

# Breaking the Boundaries

## *The Uniekampong and Modernization of Dock Labour in Tanjung Priok, Batavia (1917–1949)*

Arjan Veering<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

Who does not know them, the wharf-labourers of Tanjung Priok, the sturdy, robust blokes, who animate the docks? There are no men working harder and more tirelessly than the dockers of Tanjung Priok.<sup>2</sup>

The harbour workers of Batavia were extolled in this fashion in an advertisement for *Abdijsiroop*, a cough syrup, published in the Dutch newspapers in Java in 1907. These labourers were the epitome of toughness and strength as they had to endure very harsh working conditions. 'They are constantly exposed to the elements and many among them catch a cold, mostly left unattended because they just keep on going'.<sup>3</sup> This advertisement packed a punch, as it not only confirmed the tough reputation of the harbour workers, but also drew attention to their tough working conditions. Their health and hygiene situation was a delicate issue as diseases, malnutrition, and bad housing hampered the development of a stable docker population in the seaport of Batavia. Of course, no panacea was readily to hand.

The lives of the dockers were played out against the background of a modernization process in an isolated area of Batavia, namely the port of Tanjung Priok. The port was constructed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century

---

1 The research for this chapter was conducted as a part of the project 'The Java Sea in an age of transition, 1870–1970', in which the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Universiteit Leiden and Universitas Diponegoro Semarang co-operated. I would like to thank Prof. Dr Heather Sutherland, Dr Gerrit Knaap en Prof. Dr Peter Boomgaard for their supervision and advice during my research. The first draft of this paper was presented and discussed at the conference Reconstructing the Historical Tradition of Twentieth-Century Indonesian Labour, CLARA/IISG, in Denpasar, Indonesia, 4–6 December 2001.

2 'Wie kent ze niet de bootwerkers van Tandjong-Priok, de stoere flinke kerels die het havenbedrijf verleevendigen? Er zijn geen arbeidzamer en onvermoeider menschen, dan de bootwerkers van Tandjong-Priok' (*De Locomotief* 18-2-1907).

3 'Zij zijn altijd aan weer en wind blootgesteld, vandaar dat er velen onder hen zijn, die eene koude vatten, welke meestal verwaarloosd wordt, omdat zij er mede blijven doorloopen' (*De Locomotief* 18-2-1907).

as the first deep-water ocean harbour in the archipelago. Rapid technological developments in transport and shipping as well as the new economic impetus injected by a growing world market required a fundamental shift in the organization of labour in the ports, and consequently in the living and working conditions, which in their turn changed the use of urban space in the dock areas. This chapter focuses on the rise of the Uniekampong, which was a compound for dockworkers, established in 1919 by the main shipping companies in an attempt to answer to the perpetual scarcity of labour in Tanjung Priok.

The Uniekampong developed into a central labour pool and left its mark on the labour issue in the port, as it deliberately broke through the traditional organization of dock work. Casual labour was gradually replaced by more permanent forms of labour. This process of decasualization, which took place in many other ports in the world in the same period, involved a centralization of the labour market, disciplining and registration of the labour force, regular payment and a guarantee of income, as well as an improvement in working and living conditions (Weinhauer 2000:582).

The Uniekampong marked not only a radical break in the organization of labour, but was also an embodiment of new perspectives on labour conditions and housing. From the early 1900s, housing received growing attention from the authorities and companies and, after 1910, the port authorities showed a heightened interest in the living conditions of the Priok population. Ethical motives aside, employers like shipping companies also took more interest in the working and living conditions of their men because they recognized that social improvements could result in a higher productivity.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe this interplay between economic, social, and physical-spatial modernization in the port of Tanjung Priok, specifically exemplified by the case of the Uniekampong. The research is based on archive material in the Netherlands and Indonesia, supplemented by newspaper articles. The core of the data is formed by the Uniekampong papers in the collection of the Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij (KPM, Royal Packet Navigation Company) in The Hague.<sup>4</sup> The remit of the labour inspection did not extend to work in the docks and when the situation in the port had to be described, this was done in general terms.

This chapter aims to provide a contribution to Indonesian historiography in which dock labour, like other 'industrial' labour, has so far been underrepresented. In a predominantly rural society, most labour studies have focused on

4 Nationaal Archief, The Hague (NA), Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij-Koninklijke Java-China-Japan Lijn (KPM), 2.20.35, 197-199.

the agricultural sector.<sup>5</sup> This bias in scholarship was also a matter of sources. The colonial government showed less interest in the industrial labour as well as the service sector, and as a result only scattered information from this period has survived. John Ingleson was one of the first scholars to look at dock labour in Java, focusing on strikes and union activity (Ingleson 1983:476). In his PhD research, the Indonesian researcher Agust Supriyono dealt specifically with labour questions in the port of Semarang and the development of labour unions (Supriyono 2008). In his study of the KPM, à Campo gives a brief but illuminating account of the organization of labour in the ports (à Campo 1992:518–520).

### The Port of Tanjung Priok

Tanjung Priok was the new harbour of Batavia, built between 1877 and 1883 as an alternative to the existing, outdated harbour in central Batavia. At that time, the harbour of Batavia consisted of a roadstead, the Reede, and a harbour canal, the Havenkanaal, which had been formed by the water between two long piers at the estuary of the Ciliwung River.<sup>6</sup> Ships had to anchor in the roadstead in front of the river estuary, as the sea, just as it was along the entire northern coast of Java, was very shallow near the shore. Sandbanks obstructed the entrance to the harbour canal and smaller boats, the *prauwenveren* (proa ferries, lighters), had to transfer the goods between the ships in the roadstead and the warehouses ashore. A proa was a flat-bottomed boat with a loaded draught of 4 to 8 feet (1.2 to 2.5 metres) and a loading capacity of 10 to 50 *koyang*.<sup>7</sup> The transfer of cargo onto proas was a time-consuming, precarious process. During the wet monsoon, it was often hazardous if not downright impossible for the proas to ply between roadstead and town (Bruining 1852; De Meijier 1893; à Campo 1992:406; Knaap 1996:20).

The transfer of cargo by smaller vessels for a fee called lighterage is often considered a characteristic of 'primitive ports', but in fact the system could also be found in large, well-equipped ports such as London, Colombo, and Singapore, mostly in combination with the loading and unloading on the

5 Some researchers have focused on non-agricultural labour, like Erman (1995, 1999) on the mining industry.

6 The harbour is nowadays known as Sunda Kelapa and is still in operation, used mainly by traditional inter-island shipping.

7 A *koyang* is a unit of measure, depending on the kind of cargo. A *koyang* rice is equal to 1,668 kilograms, a *koyang* salt 1,863 kilograms.

wharfs (Morgan 1958:68–69; Dharmasena 1980:81–82; Dobbs 1999). Batavia, however, was fully dependent on the lighters.

The rise of steamships changed the appreciation of proas. Steamships were less hindered by weather conditions than sailing ships and sailed all year round, many of them according to a fixed schedule. Operational speed and reliable times of departure and arrival were essential. Furthermore, shipping companies preferred fixed berths for their steamers, so ports had to adjust to the new style of shipping, meaning deeper harbours, longer wharfs, and mechanical facilities to guarantee efficient loading and unloading of the ships. The process of loading and unloading by proas was slow and expensive and caused the steam shipping companies a major headache. Something needed to be done, but as the owners of the *prauwenveren* held an oligopoly, they felt no great urge to adapt to the new demands of the maritime sector.

However, in the 1870s it was decided to build a new harbour for Batavia. Planning, location, and budget were the subject of long, heated debates in the Netherlands Indies, in which colonial administrators, Dutch members of Parliament, shipping companies, commercial traders, railway companies, engineers and even Prince Hendrik, brother of King Willem III, were involved. In 1883 at Tanjung Priok, about 9 kilometres east of the existing harbour canal, a completely new port would be opened. Tanjung Priok had the first deep-water basins in the archipelago in which steamers could tie up directly alongside the wharf (Veering 2006:59–82).

The new harbour works at Tanjung Priok were ambitious in their scale and design and cost 20 million guilders, making it one of the largest infrastructural projects of the century. The new port consisted of an outer harbour, protected by two piers and an inner harbour basin. Ships could moor at the western wharf in the inner harbour, load and unload their cargo using cranes, and store it in seven large godowns. Mooring stages were constructed at the Eastern Wharf, specifically for the unloading and storing of salt, tin, and coal. In 1891 a dry dock constructed by the private Droogdok Maatschappij Tandjong Priok provided professional repair facilities. Being located at a distance from Batavia, a good connection with the town centre was imperative: railways, a land road, and a shipping canal for proas all led directly to the commercial centre of Batavia (Veering 2008:211–213).

The growth of Tanjung Priok is unquestionably attributable to the strong economic development of its direct hinterland of West Java (Cool 1920) and its growing role as transit port for products from the Outer Islands. One crucial factor in the development of the transit function was the founding of the KPM in 1888. The services of the KPM, initiated, stimulated, and supervised by the colonial government, were closely tied up with contemporary military and

administrative expansion, as well as the economic integration of the Outer Islands into the global market economy (à Campo 1992:635). The archipelago-wide network of KPM was centred in Batavia, where all its main shipping routes called. The KPM had transit contracts with the Dutch international shipping lines, the *Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland'* (SMN, Steam Navigation Company 'Nederland') and the *Rotterdamsche Lloyd* (RL), which gave Tanjung Priok its important role as transit port. These three Dutch companies, KPM, SMN and RL, dominated port operations, as they accounted for more than fifty percent of all shipping in Tanjung Priok. Tanjung Priok was also a port-of-call for smaller packet boat services like the Java-China-Japan Line and various other international shipping firms. In short, the port was a link between the inter-island and the international shipping networks. The colonial government promoted Tanjung Priok as the 'national' harbour of the Netherlands Indies, not least projecting it as a counterweight to the rising influence of Singapore in the Java Sea. In this respect, the development of the KPM and Tanjung Priok ran parallel, as both were used by the colonial government to tighten its grip on the archipelago, both politically and economically (Veering 2008:235).

Tanjung Priok was not the only port that was modernized in the Netherlands Indies. In the 1910s, the Dutch government in The Hague sent two harbour experts, who had played a decisive role in the development of the harbours in the Netherlands, to the archipelago. The two experts, Jacob Kraus and Gerrit de Jongh, sought large-scale, technological solutions for the capacity deficit of all major ports around the Java Sea (Cool 1920; Kraus and De Jongh 1910; Veering 2008:222–230). The expansion of the harbours in the Netherlands Indies coincided with worldwide port development, which had been generated by the rapid transformation of shipping from sail to steam. The most striking aspect of the process was the perpetual search for space: deeper basins, more and longer wharves, increasing storage space. Physically the harbours were increasingly separated from the rest of the towns, as room for their expansion was only found at the outskirts of the towns. Economically the ports grew increasingly independent of the towns and the traditional ties with the urban commercial establishment loosened (Veering 2008:236).

### Changes in Dock Work

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the way dock work was carried out changed fundamentally as a result of the shift from sailing to steamships. This change occurred irrespective of whether a port relied on lighters or offered

wharves at which ships moored. In the era of sail, the loading was carried out under supervision of specialized sailors, who were responsible for the rigging of the ship and for the stowage of the cargo. The riggers were assisted by casual labourers who carried the goods to and from the ships. With the coming of steamships, the specific skills of the riggers became obsolete and, to their dismay, they had to accept ordinary dock work or their jobs were taken over by less skilled labourers, often from other trades (Mol 1980).

In the late nineteenth century, both the shift to steam power, and the use of iron instead of wood to build vessels resulted in a greater carrying capacity and higher speeds. In this period, the job of stevedore was introduced to take care of the loading of the ships and to supervise the dockworkers. Most of the stevedores were hired by shipping companies, who were glad to hand over the tasks of monitoring the loading and hiring workers. The growth of the volume handled in the ports created a need for more labour and better equipment, and the stevedore was indispensable in this process. The shipping companies pressed to achieve a rapid handling of their steamers, which had to be on their way again as soon as possible to recover the high expenses of steam shipping (De Goey 1993:4–25).

These technological innovations in shipping were not matched by similar improvements in cargo handling. Clearly, in view of the increase in cargo transhipped through the ports, manpower was no longer sufficient. Although cranes and other mechanical devices were in use, technological progress was slow to catch on and the labour-intensive nature of dock work remained unchanged until the introduction of the container in the 1960s (De Goey 1993:25; Green 2000:575–576). The pace of this mechanization process also depended on the type of cargo: grain was very suitable to mechanical loading, whereas other goods like tea or rubber still required to be handled manually. Even the bucket ladder used to move grain required a team of dockers and a division of tasks in weighing, bagging up, and carrying the grain.<sup>8</sup>

In the traditional harbour of Batavia, the loading and unloading of ships had been the task of the specialized crews of the proas. Working with lighters was a complicated task: the shipper had to align his proa alongside the ship in the roadstead so that the freight could be transferred between the two vessels. The consignment had to be stowed carefully, because a flat-bottomed, badly loaded *tambangan* was in ever-present danger of capsizing. The boat's crew therefore had to be skilled and experienced, in both stowage and navigation, especially during the wet monsoon when they had to navigate the crashing

8 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 201, Minutes Priok meeting 21-1-1913.

waves and the tricky breakers at the entrance of the harbour canal (Bruining 1852:201).

The opening of the new harbour works at Tanjung Priok fundamentally changed the loading business. The major difference was that ocean-going ships could now load and unload directly at the wharves, and could fall back on the use of mechanical support. The skilled lightermen were therefore replaced by harbour workers, whose main asset had to be muscle power. This labour remained largely uncontrolled, as it was even in Australia where it was said 'A man could buy himself a coil of rope and call himself a stevedore' (Tull 2000). The heavy cargoes and the long working hours, not to mention the high accident rate, meant that men ran the risk of physical disability. In general, working on the docks was demanding, and dangerous.

### Dockworkers in Batavia

As is the case with many urban workers, information about the Priok dockers is very limited. One matter that is difficult to determine is the size of the labour population in Tanjung Priok. No official statistics pertaining to it were kept during the colonial era. The only figure available is from November 1948: a report by the Department of Social Affairs estimated the number of persons working in Tanjung Priok at 11,000 (*Arbeidstoestanden* 1949:3). In his article on the port strikes in the 1910s and 1920s, Ingleson mentions that Surabaya had a 10,000-strong workforce (Ingleson 1983:457). As Tanjung Priok was a port comparable in size to Surabaya, it seems feasible to estimate that the number of workers in Tanjung Priok was also about 10,000, perhaps somewhat fewer during the economic crisis of the 1930s.

Labour in the dock area was not restricted to the loading and unloading of the ships. Port operations involved an entire bureaucratic and technical apparatus: the Havenbedrijf (Port Company) combining the work of both port authorities and port operations, the Dry Dock Company Tandjong Priok, the KPM workshop, customs and immigration, police, railways, the post office, and the *vemen* (storage companies). Most European personnel did not live in Tanjung Priok, but in the Batavian suburbs of Weltevreden and Meester Cornelis. They commuted daily on the special trains running to and from the harbour.<sup>9</sup> Many of the Indonesians in the 'steady' workforce also lived in

9 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 198, VB 86 Batavia, 10-3-1917. See also *Volkstelling 1930* (1933), and De Vletter et al. (1997).

Batavia, although labourers working for the storage companies tended to live close to the docks.

The labourers on the wharves were better paid than those working on board, loading and unloading the ships. The latter were paid a daily wage and formed the floating workforce in the port. They were at the bottom of the social hierarchy. The stevedoring work was organized by smaller companies and individuals.

For a long time the labour organization in Tanjung Priok depended on the personal skills, authority, or tact of a few European labour brokers who mediated between the shipping companies and the indigenous labourers (NISHM 1939:2). A few strong men reigned on the waterfront. An account of the labour situation in the early days of Priok referred to a certain Janus Hagenaar who enjoyed a 'glorious career' as recruiter and supervisor.

We still remember how he ruled the docks of Priok with his cane, and how he, gesticulating expressively, got the most out of the troop of coolies, who at the time, and even long after, were given, the less pleasant name of the "sore legs battalion".<sup>10</sup>

If mediators like Hagenaar were absent or made a mess of their work, shipping companies immediately suffered from a shortage of labourers.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast to most ports, where employers in the harbour could easily choose from a surplus of workers, Tanjung Priok had to contend with an acute shortage of labourers. In Tanjung Priok there was heavy competition among the shipping companies for the available dockers. The need for labour was so pressing that any unexpected additional job would have an impact on the available labour in the subsequent period. This could, for instance, happen when a crew of dockers had to do a night shift to handle a particular vessel and other ships suffered a standstill the next day because of a lack of labourers.<sup>12</sup>

Traditionally, dockworkers came from Banten (Bantam), a Residency at the west end of Java, or to a lesser extent from Tangerang, a district also west of Batavia. The Census of 1930 reports that it was 'common knowledge that

10 *'Wij herinneren ons nog, hoe hij de kade van Priok met zijn rietje regeerde, en hoe hij uit het troepje koelies, destijds en zelfs nog langen tijd daarna, betiteld met de min fraaie naam van het "zeere beenen bataillon", met groot gebaar haalde, wat eruit te halen viel'* (Rietdijk 1921:59).

11 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 201, Minutes Priok meeting 22-2-1912.

12 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 201, Minutes Priok meeting 21-1-1913.

people from Banten and Tangerang worked in Priok.<sup>13</sup> They worked in the port for a few months only and then went back to their villages. At least 75 per cent of the workers left Tanjung Priok within one year (Rodenwaldt and Essed 1925). Circular migration was an established way of life in Banten. The majority of the young men travelled to Batavia or South Sumatra to work, but returned for the rice harvests or religious holidays, or when they had earned sufficient money to buy and cultivate their own piece of *sawah* land. These migration patterns assured an influx of money and goods into Banten.

The 'work ethic' of the Bantenese caused the port enterprises a headache, because do what they could, the port enterprises could not get a grip on the indigenous labourers.<sup>14</sup> M.C. Koning, principal agent for the KPM in Batavia between 1911 and 1919, was looking back on his work twenty years later still full of incomprehension about the attitude of the dockers:

Those who were acquainted with the mentality of the native in those days also remember that little was needed to have him interrupt his work. The work was frequently halted for a celebration; the reasons for a *slamatan* were insignificant. When a coolie thought he had earned enough money for the time being to allow him to give free rein to his innate laziness, he left his job without a qualm and disappeared, only to turn up again when his purse was completely empty. Also, the moment the rice crop had to be harvested, the coolies left for their *desa* and remained there until the work in the *sawah* was done.

NISHM 1939:8

The casual dockworkers were not employed directly by either the harbour management or the waterside companies, they were taken on indirectly through a *mandur* (foreman) who had been enlisted by a labour broker or sometimes a stevedore or shipping company. This system of indirect recruitment was an established practice in many ports in the world, and was also

13 The figures in the Census show that 12,424 people from Banten and 13,070 from Tangerang lived in the district of Batavia. A small group of harbour workers originated from Parungpanjang in the Bogor district. Unfortunately the Census does not specify numbers of the dock labourers (*Volkstelling 1930* 1933).

14 The migration routines of the Bantenese also caused problems at home. While the Bantenese had the reputation of hard workers outside their own region, in Banten they seemed ashamed to perform coolie labour. A colonial report depicted the Bantenese as abstemious, thrifty, and pious, but on their home ground they were said to be bone-lazy, fanatical, and rebellious. *Verslag van de Commissie* 1927:1–3; Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Jakarta (ANRI), Memorie van Overgave Bantam 1931.

commonplace in various industries in Java. The *mandur* was often village-born or had strong ties with the area from which his family originated. He used these networks to recruit labourers from his home village and region. This use of networks explains the concentrated origin of dockworkers from just a few areas.<sup>15</sup> The advantage for the employers was that they did not have to deal with all the indigenous labourers, but could organize everything through a few foremen.

### Shortage of Labourers

Around 1905 shipping traffic had developed to such an extent that the small-scale organization of labour was no longer satisfactory. The port of Batavia ran short of wharf and storage space and the limited number of dockworkers was an acute problem. The upshot was congestion and the shipping companies were driven into strong competition for port facilities and labour. In an attempt to overcome this problem, the main shipping lines in Priok – KPM, SMN, RL, and Java-China-Japan Lijn (JCJL) – combined to establish three cooperatives in 1911 and 1912: the Kolenmaatschap (Coal Partnership) for coal business, the Unieveer (Union Ferry) for lighter work and transport, and Stuwadoor Maatschap (Stevedore Partnership) for stevedoring (NISHM 1939; à Campo 1992). Although the integration of these port processes did indeed improve the handling of ships, it could not solve the shortage of labour. This arrangement was broken by JCJL when it decided to hire a Chinese broker, the firm of Wing, to bunker their ships. Wing attracted 200 Priok labourers by offering high wages. After that the three cooperatives had no other option than to raise their wages and the competition for labour only intensified.<sup>16</sup>

Another possible solution to the labour issue was to hire Chinese workers. The JCJL ships regularly brought coolies from China to work in the plantations of Deli (East Sumatra), and the company sometimes sought Chinese labourers for dock work in Tanjung Priok. Chinese labourers were also recruited from Singapore. The advantage of Chinese workers was that they, unlike the indigenous labourers, did not desert the dockside when work was at its height. Precisely in August and September, when shipping of cash crops was at its peak, there was always a massive exodus of the indigenous workers to Banten,

15 This was the case not only in Tanjung Priok, but also in Surabaya, where most dockers were Madurese, and in the harbour of Semarang, which attracted workers from Kudus, Demak, Juana, Kendal, and Jepara (Ingleson 1983:457).

16 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 201, Minutes Priok meeting 22-2-1912.

going home for the rice harvest. Lebaran (the end of the Islamic fasting) was another critical moment, because many Bantenese went back to their villages to celebrate.

Both these drawbacks to the employment of indigenous labourers did not apply to Chinese workers but, nevertheless, hiring them was not considered a permanent solution for the labour problem. The employers objected to the fact that the Chinese workers frequently went on strike and displayed strong group solidarity. Sometimes, the Chinese workers had already mutinied on the ships before they had arrived in Batavia (*De Telegraaf* 28-7-1910). Another perennial problem was that Chinese immigrants suffered from the change in environment, especially as the conditions in Priok were very harsh. Once in Batavia, the physical condition of the immigrants rapidly declined, and therefore, in the words of KPM agent Koning,

they performed even more badly than those skinny Chinese and natives who had been working in Priok and at least always carried on, despite being weak, exhausted, and miserable.<sup>17</sup>

In later years, the 1920s and 1930s, Chinese immigrants were often suspected of being communist revolutionaries, and port employers were no longer falling over themselves to hire new Chinese dockers (*Politiek-politionele overzichten, 1982, 1988:16*).

The mechanization of dock labour was another alternative to solve the labour shortage. To choose this option would certainly make the port enterprises less vulnerable to fluctuations in labour supply and speed up the handling of cargo. In Tanjung Priok some cranes were available, both on the wharves and on the barges. Large vessels were equipped with either their own cranes or winches with a lifting capacity of up to five tons each (à Campo 1992:420). Despite these advantages, the options for mechanization were very limited, mostly because the cargo was still rarely standardized.

The possibilities of mechanization were promising in the case of coal. The handling of coal was a bottleneck in Tanjung Priok, as it was still done by manual labour only. Long rows of workers carried coal onto the vessels along gang-planks in baskets. The representatives of the shipping companies, meeting to discuss the matter, considered the various opportunities for mechanical coal loading. A technical committee visited several European ports to study the mechanical loading devices used there. In the end, the Rotterdam system was chosen as the most appropriate. In 1913, after protracted bickering between

---

17 Confidential Letter KPM, Koning to Hummel, 7-2-1912, cited in à Campo (1992:419).

the various parties, two lighters, provided with steam cranes, were ordered, each with a capacity of 1,200 tons. Not long after, in early 1914, the Union companies (KPM, SMN, RL, and JCJL) established a new enterprise to run the coal trade in Tanjung Priok: the *Nederlandsch Indische Steenkolen Handels-Maatschappij* (NISHM, Netherlands Indies Coal Trading Company). The ambition was to compete with Singapore, where many Java-bound vessels used to take in coal (NISHM 1939:10–11). The NISHM had a 1,000 foot long wharf, equipped with four electrical coal transporters with grabs, each with a capacity of 100 tons per hour. The new loading facilities did indeed improve the handling of the vessels, and the process required less labour. However, the unflinching increase in shipping traffic still meant that a sizeable workforce had to be available, now made even more urgent as the NISHM expanded its activities to tug boat and lighter services and stevedoring.<sup>18</sup> In an attempt to rationalize one aspect of dock work, the Union companies had paradoxically produced a new competitor for labour on the waterfront.

### Living and Working in Priok

Most dockers lived in the old quarter of Batavia, and not in the quarters near the port. Every morning they had to walk an hour to the station, from where they travelled thirty minutes by train to the dockside. At the end of the day, they made the same trip in the opposite direction, giving a total travelling time of three hours per day. Every evening port employers posted the number of dockworkers needed for the next day, based on a calculation of the number of ships in the harbour and the expected arrivals. When a ship arrived unexpectedly, or when for some other reason more dockers were required, it was almost impossible to form a new gang and, considering the travelling time from Batavia, it would hardly be worth trying (Rietdijk 1921:60). It was in the best interests of the employers for the labourers to move to the waterfront as their immediate presence would increase the flexibility of cargo handling.

One of the main problems encountered in establishing a steady workforce in the docks was the poor living conditions in Tanjung Priok, or Batavia for that matter, and the appalling accommodation available to the labourers. In many cases, the foreman or the broker provided the migrant workers from Banten with a place to stay in one of the *pondok* (boarding-houses) in old Batavia.

18 Company brochure 'NV Nederlandsch-Indische Steenkolen Handel-Maatschappij', Amsterdam, no date. Univever and the Kolen Maatschap were incorporated into the NISHM.

People lived cheek by jowl in these shabby lodging houses, which were built very close to each other. Fires could easily destroy a whole quarter (Abeyasekere 1987:70–71). During the wet monsoon, heavy rains transformed the kampong area in central Batavia into a quagmire. When this happened, most of the workers did not show up at Tanjung Priok, after having spent all night in the wet and, if the bad weather persisted, many migrants returned to their home villages. In 1918 a severe flood forced many people to flee to Banten with as immediate consequence a lack of labourers, despite the offer of the harbour authorities to use godowns as temporary accommodation in Tanjung Priok. It took months before this situation had fully recovered (Rietdijk 1921:60).

Publicist and photographer H.F. Tillema described the city kampongs of Batavia as the ‘Augean stables’, afflicted by poverty and decay (Vanvugt 1993; Coté 2002). He was horrified by the sight of the *pondok*,

which form the sleeping accommodation of the Javanese from the country. Distressing dwellings they were, places where people were exposed to all sorts of infections, both physical and moral! Prostitution was rampant; malaria, typhoid, dysentery, etcetera, etcetera had no trouble finding easy victims.<sup>19</sup>

Sometimes workers just found a spot in the harbour to spend the night, saving a trip up and down to Batavia and keeping their train allowance. To observe them Tillema made a nocturnal trip to the harbour at the invitation of the director of the Department of Health. At midnight a small group, armed with a camera, left for Priok.

It was a lugubrious expedition. Most of the experts had taken quinine tablets before departure. This to prevent [them] catching malaria on this excursion. [...]. The small heaps, which you will notice only after looking carefully, are sleeping persons, lying on the coal, exposed to the notorious mosquitoes of Tanjung Priok. “Sheer suicide”, said one companion. “Now one can see how much the authorities here lack any insight into hygiene”, remarked another. [...] Deeply impressed by what we had seen, we returned home.<sup>20</sup>

19 ‘dat zijn slaapgelegenheden voor den Javaan van buiten. Droevige verblijfplaatsen waren het, plaatsen waar de menschen blootgesteld waren aan allerlei infecties, fysieke en moreele! Prostitutie vierde er hoogtij, malaria, typhus, dysenterie enz. enz. vonden er gemakkelijk hun prooi’ (Tillema 1919:3).

20 ‘t Was een lugubere tocht. De meesten ter zake zeer deskundigen hadden vóór hun vertrek een paar kinine-tabletten ingenomen. Dit om van het bezoek geen malaria op te doen. [...] De

Tillema had the opportunity to discuss the situation with the KPM directors during a visit to the KPM headquarters as preparation for writing his critical pamphlet *Kampongwee*. Tillema and the KPM directors discussed the living conditions and studied photographs of the facilities in Priok. Thanks to the minutes of a board meeting of the shipping companies, it is still possible to discover what happened on this visit.<sup>21</sup> It seemed Tillema and the KPM were on the same wavelength on this point.

Very scant accommodation of a more permanent nature was available in Tanjung Priok. Not much is known, unfortunately, about the housing situation in and around Tanjung Priok in its very early days. The port had been constructed in an isolated area, surrounded by swamps and mangroves. Only a small fishing settlement had been forced to make way for the construction works. Only after the turn of the century did the colonial port authorities begin to show an interest in the living situation of the Priok population. As a consequence, one by one the existing kampongs were relocated to better, specially prepared terrains, such as *Kampong Pedjongkoran* and *Kampong Kodja*. The inhabitants were paid an allowance to move their dwellings, which they simply took apart and rebuilt at the new location. The port authorities constructed roads and pathways, installed the waterworks and an electricity grid, and built a central market.<sup>22</sup>

### Establishing the Uniekampong

Housing and hygiene had appeared on the agenda of the Priok meeting of the shipping companies several times, but initially to no purpose. In 1916 the KPM management in Batavia decided to take the labour issue into its own hands by setting up a *koeliekampong* (coolie kampong). The stevedoring companies had

---

*hoopjes, die u na aandachtige beschouwing zult opmerken, zijn slapende mensen, liggend op de steenkool, blootgesteld aan de steken der beruchte muskieten van Tandjong Priok. "Je reinste zelfmoord," merkte een der tochtgenooten op. "Nu kan men eens zien hoezeer het hygiënisch inzicht hier nog bij de autoriteiten ontbreekt," merkte een ander op. [...] Diep onder den indruk keerden wij terug' (Tillema 1919:2).*

- 21 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 314.1, Minutes meeting Verenigde Nederlandse Scheepvaartmaatschappijen 22-12-1921.
- 22 Private companies, such as the Hollandsche Beton Maatschappij (a construction works) and the Dordtsche Petroleum Maatschappij (an oil company), also rented areas for the accommodation of their labourers, who were permanent employees not directly involved in the actual dock work.

not been able to supply dockworkers in sufficient numbers for all the shipping companies and, above all, the labourers were in such poor physical condition that they could barely undertake the arduous task of loading and unloading the ships. The director of a stevedoring company linked to the KPM had suggested in a report that the workers be accommodated properly, in the vicinity of the dockside. The purpose of the Koeliekampong was to house the workers who lived downtown in the 'most appalling conditions', in a new kampong with better living conditions in order to bring down the death rate among them and improve their physical condition.<sup>23</sup>

What we wish to achieve with our coolie kampong is an end to the unfortunate conditions prevalent in the slums in downtown [Batavia], where the Bantenese are living. Undernourished people live in insalubrious conditions and the result is, according to the harbour physician, a death rate of 25 per cent, while those who do not perish deliver an inferior working performance as a consequence of their poor physical shape. While a *veem* coolie shoulders a bag of copra on his own, we need four persons to do so, which is why handcarts are being used. When one considers what is achieved in *pikols* in Makassar, the difference in speed of cargo handling is the first thing which strikes the eye.<sup>24</sup>

Initially the KPM wanted to co-operate with the other shipping companies, RL, SMN and JCJL, to establish a common housing complex. This plan was stymied by the Priok agents of these other companies who were determined to establish their own kampong, but it turned out their plans were never executed.

In September 1918, the KPM opened the Koeliekampong. The local management in Batavia envisaged accommodation for 700 labourers, but the KPM board of directors in Amsterdam restricted the experiment to 400 labourers. The directors in the Netherlands feared the kampong would not attract enough labourers to fill so many places.<sup>25</sup> As will be discussed in detail in the next section, the Koeliekampong was actually a success in many ways.

23 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 314.1: 623–632, Minutes April 1921.

24 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 198, VB 86 Batavia 10-3-1917. A *pikol* is a unit of weight, roughly the equivalent of 62.5 kg. This death rate of 25 per cent is hard to believe but if correct it is indicative of both the terrible living conditions and the dire economic need of the workers.

25 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 198, VB 72 Batavia to Amsterdam 25-8-1916, VB 78 Batavia to Amsterdam 4-11-1916; VB 110 Amsterdam to Batavia 2-11-1916, VB 113 Amsterdam to Batavia 28-12-1916; VB 152 Amsterdam to Batavia 28-1-1919.

Seeing the apparent success of the Koeliekampong, at least for the KPM as employer of the dockworkers, the other shipping companies quickly came round. In March 1919, it was decided to establish jointly a limited liability company, to run the kampong and labour pool, NV Uniekampong (Uniekampong Ltd). The Uniekampong would be the primary 'supplier' of dockworkers for the companies involved in the union. The main partners in the Uniekampong were the KPM, the Nederlandsch Indische Scheepvaart Etablissements (NISE, the local representative of the RL), and Scheepsagentuur, the representative of the SMN and JCL in Batavia.<sup>26</sup> According to the statutes (Acte van Maatschap), the stated goal of the NV Uniekampong was to guarantee the availability of workers for the loading and unloading, storing and transporting of cargo's shipped in vessels operated by the Uniekampong members.<sup>27</sup>

In a radical break with the past, the Uniekampong was to house 4,000 dockworkers, many more than they had ever hired before. Although the participating shipping companies were allowed to attract other labourers, this suggestion was strongly discouraged as such a practice would only drive up competition for labour. After registration at the Uniekampong the dockers received a special pass and a European staff supervised the premises.

The relation between Uniekampong and the dockers can be characterized as semi-casual: fixed, but not permanent employment. The establishment of a labour pool was part of a general development of the gradual decasualization of dock work then occurring in various ports all over the world. The militant reputation of dockers was to a large extent based on the effects of casual labour. Port employers began to realize that steps had to be taken to alter the dockers' casual way of life fundamentally (Weinhauer 2000:580–581).

Unquestionably, the Uniekampong served the economic interest of the four participating companies. With a 60 to 70 per cent share in the total shipping movements in Tanjung Priok, the four companies hoped to diminish the mutual competition on the labour market, and thereby control and bring down wages. A point of attention was to make sure all partners had their rightful share of the labourers. The NV employed an 'administrator' – in later years

26 Other partners were Java Pacific Lijn (through Scheepsagentuur), Java Bengalen Lijn and Java New York Lijn (only those ships ran by RL and SMN). At the same time the partners established the NV Uniekampong, it was decided to dissolve the now redundant Stuwadoor Maatschappij. NA, KPM (2.20,35) 197. It is remarkable that neither the colonial government nor the local authorities were involved in the project. Since the Decentralization Act of 1903, municipalities were responsible for a great variety of tasks, including sanitation works, public housing, and kampong improvement.

27 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 197, nr 7a: Acte van Maatschap, July 1919.

his title was upgraded to 'director'— who looked after the fair distribution of workers over the various participant companies; he was also responsible for the staff and workers, and for costs and income.<sup>28</sup>

Nevertheless, the establishment of the Uniekampong was certainly inspired by ethical considerations too. The management of the Uniekampong demonstrated its engagement with the dockworkers, although in a highly paternalistic manner, aspiring to 'educate' the workers in matters of food, hygiene, and money. In an article in a nautical magazine, Rietdijk, first director of the Uniekampong, stressed that the 'ethical approach' converged with practical economic interests:

The brilliant improvement in the living conditions of the native workers is the ethical side, the benefit [we derive] from the improved performance of the workers who are better looked after is the practical.

RIETDIJK 1921:61

Ethical or not, the Uniekampong was in no sense comparable to the European working-class housing projects which were built in the Netherlands Indies in the early twentieth century. The name 'Uniekampong' can be deceiving, as it was not really a kampong in the sense of a town quarter (Van Roosmalen 2008:278–295). The housing complex displayed certain features of a *tangsi* (an army camp or barracks), as the labourers lived together in large communal buildings, although some did have private rooms.

### Life at the Koeliekampong

The first Koeliekampong, the precursor of the Uniekampong opened by the KPM in 1918, was located directly next to Pedjongkoran, one of the largest kampongs in the Priok area. On its other side, the Koeliekampong bordered directly on Zandvoort Beach, a place where the colonial elite of Batavia used to come for some fresh air and relaxation. The complex was built under the supervision of the Algemeen Ingenieurs- en Architectenbureau (AIA) and consisted of eight *pondok* for in total 500 to 600 workers and 48 *mandur* (foremen).<sup>29</sup> It was

28 As an extra warrant that no contracting party was slighted, a supervisory board, with three members from KPM, NISE, and Scheepsagentuur, controlled the functioning of the Director and the Uniekampong. NA, KPM (2.20.35) 197, nr 7a: Acte van Maatschap, July 1919.

29 AIA was founded in 1916 by the Dutch architect Frans Ghijsels, who among other things had designed the KPM building (Scheepvaartgebouw) in downtown Batavia.

still a very modest affair as the *pondok* were constructed of wood and plaited bamboo. The construction of the Koeliekampong had cost the KPM around 150,000 guilders in January 1919.<sup>30</sup>

The workers slept on *baleh-baleh* (wooden beds). According to the camp files, in 1919, one year after the opening, the number of beds in the eight *pondok* had already risen to 768. The workers could sit on long wooden benches or directly on the concrete floors. On the northern side, each building had an open gallery and a corridor. For every two *pondok*, there was a common kitchen, constructed of brick. Here the workers prepared rice, which was distributed by the management. The night watch had a bamboo shed from where he set off on his nightly rounds. Apart from the *pondok*, there were five separate houses where the chief *mandur* lived with their families. These houses had a private kitchen and steps made out of brick instead of wood.

Several hygienic measures were introduced. There were four buildings providing washing facilities, including tap water and water closets, in the kampong. Water was drawn from an artesian aquifer and channelled to the drinking water taps. Waste water flowed through sewerage pipes into septic tanks. Ill or wounded workers were taken to a special shed, the '*ziekenbarak*' (sick bay).

The European staff lived in two semi-detached houses, each with its own kitchen, washing place, and rooms for the servants. The director's accommodation – with two doors onto the front porch – had a bathroom with a shower and a washing place. This house was connected to the kampong office, where the European staff worked. However, most of the European staff lived in Weltevreden in Batavia and came to work by bus, which made five return trips a day.<sup>31</sup>

The Koeliekampong had a central kitchen for daily meals, to supplement the portions of rice that were distributed to be cooked by the workers themselves. Workers had to buy their other daily necessities at the *toko* (small shops) in the complex or they could eat at one of the *warung* (food stalls). The *toko* and *warung* were all housed in two specially assigned buildings and the shopkeepers rented the space from the kampong management. For recreation there was a cinema, complete with a projector, a screen, and wind fans on the roof used for cooling the spectators. The whole terrain had electric lighting. This was not 'luxury', but a necessity: good lighting was important for crews returning from the docks at night. Moreover, a properly lighted complex was paramount to camp security. The Koeliekampong had its private security force, which strictly guarded law and order in the complex.

30 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 197, nr 12.

31 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 314.1: 623.2, Minutes Priok meeting 1-4-1919.

As a whole, the first Koeliekampong can be considered 'a society by itself'. As said, the KPM began modestly with only 400 labourers, as there were doubts about whether the kampong would indeed attract enough labourers.<sup>32</sup> During the first year, the kampong was a demonstrated success and had already accommodated 600 people. In fact, it attracted even more workers, up to a thousand. Despite the overcrowding, health conditions were much better than elsewhere in Batavia or Tanjung Priok. In the old dock quarters, several people died daily from diseases; in the KPM complex only eight people had fallen ill.

### From Koeliekampong to Uniekampong

The Uniekampong regulations stated that the 'NV' would provide housing, food, and medical care for indigenous men who were willing to work for the NV member companies. Workers living in separate accommodation were allowed to bring along their family, if the total number of people did not exceed the maximum set for that accommodation.<sup>33</sup>

The system in the Koeliekampong – which was borrowed from that used by the Bataafsche Petroleum Maatschappij in North Sumatra (à Campo 1992: 519) – was adopted by the partners in the Uniekampong, but the complex had to be expanded enormously to accommodate 4,000 workers in place of the original 400. Furthermore, the construction of the *pondok* was improved and more 'durable' materials were used: more brick and concrete, less wood and bamboo. In the period between 1919 and 1921, new *pondok* were built, as were new lavatory and washing buildings and six new kitchens. Again the AIA was the main engineer and contractor.

Each *pondok* was designed to accommodate ninety persons. Some large *pondok* were specially assigned for use by families, the others were for single men. KPM had been pleasantly surprised that some workers brought their families along to the Koeliekampong. These workers formed a small, steady core of the inhabitants. In the Uniekampong workers with families were accommodated in more private sections. However, the population of the Uniekampong consisted mainly of *boedjong*, young unmarried men, from Banten who worked on the waterfront for a limited period only.

32 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 198, VB 72 Batavia to Amsterdam 25-8-1916, VB 78 Batavia to Amsterdam 4-11-1916; VB 110 Amsterdam to Batavia 2-11-1916, VB 113 Amsterdam to Batavia 28-12-1916; VB 152 Amsterdam to Batavia 28-1-1919.

33 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 197, 7b, 12-6-1919.

According to the Uniekampong regulations the *pondok* were already 'fully furnished' for living,<sup>34</sup> but this furnishing was very modest indeed, with *baleh-baleh* for sleeping and long wooden benches. The *mandur* lived in separate rooms at each end of the building. Just as in the Koeliekampong, the chief *mandur* lived in private houses, close to the *pondok*. The separate houses and rooms were not furnished. Three new godowns for *toko* and *warung* were constructed, and a new office building was erected for the expanding European staff. A Decauville track was laid to make transport by train from the Uniekampong to the Tanjung Priok railway station possible, and the workers were transferred to and from the docks by ferry. A landing stage was constructed to this end and in 1921 a small harbour was dug at the cost of 30,000 guilders.<sup>35</sup> The expansion costs of the Uniekampong up to July 1920 were just over 365,000 guilders, although not all construction work had been finished by then.<sup>36</sup>

Food was supplied from a central kitchen but the menu was very basic: rice, fish, and eggs. The people were expected to prepare additional food in one of the smaller kitchens near their *pondok*. The Pasar Kodja containing many more *toko* and *warung* were also nearby to supplement the mostly Chinese-owned shops on the Uniekampong. The regulations stated that food had to be distributed three times a day, in the morning, the afternoon, and the evening, at the same time every day. Under exceptional circumstances, breakfast could be distributed one hour earlier and dinner at night could be delayed two hours at the most. When workers were already or still working on the docks, the shipping company employing them was obliged to pick up the food at the Uniekampong kitchens and bring back the utensils afterwards. Medical check-ups were obligatory for every worker. The Uniekampong had its own medical doctor, after 1929 two. The workers were also strictly instructed to keep their accommodations clean.<sup>37</sup>

The Uniekampong also offered shared facilities. On their own initiative the dockers, of whom the majority were Muslim, had established a mosque in the Uniekampong. A vocational school educated the workers' children to succeed them in the dock trade. For recreation, there was a football pitch and the cinema, which both also attracted people from outside the kampong.

After a few years the press praised the Uniekampong as an example of how to cope with workers under modern conditions. The comments, for instance in

34 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 197, 7b, 12-6-1919.

35 Arsip Burgerlijke Openbare Werken, Citeureup (BOW), H2/3/25 (1933), 6-10-1932.

36 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 197, 16a.

37 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 197, 7b, 12-6-1919.

the *Deli Courant*, reflect the 'ethical policy' of the colonial government in the early 1920s. In the Netherlands, the daily newspaper *De Telegraaf* claimed that the success of the Uniekampong contrasted markedly with the bad employment records of the plantations.

Could it be that here [at Uniekampong] the psyche of the coolie was explored for the first time, that he was considered a human being and not merely a muscleman, who can be ordered around? Could it be that an attempt was made to fulfil his needs and desires and not ignore his inner self?<sup>38</sup>

The gradual modernization attracted new business as well. For instance, the establishment of a production plant of the American car company General Motors in the 1920s contributed to the transformation of the Priok area. And, as roads and railways were improved, this rather remote port area was drawn closer to the city of Batavia.

### The Inhabitants

The number of 4,000 dockers proved far too ambitious. It was hard to find so many workers, but the shipping companies had also come to realize that a work force of this size was excessive. In 1921 the KPM directors in The Hague complained that the Uniekampong had grown much larger than intended, and hence had become much more expensive.<sup>39</sup>

The Uniekampong was governed by a strict hierarchy, closely resembling the strata in the work force. The labourers were divided into the categories chief *mandur*, *mandur*, assistant-*mandur*, A-coolies (very experienced), B-coolies (experienced) and C-coolies (hardly or no experience).<sup>40</sup> The 'coolies', the actual dockers, worked six days a week, a maximum of twelve hours per day, starting at six in the morning and ending at six in the evening. This maximum did not include the travelling time to and from the docks. Overtime

38 'Kan het niet zijn dat men hier eerst de psyche van den koelie heeft verkend, dat men hem als mensch heeft beschouwd en niet als domme kracht, wie men iets opdragen kan. Zou het niet zijn omdat men getracht heeft aan zijn behoeften, zijn verlangens te voldoen en omdat men niet buiten zijn innerlijk is blijven staan' (*De Telegraaf* 20-11-1920).

39 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 197. Minutes meeting in The Hague, 22-12-1921.

40 There was also staff to run the complex itself, such as Ambonese guards, and European security staff.

(hours worked before or after six) was paid out calculating it at 1.2 hours per hour. Wages were paid to the workers directly by the shipping companies.<sup>41</sup> This was a measure to eliminate the dominant position of the *mandur*, who had traditionally distributed the income to the whole gang.

Shipping companies had to 'order' dockers at least one day in advance. Even after the Uniekampong was up and running there was a never-ending debate about the distribution of the best workers. Shipping lines reverted to the practice of hiring skilled dockers of their own accord, bypassing the Uniekampong. SMN and JCJL tried to establish their own stevedoring crew, which would be experienced in the stowage of their specific vessels. The upshot was that the best workers were attracted away from the Uniekampong, leaving the less experienced behind. On their part, the other companies accused the KPM of enjoying certain privileges in the Uniekampong. Eventually, it was agreed that each company would be allowed only a small group of fixed dockers, 50–100 workers at the most.

One of the fears which beset the companies was that bringing the workers together might provide the ideal breeding-ground for labour organizations and communist aspirations leading to social unrest. One of the directors pointed out that in 'Dutch ports similar [workers] concentrations had resulted in the organization of labourers which had harmed the employers significantly'.<sup>42</sup> In the other two major harbours of Java, Semarang and Surabaya, the 1910s and 1920s were turbulent decades. Protracted strikes had ground both the other ports to a standstill in 1913, 1918, 1921, and 1925. Although the aspect of dockers' resistance in Tanjung Priok still needs to be studied in more detail, it seems that strikes and disturbances did not occur as frequently and, when they did, it was on a smaller scale, than in Semarang or Surabaya. The Havenarbeidersbond (Harbour Workers' Union), established in Semarang in 1919, admitted that its section in Tanjung Priok was not particularly active. It could never attract any substantial support there, nor did its successor Sarekat Pegawai Pelabuhan dan Lautan (SPPL, Union of Harbour Workers and Seamen) (Ingleson 1983:461, 464–465). The relative peace prevailing in the Uniekampong, and Tanjung Priok as a whole, is striking.

The fear that bringing workers together was asking for social unrest, was balanced by the expectation of the shipping companies owning the Uniekampong to have more control over the labourers when they lived in the Uniekampong. In contrast, the *pondok* communities downtown remained largely impenetrable for the companies. When unrest flared up among the

41 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 197, 7b, 12-6-1919.

42 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 314.1:623–632, Minutes Priok meeting, 3-9-1919.

workers' population, the director of the Uniekampong had a signalling and mediating role. Director Zeeman was certainly very closely involved with the labourers' daily concerns and actively promoted their interests in the board meetings.

The Uniekampong files do not contain any references to any serious uprisings or strikes before 1942. Even during the tense November of 1926, when communist uprisings set North Banten, the home region of most dockers, alight, the Priok waterfront remained quiet, much to the surprise of the port employers. The limited degree of communist support among harbour workers might have been the reason the rebellion was geographically confined.

The absence of strikes did not automatically imply a lack of opposition, as workers resistance was often manifested in other, less confrontational forms, which were very effective indeed. The most common form of individual protest was just to leave the Uniekampong, and find another employer in the docks. As most workers were closely tied to their *mandur*, just leaving was not always an option, and discontent was often voiced or even inspired by the foremen. The pressure the *mandur* could exert was very effective, and many times the employers had to accede to their demands. The Uniekampong is an example of a working population, albeit perhaps through their foremen, which was conscious of its own power and the scope it had to negotiate with their employers. In these negotiations, the bargaining power of the dockers fluctuated together with the economic ups and downs of the harbour.

### Economic Ups and Downs

In the 1920s, the shipping companies flourished in the climate of rapid economic growth and expanding world trade, especially in colonial products like tea, coffee, rubber, or sugar. Conditions had a positive effect on the Uniekampong as well, as there was ample work for the dockers.<sup>43</sup> As a consequence, competition for hard-working and (more or less) skilled labourers was savage, and the workers could easily find jobs elsewhere in the docks or in the old harbour of Batavia. The Uniekampong had a rather high turnover of inhabitants. The better housing offered in the Uniekampong was not enough to overcome the old practice of circular migration. In the harvest periods, many of the workers continued to return to their villages, just at the time that the loading and unloading of ships reached a peak. Port employers sometimes had to

43 A second Uniekampong complex, for 800 workers, was established in Belawan, the port of Medan in 1927. NA, KPM (2.20.35) 19-12-1927.

use 'wage tactics' to bind the workers, but the good living conditions in the Uniekampong definitely helped to some extent to build a stable labour force.

The Depression had an enormous impact on the Uniekampong. Dockworkers all over the world were a very vulnerable group, as world trade, and the whole shipping industry imploded. From the 1930s, the Uniekampong had to cope with serious budget cuts and the level of services diminished. Director Zeeman, who had held his position since the early 1920s, was trying to find all sorts of ways to lower the costs, from trying to convince the colonial government to reduce the charter charges for the ferry harbour to finding cheap alternatives for electricity. Pieces of land, which were rented from the Port Authorities for any future expansion, were handed back in 1934. One of the two medical doctors had to leave again, also because there were on average only 25 patients per day.<sup>44</sup> One year later, the cinema had to stop its shows as it had run out of silent films, the electricity net was changed from high to low voltage (a cut of 70 guilders per year), and the water tariffs had dropped a bit. Some *toko* and almost all *warung* were left empty by their owners, as they could not afford the rents. There were simply too few customers left, as the working population had diminished drastically since the onset of the crisis.

The Depression completely reversed the balance of power between employers and workers in the harbour, and the strong bargaining power the workers had enjoyed in the 1920s disappeared. The shipping companies with a share in the NV Uniekampong were eager to cut their overheads, including the costs of the 'expensive' Uniekampong. The number of workers was reduced drastically to 1,550, and the shipping companies pushed the director to lower this number even more. However, Zeeman claimed that sending away workers would hardly yield a cutback, as the colonial government obliged employers to pay laid-off workers enough to live on. Instead Zeeman lowered the wages of the most skilled labourers like winch operators, who had been extremely hard to get just a few years before. He convinced the supervisory board not to lower the wages of the regular labourers by pointing out their long working hours. He also successfully argued that it was unnecessary to save on the wages of the regular labourers because of the falling rice price, which already meant the daily cost of food for the Uniekampong had decreased.<sup>45</sup>

When the supervisory board repeated its pleas for lower wages in the following years, Zeeman explained that the wages in the Uniekampong had already been relatively low, on average 37–38 cents per day, back in the 1920s. Since

44 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 197/221, Minutes Jaarvergadering Uniekampong Tandjong Priok, 7-6-1934.

45 NA, KPM (2.20.35), Minutes Jaarvergadering Uniekampong Tandjong Priok, 6/7-5-1931.

1922 the wages had not been raised once, even though competing employers had raised the wages of their workers since 1925. Lowering the wages would mean the Uniekampong could no longer hire good labourers, and, worst of all, the *mandur* might desert the premises. One member of the supervisory board acknowledged the dilemma: 'The Uniekampong has got some good *mandur* now. There is a possibility that the good coolies will go elsewhere if their wages are cut'.<sup>46</sup>

Unfortunately, the official sources, like the minutes of the Priok meetings, do not provide many details about how workers responded to the Depression. Some left the premises and tried their luck elsewhere or returned home. Many dockers preferred to stay – at least for a couple of months – in the relative security of the Uniekampong.

The workers that stayed had to put up with deteriorating housing during the Depression. By the early 1930s, the *pondok* were ten to thirteen years old and badly in need of renovation; the KPM representative was shocked by the dilapidated housing. However, maintenance and replacement investments were put on hold as a consequence of the economic crisis. In 1932, a new 'model' *pondok* was built, but financial constraints meant that the project was not pursued beyond this pilot. In 1935 renovation was again on the agenda of the board. The representative of the SMN and member of the supervisory board, W.P.J. Koper, reported that he had seen with his own eyes that the accommodation had almost 'run its course' and would have to be replaced within five to ten years. Koper stated that the quality of the housing was 'sub-standard' and as an example he mentioned the small 'rooms' the workers had created in the *pondok*, using paper and *sasak* (plaited bamboo), as the only divisions.<sup>47</sup>

### Thinking about Further Modernization

In 1937 the worst of the economic crisis was over and an ambitious modernization plan was drawn up, not only to upgrade the Uniekampong, but the premises would be extended as well. This modernized kampong was designed for 2,409 coolies, winch men and tractor drivers and their *mandur*. A new office building, a games hall, *toko* and *warung*, a new mosque, and a new hospital were all part of the plan. New housing for the European staff, namely for the doctor, the director and the supervisory staff, was also included. A completely new layout was drawn up for the actual Uniekampong, with 57 smaller *pondok*,

46 NA, KPM (2.20.35), Minutes Jaarvergadering Uniekampong Tandjong Priok, 27-5-1932.

47 NA, KPM 314.1:623-632, Minutes Priok meeting, 24-7-1935.

each for thirty men. Next to every three *pondok* (=90 men), a house for the *mandur* was planned. All buildings would be constructed of brick, in long rows of three. Total cost of the modernization plan: 781,000 guilders. The plan reflected a new optimism in the Uniekampong. At the time this plan was drawn up, 1937, the Uniekampong housed 900 workers, but with the worst of the crisis over, the shipping companies were counting on extra work for 600 labourers.

The building plans gave rise to a discussion between the administrators in Batavia and the Board of Directors in Amsterdam on the layout of the new site. The Board held the opinion that the space between the *pondok* was insufficient and formed a threat to health, safety and hygiene. Batavia replied that the existing Uniekampong was laid out 'extremely spaciouly' (*uitermate royaal*) with a distance of at least 15 meters between the *pondok*. Although the interspace between the buildings in the proposed layout was only 11.5 to 12 meters, the plans were approved by the local medical staff of the KPM. A government official of the Department of Health also approved the layout, even though he made a critical remark on the building density. The KPM director in Batavia, E. Straatemeier, pointed out to the Board in Amsterdam that if a broader interspace were applied, the construction of 15 *pondok* would have to be cancelled. The consequence was that the total capacity of the new Uniekampong would be 2,000 instead of 2,400 workers.<sup>48</sup> The Amsterdam Board persisted in its opinion. It had consulted its own expert and decided to set the interspace at 14 meters at least. Moreover three open spaces, so-called 'lungs', should be left open. A lower capacity was no problem as the Uniekampong had some vacant land in reserve that could be built when necessary.<sup>49</sup>

The construction plan was never executed. The threat of war compelled the KPM-management in Batavia to take special measures. One of the seven measures taken was to cancel the construction of a new Uniekampong. The imminent war had driven up the prices of building material to a level far higher than projected. The management deemed construction 'not urgent' and with some makeshift renovation work the Uniekampong could last for at least another five or six years. The full reconstruction could be postponed 'until normal times would return'.<sup>50</sup> The Amsterdam office consented: it pressed Batavia to

48 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 198, Letter from director KPM Batavia to Board of Directors in Amsterdam, Batavia, 22-8-1937.

49 NA, KPM (2.20.35), Letter from Board of Directors Amsterdam to Directie KPM Batavia, Amsterdam 27-12-1937.

50 NA, KPM (2.20.35), 1/11/1939 Confidential letter from Dir. Batavia to Amsterdam, 6-12-1939.

continue the improvement of the Uniekampong, but at a slower pace.<sup>51</sup> The Japanese invasion would put the plans on ice indefinitely.

Although the plans were thus never executed, they are interesting, because they reveal something of the way Dutch entrepreneurs thought about accommodation of labourers. One point worth noting is the growing concern for social and hygienic aspects. Perhaps even more striking is the central, top-down, and paternalistic approach. The letters of the Director explicitly point to the wish to 'centralize' matters in the kampong. The Batavia management was overruled by the Amsterdam head office – there is always a bigger boss – which gave precise building instructions.

### The Uniekampong During the Years of Turmoil

In April 1942, one month after it had overran the Dutch forces and occupied the Netherlands Indies, the Japanese army began to use the Uniekampong as a prisoner-of-war camp for British and Australian soldiers. The Dutch had dismantled the port facilities just before they surrendered and now the British and Australian soldiers were used to do repair work in the harbour and at the airport. Six months later, the camp was expanded by adding the adjacent Kampong Kodja for Dutch prisoners. A total of 5,000 people lived in the barracks in this period. In November 1943 the camp was abandoned, although forced labourers at the General Motors factory might have been housed in the Uniekampong in 1945. Very little is known about the Japanese period and it is unclear what happened with the Indonesian workers in the Uniekampong. The restored harbour facilities in Tanjung Priok served mainly military purposes, and commercial shipping was at a minimum.

After the Japanese surrender in August 1945, Tanjung Priok came under direct control of the British military, before the newly proclaimed, independent Republic of Indonesia could occupy the area. The harbour became the main landing stage for Dutch troops, which hoped to restore Dutch rule in the archipelago and squash the Indonesian Republic. Meanwhile European enterprises tried to re-establish their activities in the Indies, but the volume of trade was still very low. In March 1946 the British military authorities transferred the control of the Uniekampong back to the four shipping companies that had set up the compound.

The Uniekampong had been severely damaged during the Second World War. Most labourers had to sleep in the open air; the fresh water tank fell apart

51 NA, KPM (2.20.35), Confidential letters Amsterdam to Batavia 17-11-1939 and 22-12-1939.

through corrosion. In five months twelve *pondok* for 120 men each were repaired, as well as the housing for Dutch officials, and the central office. One of the former houses was used as a hospital with 40 beds. The sewerage system was renewed and a new water supply installed. In August 1946 a ceremonial meal (*slametan*) was held to re-inaugurate the Uniekampong. By the end of the year 1946, 2,200 labourers were living in Uniekampong again, together with a large number of women and children. New *pondok* were under construction.<sup>52</sup> The restoration works were completed in 1947.<sup>53</sup>

Perhaps even more important than the physical restoration, was the reconstruction of the social network of dockers. The labourers were brought together by ten *mandur* that had already worked for the Uniekampong before the war; the three best men were appointed as head *mandur*. The workers were undernourished and in bad physical condition. They received a daily ration of 500–600 grams of rice, with corned beef or dried fish. Midday food was distributed by the Uniekampong on the dockside.<sup>54</sup> In May 1947 the nourishment was improved when the Uniekampong's new kitchens were finished; according to the annual report better prepared meals resulted in a better physical condition of the workers and their families.<sup>55</sup>

The shipping companies pursued an ambivalent policy with respect to the labour relations. On the one hand, the employers tried to restore the colonial hierarchy in the Uniekampong and the system of 'semi-casual' labour of binding labourers via their foremen. On the other hand, the companies seized the opportunity to break the strong position of the *mandur*, for instance by paying wages directly to the workers (*Arbeidstoestanden* 1949). The Uniekampong was able to attract a flood of new workers, and by September 1947 their number had risen to 4,384 workers, women and children not counted. That year the Uniekampong hired its workers for 112.173 man-days per month, meaning that there was almost full employment.<sup>56</sup>

With such a massive influx of workers, it comes as no surprise that few of them had dock experience. The KPM noted that mostly starved children and adult men were looking for a job on the docks, 'in the hope to satisfy their hunger by stealing or robbing a bit'. It was with great relief that the Uniekampong management saw the return of many pre-war inhabitants in August 1947,

52 NA, KPM (2.20.59), Annual report KPM Batavia 1945–1946.

53 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 198, note 23-8-1948; NA, KPM, 2.20.59, Annual report KPM Batavia 1947.

54 NA, KPM (2.20.59), Annual report KPM Batavia 1945–1946.

55 NA, KPM (2.20.59), Annual report KPM Batavia 1947.

56 NA, KPM (2.20.59), Annual report KPM Batavia 1947.

following the ceasefire of the first Dutch offensive (*politioenele actie*) against the Indonesian Republic.<sup>57</sup> It seems that many workers had awaited the course of the violent clashes between the Dutch and Indonesian nationalists before returning to Tanjung Priok. Their return was hampered, though, by the fact that the ceasefire line ran between Tanjung Priok and Banten, the area where the majority of dockers originated from. Only after the second Dutch offensive of December 1948 and January 1949 were Tanjung Priok and Banten united in one hand, of the Dutch. Any mention of Republican influence on the workforce is conspicuously absent in the records of the Uniekampong during the whole War of Independence.

As earlier remarks show, already in 1937 a complete overhaul of the Uniekampong was deemed necessary, but the plan was not executed. During the Second World War and the early years of the Revolution, the buildings had become totally worn out. In 1948 shipping companies decided to renovate the Uniekampong completely and this time the plan was executed. Considering the fact that more than 4,000 labourers and their families were living on the premises, the situation was very pressing, and already the same year the decision to renovate was taken, construction of new *pondok* and restoration of existing ones started. By the end of 1949 the Uniekampong renovations were completed, for the sum of 3,600.000 guilders.<sup>58</sup>

In the closing months of Dutch rule in the archipelago, the Uniekampong was perceived as the epitome of modernization, far removed from the appalling living conditions of dockers of the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1949, a survey conducted by the Department of Social Affairs spoke highly of the Uniekampong as a model for dock labour, to be followed by other ports of Indonesia. Especially the effort to break the power of the *mandur*, for instance by paying wages directly to the workers, was hailed as a tool of modern employment. The provision of food, drinking water and medical care were also exemplary. Almost 50 per cent of the total dockworker population in Tanjung Priok lived in the Uniekampong at the time, most of them with their families (Arbeidstoestanden 1949).

### The 1950s: Decolonization of the Uniekampong

After the transfer of sovereignty by the Dutch to the Indonesians, in December 1949, the effective decolonization of Indonesia had in many ways yet to begin

57 NA, KPM (2.20.59), Annual report KPM Batavia 1947: 14, 130–132.

58 NA, KPM (2.20.59), Annual report KPM Batavia 1949: 147.

(Bogaerts and Raben 2007; Lindblad 2008). The inter-island shipping and the KPM, and indirectly the Uniekampong, formed a major bone of contention between Indonesia and the Netherlands, and the matter could not be solved at the Round Table Conference in 1949, which set the terms of the transfer of sovereignty. The KPM and the government of Indonesia opened negotiations in 1950, exploring the possibility of a joint Dutch-Indonesian venture for inter-island shipping. The talks took place in an emotionally charged atmosphere, because the KPM had a strong symbolic meaning for both sides. The Dutch owners still had to come to terms with a bitter defeat and almost desperately tried to safeguard their economic interests; for them it was hard to hand over an emblematic company like the KPM. The Indonesians, for their part, realized the strategic importance of inter-island shipping, the main form of archipelago-wide transport and communications, and an instrument of welding the archipelago into a nation. It was unacceptable this activity was monopolized by a foreign company, let alone a former colonial company (Dick 1987:14–15; Lindblad 2008:115–118). Already in 1950 the Board of the KPM acknowledged it did not have a future in Indonesia, put its investments in the former colony on hold, and shifted its attention to activities outside Indonesia.

The Indonesian authorities also tried to take control of the ports, because these were considered of strategic importance to the economy as well. On the whole, harbour facilities were in poor condition after years of political and military strife. The Indonesian government, lacking financial means, could hardly improve the situation. Newspapers in the early 1950s reported on an endless flow of complaints about the ‘congestion’ in the ports. For want of storage space, goods waiting transportation inland were rotting on the quays.

The waiting time of ships in the ports was exacerbated by the workers’ unrest, not only in notoriously ‘red ports’ like Surabaya and Semarang, but also in smaller harbour towns. Tanjung Priok, that had been mostly unaffected by labour unrest in the past, also became the stage of strikes, sit-downs and other protests in the 1950s. For instance, a big strike paralysed Tanjung Priok in April 1950. The *mandur* of the Uniekampong demanded several improvements from the director of Uniekampong, but the two sides did not reach an agreement. The combined union of sailors and dockers (Serikat Buruh Kapal dan Pelabuhan) supported the demands and not much later the Uniekampong workers went on strike. The action became all the more effective, because the workers of the second major labour pool on the docks, Trioveer, also went on strike, although for their own reasons. The combined strike became a direct threat to the distribution of food and commodities in the archipelago, and therefore the Ministry of Labour mediated between employers and workers. Only after a strike of nine days the employers gave in: they raised the wage of

the dockers and also agreed to hand out extra rice portions to the families of the labourers. On 13 April 9,000 dockers made a final protest march in Tanjung Priok, before resuming their work again.<sup>59</sup>

Tensions rose again over the handling of the cargo by Dutch stevedoring and transport companies. The government wished to 'Indonesianize' the economy and one of its measures was to transfer cargo activities to Indonesian owned enterprises. In 1954 the Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet put a ruling – PP 61 – into effect that only Indonesian companies would get permission for stevedoring and cargo handling.

For the KPM and the three other participating shipping companies this ruling was the signal to retract from the Uniekampong. If the shipping companies no longer held the handling of cargo in their own hands, it did not make sense to maintain a labour pool at the Uniekampong. Masjumi, an important Islamic political party, showed interest in buying the Uniekampong, but actually it was only interested in taking over the economic activities, and not the care for the labourers. It was not interested in the physical infrastructure and buildings at the Uniekampong either. The negotiations between the KPM and the Masjumi leadership, including Minister of Finance Wibisono, dragged along. The KPM directors had assessed the assets of the Uniekampong worth eighteen million rupiah, but had already accepted the idea they would not get more than four to five million rupiah. When the Masjumi leaders scented another buyer had unexpectedly entered the arena, they quickly reopened the negotiations with the shipping lines that owned the Uniekampong. The Minister of Finance ultimately offered a price of eight million rupiah, but against a backdrop of mounting political and economic tension between the two countries, the deal was eventually not struck. The KPM main office in Amsterdam had in vain put pressure on the directors in Jakarta to round off the deal.<sup>60</sup>

In December 1957 Indonesian-Dutch relations reached a low over the status of West Papua. Indonesian labourers occupied the KPM office in Jakarta, the first seizure of Dutch companies with the open backing of the government (Lindblad 2008:180–182). Early 1958 it was clear that the shipping companies had to give up all involvement with the Uniekampong: the KPM had left Indonesia and the activities had been nationalized by the Indonesian state. NV Uniekampong was liquidated: the shipping companies paid compensation to the labourers and had to accept the total loss of the fixed property. The Uniekampong itself moved into Indonesian hands; for a long time to come it continued to be known as 'Uka'.

59 *Java Bode* 4-4-1950; *De Locomotief* 14-4-1950.

60 NA, KPM (2.20.35) 198, 26-11-1956.

## Conclusion

The rapid technological and economic transformations in the late nineteenth century also set in motion the modernization of the labour organization. This process, which was going on both in the Western metropolises and in their colonies, was clearly visible worldwide 'on the docks'. The industrialization and rationalization of the economic system required a modernization of transport and infrastructure. These required new ways of managing shipping, loading, unloading, and of labour relations. Without a reorganization of the labour system the investments in steam shipping, fixed shipping routes, connecting rail and road links could never pay off.

The major problem troubling dock labour was the use of casual labourers. As circumstances changed and the need for a more stable work force increased, port employers began to realize that, as Weinbauer has noted, the casual way of life of the dockworkers had to be altered fundamentally. This decasualization included the registration of the dockworkers, the centralization of the labour market increasing the productivity of the workers, guaranteeing a weekly or monthly income, and improving the living conditions of the workers (Weinbauer 2000:580–581).

The Uniekampong can be seen as an attempt by the major shipping lines to create a labour pool, a stable and reliable workforce for the port of Tanjung Priok. The Uniekampong offered housing, food, medical care, and a certain level of guaranteed income to the dockers. Both ethical aspirations and economic motives lay behind the idea of establishing a steady labour pool. Along with the changes in the organization of labour, modernization extended to the construction of the complex itself. Better housing, water supplies and sewerage, electricity, paved roads, and a cinema all pulled the dockers into modernity. In 1949 the Uniekampong was hailed a model of a modern complex.

From the perspective of the workers, the Uniekampong formed a break with existing patterns of cyclical migration and labour recruitment. Much to the dismay of the European employers, labourers were not overly enthusiastic about living in the Uniekampong, afraid as they were to sacrifice their relative independence. The contra-cyclical fluctuation in the size of the labour force is telling in this respect. During the boom years of the 1920s, the Uniekampong continually struggled to attract sufficient numbers of labourers, whereas during the Depression of the 1930s more workers sought security in the Uniekampong, just when the shipping companies tried to reduce the labour force. After the Indonesian independence the shipping companies tried to restore their grip on the Uniekampong and even intensified their top-down attempts to control

dock labour. The rise in protests and mass strikes in the 1950s however marked a fundamental change in the workers attitude – obviously influenced by the new political reality in Indonesia. Instead of deserting the premises, labourers strived for better working and living conditions.

In sum, the modernization of shipping elicited a concomitant modernization of labour in the ports. The Uniekampong was one of the strategies devised to achieve these goals, simultaneously changing both the physical structures in the docks and the social life. Many dockers did move to the Uniekampong and adjusted their lifestyle, but they were never fully controlled, and whenever it suited them best, just as easily left the Uniekampong again. After Independence the Dutch shipping companies were step by step forced to give up their top-down attempts of modernizing the labour force.

### References

- Abeyasekere, Susan (1987). *Jakarta: A history*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Arbeidstoestanden (1949). 'Arbeidstoestanden in de havens', *Sociaal Spectrum van Indonesië* 3–6:3–7.
- Bogaerts, Els and Remco Raben (eds) (2007). *Van Indië tot Indonesië*. Amsterdam: Boom.
- Bruining, P. (1852). 'De reede van Batavia', *Verhandelingen en Berigten Betrekkelijk het Zeewezen en de Zeevaartkunde* 12:201–217.
- à Campo, J.N.F.M. (1992). *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij: Stoomvaart en staatsvorming in de Indonesische archipel, 1888–1914*. Hilversum: Verloren.
- Cool, W. (1920). *Nederlandsch-Indische havens*. Batavia: Departement der Burgerlijke Openbare Werken [2 vols].
- Coté, Joost (2002). 'Towards an architecture of association; H.F. Tillema, Semarang and the discourse on the colonial "slum"', in: Peter J.M. Nas (ed.), *The Indonesian town revisited*, pp. 319–347. Münster: LIT and Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Dharmasena, K. (1980). *The Port of Colombo, 1860–1939*. Colombo: Ministry of Higher Education.
- Dick, H.W. (1987). *The Indonesian interisland shipping industry: An analysis of competition and regulation*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Dobbs, S. (1999). *An ecological history of the Singapore River: With particular reference to the lighterage industry*. [PhD thesis, Murdoch University, Perth.]
- Erman, Erwiza (1995). *Kesenjangan buruh majikan: Pengusaha, koeli dan penguasa: Industri timah Belitung, 1852–1940*. Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan.
- Erman, Erwiza (1999). *Miners, managers and the state: A socio-political history of the Ombilin coal-mines, West Sumatra, 1892–1996*. [PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam.]

- de Goey, F. (1993). 'Water- en luchttransport in Nederland, 1814–1990', in: *Zee-, binnen-, luchtvaart en hulpbedrijven van het vervoer: Een geschiedenis en bronnenoverzicht*, pp. 5–59. Amsterdam: NEHA.
- Green, A. (2000). 'The work process', in: Sam Davies, et al. (eds), *Dockworkers: international explorations in comparative labour history, 1790–1970*, pp. 560–579. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Ingleson, J. (1983). 'Life and work in colonial cities: Harbour workers in Java in the 1910s and 1920s', *Modern Asian Studies* 17(3):455–476.
- Knaap, Gerrit J. (1996). *Shallow waters, rising tide: Shipping and trade in Java around 1775*. Leiden: KITLV Press. [Verhandelingen KITLV 172].
- Kraus, J. and G.J. de Jongh (1910). *Verslag over verbetering van haventoestanden van Tandjong Priok, Semarang en andere havens aan Z.E. den Gouverneur-Generaal van Nederlandsch-Indië*. Batavia: Landsdrukkerij.
- Lindblad, J. Thomas (2008). *Bridges to new business: The economic decolonization of Indonesia*. Leiden: KITLV Press. [Verhandelingen KITLV 245.]
- Meijijer, J.E. de (1893). *Aanleg van eene zeehaven te Tandjong Priok*. 's-Gravenhage: Van Langenhuisen.
- Mol, H. (1980). *Memoires van een havenarbeider* [edited by T. Jansen and J. Giele]. Nijmegen: SUN.
- Morgan, C.F.W. (1958). *Ports and harbours*. London: Hutchinson University Library. [2nd edition, revised by J. Bird.]
- NISHM (1939). *Nederlandsch Indische Steenkolen Handel-Maatschappij, 1914–1939: Gedenkschrift uitgegeven bij het vijf en twintig-jarig bestaan der maatschappij op 25 Maart 1939*. Amsterdam: [s.n.].
- Politiek-politionele overzichten* (1982, 1988). *Politiek-politionele overzichten van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. I (1927–1928), and vol. III (1931–1934). Leiden: KITLV.
- Rietdijk, A.J. (1921). 'Een nuttig praatje over de toestanden te Tandjong-Priok', *Bestuurs-Mededeelingen van de Afdeling Nederlandsch-Indië der Vereeniging van Nederlandsche Gezagsvoerders en Stuurlieden ter Koopvaardij* 8(5):59–61.
- Rodenwaldt, E. and W.F.R. Essed (1925). 'Untersuchungen über die Malaria in Tandjong Priok', *Beihefte zum Archiv für Schiffs- und Tropen-Hygiene Pathologie und Therapie Exotischer Krankheiten* 29(4):7–49.
- Roosmalen, Pauline K.M. van (2008). *Ontwerpen aan de stad: Stedenbouw in Nederlands-Indië en Indonesië (1905–1950)*. [PhD thesis, Technische Universiteit Delft.]
- Supriyono, Agust (2008). *Buruh pelabuhan Semarang: Pemogokan-pemogokan pada zaman kolonial Belanda, revolusi dan republik 1900–1965*. [PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam.]
- Tillema, H.F. (1919). *Kampongwee!* Groningen: A.S. Tillema-Weehuizen and H.F. Tillema.
- Tull, M. (2000). 'Waterfront labour at Fremantle, 1890–1990', in: Sam Davies, et al. (eds), *Dockworkers: International explorations in comparative labour history, 1790–1970*, pp. 471–493. Aldershot: Ashgate.

- Vanvugt, E. (1993). *Een propagandist van het zuiverste water: H.F. Tillema (1870–1952) en de fotografie van tempo doeloe*. Amsterdam: Jan Mets.
- Veering, A. (2006). 'A "chronique scandaleuse": The Batavia harbour issue, 1832-1877', *Itinerario* 30(1): 59–82.
- Veering, A. (2008). 'Nodes in the maritime network: The formation of the port system', in: W. Ravesteijn en J. Kop (eds), *For profit and prosperity: The contribution made by Dutch engineers to public works in Indonesia 1800–2000*, pp. 193–238. Zaltbommel: Aprilis and Leiden: KITLV Press.
- Verslag van de Commissie* ([1927]). *Verslag van de Commissie voor het onderzoek naar de oorzaken van de zich in de maand November 1926 in verscheidene gedeelten van de residentie Bantam voorgedaan hebbende ongeregelheden, ingesteld bij het Gouvernements-besluit van 26 Januari 1926, no ix.* [s.l.: s.n.]
- Vletter, M.E. de, et al. (1997). *Batavia/Djakarta/Jakarta: Beeld van een metamorfose*. Purmerend: Asia Maior.
- Volkstelling 1930* (1933). *Volkstelling 1930/Census of 1930 in the Netherlands Indies*. Volume 1. *Inheemsche bevolking van West-Java*. Batavia: Landsdrukkerij.
- Weinhauer, K. (2000). 'Power and control on the waterfront: Casual labour and decasualization', in: Sam Davies, et al. (eds.), *Dockworkers: International explorations in comparative labour history, 1790–1970*, pp. 580–603. Aldershot: Ashgate.