In 1898 the sudden demise of Spain as a Colonial Power and the parallel that could be drawn with the position of the Netherlands as a weak European state with a large Asian colony does not appear to have worried many at the time. There was a feeling that what had happened to Spain could never happen to the Netherlands. Spain had mismanaged its colonies and had been confronted with wide-spread popular unrest. This was what had brought about the downfall; not the war with the United States. It was argued with a certain degree of persistence that the situation in the Netherlands Indies was different. In Java, remaining silent about the difficulties the Dutch experienced in other quarters of the Archipelago, a military observer had remarked at the time, ‘we can trust the native population and their heads to be so devoted to us that even in times of war there is no fear of danger’. Though his observation did not exactly ring true and not everybody was so confident about the pro-Dutch sentiments of the Javanese, ‘Remember the Philippines’ became a slogan of the critics of colonial policy warning Batavia and The Hague not to alienate the local population by their policies and instructions. People’s loyalty, their contentment with colonial rule, was the key element to assure the continued presence of Holland in the Netherlands Indies, at least of equal importance to the strength of its colonial army and Navy, which had the task of repelling a foreign invasion (Egbert 1902:8; Visser 1913:6). It would also pre-empt any invasion of the colony under the pretext that the Dutch had ceded their right to rule because they had neglected the interests of the population.

To contemporary politicians and statesmen around the turn of the century, such reflections may well have been an incentive equally important as moral considerations to embark upon what is dubbed the Ethical Policy, defined by E.B. Locher-Scholten (1981:112, 176-218) as ‘an active pursuit of the development of land and people of the Indian Archipelago, under Dutch rule and according to a Western model’. They stressed that the best way to assure the loyalty of the population was by demonstrating that Dutch rule was benevolent, and that the Dutch had the interests of the people at heart. It was to

1 De Locomotief, 3-10-1898; Bootsma 1986:122, note 18.
Modern articles of clothing as trade mark of a Chinese firm in Kudus selling European and ‘native cigars and cigarettes’ (Javasche Courant 1914, Trade mark 7075).

remain Dutch government policy in the decades to come, resulting in an attitude towards Indonesian nationalism which many laymen thought was too lenient. In the Dutch parliament in February 1918 Th.B. Pleyte explained that one of the prerequisites for holding on to the Netherlands Indies as a Dutch colonial possession was an ‘unselfish domestic policy’ preparing the population for self-government.² This attitude was given substance by expanding educational opportunities, by launching various projects to improve welfare and prosperity, and by allowing a modest degree of political emancipation and a certain say in administering local affairs; though with respect to the last

² Handelingen Tweede Kamer 1917-18:1502.
and the local councils which were instituted after 1905, it was in the first place the Europeans and the well-to-do of the other population groups who were allowed a say in the governing of local affairs.

Around 1900 life in the colony was changing drastically. These were years which must have been looked upon by many Dutch people in the Netherlands Indies as a period in which the old familiar society gave way to a new one. In contrast, up to the turn of the century when there had been almost no political activity at all, within a couple of years it seemed that throughout the length and the breadth of the colony people were demanding a radical overhaul of colonial society. These upheavals were not easy to ignore. The thoughts that were expressed, the demands that were made, the many meetings that were held, not to mention the turmoil and enthusiasm that was created by newly founded organizations left little doubt that something new was emerging. No population group was immune to changes. In 1913 the Dutch Resident of Surabaya noted that on all sides ‘among the Natives, even among the Europeans and the Foreign Orientals a feeling of anxiety reigns’.3 In the same year the Adviser for Native Affairs, G.A.J. Hazeu, stressed that because of the rapid modernization, the colonial administration had to come to terms with the fact that those who not so long before had been merely called the ‘minor civil servants’ or the ‘small people’ had started to realize they were human beings too and were demanding a decent treatment.4 Everything happened so fast that for the Dutch members of the corps – and many of their compatriots – it was difficult to adjust to changing circumstances. Or, as Hazeu, commenting once more on internal developments, remarked in August 1916:

They may find it difficult but the civil servants must familiarize themselves with the undeniable fact that within an unbelievably short span of time, the whole intellectual and political atmosphere here in this country has changed considerably; no harsh decisions to banish people will magically make the good(?) quiet days of the past return, nor can they stem the rising tide of modern political life, and all that pertains to it.5

By the second decade of the century, progress and development had become popular catchwords among the non-European inhabitants of the colony. **Kemadjoean** was what counted. It would bring a modern world in which these population groups would no longer be treated by the Europeans as inferior beings. Education, information, and political strife were the ways to achieve this aim. Periodicals were launched for the purpose of providing their readers with useful information. **Soeloeh Kemadjoean**, the Torch of Progress, or even

3 Sarekat Islam 1975:296.
more appropriately Progress Information, a periodical started in October 1913 with Oemar Said Tjokroaminoto as one of its editors, captured the spirit of this trend. Many other examples, including special magazines for women, can be added to the list.

Lying at the basis of the restlessness which characterized the first and the second decade of the twentieth century were racial distinctions. As in other colonies race was the principal criterion by which to set people apart. The white Europeans were the masters and claimed special rights and special treatment. According to the definition decreed in 1906, Europeans (the status of United States as a Colonial Power did not change usage) consisted of Dutch people and citizens from other European states and their legal or – in the case of a concubinage – legally recognized offspring. Others could apply for a status equal to that of Europeans. This was no trifling matter. An equal status with all the benefits that accrued to it adhered to a person even after death. As late as 1914, the reburial was being contemplated of a person from Ambon who had come down in the world and, distressed by financial misfortune, had lost his mind. A policy officer vaguely recollected that the poor man had been equalized during his life and a search for papers to prove this was begun. It was an important matter. If the hunch were true, the body had to be exhumed and reburied in a European cemetery. The rest of the population was divided into two categories: Natives, the indigenous population of the Netherlands Indies, and Foreign Orientals, that is Arabs and other Asians, including the Chinese, but not the Japanese. The latter were legally Europeans. A ticklish problem was how Turkish citizens should be treated. They were Foreign Orientals, but the law was flawed by an embarrassing loophole. What should be done with Turks who claimed that they had been born on European soil, in the European part of the Ottoman Empire, for instance in Albania, from a Dutch perspective hardly a cradle of civilization?

A different set of legal rules for each of these three groups was in force. Penalties also differed. A European could be sentenced to imprisonment or to a term in a house of correction. For the same crime an Indonesian would be condemned to convict labour, either shackled or not. The inescapable impression created – not only by the different circumstances in which Europeans and non-Europeans had to serve their sentence, but also by the variations in these sentences pronounced by the judges – was that the law-giver was more lenient towards Europeans than towards the rest of the population. Such an assessment was certainly not unwarranted. In 1914, when the highest legal civil servant in the Netherlands Indies, the Director of the Department of Justice, had to contest the view that legislation was more severe towards Indonesians,

6 De Expres, 10-4-1914.
he could only counter with some trivial exceptions. Europeans were, he wrote, threatened with more severe sentences in the bicycle ordinance for Madura and Rembang of 1911, the regulation for the ceding for public use of roads, squares, and the like in Semarang, the coconut decree of Padang, and the discipline and cleanliness decree of Batavia.\textsuperscript{7}

From time to time senior Dutch colonial civil servants also complained that for similar crimes, and what they often had in mind was the publication of seditious or abusive press articles, Europeans were given a lighter penalty than Indonesians or were acquitted whereas Indonesians were punished. A moral aspect tinged the concern of the colonial authorities raised by such court rulings, but it had a practical side as well. Precisely the wish to avoid any impression of racial justice – though this was a term which infuriated the Dutch authorities when used in public – sometimes made the Attorney-General hesitant to bring charges against Indonesian journalists, leading to trials which invariably attracted plenty of public attention, knowing that a conviction only strengthened the idea that Indonesians were being punished for something for which Europeans might go scot-free.

In daily life the legal differences were accentuated by codes of dress. For centuries Dutchmen had reserved themselves the right to wear European attire. Since the early days of the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC, Dutch East Indies Company) it had been decreed that each population group should don its own national costume. By law it was forbidden to put on the apparel of another race or ethnic group. Javanese had to dress as Javanese, Bugis as Bugis, Arabs as Arabs, Chinese as Chinese and so on. Undisputedly this was often what the people concerned wanted, but breaches of the rule, except in specific instances, were unthinkable. Exceptions were granted only to members of the indigenous ruling elites and to Christians. Their assumption of Dutch apparel or items thereof was a clear sign that they had bridged some of the distance which set them apart from the foreign overlord.

Around 1900 the dress codes began to be enforced less vigorously, but had not yet been abandoned (see Van Dijk 1997). As late as 1904 the head of the Chinese community in Semarang requested and was granted permission for his wife to wear European ‘national costume’ in public.\textsuperscript{8} He did this when already for a number of years there had been reports from various parts of the Archipelago that non-Europeans had begun to adopt Dutch dress and habits. One of the culprits for the change in outward appearance was the bicycle. To prevent Indonesians in Surabaya from being afflicted by sore feet, the Dutch Resident of that city generously allowed them to wear shoes when


\textsuperscript{8} De Locomotief, 12-1-1904.
cycling. Significantly the Javanese Regent was opposed to this. He protested that the wearing of shoes by ordinary people was a violation of custom, and detrimental to the prestige of Europeans and that of Javanese civil servants.\footnote{De Locomotief, 9-6-1898, 19-11-1898.} Besides putting on shoes, people began to wear hats, long trousers, shirts, and ties, plus other items of cloth associated with the West. They also demanded the right to sit on chairs and no longer to have to squat on the floor when in the presence of Dutch or their own authorities, and had the nerve to address Dutch people in Dutch and not in the vernacular language, a serious breach of etiquette leading to reprimands and punishment.

What was frequently to be described by members of the Dutch civil service and of the indigenous elite in the decades to come as breaches of polite behaviour by Javanese and other people striving for emancipation had reared its head. On a less impertinent level, young Indonesians began to develop a predilection for Western music and dances. They played marches and other melodies, and danced waltzes and polkas at their meetings, a phenomenon still unheard of in the very first years of the twentieth century. They did so at a moment when a conservative public in Europe still frowned upon the tango, ‘imitating those ridiculous twistings and contortions of the body of negresses and barbarians’, as the Pope chose to describe the dance in 1914.\footnote{De Expres, 4-3-1914.}

The setting in which this all took place was also new. The first decade of the twentieth century saw the completion of Dutch territorial expansion. Areas which up to then had escaped colonial rule now came under Dutch control, giving the territory of the Netherlands Indies its final shape. The hesitancy displayed in earlier decades on the part of the Dutch government gave way to a deliberate policy of territorial aggrandizement. Fear that other Colonial Powers would gain a foothold in the Archipelago as they had done in Borneo and New Guinea was the major reason for such a step. National prestige was an equally important factor. The Colonial Powers felt they had a special task to perform. Expansion was proof of the supremacy of the West, and this was also in concert with prevailing moral standards. It was imperative that regions be brought under control so that the local population might share some of the blessings of civilization and to combat what was denounced as the abuses of despotic indigenous rule and non-Christian religions. Colonial aggrandizement was eventually presented by European politicians in the guise of a sacred mission.

The Netherlands Indies was not spared the Western convulsion to export the blessings of civilization. In 1904 a parliamentary commission concluded that ‘[t]hough the expansion of our authority should be eschewed as much
as possible circumstances often leave no choice but to go ahead, because the Netherlands cannot shirk the fulfilment of the moral obligations it has taken on itself as a colonial Power with respect to the native population’. Feelings among Dutch politicians about what Locher-Scholten (1981:194-9) has dubbed ‘ethical imperialism’ were perhaps even stronger than elsewhere in Europe, as they were reinforced by a sensitivity to international public opinion about how the colony was run, and by the fact that in international politics the Netherlands was pretty insignificant. What Holland lacked in political power, it could compensate for in the moral field.

Opposition to colonial expansion came mainly from the left; from Van Kol and P.J. Troelstra and their political friends in the Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiders Partij (SDAP, Social Democratic Labour Party). Proponents of aggrandizement were not impressed by their critical observation that the reasons presented to justify Dutch military expeditions in the Archipelago could be used equally well by Germany to rationalize an occupation the Netherlands, were Berlin for reasons of national defence to deem such a step necessary. Their counterargument was that the two cases were completely different. Dutch expansion occurred within a clearly defined region which formed a political and ethnological unity, of which the boundaries were internationally accepted. Likewise the argument that the British imperialist exploits were generally deplored in Holland, and that the subjugation of new territories put the Netherlands in the same class, did nothing to deter the advocates of Dutch expansion. By a show of force or at least wielding the threat of it, all remaining independent or semi-independent regions were brought under Dutch rule. When there were old contracts acknowledging Dutch sovereignty, these were exchanged for new ones which made the rulers who signed them, as was occasionally said by opponents of Dutch expansion, ‘papier-maché monarchs’. The expansion of Dutch rule, geographically and administratively, and the concurrent economic penetration contributed to a change in the character of the Dutch community. For centuries a small group, around 1900 it began to grow rapidly. Among the new arrivals were many women, which was another new trend. In the past, it had been almost exclusively men who had left Europe for the Archipelago, now women joined them. Between 1900 and 1930 the population of females born in Europe but living in the Netherlands Indies grew from 4,000 to 26,000 (Van der Veur 2006:88). This influx of women inexorably affected the composition and outlook of the European elite. It became less Indonesian and much more Dutch. The presence of Dutch women meant it was no longer necessary and indeed even made it reprehensible, for

13 De Expres, 13-3-1914.
Dutch males to take a woman from the local society as wife or concubine. Such women, who had given the European society a particularly local colour, were eventually denied access to the upper strata of colonial society.

The role of Dutch women as custodians of European manners was only partly responsible for the change in outlook of the colonial elite. The men now arriving from Holland to fill the growing number of jobs which required a certain level of education and special skills also contributed to the trend. Growing numbers in themselves already made it easier to preserve Dutch culture in the tropics. This trend was facilitated even more by the new type of person who now came to the colony. Engineers, technicians, and administrators made their appearance in increasing numbers. The nature of the Dutch civil service corps inevitably changed. Common people began to predominate. In 1913 a newspaper in Surabaya ventured the opinion that this was the reason why, in contrast to in the East Coast of Sumatra, an estate region, joining the civil militia was not popular in Java. Planters enjoyed drilling and shooting. They found it fun and socially agreeable, looking forward to the beer they would consume afterwards. In the larger cities in Java many of the Dutch community were office people who were not particularly fond of physical exercise.\(^{14}\) This assessment did not ring completely true, (and to the beer, gin should be added), but it still serves to illustrate the changes that were taking place: a bureaucratization of society and the higher educational background of the Dutchmen who were coming to the colony. One of the consequences of the new situation was that the gap between the people and the Dutch civil servants had widened. In the same year a senior adviser to the Governor General noted that the new civil servants were not always gifted with the necessary ‘knowledge, patience and tact’ to maintain friendly relations with the population. The reverse was true. They reacted with contempt and ridicule to all kinds of ‘Javanese idiosyncrasies’.\(^ {15}\) The motor car was another culprit. It had removed the necessity for civil servants on a tour the stay overnight in a village.\(^ {16}\)

The new considerations of status, the influx of people from Europe, and the plan to elevate the indigenous population made matters worse for a special class of people, whose social plight was somewhat veiled by the fact that race was not explicitly used as a legal criterion to distinguish them. They were the Indo-Europeans; legally classified as Europeans, but, if they did not already belong to the lower strata of society, socially often not accepted as members of the colonial elite. As people of mixed race they tended to be moved into a marginal position when the status criteria in the colonial elite changed emphasizing race and correct European standards of behaviour. Indo-Europeans

\(^{14}\) *Nieuwe Soerabaja Courant*, cited in *De Locomotief*, 3-10-1913.

\(^{15}\) *Adviezen 1913*:18.

\(^{16}\) *Handelingen Tweede Kamer* 1918-19:2087.
could escape this, but only by behaving in a Western fashion. The same was true of some Indonesians. Adopting Western dress in the 1910s made them Europeans; and people, white Europeans included, were more polite and friendlier towards them than when under similar circumstances, they dressed according to the custom of their own ethnic group.

For many Indo-Europeans the stark choice was either to identify with the white society, and its European appearance, or to submerge in the local Indonesian society, no longer having any special status at all. The third alternative, holding on to their own culture, meant remaining a member of a group whose language, manners, and beliefs were looked down upon and ridiculed by white Dutch people; a fact which contributed to the putative hatred of the Dutch frequently attributed to Indo-Europeans.

Indo-Europeans as a group also missed out on the special attention the Dutch professed to pay Indonesians in their efforts to improve social and economic conditions of the latter. When policies were developed to educate the people, to better their economic position, or even to improve housing conditions, it was Indonesians and not Indo-Europeans (or Chinese and Arabs) whom the planners had in mind. What daunted the most was that not only was their culture marginalized, but that economically the Indo-Europeans, many of whom occupied lower-ranking clerical positions, were also downgraded. The opening up of educational opportunities to larger numbers of Indonesians threatened their economic position. Imperceptibly the Indo-Europeans began to lose out in the competition for the lower-ranking jobs as a growing number of Indonesians and Chinese qualified for these too and were prepared to work for a lower salary. As early as the end of the nineteenth century Indo-Europeans had wanted to reserve jobs in the modern sector for themselves, jealous of the Indonesians and Chinese who had entered the sector. A programme of the Social-Democrats in the Netherlands Indies in 1897 is most specific about the aspirations of the ‘advanced’, as they styled themselves. It was the social and economic position of the poor whites and Indo-Europeans which should be improved, the indigenous population had to play second fiddle to that dream. To ‘combat the existence of a proletariat among the Indos’, the programme called for ‘fewer natives in the State Railways and the Postal and Telegraph Service, appointment of Eurasian girls as telegraph operators and ticket-sellers just as in Europe, replacement of native engine-drivers, chiefs at halts and so forth by Indos and Europeans, because the prosperity of the native lies in the cultivation of the Sawah’. Chinese also had to be banned from certain jobs – cashiers, an occupation which appeared to be one of the preserves of Chinese, had been mentioned as an example – to make way for Indo-Europeans (Tichelman 1985:111-2).

Their future as a group seemed to be at stake. To escape that fate farming was seen as one way out, but there was one major obstacle. For a number
of decades ownership of land had by law been confined to indigenous
Indonesians. The act had pre-empted complications which had made the
political situation in Pacific Islands so explosive, but was clearly disadvan-
tageous to Indo-Europeans whose Europeans status prevented them from
owning land. To change this at least since 1897 Indo-Europeans had pleaded
in vain they be accorded the right of landownership. A real impasse had
been reached. E.F.E. Douwes Dekker, their most popular and radical political
leader, called attention to the dilemma about acknowledging his offspring an
Indo-European had put to him. Where he to do so they remained Europeans,
if he did not they could buy land.17

Because of their background and lack of proper education, many Indo-
Europeans did not qualify for higher administrative posts, for which an
education in Holland was required. For positions where this did not count,
Indo-Europeans were convinced that when filling them preference was given
to persons fresh from Holland rather than to people from their own group
with the same qualifications. It was an often-heard complaint that people from
Europe were appointed to intermediate positions, which could equally well
have been filled by Indo-Europeans.

To make prospects worse, new educational institutions established within
the framework of emancipating the population were open to indigenous
Indonesians only and not to Indo-Europeans. This was the case with the
School tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Artsen (STOVIA, School for the Training
of Native Doctors), and also loomed large in plans to establish a Law College
(Van der Veur 2006:152). The educational discrimination was all the more
vexatious as it happened in a period in which indigenous Indonesians and
Chinese enthusiastically embraced Western schooling as the major vehicle of
emancipation and for advancement in life.

It was among these Indo-Europeans, caught between Dutch and Indonesian
society, that the first radical political movement in the Netherlands Indies
found a response. Like all other such movements active before and after it, its
leaders had to operate in a repressive climate. Legislation forbade all associa-
tions or meetings which had a political nature or formed a threat to public
order. In formulating their demands Indo-Europeans stressed the one point
that made them different from white Dutch people; the fact that they had been
born in the Netherlands Indies and intended – or had no other choice than – to
remain there.

A second group which made its mark at the beginning of the twentieth
century was the Chinese; presenting indigenous Indonesians with another
example of political agitation. After the Japanese had been granted European

status in 1899, the Chinese demanded the same right, even talking about a boycott of European firms discriminating against them. Chinese had plenty of reasons to call for change. The majority of them was not held in high esteem by the white European community, and legislation curtailed their freedom of movement. Till 1910 Chinese (and Arabs) were not allowed to travel without special permission and had to live in special quarters in the major cities. To circumvent such rules, some Chinese converted to Islam (though the fact that this allowed them to marry Muslim girls also could have been a reason), and claimed native status. A few others acquired Japanese nationality; a move colonial authorities were sure was sanctioned, if not promoted, by the Japanese government as part of a scheme to increase the Japanese presence in the Archipelago in preparation of Japan’s putative thrust southwards.

The resentment aroused contributed to a re-orientation towards China and a renewed interest in Chinese culture. Instead of identifying with the Dutch, as some did, or remaining a more or less well-integrated, though in some respects clearly distinct, segment of local society, Chinese identity was now stressed. This was boasted by the short-lived drive for modernization which had manifested itself in China and the Straits Settlements in 1898, coupling a selective adaptation of Western ways with a return to traditional, age-old Confucian values, undiluted by heterodox accretions and adjustments which had been introduced in the course of centuries. The Chinese revival was reinforced by the arrival of new immigrants to work as labourers. They added a new element to the Chinese community, which for the greater part had previously been made up of families which had settled in the Netherlands Indies generations ago, and had taken over much of the language and many of the customs of the indigenous Indonesians in whose midst they lived.

The press also contributed to keeping the links with the country of origin alive. Besides the Chinese Malay newspapers and periodicals that were already being published, new ones appeared, with a few exceptions still written in Malay, which catered to the new interest in China and its culture and values. The editors and teachers who had come over from China to teach at the new Chinese schools were held responsible by the authorities for the spread of the Young China Movement all over the colony, and for the fresh worries the ‘Chinese question’ occasioned them.

The fall of the Manchu dynasty in 1911 and the founding of the Chinese Republic in 1912 stirred up the Chinese community even more. Great enthusiasm, which took the colonial administration completely by surprise, and a

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18 Pembrita Betawi, 5-4-1903 referred to in Adam 1995:75.
19 De Expres, 13-3-1914; Adviser Chinese Affairs to Director BB 7-11-1917, NA, Kol. Geheim, Mr. 298x/17.
Chinese patriotism. Chinese soldier with Chinese war flag. Trade mark of a Chinese firm in Batavia selling medicines. (Javasche Courant 1914, Trade mark 6693.)

Trade mark of a Chinese tea trader in Surabaya. The figure holds a Chinese trade flag in his right hand and a Chinese war flag in his left hand. (Javasche Courant 1916, Trade mark 8094.)
boost in self-confidence were the result. As in China, the symbols of modernity and progress which signified anti-Manchu feelings were embraced. The Chinese began to behave like Europeans. They reacted to the news of the Chinese Revolution by cutting off their pigtails and donning European clothes. In an attempt to calm down stories in the Straits press about large-scale unrest in the Netherlands Indies the Dutch Consul General in Singapore wrote that the Chinese ‘endeavoured to imitate, with more and less success, European habits, such as dress, coiffure, calendar, and Sunday rest among other things’.\textsuperscript{21} The Dutch could cope with this. More difficult to swallow was the new self-assurance the Chinese displayed. That some treated Europeans as their equals was an attitude, it was written with mild irony in \textit{De Locomotief}, they would not have dared to show in the past when they still wore a pigtail, ‘but, since they wear green, mundane socks, have become republican and just as religious Christians want to be called “Sir”, this people stop at nothing’.\textsuperscript{22} Judging from a contemporary report a modern way of life must have been embraced with great enthusiasm. \textit{Pakean Europa}, European costumes, and shoes \textit{model Europa} were in great demand.\textsuperscript{23}

Restlessness manifested itself in various ways. In part this was provoked by the colonial authorities who banned the hoisting of the flag of the Chinese Republic. On 18 February 1912, on Chinese New Year, disturbances broke out in Batavia when the police enforced the ban and hauled down Republican flags. In Batavia the situation could be contained. In Surabaya it spun out of control, resulting in a tense atmosphere which lasted for more than a week. Protests against the refusal of the authorities to allow the hoisting of the Republican flag contributed to the tension in Surabaya, but it had all started with a ban by the municipal administration on letting off fireworks. The \textit{Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant} deemed this a sensible decision. The roads between the city centre and the harbour all ran through the Chinese ward.\textsuperscript{24} The newspaper also noted something disquieting. In Batavia and Surabaya the ‘usually very quiet, hard-working Chinese element among the population’ had taken ‘a rebellious, here and there definitely hostile attitude towards the Dutch authority’.\textsuperscript{25} The blame was put on the new immigrants; not the decent ones, but the lowest class among them, people who had nothing to lose. The prospect of an unruly Chinese community in the colony did not ease Dutch minds. The authority of their traditional allies in the Chinese community, the Chinese officers, seemed to be waning. The members of the established,
traditional Chinese elite had to face competition from newcomers and were attacked in newspapers in the Netherlands Indies and China for their reactionary behaviour and their involvement with colonial rule.

A new China was not a prospect to which the Dutch looked forward. China was a weak nation but the coming to power of the Republican government could herald different times. For some outside the Netherlands such a moment had already dawned. One journal, *The Islamic Fraternity*, writing about ‘Dutch officials, to whom the oppression of the Javan people is as natural as breath to their nostrils’, even reported that Peking had ordered cruisers to the Archipelago to punish the Dutch for the killing and maltreatment of Chinese, rumours which circulated in Java as well. *The Islamic Fraternity* added that the Dutch government had ‘climbed down and humbly apologizing for the occurrence promised to compensate sufferers of Dutch outrage at Java’ in suppressing the unrest in Batavia and Surabaya. It was an augury of more to come: ‘The energetic action of the Republican government of China has inaugurated a new era of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness for the peoples of the East. The worm has turned at last, and the first nail is driven into the coffin of the European domination of Asia.’

In the Netherlands and the Netherlands Indies, though still only occasionally, China made its initial appearance as a prospective foreign enemy. Such a possibility had already been predicted in 1904 by the then Resident of Batavia. Observing the mood in the Chinese community in his station he had pleaded for a positive response. Were this not forthcoming the moment China had recovered its strength a situation could emerge in which a section of the population in the Netherlands Indies would act as the allies of a foreign enemy, and become a ‘domestic enemy to be reckoned with’. In Holland in 1914 it was Van Kol who pleaded for the alleviation of the grievances held by the Chinese in the Netherlands Indies before the moment should arrive when China would have a powerful army and fleet.

China came to be presented an example for Indonesian nationalists and others detesting Western colonialism of what a people’s movement might accomplish. The radical daily *De Expres* wrote that Chinese revolution had proved that the Chinese people also no longer wanted to be a race of slaves. The fear of Holland for China as the ‘foreign enemy in a new cloak’, was a theme which was repeatedly taken up in it. True to the conviction of its editors that striking fear into the heart of the Dutch people was the best way to frighten The Hague into concessions, this was sometimes accompanied by

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26 *The Islamic Fraternity*, May 1912; *Handelingen Eerste Kamer* 1913-14:241.
28 *De Expres*, 14-1-1914.
29 *De Expres*, 13-1-1914.
exclamations like ‘Fear works; carry on Chinese Brothers [...].’

Unrest and unease had spread to the indigenous segment of the colonial society. In the vanguard of the early nationalist movement were indigenous Indonesians who had received Western secondary and higher education, but after graduation discovered that society was not ready for them. Their Western style of life was not accepted and the ideals of equality and democracy they had read about during their schooldays were far from put into practice in the colony. When they embarked on a government career, they discovered that jobs were still allocated according to the old standards in which deference to superiors was more important than educational background and that for years they would be stuck in positions lower than warranted by their schooling. Such people came from a new class of young Indonesians who no longer felt in harmony with their social background. They were sons of members of the indigenous Indonesian bureaucracy, coloured by its strict hierarchy from the higher nobility down to the more humble officials, such as office clerks. In word and deed they rebelled against the strict rules and etiquette that governed these circles. They found a way out of their social confinement by joining the nationalist movement or pursuing a career in journalism; often combining the two.

The rise of nationalism among the Javanese and other ethnic groups of the Netherlands Indies was facilitated by the dissemination of Western notions of democracy and emancipation which became familiar to a growing number of Indonesians through an increased distribution of books, newspapers and magazines, and through the Western educational institutions which Indonesians had started to attend. Equally important was the introduction of a set of ideologies, which made it possible to phrase their aspirations in a new terminology and provided new standards by which to judge contemporary society. Construed and developed in the course of the nineteenth century in Europe and in the Middle East, such ideas acquired force in the Netherlands Indies somewhat later, in the years following the turn of the century. Europe furnished the ideals of Marxism and Socialism, and the Middle East the modernist tenets of Islam.

Islamic modernism stressed a revival of Islam. European expansion seemed at its peak. It had resulted in the colonization of much of the non-Western world and vast regions where the majority or a large part of the population consisted of Muslims had already been conquered. The Ottoman Empire had maintained its independence but was weak and had to accept European economic and political intervention. To close the gap with the West, the necessity of modern education was emphasized, as was a flexibility of thought.

30 De Expres, 13-1-1914, 17-1-1914.
This it was argued, Islam, which had once itself inspired a World Power, had gradually lost in the course of the centuries. Transforming the Islamic educational system by incorporating the teaching of secular subjects was part of the answer. Giving the Islamic community new strength by inviting Muslims not simply to follow the age-old established traditions but to try and find the correct interpretation which would make Islam compatible with modern times was equally important.

In a similar way to all other reformist concepts, the new ideas presented carried the seeds of profound social and religious controversies. The reformists in the Netherlands Indies not only were determined to combat Western superiority, they also tried to undermine the position of the religious leaders who adhered to the old ways. In this, they reserved much of their venom for such figures. Established practices were rejected on religious grounds and sometimes even ridiculed. Customs which did not originate in Islam, but had become generally accepted in the local community as an integral part of religion, were attacked with the same zeal.

The reformers could, and especially the more radical of them did so frequently, borrow from the vocabulary of the second novel ideology introduced in the Netherlands Indies, that of Socialism. The ideals propagated by Socialism, an egalitarian, democratic society cleansed of exploitation – and as it often was perceived also without the Dutch and taxes – were highly attractive.

Both Marxism and Islamic Reformism carried the appeal of offering an alternative to the capitalist West and the colonial system to which it had given birth. Having identified the evils of capitalism and colonialism, they traced out the way to end foreign domination and free Indonesians from their subordinate position. Even when people did not fully understand the finer points of Communism or Islamic Modernism, the two ideologies provided some impressive words to create a feeling of solidarity and to identify the enemy and those responsible for all the wrongs in society. Worthy of praise were either the poor, the people who suffered a miserable fate, and the oppressed, or the real or true Muslim, who by arriving at an understanding of the correct meaning of Islam had dissociated himself from a system which could be blamed for the continuation of colonialism. Appeals to uphold true Islam, Islam sedjati, were made to inspire people to take their fate into their own hands and resist Dutch domination. This went hand in hand with attacks on false Muslims (as opposed to the true ones), who would not relinquish ideas which had turned Islam into a religion of the weak and meek and who were held responsible for the passive acceptance of colonial rule. A true Muslim protested against injustice and exploitation; a false Muslim remained silent.

The hardship and suffering of the common people, of the little man – the rakjat, wong tjilik, or Si Kromo – had to be grappled. But, paradoxically, their
poverty and the discrimination they suffered provided a basis for solidarity, a focus of identification. The ‘oppressed’ were the people who should be fought for; and to show that their champions were really touched by their wretched conditions *noms de plumes* such as Eternal Sufferer (*Eeuwige Lijder*), One Handicapped by Life (*Een Misdeelde*) or Wounded in Body and Soul, and significantly, also New Wearer of Suits (*Nieuwe Pakkendrager*) were used. At times such a champion chose to present himself in a deprecatory way; turning the negative into the positive. The oppressed were only half or quarter human; a very popular way to illustrate their fate. They were also the stupid ones, *Si Bodo, Domoor*, the Dutch word meaning idiot or fool also appeared as a pseudonym, as admittedly did *Si Tjinta-Bangsa*, Lover of My People. Only the clever ones, *Si Pintar*, had money and status. It was not just adopting a high moral tone, a denunciation of the materialism of the West. Like the clownish servants of the hero, who displayed genuine wisdom in the Javanese wayang play and in the end are the real winners, the stupid ones saw through the tricks and outward pretence, and knew what was amiss. It was the fool who had the superior intellect. Later, in a similar vein of irony, the Europeans were sarcastically denoted as the *bangsa sopan*, a tidy and civilized nation.

The growth of the printing industry, which made possible a vast increase in the publication of pamphlets, newspapers, and periodicals, acted as a catalyst. A plethora of articulate local newspapers emerged, reflecting the rebellious mood in sections of the Chinese, Indo-European and indigenous communities. It was a circumstance with which the Dutch had never had been confronted before. Neither the political organizations which were industriously being founded nor some of the newspapers and periodicals affiliated with them gave the Dutch much time to reflect. What was said and written did not gradually wax in tone. Within a short span of time, a few years only, they assumed a stand that many Dutch people considered to be seditious; a deliberate effort to gnaw at Dutch rule and to set the population against the white Dutch community and against the colonial administration.

Non-Dutch-language journals had been published since the 1850s, but these had never been a cause of much concern. By and large they had been harmless; copying news items from Dutch-language newspapers and providing information of use to Indonesians who wanted to improve their social and economic position within the framework of colonial society. After the turn of the century a political press took shape. Or, as it was phrased in the 1920s, only ‘when the twentieth century with its social vehemence and intellectual progress had set in, when world traffic had also included these provinces in its gigantic network, inevitably that the press, elsewhere such a powerful weapon, emerged here as well’ (Later 1923:58). This came as a bolt from the blue. In 1906 supervision of the press had been relaxed, ending a period in which it had been possible for the colonial administration to exercise preventive cen-
sorship. There were at that time a number of periodicals written in Malay or Javanese, but, prior to 1906, when collisions occurred between the press and the colonial administration it had mainly been Dutch-language media which had been the culprits.

This changed with the growth of political consciousness among the Indonesian, Chinese, and Indo-European population. The increase in the number of publications catering to these communities and in particular the change in tone had not been expected. What emerged apparently out of nowhere were what Dutch administrators called ‘scurrilous rags’, libelling and abusing Dutch officials and other people or social groups with whom the journalists of these papers did not agree. Among those expressing concern was the Minister of the Colonies in The Hague, J.H. de Waal Malefijt. In 1912 – at a time when the Adviser for Native Affairs, D.A. Rinkes, was still reassuring the Governor General that the nationalist press might make a noise, but did not pose a political threat – he stressed that the way in which Indonesian journalists were expressing themselves called for the reinstitution of the repressive powers previously wielded by the colonial administration. He maintained that it was intolerable that, as one of the civil servants of his department had said, ‘the native press did not scruple to preach rebellion in overt or covert terms, yea even to incite murder’. Consequently, in June 1913, De Waal Malefijt urged Governor General A.W.F. Idenburg to prepare legal means which would allow the colonial administration to act against ‘the overt preaching of rebellion against Dutch Authority, the outrageous way in which suspicion is fastened upon the best intentions of the government and the sowing of hatred and discord between the different races’. He considered it ‘political suicide’ to leave the matter in the hands of the judiciary with its ‘ever-changing judgements’. The colonial administration should regain the special powers it had held prior to 1906. Courts, and this was an almost general mood prevailing among administrators in Java and The Hague, could not be relied upon to suppress dangerous agitation. Judges were too lenient, and the legal proof demanded in a court case against journalists accused of libel or sedition was not always easy to provide.

Only a few senior colonial civil servants did not join in the calls for wider powers to be given to the government. One was Rinkes. He denied that the Indonesian press was recrimatory, let alone inflammatory. There were exceptions, but these papers had only a small circulation; extra proof for Rinkes that their influence was easily overrated and that Indonesians were perfectly able to distinguish between good and bad, between responsible, well-edited newspapers and rags. Rinkes coupled his observation with a plea not to overreact and to continue to allow the press to function as an instrument of political control, essential in a society where the Dutch and indigenous civil servants held almost paramount authority. For the ordinary people, newspapers were
almost the only place where they could complain about the behaviour of such officials without fear of immediate retaliation. Others were less sanguine. They lamented a situation in which it was impossible to act against ‘cunning demagogues, who, because of [Western] education which is available in ever-widening circles have learned to recognize fairly big opportunities to slip through the net’.31 Yet others deplored the fact that lawyers also played a role in this unsettling process by making journalists aware of the limitations of the law in taking action against the press.

Tension was almost unavoidable. Society was steeped in racial prejudice and stereotypes, while fear of competition for jobs and economic opportunities from people of another race was widespread. Indo-Europeans were concerned about the advancing status of Indonesians. On their part Indonesians viewed the Indo-Europeans as a group which blocked their access to the better-paid but still lower-ranking jobs, and also passionately guarded their exclusive rights of landownership, rejecting the granting of the right to own land to Indo-Europeans. Both groups saw Chinese as rivals.

Shortly before the founding of the first mass Islamic organization, Sarekat Islam, when Muslim traders in Surakarta reacted to the political and economic pressure exerted by the Chinese by a boycott of Chinese products. This reaction came as a complete surprise. Rinkes observed that such a show of solidarity and the use of ‘the modern agitation technique of a boycott so much beyond the ken of daily round in old-fashioned Surakarta’ by this ‘narrow-minded, backward’ community was remarked upon by many with ‘some amazement’.32

Anti-Chinese feelings were not the only reason Muslims started to organize themselves. Others factors were also stirring. One was the opening up of Java to Christian missions. By allowing this, the Dutch government departed from its long-standing policy of discouraging missionary activities in Islamic regions in order to avoid social upheaval. The new course of events and the discussions in the Dutch parliament and press surrounding the change evoked a strong reaction among Muslims. Offence was taken at remarks passed by proponents of the opening up of Java to Christian mission that many if not most Javanese could hardly be called Muslims because non-Islamic beliefs and customs predominated their religious life. Insulted by the comments about the religious beliefs adhered to by their fellow Javanese and fearful that a Christian offensive was in the offing Islamic leaders launched their own drive. An atmosphere in which greater stress was laid on correct Islamic behaviour was the result.

31 Note Department II of the General Secretariat, 3-9-1913, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 17-12-1913
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32 D.A. Rinkes to Idenburg, 24-8-1912 (Adviezen 1913:1).
Inaugural meeting Sarekat Islam in Blitar 1914 (KITLV 3719)

Sarekat Islam became a popular trade mark. In this case used to sell bicycles

(Oetoesan Hindia 6-8-1914)
The new mood among Muslims was given concrete expression in 1912 in the founding of the Moehammadijah, a reformist organization, and of the Sarekat Islam. The Sarekat Islam, founded by Oemar Said Tjokroaminoto, described in De Locomotief as being one of ‘the highly cultured natives’, was the more political in nature of the two. It could count on an enthusiast reception, first in Java and then in other parts of the Archipelago. An Assistent-Resident reported in July 1914 that the words Sarekat Islam had become a battle-cry. There even was a brand of bicycle Sarekat Islam. A few years later people could buy Sarekat Islam watches.

In a very short span of time the organization grew into a mass movement with branches all over the Netherlands Indies. Muslims of all denominations joined, from those who did not pay much heed to the prescripts of Islam to the strictest adherents. Pertinently at meetings economic and social demands were at least as frequent as calls for a correct religious behaviour. Sometimes, as the newspaper De Expres noted, religious topics were not raised at all. Nevertheless, an upsurge in religious life was perceptible. In May 1913 Rinkes observed that in dress, forms of greeting, and in dietary habits Muslim customs were being more widely espoused. The fashion of copying Western manners was no longer as pronounced as it had been a few years earlier. All kinds of economic and political initiatives to improve the living conditions of Sarekat Islam members and above all to set up shops and cooperatives to compete with Chinese petty traders and shopkeepers were broached.

The emergence of the Sarekat Islam was also expressed in a strong feeling of belonging. Pressure was so compelling that people complained that they were obliged to take part in funeral processions of fellow members so frequently, they did not have enough time to run their daily business. Outsiders were not part of this. Their funeral processions were boycotted. Other traditional forms of mutual assistance, at planting time or when building a house for instance, were also withdrawn from them. Members of the same family landed up in opposite camps, ignoring each other’s existence. Some divorces – which were frequent in Java – were blamed on Sarekat Islam.

The Chinese were a prime target for such acts of solidarity. Just after the turn of the century Javanese newspapers had begun to identify the Chinese as an impediment to the development of the indigenous population. They had

33 De Locomotief, 24-10-1913.
35 De Expres, 6-1-1914.
36 Rinkes to Idenburg, 13-5-1913 (Adviezen 1913:35).
hinted that were the government not to interfere, violence might be inevitable. Resentment intensified after the Chinese Revolution. The way in which Chinese reacted to the fall of the Manchu dynasty irritated Javanese in the same way as it had done the Dutch. Their behaviour was described as haughty and rude. The Dutch Consul General in Singapore explained that the ‘violent language’ of the Chinese and the ‘ostentatious way’ in which many behaved ‘caused many conflicts with their own more conservative countrymen, with the police, with the Arabs and especially with the natives’. He noted that the arrogant behaviour of the Chinese had exasperated others, especially in Java. He was not alone in this assessment. Pleyte told the Dutch parliament that Javanese who had known the Chinese ‘in baggy clothes, with a peculiar straw-hat, a long pigtail and bare feet’, as a person who mixed cordially with the Javanese, spoke their language and settled in their villages, ‘suddenly had to look up to the Chinese as a toewan, who although he had allowed him to address him by his name in the past, now demanded that he knelt in front of him’. Reports from Java linked racial tension with the new found self-esteem of the Chinese. The Javanese Regent of Rembang wrote that since the establishment of the Chinese Republic, Chinese ‘fancy themselves a great deal and look upon the Javanese as an inferior being, which has fostered a grudge among the latter against the Chinese’. The Chinese under his administration bragged that within a few years they would replace the Dutch as masters of Java and rest of the Archipelago. In anticipation of this, ‘the Javanese were going to have to show them all honour and obedience, which they are shortly going to be forced to do’. In Surakarta, Chinese predicting that the new Chinese Republic would soon conquer the Netherlands Indies demanded more ‘hor-mat’, more respect, and expressed the desire to be addressed as Toewan, Sir.

Hatred of the Chinese, according to the Dutch Resident, was intense in his district. Even a child of about eight, when asked what he wanted, had replied ‘to kill all Chinese’. Watching such manifestations of anti-Chinese resentment, some Dutchmen could not hide their gloating. Rinkes considered the Sarekat Islam ‘a nice (cold) shower for the Chinese, who have lain low for quite some time, but after their Republic had been founded, were again getting above themselves’.

39 De Locomotief, 11-11-1913 referring to Taman Sari, October and November 1903 and Bintang Hindia, 1902 and 1903.
40 Memorandum Dutch Consul General in Singapore, NA, BuZa, A-dos. 190, box 452.
41 Handelingen Tweede Kamer 1913-14:215.
42 Sarekat Islam 1975:190.
44 Resident Surakarta to Idenburg, 11-11-[1912] (Sarekat Islam 1975:328).
45 Resident Surakarta to Idenburg, 11-11-[1912] (Sarekat Islam 1975:331).
function as *contre-poids*, counter-balance, to Chinese presumptions was one of the positive effects he saw in the founding of the Sarekat Islam. A similar opinion was expressed by Pleyte when he defended his budget in parliament at the end of 1913. In his eyes, the ‘awakening’ of the Javanese served as a means to check arbitrary behaviour by indigenous Indonesian lower-ranking civil servants (he did not mention Dutch civil servants), and by those ‘one considers the economic exploiters of the Javanese’, singling out the Chinese petty traders as an example.

The unrest occasioned by the founding of the Sarekat Islam, the demonstrations of anti-Chinese feelings, and the occasional brawl on estates where labourers under the influence of the religious revival demanded to have a day off on Islamic holidays, greatly upset the Dutch community. Idenburg reported to Pleyte that especially in East Java which was studded with sugar estates the mood was one of a ‘highly nervous tension’. Sugar companies began to consider arming their staff. One such company went as far as to publish a newspaper advertisement, asking for a military officer who could help it to take the necessary precautions to ward off an attack. With Chinese and Dutchmen expecting the worst, the sale of firearms boomed. Fear of a day of reckoning spread fast. The Dutch started to speculate about the impending murder of Europeans in August 1913 during the Fasting Months. It was a major topic of conversation in the clubs. In Batavia people later spoke about the ‘fearful’ days. There was even talk that the citizen’s guard in town would be mobilized. European newspapers speculated about the prospect of a St Bartholomew’s Night. The following year *De Expres* wrote that such ‘journalistic feats’ gave cause to think that the scare had been fanned by importers of revolver. Yet even this newspaper, usually very sympathetic in its attitude to Muslims, showed some apprehension at the end of 1913 when three returning hajis had tried to smuggle in firearms.

Tuban was the only place in which there were serious problems. Its Assistent-Resident earned himself the displeasure of his superiors. His chief accused him of cowardice because when faced with Sarekat Islam unrest, he had asked for troops. A plucky civil servant should first have tried to solve the problems by visiting the scene of the troubles, not by asking for military assistance. Nevertheless, much to his own chagrin the Resident had to send in sol-
diers. He justified his action by pointing out that he had only done so because European females in Tuban, fearful of a plot to murder all Europeans, had become terrified. He wrote to Idenburg that he could not cope with women. The idea that his refusal to send soldiers would keep ‘a number of ladies in a continuous state of fear’ had so burdened his conscience that he had changed his mind about not sending in troops.54

The commotion caused by the early activities of the Sarekat Islam did not escape the attention of the foreign press. In Australia, the Straits Settlements, and as far away as China, alarming reports appeared in the press about a break-down of law and order in Java. In Singapore, the Dutch Consul General reported that articles in the Pinang Gazette and The Straits Times which tried to demonstrate that Java was teeter on the brink of a revolution had upset those trading with Java.55 An editorial in The Straits Times, basing itself on information from its ‘well-informed and reliable correspondent, whose views receive ample corroboration from many sources in Singapore’, predicted ‘trouble of grave character’ in the near future. It was claimed that because of ‘drastic censorship of news’ by the Dutch colonial authorities, the general public can glean but little of the innermost turmoil which is now tearing at the bowels of Dutch administration’. The sudden change had overwhelmed the correspondent. He saw ‘signs which portend evil’ everywhere:

In Australia, the Melbourne Argus (11-6-1913) drew the attention of its readers to the developments in Java with headlines like ‘Fear of outrage’ and ‘Sinister conditions in Java’. Blaming the trouble on a ‘secret society styled Sarekat Islam’, its correspondent in Surabaya noted that it was a ‘nervy’ time and that there was ‘not a firearm to be obtained for love or money’. Wrongly he added that Javanese troops had hurriedly been deployed to Sumatra and Ambona, and that ‘purely Dutch soldiers’ were concentrated in Java. In China, a newspaper reported that thousands of Chinese had asked and received permission to provide themselves with firearms, this because of actions by the natives who, it was claimed, harboured ‘the greatest antipathy towards all foreigners’, and had as their watchwords the extermination of the whitemen and the

54 Gonggrijp to Idenburg, 21-8-1913 (Sarekat Islam 1975:203-9); De Locomotief, 19-11-1913, 5-12-1913.
55 Consul General Singapore to Cort van der Linden, 15-9-1913, NA, BuZa, A-dos. 190, box 452.
56 The Straits Times, 22-8-1913.
ousting of the Chinese.\textsuperscript{57}

In reacting to the sudden expressions of political and social aspirations by almost all population groups in the Netherlands Indies, the colonial administration adopted a cautious attitude. Upholding law and order remained a key expression in the vocabulary of civil servants. Nevertheless, scope was created for political ideas to be circulated in writing and at public meetings. This was tolerated as long as this posed no immediate threat to law and order and to Dutch Power. As it was said in 1913 with respect to the Sarekat Islam: the ‘Governor General desires that in its attitude towards the said association the Administration shows sympathy with the movement, of which the said association is a manifestation, [but] on the other hand shall closely and firmly guard against the violation of public law and order […]’\textsuperscript{58}

Much depended on the mode of expression. Words thought to be too radical or blunt could lead to harassment by Dutch authorities and by the members of the indigenous administrative structure, and ultimately to arrest or censorship. Such repressive measures became more frequent in the course of years when the objective of changing society had become more outspoken and more widespread; when the ‘accoutrements’ to conceal its political nature, as it was concluded in 1920 by a commission to revise the legal system in the Netherlands Indies, had grown increasingly transparent over the years.\textsuperscript{59}

The course decided upon at the top of the colonial bureaucracy, was not well received by the middle echelon, the civil servants in the field, or by the Dutch public. These Dutch Residenten, Assistent-Residenten, and district officers were more reserved and more reluctant to allow nationalist activities. Their attitude to the Sarekat Islam greatly disappointed Rinkes. In November 1913 he had called it a ‘wonderful achievement’, that, with the exception of some of the Residenten, the colonial civil servants had succeeded in winning the distrust of so many Indonesians within such a short span of time, about six months, because of the attitude most of them had taken towards the movement.\textsuperscript{60} Four months later he observed that the Dutch colonial civil servants were ‘in fact opposed to all native associations which are not very well “led”, that is to say which do not unconditionally say yes and amen to everything that is expressed and judged from the side of the civil service, European or Native’.\textsuperscript{61}

\textsuperscript{57} Dutch Minister in Peking to Cort van der Linden, 15-9-1913, NA, BuZa, A-dos. 190, box 452.
\textsuperscript{58} Secret circular letter of the 1st Government Secretary to the heads of regional administration in Java and Madoera, 11-10-1913, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 13-5-1914 10.
\textsuperscript{59} Carpentier Alting 1920:291.
\textsuperscript{60} Note Rinkes, November 1913, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 13-5-1914 10.
\textsuperscript{61} Note Rinkes, 12-2-1914, NA, Kol. Openbaar, Vb. 13-5-1914 10.
A position similar to that of the Dutch civil servants was taken by members of the indigenous administration. In itself the new movement already presented a threat to their authority, as it was an expression of a new political system that was emerging. Many of them did not take kindly to the nationalist movement. When villagers got in trouble because of their membership of the Sarekat Islam, were maltreated or lost their jobs as village clerks and the like, it was usually at the instigation of these Indonesian administrators. Their actions often had the support of the members of the colonial administration, who considered such persons ‘resolute officials’, who were well able of putting the fear of God into people. Conversely, congresses of the Sarekat Islam became gatherings during which such behaviour was reported and the antipathy to the native ruling strata and its bureaucracy could be expressed.

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