while on hajj. These students immersed themselves in international communities of Islamic scholars who emphasized their Muslim identity as being far more important than national allegiances. Dutch involvement in the hajj was filled with ongoing mistrust and suspicion of Indonesian hajjis. The Dutch feared the implied threats to political, economic, and racial colonial stability caused by trouble and confusion in its handling of the hajj and an inherent distrust towards its colonial subjects.

Transnational hajj networks helped spread ideas, information, and a global sense of camaraderie among colonial subjects receptive to new forms of government that stressed indigenous self-determination. Besides the religious and spiritual ramifications of the hajj, this journey could also be the first experience of independence from colonial structures and the second-class citizenship they experienced under colonial rule. As this chapter has shown, the potential political power of returning hajjis was not lost on the Dutch government who recognized that hajjis were the main cause behind the spread of pan-Islamic ideas to Southeast Asia.³³⁷ In the eyes of the Dutch colonial administration, the hajj represented a threat to the security of the Netherlands East Indies. It was vital for Batavia to track the movements of Indonesian Muslims abroad, especially those residing in Mecca and Cairo as students. These hajjis who stayed in the Middle East to study were considered the most susceptible to the influence of subversive political ideas. The Dutch were particularly concerned with pan-Islamic ideas that encouraged an anti-Western and anti-colonial agenda.

³³⁷ Ibid., 252 and Benda, "Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje," 17-19.

The Dutch colonial administration gathered information on Indonesian Muslims in the Middle East through the surveillance activities of the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah. Surveillance was used to track the movements of hajjis both to and from the Middle East and while living in Jawi communities in Mecca and Cairo. The Dutch Consulate in Jeddah and the Kamaran quarantine station were key institutions in this project. The project of surveillance was aimed at individuals, communities, and the media, but attempts to control the spread of anti-Western and pan-Islamic ideas were negligible at best. Kongsu Tiga was not always privy to the underlying motivations of the Dutch government, but nevertheless helped in the colonial project of surveillance, a topic further discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Asian Maritime Networks and Dutch Conciliation in China

The *Java-China-Japan Lijn*'s financial successes during World War I and the early 1920's convinced the company to expand its business by improving their passenger services in Asia.³³⁸ After establishing a *Chef van de Afdeling Passage* (Head of Passenger Services) dealing specifically with passenger travel, the company increased its advertising among potential Chinese customers.³³⁹ JCJL was looking to increase their passenger services between the Netherlands East Indies and China, but also to Japan, the Phillippines, Malaysia, and Indochina. Advertisements, including Chinese-language circulars and leaflets, "become very popular" and the number of passengers on JCJL ships increased rapidly during the late 1920's. Chinese passengers embarking from Semarang, for example, increased from 2091 in 1927 to 3442 in 1929.³⁴⁰ Even on routes where JCJL had a small share of passengers, for example through Singapore, did not deter the company's "intensive canvassing" of passengers in the hope this would ensure "major extensions" to their transport routes.³⁴¹

Unlike the Kongsj Tiga, JCJL did not have a shipping monopoly over routes between the NEI, China, and Japan and, therefore, the company was more vulnerable to competing shipping companies, public opinion, and passenger demands. JCJL consistently had its eye on "future development, extension, and stability of our passage

³³⁸ Shimizu, "Dutch-Japanese Competition," 7.

³³⁹ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Koninklijke Java-China-Japan Lijnen, 1903-1975, nummer toegang 2.20.58.02, inventarisnummer 225, 21 December 1926.

³⁴⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 105, Semarang Agency Jaarverslag 1929.

³⁴¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 102, 20 March 1926, Boycott in Swatow against British.

business” and thoroughly analyzed onboard services to make them more attractive to prospective customers.³⁴² JCJL executives made frequent business trips onboard their own ships and wrote investigative travel reports to help the company make self-assessments and discover how to make improvements. The maritime vulnerabilities faced by the JCJL in attempting such improvements forced it to navigate between conciliation and control within the Asain maritime world.

Colonial conciliation underscored the rapidly changing power dynamics in Asia during the 1920’s and 30’s and the transformations within maritime Asia caused the JCJL to reevaluate how the company balanced its colonial interests and business profits with popular opinion, which increasingly expressed dissatisfaction with Dutch colonial rule. JCJL’s vulnerability within the politicized arena of interwar maritime Asia affected its political and social policies by forcing the company to rely on negotiation and conciliation rather than colonial top-down methods of coercion and control. Asian maritime networks created the connective spaces where political, economic, social, and cultural conflicts and conciliations were negotiated. Within the maritime networks of Asia, ships served as floating ambassadors of empire, transporting an image of Dutch colonialism throughout Asia and strengthening the fluid mobility of colonial subjects from the Netherlands East Indies to surrounding regions.

Chapter three investigates JCJL’s negotiations within maritime Asia both onboard ships and in port cities in order to expand its business and gain more of the market and also reveals how passengers, crewmembers, governments, and public opinion used the Asain maritime world as a way to express discontent with Dutch colonial policies. First,

³⁴² NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 27 September 1929, Soerabaja.

JCJL had to navigate its own conceptions of race and class in their quest to expand passenger services between the NEI and China. While the company sought to instill colonial norms onboard reflective of the racial and class hierarchies in the NEI, JCJL instead had to face the reality that new passengers onboard had their own ideas about race and class. Second, JCJL attempted to gain more control over its position in China by infiltrating Chinese communities both culturally and socially in port cities across the Asian littoral. Although resoundingly unsuccessful, the company attempted to improve its relationships with Chinese customers linguistically and by establishing direct contact with customers through the elimination of middlemen. The company was faced with events like the 1930-31 Amoy (Xiamen) boycott aimed at against JCJL ships. The boycott began after the sexual assault of a second-class Chinese passenger by two Dutch officers onboard the SS “Tjibadak” and was used by Chinese activists to criticize Dutch colonial policies within China *and* the Netherlands East Indies, forcing JCJL to negotiate with and conciliate to governments, unions, and popular opinion across Asia. This chapter explores JCJL’s colonial paranoia over the loss of Dutch authority in Asia and the resistance of overseas Chinese communities along maritime networks to Dutch colonial authority.

From Coolies to Class Onboard

The number of coolies working for Western companies in the NEI grew rapidly during the 1920’s and at the height of the system in 1930 consisted of around 500,000 workers, 60% of who were working in East Sumatra.³⁴³ Coolies onboard JCJL ships

³⁴³ J. Thomas Lindblad, “The Late Colonial State and Economic Expansion, 1900-1930s,” in *The Emergence of a National Economy: An Economic History of Indonesia*,

were largely from Southern China traveling back and forth between tin mines on Bangka and Belitung (Billiton) and Deli tobacco plantations on Sumatra.³⁴⁴ There was also a steadily growing percentage of women among this group of workers.³⁴⁵ Along with this increase in coolie labor came confidential government reports that “attested to growing coolie unrest as a backdrop of the rising tide of nationalism.”³⁴⁶ Although the 1931 repeal of the *Koelie Ordonnantie* (Coolie Ordinance) and *poenale sanctie* (penal sanction) making coolie insubordination punishable by jail, would change the “coolie issue” completely, JCJL was very concerned about uprisings within coolie transport during the late 1920’s, when the overall colonial atmosphere was one of suspicion, fear, and colonial repression.³⁴⁷

Most alarming for the JCJL were groups of coolies acting up, starting fights, and behaving belligerently towards European captains and officers onboard ships traveling between Hong Kong and Muntok to the tin mines of Bangka, a major line in JCJL’s steerage service.³⁴⁸ One report from the SS “Tjikembang” described it “very noisy through the unrestrained behavior of around 250 coolies for Bangka . . . There were

1800-2000, eds. Howard Dick, Vincent J.H. Houben, J. Thomas Lindblad and Thee Kian Wie, 111-152 (Honolulu: Asian Studies Association of Australia in association with Allen & Unwin and University of Hawai’I Press, 2002), 140.

³⁴⁴ Putten, *Corporate Behavior*, 50-51.

³⁴⁵ Jan Bremen notes that the “sex ratio declined from 3.7 men for every woman in 1915 to 2.9 in 1920.” Jan Bremen, “New Thoughts on Colonial Labour in Indonesia”. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*. 33, no. 2 (Jan., 2002): 333.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 336.

³⁴⁷ Although the 1931 repeal of the Coolie Ordinance and its penal clause (making coolie insubordination punishable by jail) would change the dynamics of the “coolie issue,” prior to this JCJL was very concerned over possible uprisings within coolie transport. See Lindblad, “The Late Colonial State.”

³⁴⁸ The changing attitudes of steerage-class coolies onboard supports John Ingelson’s idea that the “mental horizons of the urban workforce were undergoing significant and lasting changes in the final decades of colonial rule.” John Ingelson, “Worker Consciousness and Labour Unions in Colonial Java,” *Pacific Affairs*, 54, no. 3 (Autumn, 1981): 493.

repeated fights with the crew. The slightest little things resulted in shouting matches; if there were *kojes*, dishes, or other objects at hand, they were thrown and their attitude towards the Officers was unusually brutal.”³⁴⁹ Captain Schattenburg also reported that onboard his ship “the people under transport from Banka had again behaved in a very recalcitrant manner. Already only two days after we departed Hong Kong, an uproar was made over the tea provided and, without any warning, twenty-five of these men tried to attack the Comprador Staff, but this was prevented by the intervention of the Europeans onboard. Furthermore, during the entire trip they remained hostile and rude and had a very depressing effect upon the Etat-Major [European officer corps].”³⁵⁰ In general, JCJL noted a “spirit of resistance” among the Banka coolies and was very concerned over getting this dangerous threat under control.

The misbehaved and sometimes violent coolies were regarded as renegade passengers, threatening “the safety and reassurance of the crew and passengers between Java and Hong Kong.” The company also received testimony from officials such as Doctor Volmers of the Banka tin mines, who fully acknowledged that “during recent times dangerous people” had joined the coolie transports and were “capable of anything.”³⁵¹ Further, a recent attack by armed pirates onboard the British Butterfield & Swire ship SS “Anking” left a few European officers onboard dead. News of the attack produced a “deep impression” among JCJL’s European crewmembers who petitioned for increased security onboard. One captain felt JCJL needed to take immediate action

³⁴⁹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 15 October 1928, *Soerabaiasch Handelblad* article “De Java-China-Japan Lijn en de Chineesche Zeerovers.”

³⁵⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 2 November 1928.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

against misbehaved coolies because what “happened with the big steamer of B&S, can also happen onboard any JCJL boat.”³⁵² JCJL arranged with the *Department van Binnenlandsch Bestuur* (Department of Internal Affairs) that ships running between Hong Kong and coolie destination ports were provided with armed police escorts onboard as a form of intervention “before it is too late.”³⁵³

JCJL felt the real troublemakers were not Indonesian coolies, but former soldiers from recently disbanded Chinese armies who were joining coolie transports. Dutch opinion believed that “[n]ow that the fighting [in China] is resoundingly over, many thugs who were employed as soldiers are walking around without a job, daring to join the coolies who are recruited for Indies companies, and present themselves as very undesirable types.”³⁵⁴ Further, certain Chinese ex-military troublemakers bragged about having “been in the army of one ‘General’ or another” and were believed to bully fellow coolies onboard into subordination.³⁵⁵ These Chinese coolies were thought to be even more unruly because “while the recruiter in China has told them they were headed for a great job as a soldier in the Netherlands Indies army, their destination is meant for land works or mine works companies.”³⁵⁶ JCJL hoped that in the future Banka would use *only* Javanese workers, but in the meantime the company met with the Head of the Banka

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 15 October 1928 *Soerabaiasch Handelsblad*, “De Java-China-Japan Lijn en de Chinesche Zeerovers.”

³⁵⁵ Ibid.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

Tinwinning (tin mine) to negotiate “price increases [in coolie fares] to offset a portion of [JCJL’s] costs” for police escorts.³⁵⁷

JCJL experienced “unruly” fourth-class passengers during the late 1920s, specifically among coolies onboard and the company believed that by increasing the “standing” of its passengers, the ships would be safer and such onboard behavior would decrease. Steerage class accommodation and food were improved to make fourth-class passengers more comfortable. To eliminate these “undesirable” Chinese who acted as “negative influences” among coolies onboard, JCJL wanted to transport a “far better class of Chinese people” that it thought would “never suffer adverse factors.”³⁵⁸ JCJL looked at its ships running between Hong Kong and Java as examples of this effect, since on these ships “Chinese of a better class are transported and therefore extra security aboard these vessels is not necessary.”³⁵⁹ JCJL had discussed the subject with the NEI’s *Directeur van Justitie* (Director of Justice) “who completely shared our opinion, that no danger lurks beneath the passengers to and from Java.”³⁶⁰ JCJL realized that to decrease the amount of violence onboard its steerage decks and the negative influence Chinese passengers had on Indonesian coolies, its goal was to increase the class of passengers onboard by transforming the fourth class from a coolie-based transport to a passenger-based one.³⁶¹

³⁵⁷ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 2 November 1928.

³⁵⁸ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 17 October 1928, telegram.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 2 November 1928.

³⁶¹ Of course, after the abolishment of the Coolie Ordinance in 1931 and the economic depression, the number of coolies onboard drastically decreased. But here we see JCJL had previous political reasons for diminishing this traffic.

Part of attracting a “better class” of passenger was improving fourth-class accommodations and food. In terms of space onboard, the JCJL wanted to make sure the fourth class had a specified permanent area, ensuring there was “a reserved space for them and they aren’t getting the last available free cargo space.”³⁶² Giving steerage passengers their own designated space was comparable to the way first and second-class passengers were treated and “[j]ust as the passenger spaces in the higher classes are not reduced when fewer passengers are onboard, we must not do this with the fourth class.”³⁶³ JCJL felt it was worthwhile to make more steerage room available on routes between Java, Makassar, and Balik-Papan by making “two steerage decks or the center castle and a steerage deck permanently available to the fourth-class passengers.”³⁶⁴ Further, JCJL wanted to make sure the fourth class always had a Chinese comprador to explain onboard procedures to Chinese passengers, including the proper labeling of baggage,³⁶⁵ assigning passengers a place on deck,³⁶⁶ and ensuring luggage was properly stacked so that a small walkway remained for the daily inspection rounds by the captain, first officer, boatswain, and Chinese doctor.³⁶⁷

Along with more space permanently allocated to fourth-class passengers and using Chinese compradores to make sure passengers understood onboard procedures, the

³⁶² NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 106, 23 July 1930, Reisrapport by Heer Admiraal.

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 107, 29 September 1931, Circular to All Captains.

³⁶⁶ “Care must be taken that subordinates of the comprador and other deck crew do not ask the passengers for money.” Ibid.

³⁶⁷ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 125, 2 August 1927, Reisrapport in China.

company was invested in achieving “a more ‘senang’ feel” onboard.³⁶⁸ Part of this plan was to encourage the “large number of people who come to send people off, usually busy throwing streamers, and giving people the opportunity to appreciate a final goodbye. It is also excellent advertising.”³⁶⁹ Further, food played an important aspect in delineating class and meetings with compradors such as Hup Hoek King convinced JCJL that by “increasing the provisions of the food” the company would be “more popular” and their passenger transport would ultimately benefit.³⁷⁰

The economizing of meals by compradors shortly after embarking and just before disembarking was also targeted by JCJL’s new fourth-class policies. The travel report of J.H. Warning (Manager of JCJL’s Amoy [Xiamen] office) found that compradors were trying to economize by skipping a meal either at the start or end of the journey and the company also received complaints from local agents like Wee Tong Boo who wrote that passengers had arrived in Keelung, Taiwan after a long train ride and were not offered breakfast once onboard. Plus, when they arrived in Amoy, Hong Kong, and Batavia, they were allowed to disembark with an empty stomach, leaving a general impression that “passengers consider themselves starved traveling on your ships.”³⁷¹ Wee Tong Boo reminded the company that a “Chinaman’s pride is to go about with a heavy stomach and you find it in their custom of greeting each other every day at any time is “Chea Par

³⁶⁸ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, .inv.nr. 104, 24 Batavia 1928, Reisrapport on SS Tjisarosa.

³⁶⁹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 110, 1 July 1933, Reisrapport Heer L.C. Admiraal naar Billiton en Banka 21-25 Juni 1933.

³⁷⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 1928 Reisrapport on SS Tjisarosa from Keeling and Amoy.

³⁷¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 125, 8 November 1928, JCJL Amsterdam Office to JCJL Batavia Office.

Buai,” [nǐ chīfàn le ma] which means have you eaten yet, whereas your Western custom calls for good morning or good evening as the case may be.”³⁷²

Making sure Chinese passengers had enough to eat became a major priority for the JCJL. To counteract negative public opinion, JCJL decided to mimic the system already in place on one of its ships, the SS “Solviken,” where “at the last minute a meal was provided to deck passengers of better quality than the bad food they were provided during the trip, with the result that their last impression of the journey was as favorable as possible.”³⁷³ The entire fleet now implemented a “comprador’s meal” on the last day of the journey and also a meal just before arrival “by which the Chinese passengers will go ashore well fed, which cannot fail to leave them with a lasting good impression of the care they received onboard.”³⁷⁴

Along with devising ways to increase the class of their steerage passengers through better conditions onboard, JCJL was also trying to figure out how to attract a “better standing” of passengers for its first and second classes. This increasingly became a tricky issue because many Chinese passengers were beginning to travel in the first class during the late 1920’s, together with European and American passengers. By 1928, JCJL’s internal travel reports were showing that on some ships “the first class was as good as totally filled with Chinese . . . ALL with European food.”³⁷⁵ Other ships had a majority of Chinese passengers in their first-class accommodations, for example onboard the SS “Tjilemoet” traveling from Hong Kong to Manila with three Europeans, two

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 1928, Reisrapport on SS Tjisarosa from Keeling and Amoy.

Americans, one Manilan and ten Chinese occupying the first-class cabins.³⁷⁶ Despite the revenue these passengers created, JCJL reports still debated the appropriateness of Chinese passengers in the first class, largely evaluating their suitability on terms of how hidden they could keep themselves from fellow European passengers during the journey. One report stated the Chinese passengers “displayed themselves rarely except for meal times, so little annoyance was experienced from them”³⁷⁷ and another mentioned the “salons were used very little by the Chinese. Most [Chinese] families spent the entire day in their cabins and also their meals were taken there.”³⁷⁸ Another company employee mentioned how Chinese passengers did not use the bathrooms and since “[l]uckily this group did not bathe, I would therefore call them exemplary passengers for Europeans to travel with.”³⁷⁹ Overall, most internal company reports made positive comments over Chinese first-class passengers and found “there was not much to criticize them on.”³⁸⁰

Despite these positive reports from its own employees, JCJL developed a policy based on Dutch colonial perceptions of race and class that divided the first and second classes into Western and Asian respectively. Although Chinese travelers paid the same fare as everyone else, the first class became a white, Western enclave overwhelmingly reserved for Europeans, Americans, and other Westerners. Even when internal company reports said the behavior of Chinese passengers onboard was “exemplary” and “no trouble,” the same reports were riddled with colonial prejudices, including stereotypes

³⁷⁶ The first six passengers were brought to sternboard and cabins and the Chinese to backboard ones.. NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 26 October 1928, Reisverslag SS Tjilemoet, Hongkong to Manila.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

³⁷⁸ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 18 Juni 1929, Reirapport SS Tjileboet Manila to Makassar to Soerabaia.

³⁷⁹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 1928, Reirapport on SS Tjisarosa from Keeling and Amoy.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

casting Chinese as dirty and loud. These prejudices led many reports to conclude there could be no Asians in the first class because European and American passengers preferred not to travel with them side-by-side, yet none of the reports actually include Western passengers making such remarks.

Mostly it was the writers of the internal travel reports themselves (all Dutch JCJL employees) who argued the “impossibility” of transporting Westerners and Asians together in the same class. One employee wrote “I can imagine that on ships where the cabins are in the salon, Chinese passengers are a real burden. I therefore seek the opinions of the Hong Kong agent about booking no, or as few as possible, Chinese passengers from Amoy [Xiamen] in first class onboard ships heading to Manila, seeing as the first class is better suited to remain available for Europeans and Americans.”³⁸¹

Another report said the writer’s “stay in Chinatown convinced [him] that the recommendation is warranted to keep the second class and the Chinese as far away as possible from the first. The objections that European passengers will continue to have are: the constant noise, screaming of children, very loud talking (even early in the morning and late at night), but especially the insufferable smell and the distasteful throat sounds [coming from Chinese passengers].”³⁸² Another report imagined Europeans and especially Americans would “feel less at home in our first class, if there are subjects of the ‘Celestial Empire’ [Tiāncháo dàguó] walking around, which will undoubtedly work to inhibit the raising up of our first class traffic.”³⁸³ All of these anti-Chinese sentiments reflected colonial ideas about the proper place of Westerners and Asians within colonial

³⁸¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 18 Juni 1929, Reisrapport SS Tjileboet Manila to Makassar to Soerabaia.

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 26 October 1928, Reisverslag SS Tjilemoet, Hongkong to Manila.

racial and class hierarchies and JCJL employees believed that without making their first class an exclusively white, Western space, not only their business, but also their colonial authority would suffer.

The racial division of the first and second classes reflected a Dutch colonial understanding of hierarchy during the interwar period and was an onboard system of social management that the JCJL thought to also implement among crewmembers. The company fluctuated between the benefits and detriments of Indonesian and Chinese crewmembers and had to negotiate their desire to recreate the same colonial hierarchies onboard as existent in the NEI. JCJL had historically hired both Chinese and Indonesian crewmembers, depending on what was most convenient for the individual ship before its next journey, but the change in their passenger service convinced JCJL executives that the ship needed to be a brilliant example of Dutch colonialism for the new passengers of “better standing.”³⁸⁴ The ship was a floating ambassador of empire and Dutch ships served as the public face and a floating advertisement for Dutch colonialism to the Asian maritime world. For the travelers onboard, especially those who had never been to the Netherlands East Indies, the JCJL ship was a presentation of Dutch colonialism. First and second-class passenger interactions with crewmembers were a large part of this presentation and, therefore, JCJL’s choice of crewmembers became an important aspect of Dutch colonial propaganda abroad.

³⁸⁴ JCJL crews were not hired on longer contracts, but journey-by-journey. Chinese and Indonesian crews remained racially exclusive from one another, and served on separate ships, therefore an entire crew would either be Indonesian or be entirely Chinese. This is still the preferred method of staffing transoceanic Dutch ships today. For example, see “Dutch Ship Owners want All-Filipino Crew on their Vessels,” INQUIRER.net, 30 June 2010. Accessed <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/news/breakingnews/view/20100630-278385/Dutch-ship-owners-want-all-Filipino-crew-on-their-vessels>

Since ships were floating ambassadors of empire, JCJL wanted to recreate the NEI onboard by using Indonesian crewmembers and followed the lead of the *Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland*, *Rotterdamsche Lloyd*, and *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij* who already employed Indonesian crews as a selling point of the unique charm onboard Dutch liners.³⁸⁵ JCJL reconsidered its use of Chinese stewards onboard once they expanded their passenger services and in 1927 replaced almost all of its Chinese crewmembers for Indonesians claiming the company had “gradually” concluded that

currently Javanese servants are better than Chinese. The Chinese boys often can offer up almost no words in English, are brutal and also dirty, wherefore we now have Javanese servants on all ships except SS “Tjimanoeek”, “Tjisondari” and “Tjikarang” and on the last named ship we are considering also replacing the Chinese boys with Javanese, who, although also not ideal, still usually give more “service” than Chinese.³⁸⁶

This change in policy was reflective of larger Dutch attitudes towards Chinese workers who, also in coolie industries, were being replaced by Javanese considered “cheaper, and while less diligent supposedly more pliable, than the Chinese had been.”³⁸⁷ In terms of wages, Chinese and Indonesian crews came out to about the same in terms of total monthly salaries suggesting money was not JCJL’s main concern.³⁸⁸ Instead, the timing of this change in crewmembers reflected increased worries over the suitability of Chinese workers in terms of their political affiliations. After the communist uprisings the previous winter, Javanese stewards could have been seen as a safer bet in terms of maintaining control onboard and avoiding any trouble at sea.

³⁸⁵ See chapter 5.

³⁸⁶ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 215, 21 October 1927.

³⁸⁷ Bremen, “New Thoughts on Colonial Labour,” 333.

³⁸⁸ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.06, SB.296, 7 August 1929.

Two months after its overhaul of crewmembers, JCJL also decided to replace its Chinese chief stewards employed in the first and second classes with Indonesians.³⁸⁹ The chief stewards had always been Chinese and there had never been a discussion before 1927 about changing this. Although the Chinese chief steward was always “in need of close supervision, seeing this is a Chinese person,”³⁹⁰ the only previous issue had been changing their official title from “Chinese Purser” to “Chinese Chief Steward” because of the popular opinion that “a purser in all practical purposes cannot be trusted.”³⁹¹ These new Indonesian crewmembers were called “Native Stewards” and were preferably from Manado. Suitable Manadonese replacements would have “sufficient staff under him and must not cook or bake himself. He gets then more time for checking the work of employees and supervisions of the galley for the first class and staff.”³⁹² In the course of a few months, most Chinese crews had been replaced with Indonesians and were overseen by Indonesian “Native Stewards.”

Replacing Chinese stewards with Indonesians was a way for JCJL to export NEI colonial models across maritime Asia. As the company saw on SMN, RL, and KPM liners, such crewmembers served as advertisements for competent Dutch control over pliable and obedient colonial subjects. But it soon became clear that JCJL’s plans to have the “charm” and “authenticity” of Indonesian crewmembers onboard was causing problems largely due to the inability of these crewmembers to communicate with many

³⁸⁹ The Chief Steward, or what was called a *Hofmeester* on steamers to and from Europe, was responsible for the food in the first class and of the [non-Chinese] staff, he made the menus, gave out the available food items, oversaw the cooks, and had the entire Civil Service on board under him.

³⁹⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 225, 17 August 1927.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 225, 2 December 1927, Civiele Dienst.

passengers in the first and second classes who overwhelmingly used English as the *lingua franca* onboard. Only nine months after their re-staffing, internal company reports lamented that “the system of replacing Hong Kong boys with Javanese servants is not a success.” The issue was “[f]irst and foremost with an eye on the fact we want to work up the first class passenger service” and therefore “it cannot be overlooked that all the Far East traveling tourists and business men are more or less masterful over the English language while this cannot be said of the Malays” For example, the chief steward onboard the SS “Tjuileboet” only spoke “a few words of English, but these are also out of embarrassment and he speaks so softly that you can hear everything else around you except what comes from his mouth.”³⁹³ The Manadonese chief stewards were not competent in English and reports complained that “a Menadonese *Hofmeester* who does not understand English is not in the right place” onboard JCJL ships.³⁹⁴

An even bigger issue was the lack of English language skills among the regular Indonesian stewards. Travel reports indicated that a “question asked by a British or an American passenger cannot be answered, seeing as the Javanese servants do not speak any English and out of embarrassment always answer ‘saja’ [yes].” For example, one report explained an American woman asked a steward one morning to prepare a warm tub bath. While *saja* was the answer, “after half an hour waiting there was still nothing prepared, at which point the woman could have made another request, but she had already given up.”³⁹⁵ Chinese passengers “made due with the Javanese servants through

³⁹³ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 26 October 1928, Reisverslag SS Tjilemoet, Hongkong to Manila.

³⁹⁴ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 28 September 1928, Reisverslag SS Tjikembang from Tg. Priok to Shanghai.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

gestures and with broken English via the *Hofmeester*.³⁹⁶ Others commented that if the Chinese stewards had been replaced by an English speaking *Hofmeester* and an Indonesian crew “the question could be gotten around, but now the [language] difference is very strong” with neither *Hofmeester* nor crew able to adequately communicate with many passengers. Ultimately, JCJL felt the “large majority of the passengers cannot make themselves understood.”³⁹⁷

There were further problems with the Indonesian stewards including complaints that their “quality leaves much to be desired.” Service by Javanese servants onboard the SS “Tjileboet” was reported to be “too slow” and it was “normal to wait for an order for 15 minutes, sometimes longer, which the company considered “way too long.”³⁹⁸ Other reports mentioned “the Chinese are better at relying on their own resources than natives in carrying out their work.”³⁹⁹ Further reports felt the Indonesian crews left the impression of “a category of native that the Mails [SMN and RL] and KPM found less desirable and “zoden aan de dijk zetten” who have then come to seek refuge with us.”⁴⁰⁰ Because of both these language and service inadequacies, JCJL claimed captains had to take up the slack and “always attend to the smallest matters in order to preserve the good order of business onboard”⁴⁰¹ Captains even had to insure that the clothing of the

³⁹⁶ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 24 Batavia 1928, Reisrapport SS Tjisarosa from Keeling and Amoy.

³⁹⁷ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 28 September 1928, Reisverslag SS Tjikembang from Tg. Priok to Shanghai.

³⁹⁸ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 26 October 1928-Reisverslag, SS Tjilemoet, Hongkong to Manila.

³⁹⁹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 106, 23 July 1930, Reisrapport of Heer Admiraal on various ships.

⁴⁰⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 28 September 1928, Reisverslag SS Tjikembang, Tg. Priok to Shanghai.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

Javanese “Boys” and stewards “were decent” and not “sloppy, faded suits.”⁴⁰² JCJL’s overall conclusion from these internal reports was that “a staff of Javanese servants is not a desirable solution”⁴⁰³ and “it would be advisable for the passenger ships to again turn to Chinese servants onboard seeing as their service among the a/b [first and second-class] passengers would make our ships much more attractive.”⁴⁰⁴

During the extension of their passenger services in the late 1920’s, JCJL attempted to establish racial and class hierarchies onboard reflective of colonial values in the Netherlands East Indies. Because these ships served as floating ambassadors of Dutch empire across maritime Asia, JCJL wanted these ships to advertise a picture of the NEI as a competently controlled colony with an obedient Indonesian population exemplified by stewards onboard. JCJL’s desire to increase the standing of its passengers onboard was part of a colonial project to make Dutch ships safe, controlled, and orderly spaces and to advertise this throughout Asia. Counteracting disruptive coolies was a large part of this project and increasing the standards of the steerage class was seen as the best solution. In the higher classes, separating Asians and Westerners into different classes was also a way for the company to recreate colonial racial and class hierarchies onboard, upholding a system of European supremacy, and to advertise this throughout maritime Asia. Further, replacing possibly subversive Chinese crewmembers with Indonesians was an attempt to maintain control over its staff, but JCJL was forced to reconsider its use of crewmembers onboard to conciliate the needs of a cosmopolitan mix

⁴⁰² NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 225, 2 December 1927, Civiele Dienst.

⁴⁰³ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 26 October 1928, Reisverslag SS Tjilemoet, Hongkong to Manila.

⁴⁰⁴ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 28 September 1928, Reisverslag SS Tjikembang, Tg. Priok to Shanghai.

of first and second-class passengers traveling throughout Asia. Despite the fact the company was willing to accommodate changes within their staffing procedures, the division of classes remained in place providing a firm statement about European and Dutch supremacy over Asians.

Infiltration into China

The JCJL attempted to infiltrate Chinese culture and appropriate Chinese social networks in an attempt to acquire more passengers and excel within the competitive Asian shipping industry, but was met with mixed results due to overseas Chinese networks actively preventing Dutch interference in local business affairs. Dutch infiltration into China was intimately connected to JCJL's concerns over rising anti-foreign sentiment in China. Employee language study and disabling the system of Chinese middlemen were forms of insurance against a paranoid (yet somewhat accurate) vision of imminent European banishment from China's lucrative markets. The company encouraged and facilitated intensive Chinese language study among its European staff in order to gain a deeper understanding of the Chinese psyche not only to increase economic profits, but also to prepare the company for an imagined date in the near future when Chinese nationalism would require foreigners to speak Chinese. JCJL also attempted to eliminate Chinese passenger brokers or middlemen who it felt prevented the company's direct contact with Chinese passengers and therefore diminished Dutch control over these maritime routes. The company's quickly failed attempts at removing these brokers revealed JCJL's dependence on transnational connections of Chinese middlemen working in port cities of both the NEI and China. JCJL hoped to increase its number of Chinese passengers in the steerage, third, and second classes, but, as a foreign firm with limited

resources in China, the company was removed from the country in which they hoped to profit. JCJL's actions were meant to protect Dutch interests against foreign competitors, Chinese competitors, and anti-foreign sentiment within China, but ultimately JCJL was forced to recognize its limited influence over overseas Chinese social networks.

One of the major ways JCJL sought to infiltrate China more successfully was by teaching European employees the Chinese language, which the company believed was not only “with an eye to immediate profit or loss, [but also] a much broader question.”⁴⁰⁵ JCJL considered language education a business strategy that benefitted both the company and Dutch colonialism in general as a way to protect both entities against perceived threats in Asia. Not only would JCJL's “reputation be lifted”⁴⁰⁶ in China, but Chinese language proficiency among employees would boost Dutch “national pride and general national efficiency in the face of intense competition which is going to take place in what MAY some day turn out to be the most wonderful market and field for economic enterprise of the world: China!”⁴⁰⁷ Learning Chinese was a project the JCJL saw as benefitting the Dutch empire as a whole. Although some of this was about fears of future rivalries, it was also in response to heavy competition by other European firms in China who threatened JCJL's market share. Especially worried over “Germans (not to mention Japanese!)” who were both “in just as intimate direct contact with the Chinese as they can possibly be, with Americans getting well on the way in the same direction, and even with

⁴⁰⁵ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 15 March 1930, Thos T.H. Ferguson's Memorandum on the study of Chinese by employees of the larger Dutch firms in China.

⁴⁰⁶ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 10 January 1930.

⁴⁰⁷ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 15 March 1930, Thos T.H. Ferguson's Memorandum on the study of Chinese by employees of the larger Dutch firms in China.

the British starting.” Not only were the Dutch seeing their big enterprises “lagging behind” these European competitors, but JCJL felt the Dutch “nation is so much better fitted and trained than any other” of exerting power over foreign markets, especially in terms of learning foreign languages. It, therefore, seemed “absurd that, in China, we should distinctly lag behind all others instead of taking the lead or at least placing ourselves abreast of the Germans.”⁴⁰⁸ JCJL was not the only one to use language as a way to gain a better understanding and more control over Chinese markets.⁴⁰⁹ Heads of British shipping firms in China were taking actions to “give their juniors all possible facilities for obtaining a working knowledge of the [Chinese] language” and Chinese language schools were maintained by the British Chambers of Commerce at Shanghai, Tientsin, Hankow, and Hong Kong.⁴¹⁰

JCJL also wanted employees to learn Chinese to lessen the threat of Chinese opposition to foreign shipping lines, both through anti-foreign nationalist fervor and through the creation of Chinese shipping companies. JCJL felt that with the “rapid growth of a national spirit in China and the steadily increasing participation of Chinese firms in the foreign trade of the country, a knowledge of the Chinese language is

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Robert Bicker notes that for British residents in Shanghai, “although language was obviously a crucial factor in Sino-British interaction, for settlers, in particular, learning Chinese was seen as a demeaning compromise with indigenous society.” In terms of maritime employment, this failed to be the case, with both British and Dutch companies looking favorably on employees learning Chinese. Robert Bickers, “Who were the Shanghai Municipal Police, and why were they there? The British recruits of 1919,” in *New Frontiers: Imperialism’s New Communities in East Asia 1842-1953*, eds. Robert Bickers and Christian Henriot (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 172.

⁴¹⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 26 February 1930, British Legation in China and Commercial Secretary H.J. Brett.

becoming more and more important to the foreign merchant.”⁴¹¹ To be better prepared “in case of Chinese competition,” JCJL would benefit by knowing “the Chinese mentality” and employees who had “made a special study of that will in this case be very useful.” Despite the reliable British translations of Chinese “factual evidence,” the *interpretation* of these facts by a European was “likely to leave much to be desired, simply because a Chinese views facts in a different way than a European.” JCJL felt strongly over the impossibility that “a European can feel exactly how a Chinese thinks, before this European knows enough Chinese language to be able to speak to him in his own tongue and before he can read the newspapers.”⁴¹² Learning Chinese would be the only way for the company to truly “get below the crust” of China.

Concerns over Chinese shipping companies pushing Europeans out of China’s markets were fueled by the GMD’s 1929 platform for a shipping rights recovery program that stated “foreign navigation in Chinese waters violated China’s national sovereignty and principles of international law, threatened China’s security and caused the nation to suffer economic loss.”⁴¹³ The GMD wanted more competitive Chinese shipping lines, in part to “counter the treaty powers’ claim that China lacked sufficient tonnage to meet its needs in the event of a withdrawal of foreign ships.”⁴¹⁴ Nanjing also wanted to reduce the number of foreign ships and shipping companies in China with “the aim of gradually

⁴¹¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 26 February 1930, British Legation in China and Commercial Secretary H.J. Brett.

⁴¹² NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 10 January 1930.

⁴¹³ Anne Reinhardt, “‘Decolonisation’ on the Periphery: Liu Xiang and Shipping Rights Recovery at Chongqing, 1926–38,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36, no. 2 (June, 2008): 262.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 262.

eliminating foreign shipping in Chinese waters.⁴¹⁵ The GMD's shipping rights recovery program also sought to expand the government's role in shipping administration and in 1931 began administering many of the Chinese Maritime Customs Service's responsibilities including ship inspections and registration.⁴¹⁶ After the GMD nationalized the China Merchants Navigation Company in 1931, the JCJL heard rumors, which they "did not underestimate" that the Chinese were planning to start a shipping line between China and the Netherlands East Indies

JCJL wanted its employees to learn Chinese not for "daily routine work and business relations with the Chinese" but principally to acquire "a more intimate first-hand contact with, and understanding of, the people and the authorities of the country in which one has established one's business."⁴¹⁷ Besides understanding the Chinese mentality, the cultivation of Chinese language skills among employees would help with "first-hand knowledge of the proper scope and content of contracts, official correspondence and other important documents relating to this service." Additionally, the language students could "now and then look at a Chinese newspaper, which often had important indications of 'how the wind is going to blow' in terms of commercial control." In a word, such language students would do their "little bit" for JCJL's interests in China and if the company could achieve a reasonable knowledge of the language among a reasonable percentage of its employees, they would, in JCJL's opinion, at least bring itself to a level

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 262.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., 262.

⁴¹⁷ JCJL felt employees could get along in daily activities using English or pidgin English. NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 15 March 1930, Thos T.H. Ferguson's Memorandum on the study of Chinese by employees of the larger Dutch firms in China.

equal to the Germans who, the JCJL jealously acknowledged, already had businesses based in China for years.⁴¹⁸

JCJL tried a few different methods of language education before finding the right solution and meanwhile printed a small introductory book to hand out to staff members in order to find volunteers willing to learn Chinese.⁴¹⁹ The company noticed the variety of “different dialects of spoken Chinese both inside and outside China” and, therefore, decided employees would learn the Mandarin dialect.⁴²⁰ JCJL debated the benefits of Chinese study in Nanking (Nanjing) rather than Peking (Beijing) and consulted with the Shanghai Office of the Inspectorate General of Customs to inquire where and in what manner their employees learned Chinese.⁴²¹ JCJL even pinpointed exactly “how NOT to do it” from Butterfield and Swire who expected students to learn outside working hours, which took four years for what the JCJL felt employees “could achieve in one year by sending the student to Nanking.”⁴²²

In 1931, JCJL finally devised a new plan for employees to learn Chinese by sending them to Leiden University for a year of study. Leiden offered “lower cost and less risk if the candidate still proves unfit for the study” and there would be “less

⁴¹⁸ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 13 May 1930.

⁴¹⁹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 29 January 1930.

⁴²⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 12 May 1930.

⁴²¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 26 February 1930, British Legation in China and Commercial Secretary H.J. Brett, NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 15 July 1930, Letter from Shanghai Office of the Inspectorate General of Customs to Thos T.H. Ferguson.

⁴²² They assumed that 6 months was necessary in Nanjing to learn one hundred Chinese characters. NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 13 November 1930.

difficulty in finding suitable candidates as subsidized study probably is eagerly understood" among Dutch staff members. After one year of full-time language study the employee would return to China "with a good foundation of language to further build on." Despite the lack of conversational practice in Leiden, it was considered a better option than hiring an indigenous teacher in China and in any event "the main thing is the good "start" which he inherits."⁴²³ After returning to China from the year abroad, a second year of language instruction in China, everyday for half the day, would allow employees to improve their speaking skills.⁴²⁴

One such employee, G.C. van der Wal who undertook the year of Leiden language study, returned to JCJL's Shanghai office only to find his boss was unsupportive of the endeavor. Mr. van Hengel felt a man who was out of the office half the day "is worth nothing in the office, he is never 100% in his work" and considered it "dangerous that a young person totally without any business experience spends so much time studying." Van Hengel also thought it was "absolutely wrong to our clientele. Above all we must have young businessmen, with a good, logical, sober, practical business sense."⁴²⁵ Partly due to this, along with financial considerations, van der Wal was not sent to Peking with a Chinese teacher for another half year as the employee himself wished and was expected to stay in Shanghai for his fourth and final language exam. Since it was still "very desirable that the student learns to converse with others"

⁴²³ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 226, 9 June 1931.

⁴²⁴ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 227, 12 September 1933.

⁴²⁵ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 227, 14 July 1933, Chinese Language Student Heer van Hengel writes about Heer G.C. van der Wal of Shanghai.

he was instructed to make friends with anyone in Shanghai who he could practice Mandarin Chinese with, coupled with an “occasional weekend trip to Nanking.”⁴²⁶

As the 1930's progressed, language study became even more important for JCJL in providing it with additional weapons against what seemed like the steadily closing doors of lucrative Chinese markets to foreign businesses. JCJL feared “ultra-nationalist considerations” would become a strong factor in China and that in the future “people generally (on penalty of setback, official interpretation, etc.) would be required to operate in the language of the country.” If the Europeans themselves could “speak a little Chinese,” the natural effects would be the “loosening and ease of intercourse both presently and in the future.”⁴²⁷ JCJL feared that “China in this regard will, at least in principle, be worse than Japan. . . who demand from the Westerner 100% of its language before it thaws.”⁴²⁸

Language study was one way for JCJL to infiltrate Chinese society and culture to protect itself against competition and Chinese anti-foreign nationalism, but another way JCJL attempted to infiltrate Chinese society and culture was to make direct contact with Chinese passengers rather than go through middlemen acting as passenger brokers. This proved difficult due to Chinese middlemen's long history of booking passengers both in Chinese and Netherlands East Indies port cities and their important position within Asian

⁴²⁶ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 227, 4 August 1933.

⁴²⁷ “We write a little because the Chinese in this regard is indeed not much demanded because of the many dialects that already exist, eg where a Southern Chinese tend to look at with respect to someone who speaks ‘kuan-hua’ (Mandarin).”

⁴²⁸ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 228, 23 April 1937, Chinessche Taalstudie.

maritime networks connecting the NEI to China.⁴²⁹ In 1929, JCJL decided to further reorganize its passenger transport by getting rid of a certain type of passenger broker known as the “hotel broker” or “boardinghouse master” who recruited Chinese passengers in port cities in China and the NEI.⁴³⁰ The company claimed that in order to “give better service to our customers” they had to “clear away all the unfavorable influence of the Chinese hotel people on our customers” and “overcome any obstacles that the hotel people are likely to create against our plan.”⁴³¹ JCJL furthered explained that besides introducing their “best service” possible, the reasons for withdrawing JCJL’s sub-agencies from Chinese hotels was to

maintain a direct connection with our customers, the deck passengers in general. Thus, in due time, the passage business will be entirely in our own hands, thus preventing the Chinese hotel people from holding our customers and putting them into any steamer they like.⁴³²

JCJL had already been sending out advertisements and circulars to customers in various parts of East Java, Madoera, Bali, and Lombok, and saw their direct customers increase from 10% to between 30% and 35%. The company felt there was no doubt that if this work continued, “the direct connection with our customers will be firmly established and

⁴²⁹ Peter Post suggests that both Chinese businesses and Western enterprises in Southeast Asia were to a large extent transnational, however, “most studies on pre-war Chinese communities in Indonesia have taken a colonial political frame of reference, giving the impression that businessmen operated solely within the Dutch colonial state’s boundaries. This nation-state framework has hampered our understanding of the workings of the intra-Asian economy, in which local and migrant Chinese played such a central role.” Peter Post, “The Kwik Hoo Tong Trading Society of Semarang, Java: A Chinese Business Network in Late Colonial Asia,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 33, no. 2 (June, 2002): 296.

⁴³⁰ Putten mentions that in Chinese ports “the company worked hand in glove with boarding house organizations that provided the prospective laborers with accommodation in the harbour and credit for the journey.” Putten, “Corporate Behavior,” 51.

⁴³¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 27 September 1929, Soerabaia.

⁴³² Ibid.

they will be finally rendered entirely free from any unfavorable influence of the Chinese hotel people.”⁴³³

Shortly after JCJL announced to all their Asian offices the plan to change its sub-agency system, the JCJL learned Japanese shipping competitor *Osaka Shosen Kaisha* and their agent Hap Thay & Company had given the Chinese hotel people “an opportunity to persuade some of our customers to take the steamers of these companies.”⁴³⁴ JCJL wanted to retaliate by using “all our effort to break up the Chinese Hotels; by establishing a Chinese Hotel of our own to give better and complete service to all our customers from upcountry, we may be sure that all obstacles laid in our way by the hotel people will be gradually removed.” However, in the present circumstances, it appeared they had “better take no chances whatsoever by suppressing any competition at the very beginning.” JCJL therefore allowed certain Chinese hotels to be re-appointed as its “temporary ticket selling agents” with the same commission as allowed by JCJL’s Batavia Office, “in order to satisfy [the Chinese hotel brokers] to some extent.” A contract was made intending to “bind some Chinese hotels that have been giving [JCJL] the majority of their business from time to time.” While some hotels had been working for *Osaka Shosen Kaisha* and Hap Thay & Company and, therefore, might not be able to sign and comply with JCJL’s contract, the company felt “sure that when one or two hotels sign this agreement the rest will be anxious to join in too for such is the psychology among the Chinese people.”⁴³⁵

⁴³³ Ibid.

⁴³⁴ JCJL reassured itself it was “obvious that each of these companies has only one sailing monthly and that these sailings are not fixed and definite; moreover, both their steamers and service are not so satisfactory as ours. Therefore, they will never be able to compete with us in the long run.”

⁴³⁵ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 27 September 1929, Soerabaia.

Although JCJL claimed direct connection with its passengers would provide better service, company archives show the JCJL was mostly concerned with cornering a larger share of the Asian shipping market. The company not only felt entitled to this increased market share, but considered it would already be theirs if not for the interference of Chinese middlemen who were stealing JCJL's passengers. These hotel brokers had no particular loyalty towards Dutch ships and JCJL's economic, political, and social vulnerabilities in China made the company distrustful of brokers.⁴³⁶ Debates on the concept of trust within Chinese business run from Peter Post's idea that for both Western and Asian entrepreneurs "trust, personal relations and long-term friendships' lasted only as long as the money did" to Wong Siu-lun's belief that "the ethic of trust is central to the business success of Chinese entrepreneurs."⁴³⁷ The relationship between hotel brokers and JCJL might better be explained through Gordon Redding's concepts of insecurity, personalism, and paternalism to explain the relationship between businesses, mistrust, and networking.⁴³⁸ While both Chinese and Dutch interests based an understanding of hierarchy and authority on paternalism, Confucian social order and the Dutch concept of *Verzuiling* (pillarization) highlighted strong vertical ties generating limited horizontal cooperation. Whereas JCJL's insecurity centered around competition for Chinese passengers, which it saw as a scarce resource, the personalism of Chinese hotel brokers was in response to "the problem of establishing reliable horizontal

⁴³⁶ For a discussion about trusts within Chinese business relationships see Cheng-shu Kao, "'Personal Trust' in the Large Businesses in Taiwan: A Traditional Foundation for Contemporary Economic Activities," *De Gruyter Studies in Organization*, no. 64 (1996): 68.

⁴³⁷ Peter Post, "The Kwik Hoo Tong," 287, Siu-lun Wong, "Chinese Entrepreneurs and Business Trust," *De Gruyter Studies in Organization*, no. 64 (1996): 13.

⁴³⁸ S. Gordon Redding, *The Spirit of Chinese Capitalism* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1990).

relationships across social interactions in a context where trust cannot be assumed (in fact it is likely to be denied) and where institutionalized law is inadequate.”⁴³⁹

This mutual distrust meant attempts to eliminate hotel brokers met with little success and JCJL’s hopes that by establishing “direct connection with our customers, we shall win their full confidence towards our company” were quickly dashed by their obvious dependency on Chinese middlemen.⁴⁴⁰ Two years after the company’s announcement to dismiss hotel brokers, JCJL was still fighting an uphill battle:

[o]ur politics in recent years have been geared towards finally achieving a reduction in the influence of hotel bosses. Therefore we have established our own Chinese passenger offices in Surabaya and Batavia, but especially in Surabaya we have moved too fast. For the moment, these hoteliers still have a power that we must try to employ for our benefit. It is, for the moment at least, more to our benefit to give these hoteliers a bigger role in the enforcement of tariffs.⁴⁴¹

Despite their unsuccessful actions against and subsequent conciliation towards hotel brokers, JCJL felt these setbacks “need not necessarily prevent progress in our efforts to slowly wrest Chinese passengers from the hoteliers.” The company had its eye on shifting passenger canvassing from the principal cities of Batavia and Surabaya to the interior. But even here JCJL wished “to guard against reckless and imprudent steps” in order to not upset the hotel brokers again.⁴⁴²

JCJL was forced to hastily retreat from their plans to infiltrate Chinese passenger networks because Chinese brokers were too important to maritime Asian passenger ships to be eliminated. Brokers played a “decisive role in stimulating and facilitating international migration” through the “complex web of social roles and interpersonal

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104, 27 September 1929, Soerabaia.

⁴⁴¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 107.

⁴⁴² NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 107, 5 August 1931.

relationships” that bound them to Chinese passengers.⁴⁴³ Many newcomers to maritime networks, including those from interior land regions, relied on hotel brokers to help them navigate port cities before embarking and after disembarking. For example, many newcomers would be detained by immigration authorities for a few days before the hotel broker entered like, in the words of JCJL, a “guardian angel”:

who [Chinese passengers] receive as a guarantor and then the doors of the immigration room are unlocked and opened. And the hoteliers also see to it, that if women and children also come to Java, that they are let through immigration without much “soesah” [sorrow]. The person from the countryside, who does not know his way around the embarkation port, is then thankful for the hotelier, although it has cost him money. If he returns home again a few years later, he will without doubt return to make use of the same hotel, also because he already knows that the hotel will provide the service ensuring his papers are put right, so that on his return here to Java he will not have any problems.⁴⁴⁴

These close-knit networks of circular migrants helped perpetuate the familiarity between Chinese passengers and hotel brokers, who they could also rely on if in need of help. Another example explained why the contact between hotels and the interior were so strong. JCJL wrote that as everyone knows

club life blossoms under the Amoy Chinese. Approximately 70% of the fullblooded Chinese in East-Java comes from Amoy and its surroundings. The Hockchia Chinese now have a big club, the “Giok Yong Keng Hwee,” with headquarters in Soerabaja and subdivisions in the smaller towns of the interior. . . . The membership numbers around 8000, mostly heads of family. The purpose of the club is to lend each other support, to found schools, to collect money for the families in the interiors of China, etc. The president of this club in Soerabaja is at the same time one of the chairmen among the Soerabaian Hoteliers. If anyone in the club has plans to leave for China, than it is soon enough known by the club and is then it is well taken care of, that the member and his family will make use of the chairman’s hotel.⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴³ Spaan, “Taikongs and Calos,” 94.

⁴⁴⁴ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 109, 8 November 1932.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

These tight-knit networks of Chinese communities were nearly impossible for the JCJL to destroy in their quest to remove middlemen from passenger bookings. Eventually, JCJL concluded that

we accomplish more with “boardinghouse masters” and hoteliers if we view them as a necessary evil, who we must remain on good terms with as long as the traveling Chinese public itself becomes no wiser or are not able to free themselves from the hoteliers. The Chinese public will in any event eventually learn that these hoteliers are superfluously being “Squeezers,” at least as passage-agents, but as long as our audience does not understand that, or dares not to, we will do better to work together with these gentlemen.⁴⁴⁶

For this reason, JCJL continued to hold yearly dinners for Chinese exporters, importers and boardinghouse masters in order to try and get these potential customers to use JCJL ships instead of turning to other competitors.⁴⁴⁷

JCJL’s ambitious project to abolish hotel brokers and their quick retreat from that position seems suspicious in relation to more prudent and planned JCJL business strategies, but competition with British shipping companies--like Butterfield & Swire based in Shanghai--had something to do with it. Between 1928 and 1931, B&S was busy reforming its comprador system into a Chinese manager system that created a fundamental change to the status of the company’s Chinese employees. Howard Cox, Huang Biao and Stuart Metcalfe explain that while

under the comprador system all Chinese employees were employed and controlled by the comprador, under the new system they were employed directly by [Butterfield &] Swire. By appointing the compradors as Chinese managers and placing them within the internal corporate architecture, the company was able to

⁴⁴⁶ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 109, 22 November 1932.

⁴⁴⁷ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 108, April 1932, Chinese Dinners.

secure more effective control over their activities via salary negotiation and commissions based on a sliding scale.⁴⁴⁸

JCJL was in frequent communication with B&S, no doubt asking themselves why the British firm was gaining more control over their employees and perhaps even saving money while doing it, while the JCJL was not. After realizing its initial reforms aimed at eliminating middlemen was nearly impossible, the JCJL also questioned whether its comprador system was the better target for change. The company concluded it could “currently do no better” due to the fact Chinese trade in the NEI operated under “a strange system of paying for cargo, whereby the Comprador must be sufficiently wealthy in order to lend the appropriate credit.”⁴⁴⁹ Comparing itself with British shipping firms in Asia was a way for the JCJL to keep up with its competitors and maintain its position within the Asian maritime world.⁴⁵⁰

Fears over shipping competitors within maritime Asia fueled JCJL’s desire to infiltrate Chinese society and culture during the 1920’s and 30’s, in the hopes they could secure a more powerful economic position in the region. But the desire to also ward off political threats to Dutch colonialism, such as growing nationalistic fervor within China and the GMD’s attempts to decrease foreign ships in China, was just as important as economic issues. The plans to teach employees Mandarin Chinese and to expunge middlemen hotel brokers from the passenger trade were social and cultural attempts to address the economic and political threats facing the JCJL in maritime Asia. Ultimately,

⁴⁴⁸ Howard Cox, Huang Biao and Stuart Metcalfe, “Compradors, Firm Architecture and the Reinvention’ of British Trading Companies : John Swire & Sons’ Operations in Early Twentieth-Century China,” *Business History*, 45, no. 2 (April, 2003): 30-31.

⁴⁴⁹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 126, 8 February 1932.

⁴⁵⁰ Unilever and Royal/Dutch Shell were also trying to establish more direct contact with customers during the 1920s but were also unsuccessful at eliminating Chinese middlemen. Putten, “Corporate Behavior,” 26.

JCJL concluded that networks “between Chinese in Hong Kong, Chinese in the Netherlands East Indies, and Chinese middlemen, seem essential to this region’s special trade“ and the company realized their simultaneous dependence on and vulnerability to *all three* Chinese groups in the successful continuation of Dutch shipping in Asia.⁴⁵¹

Boycotts as Critiques of Empire

Boycotts were one way for overseas Chinese communities to express their opposition to Dutch colonial authority and Dutch business interests in Asia. Chinese activists used the 1930-31 Amoy (Xiamen) boycott against JCJL ships to criticize Dutch colonial policies within China *and* the Netherlands East Indies, forcing JCJL to negotiate with the GMD, Dutch colonial government, Chinese Seamen’s Union, and popular opinion informed by transnational media. While JCJL agents in Asia supported face-to-face negotiations and conciliation, JCJL’s Head Office in Amsterdam felt accommodating activist demands “weakened” their position in Asia by undermining Dutch colonial authority. JCJL’s Head Office in Amsterdam instead created internal policies for its own employees while avoiding negotiations with activists and ignoring boycott demands, relying instead on their own theories over the boycott’s causes and cures. The boycotters demanded an apology and compensation for the sexual assault against a Chinese women onboard the SS “Tjibadak,” which initially incited the boycott against JCJL and for Chinese activists was indicative of Dutch treatment of the overseas Chinese community as a whole. Beyond this isolated event, boycotters were concerned with larger transnational political currents between China and the Netherlands East Indies

⁴⁵¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 126, 8 February 1932.

including the treatment of Chinese in the NEI and the presence of Dutch shipping companies in China.

In August 1930, a Chinese woman traveling in the second class on JCJL's SS "Tjibadak" traveling from Manila to Makassar accused two European officers onboard of sexual assault. While one of the officers admitted to kissing her, he claimed "it was only done after due provocation." When the affair leaked out to other passengers onboard, Surabaya's Chinese Vice-Consul Mr. Dao, also traveling in the second class, became "incensed" and made an official complaint to Batavian authorities upon reaching shore. The officers were removed from the ship and awaited official investigation and legal prosecution in court. The event was widely published in Chinese newspapers and quickly spread across maritime networks connecting the Netherlands East Indies to port cities across Asia. News of the *Tjibadak Affair*--as the event came to be known--quickly sparked "political and anti-foreign propaganda" in China, soon resulting in a boycott against JCJL ships in Amoy.

Boycotts were an anti-colonial mouthpiece to express disapproval of Dutch colonial policies in Asia and provided a direct line of communication between Asians and Dutch colonial authorities. Whereas repressive laws against strikes in the NEI were "steadily being altered in order to make the organization of strikes more difficult," JCJL could not rely on such protective laws in China.⁴⁵² Boycotts in China provided "an opportunity for the relatively powerless individual consumers and workers to redress the imbalance in the marketplace"⁴⁵³ and when these agents further collaborated with activist

⁴⁵² John Ingleson, "Life and Work in Colonial Cities: Harbour Workers in Java in the 1910s and 1920s," *Modern Asian Studies*, 7, no. 3 (1983): 472.

⁴⁵³ Richard A. Hawkins, "Boycotts, Buycotts and Consumer Activism in a Global Context: An Overview," *Management & Organizational History*, 5, no. 2 (2010): 123.

groups such as the Chinese Seamen's Union,⁴⁵⁴ they gained access to a "wider arsenal of tactics as well as technology that [enabled] them to broadcast their concerns to a wider audience."⁴⁵⁵ Some academics argue that within interwar China, "business people found ways around the boycott restrictions and the boycotts themselves often petered out, their ineffectiveness undermined by lack of consensus among the Chinese."⁴⁵⁶ This chapter approaches measurements of "success" more subtly using Naomi Gardberg and William Newbury's idea that "effective protests change the objectionable business practice. Intermediately, effective protests capture business leaders' attention, for example, through media coverage. Furthermore, they suggest that effectiveness can be measured in terms of quantity and authority of participants, public impact, and disruption to business."⁴⁵⁷ Under these criteria, the boycott against JCJL in Amoy successfully crippled Dutch maritime interests, forcing the company to listen to protestors' clearly articulated demands, which were disseminated through transnational media. While the company did change some of its policies and its Asian staff was willing to negotiate, JCJL's Head Office in Amsterdam feared conciliation with Asian demands threatened their European hegemony and floated the wrong message about Dutch colonialism throughout Asia.

Unlike other interwar boycotts against European businesses in China, the *Tjibadak Affair* saw anti-colonial rhetoric grow ideologically from a starting point of

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., 123.

⁴⁵⁵ Calvano, "Multinational Corporations," 799.

⁴⁵⁶ Brett Sheehan, "Boycotts and bombs: The failure of economic sanctions in the Sino-Japanese conflict, Tianjin China, 1928–1932," *Management & Organizational History*, 5, no.2 (2010): 198.

⁴⁵⁷ Naomi A. Gardberg and William Newbury, "Who Boycotts Whom? Marginalization, Company Knowledge, and Strategic Issues" *Business Society* published online 11 March 2010, accessed November 3, 2010, doi: 10.1177/0007650309352507.

violent sexual transgression. Whereas contemporary local newspapers used demure explanations of “a flirtation” that led to “the lady receiving a kiss from the officer,”⁴⁵⁸ boycott instigators claimed “China’s national dignity and womanhood has been grossly insulted.”⁴⁵⁹ Debates in the media questioned the state of Chinese women in general, for instance in an article titled “A Modern Flapper” in the *Tsing Nien Hui Monthly*. The article pointed out that the Tjibadak Affair was a result of “our sisters . . . eagerly copying the clothes, the manners, and the habits of the typical modern flappers of the West.” These questionable foreign morals meant that perhaps the woman herself was to blame for the incident rather than the ship’s officers. The article suggested it was

her own fault by indulging in the lust of individual passions and by inviting them to intrude into her private cabin for kissing, necking, and petting as in a movie scene. We have to admit that she has a legitimate right to do whatever she pleases to, and to act in whatever manner that may be [but] . . . Why do you make a fuss when you know you are in the wrong? Why do you detest their immoralities when you have hooked your arms around them and theirs around you?⁴⁶⁰

These sentiments show the dualities Asian women faced at the time, both encouraging them to do as they like while simultaneously policing their behavior and morals. Su Lin Lewis suggests that the “growing liberality of women” became a major issue in public debate because it was seen as “a mark of progress” and “a standard by which communities such as the Straits-Chinese measured themselves, particularly against their ‘Western sisters’.”⁴⁶¹ But whereas “[a]mbivalence towards the advances of Western men

⁴⁵⁸ Article from the *North-China Herald Amoy* on 10 November 1930 titled “A Little Kiss, A Boycott: Provoked to Embrace a Lady: Serious Sequel.”

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*.

⁴⁶⁰ MNL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 321, 24 March 1931, To F.E.H. Groenman, Consul-Generaal der Nederlanden Shanghai from Consulaat Generaal der Nederlanden voor Zuid-China Hong Kong.

⁴⁶¹ Su Lin Lewis, “Cosmopolitanism and the Modern Girl: A Cross-Cultural Discourse in 1930s Penang,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 43, no. 6 (2009): 1402.

was clearly a mark” of the “modern girl,” the *Tjibadak Affair* put this Chinese woman in the public opinion’s line of fire.⁴⁶² As the boycott continued, issues over sexual transgression transformed into issues of colonial transgression, but still used a gendered rhetoric to talk about Dutch colonial invasion and violation in the NEI and Asia.

In the immediate aftermath of the *Tjibadak Affair*, JCJL offices in Amoy, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Swatow, and Batavia worked on stopping the boycott by handling the situation locally rather than alerting JCJL’s Head Office in Amsterdam. Frans-Paul van der Putten notes that “[r]elations between management in Amsterdam and local personnel in Asian ports were a delicate matter; interference from Europe was generally not welcomed by the local managers.”⁴⁶³ Despite initial reports that Chinese merchants and labor unions were against the boycott, the powerful CSU appeared to be “taking advantage of this opportunity to obtain revenge for old outstanding grievances against the shipping company by co-operating with the Kuomintang [GMD].“ Public opinion of the JCJL deteriorated and the company felt it was portrayed as “helpless against the insidious propaganda and intimidation which are used so effectively to enforce the boycott.”⁴⁶⁴ More concerning was that the boycott had no end in sight.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶² Ibid., 1402.

⁴⁶³ Putten, “Corporate Behavior,” 47, footnote 155.

⁴⁶⁴ “Why the local branch of the Kuomintang should press a boycott in Amoy when the same is not done in Shanghai and other ports is not clearly understood. It is the belief of some people that Communists are at work under cover of the Kuomintang to instigate this boycott[sic], and thereby seek to embarrass the Chinese Government. The *Tjibadak* sailed southward bound on the 8th instant without freight or passengers. The *Tjisalak* northward bound is now lying in the harbour unable to discharge 900 tons of sugar and other miscellaneous cargo. No indications are at hand as to when the boycott is likely to be lifted.” NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 125, 19 December 1930.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

Before JCJL's Head Office in Amsterdam was alerted to the boycott, their staff members in Amoy, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Swatow (Shantou), and Batavia (Jakarta) tried to find a solution through face-to-face negotiation with a variety of involved parties. First, JCJL staff turned to the Dutch colonial government, asking if they could aid the company through diplomatic negotiation with the GMD. The Head Consul at the Dutch Consulate in Peking (Beijing), J.W. Oudendijk, travelled to Nanking (Nanjing) to meet with the Nationalist Government's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. C.T. Wang. JCJL's Asian offices and the Dutch colonial government hoped working through diplomatic channels would be a quick and efficient way to end the boycott. Before leaving for Nanking, Oudendijk made it clear to Batavia he would get nowhere unless the JCJL took more serious steps in punishing the accused officers.⁴⁶⁶

Oudendijk successfully convinced both the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the GMD Headquarters to send a telegraph to Amoy calling off the boycott, but he was also exposed to what he alarmingly considered an "unnatural whipping of public opinion against the Netherlands." The boycott was turning into a "popular movement" encouraged by a few ringleaders who appeared to be working for various political groups, all using the *Tjibadak Affair* for their own political purposes. Shanghai was home to political meetings attempting to incite the *Tjibadak Affair* into a national cause and encouraging the GMD to make demands of the Dutch colonial government. These demands included allowing some deported Chinese back into the NEI, making Chinese residents in the NEI equal to Europeans, and denouncing the treaty of 1863 and the Consular Convention of 1910.

⁴⁶⁶ "The preservation of both officers on SS *Tjibadak* seems to us in any case wrong and you had must painstakingly must execute dat the *stuurleiden* be transferred to the Japan Line." Ibid.

During the last few minutes of their meeting together, Wang received a note from a political group in Shanghai signed *Support Committee of the Tjibadak Affair* and showed the following demands to Oudendijk:

1. The current Dutch-Sino treaty must be denounced and with a new one be replaced.
2. The Dutch authorities must withhold further mistreatment of Chinese in the NEI
3. The current provisional requirements on passports held by Chinese must be abolished as well as the immigration fees
4. The first and second officers involved in the Tjibadak Affair must be harshly punished
5. The Chinese Government must support the grassroots movement, which seeks a termination of the economic relations between China and the Netherlands.

Further, the group of 200 or so people wanted a formal apology from the Dutch Government with assurance that something like the *Tjibadak Affair* would never happen again. To further show their resolve and remind the Dutch of their numbers, the meeting ended by everyone shouting in unison;

Down with Dutch Imperialism!; Abolish the Dutch treaty and the Consular Convention!; Lessen the Suffering of overseas-Chinese in the NEI! Abolish article 109 from the Government Regulations!; Boycott the ships of Java-China-Japan Lijn!; Avenge the injustices affecting the overseas-Chinese!; The Dutch Government must offer compensation and apologies!; Long Live the Chinese Kuomintang!; Long Live the Chinese Republic!⁴⁶⁷

Shanghai activists used the *Tjibadak Affair* as an opportunity to address what the sexual assault onboard the ship represented, a lack of respect for the Chinese people, failure to protect people from Dutch injustices, and the unwanted penetration of Dutch business into Chinese markets. It was little surprise that the telegraphs sent from Nanking did little to quell the boycott.

JCJL's Asian offices then arranged for the Head Agent in Amoy, W.H. Lebert, to meet face-to-face with the Chairman and one Board Member from the CSU in the hopes

⁴⁶⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 321.

of reaching an understanding with the group responsible for organizing the boycott. JCJL saw the CSU as the “most powerful [union] in China” and the “fiercest instigators” of strikes who, although headquartered in Shanghai, held “huge local influence” in numerous Chinese ports.⁴⁶⁸ The CSU could link onto maritime events and employ them for their own political ends, most often using anti-Western and anti-colonial ideology to challenge the authority and economic activities of Europeans in Asian waters. Unfortunately for the JCJL, CSU was the “fiercest abettor” in the disturbances following the *Tjibadak Affair*.

The meeting between Lebert and the CSU was unsuccessful in reaching an agreement. While JCJL staff suspected the boycott might be in retaliation for their tendency to hire Canton crews rather than CSU dues paying members from Ningpo, the CSU wanted the company to allow their crewmembers to organize and for their ships to be solely manned with CSU members.⁴⁶⁹ The meeting ended with the CSU Chairman threatening the JCJL that if they didn't start hiring all CSU crews, any future “little incident” could ignite a boycott.⁴⁷⁰ Although Lebert did not know if this was a bluff, he felt reassured that without the help of other unions, specifically China's second largest union, the Tallymen Union, CSU wouldn't have enough power to enforce its threat. If JCJL could befriend the tallymen, the company would get preference in shipments and “have no more fears in regards to other Unions.”

⁴⁶⁸ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.104, 17 December 1930.

⁴⁶⁹ Lebert responded that crewmembers were free to do as they like, since they were free agents and not contract employees.

⁴⁷⁰ In the matter of the “crews” refusing to join the union JCJL felt he managed to stay neutral: “Opposition cannot be complained about him; he has set the crews at liberty whether or not to be members of the Union.” NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.126, 15 February 1931.

JCJL's next plan was to host a tallymen dinner that would "take the wind out of the sails" of CSU. Unfortunately, investigations by a local Chinese informant informed the company of the general tallymen opinion that Dutch officers were "very rough" compared with Americans, Britons, and Japanese officers who were friendlier. The Japanese even offered "cigarettes and tea, and are really like friends" to the tallymen. Fearing the impending loss of their Amoy routes to Japanese liners from *Osaka Shosen Kaisha*, Lebert instructed staff to get rid of their derogatory prejudices towards Chinese workers and sent out an order to the entire fleet stating "tallymen are not coolies and must not be treated as such. The Officers do not need to entertain them, the ship's Comprador already ensures that people receive refreshments, but the tallycrews mustn't be snubbed or sent to run around in circles." JCJL would also now provide a tin of cigarettes for the tallymen in the First Officer's office, like they had onboard other foreign ships.⁴⁷¹

Once the JCJL's Head Office in Amsterdam was alerted to the *Tjidabak Affair* on November 22, 1930, the negotiation and conciliation supported by staff members at their offices in Amoy, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Shantou, and Batavia suddenly changed into more insular and disengaged policies.⁴⁷² Amsterdam immediately ordered the Batavia agents to dismiss both guilty officers from service, "the sooner the better," and created a new company policy that "[a]ll intimate relations with female passengers must be forbidden on punishment of being fired, also in cases where the woman is complicit, because just the same that can be labeled 'rape' and an incident resulting from it can be

⁴⁷¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 104.

⁴⁷² "Why you did not notify us of the situation, so we could form an opinion, is incomprehensible." NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 19 December 1930.

cooked up.”⁴⁷³ Officers’ ship assignments would no longer be based on seniority, but according to “who is suitable to be placed on the Line I and Line II/III ships.”⁴⁷⁴

Another important instruction for all crewmembers was remembering “how necessary it is to keep in mind the irascible mood among the Chinese, so must strictly restrain themselves from anything that could, from their [Chinese] point of view, give offense and guard against giving them any reasons for real or imaginary grievances. Therefore, no overbearing attitudes and show awareness of majority attitudes.”⁴⁷⁵

Head Office sent out a confidential *Looporder* on January 9, 1931 titled “Dealing With Chinese Asians and Other Asians “ to European crewmembers onboard all ships. The *Looporder* stressed the seriousness of the *Tjibadak Affair* and its associated boycott. To ensure a “lasting impression” it was recommended that

on each ship at some hour, falling outside one’s work duties, for example after 5pm, let the entire staff come into the salon for *stuurleiden* and *machinisten* in the presence of the *Inspecteurs*, to speak seriously, and explain the *Looporder* and answer any possible questions. This can make an impression and be more convincing about the severity of the situation, the point is to make the crew definitely and explicitly appreciate that the relations in China have changed radically in recent years.⁴⁷⁶

Whereas the Asian JCJL offices looked to negotiate with others parties involved in the boycott, Amsterdam’s Head Office focused primarily on policing their own staff and crew.

⁴⁷³ Head Office was upset they did not hear from Batavia about the strike until November 22, although the event happened in August. JCJL Amsterdam executives also met with the Minister of Buitenlandse Zaken in Den Haag to discuss the situation. NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 3 December 1930, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁴⁷⁴ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.126, 15 February 1931.

⁴⁷⁵ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 19 December 1930.

⁴⁷⁶ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.226, 11 February 1931, *Looporder* 1, 9 January 1931, *Omgang Met Chineez en Andre Aziaten*.

Despite the severity of the changing relations in China, Head Office was not actually interested in knowing the boycott's demands. Quite the opposite, JCJL's Head Office felt that since the *Tjibadak Affair* was merely a "contributory cause, the action itself has little to do with it. It is only used as a little push, where after the business can easily go further on its own wings." The "little push," in this case from a sexual assault, could just have easily come from "sailing over a sampan and drowning one of the sailors, or from a deadly fall of a coolie onboard a ship, etc."⁴⁷⁷ Amsterdam's dismissive views came at the same time that local agencies were actively trying to discover the reasons behind the boycott by listening to the activists themselves. The Dutch Consulate in Amoy was busy investigating the "displeased voice in China with regards to the Netherlands-Indies Government" and while it had heard only a few words regarding the NEI's raised poll-taxes, consular staff *did* hear quite a few negative comments "regarding the deportation of nationalist elements from the NEI."⁴⁷⁸

Despite the tools of diplomacy, interpersonal correspondence, and surveillance that were available to decipher boycott demands, JCJL's Head Office largely ignored these and instead created its own theories over the boycott's causes and cures. First, a malicious campaign launched from afar had been the biggest factor in the matter. This required a motive, but JCJL did not believe the primary causes were the increase of NEI admittance fees or the expulsion of GMD propagandists from the NEI because "if this was true, than the movement would have its main point in Java."⁴⁷⁹ Second, it felt the

⁴⁷⁷ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 29 December 1930, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid., NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.106, 18 Februari 1931.

⁴⁷⁹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 31 December 1930, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

fight was fueled by competitors, primarily by *Osaka Shosen Kaisha* and Hap Thay who JCJL already saw “peeking around the corner” to usurp its Amoy business.⁴⁸⁰ Third, there was a “pure nationalist motive” together with an anti-foreigner spirit working mainly in the press to discredit the JCJL.⁴⁸¹ Finally, JCJL’s Head Office mentioned how the riot got its start when the articles over the *Tjibadak Affair* were spread across China through media from China, Java and Singapore. Vice-Consul Dao was the instigator of the articles and with him “lies the source from where the venom originally emerged.”⁴⁸² Ultimately, JCJL’s executives in Amsterdam saw the most crucial cause behind the Amoy boycott as Vice-Consul Dao, who “stoked the fires over this event by writing in the Soerabaya [Surabaya] newspapers.”⁴⁸³ This conclusion reflected the company’s acknowledgement that media had a tremendous impact on public opinion in interwar maritime Asia.

JCJL’s Head Office also had explanations for why so many people were participating in the boycott blaming it on an inferior Asian psyche and “the present mentality and hyper-nervous voice of the young Chinese.”⁴⁸⁴ Further, they felt “the story of this entire [boycott’s] history is a striking example of the hysterical temper that characterizes such an agitation.”⁴⁸⁵ As the weeks of the boycott dragged on, Amsterdam

⁴⁸⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 29 December 1930, JCJL Adam to JCJL Batavia.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid. Lisa Calvano notes “the weapons of the weak tactics of protests, blockades, and sabotage are aimed at attracting media attention in order to increase public awareness and support.” Calvano, “Multinational Corporations,” 799.

⁴⁸² NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.126, 15 February 1931.

⁴⁸³ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 19 December 1930.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁵ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 31 December 1930, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

became increasing angry, no longer just calling the activists hysterical, but also malicious. Head Office asked

how far the “agitators” dare to drive their absurd demands. We can no longer speak of irrationality or imbalance regarding such things. They are impudent, bombastic pretenses, that are only quasi-associated with the action, set up before our eyes with a certain goal. That goal is in most cases financial advantage and nothing else; in the few remaining cases is a sort of nationalist fight, however, it almost never completely and purely stands alone, but mostly is only used as a means.⁴⁸⁶

Head Office continued their accusations of financial motives by accusing their “old acquaintance, the ‘agitator pickets’ that were always a goldmine for a boycott”⁴⁸⁷ of trying “once again to temporarily relive the anti-English boycott of 1926/27, which was so lucrative for them.”⁴⁸⁸ At the same time Amsterdam tried to belittle boycotter motivations, they realized the power of the picketers and that “danger remains increasingly threatening and can only be warded off though energetic, purposeful action” on the part of Dutch shippers.⁴⁸⁹

In addition to finding fault with the boycotters themselves, JCJL Head Office accused the GMD of embodying similar shortcomings as the activists themselves, including lack of character and ineptitude. As much as Amsterdam believed “leadership must remain on a general political character and kept in the hands of consular and diplomatic representatives,”⁴⁹⁰ they also felt the local Chinese authorities “remain

⁴⁸⁶ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 29 December 1930, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁴⁸⁷ “Through all their impositions and singling out their opponents, among other things, in the form of ‘licenses,’ when they have finally brought the boycott to your door with their desired point, it turns out to be ‘not totally workable’.” Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 31 December 1930, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁴⁸⁹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.126, 5 January 1931.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

intimidated lackeys or else themselves are accessories and creep away after various “national grievances.”⁴⁹¹ Both the National Government in Nanking and local authorities in Amoy were supporting “actions of blackmail and boycott” through their “laxity, intimidation or association,” which did not “fit with the framework of a proper government, as Nanking feigns to be.”⁴⁹² Part of this was blamed on their diplomatic and governmental naivety and JCJL suggested that perhaps the next time there was a boycott aimed at foreign business, the national government will have the ability to “better perform their duty.”⁴⁹³

JCJL’s Head Office believed the lack of proper Dutch representation in the form of a Consulate in Nanjing was also partially to blame for the failure to adequately resolve the boycott situation. Head Office stressed to Batavia “the necessity of more direct diplomatic representation in Nanking. The contact of our Legation with the Nanking Government is inadequate and undermines the influence of our envoy.”⁴⁹⁴ JCJL believed transferring the Dutch Consulate from Beijing to Nanjing could help steer the new GMD in a responsible way diplomatically and their Dutch influence would be able to “again remind the Government of Nanking, that as a ‘soi-disant’, well-ordered government, they

⁴⁹¹ “In numbers, membership, and organization, the workers' Red Guards were a direct descendant of the pickets (jiuchadui) that had been established in November 1925 to enforce the boycott of Hong Kong. Sources on the Red Guards agree that the strikers, in general, and the pickets, in particular, formed the backbone (gugan) of the Red Guards. While there had been some experimentation with organizational forms after April 1927, when the Red Guards were organized in November, they differed from the earlier picket organizations mostly in name.” Arif Dirlik, “Narrativizing Revolution The Guangzhou Uprising (11-13 December 1927) in Workers' Perspective,” *Modern China*, 23, no. 4 (October 1997): 371.

⁴⁹² NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.126, 5 January 1931.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁴ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.126, 15 February 1931.

have obligations.”⁴⁹⁵ Head Office felt until the Netherlands decided to situate itself in Nanking, the less chance there existed to pacify the boycott and avoid future conflicts.⁴⁹⁶

In the opinion of JCJL executives, conciliation with Chinese boycotters represented an inversion of biologically and socio-cultural notions of colonial hierarchy along gender, race, and class lines. To prevent this collapse of the foundational structures of empire, Head Office argued “to concede unreasonable Chinese demands for the sake of peace is an exorbitant price and it is better to have difficulties and disagreements for a time in order to prove our point.”⁴⁹⁷ Amsterdam was especially concerned about the public apology made by JCJL’s Amoy office as part of Oudendijk’s exchange for the unsuccessful GMD telegrams requesting an end to the boycott. Head Office reprimanded their Amoy staff saying that “in reality the [apology] statement was issued as submission to the demands of the Unions”⁴⁹⁸ and the unions in Amoy were “clearly aware of their victory.”⁴⁹⁹ Ultimately, Head Office felt extreme pressure to maintain a fortified position of power in maritime Asia and even if “the boycott will now expire, we have placed ourselves in a weak position, the effects of which could thereafter be felt by new threats.”⁵⁰⁰ For JCJL’s executives in Amsterdam, conciliating Chinese demands represented a loss in the European position of power.

Despite their avoidance of conciliation with Chinese boycotters, JCJL recognized

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁶ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.126, 6 March 1931.

⁴⁹⁷ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 19 December 1930.

⁴⁹⁸ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.126, 15 February 1931.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 19 December 1930.

the transnational elements of the boycott and the importance these connections had over Dutch prestige in Asia. The company sought to protect their interests in the NEI and China by trying to get overseas Chinese residing in the NEI to side with Dutch interests rather than communities in China. The company thought the “Overseas Association” was “led by hooligans” and worked together with social networks in China “to launch an agitation against ‘abuse of Chinese in India’.”⁵⁰¹ It felt the solution was to “strengthen our ties with the Indo-Chinese trading world in the NEI including associations, Kongsi’s, Chambers of Commerce, etc.” in order to break the connections between these groups and mainland China.⁵⁰² To turn the opinion of NEI’s Chinese residents, JCJL needed to focus on deterring “unreasonable, vexatious actions or evil gestures of Chinese Chambers of Commerce in [the Netherlands East] India” and create “a good relationship with the Chinese elements in the NEI, so from there we can eventually mobilize good auxiliary troops [to support our interests].”⁵⁰³ Without improved relations with the NEI’s Chinese communities and breaking the ties of maritime networks of overseas Chinese, JCJL feared “trade and shipping in China will for years yet to come remain full of pitfalls.”⁵⁰⁴

As the boycott continued into the Spring of 1931, even the JCJL Head Office in Amsterdam had to change their tune and admit that “[i]n general, to concede nothing is almost impossible in a conflict in China, because for the Chinese people dignity and prestige mean everything. The vanquished party must in every case have something to save ‘face’ otherwise they will keep fighting and we would arrive at an absolute

⁵⁰¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 31 December 1930, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁵⁰² NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 29 December 1930, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁵⁰³ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

impasse.”⁵⁰⁵ They consoled themselves in that “[p]artial concession to Chinese demands [within Asia] is in principle not as serious as here in Europe.” Additionally, the Chinese government had “also lost ‘face’ in their lack of limiting local high-handedness and laxity of the local authorities, in spite of the Central Government taking such pride in her activities.” JCJL could rely upon the fact that the Dutch government would also uphold their European status in Asia and that “our diplomats and consuls will continue to prevail through her demanding activities and exercising of her power; this will probably eventually have a good effect.”⁵⁰⁶ If the company wanted to eventually regain its shipping business in Amoy, it had no other choice but to at least partially concede to boycotter demands.

JCJL’s reaction to the *Tjibadak Affair* points to the internal divisions of the company between an Amsterdam-based executive corps and locally-invested Asian offices in Amoy, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Swatow, and Batavia and the different realities of metropolitan executives and employees living in Asia. While the company did enforce strict policy changes among all staff and crew in the hopes of preventing a similar event in the future, Amsterdam’s Head Office was deaf to many of the boycotters’ demands, instead creating their own theories over the boycott’s causes.⁵⁰⁷ Head Office blamed the boycott on political influences, which cast the boycotters as easily deceivable and their

⁵⁰⁵ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.126, 12 January 1931, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁷ Ann Stoler states that even when “large numbers of workers participated in labor actions [it] was rarely grounds for examining the validity of their demands. Workers were after all child-like, vulnerable, and all the more ‘dangerous’ because of their political susceptibility.” Ann Laura Stoler, “Perceptions of Protest: Defining the Dangerous in Colonial Sumatra,” *American Ethnologist*, 12, no. 4 (Nov. 1985): 653.

demands as “unfounded, illegitimate, and externally induced”⁵⁰⁸ These political influences included an unidentifiable malicious foreign campaign, JCJL competitors (specifically Japan), a nationalistic and anti-foreign press, and rogue individuals who chose to defame the company, all of which represented dangers the JCJL was largely unable to control. In fact, the reason JCJL focused on Vice-Consul Dao was because he was the easiest to pin down and, therefore, the least threatening.

This uncontrollable danger unwillingly forced the JCJL into a vulnerable spot where hegemonic tables were turned and not only was the company at the mercy of the boycott, but Amsterdam executives felt themselves at the mercy of Asians, upsetting their perceptions of colonial hierarchy. The rhetoric used by Amsterdam’s Head Office was a gendered interpretation of weak versus strong and used aggressive language implying the masculine physical strength of the JCJL while demeaning the feeble minds and actions of feminized Asian protesters. JCJL’s Head Office became increasingly angered over the boycotts and resorted to personal character attacks on the activists, demeaning their psychological states and mental abilities and casting Asians as a weakened, feminine culture.⁵⁰⁹ The combination of symbolic humiliation of gendered inversions of power between Europe and Asia, tangible threats of the boycotters themselves, rogue individuals such as Vice-Consul Dao, and the effects of media on public opinion put JCJL in a vulnerable position, susceptible to the same feelings of invasion and violation experienced by angered Chinese boycotters over the *Tjibadak Affair*.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., 652.

⁵⁰⁹ James Carter suggests this was based on “the symbolic humiliation of seeing Chinese authorities wield power over Europeans. Chinese rule was seen as a menace to European ‘civilization’ in an abstract sense, while Chinese individuals were perceived as tangible threats.” James Carter, “Struggle for the Soul of a City: Nationalism, Imperialism, and Racial Tension in 1920s Harbin,” *Modern China*, 27, no. 1 (January, 2001): 103.

While Amsterdam was reluctant to make any concessions to Asian activist demands, JCJL's Asian staff was more open to negotiation. In the weeks after the *Tjibadak Affair*, face-to-face negotiations played the major role in trying to solve the situation primarily because only the Asian offices were involved. Unlike the company's Asian staff, JCJL executives in Amsterdam were worried conciliation, *specifically* with Asian activists, made them appear weak, unaware that Chinese concepts of "face" (*mianzi*) made their unwillingness to negotiate out of place. Additionally, Amsterdam executives were angry, which shone through in their correspondence. This anger was based on being unwillingly forced into a vulnerable spot where the tables were turned and JCJL was at the mercy of the boycott. Head Office was willing to enforce new regulations among their own staff, but public apologies were considered detrimental to the company's reputation. Whereas Head Office was unwilling to negotiate with Chinese activists, the company was open to working with Chinese organizations in the NEI, where they had the colonial structure to uphold their dominant position.

Conclusion

The *Tjibadak Affair* embodied overlapping webs of connectivity across Asia during the interwar period and shows how Asian oceans served as global arenas where economic, political, and cultural contests were negotiated.⁵¹⁰ JCJL was forced to

⁵¹⁰ Unbelievably, the SS "Tjibadak" experienced a similar event less than two years later. This time, a European officer was caught in the bathroom with a Chinese passenger and although both claimed nothing happened, the JCJL went into high alert. Having learned from their mistakes two years earlier, the JCJL Head Office stopped leakage of the news before it was able to be circulated across Asia through media and public opinion. JCJL was successful in avoiding a second boycott, but it still points to how failure to address the concerns of boycotters previously left the company in a similarly vulnerable position only a few years later.

navigate a complicated maritime world of global political, cultural, and social networks that both ignited and fueled the boycott against them. The disparate parties involved included the nationalist government, colonial administration, foreign consulates, shipping companies, trade unions, transnational media outlets, and public opinion, further highlighting how this political action became a global nexus of colonial struggle. Ultimately, maritime Asia helped these anti-colonial activists popularize their cause and create global support networks capable of affecting Dutch colonial policies and actions in Asia.

The experiences of JCJL as a business operating across maritime Asia reflected the changing realities in Asia during the interwar period, forcing European businesses and colonial governments to reevaluate their position in the region. Changing the type of passengers onboard made JCJL concede to new demands of a fluidly mobile customer base and this led to conflicting ideas within the JCJL about how to tap this new profit center. At the same time, the company had conflicting interests due to their colonial identity and JCJL had to negotiate between colonial interests, business profits, and Chinese criticism of Dutch colonialism in Asia. The issue over conciliation towards Asian demands both onboard and in terms of transnational diplomacy, was really a battle over the changing world of Asia and the Dutch position within it. Maritime Asia became a place where critiques against Dutch colonial rule were voiced and the global maritime networks established through shipping gave these voices of dissatisfaction an increased power.

Chapter 4

Policing Communism: Ships, Seamen, and Political Networks in Asia

The awakening of Asia, both politically and economically, will not be stopped. The Asiatic races act increasingly more confident, breaking with their traditions, and are rapidly adopting the spirit of our blessed Western civilization.

-*Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland*, 1926⁵¹¹

On June 11, 1934 the surveillance report of suspected Indonesian communist, 27-year-old Amir Hamza Siregar, was added to dozens of other dossiers housed at the Dutch Consulate in Shanghai. Described as having a “round face, coffee complexion, curly hair like a Negro, [looking] like an Eurasian rather than a Sumatran, and [posing] occasionally as a Filipino under the alias of Jimmy Taylor or Botelo,”⁵¹² he had passed the highest exams at Mulo College, Medan, and in 1923 continued his studies in Singapore at the Seventh-day Adventists’ Mission.⁵¹³ Two years later he returned to Batavia and worked directly under Mohamed Dahlan, a student at the STOVIA or *School tot Opleiding van Indische Artsen* (Training School for Indies Doctors), who was arrested for helping organize the 1926 communist rebellions in Java.⁵¹⁴ Along with others fleeing the post-rebellion colonial crackdown, Siregar fled to Singapore and obtained employment as a seaman on a ship running from Singapore to New York.

During the voyage, Siregar created “disaffection amongst the Javanese members of the crew” and on arrival in New York, eighteen of them deserted the ship *en masse*.

⁵¹¹ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 731, Jaarverslag 1926.

⁵¹² He had also used the aliases Yusop, Jenkie, Amat, and Monica.

⁵¹³ Located at 401 Upper Serangoon Road (note: to have obtained admission to the Malayan Seminary (Seventh Day Adventists’ School) in Singapore, he must come through the Seventh Day Adventists’ Mission at Padang Sidempoean in the Batak district of Sumatra)

⁵¹⁴ For more on Dahlan see McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 340. For more on STOVIA see Leo van Bergen, *Van Koloniale Geneeskunde tot Internationale Gezondheidszorg: Een Geschiedenis van Honderd Jaar Nederlandse Vereniging voor Tropische Geneeskunde* (Amsterdam: KIT Publishers, 2007).

He stayed in New York for three years, during which time Siregar joined the American Communist Party and in 1930, together with the majority of his original seamen comrades, again found work on a ship heading to Bombay. Siregar and his crewmates signed off and joined the *King Carnival Circus*, touring around India until reaching Iraq in December 1932. Here, he and his party traveled by ship to Batavia with free passage provided by the Dutch Consulate at Basra.⁵¹⁵ Siregar himself was believed to have gone straight to Shanghai, where he met with the exiled Indonesian nationalist and communist Tan Malaka and eventually reached Singapore in 1933.⁵¹⁶ He earned a living by writing articles for anti-colonial Indonesian and Chinese newspapers such as *Bintang Timoer* (Star of the East) and *Sin Po* (Daily News), and along with being an expert linguist able to converse in Dutch, Gujrati, Hindustani, English, and Batak, was also an ardent member of the Indonesian Communist Party, *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI).⁵¹⁷ Siregar's surveillance report was one of dozens compiled by Dutch Consulates throughout Asia that worked together with foreign colonial intelligence agencies in tracking the whereabouts of suspicious colonial subjects. Police in the Straits Settlements also viewed Siregar as "one of the more dangerous" among the "internationally minded" Indonesian communists residing in Asia in 1934.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁵ There is an alternative story that Amir Hamza left Singapore about 1925 and went to India, where he stayed for several years. From India he took a ship to New York stayed in the USA for three years and returned to Singapore at the beginning of 1933.

⁵¹⁶ Hamza was thought to be opposed to Tan Malaka's *Pari* policy. See Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Strijder voor Indonesië's Vrijheid: Levensloop van 1897 tot 1945* ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1976).

⁵¹⁷ MB NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 15. For more on NEI press see Mirjam Maters, *Van Zachte Wenk tot Harde Hand: Persvrijheid en Persbreidel in Nederlands-Indië, 1906-1942* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1998), 125-278.

⁵¹⁸ Straits Settlements Police, Annual Reports for 1934, quoted in Boon Kheng Cheah, ed., *From PKI to the Comintern, 1924-1941: The Apprenticeship of the Malayan Communist Party* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, 1992), 72.

Siregar, along with thousands of other maritime workers, used the fluid mobility of the World Ocean to expand his mental and physical horizons worldwide. During the course of his travels, Siregar visited port cities along transoceanic routes including New York, Berlin, London, India, Rotterdam, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Moscow. These maritime nodal points facilitated intellectual and physical exchanges that helped spread anti-colonialism during the interwar years.⁵¹⁹ Siregar and others like him made connections with influential communist activists and political parties around the world over the course of their travels. Shipping routes, port cities, and seamen together formed global maritime networks of anti-colonialist activists and ideas, connecting the Netherlands East Indies to other communist centers such as China and the Soviet Union. The threat of Comintern influence within the NEI and fears over the subversive political agendas of Indonesian seamen traveling to Russia for communist training to use in the NEI fueled Dutch reactions to the fluid mobility of seamen across Asia.

In order to prohibit these anti-colonial networks and stop the spread of Communism in the Netherlands East Indies, the Dutch colonial government developed systems of global surveillance to track the transoceanic movements and activities of known Indonesian communist agitators and members of NEI communist organizations. Seamen were crucial to Dutch surveillance due to their ability to connect international communist networks and spread Communism across global maritime networks. Additionally, seamen were seen as particularly vulnerable to communist recruiters, reflecting “deep racial prejudices that infantilized dependent populations, assuming them

⁵¹⁹ Although inland, Josephine Fowler terms Berlin a nodal point in the pan-Pacific arena due to its strategic location. Josephine Fowler, *Japanese and Chinese immigrant activists: organizing in American and international Communist movements, 1919-1933* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 75.

to be gullible, politically naive, and, therefore, prone to manipulation, whether in defense of empire or in conflict with it.”⁵²⁰ Seamen and former seamen made up the majority of personal dossiers within surveillance records at Dutch Consulates in port cities such as Hong Kong and Shanghai.

Shanghai became an important nodal point within the geography of Dutch surveillance due to its importance as a global port city as well as its centrality within global communist networks.⁵²¹ Dutch authorities recognized Shanghai as a global port city poised for harboring subversive agents, but also faced the inability to effectively police its colonial subjects participating in subversive networks based there. Unlike the British and French who had an established physical presence in the city based on treaty rights, the Dutch occupied a more tenuous position, with a large business presence in the city but fewer political inroads at their disposal. Dutch authorities based their surveillance around Indonesian seamen in Shanghai who were often unexpectedly interrogated when they went to Shanghai’s Dutch Consulate for assistance. Intelligence reports were often shared with other police agencies in port cities across Asia, forming a web of information that the Dutch relied on to track its colonial subjects and create an appearance of colonial omnipotence across Asia. Shanghai also served as a node connecting Russian, Chinese, and Southeast Asian communists and looking specifically at this port city helps illustrate the activity of colonial surveillance beyond the geographic realm of the Netherlands East Indies.

Shipping played a central role in Dutch colonial policing of subversive agents across international waters and in both foreign and NEI ports. *The Java-China-Japan*

⁵²⁰ Thomas, “Albert Sarraut,” 935.

⁵²¹ For an overview on Shanghai historiography see Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, *Global Shanghai, 1850-2010: A History in Fragments* (London: Routledge, 2009), 141-46.

Lijn played an active role in policing international waters and Asian ports with a goal of keeping subversive agents out of the Netherlands East Indies. The company worked together with the colonial government to patrol Asian waters against communist infiltration into the NEI. The Dutch colonial government depended on JCJL ships to aid them in alerting authorities about subversive passengers and crewmembers and patrolling ships for communist propaganda and smuggled weapons.⁵²² Ships were also used to manage maritime space by the Dutch government by aiding them in the deportation of undesirable colonial subjects, in particular Chinese residents forcibly shipped from the NEI to mainland China. By recognizing ships as active sites of colonial surveillance within global maritime networks, we see that shipping companies themselves became political agents active in the fight against anti-colonialism during the interwar period.

Global maritime networks enabled the operation of an international nexus of “subversive agents” who helped destabilize Dutch power both within the Netherlands East Indies and throughout Asia. In the eyes of Dutch authorities, seamen were the subversive agents who facilitated these international communist exchanges. Maritime workers helped the economic and political expansion of Dutch interests throughout Asia, while simultaneously expanding political and cultural linkages that strengthened anti-colonial ideology. Therefore, seamen possessed a problematic fluid mobility in the eyes of Dutch authorities, fostering anti-colonial maritime networks that targeted the very colonial expansion these maritime connections helped to create. This chapter investigates both seamen and ships as two related aspects in colonial surveillance over global maritime networks. Investigating global maritime networks connecting Southeast Asian Communism with international political affairs reveals how Dutch colonial policies

⁵²² Thomas, “Albert Sarraut,” 921.

traveled beyond the borders of the archipelago and how colonial authorities and Dutch businesses were confronted with anti-colonialism abroad.

Seamen as Global Communist Liaisons

In Chinese port cities, the Dutch colonial government did not have the same police and surveillance tools available in the Netherlands East Indies to help them exercise control over colonial subjects. In the NEI, colonial officials had both police forces and Indonesian informants to provide them with comprehensive information and the colonial government was relatively informed about Indonesian political activities.⁵²³ More importantly, due to the *Politieke Inlichtingendienst* (Political Information Service) and *Algemeene Recherche Dienst* (General Investigation Service), both Dutch and Indonesian residents in the NEI believed that the colonial government's intelligence service was omnipresent and omniscient.⁵²⁴ The loss of these colonial tools abroad hindered the Dutch from projecting an authoritative presence in Shanghai and Dutch surveillance in the city relied on cooperation with other Shanghai-based police forces mainly the International Settlement's *Shanghai Municipal Police* (SMP) and the *French Concession Police* (FCP).⁵²⁵ By the mid-1920's, the SMP had four different categories of detectives working for the Special Branch in the International Settlement; British,

⁵²³ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, "State Violence and the Police in Colonial Indonesia circa 1920: Exploration of a Theme," in *Roots of Violence in Indonesia: Contemporary Violence in Historical Perspective*, eds. Freek Colombijn and J. Thomas Lindblad (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002), 95.

⁵²⁴ Harry A. Poeze, "Political Intelligence in the Netherlands Indies" in Cribb, ed., *The Late Colonial State*, 240-41.

⁵²⁵ Stoler, "Defining the Dangerous," 655. To a much lesser degree with the Nationalist Garrison Command's Military Police, and the Chinese Special Municipality's Public Safety Bureau, yet Wakeman argues "all were emeshed in complex relationships designed to forward other national and international causes. Frederic Wakeman, "Policing Modern Shanghai," *China Quarterly*, no. 115 (Sep., 1988): 408.

Chinese, Japanese, and White Russia, but both the SMP and FCP mainly recruited member's of the city's underworld as their Chinese detectives.⁵²⁶ The FCP in particular relied on members of Shanghai's Green Gang for its police force and used gang member and other underworld informants as detectives.⁵²⁷ These detectives' intelligence reports helped give Dutch the same *mata-mata* (eyes) as they had in the NEI.⁵²⁸

Further complicating the surveillance project was Shanghai's treaty port system of extraterritoriality, established during the nineteenth century, that allowed the French Concession and International Settlement to become "havens of dissent."⁵²⁹ Indonesian communists took advantage of this lax infrastructure beginning in the early 1920's when "growing activities of Bolshevik agents in the far East," including intercepted correspondence and the presence of Henk Sneevliet (Maring), Adolf Baars and other communists, made it clear that communists had chosen Shanghai as "the Mid-Chinese Headquarters of their inter-regional organization."⁵³⁰ Sneevliet himself urged the *Guomindang* (Chinese Nationalist Party) to use Shanghai as "a center for active propaganda among the workers in all [Chinese] cities and among the peasants."⁵³¹ In response, NEI's *Gouverneur-Generaal* (Governor General) Dirk Fock requested a "reciprocal exchange of information" between the NEI and the Shanghai Municipal Police (SMP) beginning in January 1922. This information focused primarily on tracking

⁵²⁶ Frederic E. Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai, 1927-1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 41.

⁵²⁷ Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, 30. For more on the Green Gang see Brian G. Martin, "The Green Gang and the Guomindang State: Du Tiesheng and the Politics of Shanghai, 1927-37," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 54, no. 1 (Feb., 1995): 64-92.

⁵²⁸ Locher-Scholten, "State Violence and the Police," 95.

⁵²⁹ Wen-hsin Yeh, "Shanghai Modernity: Commerce and Culture in a Republican City," *China Quarterly*, no. 150, (Jun., 1997): 378.

⁵³⁰ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 144, 20 January 1922.

⁵³¹ Sneevliet quoted in Harold R. Issacs and Albert Treint, "Documents on the Comintern and the Chinese Revolution," *The China Quarterly*, 45 (1971): 107.

the movements, interactions, and whereabouts of Indonesian communists, especially seamen whose fluid mobility most threatened politics within the NEI.

Throughout the 1920's and 30's the International Settlement's Criminal Intelligence Department (CID) willingly shared surveillance information with the Dutch government and CID directors were pleased to "place at [Dutch] disposal all the information in possession of the C.I.D."⁵³² The Shanghai Commissioner of Posts, who oversaw mail and telegraphs, was also willing to offer the registered names at any specific address or vice versa. Other Dutch Consulates around Asia also shared surveillance information they had with each other, agreeing to send telegrams and "keep certain letters" regarding "special cases" of interest.⁵³³ For example, the Straits Settlements Police Special Branch kept their connection with NEI authorities "close and cordial throughout the year" on all matters concerning international communist movements.⁵³⁴

The NEI communist uprisings, in connection with other communist actions around Asia such as the GMD's Northern Expedition and the May 30th Movement in Shanghai, made Dutch authorities fear that Communism was gaining ground against Western imperialism across Asia.⁵³⁵ Shanghai surveillance became more intense and not only well-known communist leaders were being monitored, but also previously

⁵³² The CID director only asked that officials from the Dutch Consulate going to examine their files at the Municipal Administration Building, "[k]indly let me know in advance . . . the time at which he will call, so that I can have the papers ready." NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 305, 23 June 1927, CID Director of Criminal Intelligence to Consul General.

⁵³³ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 298, 15 October 1925, Consul General of South China to Consul General of Shanghai.

⁵³⁴ Straits Settlements Police, Annual Reports for 1934, quoted in Cheah, "From PKI to the Comintern," 74.

⁵³⁵ Thomas, "Albert Sarraut," 951.

unremarkable maritime seamen. This increased surveillance continued even after 1927 when GMD leader Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) massacred thousands of communists across China in the Party Purge or “white terror.”⁵³⁶ By the end of the year about 85% of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) members had been killed.⁵³⁷ Chinese Communism was driven underground, but Dutch officials seemed increasingly worried over its influence. A similar trend was happening in the NEI during the last years of the 1920’s, when despite Communism having been thoroughly suppressed after the communist uprisings, the paranoia over subversive elements greatly increased.⁵³⁸

Spurred by these heightened fears of Communism, the Dutch surveillance project in Shanghai aimed to “complete the information concerning [all] natives from the Netherlands India in Shanghai.”⁵³⁹ The Dutch Consulate wanted to know the name of anyone who was a Netherlands East Indies subject “with a view to tracing [their] whereabouts, if possible.”⁵⁴⁰ Not only well-known communist leaders, but previously unknown seamen also had intelligence dossiers created in the colonial attempt at total oversight of the NEI’s globally mobile colonial population. The Dutch colonial administration felt anyone approaching the Dutch Consulate in Shanghai, even those asking for financial, accommodation, or employment assistance, were capable of

⁵³⁶ Michael Share, “Clash of Worlds: The Comintern, British Hong Kong and Chinese Nationalism, 1921- 1927,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, 57, no. 4 (June 2005): 615. See also Chan Lau Kit-ching, “The Perception of Chinese Communism in Hong Kong 1921-1934,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 164 (2000): 1044-1061.

⁵³⁷ Share, “Clash of Worlds,” 615.

⁵³⁸ Stoler, “Perceptions of Protest,” 653.

⁵³⁹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 144, 10 November 1933, Jan van den Berg Consulate General for the Netherlands, Shanghai to TP Givens of Shanghai Municipal Police.

⁵⁴⁰ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 305, 10 April 1928 Consulate to Commissioner of Posts.

providing information on others or were themselves people of interest under guise of an alias.

The Dutch Consulate's interactions with seamen in Shanghai were characterized by suspicion over their real identities, the truthfulness of their statements, and their underlying intentions for residing in Shanghai. Seamen coming into contact with surveillance authorities, whether by asking for support from a Consulate, or being arrested by local police, were interviewed and when possible had their identification documents, including photos, copied and kept on file. Multiple files were sometimes made and sent to other policing agencies also monitoring subversive persons. This was the experience an 18-year-old Sumatran named Saiman who approached the Dutch Consulate in Shanghai for financial assistance after his funds ran out and he had nowhere to stay.

Dutch suspicion over Saiman stemmed from his history as a seaman and the fluid mobility that came with it.⁵⁴¹ Saiman served on the Norwegian tanker SS "Soli" as a saloon and cabin boy from August 1932 to April 1933, the Chief Officer onboard certifying him to be a "good boy, willing and honest". He then signed onto the Norwegian SS "Willy" in Shanghai at the end of May and traveled to Australia, Singapore, Columbo, Sumatra, Singapore, Balik Papan, New Zealand, and back to Shanghai as an engine boy at a salary of twenty-five kronors per month. In October 1933, Saiman was discharged at his own request stating "he did not wish to remain on board on account of the small remuneration for the heavy work he had to perform." A certificate by the engineer of the "SS Willy" claimed Saiman's work and conduct were good. On being discharged in Shanghai, Saiman received twenty-seven dollars and went

⁵⁴¹ Saiman came to the Consulate on November 8, 1933.

to live at Ward Road where he rented a room for two weeks at five dollars per week. After that he stayed with a Norwegian seaman named Hoken at Kung Ping Road for another week, but since Hoken left a few days prior he had no place to stay, all his money being gone. He had passed the previous night together with a seaman from Colombo named Fakir, somewhere in the Wayside District.

Saiman was interrogated over his knowledge of other colonial subjects in Shanghai before he was given \$2.50 to pay for a room through the end of the month plus some pocket money to purchase food. The Dutch Consulate was hoping Saiman could shed light over the community of itinerant Indonesian maritime workers in Shanghai to gain more information over the community of internationally mobile seamen. An eyebrow was also raised at his “well dressed” friend Eglin who was “speaking English rather well” and accompanied Saiman and held onto his passport.⁵⁴² The Consulate made numerous copies of this passport and the photograph of Saiman contained within, and sent a copy to the SMP, FCP, and the head of Shanghai’s British Secret Intelligence Service, Harry Steptoe.⁵⁴³ In exchange for a small amount of financial support, Saiman had a surveillance report registered in Dutch, French, and British intelligence agencies in Shanghai, complete with a facsimiled photograph.⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴² Saiman’s passport, issued in August 1932 by the Regent ??? of Langkat in the Malayan language. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 144, 10 November 1933, Jan van den Berg Consulate General for the Netherlands, Shanghai to TP Givens of Shanghai Municipal Police.

⁵⁴³ Steptoe was officially a British Vice Consul, but actually worked as the head of Shanghai’s British Secret Intelligence Service. Ibid. See also Richard J. Aldrich, “Britain’s Secret Intelligence Service in Asia During the Second World War,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 32, no. 1 (1998): 183-4.

⁵⁴⁴ “Efforts are being made to find him a place in a ship going South. As saiman asked for something to read in Malay, he was given a copy of Tom Sawyer in that language. Efforts to get him a place on the Norwegian SS Soli have failed, the captain sailing now

A similar experience happened to Amat bin Amat, who was also politically interrogated when he approached the Dutch Consulate for financial aid. Born at Tanjung Pura, Langkat, Sumatra, and 55 years old, Amat approached the Consulate in September 1933 asking for assistance in purchasing a return ticket to Hong Kong after his friend caring for him disappeared and left him “stranded” in Shanghai. He had worked most recently as a cook on a steamer between Singapore and Penang for six months, after which he traveled to Hong Kong, paying his own passage and again signed on as a cook aboard Japanese SS “Taiku Haru” for another six months. He claimed he’d been “[f]orced to join the strike of the Chinese crew,” after which, he stayed at a boarding house in Hong Kong called “Wantsjai,” owned by a certain Badjo who spoke Malay. After three months his money ran short and he roamed from one place to the other, and already visited the Netherlands Consulate General at Hong Kong once previously where he received one dollar.

Despite the Head Consulate’s remarks that Amat looked “old and ragged [like] a man who is returning to his native land to die,” Amat was seen as suspicious not only for his participation in a Chinese strike, but also because his tuberculosis x-rays from the Municipal Police Hospital listed him under the name Ahmath, age 43. It was enough discrepancy for the consulate to start a serious interrogation to find out if Amat was who he claimed to be. He was asked who he knew, where they lived and with whom, and where these acquaintances had traveled in the past and why. Amat’s letter of introduction was written for him by another Indonesian named Saleh and the Consulate proceeded to compare Saleh’s handwriting to those wanted or suspected Indonesian

with a Chinese crew.” NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 144, 20 November 1933, Jan van den Berg to TP Givens.

communists already on file. Amat bin Amat was shown various photos of Javanese and Malaysians who had been in Shanghai, but he failed to recognize any of them. They questioned his knowledge over other Indonesians living not only in Shanghai, but also Hong Kong. Despite his decrepitude state, Amat was still considered valuable to Dutch surveillance and the Consulate felt “information given concerning others may be of assistance in locating [Netherlands East] Indian revolutionaries hiding in Shanghai.” After the questioning was over, he was given two dollars to pay his hotel bill and to purchase a ticket to Hong Kong on a steamer leaving the same evening.⁵⁴⁵

Other seamen who came to the consulate for financial assistance were suspected of themselves being wanted communist activists who were using aliases to hide their true identity. A man named Amat bin Ali, claiming to be 27 years old and born in Tanjung Priok, came to the Consulate for financial aid in June 1933. Ali was asked to relate his life history in detail and he explained how after coming to Singapore at age 15 or 16 to work for his uncle, he served as a ship “boy” for six months with the KPM and then became a seaman making various trips with steamers of the Holland America Line to the United States and also on the Irish SS “City of Bremen” between Singapore and Holland.⁵⁴⁶ He was last engaged on the “Highland Bank” traveling from Singapore to London, Japan, Australia and Hong Kong, where eventually the Malay crew was exchanged for a Chinese crew and he had to sign off. Most of his compatriots returned to Singapore, but he thought it would be easier to find employment in Shanghai and arrived three or four

⁵⁴⁵ He left the Consulate with his luggage, consisting of one rattan suitcase and said he would take one of the Taku steamers, leaving on the evening of the 13th. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr.144, 15 September 1933, Jan van den Berg to officer in charge of special branch, T Robertson.

⁵⁴⁶ His uncle, named Saman, owned a shop selling cakes and lived at Geland No. 30 in Singapore.

months prior with no place to stay. He claimed to not know anyone in Shanghai “except Sadri, whom I met once [but] I cannot stay with Sadri because his place is too small.”

The Consulate believed Amat bin Ali was using an alias and was in fact a communist agitator previously exiled from the NEI.⁵⁴⁷ The Consulate noted the only papers he could produce were “pawn tickets for a total value of not yet \$3” and had nothing else to prove he was a NEI subject. He spoke “Riouw-Lingga Malay, the language spoken in Deli and Singapore. He does not speak any Javanese, neither the typical Javanese Malay language. To others he stated to be the son of a Javanese father and a mother from Manado (Celebes). In appearance he certainly does not look like a native of Java.” To make matters worse, Ali would not stay at the boarding house the Consulate offered him a voucher for. He found it not to his liking and wanted to stay somewhere else. When told that was impossible, he unsuccessfully asked for the cash instead.⁵⁴⁸

After looking through their surveillance files, Head Consul Jan van den Berg suspected that Amat bin Ali was in fact Mohamed Ali, a leader of the communist

⁵⁴⁷ “Amat bin Ali” meaning “son of Ali.”

⁵⁴⁸ When Amat was still in van den Berg’s office he “gave him a letter requesting the Shanghai Students’ Lodging `house at Carter Road Lane No. 199, to provide Amat with board and lodging for the time being. Costs to be charged to this Consulate. They were back in my office however in the afternoon, “Java” [errand clerk] stating that Amat would not stay there as he had no bedding, the food also not being to Amat’s taste. Amat said that he preferred to stay in a place on Broadway, nearer to the harbour, and both of them proceeded there, only to return with a card of the Crystal Hotel and a label of the Tai An Lodging House on Rue des Deux Republiques. As these places were far more expensive and less suitable, I left Amat the choice of going to Carter Road Lane or of receiving no assistance at all. Amat persisted in his demand for money, which for obvious reasons could not be entertained. He thereupon grudgingly took the letter to the Students Lodging House and left together with “Java” This morning he came back however, returning the letter and stating that he had not gone to Carter Road Lane, having passed the night on a launch, which was much warmer.” NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr.144, 9 June 1933, Jan van den Gerg to TP Givens.

uprisings at Tangerang in October 1926. After his arrest in Singapore on March 16, 1930, Mohamed Ali was added to the surveillance files, yet he was released from jail and served as a seaman on a boat plying between Pakan Baroe and Singapore under the name of Magid Bin Hamid. He was most likely “in charge of the compilation and distribution of pamphlets of an inflammatory nature, printed in the Malay language on behalf of the Communist Society ‘Seamen’s Union’ *Sarikat Boeroek Laoet*.”⁵⁴⁹ Despite interrogating him over his back story and relationship with other Indonesians in Shanghai, Amat bin Ali denied being Mohamed Ali, stating simply “[i]n Hong Kong I called myself Amat bin Amat, here I sometimes use the name Ali.” His true identity was never discovered, but he now had a surveillance dossier added to the Dutch intelligence reports as well as those of the SMP. The report was complete with information about the missing top middle finger on his left hand after an accident at sea five years prior, which would certainly make it easier for him to be identified in the future. Five months later, Amat Bin Ali still appeared to be in Shanghai and the Consulate received a complaint from the local office of the JCJL, Amat bin Ali’s former employer, about the “objectionable manner in which he asked for money there a short while ago.”⁵⁵⁰

Discovering the true identities of Indonesian seamen in Shanghai was difficult due to the resources available within maritime communities that could help them escape detection from colonial officials. Seamen in Shanghai often had networks of friends who could aid them with money, accommodation, and employment. For seamen involved in communist politics, clandestine political networks could also aid them in escaping detection. Only the seamen with no other options actually wound up asking for help

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁰ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr.144, 10 November 1933, Jan van den Berg to TP Givens.

through official routes. Patchy access to these communities further hampered colonial attempts at surveillance and kept the Dutch government in the dark over many of the activities of fluidly mobile Indonesian seamen.

This murky knowledge over Indonesian seamen in Shanghai also led to mistakes being made in terms of apprehending wanted communists. For example, Johannes Wawoeroentoe (Waworuntu), an active communist in the NEI since the early days of the *Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging* (Indies Social Democratic Association),⁵⁵¹ had called at the Consulate in November 1927 “without papers or funds and applied for assistance.”⁵⁵² He claimed to be born around 1897 in Manado and was temporarily lodged in a seamen’s home and provided work at the Municipal Shelter while the Consulate tried to obtain a passport for him from the Resident of Manado. In case that didn’t work, the Consulate would try to “provide funds from the State to repatriate him.”⁵⁵³ Before instructions were received from Java for his repatriation, he left Shanghai on board the Danish SS “Kina” working as a stoker.⁵⁵⁴

The Dutch Consulate only realized in May 1928 that he was a wanted communist activist, but by that time it was clear that Wawoeroentoe was “not at present in Shanghai.” They inquired at the places he had stayed six months prior, but “none of the inmates or the manager of that place know anything about him.” They also found “[n]o trace of his having been in the Work Shelter that can be found and if he did obtain work

⁵⁵¹ See Appendix iv and McVey, *Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 199.

⁵⁵² NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr.144, 24 May 1928, Consulate to Director of Criminal Investigation Shanghai and Gouverneur Generaal of the NEI.

⁵⁵³ Between 23 and 30 November his costs were paid by the Koningin Wilhelminafonds and provided with board and lodging at the Hanbury Institute on account of the Netherlands Benevolent Society. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 354, 13 March 1928, Consulate to Gouverneur Generaal of the NEI.

⁵⁵⁴ On December 12, 1927.

there as stated in letter from the Netherlands Consulate-General it must have been under an assumed name.” In the meantime, it had been ascertained from the local Agency of the East Asiatic Company that Wawoeroentoe was discharged from the SS “Kina” voluntarily on arrival in Shanghai on January 25, 1928⁵⁵⁵ and that the vessel made a trip to Vladivostok between these two dates.⁵⁵⁶ Still unable to be found in Shanghai, Wawoeroentoe was eventually apprehended upon his return to the NEI and interned by the police.⁵⁵⁷

The surveillance of seamen was based on beliefs they acted as powerful agents in the creation of international communist networks, even more threatening because seamen were considered especially vulnerable to communist recruiters.⁵⁵⁸ Testimonies from seamen arrested for communist activities, such as the following account told by the active communist seaman named Kamu, helped fuel these colonial fears. While working for RL, Kamu was recruited by exiled Indonesian communist and nationalist Semaoen, together with other seamen who had also worked for KPM and RL. From Rotterdam, they were sent to Moscow for a two-and-a-half year communist training course at the Communist University for Toilers of the Far East (KUTV). First suggested by Sneevliet at the second Comintern congress in 1920, KUTV was established in 1921 by Soviet government decree and was intended to provide Asians with communist training to use in the political movements of their own countries.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 354, 28 June 1928. See also NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 354, 24 May 1928.

⁵⁵⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 354, 24 May 1928 Consulate to Director of Criminal Investigation Shanghai and Gouverneur Generaal of the NEI.

⁵⁵⁷ Mc Vey, *Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 201.

⁵⁵⁸ For contextualization see *Ibid.*, 199.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.200.

Being taught specifically about the political situation in the Netherlands East Indies, together with a battery of other courses, Kamu was inducted into a transnational communist network with particular focus on his eventual return to the NEI to help further the Indonesian communist movement. Moscow was a meeting ground for communists from around the globe and during his studies Kamu was introduced to numerous Indonesian communist leaders, many exiled from the NEI, including Semaoen, Baars, Alimin, Darsono, and Moeso.⁵⁶⁰ Eventually, Kamu was sent back to Netherlands East Indies via Vladivostok and Singapore to “put his learning into practice” and he served as a correspondent and go-between for addresses in Berlin, Shanghai, and Java. His instructions were to

install communist cells in different businesses, in this way to ultimately propagate Communism. Any actions must not be pursued, because then the government will take more countermeasures against us. Must endeavor to little by little make the entire population realize the beneficial influence of Communism in order that they will sympathize with it. When that can be reached, when the full sympathy for the Soviet can be gained, then a Soviet government will arise of its own accord.⁵⁶¹

Accounts like Kamu’s convinced Dutch authorities that Indonesian communist leaders actively recruited seamen in port cities and Indonesian communists easily connected with the Comintern through maritime networks.

The connections between Indonesian communists and Moscow added to increased surveillance over Comintern infiltration into Southeast Asia and also led to anti-Russian immigration measures within the NEI. Shanghai had strong connections with Russia through the “Red Underground Communication Line” a clandestine network of Chinese Communists forming a transportation route between Shanghai, Hong Kong, and the

⁵⁶⁰ See Appendix iv for complete testimony of this informant.

⁵⁶¹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 354, 26 January 1928, From Chef de Recherche [Maseland] to the Algemeene Politie Batavia afdeeling Politieke Recherche.

Central Soviet Region, largely utilized by refugees after the Party Purge.⁵⁶² Shanghai also served as the Comintern's Far Eastern Bureau (FEB) that oversaw and was responsible for the direction of Communism across Asia and was the center for the Comintern's International Communications (OMS), which handled money, communications, and logistics of communist agents.⁵⁶³ Despite these very concrete connections between the Comintern and Shanghai, Dutch fears over the Comintern's influence on Asia were more powerful than actual evidence of such connections. Additionally, Dutch officials may have been quick to focus on Russian involvement in the NEI because it was more reassuring to assume that dangerous ideologies and activists could not come from within the NEI.⁵⁶⁴

The International Settlement's CID began specifically forwarding police reports to the Dutch Consulate "about certain people from Java who went to Russia to become better acquainted with Soviet methods."⁵⁶⁵ For example, Lim Khe-dok (alias Lim Kek-dok), a returned student from Moscow and previously active in the Fukien Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and editor of the *Red Flag*, was arrested in September 1933 by the Shanghai Public Safety Bureau and subsequently escorted to Nanking (Nanjing) where he was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Military Court. The Dutch Consulate was immediately notified of his arrest because government officials

⁵⁶² This network was still used after Tienamen. Chan Lau Kit-ching, *From Nothing to Nothing: The Chinese Communist Movement and Hong Kong, 1921-1936* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 192-203.

⁵⁶³ Fowler, *Japanese and Chinese Immigrant Activists*, 75.

⁵⁶⁴ Thomas, "Albert Serraut," 935.

⁵⁶⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 354, 29 June 1928, Director of Criminal Investigation Shanghai to Consulate Shanghai.

at Batavia had previously sent a photograph of a wanted communist activist who had fled the NEI. The arrested man and the image in the photograph were identical.⁵⁶⁶

Besides tracking NEI communists with connections to Russia, the Dutch Consulate also gathered information on specific addresses and residents connected to the Comintern with help of the Commissioner of Posts. For instance,

No 102 Route Vallon [French Concession], the address of the Pan Pacific Trades Union Society given in the Post Office Application form, is a well-known rendezvous for all manner of political scum of all nationalities, particularly Russians, Phillipinoes, Japanese, Spaniards, Czechs, etc., who are in the habit of putting up at this house for a day only, rendering it impossible to ascertain who they are as no names are given by the landlady of the house, Mrs. L.H. Burak, a Russian, one of whose daughters is married to Diamant [Czech anarchist and member of the Comintern, who was known to be engaged locally in forming the Chinese party of Anarchists] and resides at the address given. Mrs. Burak's husband, Solomon Burak, is a well-known Soviet agent and is employed (and has been for the past two years) by the A.B.C. Press at No. 434 Kiukiang Road, where he acted as the liaison employee with the Soviet Consulate for which establishment the A.B.C. press executed sundry printing work.⁵⁶⁷

Russians were certainly not looked favorably upon and in Shanghai the Soviet Consulate had already been shut down along with Soviet Russian newspapers in Shanghai such as "The Shanghai Life."⁵⁶⁸

Anti-Soviet surveillance in Asia was part of a larger project to establish a boundary protecting the NEI against Comintern infiltration. The Dutch feared Comintern organizational models were being used by anti-colonialists in the NEI.⁵⁶⁹ In addition to increased surveillance, the Dutch colonial administration "made it a practice that no person, whether of Russian nationality or of any other nationality, will be admitted, who

⁵⁶⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 144, 25 Juli 1934.

⁵⁶⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 305, 28 June 1928, Director of Criminal Investigation Shanghai to Consulate Shanghai.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹ Thomas suggests party cells, clandestine planning, and targeted distribution of covert international funding and that there was "some evidence to bear this out, but it was hardly the stuff of imminent revolutionary upheaval." Thomas, "Albert Serraut," 945.

appears to be in the service of or connection with the Soviet Government or any communist organization.”⁵⁷⁰ Russian citizens such as Gregore Radygin, who arrived at Soerabaja [Surabaya] on the SS “Nieuw Holland” in 1931, intended traveling over land to Tanjung Priok in order to sail from there for Europe. He was found to be in the service of the Commissariat for Foreign Trade and the Department of Commerce of the USSR and subsequently was not allowed to leave his ship. He continued his voyage to Tanjung Priok by sea and left from there by the MS “Johan van Oldenbarnevelt.” Despite having previously obtained a NEI visa from the Netherlands Consulate General at Sydney, the new colonial policy towards Russians was that “a visa does not ipso facto guarantee admission into Netherlands India, such admission being decided upon at the last instance by the Immigration authorities.”⁵⁷¹ Other Russians were deported or denied entry visas to the NEI, while those who were granted visas were often considered non-political, harmless visitors.⁵⁷² In spite of fears and rumors over communist infiltration popular in the Dutch press, it seems that no Soviet emissaries ever arrived.⁵⁷³

Fears over Russian infiltration went hand-in hand with fears over Indonesian communist seamen. Both were seen as serious threats to Dutch colonial power. Information gathered by the Dutch Consulate in Shanghai was used to monitor internationally mobile colonial subjects. Seamen in particular were feared for spreading subversive information across global maritime networks. Communist connections made

⁵⁷⁰ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 144, 31 May 1931, Jan van den Berg to T.P. Givens.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid.

⁵⁷² For example, many Russians allowed entry were dancers and musicians. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 305, 3 June 1929. Also, three Russians were evicted from the NEI to Harbin, on SS Tjitaroen. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 144, January 1922.

⁵⁷³ Mc Vey, *Rise in Indonesian Communism*, 199.

by seamen in foreign port cities helped them gain knowledge and leadership skills that could later be applied to their communist activities in the NEI. The importance of interrogations like the ones above, show that seamen played a crucial role in international Communism and Dutch surveillance. Dutch surveillance dossiers revealed how fluid mobility inherent to seamen could be used as a political tool to encourage the creation of international networks of communist activists and propaganda.

Ships as Political Vehicles

Along with seamen, ships themselves played an important role in Dutch maritime surveillance both as collaborative spaces in colonial policing projects and as vehicles enabling the spread of subversive agents and ideas across global maritime networks. But unlike fluidly mobile seamen who left Dutch officials suspicious over their reliability and loyalty to colonial interests, the colonial government regarded Dutch shipping companies as allies in their fight against subversive agents and anti-colonial ideology. Ships were used as colonial tools to help protect the Netherlands East Indies from communist infiltration through policing the fluid maritime contiguous zones surrounding the Netherlands East Indies. The *Java-China-Japan Lijn* participated in the colonial surveillance project by working together with government authorities in the NEI and local port authorities in China to intercept suspicious passengers and confiscate smuggled communist propaganda and weapons. JCJL's management took a strong stance against Communism and their policies supported the colonial administration in its fight against a political ideology that threatened both business *and* politics. By instructing European

crewmembers to police onboard spaces, shipping companies and ships themselves served as political agents within global maritime networks.

The “bilateral monopoly” of power JCJL shared with the colonial government meant both were highly invested in maintaining the colonial status quo.⁵⁷⁴ JCJL took a strong position against Communism and enacted policies on board ships to stop the spread of this subversive ideology. In early 1927, JCJL explained “it is our duty, so far as it is in our power, to fight against the Bolshevist danger in Netherlands India” mainly due to “the recent outbreak of disturbances in Java and the West Coast of Sumatra that bore a distinct Bolshevist character.” JCJL also recognized that because their ships were “the connecting link” between the NEI and China, they were extremely exposed to communist networks and this made their “effectiveness in [fighting Communism] especially difficult.”⁵⁷⁵

JCJL considered its European captains and officers on ships as the best tool in fighting the spread of Communism and directed all European crewmembers to act as the front line of defense in the fight against Bolshevik supporters and propaganda. Captains had to police both crews and passengers and were reminded that such onboard surveillance “must bear a very confidential nature.”⁵⁷⁶ Captains policed crews onboard for any subversive activities and were instructed to “[a]s much as possible watch and monitor the acts of the Chinese crew,” suspected as being most likely to support Communist ideology.⁵⁷⁷ Policing was carried out through the “[r]egular and if possible daily thorough searches of the entire ship, including the hold, for opium and ‘stowaways’

⁵⁷⁴ Campo, “Steam Navigation,” 11-29 and Shimizu, “Dutch-Japanese Competition,” 4.

⁵⁷⁵ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 125.

⁵⁷⁶ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 125, 28 January 1927, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁵⁷⁷ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 125.

and the keeping of daily accurate and complete records of such in the ship's logbook."⁵⁷⁸ Other European crewmembers were expected to aid this policing and captains were advised to "keep discipline of the Chinese at a distance from yourself by using your officers." Captains were not only responsible for crews while onboard but also asked not to provide "monetary advances to the crew, so that when leaving service, they are not in possession of as large a sum as possible" possibly aiding their subversive activities after disembarking.⁵⁷⁹

In terms of passengers, JCJL's policy was to "instruct the captains of all our ships to keep a sharp eye on all passengers in all classes headed to Netherland East Indies ports."⁵⁸⁰ Captains were specifically looking for communist sympathizers and were looking for "one or more passengers [who] espouse these ideas."⁵⁸¹ If found, the Captain "must immediately telegraph the authorities at the destination port, so that they can follow the steps of these individuals."⁵⁸² Captains were responsible for alerting government officials of suspicious passengers present onboard before docking in port. By doing so, Captains enabled terrestrial surveillance units to follow suspicious passengers once they disembarked or else prepared law enforcement to make an arrest before or immediately after the suspicious passenger left the ship.

JCJL captains were also responsible in sharing intelligence with the NEI's foreign surveillance collaborators. Captains worked together with the Dutch colonial

⁵⁷⁸ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 125, 28 January 1927, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁵⁷⁹ Captains of *Java Pacific Lijn* ships were advised to "not provide Chinese permits to go on shore during stops at Pacific Coast ports." GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.06, SB296, 13 August 1929.

⁵⁸⁰ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 125, 28 January 1927, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁵⁸¹ Ibid.

⁵⁸² Ibid.

government and foreign allies in a maritime surveillance project networked across Asia. Frederic Wakeman describes the collaboration between European colonial intelligence agencies as “a kind of distant early warning system” alerting each other of dangerous elements within global maritime networks.⁵⁸³ Captains on board individual ships worked together with port city nodes such as Singapore to warn colonial authorities across Asia about revolutionaries and radicals traveling through the Malaccan Straits. For example, Mohamad Joesoef [Mohammad Jusuf] arrived at Singapore in February 1928 after living in Russia and attending the KUTV.⁵⁸⁴ A communist and nationalist who had directed the Indonesian nationalist organization *Perhimpunan Indonesia*, the Dutch worried about his future plans to spread communist ideas in the NEI and “requested collaboration with the Straits authorities for them to covertly observe him and signal [NEI authorities] with which ship he sails towards Java.”⁵⁸⁵

Foreign surveillance agencies not only shared their intelligence information with each other, but sometimes also their surveillance tactics. This was particularly true of transoceanic maritime surveillance where colonial surveillance could greatly benefit other colonies due to the fluid mobility of maritime travelers. To further aid the management of subversive agents onboard their ships, the JCJL worked together with the Dutch colonial government in Batavia to learn the best tactics to police their ships. For example, in 1928 the *Gouverneur-Generaal* (Governor General) suggested the company meet with a British Captain named Shelley who was an “expert in the matter of subversive movements in these parts of the world.” All three parties, colonial

⁵⁸³ Wakeman, "Policing Modern Shanghai," 412.

⁵⁸⁴ See Appendix iv.

⁵⁸⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr.354, 24 May 1928, Consular General to Director of Criminal Investigation Shanghai and Gouveneur Generaal of the NEI.

government, shipping company, and expert consultant, could “consider together with the colonial authorities the advisability and, on agreement, the means of cooperation between the Netherlands Indian and British services concerned.”⁵⁸⁶

Inspections onboard JCJL ships by foreign customs officials were also an important part of maritime surveillance. Foreign customs agents acted as another set of eyes in helping captains and officers police onboard spaces, including passengers and crews. Although this was positive in terms of anti-colonial policing, it could also be detrimental for the JCJL and their captains, who were sometimes fined for smuggled goods or people found onboard. The Chinese Maritime Customs Service (CMCS) was a Chinese state agency with an “outdoors” branch largely staffed by Chinese who inspected the ships, while the “indoor” executive branch was largely staffed by Europeans up until the late 1930’s. While the CMCS was a agency of the Chinese state, it had historically been staffed by foreigners and used English as a second official language.⁵⁸⁷ The racial composition of the CMCS further complicated Dutch shipping company interactions with Chinese customs officials.

JCJL captains were more than happy to cooperate in the search and questioning of individuals and their belongings before docking. CMCS officials, often accompanied by soldiers and/or police agents, were looking for communists or communist propaganda onboard Dutch ships. For example, on SS “Zosma” Captain Kornelis Egbert Dik stated “[t]wo persons in grey” came on board to ask “if I had Bolsheviks on board, for, they

⁵⁸⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr.316, 6 December 1928, Consul General Shanghai to Colonal W.F. Blaker, British Head Quarters, North China Command.

⁵⁸⁷ Robert Bickers, “Revisiting the Chinese Maritime Customs Service, 1854–1950,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36, no. 2 (June 2008): 222.

said, that was especially what they wanted to look for.”⁵⁸⁸ Inspectors told Captain Pieter Abbo on SS “Tjissalak” they intended to take with them “three Chinese because they were in possession of Bolshevik literature.”⁵⁸⁹ When one naval officer, three army officers and twenty armed soldiers boarded the SS “Tjikini,” Captain J. Van Rees “ordered all Chinese passengers on deck, whereupon they were interrogated and partially searched. Letters, already written and closed, were opened and the contents examined.” The soldiers and officials ultimately left the ship “taking with them different visiting cards and a photo” while one of the officers in civilian clothes, named Lou, wrote a few lines in Chinese in the ship’s log-book, which the Captain understood to mean “Russian communists sometimes come to Shanghai in Netherlands ships and these communists must be arrested.”⁵⁹⁰

Surveillance and policing of individuals went hand-in-hand with policing ships for communist propaganda and literature. Colonial press censorship in the NEI was facilitated through two changes in the colonial law. The first was the *haatzaai artikelen* (hate sowing laws) which allowed the government to punish anyone creating “a writing or illustration, in which feelings of hostility, hate, or contempt toward the Government of the Netherlands or the Netherlands Indies are awakened or encouraged” as well as those who “intentionally awaken or encourage feelings of hostility, hate or contempt among or

⁵⁸⁸ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 307, 29 July 1927.

⁵⁸⁹ “The persons in question however had been able to show that their possession of this literature dated from former times, when the National leaders themselves were not opposed to Bolshevism but that now they were genuine anti-Bolshevik nationalists. The soldiers hereupon seized the literature but released the suspected persons.” NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr.307, 6 August 1927.

⁵⁹⁰ The Captain noted that of all the people who boarded the ship to inspect, there was not one customs official among them. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 307, June 25 1927.

toward groups of the population of the Netherlands Indies.”⁵⁹¹ The second was a new regulation passed in 1931 that gave the GG the right to ban any periodical for up to a year without first having to obtain permission from the counts and victims had no right to appeal his decision.⁵⁹² Together these two laws made it easier for the Dutch colonial government to control publications within the NEI, but most of the subversive publications found onboard ships came from abroad and, therefore, had to be intercepted by authorities in order to stop their entrance into the NEI.⁵⁹³ The fluidity of maritime networks complicated attempts to censor subversive literature.

Censorship was a tool in the colonial surveillance project that was difficult to translate to maritime surveillance. Propaganda moved rapidly across global maritime networks and connected the NEI with Russia, China, and other centers of communist activity. The combined goal of both the colonial authorities and the JCJL was to control subversive people onboard as well as to “stop the spread and publication of pestiferous lecture on our fleet and in our colonies.”⁵⁹⁴ The JCJL was particularly concerned with literature expressing an anti-Western tendency that was “inspired by Moscow.”⁵⁹⁵ Russian inspired literature began entering Southeast Asia as early as 1921, including pamphlets such as *Methods of Communist Teaching in Russia and China and the Russian*

⁵⁹¹ Articles 155 and 156. McVey, *Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 454.

⁵⁹² Hendrik M. J. Maier, “Forms of Censorship in the Dutch Indies: The Marginalization of Chinese-Malay Literature,” *Indonesia* (1991): 70.

⁵⁹³ Maier suggests the *Haatzaai Artikelen* only challenged writers and journalists rather than actually discouraging them. See Hendrik M. J. Maier “Flying a Kite: The Crimes of Pramoedya Ananta Toer” in *Figures of Criminality in Indonesia, the Philippines and Colonial Vietnam*, ed. Vicente L. Rafael (Cornell, SEAP Publications, 1999), 247.

⁵⁹⁴ J NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 106, 9 March 1931.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid.

Revolution of October 1917, only some of which was confiscated by colonial censors.⁵⁹⁶

The JCJL also thought that persons responsible for the 1926-27 uprisings were “no stranger to Russian/Chinese influences as far as their preparations were concerned.”⁵⁹⁷

The threat of foreign communist propaganda infiltrating the NEI was more frightening to Dutch authorities because of the fluid mobility of maritime passengers and workers, who the Dutch feared would travel between dozens of port cities befriending thousands of crewmembers and passengers with the goal of distributing communist propaganda to as large an audience as possible.⁵⁹⁸

Together with mail censorship, maritime surveillance was the most effective tool available to colonial authorities to stop the influx of subversive literature into the NEI. Therefore, the European crewmembers put in charge of this onboard surveillance project were important political agents within the larger colonial project of protecting the NEI from dangerous foreign political influences. Captains were instructed to pay special attention for “the reading of Bolshevik literature, making Bolshevik propaganda on board, or otherwise.”⁵⁹⁹ One example of subversive literature found onboard JCJL ships was an issue of the newspaper *Nanyang Monthly*, which had long been prohibited in the NEI due to its anti-Western propaganda. The issue found onboard was a special edition

⁵⁹⁶ C.F. Yong, "Origins and Development of the Malayan Communist Movement, 1919-1930," *Modern Asian Studies*, 25, no. 4 (1991): 630.

⁵⁹⁷ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 28 January 1927, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

⁵⁹⁸ Research such as W.M.F. Mansvelt's 1928 study on 1000 people interned at the Boven Digoel prison camp, accused of participating in the 1926-27 uprisings showed extremely high levels of literacy among the prisoners and may have fueled fears over the possible impacts foreign literature could have within communist underground circles in the NEI. W. M. F. Mansvelt, "Onderwijs en Communisme," *Koloniale Studien*, 12 (1928): 202-225.

⁵⁹⁹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr.125, 28 January 1927, JCJL Amsterdam to JCJL Batavia.

specifically about the NEI where a negative portrait was painted of the GG and the colonial government using different English names to try and sidestep NEI censors. Although for anyone who read Chinese, these characters daringly remained the same. The article titled “The Crisis of the Chinese in Netherlands India and the regulations against them” spoke of the oppression of Indonesians and Chinese in the Dutch colonies.⁶⁰⁰ JCJL was thoroughly concerned that a paper with such a “red character” was circulating onboard.⁶⁰¹

Arms smuggling was another target of maritime surveillance and both Dutch shipping companies in Asia and the GG pledged a strong “interest in all matters relating to the traffic of arms in Eastern waters.”⁶⁰² As a member of the League of Nations, the Netherlands abided by the St. Germain Convention for the Control of the Trade in Arms and Ammunition (1919) and the Geneva Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War (1925), both of which prohibited arms being in the hands of private persons or organizations, or of certain “barbarous” or “semi-civilized peoples,” but did little to stop arms trafficking among “civilized States.”⁶⁰³

Dutch authorities worried that when foreign ships smuggling arms and ammunition docked at NEI ports, weapons could be smuggled ashore and make their way

⁶⁰⁰ The article also mentioned similar situations within the British, French, and American colonies.

⁶⁰¹ NL-HaNA, Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, 2.20.58.02, inv.nr. 106, 9 March 1931.

⁶⁰² NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 145, 24 June 1926, Consul General to Shanghai Commissioner of Police.

⁶⁰³ David R. Stone, “Imperialism and Sovereignty: The League of Nations' Drive to Control the Global Arms Trade,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35, no. 2 (2000): 218.

into the hands of communist, nationalist, or anti-colonial activists.⁶⁰⁴ To counteract this threat, twenty-four hour watch was placed on all suspicious vessels for the duration of their time in NEI ports.⁶⁰⁵ Further, individuals suspected of arms smuggling were “kept under close observation.”⁶⁰⁶ One example was an arms smuggler named Mrs. Ethel Wiesinger, an Austrian-born resident of Shanghai who arranged illegal weapon shipments from Germany, Great Britain, the United States, and France to destinations in Japan and China.⁶⁰⁷ Tanjung Priok was a stopover port for the ship carrying the smuggled weapons before it embarked for its final “secret destination.” While there, not only was Wiesinger’s room secretly searched, but surveillance agents followed her and the captain of the ship so closely that “from time to time it was even possible to hear their conversation.”⁶⁰⁸

Beyond Asian port cities, Dutch intelligence worked together with British surveillance agencies to police the waters of Southeast Asia. British and Dutch

⁶⁰⁴ Ships carrying illicit munitions were susceptible to explosions and fires, potentially damaging local port infrastructure, other crafts, or worse. For example, the SS “Adolph von Beyer” caught fire while docked at Sabang under suspicions of carrying illicit munitions onboard. Ultimately, it was found to be a regular fire, but it nevertheless forced Dutch authorities to take extra precautions in the future. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 145, 24 June 1926, Consul General to Shanghai Commissioner of Police.

⁶⁰⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 145, 10 February 1926
Commissioner of Police to Consul General Shanghai.

⁶⁰⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 148.

⁶⁰⁷ According to the memorandum, Wiesinger’s husband was a merchant in Shanghai principally trading in watches, clocks, and chemicals and his firm “chartered steamers expressly for this purpose [of arms smuggling] because most ship-owners did not care for such cargo. He was in relation with the Governments of Germany, Great Britain, United States, France, Japan and China for the sale of arms and ammunitions to the later country.” NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 148.

⁶⁰⁸ So close infact that “from time to time it was even possible to listen to their conversation.” Also, Wiesinger’s room had been secretly searched where secret telegram code-words had been copied from a notebook left in her room. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 148.

authorities specifically suspected Russian ships of smuggling arms to Chinese communists.⁶⁰⁹ Since the nineteenth century, Russia's role as an arms buyer and as an imperialist actor helped to increase the import of arms across Eurasia and with the aided ideological sympathies with Chinese communists made for a particularly dangerous fleet within Asian waters.⁶¹⁰ For example, in September 1925 British intelligence alerted the GG that the Russian ship SS "Deabrist" left Constantinople for Sabang "carrying arms and ammunitions for the communists in Canton." This early-warning telegram allowed Dutch authorities to prepare for the ship's arrival and "if the steamer called at any Dutch Indian port," the highest NEI authorities ordered they be warned before the it docked.⁶¹¹ Dutch and British customs officials were also alert to other ships arriving with crewmembers appearing unusually well off financially and believed this was a sign the crew "shared to some extent in the profits of the shipment of munitions."⁶¹²

While some crewmembers profited from smuggling, others became informants for CMCS officials, police agents, and military personnel who conducted investigations onboard. In 1929, Chinese soldiers boarded the Dutch SS "Oudekerk" docked at Shanghai, where smuggled weapons were found "with the help of an informant" crewmember.⁶¹³ A large cache of weapons were retrieved from under a water tank.⁶¹⁴

⁶⁰⁹ Jonathan A. Grant, *Rulers, Guns, and Money: The Global Arms Trade in the Age of Imperialism* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2007), 17.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶¹¹ The telegram does not state whether a search of the vessel took place at Sabang. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 145, 8 October 1925 Consul General M.J. Quist of Hongkong to J.D.lloyd Esq., Superintendent of Imports and Exports.

⁶¹² NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 145, 10 February 1926, Commissioner of Police to Consul General Shanghai.

⁶¹³ The large number of weapons seized was typical because the opinion of many arms smugglers was that although arms smuggling was a very lucrative trade, "it was only remunerative to do so in large quantities, as on small consignments expenses were too high smuggled." NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 148.

The Dutch Consulate in Shanghai blamed two Chinese crewmembers who “during or immediately after the incident . . . disappeared without leaving any trace so that it is to be supposed that with them the guilty persons have escaped.” Whether or not there existed any responsibility or negligence on the part of the captain or others onboard, was “difficult to say, since no data [was] available.” However, the Consulate reported the matter to “competent authorities who will carefully investigate this case.”⁶¹⁵

Not everyone was so quick to place blame on the “escaped” Chinese seamen. Wong Tsen-Hsing, Chief of the Public Safety Bureau in Shanghai placed full blame on the Netherlands and expressed strong distain towards this example of Dutch maritime smuggling. He wrote to the mayor of Shanghai municipality,

[I]n the recent years, dangerous elements have been very active. People are deprived of peaceful living and disturbed by assassination and kidnapping. Communists in various parts of the country also join hands with loafers and massacre people and burn their properties. The military and police authorities spare no time in their efforts to wipe out the communists and the bandits. The root of all this lies with the smuggling of arms and ammunition by treacherous merchants with the cooperation of their foreign confederates. Now the Netherlands vessel SS Oudekerk smuggled such a large quantity of contrabands. If it were not for the search, the cargo would certainly have gone into the hands of communists and bandits, and the harm which will entail is more than that can be expressed in words . . . When communists and bandits get these supplies they would become as uncontrollable as tigers provided with wings.⁶¹⁶

It was further stated that the Netherlands vessel had not only defied international law, but had “dared to smuggle such a large quantity of revolvers and cartridges, hoping to make a profit out of it.” Because of this, even if it was true that the principal smugglers had

⁶¹⁴ 23 poo-koo revolvers with 1867 cartridges and 20 wooden cases, 32 Chiao Loh revolvers with 3740 cartridge and 30 cases, 2 cartridge feeding machines, 30 pistol handles, 36 cartridge holders in a secret hold along with 185 mauser pistols, 1 automatic pistol and 19522 cartridges from under water tank at the left beam. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 307.

⁶¹⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 307, 4 April 1929.

⁶¹⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 307.

escaped, Wong Tsen-Hsing felt the vessel that carried the cargo should be detained and that “even though the vessel has departed from this port, the company who control her naturally ought to be held responsible.”⁶¹⁷

The view of Dutch interests, as greedy, treacherous, and conniving by Shanghai’s Public Safety Bureau was a stereotype Dutch businesses repeatedly faced during the interwar period, and the JCJL was often at the mercy of local and international media to present them in a good light.⁶¹⁸ The Chinese press quickly saved the above smuggling incident from becoming more serious by issuing a decision three days later by the CMCS’s “Outdoor Staffs Club” that the arms seized onboard the SS “Oudekerk” originated from Germany and were put on board at Hamburg.⁶¹⁹ The need to avoid such controversies was amplified after the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and the fighting in Shanghai two years later when European worries over gun trafficking increased.⁶²⁰

Besides policing onboard spaces, from early on in the Communist uprisings the Dutch government saw JCJL ships as tools to help eliminate subversive agents from the NEI. Ultimately, shipping was used by the colonial administration as a method of managing undesirable colonial populations by forcibly deporting NEI residents on board

⁶¹⁷ Ibid.

⁶¹⁸ Consul General stated “I am therefore compelled to utter a protest against the manner in which the police have thought fit to act in this case. At the utmost the Customs might, in exceptional cases, request the Police to accompany them when visiting foreign ships, it being understood that the Consulate ought to be notified at once and preferably in advance, but the search can in no case be made by anybody but the Customs. On this point I am particularly instructed to insist.” NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 307, 4 April 1929.

⁶¹⁹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 307, 1 November 1929.

⁶²⁰ The British even considered an arms embargo against Japan in 1933 as a way “of registering Britain’s disapproval of the conflict as a whole and Japan’s actions in particular.” Christopher Thorne, “The Quest for Arms Embargoes: Failure in 1933,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, 5, no. 4 (1970): 132.

Dutch ships. In 1925, Batavia questioned the feasibility of deporting large numbers of Chinese colonial subjects to foreign ports such as Shanghai. Deportation seemed like the easy and most natural solution to the problem of eliminating people they saw as having an active hand in local unrest. Chinese were specially targeted “[o]n account of their spreading communist dogma, preaching rebellion against the legal authority, and publishing scandalous writings against the Governments of friendly powers.” Numbering “several hundred per year,” these expelled Chinese formed “a new category” that the Dutch saw as “less desirable elements for our colonies.”⁶²¹

This deportation plan was difficult for a number of reasons. It was easier for the Dutch authorities to justify deportation of Chinese residents born in China, who were stereotyped as having “no means of support, who sometimes ”committed petty crimes,” and often were “unable to present a landing card or have at their disposal a residence permit for the Netherlands East Indies.”⁶²² Chinese residents who were, on the other hand, born in the Netherlands East Indies were officially “Dutch subjects belonging to the population of the Netherlands East Indies” and legally more difficult to expel from the colony. Although more difficult to legally deport, the Dutch government tried to justify deportation by arguing Chinese residents born in the NEI who “actually wish to no longer have the Netherlands East Indies governing them. . . What then is more natural than helping them with their passage to China?”⁶²³

⁶²¹ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 298, 15 October 1925, Consul General of South China to Consul General of Shanghai.

⁶²² Ibid.

⁶²³ An alternate proposal to deportation was internment. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 298, 15 October 1925 Consul General of South China to Consul General of Shanghai.

The Consulate asked the personal opinion of the Commissioner of Police of the SMP in Shanghai as to the feasibility of such deportations. His response was less than enthusiastic, suggesting “under present conditions, such a proposal is most undesirable from a police point of view. Shanghai is at present a happy hunting ground for agitators and discontented politicians and men of this description and, in the present temper of the Chinese generally, the addition of others with grievances, real or imaginary, against foreign powers could only have a most baneful effect.”⁶²⁴ The Dutch responded by claiming to understand his standpoint of Shanghai being “a hotbed of difficulties among the Chinese themselves” and these difficulties leading to actions “against foreigners, so that the Police Authorities of both Settlements would prefer not to see them appear.”⁶²⁵

Despite the SMP’s resistance, Dutch authorities argued for Chinese deportation to Shanghai by reasoning that the police authorities would not have too much to worry about. The Dutch claimed that “passage to Shanghai does not strictly mean that the person in question is destined for the International or French Settlement” and further reasoned that communists would not necessary want to stay in Shanghai, but that “Shanghai is the most central place in China, from where other parts of the empire can best be reached . . . Clearly, the police can decide in regards to these future instances, to provide parties involved with passages to Tientsin [Tianjin], Hankow [Wuhan], Canton [Guangzhou] or another possible place in the area, where they feel at home or where their families are situated.”⁶²⁶ The Dutch administration felt they were doing these Chinese

⁶²⁴ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 298, 22 September 1925, Commissioner of Police of Shanghai Municipal Council to Netherlands Consul General Shanghai.

⁶²⁵ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 298.

⁶²⁶ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 298, 15 October 1925 Consul General of South China to Consul General of Shanghai.

deportees a favor by sending them to China because “it appears likely that the deported Chinese communists [would] want to have a [free] passage there.”⁶²⁷

The Dutch Head Consul in Hong Kong was less convinced of the feasibility of the scheme, although he did “understand very well the difficulties” that “concerned civil servants in Netherlands East Indies experience through undesirable Chinese elements there.” His major concern was that in a city like Shanghai,

Chinese will land there with bigger hopes than other places in China. It is not unlikely that people who by decent and language are properly at home in an entirely different region of China than the province of Kangsu, will quickly turn to the Dutch Consulate and the Shanghai or the Chinese authorities in order to have themselves returned to their homes. Already similar difficulties, which can lead to endless complications, *must* decrease.⁶²⁸

Although he benevolently argued “no Chinese can be sent to a place where he is not properly at home, “ the Head Consul was ultimately concerned that under “no circumstance can *I* wear the responsibility of complications, which can come about from redirection to Shanghai.”⁶²⁹ Internment also provided a major tool in dealing with “undesirable Chinese elements,” but deportation to foreign ports on JCJL ships continued to be the preferred method of “cleansing” the colonies of subversives.⁶³⁰

⁶²⁷ The Dutch also felt “the meaning of the exchange of internment with expulsion can thus not mean the departing person is immediately brought into disagreeable contact with the Chinese authorities.” *Ibid.*

⁶²⁸ Italics mine. He instead argued for internment stating “the best would be for them to be tentatively placed under surveillance in one house or another under or against a secure remuneration to execute some kind of work to do.” NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 298, 20 August 1925, Consul General Hong Kong to Hoofd van den Immigratiedienst Weltevreden.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁰ Even when deportation wasn’t an option, they sometimes still paid people to go elsewhere. For example, Chinese school teacher from Java Ho Sit Kioen 35 years old secretary of the vereeniging Soe Po Sia of Batavia. Article in China press says that Dutch government felt they couldn’t deport hi because he was born in Java, but they did give him money to go to another city and find a new position “Mr. Covey, defending, stated that his client was a teacher at a school which was closed by the authorities in Java,

Conclusion

In order to fully understand colonial surveillance and its importance to colonial regimes during the interwar years, historians must look beyond the nation-state to larger global systems of surveillance.⁶³¹ This chapter expands the scope of colonial intelligence to include maritime surveillance, which policed the threatening connective spaces linking nation-state, port city, and ship. By exploring how colonial surveillance worked across maritime networks and how the fluid mobility of seamen served to facilitate these networks, this chapter provides a more complicated history of anti-colonialism by removing anti-colonial struggles from the nation-state and inserting them into a transoceanic arena. As this chapter shows, the Netherlands were involved in collaborative surveillance projects in Asia during the interwar years, dismissing claims by historians that the Netherlands “did not dare to enter into intelligence activities outside Dutch territory” due to their neutrality.⁶³² Maritime-based intelligence reveals how extra-national events affected colonial surveillance projects and ultimately defined the struggles over Dutch colonial power in Asia.

The Dutch colonial policy towards the policing of Communism was an intense one, perhaps driven more by colonial paranoia and fear than by an actual threat. A large part of this paranoia was based on colonial insecurities arising from the 1926-7

because some of the students showed “Red” activities. That was the only way in which this teacher was implicated.” Chinese didn’t want him landing in Hong Kong, but he was only there to continue on to Canton, Chinese government need to know exact boat he departs on. NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 298, 27 October 1925.

⁶³¹ Martin Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder After 1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

⁶³² Bob de Graaff, “Hot Intelligence in the Tropics: Dutch Intelligence Operations in the Netherlands East Indies During the Second World War,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, 22, no. 4 (Oct., 1987): 564.

Communist uprisings in the NEI, when Dutch colonial residents questioned whether “it wasn't the native population's objective to chain Dutch authority to fear and weakness.”⁶³³ The discrepancy between the success of communist-based surveillance and repression within the NEI compared with the relative lack of it in foreign ports was based on the lack of colonial tools available to the Dutch abroad. In other lands, the Dutch often had to rely on foreign aid to obtain information, which could be unreliable.⁶³⁴ Despite the realities that communist infiltration into the NEI was based on colonial fears and paranoia rather than a real threat, the problematic mobility of seamen and the dangerous fluidity of global maritime networks continued to convince the colonial administration and the JCJL that anti-Western nationalism, including Communism, was a foreign rather than indigenous problem and maritime surveillance was seen as the key in protecting the contiguous space surrounding the NEI from such dangerous foreign influences.

⁶³³ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr.781, SMN Jaarverslag 1927.

⁶³⁴ Bickers suggests the racial division of labor within the SMP meant, “European residents refused to accept the services of Chinese detectives.” Bickers, “Who were the Shanghai Municipal Police,” 176.

Chapter 5

Ships as Colonial Classrooms: Race, Class, Gender and Transgression at Sea

The red-hot sunset, the smoking volcano, the blue sea and the cocoanut palm across the foreground appear in the tourist-bureau advertisements of Java but not always in the Archipelago of reality.⁶³⁵

In the mid-1920's, A.J. Barnouw, the Queen Wilhelmina Professor of Dutch History at Columbia University, wrote about his travels to the Netherlands East Indies stating "the charm of modern travel is in the search for contrasts, in the sight of scenes that are different from those that are familiar."⁶³⁶ He was one of the thousands that traveled aboard ships of the *Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland* during the interwar period. This shipping line, along with the *N.V. Rotterdamsche Lloyd*, carried passengers from the North Sea and Mediterranean through the Suez Canal and Indian Ocean stopping at port cities in Europe, Egypt, India, Singapore, and the Netherlands East Indies. From there, the *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij* carried passengers to their final destination ports throughout the Indonesian archipelago. Professor Barnouw's vision of modern travel as a search for something different or unfamiliar was true for many Europeans eager for new experiences or a temporary escape from their usual routines.⁶³⁷

Maritime transport as a leisure industry gained massive momentum during the 1920's and 30's and was increasingly available and attractive to larger segments of European society due to greater comfort on board, shorter traveling times, more

⁶³⁵ John C. van Dyke, *In Java and the Neighboring Islands of the Dutch East Indies* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), 66.

⁶³⁶ Adriaan J Barnouw, *A Trip Through the Dutch East Indies* (Gouda: Koch & Knuttel, 1925), 73.

⁶³⁷ See, for example, John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage Publications, 1990).

affordable fares, and extensive advertising campaigns. SMN alone saw the number of its passengers increase by over 400% between 1920 and 1940. With the surge of people able and willing to make maritime voyages, the SMN and RL increased their fleets with newly built and extremely luxurious passenger ships. Even before the start of World War I, these massive passenger ships were called “floating hotels.” In reality, international maritime travel during this period could be a very threatening and destabilizing environment for Europeans onboard. Ships contained a vibrant international population from around the globe, all occupying a confined space for weeks at a time. This mix of people and the fluid mobility encountered at sea made ships into potentially subversive spaces where European passengers were forced to define and perhaps redefine their own beliefs about race, class, religion, and gender.

In addition, European travelers were challenged during the many ports of call between Europe and the Netherlands East Indies, including Algiers, Port Said, Ceylon [Sri Lanka], and Belawan-Deli. Disembarking at these ports could lead European travelers to test their own colonial identities in real world situations. This was where many passengers intimately experienced empire for the first time: the first time they traveled to colonial territories, the first time they interacted with Middle Eastern and Asian populations, and the first time they saw themselves as active participants within a global empire. Studying passenger ships during the interwar period reveals not only the relationship between tourism and colonialism, but also the ways in which global maritime travel taught European tourists about proper imperial behavior.

SMN, RL and KPM liners were classrooms where both workers and passengers learned through hierarchy, segregation, routine, and etiquette the proper behavior that

was expected of them once they passed through the Suez Canal, seen as the physical and metaphorical border between East and West. Ships were highly regulated spaces both in terms of physical movement and social activity. Much effort was put into developing and maintaining rules and boundaries by shipping company administrators and crewmembers for the very reason that these boundaries could so easily be breached. What was at stake in this struggle between the implementation and transgression of boundaries was the very essence of imperial anxiety over racial mixing, sexual impropriety, and blurring of social status. It was assumed that if tourists learned how to maintain order through hierarchies, segregation, routines, and etiquette while on board, they could also uphold these divisions after arriving in the colonies.

The chapter is divided into three sections and begins by investigating the maritime colonial classrooms onboard SMN, RL, and KPM ships. During the voyage, European passengers learned three important lessons to help prepare them for colonial realities in the NEI. First, the shipping companies encouraged passengers to interact with indigenous crewmembers, allowing colonists to practice commanding and giving orders to colonial subjects. They would be expected to enact these modes of interaction once in the NEI. Second, colonists learned to view the many non-Europeans onboard ships as spectacle and entertainment. Fetishizing the “other” allowed Europeans to categorize non-Europeans using natural or biological categories rather than social or ideological ones, creating further mental and physical distance between themselves and the other.⁶³⁸ Third, Europeans learned to create racial and class solidarity with other European passengers onboard, aimed at formalizing a strong “European identity” that would protect

⁶³⁸ Abdul R. JanMohamed, “The Economy of Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference in Colonialist Literature,” *Critical Inquiry*, 12, no. 1, (Autumn, 1985): 67.

them from racial, class, and gender transgressions among colonial subjects once in the NEI. SMN, RL, and KPM regulated onboard spaces through routines, activities, and spatial differentiation to help passengers easily absorb these colonial lessons.

Next, the chapter explores the fluidity of maritime worlds and the transgression of race, class, and gender onboard ships. Identity and power negotiations experienced onboard encouraged many passengers to explore the possibility of physical and mental transgressions during the journey. Testing the limits of colonial boundaries and experimenting with personal reinvention inverted racial, class, and gender regulations imposed by shipping companies. Ships provided a fluid interlude between terrestrial stabilities, providing the freedom to upset land-based norms, while still guaranteeing a definitive “end” to such instabilities upon disembarking. Racial, class, and gender transgressions produced alternative forms of knowledge onboard and augmented the colonial classroom. Maritime boundaries were permeable, despite appearing rigid, because the liminality of maritime travel provided a sense of controlled chaos onboard. The guaranteed return to terrestrial stability when disembarking encouraged passengers to explore the hallowed, soft places hidden among colonialism’s hard edges.

Finally, the chapter follows European maritime tourists who disembarked from KPM ships at various NEI ports for day excursions to local sights of interest. Known as the “conducted tour,” these excursions created touristic fantasies in the minds of European passengers, allowing them to cultivate imagined tropes of “timeless India” and “exotic natives.” Indonesians also played into these imaginings by hiring themselves out as performers of “authentic” acts and makers of “traditional” souvenir items. Touristic fantasy became a way for European tourists to make sense of the colonial world around

them. Rather than acknowledge the increasingly threatening realities developing within the Netherlands East Indies, European tourists insulated themselves from colonial realities through the tourist gaze. Tourists presented another example of European colonial fantasies that kept them removed from rapidly changing realities in Southeast Asia. While other chapters have largely focused on imagined threats to Dutch hegemony, including the fears and paranoia that fueled colonial surveillance, the touristic fantasy presented in this chapter reflected the hopes and dreams of many European colonists who wanted to imagine an Indies impervious to modernity, technology, and change. Receding into a world of their own making added to the disparities between colonizer and colonized and may have contributed to the unrealistic expectation that the colony could pick up where it left off after World War II.

Maritime Colonial Classrooms

Dutch shipping companies prided themselves on three main comforts they provided passengers, “the catering, the personal service and the amusements of the passengers.” Food, service, and entertainment may have seemed like innocent markers of luxury in the eyes of passengers, but all three were used by SMN, RL, and KPM to teach passengers about colonial hierarchies and proper behavior. “Catering” at set mealtimes, the camaraderie of onboard entertainment, and a regimented daily schedule taught first and second-class European passengers a common identity through shared routines onboard. The “personal service” provided by Indonesian stewards and *baboes* (nannies) taught European passengers how to act towards colonial subjects and correctly assert their dominance within the colonial hierarchy. “Entertainment” taught passengers how to distance themselves from non-Europeans through the encouragement of captains and

officers to fetishize "the other" and make them into entertainment and spectacle. All three colonial lessons taught onboard maritime colonial classrooms were aimed at preparing European passengers for their proper roles once in the Netherlands East Indies.

Guidebooks helped prepare passengers for the lessons they were taught during the journey itself and SMN, RL, and KPM were not hesitant in promoting the colonial classrooms onboard their ships. The shipping company guidebooks were aimed at both first-time passengers and seasoned veterans by presenting booklets filled with artwork capturing the exotic beauty of port cities to be visited and the luxurious and entertaining spaces onboard. Along with descriptive text promoting the joy of taking one of their firm's liners, shipping company guidebooks framed the journey in a particular light and depicted what ought to be seen by passengers actually traveling to and within the colonies.⁶³⁹ For example, even as early as 1911, when the pleasure-cruise culture was still developing, SMN and RL's guidebooks distinguished the uniqueness of their ships compared with foreign lines. SMN and RL emphasized the cultural learning passengers would experience during the voyage:

[I]n the three or four weeks in which the boats of the Company "Nederland," or the "Rotterdam Lloyd," now accomplish the voyage from Genoa or Marseilles to Batavia, he will have a good opportunity of learning something about the Dutch and Malay languages, customs, and peculiarities. He will, little by little, get accustomed to the Dutch-Indian table, the division of the day, the customs with regard to dress, tropical siesta, the twice-a-day bath, the native servants, and the value and names of Dutch money. He will, perhaps, make agreeable acquaintances amongst the Dutch passengers, who will be able to give him valuable information and introductions, and, on his arrival, see that during the first few days he does not feel too strange and lonely in the entirely new surroundings of a tropical country.⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁹ Ellen Furlough, "Une Leçon des Choses: Tourism, Empire, and the Nation in Interwar France," *French Historical Studies*, 25, no. 3 (2002): 442.

⁶⁴⁰ Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij. *Guide through Netherlands India* (Amsterdam: J.H. de Bussy, 1911), 6-7.

The overall project was to inculcate passengers into routines and behaviors they were expected to embrace once they arrived in the NEI. For many passengers who had previously been to the NEI or originated there, this colonial learning served as a refresher after a stay in the Netherlands. For first-time passengers, this was a crash course on how to be a colonialist.

A fundamental aspect of education on board was the interaction between first and second-class passengers and Javanese crewmembers who comprised about two thirds of the total staff on board SMN and RL Liners.⁶⁴¹ Up to 165 Javanese men served as waiters and stewards, while a much smaller number of Javanese women served as *reisbaboes* (travel nannies).⁶⁴² The use of Javanese workers was a fact Dutch shippers prided themselves on, claiming they provided “quiet, obedient, unobtrusive” service. This fact was trumpeted in tourist brochures produced by the company during the 1920’s and 30’s. Often written as first-person travel memoirs, these tourist brochures flaunted the thorough and obedient service provided by these servants and usually included photos of the colorful and exotic uniforms worn by Javanese crewmembers.

The biggest selling point of using Javanese crews was that first and second-class passengers would be able to practice being masters over Southeast Asian servants, a skill they would need in the Netherlands East Indies. Javanese crewmembers came into very close personal contact with first and second-class passengers throughout the day and *reisbaboes* ate and sometimes slept with their charges housed in first and second-class cabins. Tourists could practice some Malay commands concerning food, childcare,

⁶⁴¹ The other one third consisted of Dutchmen who held more skilled positions and earned much higher salaries.

⁶⁴² Men hired exclusively from Java (with a strong geographic preference for Madura), worked as waiters in the dining salons and as cabin stewards. A much smaller number of Javanese women served as *reisbaboes* (travel nannies) for families with children onboard.

cleaning, and errands. In fact, SMN would sometimes add written lists of these commands into booklets given to passengers upon embarking, containing the rules and regulations of the ship along with passenger names.⁶⁴³ The opportunity to practice being European masters was what drew many tourists to travel with Dutch liners and was a vital aspect of how these ships served as colonial classrooms.

SMN and RL felt the “Malayan boys” were the most unique aspect of Dutch liners and “[a]s soon as one starts to think about the excellent personal service one receives on board the ‘Nederland’ steamers, the image crops up of the Malay boys or ‘djongos’ as they are called by the Dutch in the East Indies.”⁶⁴⁴ Another brochure touted the “Madurese table and cabin attendants (called djongos)” as a “typical special feature.”⁶⁴⁵ The SMN bragged of their crewmembers’ tidy appearance and “clean white uniforms with their smartly tied kerchiefs”⁶⁴⁶ while RL was “confident that our boys look neater than that of SMN in their striped costumes.”⁶⁴⁷ The appearance of the stewards would especially interest “those voyaging for the first time” due to their “dress and their strange coloured turbans, they are as picturesque as they are efficient and courteous.”⁶⁴⁸

Aside from their appearance, by far their most praised characteristic was the “courteous, efficient and unobtrusive” personal service they provided.⁶⁴⁹ Both SMN and RL sold their Indonesian staff as “attentive Oriental servants” who were “on the alert, early and late, to minister to every passenger’s slightest wish. Noiseless, quick, gentle

⁶⁴³ These names were used by passengers to plan their social engagements while onboard.

⁶⁴⁴ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 426.

⁶⁴⁵ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 422.

⁶⁴⁶ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 426.

⁶⁴⁷ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0668, 28 January 1938, RL to Ruys and Co. Den Haag.

⁶⁴⁸ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 422.

⁶⁴⁹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.01, 738, May 1933, MS “Dempo” and MS “Baloeran.”

and attentive these boys are one of the most useful and attractive features of the ‘Nederland’ liners.”⁶⁵⁰ Their “calm, understated manner” would be “greatly appreciated” by passengers.⁶⁵¹ These descriptions of Indonesian crewmembers painted a picture of the “perfect” colonial servant and “once served by them, the passenger remains satisfied and pleased throughout the whole trip.”⁶⁵² Passengers were for the most part impressed by “the quiet, quick service of those picturesque Javanese boys.” One passenger noted that “R.L. people are very lucky in that coterie of native boys aboard their ships: they are excellent servants-apart from lending gay colour to the daily scene.”⁶⁵³ Even language barriers were overlooked and one passenger felt “after a day or two, it mattered in the least that they could not understand a word we said to them. They seem to have a sort of sixth sense of one’s requirements: and one never has to repeat an order. Once they have grasped-which they do very quickly-your tastes and requirements, they ‘carry on’ unfailingly.”⁶⁵⁴

A much smaller number of Javanese women served as *reisbaboes* (travel nannies) to families with children onboard. Indonesian *baboes* traveled free if in the service of a family with two children under three years old or with three children under twelve years old and otherwise, they paid a discounted fare.⁶⁵⁵ Non-Indonesian nursery governesses, on the other hand, traveling with families in the first class but not related to their employers, paid second-class fare plus a modest supplement. These governesses were

⁶⁵⁰ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr.426

⁶⁵¹ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr.422-1930ish

⁶⁵² NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr.422-1930ish

⁶⁵³ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.01, 739, June 1934, “Lloyd Mail.”

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁵ That year the fare was \$120 from Europe to the Dutch East Indies. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 241, 1928-29 brochure printed in English, Dutch, German, French, and also an American version.

accommodated in the same cabin with the children under their care and had to take their meals at the children's table.⁶⁵⁶ *Baboe* accommodations depended on the ship. For example, on the MS "Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft" there were two separate *baboe* rooms (both on Deck D) along with other rooms of that class. Indonesian nannies were housed separately according to the class of their employers with one "first-class" room and the other "second-class."⁶⁵⁷ The newly built and very extravagant MS "Oranje" housed *baboes* in a space devoted to them at the back of the ship on the B deck. The number of *baboes* on board was miniscule compared with Indonesian stewards, for example where a ship housed 166 stewards onboard and only eight *baboes*.⁶⁵⁸ Despite these small numbers, one would never guess the small number *baboes* from shipping company advertising materials that were filled with photographs and artwork of *baboes* dressed in sarongs caring for neatly-frocked, white children clearly added to the "picturesque" vision of Dutch liners.

All this praise did not mean crewmembers could be left to their own devices and the shipping companies felt Indonesian crewmembers still needed European oversight. SMN reassured passengers that Indonesian stewards were "[l]ed by a large staff of Europeans"⁶⁵⁹ and RL said these crewmembers were "controlled by European stewards."⁶⁶⁰ Both companies reminded passengers that, ultimately, Indonesians always needed to be under the watch and guidance of European superiors. This was especially true when passengers lodged complaints against badly behaved stewards. Reliance on

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁷ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 402.

⁶⁵⁸ TRANSLATE Male Javanese crewmembers were housed in 2 hoog kooien in drie groote ruimten in het achterschip op dek E ondergebracht. NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 348 and NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 247.

⁶⁵⁹ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 426.

⁶⁶⁰ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.01, 738, May 1933, MS Dempo and MS Baloeran.

Indonesian servants to be docile and compliant made complaints over misbehaved stewards was an embarrassment for the shipping lines. For example, the staff onboard MS “Baloeran” traveling from Colombo to Southampton received a complaint stating the stewards were “definitely insubordinate—they were undisciplined, and inefficiently controlled.” Moreover, two passengers complained that in the lounge “was an absolute refusal by one of the boys to remove a tea tray when told to do so by a lady passenger” and on another occasion they “saw one clean a cup by moistening his finger, and polishing it with his hand.”⁶⁶¹

Another complaint made on the MS “Indrapoera” was made by a passenger who claimed one of the “boys” had fooled an elderly lady who spoke poor Malay, “much to the annoyance of other passengers present there, who understood everything.” The lady in question “had asked for fried eggs (mata sapi) and the boy had always said sapi mati (dead cow) again when serving her. The passengers present had understandably been made very angry.” The Captain spoke with the accused employee named Adji, a long time steward who was highly praised for his very good conduct. He said the pun was meant as a joke, and everyone sitting around the women had laughed except for the man who complained. The Captain reported the boy was “taken in hand” and told that in no case shall he laugh at passengers who, not knowing any better, are awkward in their Malay expressions. A repeat of the incident would be cause for dismissal.⁶⁶² Being made fun of by the stewards obviously hit a sensitive chord with some passengers, who were worried jokes were being made at their expense. Essentially, frustrations over

⁶⁶¹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, March 1936, Complaint by passenger FC Stewart on MS Baloeran from Colombo to Southampton.

⁶⁶² GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0674, 20 December 1932, SS MS????“Indrapoera.”

language problems could come down to not wanting to be left in the dark about what subordinates might be saying at the expense of European ignorance.

Of course, jokes were also played on Indonesian crewmembers by passengers who, at times, went so far as to tease crewmembers maliciously. The *Hofmeester* (head steward) aboard SS “Swartenhondt” during the late 1920’s was a young Chinese man and connoisseur of rare and expensive parrots, who was very willing to show these birds to interested passengers. Not only his parrots, but also the steward himself provided amusement for passengers and one European passenger decided to “tease him” by arranging

a little plot the day of my visit to his birds. Accordingly at luncheon time we had foretold the doom of the Chinese Republic, had prophesied the eventual overthrow of his country by Japan, and had talked disparagingly of his fellow countrymen—in fact, we had “pulled his leg” . . . It must have been hard for him to stand serving table without making a sign.⁶⁶³

The *Hofmeester* was able to take at least a small revenge later that evening when the same passenger went to visit his parrots. The *Hofmeester* spoke of the poor talking qualities of parrots and then told the European passenger that parrots and Europeans all speak the same!

Joking at the expense of Indonesian crewmembers was one way in which non-Europeans served as entertainment for European passengers and was part of their fetishization of the “other” on board. Passengers in the first and second classes were very aware of passengers in other classes and took an interest in exploring who these people were and how they behaved. European curiosity to view the “other” was in fact encouraged by the captain and officers onboard. This type of attitude also tells us

⁶⁶³ Walter B. Harris, *East for Pleasure: The Narrative of Eight Months’ Travel in Burma, Siam, the Netherlands East Indies and French Indo-China* (London: Edward Arnold and Co., 1929), 225.

something about other ways in which the ship became a site of vacationing. Passengers did not have to wait to see something of foreign cultures ashore, but could simply walk to the forecabin of the ship. In a sense, the ship, or at least the lower classes, became an exotic world in and of themselves, filled with strange manners of behavior, unusual smelling foods, and exotic forms of dress.

Interactions with Indonesian crewmembers onboard was one part of the colonial classroom, but European passengers also needed a way to categorize and understand their relationship to other non-Europeans who would be present once they disembarked in the NEI. Abdul JanMohamed explains that in fetishization of the other all “the evil characteristics and habits with which the colonialist endows the native are thereby not presented as the products of social and cultural difference but as characteristics inherent in the race-in the ‘blood’-of the native.”⁶⁶⁴ European passengers used fetishization of the “other” to essentialize race, class, religious, and gender differences and mentally distance themselves from non-European passengers in the lower classes. Fetishizing the “other” was practice for modes of interaction they would also be expected to enact in the NEI.

The third and (occasionally) fourth classes transported passengers from a large array of ethnic, racial, religious, and geographic backgrounds and the SMN, RL, and KPM used this diverse group as an opportunity to introduce European passengers to Asian multiculturalism in a way that could be harnessed to reinforce colonial norms.⁶⁶⁵ Unlike Indonesian stewards, lower-class non-Europeans were kept at a distance through the spatial segregation onboard and, therefore, were more susceptible to the colonial gaze of the higher classes. Passenger ships were spatially managed to make it difficult for

⁶⁶⁴ JanMohamed, “Economy of Manichean Allegory,” 67.

⁶⁶⁵ The fourth class often housed military personnel.

third and fourth-class passengers to traverse the divisions onboard easily. First and second-class passengers, on the other hand, had more access to explore various areas of the ship. Additionally, Europeans were personally invited by captains and officers to visits spaces where they could get a good look at the lower-class passengers. “Viewing” the lower classes became a popular entertainment for first and second-class passengers. Policies onboard created unequal structures of accessibility and colonial gazing in order to teach Europeans how to position themselves within multicultural colonial societies. Europeans were expected to uphold their colonial privilege by creating both physical and mental distance from the non-European “other.”

The fetishized “other “ served as entertainment and spectacle for European passengers and became part of holiday hedonism onboard the pleasure cruise. The colonial gaze of European passengers melded together the colonial “other” with landscapes of the tropics. For example, one passenger wrote about the siesta hour when the ship was

steaming over a sea like a mirror of pale blue and green and mauve glass, with turquoise sky overhead flaked with the flimsiest of clouds. Two or three miles away lies the jungle-covered shore, emerald green in the sunshine and purple in the shadows. There is no sound but the gentle thud of the steamer’s screw and the almost whispered monotonous song of a brown Javanese sailor in scanty white clothes who is supposed to be painting the ship’s rails.⁶⁶⁶

Collapsing together the gaze upon this worker with the gaze upon tropical seascapes denied the crewmember agency as anything other than a prop adding to the general landscape of this passenger’s sensory experience.

Unlike the Javanese stewards and *baboes* who personally interacted with passengers, other crewmembers, like the one just described, had limited interactions with

⁶⁶⁶ Dyke, *In Java*, 66.

passengers and were essentially seen as “silent” laborers. These silent workers became the fetishized other and the object of colonial gazing. The colonial gaze viewed these crewmembers as entertainment and spectacle and passengers were eager to observe them work for their own titillation. Some passengers commented on crewmembers and noted that their “cleanliness in cabin and table matters verges on the grotesque.” The grotesque created spectacle and the same passengers admitted they “seem to have a passion for polishing. Our womenfolk drew our attention to this and said it was ‘fascinating’ to sit and watch them at it.”⁶⁶⁷ Others would encourage workers to perform “physical stunts” for them. A common pastime onboard was to offer money to seamen in return for a “performance” of physical strength while docked in port. Passengers would throw a small coin into the water,

preferably silver, but copper will also do, and a Dutch or Indies dime is just as saleable as a pence or dollar. The closest Adam’s [dock workers] drifting about jump into the sea kick like frogmen, the feet above and the hands and eyes below, after the glistening coin; they always find it and return with it and speak of it triumphantly and hold it in their mouths.⁶⁶⁸

These men were admired for their physical prowess (however reminiscent of a trained seal) as long as it was in the service of passenger entertainment.

Other passengers preferred to gaze at the resting bodies of workers, which could be studied, projected upon, and used for the imaginative license of European passengers.

For example, late one night a passenger

looked down over the rail on to the lower deck. In the moonlight sailors lay sleeping, with nothing to cover their bodies but a strip of cloth around the loins. The hard wood seemed like a couch to them, so easily they slept, so gracefully. One lay on his back, his arms extended, his face upturned, his feet crossed at the ankles. His hair hung loosely on each side of his forehead. It seemed as if

⁶⁶⁷ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.01, 739, June 1934, “Lloyd Mail.”

⁶⁶⁸ Doedens and Mulder, *Oceaanreuzen*, 76.

someone had dismantled an old Italian crucifix and laid the ivory figure on the deck below me.⁶⁶⁹

The colonial gaze left European passengers feeling justified in using imaginative license to project their own desires onto the bodies of Non-Europeans. This colonial act of perceptual domination perpetuated the idea of a docile, simple workforce there for the entertainment of first and second-class European passengers.

Additionally, first and second-class passengers were invited by Dutch shipping companies to “view” lower class passengers in the third and fourth classes, advertising that “[w]hoever wishes to know something about the peculiarities of natives, and is fond of picturesque scenes, will not neglect to visit the forecastle, to inspect more closely the numerous types and costumes of the native, Chinese, Arab and other non-European passengers of the third and fourth class.”⁶⁷⁰ One passenger who took advantage of this opportunity described his viewing of the lower classes where

on the deck floor were the third-class passengers of which the Chinese and Arab women immediately screen off little apartments by hanging up nettings or mattings or sarongs; and behind this screen they camp down for the voyage, sleeping on the floor and eating with their fingers out of such pots and pans as come their way. Birds, chickens, pet rabbits, babies, half-grown children are all mixed together.⁶⁷¹

This example of fetishization of the “other” reveals the various subtexts of this passenger’s colonial gaze; racial differentiation, sexual titillation, lack of civility, questionable familial attachments, and poor hygiene. Yet, this scene was important enough to make it into his memories and obviously was a memorable experience, if for nothing else, helping him define himself in relation to the colonial “other.”

⁶⁶⁹ Harris, *East for Pleasure*, 206.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.16. ?

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.102. ?

Similar spectacles were visibly consumed by passengers when ships embarked from port cities where chaotic scenes were remembered by European passengers as a carnivalesque spectacle. For example, one passenger remarked

[w]hat a crowd there was on the quay; a few well-dressed European men and women, natives from many islands and of many colours, coolies struggling under heavy burdens, servants carrying great bunches of orchids and other flowers, parrots on perches and in cages, native “flappers” and well-dressed boys, sorrowing mothers and plucky sons—a mixture of light and shade, of laughter and stifled sobs, of waving hands and tear-wet handkerchiefs, with a band that played. . . . What a crowd, too, on board! . . . What “good-byes” and “God bless you”, what screaming of parrots, their nerves on edge; what whistling and shouting amongst the sailors . . . The women and the parrots and the orchids and the babies were sorted, and the native stewards ran hither and thither laden with packages and coats and Chinese umbrellas and birds in cages, till peace reigned once more on board.⁶⁷²

In this description, besides the few seemingly put together Europeans, all of the chaos and frenzy revolved around non-European passengers and crew. The need to restore “peace” after the feverish visuals at port was implemented through the spatial divisions on board, allowing Europeans to retreat to a white, rational, and ordered enclave onboard.

Fetishizing the “other” also raised the questions of what Europeans were in relation to the other. If Europeans were not the other, they were the “same,” but this concept needed to be unraveled to understand exactly what it meant in terms of their relationships with one another. First and second-class passengers had to construct this “sameness” during the journey through shared mental and physical routines and conventions. The colonial classroom taught European passengers how to construct a shared European identity, which was just as important as their ability to fetishize the “other.” Solidifying a shared European identity or “saming” the same was essential to creating distance between themselves and the other. It was also essential in creating a

⁶⁷² Harris, *East for Pleasure*, 267.

group of colonists with a strong enough identity to withstand any colonial “slippage” once in the NEI. The routines practiced during the voyage established a shared identity among first and second-class European passengers in relation to the colonial other.

The first way this shared identity was created was through spatial divisions between Europeans and the “other” through the use of classes onboard. Although Europeans were separated into two classes, the divisions between these classes were miniscule compared with how the first and second classes *together* were segregated almost completely from third and fourth-class passengers. Contrary to the belief that the first and second classes served to fragment Europeans onboard, the shared experience of segregation not from each other, but from the lower-classes onboard helped all Europeans see themselves as the same. For example, passengers stated there was “not the smallest difference in quality or quantity of amusement, whether you travel in the first or second class, except that in the former you get the foc’sle [forecastle] swimming pool as a pivot of noon-day attraction.” This passenger even wondered if in fact he “was not missing something by not being in the second class regions on one of their gala nights, as the festive air seems always so much more pronounced with them than with us [in the first class]: so much less self-conscious.”⁶⁷³

The similarities shared by the first and second classes far outweighed their differences. The first and second classes enjoyed intricately detailed marble and woodwork throughout lavish salons, music rooms, smoking lounges, swimming pools,

⁶⁷³ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.01, 741, December 1936, The Lloyd Mail (Published Monthly by the Passenger Department of the *Rotterdamsche Lloyd*).MOVE THIS EARLIER

promenade decks, nurseries, libraries, dining halls, and cabins.⁶⁷⁴ Although they had separate facilities, the first and second classes shared the same levels of the ship with first class towards the front and second class towards the back of the ship. Their cabins were often side-by-side and shared the same hallways. First-class *luxe hutten* (luxury cabins) all had private bathrooms and were located on the highest deck, while the second-class cabins had private sinks but no *en suite* baths or toilets and sometimes had bunk beds instead of singles. Although the two classes shared the same kitchen facilities, their menus varied considerably. First class was presented with *à la carte* menus where they could choose from a variety of dishes while the second class was served a set menu. It is clear that although there was some spatial segregation between the classes, there was also spatial overlap.

Third and fourth-class passengers were kept at a distance from the first and second-class passengers. The third class consisted of only a fraction of the berths on board. Their promenade deck, cabins, and dining room were all located at the back of the ship. Along with simple accommodations and little by the way of organized leisure activities, their meals were not gourmet and were served an hour earlier than the first and second class, which was considered less sophisticated. The fourth class occupied interior spaces at the front of the ship next to the crew's quarters and was either occupied by members of the Dutch colonial army or Asian and Middle Eastern travelers. Fourth-class passengers had to bring their own bedding with them on board and occasionally they were asked to help clean parts of the ship. Their meals were very simple, revolving around potatoes for Europeans and rice for non-Europeans. Neither third nor fourth-class

⁶⁷⁴ Complaints made about children leaving the doors open between the first and second class. GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675.

passengers were allowed to purchase liqueur, but wine, beer and lemonade were available for purchase at certain times.

Along with spatial differentiation, daily routines onboard helped to define European “sameness” and create a unified identity. Once the ship reached the Suez Canal, first and second-class passengers were encouraged to begin dressing in the manner they would once in the Netherlands East Indies. At daybreak, married passengers were to arrive on deck wearing the Indian *négligé*, consisting of sarongs and *kabajas* for both men and women. Single European women were required to instead wear white morning dresses in the European style and were discouraged from wearing sarongs altogether. Coffee or tea was served either on or below deck and after this either a saltwater bath or fresh water shower was taken. Morning clothes were then put on and breakfast was served in the dining rooms. Lunch offered the choice of European food or the “traditional” Indies *rijsttafel*. After lunch the sarong and *kabaja* were again worn for a nap lasting through the warmest part of the day to be taken on deck or below. One hour prior to sunset, “undress” was worn. This consisted of light flannel suits with stand up collars for the men and white morning dresses for both married and single women. A second bath was taken and formal dress was worn to view the sunset from the deck. Dinner was served at seven adding an air of elegance and allowing passengers to eat after viewing the sunset. Evenings were spent on deck enjoying the air except when in ports where malaria was a concern. Often, costume parties were arranged where passengers had the chance to dress up in the “oriental” fashion of their choice. The numerous ceremonies throughout the day involving dining, dressing, and bathing were shared by all first and second-class European passengers and helped create a unified European identity

onboard. These daily routines also prepared Europeans for similar routines they would have to perform once in the NEI, for many of the same reasons with which they were performed on the ship.⁶⁷⁵

Leisure activities also helped create European “camaraderie” onboard and solidified a unified European identity.⁶⁷⁶ The list of activities available onboard was immense and various amusements were arranged, from badminton and bridge tournaments, to swimming, concerts, and readings.⁶⁷⁷ Evening activities included cinema shows, dances every third night, a fancy dress ball, and the Captain’s Dinner, which one passenger noted being a “first-rate excuse for a subsequent ‘late night’.”⁶⁷⁸ Higher-class passengers were spoiled for choice and never lacked for something to do. The steady stream of social activities helped bring Europeans closer together and further solidify their “sameness.”

European identity onboard can also be elucidated by who was excluded from the group. Despite the NEI’s historical complexities around race, the realities onboard SMN and RL ships were that some Europeans had trouble seeing themselves in the same colonial category as Indo-Europeans. A few passengers complained, for instance, over an Indo-European woman causing arguments at their dining table claiming such behavior

⁶⁷⁵ After all, it was harder for third and fourth-class passengers to infiltrate the more luxurious areas of the ship, mainly due to their lack of appropriate dress.

⁶⁷⁶ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.01, 741, December 1936, “The Lloyd Mail.”

⁶⁷⁷ Other activities included deck tennis, table tennis, shuffleboard, shove ha’penny, physical jerks under an instructor’s guidance, quoits, swimming and subsequent sun-bathing, bridge drives, the race game (complete with bookies), dances about every third night, a fancy dress ball, captain’s dinner (deemed a “first-rate excuse for a subsequent ‘late night’”), cinema shows, and a children’s party. Ibid.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid. Also bridge, ping-pong, and table tennis competitions, swimming or lectures from a library of around 1300 books, costumed and masked balls and a traditional daily sweep-stake by guessing the number of miles traveled. Doedens and Mulder, *Oceaanreuzen*, 75.

“was always [the case] with [Netherlands] Indian people.”⁶⁷⁹ Another passenger was upset over “children from babies in arms upwards of every shade of color” and how these

half castes swarmed over every promenade deck and in every saloon. As is well known children brought up in the East by native servants are much less amenable to control than those who have lived in Europe and they are not very pleasant traveling companions if allowed to do what they like on board a full ship.⁶⁸⁰

Such colonial prejudices were not seriously entertained by SMN or RL because these people were Europeans under Dutch law, despite their skin color.

Categorizing other passengers was not as contentious and some were universally excluded from accessing the European identity formed onboard. Black passengers were banned from traveling in the first and second classes on SMN and RL ships and both companies found it “rather impossible to carry Negroes and white people on the same ship.”⁶⁸¹ For example, African-American banker, PhD, and former college president Richard R. Wright was refused passage along with his wife and adult son because they were black. Wright argued “the steamship company should accommodate American citizens irrespective of class, creed or colour, and if his application for accommodation is definitely turned down he has in mind submitting the facts to the United States Government as he is of the opinion they will intervene on his behalf.” Despite RL acknowledging Wright was “a Negro of high standing who travels regularly to and from the United States of America,” he and his family were never sold tickets.⁶⁸²

Even black servants traveling with their employers created controversy onboard. The black nanny of the Brickdal family stayed in first-class accommodations on the KPM

⁶⁷⁹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, 18 February 1936, MS Dempo.

⁶⁸⁰ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0674, 2 May 1933.

⁶⁸¹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 0978, 20 July 1939.

⁶⁸² GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 0978, 20 October 1939.

while caring for the family's two daughters. Therefore, she also ate with the girls in the first-class dining room. KPM immediately requested their agents in London

not book any colored people in the first class. This creates big difficulties especially on our smaller ships with fewer passenger accommodations. We cannot accommodate other huts where there is a colored passenger booked. Further, European passengers have no wish to sit at meals with a colored passenger.⁶⁸³

KPM spelled it out, “as a rule white people only travel in the first class.”⁶⁸⁴ Clearly some taboos were not ready to be broken during the interwar period and the admittance of black passengers into intimate European spaces onboard was one of them. Across-the-board denial of black passengers in higher classes of the Dutch liners also points to the fact that maritime colonial classrooms wanted the unified European identity being shaped onboard to reflect colonial norms surrounding race, class, religion, and gender.⁶⁸⁵

Commanding servants, fetishizing the “other,” and creating a unified European identity were three ways first and second-class European passengers created, enforced, and maintained European supremacy onboard SMN and RL ships. These tactics for managing colonial dynamics onboard passenger ships were based on European dominance over both colonial subjects and other non-Europeans. SMN found it “[n]o wonder then that at the end of each trip on our ships, the little clubs and societies, which it is the custom to form at sea, declare that the voyage has been a great success and that

⁶⁸³ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij en de Koninklijke Java China Paketvaart Lijnen (KPM / KJCPL), 1892-1973, nummer toegang 2.20.35, inventarisnummer 822.21, 22 August 1935.

⁶⁸⁴ NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 821.94, 13 June 1929.

⁶⁸⁵ Exclusion could also be based on the racialized concept of hygiene. For example, after second-class passengers Mrs. Heda Sakkap and baby and Mr. Syed Sagoff Alsagof embarked from Port Said, “there was a storm of indignation in the second class against these passengers due to the feelings of the majority of the passengers, who strongly objected to such dirty, unrefined fellow passengers.” GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, 31 March 1936, MS “Baloeran.”

they will not soon forget it.⁶⁸⁶ SMN, RL, and KPM also hoped that passengers would carry away the lessons learned onboard their colonial classrooms seen as fundamental to the continued success of Dutch empire.

Transgressions at Sea

The spatial and ideological boundaries that served to separate Europeans from others onboard were not steadfast due to the fluidity of identities while at sea. This fluid mobility caused a threat to maritime colonial classrooms onboard SMN, RL, and KPM ships. Ships were confined spaces where proximity to the “other” could also lead to colonial confusion and transgressions onboard grew out of negotiations over colonial identity at sea. The efforts of the colonial classroom to define and re-define boundaries between colonizer and colonized were transposed with the cultural perception that “a Dutch essence was so fragile that it could unwittingly transform into something Javanese.”⁶⁸⁷ The juxtaposition of rigidity between Europeans and non-Europeans with the fluidity of European identity manifested itself onboard Dutch passenger ships through transgression of the colonial classroom’s fundamental order described in the previous section.

Race, class, and gender transgressions onboard were shaped by fantasy and seduction. Danilyn Rutherford describes how the threat of proximity between Europeans and colonial subjects led to contentious relationships between the two through a “fantasy

⁶⁸⁶ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 422.

⁶⁸⁷ Ann Stoler, “Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 34, no. 3 (1992): 536.

of familiarity.”⁶⁸⁸ This “fantasy of familiarity” was a vibrant part of European maritime experience and allowed European passengers to explore both the mental and physical transgressive opportunities onboard. These transgressive opportunities also seduced European passengers, who saw the relative safety of the ship as a chance for them to subvert colonial norms within set temporal and spatial boundaries. The “threat of seduction,” as Susie Protschky mentions, was “omnipresent, subtle and relentless, and required constant vigilance,” but realities of maritime existence also allowed these threats momentary laxity in the minds of European passengers.⁶⁸⁹

European women acted out modern cosmopolitan sensibilities onboard passengers ships, often gaining the displeasure of more conservative passengers and European crewmembers who worried about lax feminine behaviors. In 1934, RL received a complaint over women smokers stating “[i]n these days women smoke like chimneys. There was, of course, a smoking-room [onboard], but very few of the women sat there. The drawing-room or lounge, forward of the smoking-room had a label over the door ‘No Smoking.’ Yet all the women smoked and made the atmosphere as thick as that of a tap-room.”⁶⁹⁰ Seeing women’s behavior as reflective of a masculine domain such as the “tap-room” pointed not just to the act of smoking, but also to the fact that this behavior represented a transgression of permissible gender roles. While such complaints reflected adherence to colonial gender norms, some women on board expressed a cosmopolitan feminist sensibility.

⁶⁸⁸ Danilyn Rutherford, “Sympathy, State Building, and the Experience of Empire,” *Cultural Anthropology*, 24, no. 1 (2009): 9.

⁶⁸⁹ Susie Protschky, “Seductive Landscapes: Gender, Race and European Representations of Nature in the Dutch East Indies in the Late Colonial Period,” *Gender & History*, 20, no. 2 (August 2008): 388.

⁶⁹⁰ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0674, 12 May 1934, MS “Sibajak.”

Challenges to colonial gender norms on Dutch ships were common among European women passengers who, especially when traveling as “unaccompanied ladies,” saw themselves for the most part as self-reliant travelers able to do as they pleased. For example, Mrs. Charles, who was traveling with her two daughters, caused “much trouble” for the captain and officers of the MS “Dempo” not only through her arguments with other “unaccompanied ladies” traveling, but also because she disregarded the ship’s class hierarchies. Mrs. Charles had repeatedly brought a group of “eight young people from the third class” into the first class common areas “against the instruction” of European crewmembers. She proceeded to host parties on the first-class decks for the lower-class passengers, complete with two “rotating gramophones interspersed with [live] banjos and mandolins. Complaints were not long in coming” and finally “hard words [from the Captain] were necessary to maintain order.”⁶⁹¹ This woman felt comfortable enough to repeatedly transgress class segregation for her own enjoyment.

Other women passengers transgressed racial segregations onboard. In 1933, two American first-class passengers, Miss Wilcox, aged 20, and Miss Shingle, aged 23, traveled onboard the MS “Dempo” where they “caused some severe burden and forced [RL’s European crewmembers] to act.” The women had “drawn general attention to themselves by not coming out of their cabin for days in succession.” The European crew thought they might “feel strange” due to their young age and tried to introduce them to others and make them feel more comfortable. They even sent a written card offering their services to the women but were met “without any cooperation on [the women’s] part.” Later in the journey, both women were discovered to have had “a sort of bacchanal” in the cabin of fellow passenger the Sultan Ibrahim of Johor Malaysia, also

⁶⁹¹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, 3 September 1935, MS “Dempo.”

traveling in the first class. Despite the Sultan having previously threatened to “shoot all Europeans who ventured to come near his apartments” (at which time the Captain removed the steward and all cabin inspections from that area of the ship), the two young women easily made their way there for a party.⁶⁹² In response, the women were now “called to order” by European officers and as “they had [previously] refused to take their meals in the dining room, despite gentle encouragement,” after the transgression with the Sultan, they now had to show themselves in public at meals.⁶⁹³ The behavior of these women was shocking to European crewmembers for their audacity at not only refusing their aid, but in their ease of participating in good time shenanigans with the Sultan.

Policies on ships over racial, class, and gender transgressions are most clearly seen in the ongoing debates over European women’s attire onboard. The increasingly casual wear worn by both men and women reflected the concept of vacationing within European culture as well as the physical activities increasingly participated in during the ship’s passage.⁶⁹⁴ Although men’s attire was also the subject of scrutiny (for example onboard the MS “Baloeran” where complaints arose over so many men wearing shorts), debates over women’s attire represented larger concerns over gender and sexuality while onboard.⁶⁹⁵ The companies received complaints over “the very light clothing of the ladies in the second class” while others complained over the “breezy sportswear of the women.”⁶⁹⁶ Such complaints revealed discomfort with the flimsy transparency of both the clothing itself and these women’s sexual morals. Not only were some women “walking around in pajamas on deck, but [they] also stayed in the lounges in some less

⁶⁹² GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0674, November 1931.

⁶⁹³ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0674, 22 May 1933, MS “Dempo.”

⁶⁹⁴ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0674, July 1934.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁶ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, 28 Juli 1935, MS “Dempo.”

than decent sportswear,”⁶⁹⁷ hinting that all sense of propriety was blatantly flaunted by these “indecently” dressed European women.

The way shipping company administrators and European crewmembers dealt with such women reveals how inappropriate clothing and the lax sexual and gender norms they represented connected to colonial fears of predatory indigenous sexuality and miscegenation. In 1936, Edna Van Etten-Slauson’s daughter and her companion Miss Suppen were called into the Captain’s cabin and asked “that they refrain from wearing shorts in the dining-room.” The mother, Edna Van Etten-Slauson felt “if one was decently clothed, and behaved in a proper manner, it was not within the province of a ship’s master to dictate as to what clothes could be worn and what could not. There were no rules as to how low a dinner gown could be cut, and none in regard to how high a dress might be lifted over crossed knees.” “After all,” she continued, “they are permitted on the Dollar Line, the Italian Line and on English and German boats.” Therefore, the younger Van Etten-Slauson saw no reason for the rule about shorts and, after receiving her mother’s support in the matter, the daughter again entered the dining room in shorts where “the Captain took hold of her and attempted to stop her forcibly.”

The Captain later met with Edna Van Etten-Slauson and used colonial rhetoric invoking indigenous sexual danger to try and sway her. The captain explained “it was because of the Javanese boys that he objected, “ but Mrs. Van Etten-Slauson told him “that seemed foolish since the Javanese saw them in shorts on deck all the time.” She felt the sexuality of indigenous crewmembers had nothing to do with the behavior of women onboard and “the only thing that should concern him was the behavior of [her] daughter and Miss Suppen, and [she] would answer for that.” Van Etten-Slauson later noted in an

⁶⁹⁷ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, 14 August 1935, MS “Baloeran.”

official complaint to the RL that all three women had “never received a disrespectful look or word from the Javanese boys. As samples of gentlemen, I prefer them to the Captain.” Instead of giving into the Captain’s demands to stop wearing shorts, the women chose to eat their lunch in their room for the remainder of the trip.”⁶⁹⁸ Although the Captain relied on a colonial truism over the sexual depravity of indigenous male sexuality endangering European women, these European women questioned that reasoning and found it unwarranted, instead blaming the outdated gender prejudices of the Captain himself.

Shipping companies and their European crewmembers overwhelmingly adhered to the colonial rhetoric of indigenous sexual depravity and its threat to European women, despite the fact that cosmopolitan women passengers themselves were not convinced.⁶⁹⁹ This was especially apparent in the shipping policies concerning European women traveling as passengers in the racially mixed third class. Third-class European women passengers could easily be upgraded to second-class accommodation and it was the general policy on SMN, RL, and KPM ships that “[i]f on a particular stretch third-class [European] female passengers become overcrowded and on the same stretch or part thereof one or more second-class cabins are available, the female passengers in question may, in so far that they are willing, be accommodated in these cabins. Hereby, European women take precedence.”⁷⁰⁰ Another tactic for removing European women from the dangerous environs of the third class was to hire them as nannies for first and second-

⁶⁹⁸ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, December 1936, MS “Kota Agoeng,” Complaint from Edna Van Etten-Slauson.

⁶⁹⁹ Another example of dismissing the authority of European crewmembers was a passenger onboard SS “Baloeran” in 1939 whose money was stolen from their second-class cabin. The European passenger declared it was. “[p]robably not the cabin boy, but maybe someone from the European crew.” GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, 12 June 1939, SS “Baloeran.”

⁷⁰⁰ NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 733.11, 30 August 1926.

class passengers. In 1931, Mrs. Sandkuyl, the wife of a Batavian politician traveling with two children ages 5 and 13, realized the one nanny she already had was “so busy doing washing, cleaning, etc, that she asked the captain to help her find a woman from the 2nd or 3rd class who could be hired to look after the children.” The crew found Mrs. Kastelein from the third class who was paid *f*90 and like other nannies, was lodged with the children in the higher class.⁷⁰¹ Protecting European women from the dangerous sexual and racial fluidity within the third class was a priority for shipping companies in preventing destabilizing transgressions not only of the atmosphere onboard, but also of colonial sexual and racial norms in general.⁷⁰²

Despite the rhetoric over sexual transgressions between indigenous men and European women, European men overwhelmingly committed sexual transgressions against European women onboard. The male gaze was easily focused on European women rather than the colonial other since European women shared the same first and second-class spaces. Of course, European men in the NEI had historically been expected to have sexual interactions with non-European women to some degree, but by the interwar period, this was largely spoken of in hushed voices. For example, a shipping company tourist brochure spoke furtively about the sexual services offered ashore at Port Said, recommending “[o]n the whole it is wise to be careful of proffered services; they are often not the services one is afterwards glad to have engaged.”⁷⁰³ Sexual appreciation of European women, on the other hand, was increasingly acceptable in the new

⁷⁰¹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0674, November 1931, MS “Dempo.”

⁷⁰² The shipping companies hoped another way for third-class European passengers to segregate themselves from non-Europeans would be to offer two menus, class 3A with European food and 3B with Asian food. The most stringent method of control was established in 1934, with minimum salary requirements for government workers traveling within each class.

⁷⁰³ NL-HaNA, SMN, 2.20.23, inv.nr. 242.

vacationing atmosphere of healthy and active bodies on display. One passenger remembered his favorite place onboard was the sun deck where came “a devastatingly lovely Parisian lady in an almost-swim suit, to do her daily couple of dozen of highly advanced physical exercises, of a nature that few of us could compete with--though as many males as were in favour of course tried, under her able and perfumed tuition. Great moments!”⁷⁰⁴ Unlike the shameful spaces of European/indigenous sexual encounters, the male gaze on European women was indulged in many tourist memoirs.

Alcohol was the missing ingredient needed for the European male’s sexual gaze over European women to translate into physical acts of sexual impropriety. Rather than indigenous lower-class passengers and crewmembers, inebriated European men were the real sexual predators onboard ships and drunkenness and sexual transgression seemed to go hand in hand. For example, in 1932 the passenger B. Nichting had to be subdued not once, but twice after getting drunk and “a tap ban was imposed [on him], especially since he on some occasions had adopted a threatening attitude towards the ladies.”⁷⁰⁵ In 1936, Lord Beauchamp was aboard with his secretary and his valet, all three traveling in the first class onboard MS “Baloeran.”⁷⁰⁶ The valet was considered “a questionable type” and several women complained about his unwarranted advances in the salon including inappropriately asking them to dance. The Captain “advised them to thank him [and politely refuse] when they were asked by him to dance.”⁷⁰⁷ Other men propositioned the *baboes* onboard. Mr. P.L.F. Bruning had embarked with the MS “Dempo” in Lisbon and boarded at the last minute “in a drunken state.” Bruning proceeded to the second-class

⁷⁰⁴ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.01, 741, December 1936, The Lloyd Mail.

⁷⁰⁵ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0674, May 1932, MS “Sibajak.”

⁷⁰⁶ Lord Beauchamp was former Governor of Australia and British liberal politician who had left office under accusations of homosexuality.

⁷⁰⁷ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, 31 March 1936, MS “Baloeran.”

nursery where he sat and tried some of the children's lemonade and he then wished to have a glass of port with the two *baboes* working in the nursery before being threatened by stewards either to retire to bed or have an official complaint lodged against him.⁷⁰⁸

Two British passengers in the second class of the MS "Sibajak" were suspected of getting involved in an "incident of a less agreeable nature" in 1935. After a large surprise party with lots of drinking, first-class passenger Mr. Richard returned to his cabin to find "almost all the buttons had been cut off" of his daily trousers. The two Britons were known to hold "particular interest for two American girls in the first class" and whether to the show off for their potential romantic interests or as revenge on the first-class privilege that excluded them from romantic consideration, these actions served as a drunken damper on the usual "good relationship between the first and second classes."⁷⁰⁹

The shipping companies set up a "black list" of passengers they considered unsuitable for future transport to deal with the most serious offenders to sexual propriety onboard. One such passenger was an American accountant named F.J. Farrington who traveled first class on board RL's MS "Baloeran." Farrington was described as "a notorious type, constantly drunk who accosted every woman directly with indecent proposals." He was also accused of "nearly burning down the first-class salon in one of his drunken states" and the RL felt they had to "keep this gentlemen continuously under control." The final straw seemed to be one evening when Farrington "called the cabin boy, and gave him one pound with the command to get a wife for him, '*n'importe qui*'." He was added to the RL's "black list" so the company could "thus free ourselves from

⁷⁰⁸ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0674, 4 May 1933, MS "Dempo."

⁷⁰⁹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, 24 december 1935, MS "Sibajak."

such a dangerous passenger.”⁷¹⁰ The most dangerous characteristics of this passenger was his willing transgressions of sexual norms and being a sexual predator towards European women passengers.

While shipping company brochures privileged the male, heterosexual gaze through descriptions and imagery of half-naked, exoticized “natives,” realities onboard SMN, RL, and KPM ships were more complicated.⁷¹¹ Passenger ships were spaces where a collision of gendered behaviors from both the colony and metropole played out. Women often expressed a “modern” sense of gendered behavior while onboard that were independent of colonial gender proscriptions. European crewmembers, meanwhile, continued to use colonial rhetoric to enforce the protection of European women against the predatory sexuality of non-Europeans, including the need to move third-class European women passengers to the less racially mixed first and second classes. In fact, European men, usually under the influence of alcohol, were overwhelmingly the only male passengers who actually transgressed sexual norms by “insulting” European women onboard. This divide between rhetoric surrounding women--that they required protection against non-European sexual predators--and the actual realities surrounding women--they successfully exercised metropolitan modernities onboard--only infringed upon by inebriated European men) point to ways colonial rhetoric over gender and sexuality was reconfigured through transgressions at sea.

Along with gender and sexuality, transgressions of racial and class hierarchies were ways the colonial classroom was inverted. Some European passengers chose to re-imagine their position within racial and class hierarchies at sea in order to explore where

⁷¹⁰ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, S0675, 12 september 1935, MS “Baloeran.”

⁷¹¹ Annette Pritchard and Nigel J. Morgan, “Privileging the Male Gaze: Gendered Tourism Landscapes,” *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27, no. 4 (2000): 885.

these lapses in colonial control would lead them. C.K. Elout, a correspondent of Amsterdam-based newspaper *Het Algemeen Handelsblad*, traveled to the Netherlands East Indies in 1929 and instead of the usual larger steamers, opted for a spot on the RL cargo ship SS “Rondo.”⁷¹² Elout felt the first-class accommodations onboard this ship equaled the second class on board passenger liners, the key differences being the lack of extra luxuries and fewer activities.⁷¹³ Elout purposefully chose to travel with a smaller and less luxurious ship in order to forgo the drama and intrigue one found on passenger liners, which made it possible for him to meet more of the crew and lower-class passengers.⁷¹⁴

European passengers sometimes developed significant attachments with members of the lower classes as well as crewmembers, especially onboard smaller ships such as RL and SMN cargo liners and KPM ships in Southeast Asia. G.E.P. Collins, a doctor visiting the Netherlands East Indies, traveled on KPM’s smaller steamers and during his voyage “had come to know the whole crew of the Mula Mulai by sight. Besides Haji Badong, Bacho, and Sakka, there were six others.”⁷¹⁵ Collins was very intimate with the crew’s sleeping arrangements and was able to observe crewmembers praying before meals. He also knew what types of food they ate, including “unpolished” rice, and was able to spot a new member of the crew immediately. Acknowledging indigenous

⁷¹² He paid *f*685 instead of the comparative *f*835 for second class and *f*1220 for first class on the passenger mail ships.

⁷¹³ There were no private cabins and some cabins in the back of the ship were extremely hot and poorly ventilated. There was no music room, nursery, or deck promenade, but for Elout, this simply meant he needed less clothing. The activities on board consisted of reading, talking, table tennis (if not in the tropical zone), playing cards, chess, listening to the gramophone or listening to the captain’s radio to both European and Indonesian broadcasts.

⁷¹⁴ C.K. Elout, *De Grootte Oost, Reisbrieven* (Den Haag: N.V. Boekhandel v/h W.P. Van Stockum & Zoon, 1930), 1-6.

⁷¹⁵ G.E.P. Collins, *East Monsoon* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1937), 27.

crewmembers as individuals was a result of maritime transgression of colonial racial hierarchies.

For European travelers such as Collins, simply acknowledging and sometimes even befriending passengers and crewmembers at sea also enabled transgression of class hierarchies. John van Dyke also traveled on KPM through the NEI and started his explorations with the lowest spatial area of the boat where coolies worked in the machine rooms, noting how everyone “swears at him or about him, calls him lazy, dishonest, worthless; but so far as I can make out he is almost the only one who does any work.”⁷¹⁶ The second-class passengers included “Chinese and Arab traders, who have made some money” and were well dressed and “philosophical” in their behavior. The first-class passengers were “made up entirely of Dutch commercial agents, with something to buy or sell in their kits.” Van Dyke noted that the European officers would mix with the first-class passengers when not on duty. Neither “the second or third-class makes much noise. It is the first-class that grinds the high-powered phonograph and dances and whoops half the night through.”⁷¹⁷ Van Dyke was able to reevaluate colonial racial and class hierarchies by transgressing colonial prejudices and replacing them with personal observations of life onboard.

Other European passengers created a visceral connection to fellow indigenous passengers by creating a “fantasy of familiarity” rather than seeing them as the “other.” For example, one European passenger took a great interest in a “young native of Gorontalo,” discovering through conversations with him that the young man spoke six languages and was soon to leave for university in the Netherlands to study scientific

⁷¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 104.

agriculture in order to manage his father's estates. When the young man disembarked, the European noted in great detail over the reunion of the youth with his mother waiting on shore, including the color of her sarong, and suddenly fantasized how nice it would be to also have a "stout, brown mother in a printed 'sarong' and a loose white jacket, with bare feet and wooden pattens!"⁷¹⁸ Although the young man's superior education, status as a future property owner, and connection to the Netherlands may have made it easier for a European to see similarities between himself and the young man, this European passenger was willing to imagine an overlapping racial and ethnic background as well. One's own European identity could at moments be lost though such fantasies of one's self as the "other" made possible through the fluid mobility experienced through maritime travel.

The same European passenger later observed a shabbily dressed Chinese boy on a school fieldtrip crying alone in a corner of the deck who he assumed had "failed to pass some trivial examination at school and was disconsolate." The man immediately wished to console the young man after remembering his own failed attempts at Cambridge. The imagined similarities between himself and the boy served as "one of the constant reminders to the traveler that all the world—black, yellow, or white—is very near akin in joy or in sorrow."⁷¹⁹ The way this European passenger found commonality between himself and the boy speaks of his increasing need to make mental connections with those around him as he spends more time on board. This passenger's mental development from viewing the "other" to feeling the need to connect with those around him shows the ways

⁷¹⁸ Harris, *East for Pleasure*, 205.

⁷¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 205.

in which the fluidity of maritime travel could alter the mental horizons of European passengers.

Other European passengers also transgressed racial and class segregation onboard by conversing with Indonesians and imagining themselves living as Indonesians. Johan Wøller, a Danish doctor, compared himself with an “old Javanese coolie” he conversed with onboard, feeling himself

not as rich as a Javanese who has a house and a bit of sawah. I earn a lot of money, several thousand gulden every month, it is true, but what becomes of it? The Government takes nearly a third in taxes, so that you may have schools and hospitals and railways and police . . . To the Chinese who owns my house I have to pay four hundred gulden, and to my servants two hundred and fifty gulden every month. And for everything I buy, my food and my clothes, I have to pay three or four times too dearly, because everyone supposes I am rich. I have to keep two expensive cars because I should be of no use without them. I have to work far harder than any of you Javanese; I have to jump to it every time the telephone rings and drive out almost every night when you are asleep. And would the Tuan change with a poor man like me? . . . I often long for the simple life which you lead, without servants—or shall we say with one servant—and without cars or telephones; and perhaps I will end my days in a Javanese kampong [village].⁷²⁰

Through contact with others on board, Wøller was able to reevaluate his own life and picture living life as a Javanese worker. Although patronizing and self-indulgent, he was able to use a “fantasy of familiarity” to momentarily picture another life for himself as a colonial subject. Not only that, he also toyed with the idea of colonial subjects’ lives being superior to that of a European colonizer.

Even very privileged passengers took advantage of maritime fluidity to pursue transgressions of race and class. In 1932, the Belgian Crown Prince Leopold and his wife Princess Astrid traveled onboard JCJL’s SS “Marnix van Saint Aldegonde,” under the aliases Van Graaf en Gravin de Rethy. Lodged in a *luxe hut* (luxury cabin), the

⁷²⁰ Johan Wøller, *Zest for Life: Recollections of a Philosophic Traveller*, trans. Claude Napier. (London: L. Dickson, 1936), 227.

passengers and officers were surprised at the charm and honesty of the couple, who both participated actively in the daily life of the ship. They attended the dances frequented by both first and second-class passengers and “danced without discrimination with all passengers.” They also competed on a daily basis in the various competitions on the sports deck. During the masquerade ball on the ship’s final night, the Prince and Princess went to the second class specifically to “make friends” and also visited the second-class nursery.⁷²¹ Later that night, Princess Astrid won first prize for her masquerade costume, a “traditional” Malaysian woman.⁷²²

Princess Astrid’s exploration of “becoming” a native woman through her masquerade costume reveals the freedom passengers felt to make themselves into the “other” while at sea. Whereas terrestrial proscriptions would force the Prince and Princess to maintain distance between themselves and average second-class travelers, especially during social intercourse, maritime fluidity changed these boundaries and blurred definitions of race, class, and gender. Even this royal couple transgressed race, class, and gender while on at sea due to the fluid mobility of maritime travel.

Conducted Tours through the Moluccas

KPM developed the “conducted tour” as an offering for tourists to combine a cruise through the Netherlands East Indies, with day excursions ashore at the “most valuable” sites of Sumatra, Bali, and Java. The shipping company expected these satisfied tourists would do “more for advertising than sending thousands of dollars in the way of advertising by means of periodicals, magazines, etc.”⁷²³ In order to guarantee satisfied tourists, the KPM had to

⁷²¹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.05, 0899.

⁷²² NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 822.14, 1 February 1932.

⁷²³ NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 821.94, 4 April 1923.

present them with exotic titillation tempered by a “timeless Indies” and a sense of authenticity balanced with a sense of security. The tourists who went on these conducted tours had to negotiate an array of conflicting meanings behind what they saw in the NEI. Tourism was highly manipulated, relying on technological systems to help create “timeless” images for the tourist gaze. Actors had to be hired to recreate “traditional” dances, artisans had to be found who could produce “handmade” souvenirs, and locations needed to be found where reminders of contemporary realities could be hidden. Tourists who went on these conducted tours had to negotiate an array of conflicting desires over what they hoped to witness in the NEI and disparate meanings behind what they actually saw while on tour.

Tourism was based on a few sets of contradictory characteristics. On the one hand, tourism played upon colonial nostalgia for *tempo doeloe* or the colonial “good old days” and promised temporal manipulation to make tourists feel as if they were suspended in an idealized “time past.” The colonial tourist industry fueled “desires for colonial travel with its promises of viewing ‘timeless’ peoples and landscapes.”⁷²⁴

Tourist brochures stressed the natural purity of the archipelago, especially the island of Bali, which was promoted as being “still unspoiled.”⁷²⁵ On the other hand, tourists also wanted to be titillated by “native performances” providing them with a rush of fear, excitement, and danger. Ellen Furlough suggests the entire point of traveling during the interwar years was “to stimulate the senses through encounters with ‘exotic’ cultures (otherwise, why travel?).”⁷²⁶ This touristic quest for sensory stimulation may have also been encouraged by changing self-perceptions of Europeans who increasingly referred to

⁷²⁴ Furlough, “Une Leçon des Choses,” 444.

⁷²⁵ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.01, 736, February 1932.

⁷²⁶ Furlough, “Une Leçon des Choses,” 444.

themselves during the 1920's and 30's as "gypsies who could abandon all rules and directions" and who were, therefore, particularly keen on exoticized thrills.⁷²⁷

Experiencing the "timeless Indies" and the "exotic native" were only possible when such displays were accompanied by a sense of security against genuine threats caused by foreign landscapes and people. This sense of security allowed tourists to view colonial destinations as "exotic yet safe and culturally comfortable."⁷²⁸ The Dutch colonial government helped instill this sense of security by projecting an omnipotent control over the NEI and tourist brochures applauded the Dutch ability to conduct the business of empire successfully—yet always "in such a way as not to interfere with the natural attractions of the scenery, the primitive customs of the natives, and the exercise of their ancient rites and ceremonies."⁷²⁹ Additionally, the tourist industry "shed any mention of these destinations as part of the nation" and therefore removed tourist destinations from any connections to contemporary political, economic, or cultural upheavals.⁷³⁰ Along with state oversight and intentional geographic depolitization by the tourist industry, European tourists relied on their position within the colonial hierarchy and superiority over indigenous people to ensure a secure position over potentially threatening tourist encounters.⁷³¹

In addition to safety, tourists wanted to experience an authentic tourist experience, meaning the rituals, festivals, attire, and handicrafts they were experiencing were "made or enacted by local people according to tradition" and encapsulated "traditional culture

⁷²⁷ Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 59.

⁷²⁸ Furlough, "Une Leçon des Choses," 445.

⁷²⁹ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.01, 736, February 1932.

⁷³⁰ Furlough, "Une Leçon des Choses," 445.

⁷³¹ Furlough, "Une Leçon des Choses," 463.

and origin, and a sense of the genuine.”⁷³² In reality, “staged authenticity,” to use Dean MacCannell’s term, almost always provided tourists with an ambiguous “performance” of indigenous traditions and culture.⁷³³ While tourists were just as satisfied simply *believing* they were experiencing something authentic, such belief in the genuineness of “staged authenticity” also managed to “limit the effect of the all-seeing eye” of the tourist gaze over indigenous people and landscapes.⁷³⁴ Considering that tourism constituted “a relationship of power, with the tourist more or less consciously exercising dominance over the object of her or his gaze,” authenticity provided one arena for indigenous agency and dominance over Europeans within the tourism paradigm.⁷³⁵

In 1923, KPM first suggested their ships might be employed solely for the use of first- and second-class passengers on vacation. The American Express Company, who had recently conducted an “Around the World” tour and now wanted KPM to supply a ship for one leg of the following tour, first proposed the idea. The tour would accommodate one to two hundred first-class passengers traveling with the Holland America Line from New York to Rotterdam, then with SMN or RL to Sabang or Singapore, and from there with KPM through New Guinea, the South Sea Islands, the Netherlands East Indies, and possibly Australia. KPM felt that “[t]his plan has the potential to be very seriously valuable, an ideal means by which to make the Dutch East Indies better known as a tourist destination, whereby our company will profit through a

⁷³² Deepak Chhabra, Robert Healy, and Erin Sills “Staged Authenticity and Heritage Tourism,” *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30, no. 3 (2003): 704.

⁷³³ Dean MacCannell, “Staged Authenticity: Arrangements in Social Space in Tourist Settings,” *American Journal of Sociology*, 79, no. 3 (Nov., 1973): 589-603.

⁷³⁴ Darya Maoz “The Mutual Gaze,” *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33, no. 1 (2006): 225.

⁷³⁵ Tyler Edward Stovall, “Introduction: Bon Voyage!” *French Historical Studies*, 25, no. 3 (2002): 416.

busier tourist industry.”⁷³⁶ KPM was willing to trade its cargo and lower-class accommodations in exchange for these wealthy travelers in hopes revenue from the tourist trade would increase in the near future.

The first “conducted tour” took place over the course of fifteen days in April 1924 with 150 passengers traveling through the Moluccas aboard SS “Plancius.” It had been fully booked since January of that year and was a huge success for the company. Luxury was the main priority and board and the ship had extra cold storage devoted to champagne and cigars and featured both an orchestra and jazz band. Because of the class make-up of the passengers, it was assumed that socializing would be a major priority and, therefore, the common areas were made as comfortable as possible. KPM invited a handful of journalists and travel agents to travel free in order to record the trip in the hopes of influencing other passengers in the future. The ship had a film crew making a propaganda movie about the islands specifically for KPM’s advertising use in the United States and Australia.

The “conducted tour” allowed passengers to leave the ship and take supervised day excursions to sites of interest and these trips were organized and supervised by KPM’s staff along with their agents on shore. The following is an example of a day excursion taken in Sumatra;

- 7:00am: depart from Emmaharbour by train; while on the train view the Anei river, Merapi and Singalang volcanos, and the waterfall at Anei kloof
- 10:30am: arrive at Padang-Pandjang; walk to an exhibition of native arts and produce where curiosities can be purchased; performances of “native dancing, fighting, wedding etc. in the peculiar dress of the country”
- 12:00pm: picnic lunch
- 1:00pm: visit to native wood carved houses and rice barns

⁷³⁶ NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 821.94, 28 March 1923.

1:30pm: swimming at a bath in Ajer Mata Koetjing
 2:30pm: departure by train
 5:30pm: arrive back at ship.⁷³⁷

Such day excursions offered tourists exoticized spectacles. But since passengers remained in a group and had minimal individual contact with indigenous performers, day excursions presented indigenous “culture” in a safe and digestible format. Divorced from realities of the colonial world, these day excursions presented a “timeless” vision of the NEI. The passengers walked away from a trip feeling they truly experienced the authentic and were never forced to acknowledge the staged authenticity of the encounter. They would return after a few hours to the comfort of the ship, left with fantastic memories and usually a few souvenirs.

Tourists often included these fantastic memories from their day excursions in later memoirs and travel literature, highlighting how exotic titillation and authenticity were meshed in the minds of European tourists. For example, one tourist described the “fanatic dancers, exalting themselves, who according to the legend must turn and stab themselves with a *kris* (dagger), by which a throat receives a bloody wound. Other dancers ate live chickens, wearing only feathered headdresses, drinking arrack out of banana leaves.”⁷³⁸

Other tourists focused more on the special privilege they felt when witnessing an “authentic” tradition. One tourist described “one of the gems” of his sightseeing tour as

the dancing of two small native girls which we witnessed at the temple of Sangsit near Boeleling [Buleleng]. The stage was a grassy plot near the temple walls and round the two central figures were seated in a large circle, a very large number of villagers . . . Altogether this scene with the temple walls in the background, the local audience and the knowledge that this was not a show in the ordinary sense but one of the chief amusements of the people of these parts, has impressed me as perhaps the most delightful thing I saw during the Tour.⁷³⁹

⁷³⁷ NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 821.94, 29 June 1923.

⁷³⁸ NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 821.94, 21 May 1924.

⁷³⁹ *The Malayan Traveler's Gazette*, July-September 1924, 12.

Exoticism and staged authenticity left the most lasting impressions in the minds of tourists and defined the value of their experiences on day excursions.

It was easy for tourists to overlook the complicated behind-the-scenes arrangements that made such spectacles possible since the maritime tourist industry purposefully hid this from them.⁷⁴⁰ Tour directors had to negotiate the desires of tourists and in one unsuccessful excursion to Ternate, Ambon, and Banda, the tourists were, in the words of the tour director, “deceived” because “however much they were taken in with the temples and appreciated the natural beauty; they expected less civilization and more ‘wild men’.”⁷⁴¹ Before the group’s next excursion in Kalabahi they corrected the problem and the local agent had “collected many virtually naked *Bergalfoered* [Mountain Alfura or savage mountain-people] to the great satisfaction of these tourists, whose hearts can now recollect ‘real wild men’.”⁷⁴² KPM recognized that these experiences were the types of memories tourists wanted to return home with and the company exploited this fact by staging authentic “wild men” to satisfy their customers’ desires for the exotic and authentic.

Indonesians were not the victims of maritime tourism and while the tourist gaze may have been aimed at indigenous locals, the gaze of the local was simultaneously

⁷⁴⁰ For the KPM hiring of *stuurliden* and *machinsten* was handled by the office in Amsterdam and was only for Europeans, but KPM hired more than 6400 indigenous Indonesians to work on their ships on deck, in machine rooms, and as stewards. In Singapore there was special department for the hiring of Chinese and KPM had about 800 Chinese working as servants and other positions. On ships where there was no *administrateur* or *hofmeester*, there was usually a *proviandklerken* in charge of provisions, linens, and keeping the crewmembers under control. They were usually Menadonese or Ambonese. J.P. Nieborg, *Indië en de Zee: De Opleiding tot Zeeman in Nederlands-Indië 1743-1962* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1989), 102.

⁷⁴¹ NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 821.94, 1930.

⁷⁴² *Ibid.*

aimed at them. European tourists were also the targets of "manipulation, staging, and of the gaze of the host population" and, as Darya Maoz suggests, since they operated in a strange place tourists were "very visible to the inhabitants in their enclaves."⁷⁴³ The "mutual gaze" therefore, erased positions of controller and controlled, ensuring both groups simultaneously negotiated their position of power in regards to the other.

Anthropologists like Philip McKean and Michael Picard argue that growth of the tourist industry in Bali helps local traditions prosper and "far from destroying, ruining, or 'spoiling' the culture of Bali" the increase in tourists could "fortify and foster the arts."⁷⁴⁴

Michel Picard explains that Balinese "cultural performances" aimed at tourists

distinguish between various audiences—namely the gods, the Balinese, and the tourists . . . the belief that a divine audience is present at performances intended for the Balinese acts as a guarantee for the preservation of traditional values, whereas performances designed for visitors have but a commercial purpose and thus lack religious meaning. In this respect the presence of tourists, far from diminishing the importance or quality of performances intended for divine and Balinese audiences, helps to improve their presentation, through the monetary rewards brought in by commercial shows. Thus traditional performances provide a sense of authenticity to the tourist shows, whereas the tourist performances contribute toward the traditional ones.⁷⁴⁵

Picard goes on to explain that tourists did not convince the Balinese to *substitute* new roles for previously existing ones, but instead encouraged them to *add* new original roles to their traditional repertoire. Both McKean and Picard stress that tourism reinforced a

⁷⁴³ Maoz, "The Mutual Gaze," 225.

⁷⁴⁴ P. F. McKean, "Cultural Involution: Tourists, Balinese, and the Process of Modernization in an Anthropological Perspective" (PhD dissertation, Brown University, 1973), 1, quoted in Michel Picard, "'Cultural Tourism' in Bali: Cultural Performances as Tourist Attraction," *Indonesia*, 49, (Apr., 1990): 38.

⁷⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 38.

sense of “*boundary maintenance* among the Balinese between what they do for themselves and what they do for their visitors.”⁷⁴⁶

The extent to which many Indonesians were involved in these performances for European tourists is seen in the following parade, welcoming a day excursion group. One tourist explained that after arriving in Celebes,

the townspeople gave us a great reception. School children carrying gaily-coloured flags sang to us as we landed and a boy of about eleven years recited an address of welcome in fluent Malay. Motor cars were in waiting to take us to Tondano, away in the mountains, where a Fair was in progress and some most interesting dances were arranged . . . an astonishing spectacle and one that held interest to the end. Camera enthusiasts had the time of their lives as the strangely dressed dancers liked nothing better than to pose for the visitors.⁷⁴⁷

Tourism was clearly important in towns such as these as they joined together to create the fantastic spectacles tourists expected to see in exchange for financial compensation. This was repeated for them in towns throughout their trip across the NEI.

Part of Indonesian financial compensation came from sales of souvenirs, an aspect of tourism almost as important as the performances themselves. Indonesians, tourists, and KPM all supported the making and purchasing of souvenirs. KPM published a short book titled *Bali: Godsdiens en Ceremonien* (Bali: Religion and Ceremonies) to give to passengers in Bali. After a brief explanation of Hinduism, including gods, cast system, cremation ceremonies, various house and temple feasts, history of the religion, and music, the book turned its attention to a more important matter: what types of souvenirs to buy while in Bali. The book encouraged tourists to stay away from mass produced items made of silver and instead look for handmade woodwork, which would satisfy “the self-interest of the purchasing tourists, that mean to get something that is real Balinese

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid., 38.

⁷⁴⁷ *The Malayan Traveler's Gazette*, July-September, 1924, 10.

who in place of that wind up with something mass produced with practically no value.”⁷⁴⁸ Agents on shore also worked hard to arrange a wide selection of goods available for tourists to purchase. For example, “much work was made for an exhibition of canes, weapons, and other non-Western art, where both the Molukken, the small Soenda Islands, and New Guinea were represented. Because the prices were rather high, relatively little was bought.”⁷⁴⁹ Performances and souvenirs were nearly equal in importance to Indonesians, tourists, and KPM alike.

Conducted tours were popular with many KPM passengers, reflecting the impact such trips had on tourists and the continuing desires of Europeans to experience exotic titillation while not feeling genuinely threatened and knowing that the “authenticity” they craved was actually a reversion to the timeless qualities of NEI’s *tempo doeloe*. Some tourist brochures waxed poetic that “[j]ust as the adventurous spirits of olden days set sail for the southern seas in quest of adventure, so their successors, the tourists and travelers of to-day, make Java their destination when in search of novelty and change.”⁷⁵⁰ It is clear that what tourists searched for was not change but the “timeless” Indies constructed for them by the maritime tourist industry, which prevented contemporary realities from altering exoticized tourist fantasies. Realities did eventually strike the maritime tourist industry and from 1929 KPM faced difficulties booking conducted tours devoted entirely to first-class tourists, instead giving preference to regular service throughout most of 1930’s.⁷⁵¹ Despite this, KPM still actively recruited the “single traveling tourist” who they felt had capital means and high standing and was, therefore, “important for our

⁷⁴⁸ R. Goris and Walter Spies, *Bali: Godsdienst en Ceremoniën* (Batavia: Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij, 1930).

⁷⁴⁹ NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 821.94, 1930.

⁷⁵⁰ GAR Archief KRL: inv. nr. 454.01, 736, June 1931.

⁷⁵¹ NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 821.94, 04 December 1929.

Archipelago that this last category of tourist be travelling through the Dutch East Indies.”

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Conclusion

Maritime tourism was a world of paradoxes and for European passengers traveling at sea presented a mix of competing and conflicting messages. On the one hand were images of an imagined “Indies” filled with docile and grateful Indonesians working together with Dutch colonists to create an orderly and successful colonial society. On the other hand were the realities passengers actually faced during their sea voyages, presenting complicated power and identity struggles on board, in port cities, and within the Netherlands East Indies. The peaceful images presented to Europeans in countless shipping company tourist brochures, did not prepare them for the racial, class, and gender confusion experienced onboard ships during the interwar period.

Difference was emphasized through spatial segregation on board as well as the privileged gaze exercised by first and second-class European passengers over lower-class passengers. This colonial gaze was encouraged by captains and officers onboard who invited Europeans to “view” the lower classes on the forecabin for entertainment and spectacle. The colonial gaze was also deeply gendered and “the language and imagery of tourism promotion privileges the male, heterosexual gaze.”⁷⁵³ Colonialism and maritime tourism was inherently gendered and while “modern” European women exercised cosmopolitan freedoms within the liminal realms of the ship, European men often transferred their sexual desires onto the most accessible women onboard. KPM’s

⁷⁵² NL-HaNA, KPM / KJCPL, 2.20.35, inv.nr. 821.94, 28 February 1930.

⁷⁵³ Pritchard and Morgan, “Privileging the Male Gaze,” 885.

implementation of the conducted tour provided European passengers with yet another aspect of their vacation. Through day excursions, tourists were provided glimpses into the imaginary “authentic” worlds of Indonesia and were able to ignore colonial realities. This kind of staged authenticity became increasingly important to the feeling of modernity in Western countries, as the rest of the world also modernized.

The colonial classroom onboard RL, SMN, and KPM ships taught European passengers how to distance themselves from the “other” through spatial segregation on board while simultaneously maintaining power due to the privileged gaze of first and second-class European passengers over lower-class passengers. But the boundaries onboard were permeable and racial, class, and gender transgression was also a reality for Europeans onboard. KPM’s implementation of the conducted tour and day excursions presented tourists with imaginary “authentic” worlds of Indonesia helping them ignore colonial realities including the modern nature of colonized societies. European passengers and tourists were dissuaded from investigating the realities of colonialism and instead were taught that Indonesians were docile, apolitical, and thankful subjects of the Dutch colony. This naïve view left tourists with a vision of European, and more particularly Dutch, imperialism as a safe, regulated, controlled, and modern system that both Europeans and Asians were happy and willing to participate in. The complete opposite was closer to the truth and this disconnect added to the political and cultural stresses within the late-colonial Dutch empire.

Conclusion

This dissertation explores the relationship between Dutch businesses and the colonial government and explains how the Dutch imperial agenda was implemented in a transoceanic and transnational context. Besides economic factors, a second relationship was taking place between Dutch shipping businesses and the colonial government during the interwar years, one where businesses reinforced colonial politics, culture, and society. While the Dutch government dictated to shipping companies the kinds of passengers to be wary of, the shipping companies in exchange acted as watchdogs for the colonial government by policing passengers and employees and actively taking part in the political and psychological aspects of upholding colonial order at sea and in foreign port cities. The economic decisions of Dutch shipping companies were influenced by colonial definitions of race, class, gender, and religion. Simultaneously, ships served as spaces where colonial subjects could voice their frustrations with Dutch authorities through the agency provided them as participants in the maritime world. By unraveling the inner workings of Dutch shipping practices and the fluid mobility of passengers and crewmembers both in a transoceanic context and on board ships themselves, this dissertation reveals the importance of global maritime networks to the colonial project.

The maritime world was fundamental to Dutch imperialism and seas transformed colonial dynamics from a national to a transnational arena. The maritime world was crucial to the maintenance of the Netherlands' colonial image abroad and imperial vulnerabilities, highlighted through political, economic, and cultural assaults on the colonizers or their allies, were exposed to a transnational audience along global maritime

networks. At a time when images of the Netherlands East Indies might not be readily available to people in the Middle East, Asia, and Europe, the ship was a floating representation of Dutch empire and maritime networks were direct avenues linking the Netherlands East Indies to the rest of the world. Therefore, Dutch shipping companies meticulously managed onboard space by reconstructing hierarchies of race, class, gender, and religion among passengers and workers and ships served as colonial classrooms where passengers were taught their place within colonial hierarchies, even while abroad. Ships themselves were political and cultural vehicles and shipping companies helped construct the everyday realities of thousands of passengers and workers around the globe. Not simply businesses looking to maximize profits, SMN, RL, SMO, JCJL, and KPM had to increasingly traverse a political, cultural, and economic landscape that was rapidly changing during the interwar years. The companies constantly renegotiated their willingness to concede to foreign demands at the expense of their own presumed European privilege and decided at what length the company was willing to make a profit in an increasingly hostile maritime environment.

Despite these onboard regulations, ships were spaces of colonial contestation where imperial struggles over power, policing, and transgression played out. Passengers and workers onboard ships traveling between Southeast Asia, the Middle East, East Asia, and Europe experienced the fluid mobility of global maritime networks as a transformative possibility seen as inherently dangerous to Dutch colonial interests, who responded with attempts at surveillance and policing onboard ships and in port cities. The shipping industry was frequently a target of anti-colonial actions abroad, including boycotts and anti-imperial propaganda and the maritime world served as a transoceanic

arena where anti-imperialists could voice their condemnation of the Dutch empire. The confrontation between boundary and transgression turned ships into important sites of colonial struggle.

This dissertation covers new ground on a number of levels. First, the archival sources presented here reveal previously unexplored aspects of both Dutch imperial history and modern maritime history. Investigating sites of surveillance such as the Dutch Consulates in Jeddah and Shanghai and the Kamaran quarantine station are essential in understanding the transnational scope of Dutch empire during the 1920's and 30's. Dutch imperialism was a transnational and transoceanic project and did not simply exist within the spaces of metropole and colony. This dissertation explains the specifics of what that system looked like, how it was enforced, and in what ways it was transgressed. By repositioning our viewpoint of the geographic complexities of modern imperialism, historians can gain a more complex picture of the realities of European imperialism during the early-twentieth century.

This dissertation also reexamines the importance of businesses within the Dutch empire. Historians often approach shipping company archives from an economic perspective, which creates a picture of the modern maritime world in purely economic terms. I approach the business archives with a different set of questions focusing on the ways businesses aided the colonial project on a political and cultural level. Reading archival documents from this perspective reveals a far different picture than many previous maritime histories and proves the importance of ships in the formation and maintenance of colonial projects of social and political control. This dissertation proves

that businesses were more than simply economic engines of empire, but were firmly involved in the administration of empire in other equally fundamental ways.

This dissertation also creates new understandings of the modern maritime world and what sea empires actually looked like during the 1920's and 30's. One can argue that all European empires were maritime empires, yet this concept is often taken for granted without a true understanding of what this actually meant at sea or in port cities. This dissertation shows that empires existed globally through a similar project of surveillance, policing, and control that successfully enabled European rule in terrestrial colonial settings. But unlike imperialism within colonies, this project shows how Dutch attempts at controlling the oceanic spaces *in between* metropole and colony were a refracted rather than a reflected image of terrestrial colonialism. During the interwar years, when transnational flows of information and technology became increasingly important to individuals' lives, the refraction of colonialism abroad slowly made its way along global maritime routes into Southeast Asia and influenced colonial society in the Netherlands East Indies by further rebalancing the colonial power equation. The fractured nature of Dutch colonialism in the Netherlands East Indies during the 1920's and 30's cannot be understood without first analyzing the transnational influences and exchanges traveling along global maritime networks.

This dissertation attempts to push the field of both Dutch colonial history and Dutch maritime history forward by interacting with newer historiographic concepts that have, as yet, made few inroads into academic conversations in the Netherlands. The ways colonial politics, culture, and society existed within a transnational and transoceanic context have yet to be explored by modern Dutch maritime historians. The Dutch

historical canon remains curiously insulated from current historiographies in the United States and Britain. Simultaneously, the Dutch empire often receives less attention in the United States than the British or French equivalents, but created just as much impact on the interwar world. This dissertation attempts to bridge both these gaps by increasing the visibility of the Dutch empire within colonial historiography and also showing how the transnational and transoceanic nature of the interwar Dutch empire can serve as a model for other European imperial studies.

Appendix

i. Number of Indonesian pilgrims as a percentage of total overseas pilgrims⁷⁵⁴

Pilgrim Season	Total number of Indonesian pilgrims	Total number of overseas pilgrims	Indonesian % of total
1919-20	14805	59370	24.9
1920-21	28795	60786	47.9
1921-22	22412	n/a	n/a
1922-23	22022	86353	25.5
1923-24	39800	91786	43.4
1924-25	74	n/a	n/a
1925-26	3474	57957	6.0
1926-27	52412	123052	42.6
1927-28	43082	98635	43.7
1928-29	31405	86021	36.5
1929-30	33214	84810	39.2
1930-31	17052	40105	42.5
1931-32	4385	29065	15.1
1932-33	2260	20026	11.3
1933-34	2854	25252	11.3
1934-35	3693	33898	10.9
1935-36	4012	33730	11.9
1936-37	5403	49864	10.8
1937-38	10327	67224	15.4
1938-39	10884	59577	18.3
1939-40	6586	31610	20.8

ii. Estimated pilgrim participation of Indonesian men, women, and children travelling on their own passports in rounded percentages⁷⁵⁵

Year	Men	Women	Children
1927-28	68	32	n/a
1928-29	69	28	3
1929-30	65	27	8
1930-31	69	28	3
1931-32	69	28	3
1932-33	67	29	4
1933-34	68	29	3
1934-35	66	30	4

⁷⁵⁴ J. Vredembregt, "The Haddj: Some of its features and functions in Indonesia." *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 118, no. 1 (1962): 149.

⁷⁵⁵ J. Vredembregt, "The Haddj: Some of its features and functions in Indonesia." *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 118, no. 1 (1962): 91.

Year	Men	Women	Children (cont.)
1935-36	67	29	4
1936-37	66	29	5
1937-38	66	30	4
1938-39	65	31	4
1939-40	65	33	2

iii. Daily rations to which each pilgrims of the steerage class was entitled under the 1922 *Pelgrims Ordinatie*⁷⁵⁶

Article	Unit	Quantity	Article	Unit	Quantity
Dried fish		0.1 kilograms	Fresh cocoanut oil	0.01	liters
Salted duck eggs		1.0 pieces	Vinegar	0.01	liters
Dried vegetables		0.002 kilograms	Salt	0.01	kilograms
Javanese green peas		0.05 kilograms	Roasted coffee	0.015	kilograms
Rice		0.5 kilograms	Tea	0.04	kilograms
Soja		0.007 liters	Javanese brown sugar	0.004	kilograms
Sugar		0.03 kilograms	Drinking water	5	liters

Note: Two persons under 10 years of age to count as one adult, children under two years are not entitled to rations. The daily quantity of drinking water shall be supplied to each person in full, irrespective of age.

iv. Testimony from Dutch communist informant Kamu sent from the Chef de Recherche Maseland to the Algemeene Politie Batavia afdeeling Politieke Recherche, January 26, 1928.⁷⁵⁷

From someone, previously employed as a chauffeur by the American E. Levine who he made different trip around the Netherlands East Indies with during 1923 and following that left with to America, the following statement was made:

“In New York I handed in my resignation to Mr. Levine and enlisted as a boy on the steamship “Sitoebondo” owned by the Rotterdamsche Lloyd. With this ship, which traveled on the New York-Java route, I traveled to Java where I stayed onboard and arrived in Rotterdam during the first half of 1924. Once there, I became acquainted with Semaoen, who I met in total three times. We spoke about the trips I had made and everything I had seen. I spoke especially about America and shared with Semaoen that everything was very beautiful there. He then said that Russia, and especially Moscow and Leningrad, was much more beautiful and that I could go there to see for myself whenever I felt like it. I did not speak to Semaoen by myself; during the conversations there were a few other seamen present named Clement Wentoeck, Johannes

⁷⁵⁶ Staatsblad 698 *Pelgrims Ordinantie*, November 14, 1922, Article 9 (1) A.

⁷⁵⁷ NL-HaNA, Consulaat Shanghai, 2.05.91, inv.nr. 354, 26 January 1928, report from the Chef de Recherche Maseland to the Algemeene Politie Batavia afdeeling Politieke Recherche.

Wawoeroentoe and someone named Daniel, whose last name I do not know. These people were previously employed by the KPM. I believe as cargo loading clerks.

We let ourselves be talked into being sent to Moscow by Semaoen, and so left the ship while in Rotterdam. I left the salary I was still owed behind.

We would be departing from Amsterdam where together with us was someone named Tadjoeidin, a boy of about 15 years originally from Padang.

We left by steamship via Hamburg to Leningrad. We each received four dollars from Semaoen. We were transported as working passengers. I do not know what kind of ship it was. I believe it was might have been a Russian ship; I believe the crew spoke Russian or Swedish.

We did not need any passes. Semaoen said that when he and de Visser traveled to Russia by train, they needed a passport.

In Leningrad we were fetched from onboard and went by train to Moscow. The trip lasted 16 hours. On arrival we were brought to a large building. People cared for our food and clothing.

At an estimate, there were about 1000 students present, of which, I believe there were five British Indians and definitely Chinese. The majority was Russian, and in a few cases Europeans. The classes had a count of about 25 to 30 people. The lessons began at 7:30am with gymnastics and were followed from 9:00 am to noon with theory of Communism.

During the first two months, Semaoen gave us our lessons about Indonesia, most specifically about the political situation there. After two months, Semaoen did not give any more lessons and neither did anyone else from the Netherlands East Indies. Russians taught further lessons and during the first year were mainly lessons in the Russian language. After the end of the first year we still only understood very little of this language.

The study time was split into three time periods, each lasting one year. After we had a little grasp of the language, lessons were given exclusively about Communism, which were overall focused on the difference between Communism and Socialism.

The building where we were brought consisted of a large number of dormitory rooms and class rooms, the dormitories were fitted for six to ten people, all nationalities slept mixed together.

We got a permanent fee of 1.50 rubles, for refreshments.

Besides the lessons on Communism we did gymnastics and drills. (Military exercises).

At this University in Moscow, someone named Oesman, originally from Padang, was definitely present.

After a stay of 2 ½ years I graduated and had to leave the University in order to put what I had learned to practical use. I was sent together with Clement Wentoeck to Vladivostok via Siberia. Where the others went I do not know. I do know that Tadjoeidin was sent away earlier, he was already fully developed, thus he couldn't really get Communism. Where he was sent to and where he wound up, I do not know.

At the University we were told that we must do our best, because otherwise we would not be sent back to our homelands.

I had to stay in Vladivostok for three months before there was a ship going to Shanghai. We were housed in hotel paid for by the Soviets. We didn't receive any

money. From Shanghai we were sent to Swatow paid for by the Soviets and from there we left for Bangkok. We were then given money in order to take a train to Singapore and after that the Netherlands Indies.

In Jahore, Clement Wentook left me in the lurch. I suspect he noticed that I didn't feel very much for Communism, while I am convinced he is totally convinced of Communism. Where he is at the moment I do not know, but I think he is already in Java.

Around May 1927, during my stay in Vladivostok, I met Alimin. He was alone. What he was doing there I do not know, but I suspect he wanted to continue traveling onto Moscow. He told me nothing of his doings and only asked if I wanted to visit his wife and tell her he was fine. He looked very thin and pale, so I guess he was sick. Moeso was not with him, whom I have not encountered elsewhere.

When I left Moscow, around February 1927, Semaoen, Darsono, and definitely Dengah were there.

Semaoen has a seat in the Comintern; Darsono and Dengah have jobs at the offices of the Soviet. Darsono works in the Profintern department and Dengah in the Krestintern department.

They their jobs are precisely I do not know. They have never let it be known.

Tan Malaka and Soebakat I never met during my time in Moscow or on my journey back.

I met Baars one time in Moscow. He spoke excellent Malaysian. He was previously employed as an engineer in Siberia. He didn't speak to me about anything special.

Other than the people I have named here, I didn't meet anyone else from the Netherlands Indies while in Russia.

The purpose of the training was to convince us to be communists and to use this to spread propaganda about our countrymen. When we returned to Java we had an assignment to make contact with communists who were not sent to Digoel.

From Moscow, I received an assignment from Semaoen and Darsono putting me in touch with Dr. Kwa in Batavia and Mr. Joesoef in Semarang. I don't know these people. To this day I have yet to meet Mr. Joesoef, seeing as I first went to my place of birth after leaving Singapore, from where I only arrived just yesterday (24 January 1928) in Batavia.

Wentook and I received a silk cloth from Alimin that we were to show to Dr. Kwa and Mr. Joesoef, which would then confirm us to indeed be trustable communists.

(Referred to silk cloth was shown to me. It is made from white silk on which is typed "Best Doctor. Our men bring this. They are daily. Request any help leading for coming actions. How there. Here it goes well. Selamat, your Alimin." The word Alimin was the signature of Alimin. A photo was made of the cloth.)

The message giver went on to say: I looked for Dr. Kwa yesterday afternoon during his visiting hours in order to introduce myself. He probably did not believe me, and so I showed him the silk cloth, but even then he seemed not to trust me. He said that I had to leave. He did not ask me what the purpose of my visit was.

Perhaps he will want to trust me once I have spoken to Mr. Joesoef in Semarang, when he will in the least believe me.

Further, I have received another assignment from Semaoen as soon as I arrived in Java, to give information to Frau Anna Miller address: Literaturvertrieb G.M.B.H 23 Berlin S.W. 61 Plannfed No.17.

This is a correspondence address. From here the letters are sent to the good address. I must write to this woman that I arrived good and well in Java and was ready to begin work. I also had to send my address where I would receive a different response.

Also I had to send notice of arrival to: Postnoff No.1 Chehuen Road Shanghai. I must write to him: "The tapioca you sent was received in good order. The quantity is 1789. Request more to be sent."

I must write these words in English; they mean: "I have arrived here and hope to hear more quickly."

I would also receive further messages from this address.

In order to connect with Alimin, long thought to be staying in Vladivostok or to have returned from there, I can make use of the "Seaman Club" there. The proprietor of the club cares for sending letters on to the addressee.

The tactics we must use upon our return to Java was to above all remain very careful and to use the word "Communism" as little as possible. Efforts should be to place cells in different businesses, in order to spread Communism. No actions must be taken, because then the government will again take countermeasures against us.

Efforts must be to slowly gain the sympathy of the entire population by showing them the benefits of Communism. When that can be achieved and when the full sympathy for the Soviet can be obtained, then a Soviet government would create itself in the Netherlands India."

The above person will liaise with Mr. Joesoef, which he will inform me of later.

In connection with the above, notice has been given to the Post Office and a request made to control the correspondence to and from the persons and addresses named above.

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