

**A FRENCH VIEW OF THE NETHERLANDS INDIES**

A FRENCH VIEW OF THE  
NETHERLANDS INDIES

BY

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To the Memory of

**JOOST VAN VOLLENHOVEN**

Governor-General of Indo-China

and French West Africa .

Born in Rotterdam on July 21, 1877

Died for France at Parcy-Tigny on July 20, 1918

## FOREWORD TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

THE present work is the English edition of *La Politique Musulmane et Colonial des Pays-Bas* (Paris, 1939). The first part of the French edition has here been omitted, and an abridged chapter dealing with Moslem policy has been substituted in its stead. A new addition is the chapter on the international position of the Netherlands which appeared in outline form as an article in French. The text of the French edition has undergone little revision, partly because critics have found little fault with it. I have added a few notes and have altered or deleted passages only in exceptional cases. Although this book is published under the auspices of the International Secretariat of the Institute of Pacific Relations, it should be understood that the Institute does not accept responsibility for the facts and opinions expressed herein. For these I am wholly responsible. I wish to add, however, that though I have had an opportunity to read and criticize the English manuscript, I assume no responsibility for the translation.

Since my return to North Africa some months ago, I have found no reason to alter my views. In fact, a recent trip to Morocco has left me with the impression that the material achievements of the French in that country within the space of a few years are quite as astonishing, if not more so than those of the Dutch on the far side of the Equator. And, spiritually speaking, I find the superiority of French colonization ever more striking. During my visit to the Indies I frequently had occasion to repeat one of the opening lines in *Iphigenie auf Tauris*:

*Und es gewöhnt sich nicht mein Geist hierher*

G. S. BOUSQUET

Kinas el Wa'ila, Mustapha supérieur

June 10, 1939

## FOREWORD TO THE FRENCH EDITION

WHEN I originally outlined my doctoral thesis on the Netherlands, and even when some fifteen years later I came to the Netherlands Indies to study Moslem questions on the spot, I did not expect to write a book in which an examination of Dutch colonial policy would occupy an important position. Nevertheless, almost in spite of myself, I have written just such a book.

One reason for my having done so is that there has been no work in French on this important subject since the fundamental study by Chailley-Bert, *Java et ses Habitants*, published in 1900 and now quite out of date. Moreover, foreign authors have, on the whole, written little on Dutch colonial policy, the best work to date being by the American Amry Vandenbosch, whose *Dutch East Indies*, published in 1934, I heartily recommend. His book, far longer than mine, is well documented and touches at least in passing on every problem. The present work is of a different nature: its range is more restricted, yet it deals more fully with certain questions, especially the Moslem questions which Vandenbosch almost wholly ignores.<sup>1</sup>

My real reason, however, for having discarded my original plan is that it seemed impossible to confine myself strictly to Moslem questions in considering the native policy of the Netherlands. Interesting as these questions are, they play a very minor rôle in the Indian political scene, even though nine out of ten Indonesians are Moslem. Political questions related to Islam tend to become confused with nationalist questions, yet the only urgent problems are those of nationalism. To consider native policy in only its Moslem aspects is to attack the problem from a false and narrow point of view. How does Dutch authority today react to the nationalist movement? To answer this question it appeared necessary, not merely to enumerate measures taken by the authorities, but to examine the whole problem of colonial policy.

I regret that I am unacquainted with French Indo-China, which—except, of course, in the realm of Islam—would surely have afforded more accurate and interesting comparisons than are available in North

<sup>1</sup> Thus suggesting that these questions do not dominate policy.

Africa. Since I realize that in five months one cannot hope to acquire a deep understanding of the vast problems with which this book deals, I do not claim to be infallible.<sup>2</sup> My aim has been to set down the facts plainly and precisely as I saw them.

There is no point in concealing at the outset that I do not admire everything in the Netherlands Indies and that in many respects my impressions were not what I had hoped they would be. I regret this particularly because of the high opinion which I had of Dutch colonial policy upon my arrival in the Indies, and because the authorities were everywhere most kind and helpful. They made it possible for me to appreciate the admirable features of their colonies, and I am grateful for having had that opportunity. With regard to the reservations just mentioned, it suffices to say that as far as practical suggestions are concerned, I recommend the adoption of the reforms which Mr. Colijn, now President of the Council of the Netherlands, proposed ten years ago. The earnestness, the professional morale, the enthusiasm for work which characterize all of the Dutch in the Indies are qualities which Frenchmen would do well to cultivate.

G. S. BOUSQUET

Netherlands Indies  
April—September, 1938

<sup>2</sup>If some reader should use this admission as a basis for denying the validity of my criticisms, I would simply inquire whether, when foreign visitors are full of praise (which is so avidly sought in the Indies), it is required that they be familiar with the Dutch language and spend a half-year in the country.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD TO THE ENGLISH EDITION .. .. .	v
FOREWORD TO THE FRENCH EDITION .. .. .	vii
CHAPTER I. SOME ASPECTS OF MOSLEM POLICY .. .. .	1
I. General Observations .. .. .	1
II. The Reform Movement .. .. .	2
III. Certain Aspects of Dutch Moslem Policy .. .. .	6
IV. The Bureau for Native Affairs .. .. .	11
V. Present Trends of Moslem Policy .. .. .	17
CHAPTER II. THE RISE AND REPRESSION OF INDONESIAN NATIONALISM .. .. .	22
I. The Dawn of Nationalism and the Moslem Period .. .. .	22
II. The Communist Phase .. .. .	24
III. True Nationalism .. .. .	27
IV. Present Nationalist Tendencies .. .. .	28
V. The Fight Against Nationalism .. .. .	32
VI. The Trial of Douwes Dekker .. .. .	38
VII. A Criticism of the Government .. .. .	41
CHAPTER III. MATERIAL RESULTS OF THE COLONIAL POLICY .. .. .	45
I. The Material Perfection of Dutch Colonization .. .. .	45
II. Why the Dutch have Succeeded .. .. .	48
III. Administrative Tyranny .. .. .	51
IV. Prentah Aloes .. .. .	54
V. The Difficulties of the Demographic Problem .. .. .	57
CHAPTER IV. POLITICAL REFORMS .. .. .	61
I. The Reforms Examined .. .. .	61
II. The Reforms Appraised .. .. .	64
III. A Criticism of the System. Colijn's Plan .. .. .	73
CHAPTER V. THE PROCESS OF CIVILIZATION .. .. .	84
I. Language .. .. .	84
II. The Arts .. .. .	91
III. Education .. .. .	93
IV. Other Aspects of the "Cultural" Policy .. .. .	97
CHAPTER VI. THE DUTCH COLONIAL CHARACTER .. .. .	105
I. The Colonial Philosophy of Writers .. .. .	105
II. Dutch and French Colonial Philosophy .. .. .	111
III. French and Dutch National Conceptions of Colonization .. .. .	115
CHAPTER VII. THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF THE NETHERLANDS .. .. .	
INDIES .. .. .	120
INDEX .. .. .	131

## CHAPTER I

### SOME ASPECTS OF MOSLEM POLICY<sup>1</sup>

#### I. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

NO OTHER colonial nation governs relatively so many Moslem subjects as do the Netherlands. In fact, in an immense area of 685,000 square miles, which equals in extent an area bounded by France, Italy, Afghanistan and Sweden, the Dutch rule over sixty-one million subjects, or a population as great as that of all of the French colonies combined. Of this total five-sixths or nine-tenths are Moslems. The Moslems all belong to the Shafi'i sect<sup>2</sup> but racially they are extremely heterogeneous. By far the most important group is the Javanese, about 28 million persons in the central and eastern portions of the island. Western Java is inhabited by Sundanese, who number 8.5 millions and speak a different language. The island of Madura and the adjacent district of Java are peopled by about 4.3 million Madurese. The greater part of Sumatra, with about 7.7 million inhabitants, has become Moslem although, in addition to Protestants, there are still some pagans left. In the littoral regions of Borneo, with a population of two millions, as well as in the Lesser Sunda Islands, Soembawa and Lombok, the Malay inhabitants are Moslems. There are far fewer Moslems in the Moluccas, and the Papuans of New Guinea have remained pagan.

The intensity of religious fervor among these ethnical groups varies. The Javanese have remained deeply attached to their old Hindu-Javan culture and are at the same time the gentlest and most tolerant people in the world. In Java Mohammedanism is strongest along the northern coast. The Koran looms large in the lives of the Madurese and particularly the Sundanese; in fact, a sort of latent fanaticism exists in the Banten district. The most thoroughly Mohammedan regions in Indonesia are Atjeh and the Menangkabau

<sup>1</sup> For all details concerning this question the reader is referred to the author's *Introduction a l'Etude de l'Islam Indonesien*, 1939, and *Politique Musulmane et Coloniale des Pays-Bas*, 1939, Part I.

<sup>2</sup> One of the four Sunni sects.



(also called *West Kust*), that is, the northern tip and central-western portion of Sumatra. Atjeh (with 800,000 inhabitants) is a province of extreme fanaticism, and it was only at the end of the nineteenth century, after they had spent thirty years in fruitless endeavors, that the Dutch were able to subdue its people. Their eventual success was due in part to the work of an Islamologist of genius, Professor Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1858-1936). The devotion of the Achinese to Islam takes the shape chiefly of anti-European fanaticism; they have not entirely surrendered the idea of a holy war although they do not pay much attention to ritual. Among the people of the Menangkabau, Islam, particularly neoteric Islam, is remarkable chiefly for its orthodox usage and intellectual development. But the people of both the Atjeh and the Menangkabau districts comprise only an extremely small minority of the Indonesian Moslem community.

## II. THE REFORM MOVEMENT

Like all Moslem countries, the Netherlands Indies today are subject to the influence of modern reform movements. Of the many reform associations I shall mention only two, the *Sarikat Islam* and the *Mohammadiyya*. After 1912 the *Sarikat Islam*, which had been founded three years before, became a distinctly political movement. From the strictly Moslem point of view it may be ignored nowadays, and for two reasons. In the first place, its importance has suffered a marked decline: its membership is only some forty or fifty thousand whereas once it reached 360,000. Furthermore, the truly religious character of this association has always been relegated to the background: its decline resulted from the fact that even its political demands were rarely if ever inspired by Moslem ideals so much as by its over-close political attachment to the revolutionary parties of the extreme left wing.

At present the *Mohammadiyya* is far and away the most important of the Indonesian reformist associations. It was founded in November 1912 and during the first decade of its existence enjoyed little influence. Its extraordinary rise coincided with the decline of the *Sarikat Islam*. According to its articles of association, it wishes to encourage the instruction and study of the precepts of Islam as well as the development of religious life in the Netherlands Indies. The

means of attaining these ends must, according to the same source, be the creation of schools in which lay and religious instruction are given side by side, the organization of meetings to study questions of interest to Islam, the construction of places of worship, the publication of religious works, and the Mohammedan education of and assistance to youth.

During its first period, when it was led by Haji Ahmed Dachlan, who died in 1923, the society followed a peaceful course. Dachlan was extremely tolerant, and his attitude toward Christianity was receptive. Apparently there was a tendency toward syncretism in the doctrine of the founder:<sup>3</sup> it was his belief that there is something worthwhile in every religion. The society held open debates in which a minister would take part.

In 1921 the society comprised five divisions; in 1923, fifteen. Subsequently, it experienced a complete re-orientation in policy during which its attitude toward Christians changed quite as much as did its own composition. It is impossible to explain all of the reasons behind this rapid evolution, but it was due in part to the activity of the Dutch resident<sup>4</sup> at Djokjakarta who openly carried on missionary work.<sup>5</sup> In part, therefore, the *Mohammadiyya* is a manifestation of Moslem resurgence caused by and reacting against the missions whose weapons, indeed, it attempted to employ. Under the leadership formerly of Haji Ibrahim and Haji Fachroeddine, and now under that of Haji Mansoer, the *Mohammadiyya* has steadily grown and prospered. It comprised 176 divisions in 1927, 463 in 1932, 809 in 1935, 851 in 1936, and 913 at the end of 1937—370 in Sumatra (162 in the Menangkabau), 155 in different islands (107 of these in Celebes), and the remainder in Java.

The society desires the purification of the Mohammedan religion and is engaged in manifold activities. There are, for instance, *tabligh*, schools, work among women and children, and so forth. The *tabligh* is the "inner mission"<sup>6</sup> as the German Protestants say, but sometimes it is also an "outer mission," when its efforts are directed toward unbelievers like Christian natives. In yet other ways the *Mohammadiyya* has successfully imitated the practices of

<sup>3</sup> This appears in the typewritten notes of the clergyman Baker (1925).

<sup>4</sup> A governor was not yet stationed there.

<sup>5</sup> I have this information from a private source. This fact is not mentioned in official publications nor in the notes mentioned above.

<sup>6</sup> Missions engaged in work among co-religionists.

Christian missionaries by engaging in charitable works in order to spread its influence as far as possible.<sup>7</sup> It owns orphanages,<sup>8</sup> poor-houses, hospitals and polyclinics, especially for persons suffering from eye diseases. By 1929 four polyclinics in Djokjakarta, Soerabaya and Malang had given free treatment to more than eighty thousand patients, of whom eighteen thousand were ophthalmic cases.

It goes without saying that all of this missionary activity is accompanied by great activity in the publishing line. Among others there are editions of the Koran: one in Malay and two in Javanese—of which one is in Javanese and the other in roman characters—published in installments since the work is expensive for the poor native. The society publishes almost nothing in Dutch. Another type of activity is the school.<sup>9</sup> The *Mohammadiyya* maintains all of the numerous and complicated varieties of officially recognized schools—*Normaalschool*, *Standardschool*, *Schakelschool* (Intermediate), *Hollandsch-Indische School*, upper primary schools and many other kinds as well as boarding and day schools. According to Dutch custom, a school which meets certain stipulated conditions is subsidized to the same extent as free European schools, but this almost never occurs in the Indies. In 1939 the society's important academic structure was to have been crowned by an advanced school of theology at Soerakarta (Solo). Religious instruction is given in various guises along with ordinary teaching. In the fourth year of the *Normaalschool*, for example, students have up to eight hours per week of studies in Arabic, Moslem tradition, history, etc. This is the maximum. In the *Hollandsch-Indische School* there are only three hours each week of religious instruction. This educational program is supplemented by classes for adults and by youth organizations, notably the scout corps *Hizboul Wathan*, "the hope of the nation."

<sup>7</sup> The *Overzicht* (Survey) of the native press, No. 28, 1939, reported that in Benkoelen (Sumatra) a schoolmaster of the society presented, as a practical *tabligh*, a theatrical performance of episodes from the life of the Prophet, with the Angel Gabriel taking part. This beginning gave rise to "various movements" in the Moslem world.

<sup>8</sup> I have been told that this imitation of Christian and European custom is stupid and unjustified since orphans are always taken in by private families.

<sup>9</sup> In the Menangkabau, a district with about 2,500,000 inhabitants, there are numerous reformist schools, either maintained by the *Mohammadiyya* or otherwise supported. I have visited several of them, normal schools among others, where girls attended the same classes as boys but were separated from them by a curtain or screen so that they could see the teacher and the blackboard but not their classmates.

Another very characteristic aspect of *Mohammadiyya* activity is the women's groups. In fact, the society has a women's auxiliary called the *Aichiyya* which, among its other activities, zealously propagates religious instruction in the Moslem community.<sup>10</sup> It includes a group of young women, the *Nachia*, who are interested in athletics. An interesting peculiarity of the *Aichiyya* is that, like the *Mohammadiyya*, it has built mosques reserved for the exclusive use of women. The first of these was erected in Djokjakarta in 1923; others have been built in Garoet, Karangkadjen, Soerabaya, Soerakarta and other cities. For The Prayer, women don a special costume, the prayer cloak, a very long, white cape with a hood which covers them completely from top to toe. This is not the only sartorial peculiarity of these modernist Moslem women: they wear veils. In other words, they wrap loosely about their heads a piece of light cloth which covers their hair and part of their cheeks but leaves the face exposed in a graceful frame. They bear no resemblance to the veiled women of the Arab countries. It is the veil which sets apart the modernists of the *Aichiyya* and kindred reformist societies, for as a rule Indonesian women go about unveiled. According to these modernists, however, the face and hands alone (and, in fact, generally the feet as well) may remain unveiled.

In the political field the *Mohammadiyya* is neutral in the sense that it refuses to take sides officially. Its exclusive object is to spread Moslem culture. For this very reason, in contradistinction to the nationalist groups, it is held in high favor by the authorities. It would be very wrong, however, to suppose from this its members entertain no political bias. Indeed, it would not be wholly incorrect to say that they are quite as anti-Dutch as other nationalists, Moslem or otherwise. I can vouch for this. Yet the government displays great solicitude toward this society, an attitude which I do not think shows much political intelligence.

It is difficult to arrive at an all-inclusive estimate of the significance of the *Mohammadiyya* movement and its activities. Without doubt it is important and still growing. It is equally true, however, that although new divisions are constantly appearing, old ones are disappearing. On the other hand, if its development has actually been the result in large part of the decline of the *Sarikat Islam*, we may assume that cultural makes a more permanent mark than political

<sup>10</sup> Pursuant to its by-laws, the board of directors is composed exclusively of women.

activity. I cannot appraise the net results of the *Mohammadiyya* movement without access to information which only a prolonged stay in the Indies could have supplied; but if the number of "veiled" women is any criterion, it is undeniable that the society enjoys a considerable influence in the country of the Menangkabau, in Djokja and Batavia, and especially among the lower middle classes. The upper classes and proletariat have been less responsive to its propaganda. And only forty-five miles from Djokja, in the city of Soerakarta which possesses the same traditions and culture, the activity of the *Mohammadiyya* is extremely curtailed because of the rivalry which has long divided these two capitals of the four principalities. It is worth noting that in Java the objectives of the society now draw their inspiration from the national tradition of tolerance, whereas elsewhere, as in the Menangkabau, for example, the struggle against the traditionalists sometimes becomes very bitter. Thus the regional character of the movement is influenced to a marked degree by the temperament of its members.

The future will show to what extent the *Mohammadiyya* is qualified to guide the destinies of Moslem Indonesia and to modernize its religion. Will it continue its career which is as promising as was that of the *Sarikat Islam* twenty years ago? Or must it experience the same fate after an equally brief period of achievement? The fact that the character of its activities is so different from that of the *Sarikat Islam* is important. But we need only ask these questions, not answer them.

### III. CERTAIN ASPECTS OF DUTCH MOSLEM POLICY

Of the numerous aspects of Dutch Moslem policy which I have dealt with elsewhere<sup>11</sup> I shall here discuss only two which are characteristic.

#### *Islam and the Missions*

Thoroughly typical of the caution and circumspection of Dutch colonial policy is its attitude toward the Christian missions. It is common knowledge that Moslems are touchy about missions which they generally regard with the greatest intolerance. The Dutch government has long been a coalition of Christians, earnest Protestants and Catholics who believe that the Dutch have a mandate from God

<sup>11</sup> See above, note 1.

Himself to convert their heathen subjects—even though they are not agreed among themselves as to the exact dogmatic modalities of such conversion. The exigencies of practical policy, however, prevail over the demands of Christianity, and the attitude which the Dutch authorities have adopted toward this problem in fact is a far cry from what they desire in theory. Indeed, the situation is simple as far as the spread of Islam in pagan and even Christian districts is concerned. Islam enjoys the fullest liberty: the government furnishes no opposition, nor is any authorization necessary to preach Islam. On the contrary, by virtue of Article 177 of the *Indisch Staatsreglement* (Indian Constitution) Christian missionaries must obtain a special license before undertaking their ministry. This license may be cancelled by the government if the holder does not abide by the forms imposed upon him at the time of issuance, or if the authorities consider his activity undesirable.

Evidently the Protestant missions have not suffered overmuch from this supervision, and at present they profess to be satisfied with the very liberal manner in which it is imposed. The Catholics, however, have never ceased to protest against this attack upon the principle, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations," partly because they are not permitted to sow in the fields of the Protestant missions. There is, moreover, talk of abolishing Article 177. Moslems cannot tax the Dutch government with intolerance. The application of this article has been very lax, but there are certain Moslem regions in which Christian missions are forbidden to proselytize:<sup>12</sup> these are Banten in the Sundanese district and Atjeh (the northern tip of Sumatra), where the authorities fear fanatical outbreaks.

Under such conditions the missionaries carry on their work peacefully enough. What is interesting is not so much the rivalry between Islam and Christianity in this pagan land as the direct and relatively successful war undertaken by the latter against Javanese Islam. Java, in fact, is one of the few places in the world where Christian missions have been able to chalk up a few victories over Islam. At the beginning of 1937 the Protestant missions were serving about ninety thousand Christian natives, to whom may be

<sup>12</sup>In the same way the island of Bali is closed to missionaries because, one might say, of æsthetic considerations. There have been spirited polemics on this point. The attack delivered by the missionaries has been repulsed by native chiefs who feared for their authority and for public order, by Dutch intellectuals who have pleaded the cause of Balinese culture so intimately related to religion, and—so evil minds would have it—by tourist bureaus which feared for their interests if Christianity should veil the bare breasts of Bali.

added some tens of thousands of Catholics converted by the Catholic missions. These figures are doubtless insignificant when compared with the total number of Moslems in Java—not even 0.5 per cent—and Islam need not worry. Yet this accomplishment is curiously indicative of the nature of Indonesian, or rather Javanese, Islam.

### *Moslem Law and Custom*

In North Africa today several questions of Moslem law are being more or less bitterly argued. There is, first of all, the reluctance of certain natives to accept French citizenship—what may, more conveniently than accurately, be called naturalization—because the abandonment of their religious law would constitute a sort of apostasy. This question has arisen in Tunisia and Algeria. There is again, this time in Morocco, the problem of extending Moslem law at the expense of local custom. And finally there is the problem of instituting reforms in Moslem law and custom wherever, as in Algeria, they run counter to the practices of modern civilization.

The question of immediate interest is whether the situation in the Netherlands Indies sheds any light on this legal problem. The first point may be treated briefly. In the Indies as in France public law distinguishes between citizens and subjects. But from the point of view of *private* law, subjects enjoy an entirely different status than do citizens who, for instance, can purchase real estate only in towns. There is talk at present of allowing subjects to come under the jurisdiction of the private law governing European citizens, a change that would involve rather complicated methods which I shall not go into here. Citizenship is also obtainable and, of course, implies a complete renunciation of native status, even where Moslem law is binding upon subjects. Natives rarely request such naturalization, but their reluctance is not born of religious scruples. In the Indies naturalization is never made a religious issue. In North Africa Moslems do not seek naturalization from fear of committing apostasy; in British India they protest when Hindus play music near their mosques; but in Java people play music in the courtyards of the mosques and accept naturalization with a clear conscience.

Regarding the scope of Moslem law,<sup>13</sup> the Dutch formerly committed the same error that the French did in Algeria and the British

<sup>13</sup> On this subject I refer the reader to my *Introduction* (see above, note 1), in which the question of native law is discussed in greater detail.

in India: they assumed that Indonesian Moslems are deeply influenced by the laws of Islam. Thanks to the ethnographer Wilke, to Snouck Hurgronje, and particularly to Cornelis van Vollenhoven, professors at the University of Leiden, this assumption has been abandoned. The tendency nowadays is to ascribe only the slightest importance to both Moslem and European law. According to van Vollenhoven, Indonesian customs are part of a great legal system which extends from Madagascar to Formosa and whose primitive foundation has, in the Netherlands Indies, been affected by various influences such as Moslem law. In Indonesia the latter has never been binding in its entirety. It has influenced local customs only in certain respects, principally in the celebration of marriage in which the formalities of the Moslem ceremony are everywhere observed, and also in the case of the *waqf*<sup>14</sup> though *waqfs* are rare. Indonesian custom has managed to survive almost everywhere. The trifling influence of Moslem law is especially noticeable in the Menangkabau. As has been said, this district is staunchly Mohammedan intellectually, yet the traditional matriarchal customs have been stubbornly preserved to the present day. The husband visits his wife at her house; he does not have to support her or his children, nor do the latter inherit from him, for family property is handed down solely through the mother. These customs, so contrary in letter and in spirit to Moslem law, are observed in what is without doubt the most thoroughly Moslem province in the Netherlands Indies.

In Java a certain number of fundamental rules relating to Moslem marriage are recognized by custom, but so too are other older rules. The same is true of separation. The formalities of the wedding celebration derive from Moslem law, but the manner of allocating the property of husband and wife is not the Moslem one of property division but derives instead from the Indonesian tradition of community of property in marriage. This subordination of Moslem law to local tradition is not limited to popular usage. The religious judge himself, in order to interpret traditional law when confronted by an argument on this question, assumes the existence of a partnership contract between husband and wife. Local custom prevails in other respects also. At the conclusion of the wedding ceremony the husband utters a formula of conditional repudiation: he promises

<sup>14</sup>A *waqf* is generally a religious and charitable foundation privately instituted.



to renounce his wife in the event of his remaining absent from home too long, failing to provide for her support, and so forth. This procedure allows the wife an opportunity for divorce which under Shafi'i law is very difficult to obtain. And, as we have seen, even in the most staunchly Mohammedan regions the people recognize only the traditional law of succession.

The Dutch have interfered very little in domestic legal matters. In 1926 a circular called upon the proper authorities to discourage, if possible, the marrying of young girls although premature marriages were actually infrequent. Marriages must be performed by a competent, government-appointed official who keeps a marriage-register. A union consummated without his assistance is valid in private law but exposes the celebrants to legal prosecution. In 1937 the government published a plan which would have compelled couples to declare themselves married under Dutch law—which implied the prohibition of polygamy. All Moslem groups proved extremely hostile to this scheme, and it was withdrawn. Nationalist circles, on the other hand, received it with some favor since it was considered to be more in harmony with the demands of modern civilization. At last in 1937 religious justice was thoroughly re-organized. In Java the "priestly councils", sitting under the presidency of the *penghoulou* (director of the mosque), are no longer appellate bodies; a Moslem Appellate Court has been established. The jurisdiction, moreover, of the Moslem religious judge has been radically reduced: in particular, he is no longer legally competent to decide cases involving succession. This change was made without much protest from the parties concerned, for it abolished a procedure which did not conform to the legal beliefs of native litigants. These questions of Moslem law in Indonesia are so different from those in North Africa that they are of little use in discussing the situation in the latter colony.

The attitude of the authorities toward tradition, however, is rather instructive: their aim is to respect tradition as far as possible without codifying it. But it would be interesting to know whether this attitude is constant and whether the native members of the *Landraad* (district court), presided over by a European and assisted by a Moslem religious adviser, always make decisions in the spirit of Indonesian tradition. In theory it appears that the preservation of this tradition is desirable on two counts. The first is the influence

of Cornelis van Vollenhoven himself who always evidenced a particular affection, which I consider excessive, for native tradition; he even wished to make Europeans conform to it!<sup>15</sup> This sentimental point of view—he was a convinced anti-colonialist—has been adopted by government circles and by the officials of the Native Affairs Service: the development of the natives is dangerous; therefore, leave them as they are. I learned with some surprise that in these government spheres van Vollenhoven is much more admired than Snouck Hurgronje and that criticism of the former's views is hardly tolerated. Then, the Dutch absolutely refuse to admit that the European legal system may be superior to the native, or that it might even be wise under certain circumstances to substitute the European for the native code. Here we are touching upon a first manifestation of the Dutch colonial spirit—we shall note others—namely, the fact that the transmission of European social institutions from their mother country to the natives of their colonies does not interest the Dutch. The superiority of these institutions leaves them indifferent. If a Dutch woman marries a native today, he may cast her off tomorrow or may legally wed three additional wives. Who cares?

#### IV. THE BUREAU FOR NATIVE AFFAIRS

Having discussed some aspects of Dutch Moslem policy, we are now ready to examine its administration and the considerations which influence it. First of all, how is the policy administered? In addition to the ordinary administrative bodies, which require no special comment and which we shall meet in later pages,<sup>16</sup> there is the *Kantoor voor Inlandsche Zaken* or Bureau for Native Affairs which demands our full attention.

In the Netherlands Indies the *Adviseur voor Inlandsche Zaken* or Adviser on Native Affairs enjoys special privileges.<sup>17</sup> Appointed by the governor-general, he is under the former's sole and direct authority.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See his proposal to a legal congress, reprinted in *Het Adatrecht van Nederlandsch India*, Volume III, Leiden.

<sup>16</sup> See Chapter IV.

<sup>17</sup> The following five paragraphs are a translation of a note with which at my request, Dr. Pijper, Adviser on Native Affairs, was good enough to provide me.

<sup>18</sup> However, his department is, I believe, responsible—at least from the hierarchical point of view—not to the governor's cabinet, but to the Department of Public Education and Religion. (Author's note.)

The work of this adviser is scientific in nature. He is obliged on the one hand to study especially whatever religious, political or "cultural" movements may be afoot in native society, and on the other to keep informed of currents in the Indonesian Arab colony and of spiritual trends in the Moslem world at home and abroad. In particular, he must pay attention to whatever affects the pilgrimage to Mecca. Finally, he is also obliged to study local languages and ethnography sufficiently to permit him to perform his duties adequately.

All of this scientific research has a practical purpose: to enlighten the government and to furnish it with information about the religious, political and "cultural" movements of the native and Arab elements of the population. The Adviser is empowered to offer suggestions to the government, to the heads of various administrative departments, to governors and to residents. He is consulted on all questions bearing upon native society.

From time to time, in order to keep abreast of current trends in native society, the adviser, who lives in Batavia, travels about Java and through the Indian Archipelago. He maintains personal contacts with people in all circles of native society—with political and religious leaders, native chiefs, Javanese regents, native officers, Moslem scholars, Arabs and so on. He attends native meetings and conferences on political or religious matters, and he keeps an eye on the activities of native associations.

The adviser has a certain number of assistants—European officials, natives and Arabs—who constitute the Bureau for Native Affairs. For fifty years the government has always chosen an orientalist for the position of adviser. Working with him are usually two or more other orientalists who rank as his immediate aides. The latter are generally Europeans, but in one instance a Javanese scholar who had studied at Leiden was an assistant-adviser.<sup>19</sup> The most famous adviser was Professor Snouck Hurgronje, who occupied the position for seventeen years (1889-1906). It was he who laid the foundations of Dutch Moslem policy and thus exerted a great influence on all government measures affecting the natives. His successors have carried on in the same spirit. The Bureau for Native Affairs has made many administrative suggestions which

<sup>19</sup> Professor Houssein Djajadiningrat, today a member of the Council of India. (Author's note.)

have helped to determine the policy of the Indian government. Thanks to the Bureau, the government has at its command a scientific group to which it can turn for practical advice.

Any attempt to appraise the value of this administrative body<sup>20</sup> should make one point quite clear: the scientific ability of the different successive advisers has been indisputable. There is, to be sure, no longer a Snouck Hurgronje at the head of the Bureau, nor could there be another like him. As Chailley said, "God makes few men in his mold." Genius cannot be made to order. Yet even if we assume that Snouck Hurgronje did not found a school—and evidently he did not wish to do so, if we may judge by the opinion which his numerous students in the Indies have of him as a teacher—the fact remains that his successors have been quite equal to the scientific problems with which they have had to cope. From the few studies which have been published we can imagine what treasures for the Islamologist and ethnographer are stored in the Bureau archives collected by scholars from the most immediate sources.<sup>21</sup> If I were allowed one wish in this connection, it would be that the Indian government authorize the publication of Snouck Hurgronje's opinions and reports, or at least those which do not bear upon controversial subjects. Such publication would be of great service to science.<sup>22</sup>

The Bureau for Native Affairs is typically Dutch. The Netherlands generally, and particularly in their colonies, pursue a cautious and extremely precise policy; they do not like to overlook a single detail and will not act until they have thoroughly examined each situation. In a matter as delicate as the religious question, for example, the utmost circumspection must be employed. Doubtless because of their history the Dutch are fearful of committing a blunder in this domain, and hence in their colonies they must be reassured by an organization of scientific accuracy. In another respect the Bureau is equally characteristic of Dutch colonial policy.

<sup>20</sup> There is a similar Bureau for Far Eastern (mainly Chinese) Affairs.

<sup>21</sup> It may be worth noting in passing that when an official of the Bureau for Native Affairs leaves his position, he composes a *memorandum upon surrendering authority* which is of the greatest assistance to his successor and which very frequently contains observations of the utmost importance and interest. This report is distributed to the various hierarchical chiefs. While I was engaged in research in Lombok, I made considerable use of some of these reports. They are one of the excellent institutions of Dutch colonial administration.

<sup>22</sup> The government is exceedingly timorous about publishing the archives. They are inaccessible beyond the year 1827. This is another very characteristic aspect of Dutch Colonial administration.

Since the Dutch wish to be omniscient, it is only from experts that they will accept advice on those delicate and complex problems which affect their policy—and this is equally true of details which other people may consider petty but which the Dutch think are of the utmost importance. In other words, because of the very nature of Dutch Moslem policy, the Bureau plays a vital role in colonial administration. But it is one thing to recognize that this is so, and another to say that it is the only possible policy or even the best.

As a matter of fact, others do exist. In British India, for example, no one bothers about the numerous Moslem questions which in the Indies would occupy the entire attention of the Bureau for Native Affairs. In the whole central administration there is not one Moslem specialist. In New Delhi I had the great honor of an interview with the State Secretary for the Defense of India because I had expressed a desire to talk with an Islamologist and because one of his friends, recalling that he had once governed Moslem provinces, thought that perhaps he knew something about Moslem affairs. I have often related this anecdote in the Netherlands Indies, and my audience has invariably missed the point. What would happen if the president of a *Landraad* (district court) should find his assisting Moslem judges objecting to sitting during Ramadhan? An urgent telegram would be dispatched to the Bureau to secure a *fetwa*;<sup>23</sup> the works of learned men of law, not forgetting the commentators and glossers, would be consulted; and finally the Bureau would deliver its opinion. Here, as Taine would have it, are two characteristic approaches: they portray two policies and thus two mentalities.

The French system—I shall have to reiterate this in other connections—is midway between the British and the Dutch, but it is closer to the former. There is no doubt that at least in Algeria people are better informed on Moslem questions than the British are in India. But they are, and with reason, less anxious than the Dutch to know the decisions of the *ulema* and *fouqaha* (the wise men of Islam), nor do they feel the need of a special and independent organization to study these questions. The three policies are unlike, and the agencies which execute them are differently planned because they are adapted to dissimilar needs.

<sup>23</sup> An authoritative opinion delivered in answer to a question of law.

When, for instance, we find the Dutch administration asking the *Adviseur* for his opinion about how native officials should dress;<sup>24</sup> when we observe the latter drawing up reports to determine whether, according to the religious Law, trade in snakeskins is *haram* (forbidden) or merely *makrouh* (condemned);<sup>25</sup> or when we see the administration composing an exegesis and sifting Moslem casuistry to determine how far from each other two cathedral mosques may be built,<sup>26</sup> we have reason to wonder whether all this is necessary or judicious, and we are little inclined to recommend this policy for British India or Algeria although it may be well adapted to the needs of Indonesia.

So much for international comparisons. We must now consider the Bureau for Native Affairs in its own environment, where its existence is quite justified. In questioning whether it is an unmixed blessing, I realize that I am treading on dangerous ground, yet I must note two serious reservations.

As to the first, we have seen that in the memorandum with which the Bureau provided me<sup>27</sup> emphasis is laid on the scientific character of the Bureau. This is quite correct. Sometimes, but not invariably, the head of the Bureau is not just a scientist but also capable of acting on his own initiative and responsibility—a man familiar with not merely the Arabic texts and the schools of Moslem orthodoxy, but also with the Indonesian masses who are often little affected by Islam and to whom the Arabic commentaries are meaningless scrawls. Such an official is in a position to give advice with greater assurance than are those who impute to the *Minhaj-el-Talibin*<sup>28</sup> and the glosses of Bajouri<sup>29</sup> an importance which, in my most humble opinion, these texts do not possess in Indonesia. I distrust dry-as-dust scholars instinctively because I know the breed and I think their practical intelligence is limited. I would suggest, on this account, that the adviser be selected from among the former administrators of the *Binnenlandsch Bestuur* or Department of Interior Administration. He should be one of the outstanding members of the Department who, having given

<sup>24</sup> Snouck Hurgronje, *Verspreide Geschriften*, Volume IV, Leiden, 1922.

<sup>25</sup> Pijper, *Fragmenta Islamica*, Leiden, 1934.

<sup>26</sup> V. Ronkel, "De twee moskeeën en de 'adat'," *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, IV.

<sup>27</sup> See above, page 11 *et seq.*

<sup>28</sup> The most important Digest of Shafi'i jurisprudence.

<sup>29</sup> Ibrahim ben Mohammed ben Ahmed al-Bajouri, a famous Shafi'i commentator.

evidence of his qualities as a practical man, also had the best training as an orientalist. He would not need to be a peerless Arabist but rather a man of broad outlook with a wide grasp of affairs, for among his colleagues he would find experts qualified to give him technical advice. The future adviser might even be required to broaden his knowledge by travel in other colonies. If he came to North Africa, for example, he could become acquainted with a real Arab country and learn how it can be governed without excessive recourse to Mohammedan religious law!

As to the second reservation, an organization like the Bureau for Native Affairs necessarily suffers from a weakness for which I can see no remedy. If the adviser is asked for advice on important questions of practical policy without being responsible for the performance of what he recommends, a conflict may arise between him and the administration, that is, the governor-general. Then one of two things will occur: if the adviser has an independent nature, he will be ignored; if he is a boot-licker, his advice will be worthless. I do not believe that Snouck Hurgronje approved of all that was done during his last years in the Indies. And more recently there has been an adviser whose advice was systematically rejected by a governor-general whose policy was diametrically opposed to his. During his regime the Bureau was useless.

It is difficult to ascertain the general political complexion of the Bureau because it is almost wholly lost in the ramifications of Dutch Moslem policy. We shall meet with it again shortly. For the present it is enough to note that it has several serious weaknesses.

For all of the reasons which we have been discussing, the *Kantoor voor Inlandsche Zaken*, whose usefulness in the Indies I recognize, is one of those Dutch colonial institutions—and there are others like it—which are more impressive at a distance than near at hand. I went to the Indies with the idea of advocating a similar organization for North Africa. French native administration is most certainly far from perfect; it can and must be improved. But I do not believe that the creation of an *Adviseur* on Moslem affairs is indicated—far from it. On the whole, the Algerian system, in which the director of native affairs is supposed to have both practical administrative ability and a sufficient know-

ledge of Moslem problems,<sup>30</sup> seems preferable: in this case the adviser is responsible for the execution of the measures which he recommends. And since, moreover, French colonial administration neglects many of the details which seem important to Dutch administrators, the Bureau would not have much to do in North Africa. I do not pretend that numerous reforms are not necessary in the French colonies, but I do believe that they must be sought in a direction other than that followed by the Dutch. In this connection the recent establishment in Paris of a School for Advanced Administrative Moslem Studies is a most interesting experiment.

#### V. PRESENT TRENDS OF MOSLEM POLICY

Taken as a whole, Dutch Moslem policy has beyond all shadow of doubt been extremely successful. Here is a colonial nation which governs, almost at the antipodes, a body of Moslems six or seven times more numerous than the inhabitants of the mother country, and content on the whole with the religious regime under which they live. At the time of my arrival in the Indies, the Moslems had only two complaints. One of these had to do with the *slachtenbelasting*, a tax on the slaughter of animals. Their request for modification of the legal provisions governing religious sacrifices was granted, and thus at my departure there remained a single point of friction which arose over the *gourou-ordonnantie*.<sup>31</sup> This desirable state of affairs redounds to the credit of Dutch policy and argues in favor of its methods, especially those of the Bureau for Native Affairs; in large part it is attributable to the activity and skill of the leaders of the Bureau. Yet I am not convinced that this Moslem policy merits only admiration. In fact, I consider its attitude toward one vital question either dangerous or incomprehensible. I am referring to its treatment of the question of reform, which presents one of the most ticklish aspects of the whole Moslem problem. The constantly increasing importance of reformist tendencies in the entire Moslem world and the consequent awakening of Moslem consciousness are indisputable facts

<sup>30</sup> For example, Luciani's translations from the Arabic are first-rate. In the Indies the director of the Department of Interior Administration need not be a specialist in Moslem affairs.

<sup>31</sup> An ordinance of 1925 which obliges religious teachers to register with the authorities.



pregnant with danger for the dominion of European nations over their Moslem subjects.

It is important to distinguish between three quite different aspects of the question. There is, first, the theological angle which does not interest the European authorities in the least. It is immaterial whether their Moslem subjects accept the *taqlid*,<sup>32</sup> or whether they wish to interpret the sources of religious law for themselves or prefer to recognize the authority of one of the four orthodox schools. Next there is the ethical aspect. I believe that ethical reform should be encouraged. It wars against drunkenness, superstition, promiscuity and ignorance, and endeavors to educate the masses, especially the women. These are highly laudable aims, deserving the support of the authorities. Finally, and unfortunately, there is the political angle. Essentially respectable as reform *qua* reform may be, it is undeniable that its propaganda is, at least in its effects, anti-European and anti-colonial. Without laying particular stress upon this problem, it must be said that it is an extremely difficult one for the European governments concerned to solve. Certainly I have no ready solution to offer.

The attitude which France has adopted in Algeria toward this new current of Moslem thought indicates that in this respect her policy is no more positive than are my ideas. France really has no Moslem policy. Her official attitude is an ill-natured and quarrelsome neutrality, a semi-hostility which does not dare to show itself too openly.<sup>33</sup> She does not know what she wants and has no course of action. Such is not the position of the Netherlands. They have a clear policy regarding reform and hence have made more progress in this direction than France. The only question is whether their policy is a good one. It consists in not putting obstacles in the way of reformist propaganda. It has doubtless been successful if by that one means that Indonesian Moslem reformists, *as reformists*, are quite content with their government: they could hardly be otherwise. As much cannot be said for North Africa.

The Dutch have been well advised not to disturb or persecute the *Mohammadiyya*. To my mind such interference would be

<sup>32</sup> i.e., adhere to conventions already established by Moslem jurisprudence.

<sup>33</sup> It resembles the attitude of the Dutch authorities toward the nationalist schools of the *Taman Siswo*.

dangerous and fruitless.<sup>84</sup> I believe that they are inclined, in their own interest, to exaggerate their policy of non-interference. I have no right to cite definite cases with which I am familiar, but the fact is that the administration has shown that it gladly supports the cause of reform when the interests of the latter are at stake. What is even more serious is that those who are influential in determining government policy occasionally advocate measures which clearly demonstrate to the entire Moslem world that the Netherlands wish to throw open their colonies to every modern Arab influence. Such behavior would make the hair of the French governors of North Africa stand on end.

Of course, I am not competent to discuss this ticklish subject, and it may be that the Dutch policy is excellent. In my opinion, nevertheless, it is either blind or incomprehensible. It is blind if the Dutch governors imagine for one moment that the reformists are at heart less anti-Dutch than the nationalists who make no capital of Islam. In the long run their activities are quite as dangerous. There is a certain administrative building in Batavia where some thought should be given to what Snouck Hurgronje used to say so often: a government of unbelievers is by its very nature illegal in the eyes of Islam. It is quite true that the *Mohammadiyya* does not meddle with politics—but its members do. In the Menangkabau region among others, the names of members of political groups proscribed or persecuted by the government are enrolled in this association. I do not think that religion has succeeded in diminishing appreciably their subversive activities. Dutch authorities like to think that reform is not dangerous. Yet all of these Moslem religious schools spread anti-European teaching. Prohibition of the teaching of the *djihad* or religious war against unbelievers is only superficially effective. I remember that in the days when my schoolmates and I were translating the *De Germania*, our teacher had us omit a paragraph which was considered dangerous to our virtue. That is the only Latin passage which we ever prepared without having been expressly obliged to do so. Administrative laws are powerless against Moslem religious teaching which impresses upon students the conviction that they are the equals of their rulers. Then why let the masses of the

<sup>84</sup> The Dutch do not realize that the same consideration applies to nationalism as well. In other words, they treat identical things in different ways.

people believe that such teaching is being encouraged by the government?

On the other hand, if the authorities are not blind, their policy is incomprehensible. Do they hope to gain time, to divide the opposition by supporting what appears to be the less dangerous wing, in this case the Moslem reformists, in order to deal more easily with the other, purely nationalist wing? This is a possible policy, but it will create enormous future difficulties. Moreover, divided though these parties may be, they are all agreed on one point: all are anti-Dutch. The whole situation is difficult to understand. Numerous indications suggest that the government dangerously underestimates the anti-Dutch activity of the Moslem movement and exaggerates that of the nationalists. It has always seemed to me to be behaving illogically in encouraging the *Mohammadiyah* schools while persecuting those of the *Taman Siswo*.

The extremely favorable light in which the authorities view everything that is Arabic or concerns Moslem orthodoxy, reform and the like, is probably due in part to Snouck Hurgronje's posthumous influence. It certainly explains the situation in the Bureau for Native Affairs, where this attitude is especially apparent. Doubtless Snouck Hurgronje himself saw behind the veil of official Islam and was familiar with the real social life of the Indonesian masses which is often so little sensitive to Moslem influence;<sup>35</sup> but, greatly daring, I would say that he himself somewhat exaggerated the importance of the orthodox Arab element. In any event, his successors have very definitely committed this error. Taking Indonesian Islam as a whole, my direct impression of it was that it is less affected by Arab influences and less orthodox than I had been led to believe by Snouck Hurgronje's books and especially those of his successors. The intensive training in Islamology which orientalists received at Leiden under Snouck Hurgronje's supervision, the great demands which he made especially in the field of Arabic, and their intensive study of Arabic texts naturally make these orientalists feel more at home in orthodox Arab circles in the Indies. This state of affairs does not exist in North Africa,

<sup>35</sup> After having been in the Indies for just a few months, he published in the daily *De Locomotief* an admirable description of Javanese life, which is so little affected by Islam. For nearly forty years afterward, until the publication of the *Verspreide Geschriften*, Snouck Hurgronje's marvelous *Brieven van een Wedono-Pensioen* remained almost inaccessible.

where, however, two-thirds of the population are Arab. For my part I have always regarded this Dutch attitude with astonishment, for Javanese society, comprising half of the Indonesian Moslem population, has preserved a culture so Hindu in character. I was even more surprised to find that sinological studies are neglected in the Indies where Chinese play such an important rôle. In the Dutch colonies the policy doubtless is to teach those who will make decisions, and those who will give advice, to see things as they are. But the framework of such studies should be enlarged so that realities may be seen from a somewhat less Arab and Moslem point of view. I offer these considerations for what they may be worth.

On the whole, the Dutch do have a Moslem policy. The difficulty lies in determining whether it is a good and a wise policy. Certain of its aspects suggest that it is neither good nor wise. Twenty-five years from now, when reform will have shown its true colors, it will be possible to decide whether the Dutch governors or the author were correct.

After coming this far, the reader will realize that Moslem reform is only one of the new social and political currents agitating the Indies, and that it is not even the most important one in contemporary politics, since no serious conflict exists between the government and the reformist associations. To conclude that all is going smoothly in the Netherlands Indies would be to misconstrue the whole Indonesian problem. Moslem questions in the Indies are not nearly so important as one might at first sight be led to believe. It is necessary, therefore, to extend our investigation beyond the peaceful confines of Moslem policy.

CHAPTER II  
THE RISE AND REPRESSION OF INDONESIAN  
NATIONALISM

I. THE DAWN OF NATIONALISM AND THE MOSLEM PERIOD

IT SHOULD be clearly understood that, like the Moslem reform movements, the nationalist movements with which we shall have to deal have the support of only a very small minority of the native population of the Indies. In this respect North Africa and Indonesia are alike. It is very difficult to determine how many natives have even the foggiest notion of politics and do not, for example, confuse the word "autonomy" with a new make of automobile.<sup>1</sup> At least ninety-five per cent of the people—and probably many more—are unaware that the question of autonomy exists and, what is more, that the officials who govern them in Java are only agents of a foreign country.<sup>2</sup> The typical native, after all, is interested only in knowing where his next meal is coming from. And so it is that the representatives of the "Indonesian nation" have the support of only a very small fraction—possibly a few hundred thousand—of the sixty million natives in the Indies. I shall not repeat what has already been said about the causes underlying the development of the nationalist or extremist movements, because they are the same whether or not they are affected by Islam. It will be sufficient to describe the four periods of their development.

*The Early Period (1908-17).* The first natives' association, the *Boedi Oetomo*, was founded in May 1908 by some natives who were studying for the medical service. This association drew its members from the youth of the better native class who renounced

<sup>1</sup> M. W. F. Treub, *Indie's Toekomst*, Haarlem, 1924, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> E. F. Gautier relates in one of his books that one day an Arab came to discuss the strange idea of one of his friends who believed that there had once been a time when the French had not yet appeared in Algeria. In the Indies the natives find it hard to believe that Europeans govern. I have heard of the case of a native of Bali who, having crossed the strait separating his isle from Java, was most astonished at not finding this island populated almost wholly by white people, since the whites come to Bali from Java.

administrative careers for more occidental professions. It developed rapidly, especially among the young intellectuals, and, it should be noted, originally had no Moslem leanings. As early as October 1908 the *Boedi Oetomo* held its first congress at Djokja, where the moderates discomfited the more radical element, and the regent of Karanganyar was elected to the presidency of the association. Thus the *Boedi Oetomo* speedily came under the influence of cautious officers who, though deeply devoted to the cause of native education, were not anxious to become involved in any trouble with the government. By 1909 the association had a membership of ten thousand.

Shortly afterwards the *Sarikat Islam* was founded. Its more radical tendencies gave a new impetus to the *Boedi Oetomo*, which continued to support the government without, however, relinquishing its demands for certain reforms. Other associations also were founded, among them the *Union of Regents* which was extremely moderate.

*The Sarikat Islam Period (1917-27).* Toward the end of the World War a period of restlessness set in, and during the next ten years nationalism emerged in its coat of many colors as an aggressive, more or less bolshevist element. This development ended with the disturbances of the winter of 1926-7.

The first warning of what was to come was given by employees of the state pawnshop who, with considerable encouragement from *Sarikat Islam* headquarters, staged a strike as a demonstration of strength. Unions sprang up like toadstools, and in 1919 a central trade union organization was established. A wave of strikes followed. There were strikes on the Semarang-Cheribon tramway, on the Sumatra East-Coast railway, in the Soerabaya printing office and tailors' shops, etc. A strike in the sugar industry, the stronghold of European capital, caused a considerable sensation; it was conducted by the *P.F.B.* (factory workers' association) in close conjunction with the central trade union organization and the *Sarikat Islam*.

Thanks to government pressure on the manufacturing interests, the agitators at first met with considerable success. Even those in high authority were of the opinion that the working conditions of the natives were bad. Conditions improved. But the *P.F.B.* had more ambitious plans: it announced a general strike for the

end of 1920. On this occasion the government adopted not only a different attitude, but measures which prevented the strike. During this whole period there were various unrelated disturbances, of which the most serious was the murder of the controleur de Kat Angelino at Toli-Toli. The year 1921 was quiet. But since the radical elements in the *Sarikat Islam* had been expelled from the party, the position of the dyed-in-the-wool communist group was clarified during the next five years. Communism played the leading rôle in the subsequent disturbances.

## II. THE COMMUNIST PHASE

*The Communist Period.* The year 1920 witnessed the establishment of the *Partai Kommunist Indonesia* (the Indian communist party), which was none other than the old Indian social-democrat party of pre-war days, to which were added the revolutionary elements of the *Sarikat Islam*. In 1923 the *Sarikat Islam*, joining the *Partai Kommunist Indonesia*, adopted a policy of non-cooperation which it has maintained to the present day.

In 1922 disturbances broke out again. There was a serious strike in the state pawnshops. Although the government remained in control of the situation, the discharged workers swelled the ranks of the revolutionary party. In 1923 there was a more serious strike among transport workers, especially in Semarang. On this occasion the authorities under Governor-General Fock took effective measures: the right of assembly was restricted, inciting to strike was made an offense, railways were given military protection and strikers were disbanded. The leader Semaoen was first imprisoned and later permitted to leave the Indies for Moscow. The movement was thus repressed, but not before the *Partai Kommunist Indonesia* had increased its influence in the unions.

In the middle of 1925 a new rash of strikes broke out, particularly in Semarang and Soerabaya. Once again the government intervened by restricting the right of assembly and by deporting or restraining some of the ringleaders. Henceforth the disturbances tended to assume an increasingly illegal character. In 1923 Solo was the scene of incendiary fires and attempted bombings.

In 1924 the *Partai Kommunist Indonesia* held a meeting at Djokja, where it was determined to employ organized terrorism, thus

appealing to the criminal element of the country.<sup>3</sup> At that time the organization comprised 1,140 members of the communist party in 36 divisions or cells and was the superstructure of the 31 *Sarikat-rajats* or Soviets which had a total membership of 31,000. By May 1926 the number of communist cells had reached 65. It is said that these criminals were commissioned to obtain funds for the party by means of extortion or theft, to recruit party members by force and to serve as shock troops at the proper time. Their activities were part of a plan which included the multiplication of communist cells and the intensification of propaganda. The masses of the Indies are even less well equipped than the European proletariat to understand the intellectual philosophy of Marxism and Leninism. To bring these doctrines down to the appropriate intellectual level, nonsensical propaganda was employed which promised, for example, that in a communist state there would be no taxes.

De Graeff succeeded Fock as governor-general in September 1926. Two months later revolutionary disorders broke out without the authorities having got wind of them. In this instance the latter were clearly at fault. On the night of November 12, 1926, while a state ball was in progress at the governor's palace in Weltevreden, armed bands roamed the streets of Batavia, killing one policeman and injuring others. One of these bands made an abortive attack upon the prison at Glodok, and another succeeded in occupying the Telephone Exchange for some time.<sup>4</sup> Two days later order had been restored in Batavia, but in several other places in Java, especially in the west, other disorders broke out at the same time. By the end of the month order was almost entirely reestablished. Taken as a whole, this eruption was not, in my opinion, particularly serious; vigorous preventive measures could have averted it.

Early in 1927 other revolutionary attempts disturbed western Sumatra, but at no time was the government seriously embarrassed. The disorders were no more than inconsequential skirmishes. The

<sup>3</sup>I am following only official sources which it is obviously impossible for me to contradict or confirm.

<sup>4</sup>According to one extremely well-informed person, the occupation of the Central Telephone Exchange lasted longer than just a few minutes because the authorities refused to allow a grenade to be thrown into the building from fear of destroying the equipment. What curious precautions when the "communist peril" threatens!



most serious incident occurred at Siloengkang, where seven revolutionists were killed and two detectives wounded. After several days order was restored. In 1908 and 1909 this same region had been the scene of rather serious disturbances. On June 24, 1908, fifty-eight natives were killed at Palembang, and on May 20, 1909, forty-five were killed or wounded at Oelakan.<sup>5</sup> In view of this history it seems impossible to accept the allegations of the Dutch government, that the colony suffered serious risks in 1927 and that it was snatched from the jaws of communism. Compared with the disorders which so often have bloodied the colonial possessions of Great Britain and France, these appear insignificant. The importance which I, like so many other persons, had attributed to them while I was in Europe, I found very slight in actual fact. It is only unfortunate that the authorities permitted the disorders to arise.<sup>6</sup>

This time, however, the government adopted extremely severe measures. Without great difficulty it succeeded in completely weeding out bolshevism from the colonies—a praiseworthy measure. It is only fair to observe that this extirpation of the international revolutionary movement was effected by de Graeff's government which Dutch reactionaries were accustomed to accuse of weakness. Their accusation was justified in so far as the government was lenient where true nationalism was concerned. But it is worth noting that although the imperial nations should make common cause in everywhere opposing bolshevism in all of its manifestations, the question whether the Netherlands Indies will enjoy a status similar to that of the Philippines or British India, or whether its government is to resemble that of present-day Indo-China does not in the least affect the colonial security of France or England.<sup>7</sup>

To check communist activities the government proceeded to make mass arrests. Of the 13,000 persons involved, 4,500 were speedily imprisoned and 1,308 were interned in a camp specially

<sup>5</sup> M. Joustra, *Menangkabau*, Leiden, 1920, p. 89.

<sup>6</sup> The same stricture is applicable to the French authorities at the time of the Constantinian riots in 1934. In both cases the authorities were the culprits, and, to my knowledge, no steps have been taken in either country against the guilty parties.

<sup>7</sup> These two considerations, the defense against bolshevism and the defense of the various Dutch interests in the Indies do not overlap. Neither British India nor the Philippines are apt to become bolshevist because they have received some degree of autonomy. Whether such autonomy is good or bad is immaterial. But the present reactionary policy of the Dutch in the Indies is intended merely to defend their interests. It is only in consequence that it is anti-bolshevist.

built in Upper Digoel in New Guinea. Since then there has been, properly speaking, no communist movement in the Netherlands Indies, at least not above ground; but it is difficult to determine to what extent the Third International has tried or is still trying to play a part. In July 1928, however, an Indonesian labor association (the *Sarikat Koaem Boeroeh Indonesia*) was founded which maintained contacts abroad. Within a year its leaders were deported. In addition, an Indonesian communist, Roestem Effendi, sits in the lower chamber of the Netherlands States General.<sup>8</sup>

### III. TRUE NATIONALISM

*The Nationalist Period.* Although nationalism had originally manifested itself chiefly in the creation of the *Sarikat Islam*, an association colored even though slightly by Islam, and though afterwards the malcontents had flocked to the bolshevist banner, it now assumed a more distinctly national appearance. Today the catchword is Indonesian unity, and to that end Great Indonesia, *Indonesia Raja*, is glorified and the national anthem bears its name.<sup>9</sup> Great Indonesia is merely a euphemism for Free Indonesia, *Indonesia Merdeka*. The majority of those who openly refer to this idea are "non-cooperators."

During 1927 the National Indonesian Party (*P.N.I.*) was organized at Bandoeng. On the one hand it enjoyed close relations with an organization of Indonesian students whose headquarters were at The Hague, whence contact was established with the anti-colonial league in Berlin. On the other hand it established in the Indies a federation of nationalist organizations (the *Permoefakatan Perhimpoeanan-Permoefakatan Politik Kebangsaan Indonesia*). The guiding spirit of this movement was the Javanese

<sup>8</sup> The incident of the mutiny aboard *De Zeven Provinciën* (Admiral de Ruyter's ship) does not, properly speaking, enter into the history of Indonesian nationalist movements. In that instance two elements, native and European, made common cause. The incident boils down to this. Swayed by socialist influences and in protest against a reduction in pay, the crew mutinied. "The attitude of the officers and junior officers was not what it should have been," and the vessel put out to sea on February 4, 1933. For six days its commander pursued it aboard a small boat. The government ordered an aviator to drop a bomb before the bow of the ship by way of warning, but the bomb fell on the ship, and men were killed and wounded. The terrified crew thereupon surrendered. I have taken this information from a discussion of the incident in the *Indisch Genootschap* (India Society), March 10, 1933. The quotation is from the *Handelingen* (Proceedings), p. 64.

<sup>9</sup> The flag is red and white with the superimposed head of a *banteng* or wild buffalo, symbolic of indomitable strength.

engineer Soekarno. Before long the *P.N.I.* boasted ten thousand members. In 1929 the government decided to intervene, and the *P.N.I.* was suspended by the court which sentenced Soekarno to a prison term of four years. With the *P.N.I.* once dissolved, three other organizations were formed, for such is the monotonous history of parties in the Netherlands Indies: they are formed, then transformed, divided, merged or finally destroyed, whether by the courts or by some other factor. One of these organizations, the *Partai Rd'jat Indonesia*, was comparatively moderate; it sought dominion status through legislative reform. The other two, the *Perhimpoean Indonesia* (one of the earliest nationalist societies) and the *P.N.I.* were controlled by Mohammed Hatta and Soekarno, both of whom were interned. Soekarno was pardoned in 1932 by Governor-General de Graeff. Upon the expiration of the latter's term in office, he was succeeded by de Jongh, a former director of Royal Dutch (1931-6),<sup>10</sup> who governed the country with an iron hand in response to the demands of the Dutch colonials banded together in a "Patriots' Club."<sup>11</sup> The present governor, Tjarda van Starckenborgh-Stachouwer, is doubtless a man of more liberal views; yet the government's reaction against nationalism shows no signs of weakening.

At this point it seems necessary to consider first the organization of the nationalist groups and then the principles and the practices of the Dutch reactionary regime.

#### IV. PRESENT NATIONALIST TENDENCIES

In discussing the present character of Indonesian organizations, it is necessary to repeat what has already been said about the Moslem groups. From the political point of view communist tendencies need be mentioned only in so far as they still exist and are in contact either with Roestem Effendi in the Netherlands or with foreign countries by way of Singapore. As a matter of fact, the *P.N.I.* still survives even though its meetings are forbidden and its members hunted by the police. Some of the licensed organizations are "non-cooperative," like the *Sarikat Islam*<sup>12</sup> and

<sup>10</sup> Such a remarkably indicative appointment would be absolutely inconceivable in France—and I should think in England also—even under the most reactionary sort of government.

<sup>11</sup> This was an opposition group organized during de Graeff's government.

<sup>12</sup> Less the fraction which broke away in 1937.

the *Persatoean Moslim Indonesia*;<sup>18</sup> others are cooperative, and the most important of these is the *Parindra*, which was formed in 1936 by the amalgamation of the *Boedi Oetomo* and the *P.B.I.* of Soerabaya. It suffered a great loss in the death of its leader Dr. Soetomo in 1938. Its present chief is the regent of Solo. Although its ultimate goal is a free Indonesia, it is nevertheless willing to take part in state affairs. The *Gerindo* is more advanced; it has been organized but recently and is willing to cooperate. The *Pasoendan*, a Sundanese organization with headquarters in Batavia, has been unwilling to merge with the *Parindra*. Among the native Christians, both Catholic and Protestant, there are a number of groups with nationalist sympathies. In every case the organizations which have been mentioned, whether or not they are fundamentally religious, nationalist, Christian or Moslem, invariably share the same ideal—an emancipated Indonesia. Within the union domain there are associations composed of officials, teachers, tramway and railway employees, etc., but none of these is influential. In addition there are organizations for native women and for children (like the scout groups). In this particular province there is rather stiff opposition between nationalists and Moslems.

As I remarked earlier, the striking feature of Indonesian nationalism is its amorphous character: groups are forever in the process of forming, vanishing and reforming. Usually the cause of this restlessness is not public authority alone, but rather the psychology of the nationalists themselves. The great success of the *Sarikat Islam* and its subsequent decline is a fair illustration of this curious state of affairs.

Especially noteworthy is the *Taman Siswo* (literally "people's home"), presided over by Ki Hadjar Dewantoro, a member of the Javanese aristocracy and a former militant nationalist. Today he has withdrawn from politics in order to devote himself to the cause of national education. In certain respects the *Taman Siswo* resembles the *Mohammadiyya*. Dewantoro plans to give the children of the different regions of Indonesia an education in keeping with their native culture. He has established more than two hundred schools which are run on simple lines and, of course,

<sup>18</sup> Or *Permi*, which exists practically only in Sumatra. I must also mention the *Partindo*, which disappeared in 1936. The history of these groups is hard to follow.

without government subsidy.<sup>14</sup> The great majority of these schools are located in Java, but there are some on other islands, where the education and general training are in each case adapted to the local culture. The authorities are extremely suspicious of the movement. I thought Ki Hadjar Dewantoro a remarkable person. Although the Dutch are not aware of this, it is fortunate for them that Indonesia has no outstanding leader or political party such as one finds in British India. There is no Gandhi or Congress Party in Indonesia because the groups are too conflicting in their aims and the leaders too jealous of each other and too narrow-minded to permit cooperation. Conversations which I have had with different party leaders have convinced me on this point. The question to what extent this nationalism is purely Indonesian in character is interesting psychologically and sociologically, but it is difficult to answer one way or another. Dutch opponents of nationalism<sup>15</sup> have no difficulty in demonstrating that Indonesians are too heterogeneous a group to constitute an ethnic, linguistic, geographic or religious unit of any significance. When the situation is considered objectively, it becomes evident that the Dutch objection is valid. Only a small fraction of the masses is interested in the concept of Indonesian "unity."

But it is equally possible to agree with Snouck Hurgronje,<sup>16</sup> who maintains that all of these differences become unimportant as soon as Indonesian nationalist sentiment exists; for if this sentiment exists, then so must the Indonesian nation exist. This point of view is, I believe, defensible; it is predicated upon a profound sociological truth more cogent than all of the arguments of ethnography and geography. But it is quite another thing to declare, as Snouck Hurgronje does, that this sentiment alone is to be found within the nationalist movement. If I may express my opinion—or rather my impression which, though necessarily superficial, is unbiased—I would quite agree with Snouck Hurgronje that Indonesia is more than a geographical expression. There is a historical interrelation between its different parts. It is not merely an accident that the Netherlands Indies as we know them include almost exactly the territory of the Hindu kingdom of

<sup>14</sup> The *Mohammadiyya* is occasionally subsidized by the state.

<sup>15</sup> H. Colijn, *Koloniale Vraagstukken*, etc., Amsterdam, 1928, pp. 64-5.

<sup>16</sup> *Colijn over Indie*, a brochure containing a series of articles from the *Telegraaf*, Amsterdam, 1928, pp. 13-15.

Majapahit at the time of its most extensive power in the fourteenth century.<sup>17</sup>

On the other hand, I should not care to dogmatize about the concept of Indonesian unity. If we set aside that fraction, infinitesimal perhaps but by no means nonexistent, of those who from conviction or self-interest support the Dutch regime,<sup>18</sup> we find that there does exist a growing feeling of patriotism for which the presence of foreigners is responsible. Without going back to Julius Caesar and Vercingetorix, we can find the same psychological reaction in British India and more especially in North Africa, where tribal loyalty has broadened as a result of the presence of foreigners as well as because of improved means of communication. But just what is this sentiment in the Indies? It cannot be religious inasmuch as it affects Christians as well as Moslems. Islam is not responsible, for Moslem societies have more than once reproached the true nationalists with indifference if not impiety.<sup>19</sup> Perhaps this sentiment can best be described as a sort of territorial consciousness, a nascent patriotism.

Despite, however, the unanimity of the nationalists in their dislike of Europeans, I cannot categorically assert that they are always and everywhere motivated by Indonesian patriotism. I realize that in discussing this question I am perhaps venturing beyond my depth, and I wish to remark only that in the course of various conversations which I had with different persons in the Indies, I found a feeling of local or regional patriotism, often very pronounced, which threw into high relief some rather considerable divergences in point of view or patriotic feeling.<sup>20</sup> This impression is confirmed by the lack of unity among the various groups and by the increasing number of organizations with territorial interests. There are fundamental differences between the

<sup>17</sup> Present Dutch territory also includes the Sundanese district, but not the Malay Peninsula or Northern Borneo.

<sup>18</sup> I have known a few rare individuals who seemed sincerely devoted to the present regime. There exists, besides, a *Nederlandsch-Indonesisch Verbond* (Netherlands-Indonesian League) with groups in Holland and in the Indies. Its goal is the friendly reconciliation of Dutch and Indonesians. (See *Naar een nieuwe Samenleving*, by Noto Soeroto, The Hague, 1931. The author apparently writes good Dutch verse.) I have never noticed any activity on the part of this society in the Indies, and I imagine that its influence is very slight.

<sup>19</sup> Here, taken at random, is an echo of these complaints, in the review of the native press: *Overzicht*, 1938, Nos. 13, 23.

<sup>20</sup> It goes without saying that if all Indonesia felt the influence of reformism, as Dutch Moslem policy encourages it to do, religion would tend to eradicate these divergences. Why do not the authorities realize this?

Christian portion of Celebes, the island of Java, the Sunda Islands and the Menangkabau country. Is this the dissimilarity which distinguishes an Alsatian, a Corsican, a Basque, a Fleming, all of whom are French? Or is it the dissimilarity which sets apart the English, French, Serbs and Americans, although they were allies during the World War? This question must be asked, but I do not know the answer. The progressive growth of a national consciousness is apparently not inevitable nor are its frontiers predetermined. Had the Spanish occupied Sumatra and the Dutch the Philippines, the geography of Indonesian nationalism would not be what it is today.

Thus we arrive at a provisional conclusion. On the one hand foreigners have developed public education and the means of communication. This material progress, in conjunction with the presence of foreigners, has created in the Indies as elsewhere a growing opposition. A section of the population, still quite small but constantly growing, has banded together to demand what it considers to be its rights.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand public authority is fighting this opposition which includes elements very heterogeneous as regards religion, race, language and birthplace. Accordingly, we must now examine the nature of this struggle and consider the part played therein by the government.

## V. THE FIGHT AGAINST NATIONALISM

The Netherlands are in a ticklish predicament. The Indies are a source of great wealth to this diminutive nation of eight million inhabitants which governs sixty million natives,<sup>22</sup> or a population about as great as that of all the French colonies combined. There is a saying that the Indies are the life-belt of the Netherlands. Now, the Netherlands cannot employ a large military force to maintain order because they lack the necessary material resources and because their foreign policy prohibits any too obvious demonstration of strength which might attract the most unwelcome attention of other powers. France and England have the resources necessary for an energetic colonial government, and, moreover, their international position makes such government possible. They

<sup>21</sup> I am not here examining the extent of its claims.

<sup>22</sup> The proportion, however, between the population of England and that of India is almost the same.

can employ a repressive system which consists in intervening only after it is too late, but intervening then with a vengeance.<sup>23</sup> I am simply stating a fact, not weighing the merit of a system. Necessarily the Netherlands practise a preventive policy—a fundamental point which must never be overlooked if the present attitude of the Dutch authorities toward Indonesian nationalism is to be understood. The Dutch, then, are careful not to offend foreign opinion. Death sentences and executions are taboo. Psychologically speaking, this is a most advantageous policy—though perhaps the Dutch are not fully aware of this—when one considers that profound sociological axiom, that in times of nationalist or religious unrest martyrs who have died for their cause are more dangerous dead than alive. It appears that Indonesian nationalists are not enamored of martyrdom. If the political prisoners or inmates of the internment camps of Digoel<sup>24</sup> were to embark on a hunger-strike, if but *one* of them were to imitate the Mayor of Cork, it is a certainty that tremendous moral pressure would be brought to bear on the government. Because the Dutch system is essentially one of prevention, it would be difficult to find instances of ill treatment knowingly inflicted upon natives by subordinate officials. Personally I have not heard of a single case.<sup>25</sup>

The press is strictly censored. Liberty of the press is an empty phrase.<sup>26</sup> If a newspaper departs in the slightest degree from the instructions it has received from the prosecutor-general, the person responsible is summoned onto the carpet and given a severe warning which is followed by more effective measures.<sup>27</sup> Doubtless the regime is infinitely more liberal than those in fascist countries, and a certain moderate and discreet criticism is tolerated. But freedom of the press simply does not exist. Moreover, by virtue

<sup>23</sup> The bombardment of Damascus or the rifle fire in Amritsar are incidents inconceivable to inhabitants of the Netherlands Indies.

<sup>24</sup> See below, page 35 *et seq.*

<sup>25</sup> Note, in an article by van der Plas in *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, how in the Javanese shadow-theatre (*wajang*) gods maltreat mortals with their hob-nailed boots. The allusion is shrewd and amusing, but I should gladly retain "police brutalities" since they resemble those found in Europe.

<sup>26</sup> To my great regret, I wholly disagree on this point with Mr. Meijer Ranneft. (See his article, "Hollands fout in Indie," *De Gids*, pp. 13-14 of the reprint.) I do not understand how this serious writer can say that the press in the Indies enjoys freedom of criticism, which does not exist even in society. In this regard his report paints a far more favorable picture than the facts warrant.

<sup>27</sup> The corpus of the repressive laws are in J. T. P. Blumberger's official work, *De communistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië*, Haarlem, 1928.



of an ordinance of March 25, 1935, the government is empowered to violate the privacy of the mails which formerly was protected by Article 142 of the Indian Constitution.

Strikes are almost impossible, thanks to Article 163b of the Penal Code. Freedom of assembly is an empty theory; the ordinance which governs it actually suppresses it.<sup>28</sup> All this typifies the preventive system mentioned earlier. There are some associations, like the *Sarikat Islam* and the *Persatoean Moslim Indonesia* of the Menangkabau, which are not themselves forbidden but whose meetings are. There are also authorized meetings which are systematically emasculated by the police. These meetings are restricted, and only members of the association are permitted to attend. On the day of the meeting the police inspect members' cards so carefully that several hours are consumed in the process; occasionally also the speaker is summoned by the authorities at the very hour set for the meeting. The police, moreover, have the right to attend all meetings and to dissolve them whenever they consider the public safety to be jeopardized.<sup>29</sup> They are extraordinarily zealous in performing this function.<sup>30</sup> An amusing instance will illustrate the manner in which the authorities interpret their duty. In order to hold an open-air meeting it is necessary to secure special permission in advance.<sup>31</sup> A meeting having taken place in a roofed house, the police took it into their heads to declare that, since there were holes in the roof of the building, it followed that the meeting was open to the sky and hence illegal.<sup>32</sup>

Also noteworthy are the continual investigations of suspect nationalist societies. There are more suspicions floating about than one can shake a stick at. The whole system of Dutch colonial Government depends at least at present upon police informers.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>29</sup> It is fair to point out that this regulation is not peculiar to the Indies. Those who are familiar with Holland know that it obtains in the home country as well.

<sup>30</sup> A meeting is dissolved, for instance, because a speaker has said, "The Indonesian people are treated like a beast of burden." *Overzicht*, 1935, No. 43. For another complaint, see the same publication for August 13, 1938, p. 542.

<sup>31</sup> Article 5 of the ordinance.

<sup>32</sup> *Handelingen Volksraad*, 1933-4, reprinted in the pamphlet *De Nationale Fractie in de Volksraad*, p. 92. See Blumberger for an enumeration of many other measures, such as the reestablishment in certain cases of the necessity for a passport in the outer provinces, the surveillance of officials, and so on.

<sup>33</sup> It is important to emphasize that this is not simply idle gossip but an actual, manifest fact.

Naturally the part which they play is not mentioned in the law books, but their existence is far more vital than that of the books themselves. The native world teems with these informers; people speak of nothing else, and they see them in every strange face—often no doubt without cause. They have the ear of the authorities, and to justify their existence they keep the government on the alert by means of denunciations occasionally more enthusiastic than accurate. If it is true that a government cannot dispense with services of this kind if it intends to guard against such surprises as those of November 1926, it is equally certain that the importance accorded spies must be kept within limits and particularly must not, as however in actual fact it does, lull the authorities into a false sense of security and a belief that the perpetuation of the government depends upon its espionage system.<sup>34</sup> The function of the police is to serve,<sup>35</sup> not to govern.<sup>36</sup>

If the police informers are the foundation of the preventive system, then the practice of internment is its pinnacle. Internment as an administrative measure is a part of the "extraordinary" powers of the governor-general who is authorized to deport undesirable aliens. When the governor-general is dealing with native-born persons, he may forbid them access to certain parts of the country or compel them to reside in a particular district.<sup>37</sup> His decision must be made with the approval of the Council of India; the accused must have had a previous hearing of which a report was made,

<sup>34</sup> The *Java Bode*, which is surely not suspected of harboring pro-native sympathies, declared: "The Indies have become a State living under a police regime. Sometimes it appears as if the government power lies with the public prosecutor instead of in the government councils." December 8, 1937, and quoted in *Handelingen Volksraad*, July 14, 1938, (p. 189.) I wholly agree.

<sup>35</sup> Opponents of the government, moreover, have their own information service, if I may judge by what I have heard and am inclined to believe. In any case, I have seen persons in their own homes reading administrative documents marked "confidential: for the department." This little scene of home life, worthy of the brush of a Dutch master, gave me food for thought.

<sup>36</sup> I am adding the following note to the English edition because it may interest English—and Dutch—readers. In railway trains in British India I have frequently talked with natives in the freest manner about the most controversial political questions of the day. I am not sure that a foreigner could do this in North Africa; it would be *absolutely impossible* in Java. On one occasion in Djokja, after I had delivered a lecture in which I criticized the attitude of international (and particularly Indonesian) Islam toward the French government at the time of the Berber uprising (1930), one of my Dutch friends told me quite seriously that I had perhaps laid myself open to prosecution under Article 155 of the Penal Code (for which see the section, below, on the trial of Douwes Dekker). Such is the Dutch system.

<sup>37</sup> Articles 35, 36 and 37 of the Indian Constitution.

and the *Volkstraad* (National Council) must be informed of the decision. The idea originally responsible for Article 37 of the Constitution seems to have been to clear certain regions of individuals engaged in unwelcome but not illegal activities. This accounts for the permission often granted by the authorities to such undesirables to leave the Indies as voluntary exiles.<sup>38</sup> The administration of the system underwent a metamorphosis with the establishment of an internment camp in Upper Digoel in southwestern Dutch New Guinea. According to the *Statistical Review*,<sup>39</sup> the number of inmates declined from 1,321 in 1931 to 631 in 1934, and then rose again to 697 in 1936, the latter number including about 250 members of families who were permitted to live with the internes. The latter are not always sent to Upper Digoel, and the engineer Soekarno, who was at first interned on Flores, was allowed to move to Sumatra in 1938. This internment system has evoked violent protest from Dutch liberal and leftist groups. What are we to think of it? As it functions in Upper Digoel, it is a sort of family prison,<sup>40</sup> especially since the establishment of a separate camp for irreconcilables. The original conception and purpose of the law have been modified. Since only official (that is, unverifiable) sources are accessible, I cannot discuss the treatment accorded the prisoners. I take it for granted, however, that they are treated decently.

I do not for a moment believe that the principle of the internment system or of compulsory residence is wrong. Marshal Lyautey is supposed to have said, "Faint heart never won an empire." I should add that socialist sermonizing does not preserve an empire. In colonial possessions a strong government is essential, a government with great power which it knows how to use with discretion. Among French laws there are some similar to the Dutch which are enforced occasionally. For example, Tunisian nationalists have on several occasions been interned. The only fault to be found

<sup>38</sup> For example, in the case of Douwes Dekker in 1913, for which see below, page 38 *et seq.*

<sup>39</sup> *Statistisch Zakboekje*, 1937, p. 146.

<sup>40</sup> Blumberger's official juridical explanations which assert (pp. 113-14) that "the internes are free within their camp" bring to mind the fiction according to which—errors excepted—the Prince of Orange did not fight against the King of Spain, and China and Japan are at present living amicably side by side. Before reading this book, I had never realized that Cardinal de la Balue enjoyed perfect freedom in his cage—so long as he did not wish to get out of it.

with the French authorities is that at these times they have invariably been deplorably lenient about the term of internment.

But we must discriminate between the two different applications of the same principle. I fear that in the application of Article 37 the Dutch authorities err on the side of severity. The guaranties which bolster the decisions of the administration are illusory. I do not believe that the hearing accorded the accused has the least effect upon his fate, nor can I conceive of the majority of the Council of India (a group of high officials) declining to approve whatever decision has already been reached by the governor-general. What seems worst of all is the extremely long term of confinement. In many cases internment formerly was the equivalent of lifetime exile; in some cases it still is, and this without an adequate trial. In 1923 Snouck Hurgronje published an article on this very point.<sup>41</sup> It was entitled *Vergeten Jubilees* (Forgotten Celebrations) and enumerated some specific incidents which did little credit to the government. Although the totalitarian governments have accustomed us to unparalleled despotism, and although in this respect Indonesian nationalists are particularly favored by Providence, some reservations are necessary. To be sure, the system does seem to have become less severe: the number of inmates of Digoel has considerably decreased during the past dozen years, and since, moreover, there have been new additions to the interned colony, the number of released inmates is greater than one might suppose. But we cannot feel quite easy on this score. For if judicial errors are possible, then administrative errors are almost inevitable in troubled times such as those between 1925 and 1927. In the same article Snouck Hurgronje points out not only that the cases of internment which he examined were almost perpetual,<sup>42</sup> but that certain errors had been committed. He cites the case of one of his friends whom he had known at Mecca and for whom he was willing to be responsible. In spite of Snouck Hurgronje's considerable influence, this most respectable man, Mohammed Archad, remained interned for thirty years. One must not look for absolute justice in this world, yet it is to be feared that justice as it is practised by the Netherlands Indian

<sup>41</sup> Snouck Hurgronje, *Verspreide Geschriften*, Volume IV, pp. 417-36.

<sup>42</sup> The principle of repatriating internees while they are still alive was accepted after twenty-three years.

government is entirely too relative. It should be possible to find the golden mean, *de gulden middleweg*, between the French and the Dutch systems of internment.

To accomplish this I would not suggest that Article 37 be repealed or even amended. Governmental authority must not be emasculated, and in any case I am not pleading the Indonesian cause. What I should like is a government which knows how to practise restraint and to use its weapons with discretion.<sup>43</sup> Since, to employ the official expression, the governor of the Netherlands Indies, is its guardian (*s' lands Voogd*), he should punish only in the interest of his ward. Snouck Hurgronje has demonstrated that such has not always been the case, and I am very much afraid that despotism is too often the order of the day. Moderation is a cardinal principle of government, and I wonder whether the Indian government always observes this principle. And, what is far more serious, I fear that justice itself is being dragged down from its proper high place.

## VI. THE TRIAL OF DOUWES DEKKER

"The question is whether lawsuits are to be a sword in the hands of the political or administrative authorities, to be brandished or sheathed as the government sees fit. To my way of thinking, substantial legal considerations and justice alone should determine not only the verdict but the institution of suits as well."<sup>44</sup>

Ernest Francis Eugene Douwes Dekker (called D.D.), a distant relative of Multatuli, the author of *Max Havelaar*,<sup>45</sup> is now sixty years old. He is a Eurasian of that very rare anti-Dutch breed which, if there were enough of them, would destroy the power of the Dutch in the Indies. As early as 1913 he was prosecuted for agitating against the Dutch during the celebration of the centenary of Dutch independence. Today he is principal of a Bandoeng private school, the *Ksatrian Instituut*, and in this capacity

<sup>43</sup> I quote this line from Pareto from memory: *Moderarsi nella potenza, é un avvicinarsi alla perfezione. Cio seppa fare Augusto.* (Moderation in the exercise of power is a means of approximating perfection. This Augustus knew and practised.)

<sup>44</sup> J. R. Thorbecke, *Bijdragen t. de herziening der Grondwet*, The Hague, 1921, p. 95.

<sup>45</sup> In 1860 the former assistant-resident Douwes Dekker published under this title an extremely celebrated satirical novel directed against the *Cultuur Systeem* and particularly against the administration of the regents. I am at a loss to understand the success of this book. It is ill-conceived, tedious and filled with misinterpretations which give a poor impression of the author's learning. There are, however, some extremely powerful pages at the end of the book. For my part, I am sorry that I had to read it to the bitter end.

is exposed to a thousand petty annoyances at the hands of the authorities.<sup>46</sup>

Now, in the summer of 1936 this man published a scholarly work entitled *A History of the World: Part I—The Far East*. There is no doubt about the tendentious character of this book; on this point alone the public authorities seem to have had a leg to stand on.<sup>47</sup> The book was seized and the author prosecuted under Article 155 of the Penal Code which punishes with four years' imprisonment and a fine of three hundred guilders<sup>48</sup> anyone who "publicly manifests hostility, dislike or contempt of one or more of the population groups of the Indies." But the book does not deal with the Netherlands Indies at all. Of its three hundred pages the public prosecutor pounced upon only fifty-one lines in sixteen passages, of which only two deal with the action of the Netherlands Indies Company in Japan and with its religious policy. The rest concerns other colonial nations. France, for instance, is criticized thus: "France declared even rice to be war contraband. In this way her evil designs became apparent. She was trying to starve the blockaded island of Taiwan." This is one of the sentences attacked by the Dutch authorities under Article 155.

The author defended himself by proving decisively that these statements were accurate and, what is more, borrowed from Dutch or foreign studies of indisputable scientific merit.<sup>49</sup> When the case was appealed, this was acknowledged. He asserted that the prosecutor accused him of writing that, "Great Britain had broken her promises;" and yet there had been no objection<sup>50</sup> to the appearance of sentences like these in official Dutch scholarly works concerning not England, but Holland herself: "The Dutch government did not keep its promise to its enemy, Diponegoro, in the

<sup>46</sup> They began, for instance, by demanding taxes of 18,700 guilders, and he succeeded in establishing that he owed only 60. (II, p. 21.) The proceedings of the trial have been published in two pamphlets, here called I and II, *Het Proces Douwes Dekker Officiële Bescheiden*, etc., privately printed, Batavia, 1937.

<sup>47</sup> It is sufficient to compare what the author says of Japanese colonization in Formosa and French colonization in Indo-China. Today, in fact, since the suppression of the fifty-one lines involved, the author has published his book in mimeographed form. Since, moreover, the incriminated lines are included in the indictment and published in the pamphlets mentioned above, the entire book is accessible. This is one of the comic aspects of the trial.

<sup>48</sup> This is the maximum. According to Dutch penal law, the judge is not limited by any minimum penalty and can reduce the punishment as far as he sees fit.

<sup>49</sup> See the quotations, *D.D.*, I, pp. 11-45.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Java War . . . In 1656 the Company seized Ceylon while promising the Catholic Church complete freedom. This promise was broken in the most scandalous fashion."<sup>51</sup> Moreover, the defendant pointed out that every one of the incriminating passages concerned past and not present-day policy. He endeavored likewise to prove that he had published his book under conditions which had led him to believe that he was protected by the authorities.

Indeed, he established—nor did the court deny this—that he had regularly sent to the Dutch resident magistrate all of the lectures given in his *Instituut* as well as the manuscript of his book "For six months, until his departure in December 1935, I regularly sent copies of the chapters to the Preanger resident. The Court can satisfy itself on this point by examining my private records . . . Who would not feel confident and easy in his mind when he knew that the most competent authority was inspecting everything he wrote?"<sup>52</sup> The author even added that the resident magistrates considered his book to be "of great value," that his view was supported by Mr. Gobece, who was then Adviser on Native Affairs, and that Dr. Pijper, the assistant-adviser, had praised it.<sup>53</sup> This point seems to me to have been less well established than some others; but if the defendant's statement were true, then the moral responsibility of these officials would have been involved.

There is no point in discussing to what extent Article 155 was applicable in this case. To one who has studied the trial quite objectively its application was juridically at least questionable. In the first instance Douwes Dekker was condemned to three months in prison. The most important ruling of the court<sup>54</sup> was that which declared that the manifestation of hate and contempt is in itself punishable, it having been agreed that the author was not guilty of having falsified historical fact. In emphasizing this last point in his memorial to the Court of Appeals, the accused delivered a smashing reply to the prosecutor-general. He cited

<sup>51</sup> Douwes Dekker also cites other Dutch anti-colonialist books from which he gives long extracts (II, p. 57 *et seq.*); but the argument drawn from scholarly books is far more convincing.

<sup>52</sup> *D.D.*, I, pp. 60, 67. This is one of the reasons why I believe that the government of the Netherlands Indies owes it to itself, more than it owes it to the people, to institute competent preventive censorship.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102 *et seq.*

a number of extracts from the European press which were extremely offensive to Indonesians. Here is one of them. "Treat a dog like a dog. If a coolie understands kindness, be kind to him; but since he understands the language of the whip, take the whip to him." He asserted that on several occasions important political figures had demanded action against writings of this nature, but that the government had invariably refused to act. As evidence of the government policy he cited the following case. An Englishman, having sustained a slight injury in a railway accident, received fifty thousand guilders in compensation while the widow of a native engineer killed in the same accident was granted a monthly pension of five guilders. A native journalist pounced upon the incident and published an article entitled "But a Javanese . . .", and was thereupon imprisoned.<sup>55</sup>

On appeal, D.D.'s punishment was reduced to a fine of three hundred guilders. The ruling of the court which follows is of interest to the historian of contemporary Dutch colonial policy. "Whereas Article 155 applies equally to whoever on scientific grounds and with a scientific approach voices an opinion offensive (*grievend*) to a social group, and whereas the historian will have to take this consideration into account . . . etc."<sup>56</sup> High-ranking persons in Batavia confessed to me that they were afraid to protest against this prosecution and trial.

If such a state of affairs exists in the legal domain, we may feel extremely dubious about the conduct of the executive power. Thus my very moderate remarks about the internment system are explained.

## VII. A CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT

"It is not enough merely to discover how high the burning fever has risen . . . but the cause of such a serious illness must also be ascertained."<sup>57</sup>

The cause, or at least one of the causes, of this state of affairs lies in the state of mind of the Dutch in the Indies. It is not easily described. It is the result of imponderables which find expression in fear, secrecy, unhealthy hypersensitiveness which

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, II, pp. 33-6.

<sup>56</sup> It is largely because of this ruling that I have discussed the matter.

<sup>57</sup> Joost van den Vondel, *Josef in 't Hof*.



affects the treatment of every colonial question, an incredible pettiness in dealing with a myriad of inconsequential details,<sup>58</sup> an almost complete inability to grasp the broad outlines of problems,<sup>59</sup> and invariably an irrational dread of the least trifles. The following example taken from public life is a fair illustration of the present state of affairs.

By its own ruling the *Volkstraad* (National Council) allows its members to speak in Dutch or in Malay. When the budget was under discussion in July 1938, the nationalist members decided to speak in Malay in the hope of irritating the government. The Dutch press thereupon became alarmed and protested violently; what was more serious, the government itself expressed dissatisfaction. A reaction of this kind (which was just what the opposition had anticipated) is not the act of a group rejoicing in its strength. I believe that there has long been a discrepancy between the position of the Dutch government which nationalism is not threatening just now, and the policy which it pursues. The employment of repressive measures is to a great extent the result, I think, not of objective consideration or actual necessity, but of the state of mind which I noticed among the Dutch. The trial of Douwes Dekker indicates the truth of my contention. Considered objectively as a sociological phenomenon, the action of the authorities at that time seems unduly exaggerated.

But if it appears exaggerated in certain respects, it appears thoroughly inadequate in others. We have already spoken of the causes of nationalism. If where it is desirable to suppress a social movement it is permissible to prohibit its demonstrations, it is also imperative to deal with its causes—that is, the feelings which give rise to it. Pareto has stressed this point repeatedly, and it is surprising that such an eminently sensible idea has been ignored by so many governments. According to Pareto, the best way to suppress unwelcome views is to suppress all those who profess them. In the Indies such a policy is impossible, for the government cannot intern all of its opponents nor can it revive

<sup>58</sup> I do not wish to stoop to personal anecdote. As regards learned books, I could give at least two examples typical of this mentality, but certain considerations demand the fullest discretion on my part.

<sup>59</sup> There are exceptions. I remember a conversation I had with a remarkable and extremely reactionary Dutch official who considered things dispassionately, as though they were men on a chessboard, and made numerous comparisons with life abroad in a most enlightened manner. There is nothing more instructive than this sort of conversation.

the days of October 1740 when the India Company could slaughter several thousand Chinese whom it happened to find displeasing. If the government were to suppress all nationalists today, there would be a new crop tomorrow. The Dutch lack the material resources necessary to suppress the apparent causes of Indonesian nationalism. And on moral grounds they cannot employ their one effective weapon, suppression of native education.

Nationalism is comparable to a stream whose flow inconveniences and endangers the Dutch administration. To meet this danger a high and solid dam was constructed ten years ago, and ever since then the authorities have maintained careful watch lest a fissure in the retaining wall appear and allow the flood to pour through. But by some irony of fate, while the Department of Interior Administration and the public prosecutor perform their task with praise-worthy zeal, the director of public education quite as zealously opens ever wider the floodgates which feed the stream. I am satisfied that no matter how high or how solid the dam may be the flood will sweep it away in the end. The government of the Netherlands Indies is behaving like a sick man who doses himself with aspirin without really trying to effect a cure. The treatment is momentarily easing its discomfort, the symptom of the malady, but since it does not attack the cause, the symptoms will reappear.

I believe, indeed, that the government greatly exaggerates the threat of present-day nationalism and underestimates its future development (especially in its Moslem aspects) as a force in colonial affairs. It is essential to prepare for the future by pursuing a present policy which will as far as possible direct nationalist energies into channels acceptable to the government. It is for the authorities to dig these channels while there is yet time. Many administrative reforms have been effected during the past forty years, and it may be that the solution to the difficulties which we have been discussing lies in this direction. I propose to treat this question in a separate chapter on the Netherlands Indian administrative organization and its work. We must try to discover why Dutch policy in the Indies is what it is. Why this lack of far-sightedness, this picayune pettiness? Why this attitude which commands neither sympathy nor admiration? Are the Dutch unconsciously aware that they have not succeeded? Their per-

formance in the Netherlands Indies has included many noteworthy accomplishments, but the fact remains that their lack of confidence indicates that their colonial psychology is no longer well adapted to the situation as it now exists.

In any case, this chapter may be concluded with the statement that Dutch colonial policy has failed as definitely as the British and French have failed in the attempt to prevent the birth and growth of some sort of nationalism in their colonies. This failure constitutes an irretrievable loss. The superiority of the Dutch as colonizers undoubtedly lies in another direction. Indeed, if British India and the Netherlands Indies are compared, the difference between their policies is striking. In British India we find an experiment which is impressive, though it may not have our approval; the British, in a word, are countenancing the attempt of the Indian continent to become a nation. In the Netherlands Indies, on the other hand, we find a regime which is undisguisedly reactionary and not especially attractive.

## CHAPTER III

### MATERIAL RESULTS OF THE COLONIAL POLICY

#### I. THE MATERIAL PERFECTION OF DUTCH COLONIZATION

THE material consequences of the European colonization of economically backward countries are perfectly illustrated by the performance of the Dutch in their colonial empire and more particularly in Java. As has been often and truly said, theirs has been an admirable accomplishment.

It was not until the last third of the nineteenth century, when the government's *Cultuur Systeem*<sup>1</sup> was abolished, that extensive private enterprises were given an opportunity to develop. The land rights of the natives were, however, carefully and consistently protected: Europeans might rent land; they could not own it. Whether it was a question of sugar, tea, tobacco, coffee, or rubber, the Dutch gave the utmost encouragement to foreign trade and worked extremely hard to improve and increase production. The same was true for mineral products, tin and petroleum, and for all raw materials in general. Java boasts a railway system which is run more efficiently than that in British India and is cleaner and more comfortable than the Algerian. The roadbed is excellent and kept in good repair. All hydraulic construction has been executed by Dutch engineers as skillfully in the Indies as on the shores of the North Sea. The postal and telegraph services are excellent. The traditional cleanliness which characterizes Holland graces the streets and public places of Java. The country is utterly peaceful and safe. Neatness and order are universal; everywhere people work intently and conscientiously. And all this is not merely a facade, but a deep-rooted structure, solid and durable, the effects of which are apparent everywhere. I can bear witness that the picture is the same in remote regions of Java and on Lombok, where the tourist is a *rara avis*. These figures tell

<sup>1</sup> A system for exploiting the natives in the sole interest of the Dutch treasury. It bound the natives to plant one-fifth of their land in the "new" crops (e.g., coffee and tea) and to surrender this produce to the government. It was conceived about 1830 by General Van den Bosch.

the story: the resources of Java have been developed to such a degree that the population of the island has multiplied tenfold since the beginning of the nineteenth century. In other words, the country now supports ten times the number of inhabitants it did 130 years ago. Order has displaced disorder, domestic wars have given way to the *pax neerlandica*, and extortion and venality have been superseded by the severest incorruptibility. Public works are found everywhere, and the public health service has stamped out epidemics. In a word, European administration has very definitely made its mark. In the overseas possessions of other countries there may be something like the Dutch colonial experiment in the Indies, but I cannot imagine that there is anything better anywhere.

The Dutch like to repeat a saying of J. P. Coen, the founder of Batavia: "Great things can be done in the Indies." And great things *have* been done. Among the causes of these extraordinary achievements we should recognize first the superiority of Europe to the rest of the world, then the superiority of capitalism to other economic systems, and the contributions of private enterprise. But to a great extent the credit belongs to the Dutch government and its officials. And here we return once more to the subject of colonial policy which is the theme of this study.

From the time of the arrival of the Dutch in the Indies late in the sixteenth century and for almost three hundred years afterward, the avowed aim of every Dutch governor was the fullest exploitation of the country. Such was the purpose of the combined East India Company in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In 1816, after a brief period of British occupation, the Dutch government regained possession of the Indies and determined to exploit them in order to increase the income of the home country. That the *batig slot*, or favorable balance, might be as large as possible, compulsory farming was instituted. This was known as the *Cultuur Systeem* or Van den Bosch's system. At the same time the *Nederlandsche Handelmaatschappij* (Dutch Trading Company), in which King William I held an interest, was organized. Without harping on this aspect, it is worth mentioning that by 1877 the colony had poured about 832 million guilders into the coffers of the Netherlands Treasury.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Of this sum 236 millions were appropriated for amortization of the public debt, 153 for the construction of railways, 155 for the reduction of various taxes, 146 for military and other public works. (E. B. Kielstra, quoted in *Neerlands Indie*, II, p. 27.)

Ten years earlier the *Cultuur Systeem* had been discarded and a new policy inaugurated.<sup>3</sup> The development of the country was no longer wholly dependent upon a political body—the Company or the State. Private enterprises succeeded the Company, and the State increasingly extended its authority (a process completed in the beginning of this century) which hitherto had been nominal in the greater part of its colonial possessions. The State strengthened its power everywhere and devoted itself to the development of the resources of the country. We have seen how fully it has realized its aims.

The development of Java and of several other outlying regions has been due in large part to the magnificent efforts of the Dutch officials in the Indies. Theirs has been a superb achievement. I agree whole-heartedly with Chailley-Bert's sentiments: "I know of no administration better trained or more devoted to its duty. I have seen them [the officials] at work in the field. Their administrative technique defies criticism, their professional zeal is above praise . . . From top to bottom two features characterize the administration: discretion and conscientiousness, devotion to duty and fear of accidents . . . I need not repeat how much I admire the officials for their skill, their conscientiousness, their devotion . . . They are fine and devoted servants."<sup>4</sup> And although Chailley-Bert had in mind the Department of Interior Administration, *Binnenlandsch Bestuur*, in particular, it is possible nowadays to say as much of the officials in the other departments which have developed well in the last forty years. We must remember that Holland is a small country and that for her the recruiting of the picked men who constitute the colonial service is more difficult than for a large nation. Holland has been able to send to her colonies men quite as able as those stationed in the home country. And I believe that she tries to imbue her native officials with the same qualities—often with success. But the highest praise that can be given to the administration is the respect which its opponents have for it. I have frequently asked nationalists about the Dutch officials; indeed I have on occasion invited unfavorable criticism—and in the Orient such invitations

<sup>3</sup> See Chailley, *Java et ses Habitants*, p. 150. "The Dutch, who for 150 and even 200 years thought only of amassing wealth, who in the middle of the 19th century conceived, imposed, maintained and only reluctantly restricted an ingenious, profitable but shamelessly spoliative system of production—these Dutch ended by being merciful."

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 176, 199, 219, 222.

are speedily accepted—but not once has the slightest doubt been expressed of their earnestness, professional conscientiousness, or integrity. Because the nationalists have seen the officials at work, and because they recognize the value of their devoted work, they have great respect for them. The nationalists can hardly be expected to feel grateful as well. But their high opinion is sufficient commentary on the picked band of men which constitutes the administration of the Netherlands Indies.

If some day Indonesia should be capable of directing its own affairs, or even if it should part ways with Holland, its metamorphosis will have originated in the wealth created by Dutch capital and in the administrative feats performed by the mother country. On this point the impartial observer cannot have the shadow of a doubt.

## II. WHY THE DUTCH HAVE SUCCEEDED

Are these happy results attributable wholly to the colonial genius of the Dutch, or has not Holland been favored by a combination of unusual circumstances? On this head there can, I believe, be no doubt.

The nucleus of the colonial power of the Dutch is Java, until very recently the only island in the Indies completely occupied and effectively administered by them. On Java live the great majority of their subjects; from Java they have drawn their principal resources. Now, they have had the unprecedented good fortune to deal with a people who, as they themselves say, are *het zachtste volk der aarde*, the gentlest, most obedient, docile, humble, in fact the most servile people in the world. Dutch authors in speaking of the Javanese refer to his slave-like soul (*slaafschheid*).<sup>5</sup> Even today, although the old order is passing, this trait remains. Servants may still be seen approaching their masters almost on their knees and, hands on forehead, punctuating each sentence with a quick bow. The inhabitants of other islands admire the culture of the Javanese, but they share the European's contempt for the humility and feeling of inferiority which this people has before a European.

If in the center of their possessions the Dutch had had to deal with a group capable of resistance like the Achinese, they would have

<sup>5</sup> This is less true of the Sundanese and Madurese, but they are only a minority.

been exhausted or unable to maintain their position. Whereas, comfortably installed in Java, they were opposed only by adversaries who were separated from each other by hundreds of miles<sup>6</sup> and who were the less able to form a united front against their common enemy because they did not even know of each other's existence. Save in the case of Atjeh (in northern Sumatra) the Dutch have never experienced great difficulty either in securing a foothold or settling permanently in the islands. Most of their subjects have never dreamed of disobeying them: tolerant, patient and docile subjects, they have been and still are almost too good to be true.<sup>7</sup> It is upon these characteristics that the Dutch power is founded. Had Java been inhabited by Achinese, Kabyles, Sikhs or Hereros, the Dutch would never have been able to govern the island as they wished.<sup>8</sup>

The significance of the Javanese character is recognized by the Dutch. But there is another factor relating only to the present day, of which they are perhaps not aware and which I have never seen mentioned. I refer to the presence of Chinese in the Indies.<sup>9</sup> If despite the threat of nationalism the Dutch have remained comfortably in the saddle during the past twenty years, it is the Chinese who have been largely responsible. The Chinese constitute the middle class from which in other countries nationalism would draw a great part of its supporters. Though their incomes are small in comparison with those of the Europeans, they are larger than those of the natives. During the academic year 1935-6, the total number of undergraduate students in the Indies (including girls) was 1,020, of whom 239 were Europeans, 265 Chinese and 516 natives. In other words, the ratio between Dutch students and native students (who might become nationalists) was one to two; without the Chinese the ratio would have been one to three. In the various upper primary schools there were in the same year 1,577 Chinese

<sup>6</sup> Consider, for example, the distance between Atjeh and Lombok, which were two centers of resistance.

<sup>7</sup> The Menangkabau is one of the regions in which the Dutch experienced some difficulty in gaining control, but their expeditionary parties never numbered more than a few hundred men. It is true that these were composed in large part of French soldiers. In fact, one expedition failed because its commander did not have a sufficient knowledge of French. (Joustra, *op. cit.*, p. 62.)

<sup>8</sup> Since ships of the Netherlands Company call at Algiers, a certain number of inhabitants of the Netherlands Indies have visited that city. Several of them have told me that they had been struck by the *brutaliteit* or insolent attitude of the Algerian natives toward Europeans. The difference between the North African native and the Javanese is indeed immense.

<sup>9</sup> See Chapter VII.



as against 5,176 natives; in the State secondary schools there were 746 Chinese as against 1,132 natives. The Chinese represent an economic, social and intellectual force which is unsympathetic to nationalism. At present they are quiet and not much interested in politics. It is possible that in the future they may become intractable, but for the present, although the natives are sixty times more numerous, the Chinese exert an influence out of all proportion to their numbers and in direct opposition to the interests of nationalism. Of course, besides the Chinese who remain neutral there are the Eurasians who comprise four-fifths of the European population and are loyal supporters of the government. Defection on their part would doubtless mean the immediate collapse of Dutch authority. But a change of attitude is as improbable in them as it would be in the Chinese. Thus a sizeable proportion of those social blocs which in Tunis,<sup>10</sup> British India or Indo-China would constitute an active opposition to the government is in Indonesia either loyal or at least neutral. What is more, present-day nationalism is not a truly threatening force in the Indies because, as is also the case in North Africa, its adherents are divided into such a multitude of warring camps.<sup>11</sup>

The establishment and maintenance of Dutch power in the Indies are largely due to the three important factors which we have just considered. But in order to form an unbiased opinion of Holland's colonial achievement, it is necessary to consider also the policy responsible for the truly extraordinary transformations which were mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Unfortunately there are few thorough studies on this subject. Sealed in innumerable official documents, the history of the administrative policy has yet to be written. As for the present application of this policy, we must depend on general impressions supported by a few facts and on presumptions which are perhaps not in the words of the French Code, "weighty, exact and concordant" but are nevertheless significant.

In order to blaze the trail for others and to begin a debate on this subject, I should like to offer the following theory for discussion as a hypothetical proposition. That it may be the more vulnerable to criticism, I am purposely stating it as dogmatically as possible. The

<sup>10</sup> Consider the Jewish socialists in that city and their attitude until the recent appearance of anti-Semitism in Italy.

<sup>11</sup> See above, page 30 *et seq.*

Dutch, then, have succeeded simply in imposing upon their subjects an extremely harsh administrative tyranny, especially in Java. Such at least seems to be their system the enforcement of which has been made possible by the factors enumerated above.

### III. ADMINISTRATIVE TYRANNY

In the era of the *Cultuur Systeem* Dutch officials devoted their energies to making the natives work and to supervising and even organizing government agricultural projects. Their interference in native affairs was considerable and most annoying to the objects of their solicitude. Chailley has aptly described what occurred after 1886, when the Van den Bosch system had already entered the vanishing stage which was to end in its complete obliteration by the beginning of the next century.

“At this time they [the officials] resigned themselves to relinquishing their positions as agricultural supervisors but not as officials. Since their original usefulness had disappeared, they cast about for some new means of making themselves useful. Now there began to take shape the protective system for the Javanese, those meek people who nowadays are called the little folk (*de kleine man*).<sup>12</sup> I do not wish to be misunderstood. This noble attitude which does so much honor to the Dutch was not born of self-interest or even of hypocrisy, but it produced a very natural change of feeling. . . . This new departure had surprising results. The Dutch fell passionately in love with their work and allowed their enthusiasm to lead them farther than they had foreseen. . . . They became increasingly concerned with trifles. They wished to have a hand in everything that was done or even contemplated. They superseded native chiefs, whom they distrusted, and natives, whom they considered inept. They transferred the entire load to their shoulders: public affairs, private matters—all was grist to their mill.”<sup>13</sup>

In a word, they believed that it was their right and even their duty to impose their will upon the natives in every conceivable matter without concerning themselves too deeply about the liberty of their subjects. And the official attitude has not changed. In this respect there is a fundamental difference between the Dutch administration in Java and the British administration in India. In India officialdom concerns itself as little as possible with the personal affairs of the

<sup>12</sup> The phrase should really be written in the singular. Chailley prints it, with a capital M in the German style.

<sup>13</sup> Chailley, *op. cit.*, p. 209 *et seq.*

natives; in the Indies it meddles in everything. The French administration in North Africa stands between these two, but it definitely has more in common with the liberal spirit of the British. A British official of Burma<sup>14</sup> has very wittily set off the two mentalities. The British official is a babu, the British Indian equivalent of an educated quill-driver; the Dutch official is a baboe, or Javanese nursemaid. "I would suggest," adds the same writer, "that these caricatures point to a difference between the two systems that is not merely accidental, but essential; a difference of vital principle, finding expression both in organic structure and in character and conduct."

The Dutch administration considers the native to be a child and meddles with the pettiest trifles in native life. On this point writers are agreed. Chailley speaks politely of the "numerous, trained and devoted personnel which concerns itself with philanthropy instead of with government."<sup>15</sup> Colijn himself speaks discreetly of the "desire of the people not to be bothered by officialdom. Though I am not an expert on Javanese administration, I do not consider this wish extravagant. What I have learned in this connection leads me to fear that perhaps errors have been committed."<sup>16</sup> He is surprised, for example, that on an island like Java it is illegal to ride a horse bareback, and he continues: "Almost every one who knows the Indies believes that there can be no logical reason for such a prohibition. And"—he italicizes this—"I have discovered other things of the same nature." His opponent Snouck Hurgronje supports him unreservedly on this point. "Whoever is well acquainted with the administration of Java can easily cite a hundred equally telling examples of this kind. One of my friends, an assistant-resident stationed on an outlying island, was temporarily transferred to Java. After he had been in Java for some time, I asked him for his impressions. 'I rather felt,' he said, 'that we were going too far in trying to regulate everything, but I never dreamed that there could be an administrative tyranny such as I have found here. All that is now lacking is an order instructing the natives at what hour they must do their daily duty.'"<sup>17</sup> And finally there is Furnivall's view. He

<sup>14</sup>I am much indebted to J. S. Furnivall, "Administration in Burma and Java. Some Points of Similarity and Contrast," *Indisch Genootschap*, December 4, 1934, *Handelingen*, p. 341 *et seq.*

<sup>15</sup>Chailley, *op. cit.*, pp. 217-18.

<sup>16</sup>Colijn, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>17</sup>Snouck Hurgronje, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

writes solemnly, "As I went round your villages and saw the infinite pains you take to conserve village society and build social welfare, I found myself humming a tune. It was a hymn tune. Gradually the words came back to me:

'Can a mother's tender care  
Cease toward the child she bare?  
Yes, she may forgetful be;  
Yet will I remember thee.'"<sup>18</sup>

If I may add my humble opinion to those of such competent authorities, let me say that my superficial impressions corroborate the verdict of these commentators of the past forty years. I will conclude this list of quotations with the protest of the eponymous hero of *Tannhäuser* who, exhausted by the delights which he has enjoyed in the arms of Venus, cries, *Zu viel, Zu viel!*<sup>19</sup>

The energy of the Dutch administration has been really dumbfounding. I have read,<sup>20</sup> for example, that the cultivation of rice, which is the chief occupation of the natives, has always been "free." Now, officials have tried not only to teach natives how they must plant the seed, but they have tried to compel them to transplant the seedlings at prescribed distances from each other. The past thirty years have witnessed little change in this respect. Furnivall writes, "The supervision of agriculture? I once heard a Burman villager say, 'Any one can learn to read or write, but to be a farmer you must be born a cultivator.' When I found your officers telling your people when and how to cultivate, I wondered what a Burman would have thought of them."<sup>21</sup> Personally I am not familiar with Burma so I do not know what the Burmese farmers would think of it, but on the other hand I know very well what Kabyle farmers would *do* about it.<sup>22</sup>

The fact that this incredible meddling by officials in the private affairs of natives is not always legally justified or based on mere

<sup>18</sup> Furnivall, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

<sup>19</sup> *Tannhäuser*, Act I, Scene I.

<sup>20</sup> *Indisch Genootschap, Handelingen*, 1905, p. 40.

<sup>21</sup> Furnivall, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

<sup>22</sup> The bibliography on these questions is extremely slim. There are interesting discussions in the publication of the *Binnenlandsch Bestuur—Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur*, Volume XXV, *et seq.*, as well as in the *Handelingen* of the *Indisch Genootschap*. See, in Volume XXVI of the former, p. 40 *et seq.*, a study intended to demonstrate how natives can be compelled to fight injurious insects.

persuasion raises another point which has not engaged the attention of writers but should be studied if there is ever to be a definitive history of Dutch administration in the Indies during the fifty years after the gradual disappearance of the Van den Bosch system. I am told, however, that the administrative system which we are going to discuss is itself in a fair way of disappearing.

#### IV. PRENTAH ALOES

Prentah aloes (*zachte dwang* in Dutch) means "gentle compulsion."<sup>23</sup> I am going to examine what has been written on this subject by a moderate and conservative person, Mr. Meijer Ranneft, a former president of the *Volkstraad*. This is a position of consequence in the Netherlands Indies, perhaps the most important after that of the governor-general.<sup>24</sup> Meijer Ranneft declares that this camouflaged coercion appears in commands given by native chiefs; it seems necessary to ensure the execution of these commands even though they may be illegal. They are given orally, and the person affected is unable to weigh their legality.

"The situation thus created, which is maintained with or without popular consent, is dependent upon the enforcement of a system of constraint through fear of punishment. In other words, the native knows that he must do something distasteful or, contrariwise, must refrain from doing something pleasant, because if he does otherwise he is threatened with something even worse. When compulsion is illegal, it can be enforced only by means of illegal punishments, and these are far more common than might be supposed.<sup>25</sup> In general, the government of Java tolerates the use of constraint, but it does not openly encourage it. I wish merely to draw attention to the fact that this compulsion is definitely *illegal*.<sup>26</sup> I consider it wrong and deplorable to a degree although I am aware that it has had some extremely desirable consequences. . . . The majority of the people cannot differentiate between overt and covert coercion. To the average man the commands (sometimes contradictory) which he receives constitute a bewildering conglomeration; and every time there is a change of officials, there is inevitably a host of new

<sup>23</sup> I am told that the Dutch translation is faulty and that "disguised order" would be a better literal translation of this Malay expression.

<sup>24</sup> "Reglementeering van zachte dwang," *Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur*, 1910, p. 58 *et seq.*

<sup>25</sup> The punishments also affect, or used to affect, the chiefs themselves. "Many a village chieftain has been punished for having neglected his duties, although he insisted in vain that he had executed the order which he had received, or even that he had not spoken to the people under his jurisdiction because he knew that it would be useless." *Indisch Genootschap, Handeligen*, 1905, p. 40.

<sup>26</sup> Italicized by Meijer Ranneft.

commands to cope with. Another unfortunate feature is that only the intelligent persons in a village can suspect that a given command is illegal: the 'mildness' of the constraint really lies in the fact that it affects the mild person in particular. Moreover, it is well known that this unregulated constraint is the source of serious annoyances and irregularities. . . . I believe that many of the deputies in the Dutch Parliament and other influential persons are not fully aware of the abuses which I have enumerated here. The enthusiasm, for example, with which they have spoken of the establishment of village schools would surely abate appreciably if they knew that these schools can exist only through the employment of illegal compulsion on a vast scale."<sup>27</sup>

It would be interesting to cite other well-qualified opinions on this subject, but they are scarce. Mr. de Kat Angelino has written voluminously to the greater glory of Dutch colonization, and abridged editions of his work have appeared in French and English.<sup>28</sup> It would be especially instructive to have the opinion of such a generally prolix writer; but on this point he preserves complete silence.

It is difficult to obtain any direct expression of popular reaction to *prentah aloes*, but perhaps what Regent Koesoemo di Poetro has to say is pertinent. In reply to an article by Controleur Alting, who had reproached the Madurese with obstinacy, he wrote in the publication of the Department of Interior Administration: "I regret that I do not share the controleur's views, perhaps because I am, so to speak, inside the house and thus lack the broad outlook which one enjoys from the roof."<sup>29</sup> This oriental parable is revealing. "The Madurese is 'obstinate' because he wishes to retain his feeling of independence—though not to the point of refusing to travel by railroad, which at the beginning of the last century Dutch peasants considered to be an invention of the Devil."<sup>30</sup> The Regent intimates that in certain cases attempts have been made to impoverish farmers in order to compel them to rent their land to sugar estates. He also attacks the interference of the Dutch: "Controleur Alting doubtless supposes that it is possible to improve the extremely primitive method of

<sup>27</sup> Meijer Ranneft, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-6.

<sup>28</sup> The Dutch edition, is some two thousand pages long, and is the sort of book which one consults but does not read. *Staatkundig beleiden Bestuurszorg in Neerlands Indie*, The Hague, 1929. The words *prentah aloes* or *zachte dwang* do not figure in either of the two indexes, nor in the section (pp. 79-93) in which they might properly be mentioned and in which the author speaks of the controleur calling upon the natives to plant vegetables.

<sup>29</sup> *Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur*, XXVI, p. 347 *et seq.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 349 *et seq.*

growing rice by sending a controleur like himself<sup>31</sup> into the fields with some manual or other in his hand to give a learned lecture about the best way to plow, sow and the like. Would a Dutch farmer think of going to the mayor—not the mayor of his own village who might be a peasant also—but the mayor of some large neighboring city in order to hear him discourse on farming in official jargon?” The Regent admits that natives must be instructed like children, but he adds that the official instructor should consider them “as his own children, not as abandoned waifs.” Whoever undertakes this task must constantly ask himself, “Have I the desirable qualities and have I the right to teach children? Do I always know what they need? Do I devote myself to their welfare completely? Do I try hard enough to gain their affection? Will they love me?” And this was written some thirty years ago by a native official in a quasi-official publication.

This aspect of the question has, we have seen, been ignored by foreign writers with the possible exception of Furnivall,<sup>32</sup> who, addressing an extremely orthodox colonial audience, tactfully raises the question of the comparative merits of the English and Dutch colonial system in the following way. He explains that in Burma people allow things to run their course quietly and that reforms are nevertheless accomplished.

“Thus, by a quasi-natural process, by the play of supply and demand, we arrived at very much the same results as you—with very much less work and worry. But the principle is not the same, the method is not the same and the results are not quite the same. Your policy is, professedly, ethical; ours, practical. These are not mere catchwords. You try to give the people what they ought to want, we are content to give them what they will pay for. Your method is one of personal influence, gentle pressure, *zachte dwang, prentah aloes*; we rely on the economic motive, the desire for gain, working within the limits of the law. The results, I admit, are not quite the same. Our villages compare very badly with yours in respect of hygiene and roads; it is hardly an exaggeration to say that, outside the larger towns, until the coming of the motor-car, we had no roads. People do not want disease, and they would rather go dry-foot than through mud. But no one can make any money out of hygiene or roads, and not much can be done by a private individual in respect of either. The want for these, and for many other things, is a social want. On the ethical system you aim at organizing social demand; on the practical system we neglect such wants until they threaten to

<sup>31</sup> Today there is a group of agricultural advisers called *Landbouw Consulents*.

<sup>32</sup> Furnivall, *op. cit.*, p. 353 *et seq.*

create a public nuisance. Your system works differently from ours. . . . Our aim is negative—to suppress disorder; yours is positive—to maintain order. Order—it is a word we both use frequently but with a significant difference of context. We talk of 'law and order' and you of 'rust en orde';<sup>33</sup> but, in the absence of a common active social conscience, it is hard to distinguish between law and the letter of the law, and between *rust* and the placidity of a good baby in its perambulator. The caricature which depicts your system as a *baboe*, a nursemaid, and ours as a *babu*, a clerk, does emphasize a difference in vital principle. You try to keep a man from going wrong; we make it unpleasant for him if he does go wrong. You believe in protection and welfare; we believe in law—and liberty."<sup>34</sup>

When the history of Dutch colonization is written, it will be necessary to open the brief of a case which has not yet been pleaded. In these pages I have set down only a few pertinent notes in the hope of drawing to this subject the attention of more competent commentators.

## V. THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEM

If these are the means employed to obtain the material results under discussion, what of the results themselves?

At present the avowed aim of Dutch colonial policy is the improvement of the physical lot of the native. (The development of his character will occupy our attention elsewhere.)<sup>35</sup> From the economic point of view the great efforts of the Dutch have to a large extent been ineffectual. At a London conference an official, Mr. Neytzell de Wilde, had this to say: "The welfare of the native population has not been noticeably improved, for higher productivity is counter-balanced by increased population."<sup>36</sup> I cannot in all truth

<sup>33</sup> "Law and order," "peace and order." What a polite way of insinuating that Dutch colonials do not allow considerations of illegality to inconvenience them! Furnival has admirably grasped the meaning of *rust en orde* in the Indies. A witty Dutchman remarked to me, "Above the governor-general there is Her Majesty, above her is God the Father, but above God the Father is *rust en orde*." This formula replaces that found in official French jargon: "The unflinching attachment to republican institutions," or "The love of France for all her children," and so on.

<sup>34</sup> "Our system is not, like yours, an enormously powerful instrument of government which in the past has endeavored to swell the *batig slot* and now works for the development of social prosperity." Furnival, *op. cit.*, p. 352. The following incident is noteworthy, for it is typical of the notion which the Dutch, in contrast to the English, have of native liberty, The newspaper *Handelsblad*, which attacked *zachte dwang*, considered that it was nonetheless advisable to compel native families to plant a coconut palm at the birth of each child and to keep poultry. (*Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandseh Bestuur*, XXVI, p. 374.)

<sup>35</sup> See Chapter V.

<sup>36</sup> *Journal of the Royal East Asiatic Society*, April 1934, p. 136.



go quite so far as this Dutch official. The living standard of certain native groups has improved. After having visited certain districts, I cannot persuade myself that before the Dutch occupation the native costume was what it is today. And judging only from the number of bicycles in use, I imagine that the same is true of the native way of life. Moreover, the natives certainly appear content with their lot. But although exaggerated pessimism is unwarranted, the fact remains that the tremendous development of resources resulting from the application of European technology serves for the most part to sustain a population which has increased inordinately. Dutch enterprises enjoy cheap manual labor, but nineteen out of twenty natives live, economically speaking, in the most primitive manner. This state of affairs is by no means the fault of the Dutch; it is an unavoidable consequence of unprecedented prosperity in an undeveloped population. Who would dream of reproaching the Dutch administration with having all at once intensified the production of rice and suppressed wars and epidemics? They have done their utmost to increase the wealth and comfort of their subjects. Are they to be held responsible for the enormous birthrate?<sup>37</sup>

At present I can see no remedy for this deplorable situation. The industrialization of Java or some other islands would not be very effective: the population would increase in proportion to the development of its resources. Migration to less densely populated regions is insignificant, though the Dutch government has applied itself to its task with praiseworthy zeal. Immigration to southern Sumatra in particular has shown some interesting results, and satisfied settlers have of their own volition acted as good propagandists. Emigration has brought no appreciable improvement, for the annual exodus of 30,000 persons has little effect upon the population of Java which increases by 500,000 each year; besides, it is extremely expensive. Since it is humanly impossible not to maintain and develop the health services and material benefits of colonization, the authorities must resign themselves to allowing the masses to swarm wretchedly and to subsist on a few cents a day.

Theoretically there is indeed a remedy. It would entail the dif-

<sup>37</sup> In certain districts of the Regency of Bandjarnegara, where, thanks to the Rockefeller Foundation, an attempt at record-keeping is being made, I found birth-rate figures as high as 48 per thousand. This, I believe, is the highest rate on record, even though perhaps all of the births are not registered.

fusion of birth-control propaganda. But actually this remedy is inapplicable; I very much doubt whether the people would even listen to it. For a people like the Javanese, whose ancestor-worship and family feeling are so strong and deeply ingrained, the teaching of birth-control would have unpredictable and possibly dangerous results. And even supposing that this were not the case, the Dutch government, composed of Catholics and Protestants, would never countenance such an attack upon the principles of Christianity. To defend these principles it is necessary to let the children of the Prophet increase to the utmost. Since the natives will not voluntarily restrict their birth-rate of their own accord, and since the economic development of the colony will continue, the population will inevitably increase—at the expense of its own living conditions.<sup>38</sup>

We must mention a final aspect of the demographic problem. If to the population of Java (including Madura) are added the peoples of the Menangkabau (in Sumatra), South Bali and Macassar (in Celebes), it becomes clear that three-fourths of the natives live in a state of overcrowding upon only one-tenth of the land, while vast regions like New Guinea remain almost deserted. This phenomenon is explicable on several historical grounds. In the era of the *Cultuur Systeem* the Dutch concentrated their energies almost exclusively upon Java, ignoring the rest of their colonial empire the conquest of which would have been expensive and unremunerative.

An attempt is being made nowadays to remedy this state of affairs, but it is a difficult business. The lack of development of islands other than Java is a sore point, for it leaves the Netherlands open to the criticism which has so often been directed at the Portuguese colonies. Since, the argument runs, these possessions have not been developed by their present owners, they should be turned over to countries better qualified to do so. I have never heard this question discussed by the Dutch, but many of them are worried about the colonial appetites of the "have not" nations. The population problem concerns Dutch New Guinea especially. This vast territory of 138,000 square miles had 315,000 inhabitants in 1930, 204 of whom were Europeans. Naturally the Dutch want to hold on to a territory, even an unproductive one; and quite as naturally other nations

<sup>38</sup> To be sure, the time will come when the number of deaths will increase as persons who are very young today reach old age, and this rise in the death rate will be in proportion to the recent increase in the birth rate.

wish to take it away from them. But here we are running afoul of the question of colonial demands which has no place in this chapter.

It is more than likely that New Guinea will be a source of nothing but disappointment to its possessor. The Dutch half of the island seems to have mediocre resources. Several colonizing ventures have been launched, especially by Eurasians, but all have failed. Some of the settlers carried on their vocations while teaching the natives the noble game of football "and devoted themselves also to other sports which are important from the colonizing point of view."<sup>39</sup> Present-day endeavors are hardly encouraging, and there is a possibility that they will be abandoned. Like French Guiana, New Guinea is one of Europe's colonial liabilities.

In the final analysis, from a material point of view the achievements of Dutch colonization are quite remarkable and do Holland great credit. They are accounted for in part by the influence of certain factors which have favored Dutch enterprises to an extraordinary degree as well as by a policy of excessive interference in native life. On the other hand, the colonial goal has not been quite attained. The alarming increase in population has to a considerable degree thwarted efforts to raise the native standard of living, and there are vast tracts of land which have been developed only slightly or not at all. Nevertheless, the performance has been a splendid one, commanding admiration and fit to be held up before the world as a magnificent example of untiring energy and steadfast purpose.

We must now turn our attention to the administrative policy of the Netherlands Indies.

<sup>39</sup> J. Winsenius, *Nieuw Guinee als Kolonisatie gebied voor Europeanen en Indo-Europeanen*, Amsterdam, 1936, p. 247. See also Klein, *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, July 1938.

CHAPTER IV  
POLITICAL REFORMS

I. THE REFORMS EXAMINED

**A**FTER 1903, but especially in the years 1916, 1922 and 1925, some extremely important and far-reaching reforms were effected in the administration of the Netherlands Indies, while at the same time its previously unprivileged people were obtaining political rights.

The old system with which Chailley-Bert was familiar was distinguished by excessive centralization of power, absolute autocracy<sup>1</sup> and "Dutch control of everything." Although the Dutch ostensibly governed through their regents, they had actually reduced these hereditary chiefs of Java to the rôle of puppets. On the one hand almost every decision had to be made by the central government; on the other neither Dutchman nor native could make his voice heard through any sort of political body in the colony. In short, the administration wanted, Chailley said, "to supervise and to manage everything . . . and the European officials bogged down in a morass of trifles." The situation has been altered by fundamental reforms, nearly all of which, it is pleasant to record, were inspired by the observations made by Chailley some forty years ago. Apparently he was a good diagnostician. It is noteworthy that in his time there was no intermediate body between the central government and the Dutch resident who had under his command assistant-residents, functioning as advisers to regents, and controleurs stationed in administrative units smaller than the regencies.<sup>2</sup>

After much experimenting the Netherlands Indies were divided into six major administrative units with a governor at the head of each. Java constitutes three units (not including the principalities

<sup>1</sup> This is true of the districts under direct administration—that is, almost all of Java. In many parts of the outer provinces the Dutch exercise only nominal authority.

<sup>2</sup> The *dessa* or village is the social unit of modern Java. Several villages constitute a regency, governed by a native regent who is usually of noble birth.

of Solo and Djokjakarta which have two special governors); Sumatra and the adjacent islands, one; Borneo, one; and the rest of the possessions, called the "Great East" because of their geographical position, one. Where provincial deliberative councils exist, as in Java, the units are called "provinces"; where the government, though decentralized, has remained autocratic, the units are called "governments."<sup>3</sup>

The residencies were decentralized while the Java regencies received greater autonomy, and the same procedure is now being attempted in the other possessions, where the proportion of districts under indirect rule has always been much greater.<sup>4</sup> Native chiefs often preserved their power after signing agreements with the Dutch government, agreements which, on Snouck Hurgronje's advice, were drawn up along the lines of the so-called "short contract,"<sup>5</sup> rather like the terms of treaties between France and Morocco or Tunisia. The present trend is toward the extension of this principle. Thus, in July 1938, the autonomy of the Balinese chiefs was restored, and the same policy is being followed in Sumatra, where deliberative councils have been established in various districts.

Along with this decentralization has come an increasing popular participation in politics. In Chailley's day there was no elective body; today there are several important ones. To begin with, in the cities an administration has been established recalling that of the mother country and including among other things a municipal council in which different ethnographic elements are represented. The electoral body is composed of literate Dutch subjects who have an annual income of at least three hundred guilders, and the council is an influential body representing European interests among others. The regency council is mainly a native representative body; thus, of the 452 members in such councils in western Java there are only 65 Dutch and 48 foreign oriental councillors.<sup>6</sup> The members are elected or appointed. Natives are elected by

<sup>3</sup> The powers of the central government, and not of the residents, have been transferred to the governments, thus making deconcentration possible.

<sup>4</sup> I have had no opportunity to discover how real this autonomy was.

<sup>5</sup> This, the  *korte verklaring*, was an agreement by which the native princes recognized Dutch authority.

<sup>6</sup>  *Beknopt overzicht van het Bestuur van Nederland Indie*, an anonymous pamphlet published by the Breda Military Academy, 1936, p. 41. This brief summary is well done.

indirect suffrage. The inhabitants of villages, at least the taxpayers, choose primary electors who elect the councillors. The council is presided over by the regent, an official found in Java alone. Provincial councils exist only in the provinces, not in the governments. In these, natives do not constitute a majority. Thus, in western Java the council is composed of 20 Dutch, 20 natives and 3 foreign orientals. Its members are appointed or elected; those elected are nominated by the municipal and regency councillors.

But of all these administrative reforms the most important was the creation in 1916 of the National Council or *Volksraad*, the powers of which were increased in 1925 and again in 1928. As it functions at present, the *Volksraad* is a co-legislative body in the sense that a bill passed by it and approved by the governor-general has the force of law, provided the Dutch parliament does not repeal it. On the other hand, in the event of a disagreement between the governor and the *Volksraad*, the home ministry decrees the course to be followed. The Dutch parliament, of course, preserves its legislative powers,<sup>7</sup> yet much legislation in the Indies is enacted with the collaboration of the *Volksraad*. Today it has sixty members and a president appointed by the Crown; the latter, curiously enough, may vote. Of the 60 members, 38 (20 natives, 15 Dutch, 3 foreign orientals) are elected, and 22 (10 natives, 10 Dutch, 2 orientals) are appointed by the governor-general upon the presentation to him by the Council of India of a list containing two names supplied by each member. As the regency and provincial councils do elsewhere, the *Volksraad* names a permanent body to represent it when it is not sitting; this is the "College of Delegates," which is somewhat similar to the French departmental committees. The *Volksraad* has the power to investigate, petition, and initiate and amend legislation. Appointed members are chosen by the municipal and regency councillors; the local councils do not participate in this election.

So much for political rights. Another aspect of reform is the reduction of the prerogatives of the Dutch administration. This aspect, which is particularly evident in Java, is known as *ontvoogding* or withdrawal of guardianship. Generally speaking, the regent formerly was extremely dependent upon the assistant-

<sup>7</sup> In particular it must approve the budget.

resident just as the regent's subordinates, the *wedonos* and assistant-*wedonos*, were dependent upon the controleur. Now the regent is assisted chiefly by his regency council; there are few controleurs left in Java, and the regent has become, at least theoretically, more independent of the assistant-resident. Outside of Java the legal reduction of the prerogatives of the Dutch Department of Interior Administration has not been nearly so marked, but then the Department has always been less meddlesome outside of Java.

On the whole this great reform program, which is still being followed, is in large measure a reply to the demands made forty years ago. In certain respects, notably in the creation of the *Volkstraad*, the original program has been exceeded. Decentralization has been achieved, the people have received political rights, and the native chiefs have been emancipated. The question now is whether the program, which is almost completed, meets the needs of the day. To answer this question it will be necessary to understand first how this program works and what its results have been.

## II. THE REFORMS APPRAISED

At the head of the Indian government are the governor-general and the Council of India, the latter with five to seven members who are always former high officials. Today the Council is an almost purely consultative body. The governor is assisted by the secretary-general whose position is a far cry from that of secretary-general in a French colony; he is more like a personal secretary to the governor-general. The secretariat is a sort of major ministerial department and exerts a very considerable influence upon the course of events.

The governor-general is not an official of the colonial service, nor is his salary paid by the colony. He is appointed by the home ministry and customarily remains five years in office, is never re-appointed and never returns to the Indies after the completion of his term. This is an admirable system because it puts the governor above political intrigue—though it is true that in the Netherlands Indies there is little of this sort of thing because of the strict observance of proportional representation.<sup>8</sup> The five-year term is a sensible

<sup>8</sup> That is, the political complexion of the *Volkstraad* is determined by popular vote.

one, for it allows the incumbent sufficient time to undertake useful work. I need not compare the French system nor cite examples, for that would be too invidious. In late years technical progress (radio, airplane service, etc.) has brought the colony and its governor-general closer to the mother country and its ministry; but the creation of the *Volkstraad* has served to make the Indian political machine decidedly more independent of Holland. The governor-general, supported by the *Volkstraad*, is in a strong position even when dealing with the Dutch parliament.

Of the natives elected to membership in the *Volkstraad* a great many are officials. This is accounted for partly by the fact that prominent natives are so often officials and partly by the manner in which members of this political body are selected. The regency councils also have a large proportion of officials and enjoy a decisive influence on the *Volkstraad* elections. Officials are at liberty to criticize government proposals and occasionally even to vote against them. True, Amry Vandenbosch echoes the complaint<sup>9</sup> of the member officials who were sharply rebuked for having given proof of their independence, yet despite this, it would not be impossible to preserve a certain relative independence the importance of which must not be exaggerated.<sup>10</sup> One disadvantage in the manner in which members are selected is that it represents mainly the rural groups, through the medium of the regency councils, rather than the urban groups through the medium of the municipal councils. The majority of persons who entertain any political opinion at all are opposed to the government; but their views can hardly attain a prominence proportionate to their political and intellectual worth because of the amorphous mass of those who are widely represented in the regency councils. These regency councils express the opinion of their members, the officials, but not of the vast majority of their electors, the village bumpkins who have no political opinions. Since these villagers are supposed gradually to elect a large proportion of the *Volkstraad*, those who represent a political organization are unable to make their voices heard. The government is so well aware of this situation that it does not hesitate to include its

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 105. He cites as reference the overseas edition of *De Locomotief*, April 23-5, 1931.

<sup>10</sup> It is difficult to grasp the degree of independence which officials enjoyed. In the *Volkstraad* session of September 15, 1938, the Director of the Interior was violently attacked on this point, even by the Dutch members of his majority. (Debate on the Blaauw motion.)



opponents among its own appointees. Nevertheless, the "national group" includes, as far as I know, only eight members out of thirty natives and a total of sixty members of the *Volkstraad*. This representation is in no way an accurate reflection of native public opinion.

The government is highly to be commended for having permitted members of the opposition to sit in the *Volkstraad*—not because this is a noble gesture, but because it is a clever one. An opponent is less dangerous on the floor of a deliberative assembly than behind the scenes. The position of a member of the *Volkstraad*, especially when he belongs to the "College of Delegates," is an enviable one financially. To make speeches criticizing the government is not especially arduous—and much pleasanter than to be consigned to New Guinea. I once received the impression that an Indonesian nationalist had actually become a kind of leader of "Her Majesty's most loyal opposition." How very delightful this must have been for the rulers!

The foremost advantage of the *Volkstraad* to the Dutch government is that it gives certain nationalists an opportunity to let off steam. In a more general way the council keeps the government well posted on the demands and inclinations of the different social and economic groups in the Indies. In this respect it is a constructive force in the life of the country. As far as I can see, however, the *Volkstraad* is very far from playing a decisively important rôle in the conduct of state affairs. At times it has been influential<sup>11</sup> and has offered a means of keeping a check on the general trends which one or another of its groups was following. But it is a body definitely divided against itself, and I do not believe that its voice carries much weight. The most recent edition of *Nederlands Indië*<sup>12</sup> says that the Dutch are educating the Indians today with the idea of granting them a more or less considerable degree of autonomy, and that the establishment of the *Volkstraad* as a co-legislative body is extremely significant. This is by no manner of means how the situation impressed me. Theory is not enough; the letter of the law must not be taken for its spirit. An

<sup>11</sup>In the *Volkstraad* session of July 26, 1935 (*Handelingen*, p. 479), the government commissioner explained how great an influence this political body enjoys. His arguments have not convinced me.

<sup>12</sup>*Nederlands Indië; land en volk, geschiedenis en bestuur*, edited by D. G. Stübbe, Amsterdam.

attempt must accordingly be made to discover which political or administrative bodies actually do have a decisive influence on the central government.

In an earlier chapter I said that the public prosecutor plays a decisive rôle. But this is a rather unusual and temporary state of affairs. In trying to examine the facts more closely and to study them in the numerous cases in which the attorney-general is not concerned, it is difficult to get a clear picture of the situation. Personally I have been wholly unsuccessful.

One cause of this confusion was noted and criticized by Vandenbosch, namely, the "bewildering lack of integration of the central government."<sup>13</sup> In the first place, this extraordinary lack of integration is most apparent from the geographical standpoint. The governor-general and one department are located at Buitenzorg, three other departments are in Bandoeng, the rest of the departments, the *Volkstraad* and the Council of India are in Batavia. "The governor exercises his control over the departments from a distance and through written orders." Moreover, the Council of India, a most important consultative body, interposes between the governor-general and his administration. I can distinguish at least five groups which may influence policy: (1) the *Volkstraad*, (2) the Council of India, (3) the secretariat-general, (4) the departmental heads, and (5) the three governors of Java who are subordinated to the central power and have jurisdiction over two-thirds of the population. Which of these is predominant? The constitution speaks of the first two (the *Volkstraad* and the Council of India), and the head of the government would naturally consult the next two (the secretariat-general and the department heads). Yet it is my impression that of all these influences that of the *Volkstraad* and especially that of the department heads (always excepting the attorney-general) are rather weak. On the other hand, I believe that the governors of the three large provinces are influential. It is difficult, however, to see clearly just how this complex machinery works and, particularly, how effective the power of the department heads really is.<sup>14</sup> The earnestness and

<sup>13</sup> Vandenbosch, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

<sup>14</sup> There are many complicated aspects of the work of the Dutch in the Indies—the academic system, for example, and native justice in the outer provinces. In a matter which concerns a given central department and has been undertaken by a local or regional body, how is the executive power to be apportioned among the governor-general, the secretariat and the department head? I cannot answer this question.

deliberateness of the Dutch character have apparently lessened the inconvenience which this system would otherwise entail. Violent public clashes do not occur.

At all events, the part played in affairs of state by the native element, particularly the nationalist group, is very small indeed. It may criticize, but that is about all. A perusal of the minutes of *Volkstraad* sessions shows that its president carefully controls the discussions and suffers no digression of the type so common in European parliaments. This question of form is unimportant; but that it is fundamental can be seen from the following incident which illustrates how the system really works. The *Indo-Europeesch Verbond*, an Indonesian group of loyal government supporters, once voted in a manner displeasing to the government. Its leader was thereupon summoned before the Director of the Interior and, so he told me, soundly rated. So we must not over-estimate the actual rôle and influence of the *Volkstraad*.

Below the central government are the provinces and governments. The provinces and their provincial councils function unobtrusively. In so far as they have relieved the central government of work which formerly devolved upon it, these councils are worthy of their hire. The governments, however, are not quite yet administrative realities—at least not in the "Great East." I am afraid that the governor's prerogatives with respect to the residents and his other subordinates are not yet clearly established. Thus to some extent the reform is still only a scrap of paper.

Within the provinces the significant change has been the emancipation of the regent by providing him with a regency council and suppressing the controleurs. On the whole, the change has been a good one. Since nowadays there are natives who have been trained by the Dutch and are capable of understanding public affairs, it seems advisable to increase their part in the administration of the regency while reducing the interference of the central power and the Department of Interior Administration. It is perhaps unfortunate that these councils are composed mainly of officials, but it is difficult to see how they could be otherwise. It should be noted here that, as is true of the *Volkstraad*, these councils do not actually represent the social classes which theoretically elect them; for the masses are uneducated, and the method of election is gradually depriving them of any opportunity of expressing an

opinion—if they have an opinion, which I very much doubt. In other words, I do not attach much importance at present to the electoral system by which a part of the regency council is selected. The Dutch declare that village elections are absolutely free, and they have even invented ingenious ways of ensuring the secrecy of the vote of the illiterate population. I have, however, with my own eyes seen an order written by a native district leader to a village chief, enjoining him to ensure that those under his jurisdiction voted for the official candidates, a list of whose names was attached. This behavior is neither surprising nor disturbing; it is not in the Indies alone that practice and theory have only a bowing acquaintance. Little by little, over a long period, the masses will probably achieve some sort of education, and then they will become less amenable to the electoral commands of the regent.

By law the regent enjoys a rather considerable degree of liberty of action. Just what this liberty is in actual fact can be discovered only from an examination of administrative practice. Does the assistant-resident now confine himself to his less active rôle, or is he still eager to manage and regulate everything himself? No generalization will answer this question. In any case, the character of Dutch administration does not favor too independent a spirit. It is true, though, that the regent enjoys a considerable advantage over his assistant-resident; the former is to all intents and purposes firmly settled in his regency; the latter is essentially insecure in his administrative post. Apparently an assistant-resident does not remain in one post for more than three years, and I know of one regency in Java where in less than twelve years the same regent has had six assistants in succession.<sup>15</sup> Under such conditions he can say, with the Church: *patiens quia aeternus*. On the whole, the reform of the regency seems to have succeeded. It is probable that in the distant future other changes will be effected in this field, particularly in the manner in which regents are appointed. The position is as a rule hereditary; a regent is succeeded usually by one of his sons. But

<sup>15</sup> I have pointed out that the governor of eastern Java does not remain in office longer than three years, and the same system apparently prevails elsewhere. I have been told that this is due to a desire to have more officials benefit from these profitable posts, especially in the matter of pensions. I imagine that there must be even greater instability in the French colonies, although that does not justify the Dutch system. The same policy is followed in the membership of the Council of India and, it is said, for the same reason.

several writers have pointed out, and I too could cite examples, that in the regents' families those who are best qualified to succeed their fathers turn aside from this career which does not offer them sufficient liberty and independence. Another reform should increase the regent's real executive power in his council. This would complete the more or less effective withdrawal of administrative guardianship which has been under way. However, this reform does not appear to enter into the plans of the authorities.

As in the case of the governments, the reforms of the administrative units outside of Java, which are smaller than the governments in Java, appear to me to be of very slight importance. Political power is being restored to certain chiefs. In places where they do not already exist, there are being or already have been established groups of communes or confederations of villages with the intention of setting up "autonomous" groups. These local groups will have councils more or less analogous to the regency councils, and in them the natives will play a deliberative part. But what makes this reform, instituted in 1932, quite different from the one effected in Java is that here the *controleur* remains at his post with the powers of a local administrative head. Six years ago Vandebosch wrote: "Little real emancipation of the administrative corps can be expected in the near future." His prediction has been realized, and the same prophecy may be repeated: there is no question of really emancipating the outer provinces. In certain districts the level of native civilization is still extremely low. There is, moreover, no intention of reducing the activity of the Department of Interior Administration: the regional units which will be set up in certain outer provinces will have fairly extensive powers, more so than the Java regencies, but the European administration will preserve its hegemony. The system is motivated more by the idea of administrative deconcentration than that of political decentralization.

The previous discussion has pretty well covered the third aspect of the administrative reforms, namely, the slackening of direct intervention by the Dutch administration. Its activity in Java has lessened with the suppression of the *controles*,<sup>16</sup> but I am not very

<sup>16</sup> Some twelve years ago the *controles* of Minahasa (Celebes) were abolished. There are still three *controleurs* today, but they are assigned to special services under the assistant-resident.

familiar with its attitude towards its work. What I have seen in the outer provinces has given me the impression that the controleurs accomplish an enormous amount of work, chiefly through their often very extensive judicial duties and their intimate contacts with the native chiefs. On the other hand, judging only from my observations in the Lombok district, with which I am best acquainted, their position is decidedly insecure. It is unusual for a controleur to remain in one post for more than two years. I have heard complaints about the changes in local policy which this system occasionally involves. In this connection I shall quote Joost van Vollenhoven, Dutch-born governor-general of French West Africa and formerly a great figure in French colonial administration. "To the necessary changes which the civilizing process entails it is not essential to add profitless changes in personnel. If what seemed desirable yesterday is considered bad today, if every leader systematically abandons what his predecessor undertook, chaos is inevitable."<sup>17</sup>

Chailley's suggestions about the administrative personnel have not been followed. After speaking of the recruiting of officials for the Department of Interior Administration,<sup>18</sup> he added: "However, I would not at any price agree to be reduced to this method of recruiting alone. If a worthy man, no matter what his origin, should pass my door, I would promise him a job in Java with the stipulation that the number of these 'outsiders' should be limited and that they would not enjoy the privileges reserved for officials from Delft." Vandenbosch advances similar suggestions, with which I quite agree, about the duties of governor—an official who did not exist in Chailley's day. "The government of the Indies would do well to consider whether it would not be advisable to appoint as governors eminent, broad-minded men who are conversant with Dutch politics."<sup>19</sup> He even suggests that it would be possible to discover candidates for these offices in colonial society, both European and Indonesian, but that is perhaps going a bit far.

The great advantage of such a policy—the appointment of high-ranking men from the Netherlands as governors—is that it would serve to increase the group of men from which governors-general

<sup>17</sup> Circular on the administration of groups, Dakar, November 1, 1917, reprinted in *Une âme de chef: le gouverneur général Joost van Vollenhoven*, Paris, 1920. Anonymous.

<sup>18</sup> Chailley, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

<sup>19</sup> Vandenbosch, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

might be chosen; the latter have never been selected from among the members of the Department of Interior Administration, why I do not know. The American writer himself makes the point that the choice of men qualified to fill these positions is extremely limited, especially since the selection is made with great care. Thus, Governor-General Fock (1921-6), a man identified politically with the left, was selected by a government with rightist sympathies; and Idenburg (1909-16),<sup>20</sup> was Minister for Colonies at the time of his appointment. In each of these cases the appointee was the only candidate who seemed suitable. If Dutch political figures were appointed governors, they could serve their apprenticeships and thus eventually rise to be governor-general. Another means of training would be to place a lieutenant-governor under the governor-general; such a position has been provided for by law since 1864 although for some curious reason it has never been filled. Desirable as such a means of recruiting may be, it is unlikely that it will be resorted to inasmuch as administrative bodies the world over exhibit to a marked degree what Spinoza called "the tendency of being to perpetuate itself." The band of picked men who constitute the Department of Interior Administration are no exception to this rule, and they exert a powerful influence.<sup>21</sup>

In summing up it may be said, with a few reservations, that the Indies have been the scene of a determined attempt at administrative and political reform. Almost the entire program outlined by Chailley about 1900 has been accomplished. In certain respects, of which the creation of the *Volkstraad* is the most important, the program has been exceeded. But is this attempt enough? Has it been consistently wise and enlightened? Actually it is in large part nothing more than the tardy execution of a plan sketched in outline nearly half a century ago to meet the exigencies of that day. Since that time tremendous changes have taken place in the Indies; education has spread, nationalism has made its appearance, China has become a republic, the Philippines are semi-independent and all of British India has gained administrative autonomy. Bolshevism is now a threatening force.

In the light of these facts, now that the program of 1900 has

<sup>20</sup> This governor-general was an exception in that he remained in office longer than five years because of the World War.

<sup>21</sup> The same might be said of the Council of India, which also draws its members exclusively from high officialdom.

been enacted, it is not enough to have emancipated the regents and abolished a few controleurs. To be sure there have been more extreme reforms, of which the most significant was the establishment of the *Volksraad*. The questions which must now be answered are whether the *Volksraad* is capable of canalising the nationalist aspirations of the upper Indonesian groups and whether, at the same time, it is compatible with the interests of Dutch colonial policy. If the answer to these two questions were in the affirmative, the problem would be solved: political and administrative reform would happily have been accomplished at one time. But to my way of thinking quite the reverse is true. The political reforms are both inadequate and dangerous—inadequate because they do not satisfy the nationalists, dangerous because they contain seeds of trouble for the Dutch government. I shall enlarge on this theme and at the same time explain why the proposals for political reform recommended in 1928 by Colijn, today president of the Council of the Netherlands, appear to me to offer a very happy solution to the problems which have been engaging our attention.

### III. A CRITICISM OF THE SYSTEM. COLIJN'S PLAN.

"To reach this goal, we must adopt tactics quite different from those of the past."<sup>22</sup>

Before the suggestions made by this statesman are discussed they should be carefully examined. It is now more than a quarter of a century since nationalism first appeared and began to develop in its various forms. The causes which brought it into being—the emancipation of Asia and the spread of education—have not disappeared. The intellectual quality of the schooling now provided by the Dutch is surely not one whit inferior to that of twenty-five years ago, and the number of persons who take advantage of it is increasing daily. Accordingly, either the schools must be closed—but no one has the courage to recommend such a measure though it would doubtless be effective—or nationalism must be directed into various channels in order to render it less dangerous to the mother country. Slowly, to be sure, yet in an increasing degree, schools are opening their doors to the people. As for the canalization of nationalism, that is being done in two ways:

<sup>22</sup> J. P. Coen (January 1, 1614), *Bescheiden*.



the more aroused nationalists are sent to New Guinea without trial, while others are to a certain extent allowed to have their say in the *Volkstraad*. I consider this system faulty on two counts. First, although New Guinea is still a wilderness, the Dutch will not succeed in deporting ten thousand persons there during the next twenty-five years, for such a policy cannot be pursued indefinitely. In any case, it would be impossible to deport all of the malcontents—there are too many of them. Secondly, the *Volkstraad* no longer satisfies the nationalists, and it is concealing serious danger for the Netherlands by maintaining and feeding precisely that fire which it was supposed to extinguish.

What is occurring in British India and North Africa is occurring also in the Netherlands Indies: among certain more or less extensive groups of the population foreign rule is giving birth to a feeling of patriotism hitherto unknown. It is clear that whatever strengthens the feeling of national unity tends to create or to strengthen nationalism, which becomes more dangerous as its influence spreads over an increasing geographical area. But though the presence of a foreign government has created patriotism, it does not determine the geographical extent of that patriotism. In this respect France has the advantage over the Netherlands in that, besides possessing a far larger population at home, her colonial empire, though with a population about the same as that of the Netherlands Indies, is extremely disunited. I doubt, for instance, whether a Tunisian nationalist is capable of feeling more than vague sympathy for the Indo-Chinese who also "groan under a foreign yoke," and I do not think that this sentiment differs essentially from what he feels for other "oppressed" peoples. In any case, the Tunisian and the Indo-Chinese do not act in conjunction, nor can they be said to be in close alliance; even less do they belong to the same social group. It would be singular, to say the least, if the two peoples, brought face to face in some sort of French colonial parliament, were able to act in concert.

In this respect geography has been most unkind to the Dutch. But to a far greater degree they have harmed themselves by centralizing administrative authority. Past history demonstrates that there has been a certain bond between the different elements of Dutch Indonesia, but with the development of modern civilization the Dutch have strengthened this bond immeasurably. Dutch Indo-

nesia today is in extent about what it was in the days of the Company, and more or less what it was in the time of the Javanese Majapahit Empire. Yet in former times Indonesian patriotism did not exist. It has been strengthened by the Dutch policy of unification. Snouck Hurgronje says truly, "It is undeniable that Dutch rule has done much to strengthen this feeling of unity. There has never been any hesitation about stationing Javanese, Sumatran, Amboynese or Menadonese officials in any part of the archipelago, or about encouraging either emigration to Sumatra or the recruiting of Javanese coolies for work in Sumatra. Javanese legislation has frequently served as a model for regulations in other islands."<sup>23</sup> To these examples, and many more could be cited, let me add the serious error of employing an Indonesian language (Malay) in dealing with the natives instead of speaking Dutch or the local tongue.<sup>24</sup> Another even more unfortunate error was the creation of the *Volkstraad*. Regarded purely from a political point of view, the establishment of this body betrays a truly amazing lack of psychology. If there must be a centralized government, well and good, but it is dangerous to consolidate the opposition and to present it with a tangible symbol of its unity. From this standpoint, therefore, I quite endorse Colijn's criticism of this institution.<sup>25</sup>

He declares to be sure that, "Indonesia, if this term must be used, is at most a geographical, not a valid political concept." This is not my belief. History and geography show that this view is too arbitrary, and Snouck Hurgronje is justified in replying to Colijn: "There is no reason to describe as absurd the belief that in our day, when the entire East is trying to rid itself of the West, Indonesians find in the consciousness of their unity (which for several reasons has existed for centuries) the motive for uniting politically in an endeavor to attain that independence which they all desire."<sup>26</sup> In Europe, too, nations are created on the basis of common interests of groups no less different from each other than are the people of Sumatra from those of Java, Bali and Timor."

<sup>23</sup> See *Colijn over Indie*, p. 13.

<sup>24</sup> See Chapter V, Part I.

<sup>25</sup> Colijn, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>26</sup> I deny the truth of this assertion. Ninety-five per cent of the people have no views on the matter and are not interested. If only those who do care are called "Indonesians," then Snouck Hurgronje is right; but this definition has no relation to the facts.

No doubt, but it is no more absurd to declare that today Belgians and Dutch dislike each other even though they were allied against Spain; that Switzerland does not wish to be divided into three ethnical groups; that were it not for the treaty of 1824, Benkoelen would be English and Malacca Dutch; that half of Timor is Portuguese; that on the whole this grouping was neither inevitable nor predetermined. At all events it is quite proper to try to destroy these tendencies while they are still at a formative stage. But the *Volkstraad* (just like police persecution) serves only to make the upper classes of the archipelago conscious of their unity.

Colijn goes on to criticize the *Volkstraad*. He explains just why this body cannot satisfy certain aspirations of the cultivated native. "One would have to be really very short-sighted not to see that in native society there are disengaged forces which will doubtless grow in the future and must not be left unemployed in our administrative organism—using this word in its widest sense—and which must gradually be invited to take their place therein in such a way that they will be able to cooperate on the principle of *responsibility*."<sup>27</sup> The writer goes on to point out that the value of the parliamentary system lies precisely in the responsibility borne by the ministers in office and by the opposition which may be asked to assume leadership, especially if the cabinet, believing that it has been unfairly criticized, resigns and invites the opposition to take office. Now it is as clear as day that this parliamentary give and take does not exist in the *Volkstraad*; the majority cannot upset the government, nor can the latter resign and compel the opposition to succeed it.

According to Colijn, this is a deplorable state of affairs, first of all from the point of view of the thoughtful native who believes in the possibility of cooperation with the Netherlands. However well-founded his criticism of the government may be, he can never assume the responsibility of command, "and that, to my way of thinking, is a state of affairs which in the long run is undesirable from the native standpoint,"<sup>28</sup> and which, moreover, would exist even if the *Volkstraad* were composed entirely of natives. What is more, this situation is not healthy from the government standpoint. What would happen if for several consecutive years the assembly

<sup>27</sup> Colijn, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

rejected the budget of some particular department, or if the entire budget were rejected at once?<sup>29</sup> Opponents of the government can thus criticize without ever having to suffer the consequences of their position or their acts. This is an impossible situation. The great error consists in having granted too much and yet not enough—too much because although they are not sufficiently awakened to political realities, the natives since 1918 have been given a voice in all state affairs; and not enough because even in the smallest administrative units they have not been allowed to share the responsibilities of power. For this reason, says Colijn, two autonomous provinces, and not a central *Volksraad*, should have been created. In brief his scheme consists of increasing the political rights of the natives, but in smaller geographical units, while reserving for the central authority all matters of general interest affecting the colony and the mother country.

Thus there would still be a governor-general, but his only function would be what Chailley (whom Colijn does not cite) assigned to him in 1900. "If I were governor-general," Chailley observes, "I should look out for myself . . . I should establish three lieutenancies in Java . . . I should shift the burden of administration and local politics onto the shoulders of my lieutenants. As governor-general I should reserve my strength for questions of general policy affecting the interests of empire."<sup>30</sup> This program is rather like Colijn's, who wishes the governor of a province to become, "not a local leader of an obsolete type, but a kind of petty governor-general placed above his local administrative heads."<sup>31</sup> This governor would have his own departments and services under his command, and within the confines of his government would rule in collaboration with a reduced *Volksraad*. The heads of these departments "could at first be official technicians; later they could be political figures. And once these latter had acquired some experience, there would no longer be any reason for barring an exchange of rôles between the governor's cabinet and the opposition, *since the general interests of the Kingdom of the Indies would be outside this sphere.*" Within these provinces nothing would prevent the grant of limited autonomy to the

<sup>29</sup> This situation has not yet arisen, but a departmental budget was once unanimously rejected by the *Volksraad*. The head of the department affected remained in office.

<sup>30</sup> Chailley, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

<sup>31</sup> Colijn, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

smaller ethnographic groups. Gradually the system could be extended to include the whole of Netherlands India. Of course the system of ministerial responsibility would not necessarily be inaugurated everywhere at once. "Through the establishment of a central *Volksraad* the people have lost the most important of their privileges, namely, the right to exercise an influence on government policy. This should not have been the case." The jurisdiction of the local *Volksraad* would be less extensive but more effective.<sup>32</sup> Colijn makes this excellent observation: "I imagine that the sensible native who is not mischievous but wishes to serve his people—and he alone concerns me here—would much prefer to be at the head of the Department of Public Education for the thirty-five million inhabitants of Java<sup>33</sup> than to be able to address the present *Volksraad* about whatever concerns the education of fifty million natives, a million Chinese and a few hundred thousand Europeans."<sup>34</sup> These views are sound because they would safely grant new rights to the natives while developing their sense of political responsibility. Even better, they would set at variance the nationalist forces which are in a fair way of forming and growing.

In one respect the Colijn plan seems to me to require further consideration. For according to this plan it would be expedient to create two autonomous provinces, Java and Sumatra, comprising five-sixths of the Indonesian population. This division is inadequate because Java with its forty-one million inhabitants would still be too powerful. Java must be split up. On this point history, ethnography and contemporary politics are agreed. Passing by the Madurese (who are relatively few in number anyway), it is apparent that the Sundanese and Javanese regions differ markedly from each other in point of language, race and depth of religious fervor. At its apogee, moreover, the Majapahit Empire did not include the Sundanese, and to this day the latter have preserved their own political and religious groups which have been unwilling to merge with Javanese organizations. The Dutch are trying to create Javanese-Sundanese unity where such a thing has never existed. I should like to see an autonomous Sundanese province established as soon as possible, quite detached from the Javanese district and

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>33</sup> This was written in 1928.

<sup>34</sup> Colijn, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

free from Javanese interference.<sup>35</sup> Experts in Indonesian affairs ought to have additional suggestions. Thus there might perhaps be reason to conceive of Sumatra, far larger but more heterogeneous and less densely populated, with a government of autonomous cantons on the Swiss model instead of centralized governments such as there would be in the Sunda and Java districts.

I will go even further. In these districts a feeling of racial and linguistic autonomy should be developed to counteract nationalism and even, if this is possible, to foster a love of Holland. Customs duties and passports should be reestablished if necessary. Young people should be forbidden to find work in any province but their own. Native officials should be recruited on a strictly regional basis. Militias should be established but not for service outside their own provinces. In the field of secondary education intercourse between provinces should be prohibited; unfortunately the same cannot be done in the case of higher education. Advanced students should be compelled to study either at home or in Holland. The use of that preposterous language, Malay, should also be systematically abolished; Batavia must be Hollandized linguistically. This could be done within a few decades. Either the local tongue or Dutch, but never Malay—that must be the watchword. Instead of uniting their subjects against them, the Dutch must divide and rule.

I am so unequivocally in favor of this complete division of the Netherlands Indies because the experience of the French in North Africa capitably illustrates the advantages of this policy. I used to think it ridiculous that some of the fifteen million inhabitants of North Africa are governed by the Ministry of the Interior and others by the Quai d'Orsay. It would be difficult to conceive of a system which at first blush would seem more senseless; it is intelligible only in the light of French diplomatic and political history. After visiting the Indies, I realized that France has been very lucky, that it would have been a calamity if all of North Africa had been governed by a central administration in Algiers; and that the creation of a Ministry for North Africa is not necessarily desirable. Today indeed, while the territory has only two races and two native languages, Arabic and Berber, spread more

<sup>35</sup> At the present time the large autonomous provinces of British India are trying to split up—an interesting sign.

or less over three countries, nationalist aspirations are quite definitely divided. In Algeria people want to obtain the privileges of French citizenship while preserving their native laws; in the two protectorates people are demanding autonomy and independence. Doubtless those who live in one district sympathize with those in others, and they are in touch with each other, mainly in Paris; but they do not act in concert and are not formally allied. They cannot easily form an alliance. The French should be delighted that Algiers does not boast a *Volkstraad* in which the deputy for Gabes (Tunis) might discuss the affairs of Blida (Algeria) or Marrakesh (Morocco). The native administration of each of the two protectorates recruits its own personnel on the spot.<sup>36</sup> The subjects of the bey of Tunis or of the sultan of Morocco are not at home in Algeria. In the barracks of Algeria there are no Tunisians or Moroccans quartered among the local troops. I have often complained about having to carry a passport in order to go to Morocco and having to open my bags at the Tunisian customs station of Ghardimaou; but now these police and customs officials who guard the barriers between Morocco and Algeria appear to be the firmest defenders of French rule in North Africa. It is enough for the French to know that in each of the three Berber countries, hitherto divided into hostile tribes, patriotism is appearing and is sometimes directed against the rulers. Let the latter take care not to encourage these tendencies. On the negative side let them preserve their political and administrative divisions; on the positive, they must spread abroad everywhere the civilizing influence of France. This much I learned during my visit to the Netherlands Indies, where the Dutch are striving so conscientiously to create an anti-Dutch Indonesia. In fine, I think Colijn's plan has a place in a far-sighted colonial policy and that it is inspired by the familiar but always serviceable maxim, *divide ut imperes*.

There is still one point, however, to be considered. Colijn writes, "It is possible to have a political system resting upon a sounder substructure. And it is to this end that we must work. It is not too late today to make a fresh start. Ten years from now it will be much more difficult; in twenty-five years it will be impossible."<sup>37</sup> It is quite true that, what with the development of technology and

<sup>36</sup> And the European groups form three quite distinct bodies.

<sup>37</sup> Colijn, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

education, the idea of Indonesian unity has made some progress in the last ten years, yet I am not sure that the situation has become so much worse for the Dutch since 1928. I believe that there is still time to act—and this is why I think so. Ten years ago the native world was in a state of ferment; Dutch reaction had hardly begun to manifest itself; communism had been crushed but not nationalism. Today, more than ten years later, the Dutch government has clearly shown that it can maintain order and that it is quite determined to do so. This maintenance of order is a fine thing, although we may have certain doubts about the manner in which it has been accomplished. I am of the opinion, accordingly, that in certain respects political conditions in the Indies are more favorable to the realization of Colijn's plan at this time than they were in 1928.

I believe, indeed, that although it is always necessary to take popular evolution into account and to submit to the unavoidable, it is deplorable to yield when another course no longer offers.<sup>38</sup> In this respect subjects should be treated like children: the worst policy is to yield when they are aware that they can demand and obtain what they desire. A government must know how to offer concessions at the right time, in order to preserve its prestige, as well as how to yield in the way which seems best. From this point of view it may be that the situation is more favorable at present than it was in 1928. On the other hand, conditions will become less favorable as time passes. Nationalism can hardly be repressed further than it is today, and in the future the government will have to relax, not tighten its grasp. The crisis has passed. Yet I would say to the Dutch, do not delay until the next one. Undertake the reform program calmly and unhurriedly. Act while you still control the situation. Do not try to halt evolution that is inevitable. Guide it while time still permits. Do not suppose that, by restoring temporal power to a few Balinese princes or by establishing regional councils which deliberate under the supervision of

<sup>38</sup> Accordingly I advocate increased political rights for Algerian natives, and I believe that a great error was committed ten years ago in not granting French status to those who demanded it. Moreover, what natives demand from the French today, France will be compelled to grant as the result of war in Europe; and it is likely that ten years hence they will no longer accept what they now demand. In this respect the administration in Algeria seems as blind as that in the Netherlands Indies. The history of French foreign policy during the past fifteen years is, indeed, a painful demonstration of the principle stated here.



your controleurs, you will be able to solve the serious problems which confront you in the Indies. Stop fooling yourselves; Chailley's era has passed. Times have changed: in 1847 control of Indian affairs rested wholly with the king of the Netherlands—I say king and not minister because at that time there was not yet parliamentary government in Holland; in 1900 control still rested with The Hague and the governor-general; in 1925 the *Volkstraad* emerged as a co-legislative body. These developments took place in the course of seventy-eight years, and no one believes that this evolution is ended. There will be other changes,<sup>39</sup> and we know their nature. The motto of the Netherlands is in vain *je maintiendrai*; they will not maintain the present regime.

Chailley had the good fortune to have his prophecies borne out by later events. If I feel no doubt concerning my own predictions, I am fairly certain that they will never be fulfilled although they resemble the suggestions of the current president of the Council. They are opposed by too many interests. First of all, the Department of Interior Administration is violently opposed, for the attitude of this body has not changed much in the past forty years. It wishes to retain as far as possible a considerable power of supervision and action. Rabid nationalists will be equally in opposition. The whole *Volkstraad* must be antagonistic, for why should it desire its own death or impotence? In the Netherlands most people will remain, as is true everywhere, indifferent to the interests of the nation, and some feeble-minded persons will believe that the "sacred rights" of Indonesian democracy are being attacked. To buck the tide an inflexible will and an iron hand will be required. But the attempt will not succeed, and we can imagine what will inevitably occur before another century has passed.

As I have said, the reforms which I have proposed and discussed in these pages are inspired by the very simple principle, *divide ut imperes*. Actually if one considers the Roman policy or many other imperial policies, it is apparent that this principle has most often been applied instinctively. But in the case of the Roman Empire there was more to it than mere conquest by force of arms and poli-

<sup>39</sup> This is what Thorbecke wrote about Guizot on March 7, 1848. "What would have been discretion some years ago is now compulsion. It is no misfortune that the government is drawing closer to the middle classes, but it remains to be seen whether compulsion will bear us the same fruit that discretion would have borne." (*Historische Schetsen*, The Hague, 2nd ed., pp. 158-9.) The Dutch might meditate upon these words of their great statesman.

tical division. This cynical maxim was the expression of a desire to extend the power of Rome ever farther. Rome, whose great empire lasted so long, tried to civilize the thousand peoples who were her subjects; she taught them her language and gave them her culture. I do not grasp the idea behind *divide ut imperes* at all unless it is part of a larger concept in which the work of civilizing goes hand in hand with political domination. For this reason, after having examined the material achievement and administrative policy of the Netherlands in its colonies, we have still to consider other problems of a more lofty nature in an attempt to define Dutch colonial philosophy.

## CHAPTER V THE PROCESS OF CIVILIZATION

### I. LANGUAGE

I HAD hardly landed in Batavia before I discovered that in that city which has been in Dutch hands for more than three centuries, nearly the entire native population is ignorant of even the first word of Dutch. I was astounded by this state of affairs so different from what I had observed in British India and even in the French settlements in India,<sup>1</sup> to say nothing of Algeria. My astonishment gave rise to the reflections which fill this and the following chapter. Other observations gradually led me to believe that this state of affairs is merely a typical manifestation of the Dutch attitude toward problems of colonial civilization. It is important for us to know whether results attained in this field by the Netherlands are as brilliant as the material achievements already discussed.

Great as was my surprise, I imagine that it will be exceeded by that of my French and English readers when they learn on good authority<sup>2</sup> that the Dutch themselves neglected their own language until almost the present day. The facts are really incredible. At first, after the foundation of Batavia, it was Portuguese which rivalled Dutch:<sup>3</sup> as early as 1627 religious literature was translated into Portuguese. In 1673, of five weekly sermons two were in Malay, two in Portuguese and only one in Dutch. In the beginning of the eighteenth century the traveler N. de Graaf said that if one asked a question in Dutch of a girl of Dutch parentage she would reply, *Noke save*, "I don't know" (*Nunca sabe* in Portuguese). The

<sup>1</sup> French is not widely spoken in these French settlements, but even in Chandernagore, a suburb of Calcutta, some two or three per cent of the population can speak it. I am informed by some one who recently completed an investigation there that in the little settlement of Mahé (with 10,000 inhabitants) seventy per cent of the population knows French. But this is an exception. On the whole, the relative number of persons familiar with French must be at least as great as the number of inhabitants of British India who can speak English.

<sup>2</sup> Prick van Wely, *Neerlands Taal in Verre Oosten*, Semarang 1906, pp. 1-24.

<sup>3</sup> In support of this I should like to add a book to the Dutch sources cited in the French edition of my study: David Lopez, *A expansacao da lingua portuguesa no oriente*, 1936, especially Chapters II and IV.

Company seems to have been quite indifferent to this state of affairs.<sup>4</sup> At about this time two Dutch clergymen declared that they could no longer preach save in Portuguese. The education of children was left to slaves who did not know a word of their master's language. In the Protestant Seminary at Batavia in 1745 the languages in use were Portuguese, Malay and Latin, not Dutch. At the end of the nineteenth century the last stronghold of the Portuguese language (in Tigoe, near Batavia) disappeared, but it was Malay which succeeded it. The following example illustrates the transition. A member of the Council of India married an orphan of Batavia with whom he could speak only Portuguese; after their mother's death his children were brought up to speak Malay. In the course of the nineteenth century Dutch began to be spoken more widely, but an investigation made about 1900 showed that only 29.2 per cent of the *Indische kinderen* (Dutch children, generally Eurasian, born in the Indies) had a proper knowledge of the tongue and that 41.5 per cent did not know *a single word* upon first going to school.<sup>5</sup>

Under such conditions it seems perfectly natural that the Dutch did not try to spread the use of their language among the natives; until the end of the nineteenth century they did practically nothing in this direction. When the *Pangeran*<sup>6</sup> Ahmed Djajadiningrat was sent as a little boy to a Dutch school, he had to be passed off as a Eurasian, "Willem van Banten," although his father was a regent.<sup>7</sup> It was only through force of circumstance, because the natives demanded it ever more urgently and because the economic development of the colony made its use convenient for employers, that the authorities were *compelled* to disseminate the Dutch language. Their reluctance was obvious. They waited until 1908, for example, before deciding to grant instruction in Dutch to the

<sup>4</sup> van Wely, *op. cit.* Note, on page 4, an enumeration of measures adopted by the Company to encourage the spread of the Dutch language: among others, slaves who learned it were allowed to wear a cap or hat. The same was true in Ceylon. In 1659 it was determined to abolish Portuguese. Slaves who did not know Dutch had their heads shaved and had to go about bare-headed, "with the result that the Portuguese language outlasted Dutch rule in Ceylon." (*Op. cit.*, p. 6.) Despite tonsures, hats and caps, the academic regulation of 1778 in Batavia called for the use of Dutch as though it were an innovation.

<sup>5</sup> I thought the present situation satisfactory. The percentage of Indo-Europeans unfamiliar with Dutch is very small, and the language is spoken more correctly than I had anticipated.

<sup>6</sup> A native title.

<sup>7</sup> See his *Herinneringen*, in which there is a photograph of him as Willem van Banten.

Chinese, when the latter, weary of having their demands refused, had resigned themselves to the establishment of schools of their own, which would include English on their curriculum.<sup>8</sup> I visited two of these Anglo-Chinese schools in Semarang. Signs admonishing the pupils to "Speak English" hung everywhere. In only one of these schools was there optional instruction in Dutch, and it was elected by one-fifth of the students. History was taught in the Chinese manner—how, one can imagine. Neither of the two principals of the school knew Dutch.

From the linguistic point of view Dutch colonial policy seems to me now, after five months residence in the Indies, quite as incomprehensible as it did on my first day in the country. In 1890 at a discussion dealing with the language question, Mr. Elout van Soeterwoude had this to say about the poor little Portuguese colony of Timor, half of which island is Dutch. "We were invited to attend a theatrical performance given by some chiefs' daughters who were being brought up in a religious boarding-school. The performance, in Portuguese, was charming. On the following day we made a visit to a similar boarding-school for the sons of chiefs; it was delightful to hear these youths speaking Portuguese so fluently."<sup>9</sup> Can there possibly be two more contradictory conceptions of the rôle or purpose of colonization than the Dutch and the Portuguese?

Today things have changed; Dutch is making rapid strides. In all cultivated society it is spoken fluently, at times even more so than the native tongue, and some people even know French, English and German. Nevertheless, the delay has been so great that the results are still relatively small. According to the latest figures, fewer than 200,000 natives, or less than 0.2 per cent, can read and write Dutch. The present policy of education seems wiser than that of the past. There can be no question of spreading the language among the masses, for no one desires or even thinks of doing this. And if it were desired, the undertaking would meet with all kinds of insurmountable difficulties. In the academic year 1935-6 there were 1,900,000 students in the Indies:<sup>10</sup> of these one quarter, girls, received primary instruction exclusively in their native language.

<sup>8</sup> G. J. Nieuwenhuis, *Bronnenboek voor het nieuwe taalonderwijs in Indië*, The Hague, 1925, p. 14. This is an extremely interesting study, even in its technical portion.

<sup>9</sup> *Indische Genootschap, Handlingen*, p. 231.

<sup>10</sup> In State or subsidized schools, not free or so-called "uncivilized" schools like those of the *Taman Siswo*.

Moreover, for four-fifths of these the instruction was of a most elementary nature: reading, writing and some arithmetic. On the other hand, a small minority was taught exclusively in Dutch, either in the Dutch-Indian schools<sup>11</sup> reserved for natives, schools which are theoretically in a class with European primary schools, but are in fact inferior, or, in exceptional cases, in Dutch primary schools. Since to their great regret, the authorities are thus unable any longer to prevent the diffusion of their language, its use is really spreading. Yet except in the upper strata of native society, Malay, or what goes by that name, is still the customary language for all conversation between natives and Europeans. Since Malay is the "national" language of only a *very small* minority of natives in the Netherlands Indies, the language employed in such cases is almost always alien to both persons speaking it.<sup>12</sup>

In administrative circles these days Dutch is usually spoken; next comes Malay. The officials of the Department of Interior Administration are required to know Malay as well as two local tongues, but because of the way in which they are shifted about during their career they find it difficult to speak anything but Malay. They could not learn all of the dialects in the archipelago. Familiarity with some of these dialects would be possible only for Java officials stationed permanently in Javanese districts.<sup>13</sup> But I believe that it is very seldom that the latter can speak the extremely difficult Javanese language fluently. In this respect the situation is less favorable than I used to imagine, for Malay, a simple language without grammatical construction, should not deceive us: generally the official does not speak the language of the people in his district. In Javanese the word *bahasa*, which means language, also means style and correct usage. It is doubtful whether many colonials know enough Javanese to achieve correct usage. I cannot pretend that the French system in North Africa—that is, the use of French or eventually of the native tongue, or else recourse to an official interpreter—does not strike me as being at least as good, if not perhaps better than the Dutch system. I remember having once heard a speech delivered by a high official to some Balinese chiefs. I was probably the

<sup>11</sup> In 1935-6 there were 66,000 students, 24,000 of whom were girls.

<sup>12</sup> This is something which foreign tourists ought to know when they admire the Dutch "who all speak the native tongue." The great majority of the Dutch speak a vulgar hodge-podge.

<sup>13</sup> There is a certain specialization of officials in Java on the one hand, and in the outer provinces on the other.

only one in the company to feel surprised at the use of a language foreign to all parties concerned and crammed moreover with Dutch administrative terms untranslated but repeated to indicate plurals.<sup>14</sup> The situation is the same for other Europeans because they are not familiar with literary Malay. What housewives, for example, dignify with the name Malay is a formless cross-breed with a vocabulary which is a mixture of Arabic, Portuguese and Dutch.

Why should this state of affairs exist? The only possible reason is the apparent simplicity of "bazaar Malay,"<sup>15</sup> but there are other, less acceptable explanations. The Dutch maintain that they do not want their servants to be able to understand their conversation. Well and good. But then why do they not treat them as they do their own children, interrupting the conversation when necessary or speaking French, English or some other foreign language? It is regrettable that these ancillary considerations prevail when the question at stake is the very important one of the introduction of a civilizing language. A high official remarked to me, "In this way we understand what they say, but they cannot understand us." Granted, but is this such a great advantage to the Dutch? And will they be able through the use of "Malay" to influence the native spirit sufficiently? The real truth is that the Dutch *desired and still desire to establish their superiority on the basis of native ignorance*.<sup>16</sup> The use of Dutch diminishes the gap between inferior and superior—and this must be avoided at all costs. Undoubtedly the age has passed in which the Javanese official was sharply rebuked for daring to speak Dutch to a white man,<sup>17</sup> but the same feeling quite clearly still exists and manifests itself openly where women are concerned. A lady of my acquaintance was earnestly requested by one of her friends to dismiss a servant who had dared to answer her in Dutch. Another lady, of very liberal views and with a French university training, confessed to me that on similar occasions she had to suppress a slight feeling of disgust.

<sup>14</sup> For example, *Zelfbestuurder-Zelfbestuurder* means "autonomous chiefs" in Malay.

<sup>15</sup> True Malay is more difficult.

<sup>16</sup> See, in this connection, Mr. van Putten's characteristic declaration in the *Indisch Genootschap* (1890, pp. 229-30, 232-3), especially: "Mr. van den Toorn tells us that his pupils were filled with a desire to learn Dutch and to speak it with their superiors. This is precisely what must be avoided, for in this way the Javanese tradition of respect on the part of an inferior for his superior falls into disuse."

<sup>17</sup> There are many evidences of this, among others in Snouck Hurgronje's *Colijn over Indie*. See also the pamphlet, *Het Gebruik onzer Taal in Nederland Indie*, an address to the *Taal en Letterkundig Congres*, Dordrecht, 1897, p. 10.

It may be doubted whether the use of "coolie Malay" actually does add to the white man's prestige. Professor Kern, an unimpeachable authority, points out that as a general rule the European official can speak Malay less fluently than his native subordinates. "The latter are so familiar with Malay that when addressing a European they speak the worst and most ungrammatical Malay possible for fear that otherwise they will not be understood at all. Thus they lower themselves to the level of the spluttering official. But the latter supposes that this sort of thing adds to his 'prestige'. "*Sancta simplicitas!*"<sup>18</sup> In other words—and it is curious that, so far as I know, these points have not hitherto been made—Dutch colonial policy has never for a moment considered that the Dutch language could play a part in the culture and civilization to be given to the native. On the contrary, by opposing him with a language intended to mark the distance which sets him apart from the European, the Dutch have striven and still strive, though vainly, to deprive their ward of contact with the outside world.<sup>19</sup>

There are other extremely serious consequences of this linguistic policy. Since the Dutch did not allow the use of their language to spread before the birth of nationalism, nationalists now employ Malay as a weapon against Dutch influence. The Dutch are so well aware of this that the use of Malay in the *Volkstraad* exasperates them.<sup>20</sup> The rational inconsistency of their attitude is understandable from the emotional point of view. They believed themselves to be forging a chain for their subjects, but they see now that they have given them a weapon, that terrible psychological weapon, a common national language with which to express their common national aspirations. Just as their policy of administrative centralization has turned against the Dutch, so their language policy has aggravated rather than improved the situation. For this reason the future of the Dutch language may in the long run be dark. It will, I think, be crushed between Malay and English. As the political bonds between the Netherlands and the Indies slacken, the

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> It would have been easy to spread the use of Dutch. The illiterate natives or Chinese in Batavia and Soerabaya who can gabble a few words of English are as numerous as those who know an equal amount of Dutch. In Bali, where demand has created a supply, they are in the majority. The servants of one hotel at which I stayed knew a smattering of English, almost no Malay, and not one word of Dutch. I found the same to be true elsewhere.

<sup>20</sup> See above, page 42.



importance of Malay will increase proportionately. And as the language of the colonizers becomes less essential, it will be replaced by English which will be the international language of the Far East. Symptoms of this future evolution are already visible.

The Indonesian periodical *Bangaen*, for example, usually publishes an article in English in each number. Would this be conceivable in a French or an English colony? When I visited two reformist schools at Padang, I was invited to address the students in English, Arabic, or Dutch: I gave them their choice of English or Dutch, and in each case they chose English. On the next day at Prab I was obliged, alas, to perform in "Arabic". A little later at Padang Pandjang, also on the west coast of Sumatra, I spoke in English to the young girls in the religious school, "Diniya," and one of them was able to answer me in English.<sup>21</sup> They did not know the first word of Dutch. I recall that this little Moslem miss said to me, "When you are home in your *village*" and that her companions whispered "country" at her. My thoughts then took this tack: what if, some twenty-five years from now, a Menangkabau nationalist committee should send a petition to England saying, "For a long time you have had permanent settlements in our country, and we have learned your language although the Dutch have not cared to teach us theirs. We are accordingly drawn toward you; to you we turn to request the status which you have granted to India and to others of your colonics." If this should come to pass, England perhaps would make no reply, but how would the Dutch like it? And what could they do against such a group with headquarters in Singapore?<sup>22</sup>

On the whole, in the Indies as earlier in Ceylon, the Netherlands have neglected to make their language the national one of a fair-sized portion of the people. If at the present time the Dutch were to lose their possessions, or if they were to grant autonomy to the Indies, the ultimate result of their long Indian occupation would not differ from that of the Ceylonese. Fifty years hence the Dutch language would cease to play any sort of social rôle in what had been Dutch territory for more than three hundred years. Neither

<sup>21</sup> With the native Moslem reformists in Medan (on the east coast) I spoke only English. It should be noted that the Dutch have occupied Padang since 1661 and the interior of the district for a century.

<sup>22</sup> And what if the British, which God forbid, should tomorrow grant concessions of a colonial nature to Germany and demand compensation from those countries which would profit from world peace thus obtained?

the other European colonial nations nor the United States have adopted a linguistic policy of this kind. But we need not feel too sorry for the Dutch. For whereas a Frenchman is happy in pointing out the influence of his language in Mauritius, in Canada or in Haiti, and the modern Roman of every class is filled with pride when he thinks of the widespread influence on a great part of the world of the tongue which was spoken on the Seven Hills two or three thousand years ago; the fact nevertheless is, as I realized after many conversations with them,<sup>23</sup> that the Dutch do not feel this sort of emotion and can hardly understand why others should do so.

## II. THE ARTS

The language question is but one aspect of the problem of the influence of European civilization upon colonial peoples. If other aspects of the civilizing work of the Dutch in the Netherlands Indies are considered, there appears the same disproportion between material accomplishment, which has left its mark everywhere, and intellectual progress which is deplorably nonexistent in the fields, for instance, of architecture or civic planning. A Latin nation can hardly conceive of a colonial undertaking which does not attempt to leave its mark intellectually as well as in other ways. The Netherlands, however, appear to have had but one colonial aim—domination of an exclusively economic nature.

In the first place, city planning, considered as one of the fine arts, is unknown in the Netherlands Indies. Save perhaps for a vague attempt in this direction in Bandoeng, there is not a city in which can be found the slightest concern with the execution of a plan representing an original culture, not to say civilization. In Pondicherry—and the same is true, I am told, in Indo-China—one is conscious of a desire for self-assertion, a desire which history unfortunately has disappointed. The plan of Pondicherry is remarkable, and its execution is good: Pondicherry is a city. In the Netherlands Indies there are hardly any cities, but there is a surfeit of agglomerations.<sup>24</sup> In the realm of architecture, the first impres-

<sup>23</sup> An echo of these conversations will be found in the *Handelingen* of the *Volkstraad*, July 13, 1938, p. 145.

<sup>24</sup> Is it necessary to point out that, on the other hand, municipal services are admirable in the Indies? A comparison, for example, between the appearance of the market in Pondicherry and of that in Bandoeng is not exactly flattering to French "colonizing genius."

sion of the traveler who has visited Tunisia and Morocco is that in the vast Indies native styles have, with one or two exceptions,<sup>25</sup> been systematically neglected. To recreate a native art with the inspiration of the past would have been a splendid undertaking which should have attracted the Dutch, who dislike large buildings.

With regard to European architecture it is fair to say that even though it would have had to be imported, it is nevertheless little in evidence. Furnivall tells us that he mistook the office of a regent for a bicycle-shed; too many administrative buildings are no more impressive than automobile garages. As for the two "palaces" of the governor-general,<sup>26</sup> they are old, commonplace, ridiculous structures utterly without character. In all the Indies there is not a single architectural work, not a sign of a real monument worthy of the Dutch, though the latter have lived in Batavia for more than three centuries.<sup>27</sup> If one tries to find a really picturesque building of the past in Batavia, about all there is is a large warehouse by the city wall. On the other hand, if one seeks the most impressive signs of contemporary Dutch construction, one must not stop before the government buildings, schools, hospitals, museums, temples or churches. Instead one should go to the business district, and there—*si monumentum quaeris circumspice*—flanked by the *Javasche Bank*, rises the greatest pile of brick and mortar in the Netherlands Indies, the offices of the *Nederlandsche Handelmaatschappij*, the nineteenth-century successor of the Company and the great beneficiary of the *Cultuur Systeem*. Viewing this pile, I have frequently thought of the critic Potgieter's observation: "Of all the arts there is none which reflects our image better than architecture, which more severely examines our conscience as to whether we have accomplished what we set out to do, and which more clearly shows us whether we have been successful or have failed. And this is true not for our lifetime alone but even from generation to generation."<sup>28</sup>

I need not speak here of the other arts, whichever they may be, for they have left no mark and thus help to characterize the sort of colonization which the Dutch have brought to the Netherlands Indies.

<sup>25</sup> For example, the Engineering School in Bandoeng and the Den Pasar Museum.

<sup>26</sup> In Batavia and Buitenzorg.

<sup>27</sup> On the self-styled Dutch "colonial style" (*lucus a non lucendo*), Professor G. Brom's *Java in Onze Kunst*, p. 134, may be consulted.

<sup>28</sup> E. J. Potgieter, *Verzamelde Werken*, Amsterdam, 1860, Volume XV, pp. 196-7. See especially page 198: according to the author, the street is the mob's school of fashion.

## III. EDUCATION

The results of native education have been more satisfactory, but the same spirit dominates its organization. Many children attend primary school, forty per cent between six and nine years of age, according to official figures. The vast majority of them, to be sure, go only to the *dessa* or village school where the term is only three years and almost the only subjects are reading, writing and arithmetic.<sup>29</sup> There are less restricted curricula in other schools, schools in which the mother tongue alone is taught, or Dutch-Indonesian or Dutch-Chinese schools; in the latter only Dutch is used. There are also schools which allow students who have already had instruction in the mother tongue to obtain Dutch instruction later.

The administration has, I believe, made a vigorous effort to increase literacy among the people. Its task is very difficult—although the villages contribute rather liberally to the expenses—by reason of the extraordinary increase in population. Yet I have heard this system criticized by competent Dutchmen. To begin with, children in many villages do not receive normal primary education every day because there is only one teacher for two or three classes; too many children do not complete their three years' schooling. Moreover, for the small minority who continue their studies the whole system up to the end of the secondary period is far too long, two years longer, I am told, than in Europe. And as is the case in the Netherlands, schooling from first to last is not free. There is a psychological advantage in requiring some sort of contribution from the families of students who continue to attend school beyond the compulsory stage. Although the amounts in question are very small, it appears that the burden is nevertheless too heavy. There are, it is true, many free native schools which are not subsidized; their teachers live badly on the contributions of the students and on national conviction. I believe that the cost of official instruction should be reduced and with it the sacrifices demanded of parents.

Secondary education is already very restricted: of the 83 establishments in operation, nearly three-fourths (60) are upper primary

<sup>29</sup> In 1935-6 there were 19,612 primary schools conducted in local tongues, of which 16,728 were village schools. These were attended by 1,822,000 children of whom 486,000 were girls. On the other hand, there were only 447 primary schools conducted in Dutch for non-Dutch pupils. These were attended by 93,000 children of whom 66,000 were natives and 35,000 were girls. These figures refer to public or subsidized schools.

schools called *Mulo*. Of the remaining 23, 5 are secondary schools with only a three-year course, and 7 are secondary schools whose attendance comes from the *Mulo* schools, with 672 pupils. Thus in all of the Netherlands Indies there are only 11 establishments of really European caliber; in 1935-6 these were attended by less than 500 students of native origin. This extraordinary predominance of higher elementary schools is doubtless due to budgetary considerations, but it is characteristic that when natives complete their elementary education, more than three-fourths of them enter the *Mulo* schools. It is especially regrettable that there is only one real secondary school outside of Java.<sup>30</sup> It would be to the advantage of the Dutch to decentralize this instruction. There is the island of Lombok, for example, with about 700,000 inhabitants and without a single higher elementary school. Children who continue their studies in Java absorb Indonesian nationalism while learning their lessons. The Sasaks of Lombok have their own language and institutions; so do the Balinese, who number over a million. There is also the northeast part of Celebes called Minahasa which, like Amboyna, is almost entirely inhabited by native Protestants who are said to be deeply attached to Holland. This region is sometimes called the twelfth province of the Netherlands,<sup>31</sup> and it seems that its people are now demanding a secondary school. To my mind it is incomprehensible that the authorities do not at once establish an institution there on the model of a French *collège*<sup>32</sup> but where the students might receive an education inspired by the purest Calvinist principles. The best of them might receive scholarships for study at the Calvinist University in Amsterdam. It is said that in this region Holland has attained the ideal of French colonization, the moral assimilation of the colony by the mother country. Then why not admit the *élite* of the colony into a national Dutch society instead of placing it in Java, where it is in contact with future nationalists assembled from all parts of the archipelago in schools maintained by the Dutch?

Another question arises. Half of the higher primary or secondary institutions are subsidized religious schools.<sup>33</sup> I realize that this very

<sup>30</sup> *Handelingen, Volksraad*, 1938, p. 437.

<sup>31</sup> Those from the Minahasa district whom I saw in Java were not exactly pro-Dutch.

<sup>32</sup> That is, a secondary school run on the same lines as a high school but less expensive and staffed with instructors lacking the requirements necessary for teaching in a high school.

<sup>33</sup> Except in extremely rare cases, Moslem confessional schools do not receive subsidies because they do not satisfy the necessary legal requirements.

liberal system exists in the Netherlands also and that it is impossible to abolish it. It is regrettable nevertheless. I should like to see the youth of the Netherlands Indies, belonging to so many races, languages and religions, seated on the same benches and benefiting from the same instruction in which, with respect to individual beliefs, love of the mother country would be placed above all religious pettiness. But whoever knows the Netherlands knows that this is impossible.

Holland has but very recently decided to institute higher education. Three centuries after the founding of Batavia (1619) there was still nothing of this nature in the Indies. Referring to this lack, Professor Kern in 1890 wrote as follows:

"In the Philippines there is a well-organized system of elementary and higher education. Instruction given at the University of Manila, which was founded in the seventeenth century and reorganized in 1875, includes these subjects—law, theology, medicine, pharmacy, notary training. The number of students and auditors in 1884-85 was about 1000, of which the largest group, about 400, were medical students. There were 232 law students, 100 in pharmacy and 65 in theology. In addition the course was attended by 70 future health officers, destined like our *docteurs-djawa* to take care of the rural population, and by some auxiliary chemists and midwives."<sup>84</sup>

In the Netherlands Indies in 1935-6 there were 1,020 students (516 of them natives) in the higher schools of law and medicine in Batavia and in the engineering school in Bandoeng. The population of the Philippines is one-sixth that of the Indies.

I have nothing to say about the medical and engineering schools. As for the law school, I received the impression that its chief object was to train ordinary practitioners, which would be in keeping with the spirit of Dutch education. There are two non-juridical chairs in the law school pending the establishment of a university which is being much discussed. I have two observations to make concerning this scheme. In the first place, since it is advisable to specialize, though not to excess, the students in an Indonesian university should have a solid, general course of preparatory study followed by equally general and solid study of Latin and even Greek. I do not attribute so much importance to these languages in themselves, but in the teaching of them one draws on a treasury of pedagogical experience, research methods, books and studies

<sup>84</sup> *Indisch Genootschap, Handelingen*, 1890, p. 209.

which will be lacking in oriental languages for some centuries to come. To build solidly one must use good materials. If necessary, a modern language could be substituted for Latin as long as a thorough knowledge were required. Indonesian students could learn German and Old German which would permit them to become more familiar with Dutch—to them a foreign language. Dutch students would study a Romance language (preferably French), because it would require a far greater effort than English or German and would lead them into new linguistic fields. In fine, what the new school should avoid is over-specialization. Education must broaden the students' general culture and enlarge their horizon.

My second observation concerns the location of the university. For the law school and especially for the school of letters the choice of Batavia seems deplorable. The atmosphere of this "city" lacks even the slightest suggestion of intellectuality or culture.<sup>35</sup> The young Indonesian is sincerely to be pitied, for to him this agglomeration represents Europe. Batavia is neither Europe nor the Orient; it is a plot of ground on which for some centuries the Dutch have pitched their tents, as other Europeans have done in the Klondike or at Witwatersrand. If the students are not to work in an atmosphere of European culture, they should at least live in one of Indonesian culture. To establish the school of letters in Batavia would be truly disgraceful; it would be better situated in a principality like Solo or Djokja.

To return to the subject of education in general, Amry Vandenbosch accuses the educational system in the Netherlands Indies of yielding a very small return and costing a great deal.<sup>36</sup> In the field of higher education, he says, less than 25 per cent of the students complete their studies; in the *dessa* schools, less than 33 per cent; and as for the rest, the percentage is between 37 and 40 per cent. I estimate that 325,000 out of the 1,600,000 students in village schools in 1935-6 completed their studies although the course lasts but three years. Moreover, there were only 58 graduates—of whom 29 were natives out of a total of 516—for each 1,000 students, which certainly makes the cost of education per pupil extremely high. If this applied only to higher education, however, I would say that this

<sup>35</sup> On the subject of Batavia society, consult Chailley, *op. cit.*, p. 69 *et seq.* The marked changes which have since occurred are superficial rather than fundamental.

<sup>36</sup> Amry Vandenbosch, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-205.

loss,—accounted for perhaps by the transfer of students to the Netherlands for further study—would not be undesirable provided it arose from strict selective methods on the part of the teaching body.<sup>37</sup> The question would appear in different light if the high mortality resulted from financial considerations. Higher education imposes expenses which are difficult if not impossible for native families to meet. The cost is 300 guilders per year,<sup>38</sup> to which living expenses must be added. There are very few government scholarships, and since even the families of regents are in modest circumstances, the cost of a youth's complete course of studies must at times be underwritten by many distant relations.

It is difficult to appraise the value of this educational system practically. Cynically but not unjustly it may be said that by applying European rates to the natives, the Dutch have to a great extent avoided the danger of having a plethora of professional men on their hands. But in this case I should prefer a *numerus clausus*, a competitive entrance examination with the number of vacant places determined each year and given to the most worthy; for the nationalist danger which the graduates represent is not dispelled by the creation of malcontents barred from higher education through lack of funds. Yet even for the recruiting of public officials, the Dutch almost never employ competitive examination.<sup>39</sup>

#### IV. OTHER ASPECTS OF THE "CULTURAL" POLICY

Among other institutions closely related to education is, first of all, the *Bureau voor Volkslectuur*, a government department much admired by the Dutch, which tries to encourage reading among the

<sup>37</sup> I should like to repeat my belief that higher education in the colonies ought to be on a par with that in the mother country. It must not be an inferior article. Such is the custom in Algeria, which, to be sure, is not a colony. Under these conditions an extremely severe weeding-out is necessary, especially in the first-year examinations. At any rate, this is the practice of the teachers of the Faculty of Law at the University of Algiers, and I think it a good thing that students consider this system to be the stiffest in France. In the first-year July examinations of the *Centre d'Etudes Juridiques de Tunis* (Tunis Law School) 84 per cent of the candidates failed. In Algiers 75 per cent is not an unusual number of failures.

<sup>38</sup> Limited, however, to a maximum of 1,200 guilders.

<sup>39</sup> The director of the training school in Bandoeng told me that his institution chose candidates by lot after those with superior records had been accepted. It is hard to believe that this serious people would employ such a comical system. I was much impressed by my visit to this school.



people by publishing very cheap books.<sup>40</sup> I confess that I do not quite share this admiration. I do not think it wise for an administration, composed of able leaders and an army of officials, to engage in publishing books of which the most important is, as a matter of fact, a popular almanac. I know that the legendary text of the *wajang*, published under its auspices, is highly esteemed by nationalist groups themselves; indeed, one of the most notorious anti-Dutch Javanese sang its praises to me. It is my belief, however, that a government should not perform this function because, although it may claim to be impartial, it is not so in fact nor can it be. A Dutch writer has very justly observed that the attitude of the Department cannot be unprejudiced about matters of religion, love and politics. Yet if these three subjects are omitted, what is left in the field of letters? The director said to one of my friends, "I can accept a book which treats of polygamy provided it does not depict the women as being happy." With this reservation the department is "neutral!" For my part, I would suppress the department as a publishing organ while retaining a government service which would be responsible for the intelligent subsidizing of private native publishing which at present is far from negligible. Working behind the scenes, it would have greater freedom and be more effective.

There is not much to say about the libraries. Except for the popular libraries which doubtless serve a purpose, there is in all of Netherlands India not a single public library worthy of the name. In this field the government has done nothing itself; but it gives considerable grants to a very fine library, that of the *Bataviaasch Genootschap*,<sup>41</sup> to which the law school library has been attached. By means of liberal loans it does very good work, but I do not approve of allowing natives to use the library only upon an annual payment of twelve guilders. In this field the effort to spread culture has been definitely as weak as in the field of education. There is

<sup>40</sup> The *Bureau* or Institute of Popular Literature publishes a very useful survey of the native press. Numbers which I consulted contained criticisms of its own operation—a handsome gesture.

<sup>41</sup> The Society maintains a fine public museum. Founded in 1778, it is the oldest scientific society in the Far East. Goethe was an honorary member. It is painful to record that the number of European members had not increased in the last eighty years although there are far more Europeans in the colony today. At present there are scarcely two hundred members. The assessments of the members should be lowered and the level of the Europeans' culture raised.

some little official interest in the base of the social pyramid, but it goes no higher, as if there were a desire to avoid at all cost the formation of an upper native class and to diffuse only the most elementary ideas of European culture.

In the same way there is no artistic instruction in the Indies, no conservatory, no school of fine arts. Neither cities nor state show any interest in the arts. Is this because the people themselves are apathetic? In any event, not even Batavia has an orchestra, and its theatre is nothing more than a century-old structure used infrequently by traveling companies. Why has it not been found necessary to build a larger theatre? Is it perhaps because in this tropical country Dutch and native alike are so busy cultivating the fields that they have forgotten to cultivate their minds?

The situation is more satisfactory as regards scientific research. I may mention only that aspect with which I am familiar and can appreciate. Just as the organization of an archaeological service was undertaken very late,<sup>42</sup> so the study of the peoples of Indonesia was inaugurated extremely recently. As Brom says, "In the days of clear profit [when the *Cultuur Systeem* held sway] no account was opened for spiritual values."<sup>43</sup> It is rather characteristic, on the one hand, that it was three Englishmen—Marsden, Governor Raffles and Crawford—who, from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth, were pioneers in this field; and, on the other hand, that the scientific exploration of Algeria, which was conquered in 1830, was already far advanced at a time when the Netherlands Indies were still no more than objects of exploitation for the Dutch. Only since the last quarter of the nineteenth century have the Dutch set to work, but then with great success. It is a privilege to be able to read Dutch in order to feast one's mind upon so many treasures.<sup>44</sup> The scientific work of Snouck Hurgronje in the field of Islamology or of C. van Vollenhoven in that of Indonesian customs are monuments<sup>45</sup> comparable to the work of Lorentz, de Vries and Christiaan Huygens, and they do much honor to

<sup>42</sup> In 1938 the archaeological service celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary, but an archaeological commission has been in existence since the beginning of the century. I was permitted to accompany the director of this service on a visit to the principal monuments, and I was struck by the great care and accuracy with which they have been restored stone by stone. In several cases a veritable resurrection has taken place.

<sup>43</sup> Brom, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

<sup>44</sup> In other fields there are the geological studies of G.A.F. Molengraaff and the Buitenzorg Botanical Garden which enjoys a world-wide reputation.

<sup>45</sup> There is absolutely nothing of this sort in British India.

European learning. But besides these great names there are many others worthy of note. It is only fair to repeat that since Holland is a small country, it is the more difficult for her to recruit an intellectual *élite* from within her borders—a consideration which emphasizes the excellence of her work.

The whole process of spreading European culture or simply education in the Netherlands Indies appears to suffer from a serious defect: it shows, one might say, that the Dutch are ignorant of what they want, or, if they are not, that they do the opposite of what they claim to be doing. If any one theory is in favor today, it is that the native should not be occidentalized but should be brought up in his own culture since that of the occident is not good for him. In this connection I wish to cite two views which, though they are derived from opposing schools of thought, nevertheless strike the same note. First, Professor Berg, the Catholic intellectual and Javanese expert at the University of Leiden, who is now temporarily in Batavia.<sup>46</sup> In his opinion, a Christian, considering the de-Christianization of the European masses, cannot honestly believe that Europe in general boasts a higher culture than Asia; "but even without employing this theological argument, it is difficult to arrive at a favorable conclusion."<sup>47</sup> Berg goes on to observe, very justly, that in the last fifty years the Dutch government has adopted some excellent measures for the good of the natives. "But . . . all this is not yet culture," for these measures have not succeeded in making a new imprint on Indonesian society as Hinduism and Islam have done. They would assume their full value only if they were introduced "into a system motivated by the desire to make a more perfect person of the Indonesian." If unrelated measures are adopted, then the harmony of the pre-existent culture is destroyed. Now, he says—and this is most interesting—those who brought Hinduism and Islam with them lived with and among the people;<sup>48</sup> while the Dutch "have systematically withdrawn the more from native society the longer they have lived in the Indies. . . . Whatever is approved by the natives is rejected by them. They themselves are the principle obstacle to the diffusion

<sup>46</sup> *Indische Genootschap, Handelingen*, 1929, pp. 273-82.

<sup>47</sup> I consider this argument faulty, for if the movies, the automobile and the airplane do not constitute culture, nevertheless Einstein, G. B. Shaw, and Debussy are pioneers of European culture comparable to the great Christian thinkers of the past.

<sup>48</sup> Some people, however, are of a contrary opinion, at least as regards Hinduism.

of culture." The author then attacks the Dutch teachers, who in the Indies have the shortcomings of their kind, and points out that Holland is too divided within itself to be able to transmit a culture. "To impose upon Indonesian peoples a Dutch culture, in the shape of occidental education of the pick of the youth, just because the rulers happen to be Dutch is, unless justified by absolute necessity, an outrage against the right of the Indonesian peoples to a national education—and as such it should be rejected." Even the fact that the Indonesians demand it does not morally justify this instruction! "To spread propaganda for Dutch culture exceeds the normal province of the government, both because it transcends the limits of the power of the State and because it would attack the cultural autonomy which Indonesian peoples enjoy by virtue of their natural right."

Here is what Tuinzig, a frank and typical representative of capitalist interests, has to say:

"Occidental education in the Indies should be reserved exclusively for Europeans. In their own interest orientals should be deprived of this instruction. For this group it is essential to institute oriental training, and that with the utmost prudence . . . it will be expedient also to protect orientals from contagion by occidental ideas. . . . What possible good is occidental civilization to the Orient?"<sup>49</sup>

The parallelism of these two ideas is so striking—and all Dutchmen feel the same way—that in the following motley quotation the disciple of St. Thomas and the representative of the sugar and petroleum industries are found in complete agreement.

"The Orient will have to develop, but in its own oriental way. We will gladly assist in this evolution. Invested as they are with the political power of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and desirous of increasing the public welfare, the authorities in the Indies have to maintain and perfect the various cultures of their Indonesian subjects. But this evolution should proceed from the depths of the oriental soul and should have nothing in common with occidental culture. The Orient must be left to develop unhindered; that is its real concern. In embracing this point of view, we are not guilty of spiritual defeatism, against which de Kat Angelino argues in the seventh chapter of his great work. We are only speaking in favor of preserving Indonesian cultures from the faults of our civilization. It is to the advantage of the Orient to be protected as far as possible from undesirable contacts with occidental civilization!"<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> A. J. P. Tuinzig, *Koloniale Macht*, Amsterdam, 1936, pp. 190-1.

<sup>50</sup> C. C. Berg, *op. cit.*, p. 293, and Tuinzig, *op. cit.*, p. 191. I will leave the reader to reconstruct the respective texts!

I may add that the assistant-director of public education has assured me that this is also the point of view of the administration. As he expressed it, "We want to give the natives the tools wherewith to resist what may be harmful in foreign influences, and to enlighten them so that they may understand the advantages of the reforms imposed upon them by the administration. We do not wish to give them occidental culture." This, then, is the theory: no one today dares advocate the occidentalization of oriental youth.

Now, as to actual practice, insofar as the program is negative, that is, opposed to having Indonesian youth enjoy contact with European civilization in its fairest, noblest and most exalted aspects—so far it has been realized to an appreciable degree. We must remember that the elements of civilization can hardly be transmitted by village schools or even by means of ordinary primary education; they are first communicated by secondary education. To what extent can a "secondary" schooling which is for the most part only of an upper elementary grade perform such a function? The reader must decide this question for himself. As for higher education, it seems to be directed chiefly to the training of practitioners, not scientists.<sup>51</sup>

Turning now to the positive aspect of the program, it may be said to have failed utterly. The following criticism of the village schools is wholly justified.

"It seems too bad that in these *desa* schools, right at the beginning of the educational course, there is not some formal recognition of the local culture instead of exclusive devotion to the tool subjects of the West, however important these tools are in everyday life in any community today. With gamelan music so beautiful and so readily at hand, with the dance so intricately bound up with history and folklore, with the soil so vital to the life of the dense populations, it would seem that these were as much the materials of life and hence the materials of education as the three r's. . . . What the school teaches is regarded as the essence of successful life in the modern world; what the school ignores may easily fall into disrepute and be thought of as trivial if not actually the mark of backwardness."<sup>52</sup>

It may be said, it is true, that the Institute of Popular Literature does very useful work in spreading abroad the literature of the *wajang*;

<sup>51</sup> For this reason I have not discussed technical education.

<sup>52</sup> E. R. Embree, M. S. Simon, and W. B. Mumford, *Island India Goes to School*, University of Chicago Press, 1934, pp. 73-4. This little book, though written by three persons, is otherwise rather superficial.

but it is also true that this activity is the result more of public demand than of any desire on the part of the publishers.

I shall not be so mean as to discuss here to what extent the primary and *Mulo* schools, not to mention the upper schools, disseminate oriental and Indonesian culture. I shall content myself with the brief statement that the positive program is not being followed even remotely and that no one dreams of following it. Two attempts have been made in this direction, but the attitude of the authorities toward them is significant. The first attempt was the creation in 1926 of a department of oriental studies in the secondary school at Solo (since transferred to Djokja). This rather interesting scheme was intended to give students, within the framework of their secondary studies, a training in harmony with Indonesian culture. If the program of this department is compared with that of the classical letters department, it becomes clear that it has dropped courses in Latin and classical culture entirely, and has very slightly reduced the hours of French in order to replace them with instruction in Javanese and Malay and with a course in Hindu and Moslem civilization. The second experiment is that of the nationalist Ki Hadjar Dewantoro and the *Taman Siswo* schools.<sup>53</sup> In these schools an attempt is being made to bring up children, not in an Indonesian, but in a local culture. Thus, in the strongly Moslem districts there is Moslem religious teaching; in Java emphasis is laid on the *wajang* and gamelan music, and so on. This is in the spirit of Berg and Tuinzig. But police interference is troubling Dewantoro and his schools. The government has seriously considered closing them. If their influence is so pernicious, why not suppress them while at the same time imitating their good features? One final remark: Dutch teachers of native youth have had *absolutely* no special training in oriental languages and culture. What a glaring contradiction of official declarations!

On the whole, the educational work of the Dutch has not been negligible,<sup>54</sup> and I believe that they have done more for their Indian primary schools than the French have in Algeria. But the system has grave shortcomings. Besides being extremely complex from top to bottom, it saddles families with heavy expenses. The family of a student must pay a few cents a day to the village school and

<sup>53</sup> See above, page 29.

<sup>54</sup> Information on the efforts of the Indonesians themselves is lacking, but *a priori* they seem to me to be respectable and important considering the poverty of the people.

several hundred guilders a year to the upper school, although this obligation, imported from Holland, is not an indigenous phenomenon. At any rate, education is extremely expensive for the consumer as well as for the taxpayer. To my mind its most serious fault is that it is a pedestrian sort of instruction, of a piece with the materialism which I have so often noted in this study. At its base it is fairly extensive; at its peak, extremely restricted. As I see it, it is directed toward the utilization of the native in the lower ranks of society; it is a laborer's education.<sup>55</sup> Doubtless in its ultimate results it realizes the desires of the authorities, namely, the prevention as far as possible of the eventual formation of an upper group in native society by forbidding the natives an acquaintance with the most admirable aspects of the occident. I wish to add emphatically that I believe that this system is to some extent suited to the perpetuation of Dutch rule in the Indies.

<sup>55</sup> This is in striking contrast to British India, where universities abound and the knowledge of English is so widespread. Amry Vandenbosch also remarks upon this: *op. cit.*, p. 336.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE DUTCH COLONIAL CHARACTER

#### I. THE COLONIAL PHILOSOPHY OF WRITERS

IT IS difficult to ascertain exactly what the Dutch colonial spirit or its ideal is. The various attempts which we have made in this direction have been more or less fruitless. In Colijn's writings, for example, it is impossible to find any general conception of the task of the Netherlands in their colonies. He does not propound a fundamental colonial philosophy and, what is more, he leaves us with the feeling that such a thing does not exist. I am not here debating the value of such a philosophy, and if the Dutch should object that this is all empty chatter, I should not argue the point.

Another writer, Moresco, once delivered a speech on colonial policy.<sup>1</sup> We are, he said, in the midst of a liberal and autonomist period. He alluded vaguely to the possibility of a hypothetical, future independence of the colony, but that was all. In Professor Kielstra's writings<sup>2</sup> we find for the most part a spirited refutation of the policy which would associate Europeans with natives.<sup>3</sup> The solution which he has to offer to the difficulties of colonial policy, a "historical and organic" solution which keeps everyone in his assigned place, seems to imply that European and native should live apart, that is to say, the one above the other on the social scale. His is a vertical solution of colonial problems.

There are many such examples. There is Treub, for instance, a very important writer with definitely reactionary views.<sup>4</sup> He

<sup>1</sup> E. Moresco, *Inaugural Address* at the Rotterdam School for Advanced Studies, The Hague, 1924, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Het Koloniaal Vraagstuk*, Haarlem, 1928. See especially p. 29 *et seq.* What the author terms "the formal spirit of the policy of association" is precisely what a Frenchman would call "liberal spirit." The author and the majority of his school do not realize that at this stage of the discussion the important thing is not the technical value of particular measures, but a good or bad psychological attitude toward the great colonial problems. It is just that attitude which, as far as I can discover, is either non-existent or negative in the case of the Dutch.

<sup>3</sup> See below, page 108.

<sup>4</sup> Treub, *Indie's Toekomst*.



does not discuss the big problem inherent in the contact between different races and civilizations. It appears that he does not envisage the possibility or desirability of a closer intellectual and moral contact between the home country and its colonial subjects; there is no question here of the transmission of European culture or of a civilizing mission in its highest sense. The practical solution which he arrives at is somewhat similar to Colijn's, for it envisages a very relative autonomy of different social groups under the aegis of the Netherlands. Properly speaking, it is not a colonial philosophy at all.

Then there is the former president of the *Volkstraad*, N. de Wilde, who delivered a lecture in London on Dutch colonial policy<sup>5</sup> in the course of which he supplied excellent and accurate information but not a word of what we are looking for. Among other things he said, "Asiatics forget that during the past half-century the Occident has brought to the Orient, in addition to economic development, certain tangible advantages such as security, a better distribution of food, hygiene, improved education, impartial justice and honest legislation." All this is true, but again the main problem is ignored. Nor is there in J. J. Schrieke's book<sup>6</sup> any discussion of what the general attitude of the mother country toward its colony should be as far as the ultimate goal of colonization (using the word in its highest sense) is concerned.

In de Kat Angelino's case the subject is mentioned. He realizes that there is a great question to be solved, and he offers a solution. He wants a Greater Netherlands, *Groot Nederland*. "The creation of a living and organic community of peoples within the frontiers of the Dutch State—that is the gigantic task before us."<sup>7</sup> I wish merely to remark that this "dynamic synthesis," as the author terms it,<sup>8</sup> consists chiefly in allowing the different peoples to retain their social institutions, *with full understanding of the motive for doing so*.<sup>9</sup> Thus there is no question of associating the native with European culture, and I do not quite see how this "dynamism"

<sup>5</sup> Neytzell de Wilde, in *Journal of the Royal East Asiatic Society*, April 1934, p. 137.

<sup>6</sup> *De Indische Politiek*, Amsterdam, 1928.

<sup>7</sup> De Kat Angelino, *op. cit.*, II, 721.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 575.

<sup>9</sup> Italicized by the author.

differs greatly from the former *dunamos* which kept the colony in subjection to the mother country. I also note that the author—and he is not alone<sup>10</sup>—is inclined to involve the League of Nations in the question of colonial relations. It seems that Holland would very much like to be considered as having received a mandate from the rest of the world to administer her colonial domain.<sup>11</sup> It is difficult to interpret the author's text which is not always too clear, and it may perhaps be unfair to try to do so. I am simply submitting my doubts to the reader. Having said this much, I may add that it is extremely difficult to understand psychologically the Dutch attitude toward the colonial problem.

Will a scrutiny of colonial doctrines be more fruitful if we examine the now almost crushed party of leftist "ethical" who were represented in the Indies by the *De Stuw*, a body supported by several professors in the Law College? It does not appear so. Their attitude is a purely negative one. They desire the formation of an independent republic (*Gemeene best* or commonwealth)<sup>12</sup> and differ from the nationalists only in some particulars as to the speed of the reforms and the guarantees to be given to foreigners. They hope that the two states will maintain lasting relations; but it seems to me that their motto really amounts to *Los van Nederland*, let us break loose from the Netherlands. This is a point of view, and even a policy, but surely it is a long way not only from bringing the colony and its mother country together in a unity which, spiritually speaking, would be at once greater, loftier and stronger. The *De Stuw* is interested less in seeing a helping hand extended by the Dutch than in seeing it withdrawn because it thinks that the hand has in the past grasped the Indies too tightly. Here again we find an equally negative attitude toward the great problem of the mission of civilization. There is no guarantee that a policy of association, fusion and transmission of cultures would succeed. I freely confess that it may be utopian. But it is a certainty that, given the attitude of the *De Stuw*, it is vain even to

<sup>10</sup> See *Neerland's Indie*, Volume II, pp. 51-2, together with a fine photograph of the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations.

<sup>11</sup> See also Amry Vandembosch's observations on this point: *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>12</sup> *De Stuw*, May 1, 1930, p. 1. See the "anti-colonialist" article attacking the fine French colonial exposition of 1931. Note also the issue of July 1, 1931, p. 10. There is a striking contrast between this attitude and that shown in the *Empire Colonial Français* of Pierre Lyautey, minister in the Front Populaire government.

attempt it. There is a profound psychological truth in the semi-ironical words of the Gospel: "And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."<sup>13</sup>

The apparent inability of the Dutch to raise the discussion to the level—utopian, I agree—at which I should like to see it could not be illustrated better than by the following example which I think typical. It has to do with van Deventer, a most respectable person, a friend of the natives and particularly well informed on all colonial questions. He is celebrated for having demanded in a spirited article that the Netherlands pay to their subjects the "debt of honor" contracted by them as a consequence of the clear profit policy.<sup>14</sup> The first paragraph of his argument begins, "The financial condition of the Indies after the last budget is about as follows." What follows is nothing more than figures and calculations to determine how much Holland should disgorge,<sup>15</sup> and also some facts pertaining to the administration of the colony. Very probably a Frenchman would have ignored these illusive calculations and devoted himself to general considerations perhaps equally illusive. Instead of the expected Ruy Blas and his tirade, "I wish you a good appetite, gentlemen . . ." we are confronted with a book-keeper!<sup>16</sup>

Of the numerous writers who may be consulted on this question there is, I think, only one who expresses ideas sympathetic to a Frenchman, who can immediately grasp their profound meaning. This writer is Snouck Hurgronje, the greatest of them all. Before it was too late, before the native upper classes made their appearance, he outlined a grandiose program of national union between the Netherlands and their colonies.<sup>17</sup> He wrote that the solution of the Moslem question "depends wholly on the association of Moslems, who are Dutch subjects, with Dutchmen themselves. If this association is accomplished, we will no longer have a Moslem

<sup>13</sup> Matthew, xiii. 58.

<sup>14</sup> *Leven en Arbeid van Deventer*, Colenbrander ed., Amsterdam, 1916, p. 1 *et seq.*

<sup>15</sup> In 1937 the Netherlands made their colonies a gift of 25 million devalued guilders. Van Deventer demanded the repayment, on January 1, 1900, of 187 million gold guilders.

<sup>16</sup> I am merely trying to describe two attitudes. A fact very much to the credit of the Dutch is that at the time of the colonial expeditions in the early part of the century there were those who demanded that their wounded enemies should be carefully attended. (*Indisch Genootschap, Handelingen, 1906-7, p. 166.*) Did any one in England or France do as much?

<sup>17</sup> "Politique musulmane de la Hollande," *Verspreide Geschriften*, Volume IV, p. 287 *et seq.*

question. There will be sufficient unity between the subjects of the Queen who live on the shores of the North Sea and those who live in the Indian Empire to remove all political and social significance from religious differences. If, however, this association is not accomplished, the inevitable development of their civilization will remove the Indonesians ever further from us, for other people will then control their intellectual evolution." Then he goes on to develop the idea of a political and national union, "making the Dutch State a power divided into two parts very distant geographically but intimately united in spirit . . . There is no question here of an ideal utopia. The goal is positive. The Dutch government and people will reproach themselves too late with having been remiss if they do not eagerly grasp the favorable opportunity now offered." In this respect his words are truly prophetic,<sup>18</sup> for he insists that, "It should not be supposed that the matter is still in its infancy, as if we were at a cross-roads and as if it depended on the good pleasure of the government whether we turn right or left. . . . It is a question rather of ascertaining whether those elements of the population which are qualified for a higher culture would join us on a common intellectual ground. It remains only for us to decide whether we are going to collaborate in and direct this movement which has so forcefully made itself manifest, or whether it is to be achieved in spite of our resistance and under the guidance of other inspiration which will not be long in appearing." He wants the qualities of the Javanese and the Dutch to be fused as intimately as possible. "What was once foreign will become national. There will be only eastern and western Dutchmen, united politically and nationally by a bond which racial differences cannot weaken." He rejects possible objections. There is in the first place no difference of race: "For centuries our blood has been so mixed with Indonesian blood that every color between white and brown can be found among the Dutch." The author does not add that this is especially true in the Indies, where four-fifths of the Dutch citizens are

<sup>18</sup> And their significance transcends the sphere of Indonesian policy. In Algeria favorable opportunities have been lost in recent years. I am a staunch advocate of the extension of the political rights of Algerian natives—provided these rights are enhanced in a proper manner—for the very reasons which Snouck Hurgronje gives. I feel that it is to the interest of France to grant the demands of the natives before they become incompatible with her interest.

Eurasians. Moreover, if there are intellectual differences, these would disappear as the upper strata of native society developed. Indonesian students in Dutch universities "are much more our equals than whole groups of our farmers and sailors." The difference in religion is no great obstacle: Islam and Christianity can live side by side, and natives are often more tolerant than the Dutch. In conclusion he says:

"As a student I attended a lecture by Ernest Renan whose subject was 'What makes a nation?' Broadly speaking, he said that the true constituent element of a nation is neither race, color, language, religion nor natural frontiers, but *the desire to be together*. Although this phrase does not tell the whole story, it certainly contains much truth. We are familiar with that mysterious spirit which in spite of differences in origin, education, walk of life, in spite of all religious and political disputes, makes us declare unhesitatingly, when all is said and done, that we wish to remain Dutch nevertheless. Now the most noble representatives of a great race which has lived under our rule for centuries are earnestly requesting us to adopt them and theirs into our great national family.<sup>19</sup> Let us extend our hand to them and express a mutual desire for a national union, *the desire to be together*, through courageous actions which will show that our people is still capable of great deeds."<sup>20</sup>

There is no longer any one in the Netherlands or in the Indies who would dare to defend such ideas, if indeed there ever was any one besides the great Snouck Hurgronje. These views are publicly repudiated. I believe, moreover, that today it is too late to advocate them, even if it was possible to have done so twenty-seven years ago when they were first expressed. That is why I say that if the Netherlands want to keep their colonies, it will now be necessary, for reasons which I have noted in earlier pages, for them to divide as much as possible the interests of the natives whom they govern. At the beginning of the twentieth century, when education was in its infancy, the Dutch were masters of the situation. Today they are no more so than was Goethe's sorcerer's apprentice:

*Die ich rief die Geister  
Werd' ich nicht mehr los.*

<sup>19</sup> Note the use here of official French colonial phraseology. Snouck Hurgronje was directly descended through the paternal line from a seventeenth-century Frenchman, Jean le Hurgroigne.

<sup>20</sup> I remember that the famous old man once told me of the impression which this lecture made upon him. I cannot help thinking that in this field he owed much to Renan.

## II. DUTCH AND FRENCH COLONIAL PHILOSOPHY

"Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."<sup>21</sup>

Save for Snouck Hurgronje's lofty and noble views, there seems to be no real Dutch colonial philosophy. Here perhaps the Protestant and Catholic missionaries and their aims should be mentioned. Yet the religious divisions of the Dutch are so irremediable that it would be difficult to speculate upon their colonial ideal. In any case the ideal would not be national and could claim no historical tradition. Indeed, until the nineteenth century Catholics were not permitted to engage in missionary activities. As for the Company, it ignored such work, as did the government of the Netherlands itself. While admiring the disinterested work of the missionaries, we must not look to them for a national colonial philosophy.

To this examination of so many writers I should like to add my personal impression, which wholly confirms what we have learned. With one possible exception, I have never met a Dutchman in the Indies who had a noble conception of colonization.<sup>22</sup> I have frequently met men whose professional abilities filled me with the greatest respect, but I have never found anything like enthusiasm in them for any cause whatever. I am convinced that all of these men would have worked with the same zeal and devotion and ability had they been stationed in Terschelling or Schiermonikoog instead of in Sumatra or Borneo. The Dutch boast of being the world's most *nuchter* people, that is, the most rational, most objective, least given to enthusiasm, and most matter of fact. And rightly so. I frequently felt chill in their tropical country.<sup>23</sup>

The contrast between the Dutch and the French colonial ideals is really extraordinary.<sup>24</sup> As impartially as I could I have tried to analyze the differences between the two. I have enjoyed rela-

<sup>21</sup> Luke, x. 41-2.

<sup>22</sup> Noble, that is, in my opinion.

<sup>23</sup> The Dutch have chided me for having expressed this opinion in the French edition of this book, and I understand their objection. I cannot, however, change what I have written, for it is a purely personal opinion which I cannot suppress. As Luther said, *So steh' ich hier, ich kann nicht anders.*

<sup>24</sup> It must be understood that I am speaking of an ideal and not of realities, of the hopes of the better colonials and not of the prisons of Guiana or of Gide's *Voyage au Congo*. In the Netherlands Indies there is neither Congo nor Guiana. Apropos of this latter region, travelers say that the situation of Dutch Guiana is far superior to that of French and even British Guiana.

tions with all sorts of people in various circles. I recall interviews which I have had with Mgr. Lemaitre, Bishop of Carthage, and conversations with a syndicalist teacher in Karikal; I remember especially the atmosphere which pervaded the *Centre d'Etudes de Colonisation Comparée* when it was under the direction of that great colonial figure, Georges Hardy.<sup>25</sup> From these contacts I derived but one impression, that to the French colonization is a conquest, a military and political conquest, but before all else a spiritual and moral conquest.<sup>26</sup> France does not conquer only to carry off what is valuable; she also brings with her something definite and durable. At heart the Frenchman is essentially a potential assimilator. Assimilation as a colonial policy has very often been criticized, and rightly so, but that does not stop the Frenchman from forever regretting that a Gabon negro or a Laotian cannot become a gentleman of Châteauroux. I recall having once seen a sign in a shop-window in the United States: "Milk from contented cows." And I have often suggested to my Dutch friends the following formula which they have accepted with a smile. "The colonial ideal of the Dutch is the transformation of the native into a contented cow; that of the French, into a citizen, in other words a discontented person."

Be this as it may, there is no doubt that really successful assimilation is very pleasing to the French. I have often and with great pride told my companions that the leader of the *Croix-de-Feu*<sup>27</sup> in Tizi-Ouzou is a Kabyle. Perhaps I should have been as pleased if I could have said that our leaders of the extreme left are Madagascans or Tahitians. There is a Dutch poet, one Noto Soeroto, who is a pure Javanese; but this is a matter of utter indifference to the Dutch. An Indo-Chinese, Mr. Nguyen Manh Tuong, once wrote, "On landing in France for the first time, I felt as if I were

<sup>25</sup>I should like to cite another example at random. In Professor Viard's preface to *La Femme Kabyle* by Laure Bousquet-Lefèvre there is a similar manifestation of this state of mind, although from the metaphysical and political point of view the beliefs of my colleagues very frequently have little in common with mine. So much for such examples, which could be multiplied endlessly.

<sup>26</sup>On the facade of the Colonial Museum in Paris, quite near van Vollenhoven Square, the names of the great French colonial figures have been carved, with this inscription: "From grateful France, to her sons who have extended the dominion of her spirit and made her name loved beyond the seas." This is typically French and is probably incomprehensible to foreigners, surely so to the Dutch. Among her sons France counts a Savorgnan de Brazza and a van Vollenhoven, not foreigners but great French colonial figures. This too is typically French.

<sup>27</sup>A French Fascist organization.

returning to my native land."<sup>28</sup> How sweet to the ears of a Frenchman! Supposing, for the sake of argument, that the author of this remark were not sincere, that his words were only low, mercenary flattery, the demonstration would still be striking. It would show that French subjects know what note they must strike, that they know their masters' weaknesses and the sort of cant they like to hear. In Algeria the nationalist must pretend to be eager to take his place "in the great French family;" in the Indies he must worship *orde en rust*. Both make use of conventional hackneyed phrases, but each furnishes a clue to the mentality of his respective ruler.

This idea of love for the mother country, a necessary consequence of the latter's moral and spiritual conquest, is totally lacking in official Dutch terminology whereas it appears constantly in the French. It will be said that the reserved and dignified Dutchman knows how to conceal his feelings while the Frenchman makes himself ridiculous in exposing his. I accept the reproach, yet is it not easier to hide what does not exist than to exaggerate what does? I have never heard this warm and hearty note, which *sometimes* springs from the heart, struck in the Netherlands Indies; and, being sufficiently familiar with the Dutch people, I am not afraid to say that if I have never heard it, that is because it never is struck.<sup>29</sup> There are solid personal friendships between Dutch and natives, but no eager desire on the part of the one race or people to share with the other its most precious possessions, its language, institutions and culture. They do not even possess an imperial conception of colonization<sup>30</sup> such as, for example, the English exhibit in the works of Kipling.

<sup>28</sup> From an article in *Le Temps*, June 23, 1938.

<sup>29</sup> According to official phraseology, the Dutch exercise a "guardianship" over their subjects in the sole interest of the latter, though the guardian alone will decide when the ward is to be emancipated. Are mothers never guardians in Holland? If they are, why not introduce this idea into official phraseology?

<sup>30</sup> In the following passages from Joost van Vollenhoven we see, not the native of Rotterdam, but the Frenchman in heart and mind, the Frenchman by choice who wrote in French. "Act, gentlemen, in such a way that her [France's] children, white or black, may always be aware of the hand of their mother." (Circular on the native chiefs, Daker, August 15, 1917.) Or, "Nothing is great unless it comes from the heart," (Circular on the relations between the central government and the local administrations, Daker, July 28, 1917.) Or again, "It is necessary to distinguish very clearly between what is done for the native masses . . . and what is done for the upper classes which must increasingly develop and take their place beside us. The former, like the latter, will make excellent Frenchmen." (*Un âme de chef*, Paris, 1920.)



While in the company of Dutchmen, I have frequently tried to develop the following thought. The country that produced Rembrandt lies between the countries of Racine, Shakespeare and Bach; it is thus in a position to select most impartially what is best in the French, English and German cultures, and to become its ambassador in the Far East and more particularly in Indonesia. But it was apparent that my audience thought this program the child of a disordered, not to say unhealthy imagination.

This lack of mutual understanding can be explained. The Minahasa district (and this is true also of Amboyna) is, as has been noted, inhabited by Christian natives who are very pro-Dutch and who, I am told, consider themselves almost inhabitants of a twelfth province of the Netherlands. From the French point of view this is the most magnificent of the triumphs of Dutch colonization; yet I can state categorically that the Dutch regard this triumph with complete indifference. To them it is simply a fact, in the same way that the Menangkabau (with Atjeh) is the most anti-Dutch region in the Indies is just another fact. The natives may consider themselves Dutch, but their rulers do not feel particularly flattered thereby; all that concerns them is that the Minahasa are their most loyal soldiers. Speaking of the Company, Tavernier wrote:

... "If it had possessed a hundredth part of the zeal of 'Messieurs de la religion romaine', the entire youth of these islands would now be Christian, and I have reproached some of them frequently on this score. For truly they have a splendid field in which to harvest to the glory of God; but, in the words of the Gospel, they will not send forth laborers to reap His harvest. There are those among them, I am ashamed to say, who ridicule the idea, saying that these poor heathen are dogs unfit to know God. In the righteous resentment which I felt at their lack of charity, I was moved with such contempt for them that in the argument I was within an ace of coming to blows. For I steadfastly maintained that like us these people were created in the image of God and that God had perhaps led the Dutch to these remote lands only that they might teach these poor people the true word; that they should preach the Gospel instead of removing their treasures; that God wished His name to be proclaimed to everyone, and that those to whom He had given the grace to know Him should carry the message to the most backward peoples. Sometimes in this way I touched the hearts of a few of these people who confessed that I spoke truly. But they said that it was not the aim of the Company, which desired to turn to account its business

talent only and not the talent of the Lord, and that those who were in the service and pay of the Company had to do as they were told to do."<sup>81</sup>

The subsequent change in people's attitudes must be taken into account. Civilization is no longer confused with religion, and the Dutch no longer try to exploit the natives but are interested rather in promoting their welfare. Yet I myself have been able, after the passage of 250 years, to reconstruct sufficiently well the atmosphere of Tavernier's conversations. Since his day all points of view have not changed completely.

In the Netherlands Indies three civilizations from the West have succeeded each other: Hinduism, which gave the Indies its culture; Islam, which gave its religion; and the Dutch, which brought material prosperity. Near the Indies lie the Philippines. There the Spanish have left their religion and in part their language, and the Americans also have tried to spread their language in the islands.<sup>82</sup> So it is the Dutch alone who have been willing to disseminate only the material elements of occidental civilization. They cannot even understand why others should want to do more.

### III. FRENCH AND DUTCH NATIONAL CONCEPTIONS OF COLONIZATION

Why are the colonial attitudes of France and Holland so different? The French seems easy to describe. For all of its variety, France is remarkably unified: a Frenchman has in him something of the Basque, the Fleming, the Catalan, the Alsatian, the Breton and the Corsican, with all of their six different languages. While pervading the outer provinces, French civilization is also enriched by new elements met with there. It is quite natural that the French should try to extend this process overseas. That is why I say that the ideal French colonization would be one by which the culture of the mother country would be enriched through contact with the distant countries to which it is related. Even now, while young Kabyles are learning to speak French, the influence of North Africa is becoming apparent in French painting and literature.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>81</sup> *Suite des voyages de M. Tavernier; Histoire de la conduite des Hollandois en Asie*, 1679, pp. 29-30.

<sup>82</sup> The British do not claim to have given their civilization to India, yet actually the mark of their culture on this country is deep and decisive.

<sup>83</sup> In his book, *Java in onze Kunst*, Professor Brom shows, on the contrary, the insignificance of Indian influence upon the art of the mother country.

Besides, present-day France still clings to the two ideologies of Catholicism and the Revolution. Though for more than a century the struggle between these two ideologies has loomed large in French political history, it has not been sufficiently remarked that they have something in common, namely their universality, their "catholicity." In the eyes of the Catholic Church every human being is a potential Catholic; whatever his race, language or religion, he can be converted and become the equal of those who have already embraced the true faith. In fact this is the goal toward which the Church must strive. By virtue of the principles of 1789, men are born free and equal under the law; here the goal to be attained is likewise the propagation of the true principles among those who, once they have accepted them, will then become equals of the French. The common character of these two ideologies is apparently accounted for by the psychological disposition of the French. They have succeeded today in separating the idea of civilization from that of religion (or anticlericalism); the French *patrie* and French culture are two independent conceptions. The French believe that the latter in particular can be spread beyond their frontiers, as were Catholic dogma and the principles of the Revolution. And it likewise follows that he who is influenced to such a degree that he considers himself French has in fact become a Frenchman, quite as much as he would become a Catholic upon undergoing baptism, or a republican upon accepting the principles of 1879. Foreigners sat in the Convention, and in the Middle Ages a Finn was rector of the Sorbonne.

Similarly there is no doubt that the great merits of Dutch colonization are due to the fine psychological qualities of this people who have accomplished as great material miracles in their overseas possessions as in their home country, where the struggle against the ocean, defensive at first, has become a peaceful conquest of entire provinces. This is one of the most astonishing examples of the energy of this people. But the other aspects of their colonization are also explained by their psychological character. Here is what Professor Kern has to say:

"Although no one can deny that the Dutch are energetic and industrious, there is considerable truth in the Englishman's remark: 'Doubtless they are always busy, but they do not accomplish anything really important.' This springs from their delight in doing things up in

style and because they attach too much importance to details while overlooking essentials. Intellectually speaking, they see clearly what is close at hand but do not concern themselves with what lies beyond; they are, so to speak, intellectually myopic. This is of a piece with their lack of imagination. Since their intellectual processes are always dispassionate and objective (*nuchter*), their ideas are generally commonplace. They are also an unemotional people who do not easily become excited over a great idea or what we know as an *ideal*." <sup>84</sup>

It would, however, be unfair and inaccurate to suppose that the Dutch have no ideals, for they do have a fine and noble one, the only one which makes their hearts beat faster. Indeed, immediately following the passage just quoted, Professor Kern adds:

"Nevertheless, there are cases in which they become inflamed. That is when they see violence trying to oppress liberty or the law being trampled underfoot; for they have a feeling for liberty and an affection for the law which few other peoples have. And this gleam is by no means a sudden blaze with a hot but short-lived fire; with the stubbornness of their character, it retains its heat for a long time."

Less important in its universal results than the struggle of the Greeks against the Persian Empire, the fight for Dutch liberty against what was the most powerful army in Europe remains one of the shining pages in the history of the world. It is the cement which binds the Netherlands together. Such is the ideology par excellence of the Dutch, and he is not a Dutchman who would not enthusiastically subscribe to these words, so just and true, of the Prince of Orange.

"Ours shall always be the honor of having done what no other nation has done before us, of having defended ourselves and stood our ground in such a small country without any assistance against the great and fearful efforts of such powerful foes." <sup>85</sup>

*But if the national ideology of the Dutch is based upon the independence of a people in spite of all efforts from without, it is evident how essentially demoralizing this must be for them in the Indies.* It is my impression, though they do not speak of it, that at bottom they are conscious of this conflict, the more so since they all acknowledge that from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century

<sup>84</sup> "Over het Nederlandsch Volkskarakter," *Studien in Volkskracht*, I, No. 8, pp. 361-2. In thus approving it, the author adopts this idea of a foreigner as his own.

<sup>85</sup> Prince William of Orange, *Brieven*, Middleburg, 1933. Letter of May 7, 1574, p. 92.

the colony was indecently exploited, first for the greater profit of the Company and later for that of the Dutch budget.

Thus, certain facts appear in a new light; if the Dutch do not wish to bestow upon their subjects either their language, religion, law or civilization, this doubtless is due to their lack of imagination and to their belief that it is in their own interest not to do so. But this does not necessarily conflict with their ideology. For in this way they respect in some slight degree the liberty of the conquered people. The same applies to the French: the havoc created by a colonial expedition can be wrought in the name of French civilization which must be spread abroad. There is no more hypocrisy in the one case than in the other. Moreover, the great material achievement from which the native has profited so much would in part be explained by the desire of the Dutch to make amends for injustices perhaps committed in the past. Finally, the discomfort and narrow-mindedness which characterize too many representatives of the mother country would arise from the impossibility of reconciling the ideology which they brought with them from home with the unavoidable necessities of colonial administration. The Dutch cannot adopt the broad point of view because to do so would be incompatible with their national ideology. At this stage of the discussion the point of view advanced by the *De Stuw* seems to be the only logical one, the only one which corresponds to the Dutch ideal; but, as we have pointed out,<sup>36</sup> it would result in the independence of the Indies. The other groups cannot have a colonial ideal, for it would be incompatible with their own national ideal.<sup>37</sup>

\* \* \*

To sum up, Dutch colonization possesses the greatest merits, and I cannot too strongly advise French colonials to go and study its material accomplishments on the spot. They could admire them without being familiar with the language and institutions of the Dutch. Such investigation could only benefit the French Empire. I believe also that it would be extremely advantageous for Dutch

<sup>36</sup> See above, page 107.

<sup>37</sup> The accused Douwes Dekker very justly said, "We are reproached with admiring William the Silent in our schools." (II, p. 21.) Few people, indeed, admire this great man so sincerely as do the anti-Dutch Indonesian nationalists. Many of them have a portrait of him in their homes.

colonials to visit the French overseas possessions. Perhaps they too might learn something, but in any case they could assist the French by offering criticisms. In spite of everything, Dutch colonization is not—and this is my purely personal and subjective opinion—in every respect a paragon. I have undertaken the ungrateful task of emphasizing this point because I am in a better position than many other persons, French and English, to do so. In the Far East the French and English feel decidedly inferior before the colonizing genius of the Dutch. On reaching the Indies I was myself subject to this “complex.” When I left there, my feeling of inferiority had utterly disappeared.

To my mind the colonial ideal today is a synthesis of the best qualities of the Dutch and French peoples, that is, a sort of colonization which would achieve the prodigious material results so admirable in Java, but on a rather more imaginative level<sup>38</sup> somewhat enlightened by French idealism, a synthesis of Martha's and Mary's points of view. In truth this ideal, like others, is not of this world, and the psychological qualities of a people are not transmissible. But what this sort of colonization would be like can be imagined by considering the superb example of the great man to whom this book is respectfully inscribed. The superiority of Joost van Vollenhoven probably arises from the fact that he possessed, in addition to all of the Dutch qualities, a most high and noble idealism, an emotional character which could never have enjoyed full play in his native country.<sup>39</sup> Besides what is best in his countrymen, he also possessed the French temperament. It is not surprising that a French Minister of Colonies advised the governor-general of his colonial empire to imitate the example of this Frenchman from Holland.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup>I was painfully surprised to find that the tomb of the hero J. P. Coen had been completely neglected during the past 130 years and that a commercial bank had been built over it. This is almost too typical.

<sup>39</sup>This is an idea which I have several times had the pleasure of elaborating, in French or in Dutch, in the course of lectures which I delivered in the Indies on van Vollenhoven.

<sup>40</sup>Inauguration of van Vollenhoven Square. Supplement to the *Bulletin municipal de la ville de Paris*, July 21, 1937, p. 3526. See the address of the Minister for Colonies at the inauguration of the van Vollenhoven Monument in Longpont on November 7, 1938.

CHAPTER VII  
THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF THE  
NETHERLANDS INDIES

IN ANY consideration of the foreign policy of Netherlands India, the first thought which comes to mind is that the Sino-Japanese conflict, a manifestation of Japanese imperialism, threatens both Holland and its colonial empire. Besides the Japanese, therefore the only real threat to the Dutch colonies might be a German seizure of these rich lands. This could be realized only as the result of a victory enabling Germany to dictate to the world, and hence this is not a specifically Indonesian problem. Thus it follows that the major Indonesian problem of Dutch foreign policy lies in the consequences which the Sino-Japanese conflict may have for the Indies. *A priori* one might suppose that, from the Dutch point of view, the problem is of this nature. Japan is a young, formidable and well-armed power which has never concealed its vast ambitions: all of Asia, including Netherlands India, must be enslaved by Japan. Accordingly, a Chinese victory in the present conflict is desirable, for it will leave this formidable adversary exhausted and for many years incapable of resuming its imperialist policy of expansion.

Actually, the attitude of the Netherlands, or rather of government circles in the Indies, is far less definite than this brief survey would lead one to suppose. The point of view just outlined is not inaccurate, but it is incomplete; there is another extremely important factor which must be taken into account. Although a Japanese victory would mean the future aggravation of foreign threats against the Indies, a Chinese victory would, on the other hand, aggravate a danger which would threaten the Dutch colonies from within. Moreover, Japan's victory would oblige it to "digest" its conquests over a fairly long period of time during which many changes might occur. It is impossible, therefore, to summarize in a brief sentence the Dutch attitude toward the Sino-Japanese struggle; and for the same reason it is necessary to examine the problem at greater length, seeking first its immediate and then its probable consequences.

With regard to the economic aspect of the problem, there is little to say about Netherlands Indian commercial relations with China. Exports to China are not negligible: in 1930 they reached 44 million guilders (plus 51 millions shipped to Hongkong) out of a total export of 1,160 millions. In 1936 these figures were respectively 9.7, 12.8, and 539 millions. Imports in 1930 were 18.2 millions from China and 10.2 millions from Hongkong out of a total of 888 millions; in 1936 they were 5.6, 4.6 and 287 millions respectively. Current statistics would show an appreciable decline in each of these figures.

As for Japan, the big question in late years, thanks to the liberal Dutch open-door policy, has been the invasion of the Indonesian market by Japanese products. Thus, in 1930 Indian imports from the Netherlands rose to 163 millions, while those from Japan reached 92 millions. Imports from the mother country then suffered a steep drop, with a low of 36.4 millions in 1935; whereas Japanese imports remained almost at their former level, that is 81.2 out of a total of 276.5 millions, so that they represented about 30 per cent of all imports.

At the same time the trade balance with Japan was most unfavorable to the Netherlands Indies. In 1930 exports totalled about 50 per cent of imports (46.2 millions against 92); in 1935, about 30 per cent (24 millions against 81.2). After various negotiations the Dutch Government decided to institute the quota system in an attempt to secure more advantageous treatment of its own products. In 1936 exports to Japan totalled 30.3 millions; in 1937, 42.2 millions; in the first half of 1938, 11.8 millions. The influence of the war is apparent in the last figure. Imports from Japan were respectively 75.2, 124.4 and 30.4 millions. In this case the war was responsible for a 50 per cent decline in imports. Imports from the Netherlands were 47, 93.8 and 51.7 millions.

For 1938 the Netherlands' share apparently should be almost double the Japanese, whereas in 1935 it was less than half. Thus, for the time being, Holland is freed of the anxiety which Japanese imports were causing, though this alleviation is due mainly to the war in China. It will be seen that, relatively speaking, the balance is still unfavorable: Japan continues to buy only about one-third of what she sells (11.8 millions against 30.4).

The danger from within which would threaten Dutch ~~role~~ in the



event of an overwhelming Chinese victory is the existence in the Indonesian Archipelago of a Chinese colony which, demographically and economically, is extremely important. In the census of 1930, out of a total of 61 million inhabitants in Netherlands India there were 1.2 million Chinese, half of them in Java<sup>1</sup> and the rest in the outer provinces. Of these, 730,000 had been born in the Indies; the others, for the most part men, were immigrants. Certain Chinese families have lived in the Indies for centuries and are of very mixed blood. Many speak only Malay. The Chinese, however, do not mix with the natives; they live quite apart from the rest of the population, and the sentimental bonds which bind them to China are still strong. From the economic aspect the importance of the Chinese is considerable. They are on the average far richer than the miserable native and may be described as middle-class, if this word is understood in a very relative sense. The following figures afford some idea of the situation. In 1935, out of 240,000 Europeans (of whom at least three-fourths were really Eurasians), 64,000 paid an income tax. For the Chinese the figures were 36,000 tax-payers out of 1,200,000; for the natives, 28,500 out of 59,130,000. The Chinese are chiefly small tradesmen, manufacturers or money-lenders. They are widely represented in the professions, but there is a Chinese laboring class as well.

Legally, with the exception of penal treatment, Chinese are grouped with Europeans, although they were until very recently subjected to all sorts of restrictions. A much more important point is that China does not recognize the Dutch citizenship which a great many Chinese hold by virtue of the principle of *jus soli* which the Netherlands enforce. A Chinese, it would seem, never loses his nationality, and his descendants retain it as well. Of course the authorities reject the demands of the Chinese consulate for a hand in matters concerning Dutch subjects, but China maintains its own legal point of view. In 1936 the *Koloniale Studien* published a special number dealing with the Chinese in the Netherlands Indies, with a foreword in English by the Chinese consul-general. The latter wrote: "We have over a million Chinese in the Netherlands Indies, and they form an integral part of the economic life of this

<sup>1</sup> It is worthy of note that more than two-thirds of the Indonesian population lives on this overcrowded island, which occupies only 48,000 square miles out of a total Netherlands Indian area of 684,000 square miles.

country." From the first word of his sentence it can be seen that this official considered the Chinese to belong to China and to form an integral part only of the *economic* life of the Indies.

There are, on the other hand, only a few thousand Japanese in the Indies, and these rarely emigrate. They maintain a few tropical farming enterprises, and there are some Japanese fishermen in the Minahasa district of Celebes. In the towns there are a few photographers, but generally the Japanese are hair-dressers and the like. A few others have made an attempt at colonization in New Guinea, but their numerical importance is insignificant and their economic rôle very slight.

Thus it is understandable that the authorities are fearful of the disastrous consequences which, in the long run, a clear-cut Chinese victory in the present war would have for Netherlands India. In their eyes, Chinese imperialism is quite as dangerous as Japanese. The powerful Chinese colony in the Indies would constitute the formidable vanguard of an economically and militarily formidable China; and against its political influence within the country, Singapore and the British Navy would be of no avail. The attitude of the Chinese in the Indies is clear: they form an entity and unreservedly support their "native" country, even when, as most often is the case, they are no longer familiar with the Chinese language and have lived in the Indies for many generations. It should be noted in this connection that for a long time, until well into the twentieth century, the Dutch Government systematically refused to teach Dutch to its subjects, whether Chinese or native, so that the former established Anglo-Chinese schools in which Dutch is not taught. Although the great majority of Chinese speak only native dialects, they do not have much in common with the Indonesians intellectually. And since, moreover, the Dutch have systematically avoided spreading European culture among their subjects, the Chinese upper classes quite naturally turn to China. If pan-Sinism should appear in the near future, the Dutch will have an opportunity to appraise the consequences of a policy which has been ungenerous in this respect; the most enlightened among the Dutch already realize the possible consequences, but not the real causes.

Be this as it may, the Chinese are united in their sympathy for China. It is true that this sympathy does not manifest itself in the form of voluntary mass enlistments in the Chinese army. The

Chinese are not warlike, and many people in the Indies say that since there is no lack of manpower in a country with hundreds of millions of inhabitants, the support offered by foreign enlistment would be insignificant. In fact, in the summer of 1938 the number of volunteers who left for China was estimated at less than 300, among whom there were no real soldiers but rather technicians, chauffeurs, trained nurses and the like. In addition, a certain number of students left to attend the anti-Japanese Universities which are more or less under the influence of Moscow.<sup>2</sup> Sympathy with China is manifested especially in the collection of funds for the support of the Chinese cause. These are often public, and many people regularly contribute a part of their monthly income to agents who collect the funds and turn them over to the Chinese consular authorities. I do not know if all of the contributions actually reach the Chinese Government, but the effort is certainly not to be dismissed lightly. The same practice obtains in Singapore, where I heard local businessmen complaining that although the Chinese there are numerous, industrious and wealthy, they are buying almost nothing these days but are instead sending their available funds to China. This is the most tangible assistance contributed to China by expatriate Chinese.<sup>3</sup>

In considering the attitude of the natives toward the war, we are dealing, of course, with only that very small fraction of the people with some understanding of current events, and more particularly with the upper level of native society, that is, the few, at most some hundreds of thousands, who are capable of forming an opinion. At the present time it is possible to distinguish two currents among the ranks of Indonesian nationalists in Netherlands India. On the one hand, there are the true nationalists who have long enjoyed communist support. Today communism is officially prohibited; communist-inspired movements are vigorously ferreted out by the Dutch. On the other hand, there are numerous groups with neo-Islamic tendencies which are concerned mainly with religious education

<sup>2</sup> The Dutch Government is, I believe, worried by the existence of this communist element and especially by the prospect of its eventual return to the Indies. It is contemplating the adoption of whatever measures are necessary to protect its subjects from influences which it deems unhealthy.

<sup>3</sup> I shall not discuss the attitude of the Japanese in Netherlands India, for they are too few in number and in any case not much talked about. There is no record of trouble between the Japanese and Chinese elements of the community.

and do not publicly engage in politics. Of these the reformist *Mohammadiyya* is the most powerful. The *Mohammadiyya* is on excellent terms with the Government, but I am by no means convinced that the official favor it enjoys is wholly justified by its policy. There is no doubt that, while abstaining from all anti-Dutch activity, its members have the same goal as the nationalists; namely, the expulsion of the foreigner.

I have not heard of any attempt by the Chinese Government to win over native public opinion. Japan, on the other hand, although it seems to have done nothing openly to gain the favor of Indonesian nationalism, has endeavored to win the good will of all Islam in general and of Indonesian Islam in particular. So far its efforts have borne no apparent fruit, for the Moslems of Netherlands India have been very cautious. The Japanese Government issued numerous invitations to the inauguration of the Tokyo mosque on May 12, 1938, but the *Mohammadiyya* refused to participate on the pretext that the date was inconvenient. Out of fifty-odd million Moslems, only one finally attended; he was a Sumatran member of the *Sarikat Islam* and quite without authority or influence. The Japanese also try to attract Indonesian students to their universities. There are about 25 such students in Japan, but the Dutch authorities do not appear unduly disturbed thereby. Since on their arrival in Japan the students are utterly ignorant of the language and must devote several years to learning it before beginning their real studies, they do appear to constitute an imminent danger.

The reactions of native opinion to the conflict and to Japanese propaganda are varied. There is, first of all, a left-wing, revolutionary current which, though actually suppressed in the Indies, is represented in the Netherlands by the Indonesian communist deputy, Roustem Effendi. He has declared that the revolutionary group is prepared to support the Government in defending the Indies against Japan. Thus, as far as this group still exists in the colonies, it would be pro-Government and anti-Japanese in the event of a war.

As far as the Moslem nationalist movement is concerned, it would, in my opinion, be very wrong to suppose that it is much less pro-Japanese than the true nationalists are. These Moslems have no reason to compromise themselves, for they find the present situation most advantageous: the Government has adopted what may be called a benevolent neutrality toward them, if indeed it does

not openly favor what they desire. This is a noteworthy attitude on the part of a home government which is supported by a Christian majority, Protestant and Catholic, who believe that the Dutch rule the Indies by the grace of God. The Moslem nationalist elements would stand to gain nothing and lose everything if they publicly adopted an anti-Dutch attitude. Yet I believe that at heart they subscribe to the views of the true nationalists.

The true nationalists are frankly pro-Japanese. They are less eager for a Chinese defeat than for a victory by the great Asiatic Power in the teeth of Europe. The attitude of the political associations, the *Parindra*, *Gerindo* or others, is similar: they are all anti-European, though with that gentleness characteristic of Indonesians, and especially Javanese. In this respect the difference between their attitude and that of the nationalists and Moslems in British India is most striking. European ideology has already influenced the latter: Japanese are "fascists" who have invaded "democratic" China. And since the inhabitants of India are "democratic" and since Great Britain claims to be so also, it is expedient in the name of democracy to unite with Great Britain, or at least to observe a benevolent neutrality in so far as it opposes Japanese fascism and especially if it should be attacked by Japan.

An equally remarkable difference may be observed between the attitude of the Indonesian nationalists and that of the Moroccans, Algerians and Tunisians. Just as the Japanese demands frightened the Hindus and reconciled them to the British, so in the spring of 1939 North Africa was closely bound to France. Native and French opinion were in complete accord, and this was the more remarkable because up to the middle of 1938 the French had experienced serious difficulties there, especially in Tunisia. What Japanese aggression did not succeed in accomplishing in Netherlands India, German policy and Italian aggression in Albania have effected in French North Africa. Without putting too much stock in official statements, of which I am rather skeptical, it can be said that the rapturous enthusiasm which greeted Premier Daladier in Tunisia, just a few weeks after the local unrest had ended, was shared by every ethnical group in the country—Arabs, Jews, Maltese, French, and I would almost add Italians. There can be no doubt that the calm determination of the 16 million inhabitants of North Africa to remain at the side of France was due to Italy's demands, as insolent as they were

ridiculous (to which France owes a great debt of gratitude). But it was also due to French domestic policy in North Africa.

It appears that the nationalists in North Africa have a far clearer conception of the realities of the situation than do the Indonesian nationalists; yet it is certain that in this domain France has enjoyed considerable political success, quite as much indeed as the British have in India. The psychological position of the Dutch in Netherlands India is decidedly inferior.<sup>4</sup> Indonesian nationalists of almost every degree desire a Japanese victory. I am convinced that if Japan were today to attack Netherlands India, few nationalists would line up behind the Dutch Government. Whether or not this attitude is wise and just, it is general. Its most obvious explanation is the nature of the political relations between the Dutch Government and the nationalist element. For many years these relations have been extremely strained and unproductive of results. The nationalists have in large part adhered to a policy of non-cooperation, although of late a change in their attitude has been apparent. As for the Government, its policy toward these elements consists mainly, if not wholly, in increasing police interference, investigations, prosecutions, jail sentences, internments without trial and the like.

Under these conditions, Indonesian nationalists are at an earlier ideological stage than are the people of British India. A Japanese victory would be the victory of an Asiatic power over European powers, and they profess to believe that it could have no disastrous consequences for the cause of Indonesian nationalism. It is regrettable that they do not possess greater vision and that the Netherlands have not succeeded, in the face of the eventual Japanese threat, in creating an ideology favorable to their interests. Such is the situation, and I may add that, in my opinion, it is not the consequence of nationalist "blindness" or "perverseness" alone.

Quite a different reason, subordinate perhaps but nevertheless noteworthy, is economic and owes nothing to Dutch policy. The Chinese is not always popular in the Indies. He is often a business or professional man who actively competes with the middle-class

<sup>4</sup>I must insist on this point and have accordingly elaborated upon it at greater length than in my article in *Politique Étrangère* (February, 1939), for I have been reproached with this view in an anonymous article in the *Algemeen Handelsblad*, February 22, 1939. I doubt if the author of this article has been, as I have, in British India and North Africa, and has had an opportunity to realize that the mentality in those countries is unlike that in Netherlands India. He writes that my allegations are "unfair and not very kind." They may not be kind, but they are true.

Indonesian and impedes his progress. He is often also a foreign money-lender and exploiter of the natives. On the other hand, there are few Japanese in the archipelago, and these compete with no one. What is more, the invasion of the Indonesian market by Japanese goods has actually permitted Indonesian shopkeepers to increase their sales; and many workers find positions which Japanese cannot occupy whereas the Chinese businessman seeks and finds Chinese helpers. In British India, however, the Chinese is not a competitor; there Japanese competition is feared. What is the use of setting up defenses against Manchester if only for Japan's benefit? Since there is no native industrial class in Indonesia as in British India, there exists no corresponding anti-Japanese element. The economic considerations strengthen those of a political character.

There is no doubt that at present the Netherlands Government desires the mutual exhaustion of China and Japan. It fears an easy victory which would inflate Japanese ambitions enormously and would encourage Indonesian nationalism. And in the long run it fears a Chinese victory which would give the Chinese within its colonies a preponderant political position. In other words, like the dwarf Mime in Wagner's *Ring*, it regards the two opponents as equally odious and desires their common extermination: *Siegfried und Fafner, Fafner und Siegfried*—so far as the Dutch Government is concerned it is all one. I may add that it should be all one to Europe in general. But the wishes of the Dutch Government are not manifest. Its policy is consistently one of caution and neutrality: it does not prevent Chinese resident in the Indies from going to China or Japanese from going to Japan; it permits public collections for either of the two rival nations (although only Chinese funds are in fact solicited) as long as they have a humanitarian aim such as relief for Chinese sufferers; it authorized the organization of a great benefit in May 1938 for Chinese student victims of the war, and, if requested, it would authorize a similar affair for the Japanese. Private collections are not forbidden, even for other purposes. This policy of neutrality is extended to the press. Native and Chinese newspapers receive strict instructions and are forbidden to express too heated opinions about the war.

The same caution is apparent in the diplomatic attitude of the Netherlands in the Far East. Actually this policy is determined not in Netherlands India, but at The Hague. On this point I can

offer merely impressions, but one fact may be noted—the voluntary, systematic and complete seclusion in which the governor-general lives with respect to the consular representatives of great foreign countries. It would doubtless be inadvisable for this official to pursue his own foreign policy independently, but it seems to me that this Far Eastern representative of Holland should have some definite contacts with the consuls-general. Things are not and cannot be viewed in the same light at The Hague as they are in Java. I am convinced that such contacts could be of the greatest advantage to the Netherlands and that the exchange of points of view between these consular representatives and the highest Dutch colonial authority would be profitable to all concerned. Yet this exchange never takes place. It is my strong belief that the Netherlands are not anxious to contract alliances with any great powers (France, Great Britain or the United States) for the defense of their colonies.

The cautiousness of Dutch policy does not exclude a certain determination in military affairs. With the democratic powers awakening from their inertia, the Netherlands are making an effort to improve their colonial defense, which suffered a budget reduction after the economic crisis. The total appropriation, which was 140 million guilders in 1929 (76 millions for the Army), was reduced to about 50 millions in 1933.

In this respect the difference between French military policy on the one side and British and Dutch on the other is remarkable. If, instead of the British, the French had conquered British India, there is no doubt that they would today have an army of at least ten million men in India with which they could have conquered the world. It follows, therefore, that, in winning his victories, Clive rendered a greater service to the cause of the world peace than has the most ardent pacifist. The Netherlands maintain a native army which represents a tiny fraction of the population—a few tens of thousands of men, almost all Christians (Menadonese and Amboynese) or Muhammadan Javanese. A strange feature in the eyes of a Frenchman is that the Dutch have never attempted to recruit soldiers in the regions which were most difficult to subjugate. To my mind, one of the claims to glory of French colonization, viewed from the standpoint of political psychology, has been its success in recruiting soldiers in regions only recently subdued. The behavior of the Moroccan tribes in the Great War was typical of this. The



Dutch today would not dare to recruit a single company in Atjeh, which was conquered 35 years ago—that is, even before the very first attempt at French occupation of Morocco. I have frequently told Dutchmen that the French would doubtless have raised an army of volunteers in Atjeh exclusively, but on this point, as on so many others, the colonial conceptions of the two countries are in hopeless disagreement. What is more, if in the past the Dutch had pursued a policy of decentralization instead of consolidating all opposing forces, they could have instituted compulsory military service, which would have been of great service to them at this time. But there is no point in thinking of that now.

I am skeptical of the ability of the Netherlands to defend themselves, or rather of the ability of the Dutch unaided to defend their colonies against an attack. How can a territory comparable to that lying between France and Afghanistan, and Italy and Sweden, be defended by 50,000 men and a few warships and airplanes? Defense is the more difficult since, in my opinion, the people as a whole would remain passive in case of an attack. I do not believe that they would rise in revolt against the Dutch (and they would be wrong if they did), but I do think that they would sit quietly by if an attack were launched. Nevertheless, the Dutch are well advised to appear resolved to defend their colonies. The better established their defense system, the more willingly will outside assistance probably be offered them.

## INDEX

- Ability of Dutch to defend Colony, 130  
 Administrative units, division into, 61  
 Advantage of *Volksraad* to Dutch government, 66  
 Adviser on Native Affairs *see Advizeur voor Inlandsche Zaken*  
*Advizeur voor Inlandsche Zaken*, 11  
 Adviser on Native Affairs, work of, 12  
 Aim of Dutch colonial policy, 57  
 Angelino, de Kat, murder of, 24  
 Anti-Dutch activity, underestimation of, 20  
 Anti-European teaching, spread of, 19  
 Artistic instruction, lack of, 99  
 Autonomy of Balinese chiefs, 62  
  
*Bataviaasch Genootschap*, 98  
 Birth control propaganda, 59  
 Bureau for Native Affairs, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17  
*Bureau voor Volkslectuur*, 97  
  
 Censorship of the press, 33  
 Central government, lack of integration of, 67  
 Chinese in the Indies, 49, 122  
 Chinese imperialism, danger of, 123  
 Christian missions, 6, 7, 111  
 City planning, 91  
 Citizenship, reluctance of Moslems to obtain, 8  
 Colijn's plan, 73-83  
 Colonial contributions to Dutch Treasury, 46  
 Colonial attitudes of France and Holland, 115  
  
 Colonial defense, 129  
 College of Delegates, 63, 66  
 Communist movement, 24, 25, 26  
 Criticism of government, 65, 66  
*Cultuur Systeem*, 45, 46, 47, 51, 59, 92, 99  
  
 Dachlan, Haji Ahmed, 3  
 Defense, difficulty of, 130  
 Dekker, Ernest Francis Eugene Douwes, 38, 42  
*Dessa*, 93, 96, 102  
 Dewantoro, Ki Hadjar, 29, 30, 103  
 Disorders, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27  
 District Court *see Landraad*  
 Dutch colonial policy, aim of, 57  
 Dutch colonial policy, success of, 48  
 Dutch Indonesia, extent of, 75  
 Dutch language, future of, 89  
 Dutch language, neglect of, 84  
 Dutch Moslem policy, success of, 17  
 Dutch parliament, legislative powers of, 63  
 Dutch and French colonial ideals, contrast between, 111, 112, 113, 114  
  
 Education, 49, 93  
 Education of advanced students in Holland, 79  
 Electoral body, composition of, 62  
 Emancipation of the regents, 68  
 European Culture, spreading of, 100  
 European architecture, 92  
 Europeans and natives, association of, 105  
 Exploitation of the colony, 118  
 Exports to China, 121

- Governor general, seclusion of, 129  
 Governor general, status of, 64  
 Groups influencing policy, 67
- Haji Ahmed Dachlan *see* Dachlan  
 High school students, 95  
 Higher education, cost of, 97  
 Higher education, institution of, 95  
 Hurgronje, Christiaan Snouck, 2, 9,  
 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 30, 37, 38, 52  
 62, 75, 99, 108, 110, 111
- Immigration to Sumatra, 58  
 Imports, 121  
*Indisch Staatsreglement* (Indian Con-  
 stitution), 7  
 Indonesian Nationalism, amorphous  
 character of, 29  
 Industrial unrest, 23, 24  
 Institute of Popular Literature, 102  
 Internment Camps, 26, 33, 36
- Japanese in the Indies, 123  
 Japanese victory desired by national-  
 ists, 127  
 Java, development of, 47  
 Java railway system, efficiency of, 45  
 Javanese humility, 48  
 Javanese coolies, recruiting of, 75
- Kantoor voor Inlandsche Zaken*, *see*  
 Bureau for Native Affairs  
 Ki Hadjar Dewantoro, *see* Dewantoro  
 Koloniale Studien, 122
- Landraad*, 10, 14  
 Language, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88 89, 90, 91  
 Law school, 95, 96  
 Legislative powers of Dutch parlia-  
 ment, 63  
 Libraries, 98
- Maintenance of Dutch power, 50  
 Malay, use of, 75, 79, 89  
 Merits of Dutch colonization, 116, 118  
 Missions, attitude of Dutch toward,  
 6, 7  
*Mohammadiyya*, 2-6, 18-20, 29, 125  
*Mohammadiyya*, divisions of, 3  
 Moslem marriage, 9  
 Moslem law, subordination to local  
 traditions, 9  
 Moslem nationalist movement, 126  
 Moslems, contentment of, 17  
*Mulo* schools, 94, 103
- National Council *see* *Volkstraad*  
 National Indonesian Party *see* P.N.I.  
 Nationalism, suppression of, 43  
 Native birth rate, 58  
 Native Education, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97  
 Native living standard, improvement  
 of, 58  
 Nationalism, canalization of, 73  
 Nationalists, deportation of without  
 trial, 74  
 New Guinea, population problem of,  
 59  
 New Guinea, resources of, 60
- Officials elected to *Volkstraad*, 65  
 Officialdom, comparison between  
 British and Dutch, 51, 52  
 Opposition members allowed to sit in  
*Volkstraad*, 66  
 Overpopulation, 59
- Partai Kommunist Indonesia*, 24  
*Partai Kommunist Indonesia*, mem-  
 bership of, 25  
 Patriotism, birth of, 74  
*P.F.B.* (factory workers' association)  
 23

- P.N.I.*, 27, 28  
 Police informers, 34  
 Political prisoners, 26, 33, 36  
 Political reforms, danger of, 73  
 Polygamy, prohibition of, 10  
 Population of Dutch East Indies, 1  
*Prentah aloes*, 54, 55, 56  
 Press, liberty of, 33  
 Preventive policy of the Netherlands,  
     33  
 Protestant missions, 7  
  
 Ranneft, Meijer, 54  
 Reforms in administration, 61  
 Refusal to teach Dutch language, 123  
 Regency council, 62, 63, 64  
  
*Sariḳat Islam*, 2, 6, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29,  
     34, 125  
*Sariḳat Islam*, membership of, 2  
 Seclusion of Governor general, 129  
 Secondary education, 93, 94  
 Shafi'i sect, 1  
  
 Sino-Japanese war, Dutch attitude to,  
     120  
 Snouck Hurgronje, *see* Hurgronje,  
     Christian Snouck  
 Strikes, 23, 24  
 Sumatra, immigration to, 58  
  
 Terrorism, 24  
 Threats to Netherlands Indies, 120  
 Trade balance with Japan, 121  
 Trade with China, 121  
 Tuinzig, A. J. P., 101, 103  
  
 Undergraduate students in the Indies,  
     49  
*Union of Regents*, 23  
 Use of Malay in the *Volkstraad*, 89  
  
 Village elections, 69  
 Village schools, criticism of, 102  
*Volkstraad*, 36, 40, 63-68, 72-78, 80,  
     82, 89  
*Volkstraad*, criticism of, 76  
*Volkstraad*, membership of, 63